religions

MDPI

Article

Pushed Forward by Lifted Hearts: On Stanislaus Lo Kuang's Sino-Christian Philosophy of History

Dawid Rogacz

Faculty of Philosophy, Adam Mickiewicz University, 60-568 Poznan, Poland; dawid.rogacz@amu.edu.pl

Abstract: This article presents an analysis of the Sino-Christian philosophy of history created by Archbishop Stanislaus Lo Kuang (1911–2004), whose comprehensive view of historiography and the historical process situates him amongst very few contemporary thinkers interested in developing a distinctively Christian yet strictly philosophical outlook of human history. It is shown that for Lo, an inquiry into the structure of historical facts leads to uncovering their meaning, which is identical with the meaning of human life, namely the search for happiness. Humans, driven by their nature and led by heroes, move freely towards what they consider greater happiness, realizing that this requires ever greater freedom and equality. God is introduced in this approach only as a guarantee of the fulfillment of the deepest desires and the One who inscribed them into human hearts. Importantly, in his discussion of God's relation to history, Lo Kuang refers to the Confucian conceptions of human nature, Heaven, and destiny, offering a cross-cultural synthesis at the intersection of the theology and philosophy of history. It is argued that despite its inconsistencies, Lo Kuang's contribution is original and could still be relevant for global society today.

Keywords: Lo Kuang; Sino-Theology; Neo-Scholasticism; New Confucianism; Taiwanese philosophy; philosophy of history; theology of history

check for updates

Citation: Rogacz, Dawid. 2022. Pushed Forward by Lifted Hearts: On Stanislaus Lo Kuang's Sino-Christian Philosophy of History. *Religions* 13: 218. https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13030218

Academic Editor: Daniel M. Stuart

Received: 1 February 2022
Accepted: 28 February 2022
Published: 3 March 2022

Publisher's Note: MDPI stays neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

Copyright: © 2022 by the author. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

1. Introduction

The belief that God has already come into history is central to the Christian teaching, yet God's relation to history has always caused challenging theological puzzles. God transcends time, but He also became a part of human history through Incarnation; the future is unpredictable and humans are free, but God is omniscient and He preordained certain events beforehand; finally, history is primarily an area of conflicts and corruption, and this has to be reconciled not only with God's omniscience, but also His goodness and omnipotence. On top of that, the Revelation is not specific about the meaning and purpose of human history between Christ's life and his Second Coming, at least other than spreading the Good News and waiting for the Parousia (cf. Cronin 1965, p. 693). The view that world history does not unfold according to God's plan was upheld by St. Augustine (O'Daly 2020, pp. 189–91), which translated into the fact that the theology of history was never considered a classical branch of theological reflection and rarely attracted the attention of medieval and early modern theologians. One may argue, as Hans Urs von Balthasar (1964) does, that God's Incarnation has transformed history and that Christ has become the relevant, concrete 'norm' for all epochs, but von Balthasar still maintains that from a theological perspective, no age has its self-contained meaning. Hence, there naturally arises a question of whether there is any distinctively *Christian* philosophical outlook on human history. In particular, is there any place for a Christian philosophy of history other than the system of Bossuet (1681), who interpreted certain events and figures of history (in this case French) as directly inspired or used by God? Surprisingly, rather few Christian thinkers gave a positive and systematic answer to such a question. One of them was Stanislaus Lo Kuang (1911–2004), whose view of history was additionally supported

by references to Confucianism and a non-Western, twenty-five centuries-long tradition of philosophizing about history (see Rogacz 2020, pp. 3, 197).

Lo Kuang (*Luo Guang* 羅光; styled Dayi, baptized as Stanislaus) was born on the first day of 1911 in Hengyang (currently Hunan province), which was then still a part of Qing-dynasty China. Raised in a Catholic family, in 1930, he went to study abroad in Rome and was ordained priest in 1936. Having obtained doctoral degrees in philosophy and theology from Pontifical Urban University and a doctorate in canon law from Lateranum, Lo Kuang served as an adviser to the Ambassador of the Republic of China to the Holy See, facing the retreat the Republican government to Taiwan in 1949. In 1961, Pope John XXIII consecrated him the bishop of Tainan, and afterwards Lo participated in all four sessions of the Second Vatican Council. His main contribution consisted in the specification of the concept of religious freedom, which was then included in the key declaration *Dignitatis humanae* (par. 4) (Słowikowska 2019, pp. 184, 195). Lo Kuang also had his say on the issue of common priesthood, arguing that it is perfectly understandable from the traditional Chinese perspective, since China was historically devoid of the institution of clergy and sacrifices had been made by officials or family members (Acta 1972, pp. 16–17). In 1966, Lo Kuang became appointed as the archbishop of Taibei but resigned from the function of metropolitan bishop in 1978, succeeding Cardinal Paul Yü Pin as the president of Fu Jen Catholic University. During his fourteen years as president, the university doubled its departments and student enrollment. In 1983, Lo Kuang became the head of the Chinese Regional Bishops' Conference—the highest organ of the Roman Catholic Church in so-called Greater China, and remained influential even after his retirement.

Lo Kuang's difficult political position prevented him from having contacts with Chinese thinkers from the People's Republic of China for the vast majority of his life, and except attending a conference in Honolulu in 1982, also the Western ones. The voluminous corpus of his philosophical writings is thus still virtually unknown outside the circles of Chinese Catholic intellectuals, although it is argued that some of his concepts influenced Mou Zongsan's moral metaphysics (Pfister 2020, pp. 717–19).[1] This lack of recognition also extends to those works of Lo that have been published in languages other than Chinese. Prior to his episcopal ordination, Lo Kuang wrote a Latin monograph on the legal regulations of foreign missionary activity in China (Lo 1944) and authored several writings in Italian which provided introductions to Chinese philosophy and religion: an Italian translation of the works of Confucius (Lokuang 1956), three popularizing booklets about Chinese thought and spirituality (Lokuang 1946b, 1951, 1957), and, finally, books on Confucianism (Lokuang 1945), Taoism (Lokuang 1946a), and the history of Chinese religions (Lokuang 1952). Already in the first of these books—*La Sapienza dei Cinesi* (*The Wisdom of the Chinese*)—Lo Kuang offers a theistic interpretation of Confucianism which would remain in force until his last publications. Lo argues there that pre-imperial Confucianism, including the Classics, viewed Heaven (*Tian* 天) as a "monotheistic, personal God having intellect and will, the creator and ruler of the universe" (*un Dio monoteistico, personale, avente intelletto e volontii, creatore e dominatore dell'universo*). As a Supreme Being and the source of the existence of all things, or even "being in itself"(*e un essere a se*), Tian thus understood did not speak to anyone or grant any visions, much less did it incarnate itself. At the same time, the early Confucian God is not a spectator of history, but its "wise legislator," punishing some of His children as their good father and leading society towards prosperity and harmony by endowing the mandate to the worthies. In sum, "the figure of the Confucian God appears to us as the most perfect and spiritual that has been produced by natural theodicy" (*la figura del Dio confuciano ci appare come la piu perfetta e spirituale che sia stata prodotta dalla teodicea naturale*) (Lokuang 1945, pp. 19–29).

By means of such an interpretation, however, Lo Kuang accommodates Confucian thought with the articles of Christian faith in a way that resembles the hermeneutic strategies of the Jesuits and later missionaries in China, including Legge (1877). Not mincing his words, the above-mentioned Mou Zongsan criticized Lo for a "plunderous" Catholic misappropriation of Confucianism (Liao 2017, p. 109). In addition to projecting the Scholastic

vision of God onto ancient Chinese philosophy, Lo also deliberatively simplifies the latter, trying to ignore Xunzi's naturalization of Heaven as an insignificant exception from "the faith of Chinese people" and treating all of imperial Confucianism (whose founding figure Lo sees in the person of Dong Zhongshu) as "pantheistic" or at times even "materialistic" betrayal of ancient spirituality. Ironically, Lo Kuang's viewing Heaven as a personal, good being equipped with will is actually quite close to the view of Dong and that of the Mohists (Brown and McLeod 2021, pp. 75–114), whom Lo completely ignores.[2] Most importantly, *La Sapienza dei Cinesi* contains the seeds of Lo Kuang's mature, original philosophy of history which employed Confucianism as one of its inspirations: God *qua* Heaven is not indifferent to human history and His will is that humanity shall move towards prosperity and harmony. On the other hand, Lo's early reading of Confucianism assumes that Tian directly intervenes in history, which will be rejected on the grounds of his later philosophical reflection upon history as a part of purely theological thinking.

One of the reasons behind abandonment of that teleological interventionism was Lo's increasing interest in the philosophy of life, which culminated in his best-known book, *The Philosophy of Life* (*Shengming Zhexue* 生命哲學) (Lo 1985), which was later translated into English (Lo 1996a) and supplemented with a collection of essays on Chinese philosophy (Lo 1996b). Such a turn was possible due to the crucial premise of Lo's new metaphysics, according to which the generative power, which is the moving force of things and the cause of change in the world, is only *derived* from God, but ontologically speaking, it "resides" within things themselves (Lo 1996a, p. 124). As coming from God, this force and the whole material world is intrinsically good. But this also means that all needs resulting from human nature, including "the desire for enjoyment," are good and there has to be a way of "using the material world to satisfy man's needs in life" such that it eventually leads to the realization of spiritual goods. Its understanding requires, as Lo believes, bridging the gap between classical Christian eschatology and Confucian one-world "view of the present life" (Lo 1996b, pp. 89–90) and the proper sphere of this intellectual mediation lies in the domain of the philosophy of history.

Two out of forty-two volumes of Lo Kuang's complete works (*Luo Guang quanshu* 羅光全書) include treatises dedicated to the philosophy of history, namely *Comparative Studies in the Chinese and Foreign Philosophies of History* (*Zhong-wai lishi zhexue zhi bijiao yanjiu* 中外歷史哲學之比較研究), and most importantly *A Philosophy of History* (*Lishi zhexue* 歷史哲學) from 1972, an original synthesis of the Christian, Confucian, and analytic views of history, totaling over five hundred pages. As a systematic answer to the question about the possibility of a "bridge" between Christian eschatology and Confucian secular view of history, *Lishi zhexue* occupies a unique, if not critical place in the philosophical oeuvre of Archbishop Lo Kuang. This notwithstanding, Lo Kuang's contribution to the philosophy of history goes unrecognized even in the Chinese-language academia, while to date, no academic papers that discuss any aspect of his thought have been published in English. The following article fills this striking and underserved gap, providing a critical analysis of Stanislaus Lo Kuang's conception of history and evaluating its originality and contemporary relevance.

2. Reliving the Facts: Lo Kuang's Metareflection and His Philosophy of Historiography

Lo Kuang emphasizes that reflection upon history should not be separated from anthropology, which often happens due to the philosophy of history being reduced to a mere methodology of historiography. At the same time, in the wake of the gradual specialization and diversification of historical studies, scholars lose interest in the reasons why (*suoyiran* 所以然) historical facts are established as facts and what the meaning (*yiyi* 意義) of history is, although it is the latter that ultimately reveals the meaning of human life. Lo Kuang believes that this meaning can be elicited from historical facts themselves, with respect for the results of historical studies (Lo 1972, pp. I, 1–2, 4, 16). On that account, historical studies are essentially different from the natural sciences and have their autonomous value, and since no historian past or present can do without a certain image

of history, this also concerns the philosophy of history. The latter has a huge impact upon the historian's choice of methods and facts, the way they are ordered, and the causal nexus they are framed within (Lo 1972, pp. 5–7, 14). Lo Kuang's ideas are similar in that regard to the views of Hayden White and were, quite interestingly, expressed prior to the publication of *Metahistory* (White 1973).

After this metaphilosophical "defense" of the philosophy of history, Lo Kuang proceeds to his reconstruction of its own historical dynamics. Whereas in *Comparative Studies* Lo offers two separate periodizations for Chinese and Western historical thinking (Lo 1984, pp. 1, 117),[3] in *A Philosophy of History* he attempts to adopt a unified schematization. According to the latter, in the ancient phase, the philosophy of history in both traditions was centered around a metaphysics of the historical process; however, the problem of the totality of history of humankind and its end was first raised only by St. Augustine. On the other hand, Augustine was focused solely on salvation history and no Christian thinker prior to J.-B. Bossuet developed a Christian interpretation of world history (Lo 1972, pp. 8–9; 1984, pp. 121–28). This view is shared by Löwith, who writes that whereas for Bossuet God (or more exactly Providence) realizes His plan through the events of world's political history, for St. Augustine world history has no meaning and the City of God does not become real in history (Löwith 1949, pp. 141–42, 166–71): "it is precisely the absence of a detailed correlation between secular and sacred events which distinguishes Augustine's Christian apology from Bossuet's more elaborate theology of political history" (Löwith 1949, p. 172). However, Lo Kuang does not take this opportunity to quote Löwith and he also disagrees with the latter's understanding of the modern (Western) philosophy of history as a secularization of the theology of history.

For Lo, modern discourse was more disruptive as it had raised the problem of freedom and reason in history and therefore focused on the history of culture. The Kantian idea of reason in history meant that once the conditions of possibility of a rational life had been asserted, humanity's progress toward the perfection of the moral tendency and perpetual peace in the world became inevitable. For Hegel, however, the rise of the modern state was rational, as a synthesis of the moral life of the family and the freedom of civil society. As such, its creation ended history understood as a 'march of the Spirit,' which in Lo's view significantly limited the potential of Enlightenment progressivism. Marx's historical materialism was a no less closed system, which Lo sees as much closer to the ancient ontology of history as represented by the *Book of Changes* (*Yijing*) than it is to modern concerns; in his view, Marx 'reads' from history only those things that had been beforehand inscribed into it (such as the modes of production), essentially disregarding historical facts. Not surprisingly, the contemporary philosophy of history, which starts from Dilthey, limited itself to a theory of historical knowledge (Lo 1972, pp. 10–13, 38, 257). Against these trends and in line with his metaphilosophical declarations, Lo Kuang wants to reintegrate a "critical philosophy of history," which examines the meaning of historical facts and history, with its "theoretical" branch which discusses history's relation to humans, humanity, and finally God. In Lo Kuang's seminal formulation, "religious faith meets history only on the premises of a philosophical theory" (*zongjiao xinyang shi zai zhexue lilun zhong he lishi jiechu* 宗教信仰是在哲學理論中和歷史接觸) (Lo 1972, pp. II, 281–82). This testifies to his aspiration to show faith as the culmination of historical reflection rather than its premise (as in the theology of history) and to prove that God's relation to history follows on an independent, reasonable analysis of history, analogously to the Neo-Scholastic approach to the philosophy of nature.

For these reasons, the starting point of Lo Kuang's philosophico-historical system is the category of historical facts. However, Lo is well aware that their nature is by no means a simple, unmediated given. Historians collate and explain facts from the past using a narrative (*xushu* 敘述) and these facts are transformed into historical ones only due to the minds of historians. This does not mean, though, that they exist only in their minds: while the way they are grasped as historical is subjective, the facts still remain an external object of reflection and they cannot be fabricated. Consequently, the narrative has

to follow some established historical method (for instance Bernheim's methodology[4]), and its structure cannot be taken from anywhere, as histories are not novels. In this respect, Lo's approach was not much different from that of Edward H. Carr, and he agreed with his landmark *What is History?* (Carr 1961) that history is not a chaotic body of various facts, as it consists of only those that can be seen as a part of a certain process of development (*yanjin* 演進). But this also means, and this is the point where Lo Kuang seems to implicitly follow Neo-Kantians rather than Carr, that historical facts are those which have some value.[5] This value (*jiazhi* 價值) could be measured by their historical influence and from this viewpoint most facts have only relative value, and only a few of them have an absolute value, such as—in Lo's opinion—the French revolution. They are, in other words, living social facts (*shehuixingde shishi* 社會性的事實)—history consists of those facts that bear meaning for social life (Lo 1972, pp. 284–88, 327–28).[6]

Therefore, historians are not mere 'transmitters' of disconnected facts: they also explain them, although such explanation is rarely explicit and usually evident only from the shape of the narrative, specifically from the ordering of historical facts. The arrangement of the facts depends upon historians' cognitive abilities and feelings, not to mention that historians are not machines (*jiqi* 機器) and they are also free to choose which facts are meaningful. But this does not imply, again, as Lo Kuang argues against Benedetto Croce[7], that chronicles are works of art or speculation: re-enactments (*chongfu* 重複) of the past events in historian's mind are not devoid of an objective basis, like normal recollections. Trying to find a golden mean between the extremes of subjective idealism and naïve realism, Lo emphasizes, however, that re-enactments are re-presentations (*daibiao* 代表) of facts as something different to what they had been, at least due to the mediating role of language (Lo 1972, pp. 290–93, 301, 306, 314, 318, 339).

In principle, historical knowledge is always and inevitably partial: first due to the limits of human reason (for Lo, there is no a priori logics or dialectics of historical knowledge), second owing to the incompleteness of sources, and finally given the amount and complexity of facts. For these reasons, Lo observes, universal laws (*gongtong guilü* 共通規律) are rarely referred to in historical research; at the most, historians use some generalizations (*changli* 常理), which are actually nothing but threads that put historical facts into some order (*shishi qianhou de xiansuo* 史實前後的线索). In addition, Lo Kuang puts forth two main arguments against the employment of universal historical laws. First of all, to verify their adequacy, a narrative should take into account all the circumstances, which is unfeasible. On top of that, it is impossible to define a singular law explaining a particular fact, which entails the intransitivity of historical explanations: if fact A can be explained with relation to fact B, and B to C, A is not necessarily explicable with reference to C under the very same law (Lo 1972, pp. 303–7, 320, 322, 340). This explicitly contradicts the Hempelian model of historical explanation, which Lo Kuang readily admits, despite sharing his idea that the majority of explanations used in history are of a psychological nature (Hempel 1942, p. 349).[8] Even then, the acceptance of psychological explanations is also much limited, as Lo sees human freedom as something "miraculous and hard to fathom" (*shenmiao nance* 神妙難測) which makes particular acts inexplicable by means of laws themselves; only events occurring throughout whole epochs or areas can be explained in that way. Geographical explanation is not an option, Lo believes, as geographical factors determined only primitive societies that were not able to transform nature; reference to the laws of biology is not crucial either, since animals do not have history and the evolution of human civilization does not follow the Darwinist principle of survival of the fittest (Lo 1972, pp. 340–46).[9]

Interestingly enough, while remaining skeptical about applying scientific explanations to history, Lo Kuang acknowledged (or even allowed) that philosophical explanations of historical events have quite a significant role. Lo distinguished explanation (*jieshi* 解釋) from interpretation (*jieshuo* 解說), with the latter consisting mostly of the judgements (*panduan* 判斷) of historical events, figures, and periods, which are made in a way deeply rooted in the historian's philosophy of history, ethics and/or anthropology. Such judgements cannot be verified, but this does not undermine their value. In fact, Lo does not consider

interpretations thus understood as mere 'additions' to the main body of explanations, but treats them as an indispensable part of history writing. Using the distinction made by the Chinese philosophers of history—Zheng Qiao (1104–1162) and Zhang Xuecheng (1738–1801)—Lo argues that history books are different from historical materials in that they possess some principle (*yili* 義理) of narrative, by which he means guiding, central interpretative thought (*zhongxin sixiang* 中心思想). Under such a reading, 'interpretations' include not only judgements, but also hypotheses (*jiashe* 假設), according to which historians narrate the events. On the other hand, hypotheses are to be proven by facts and used only to explain them, so that the "meaning of history" should emerge out of the way the events are narrated (Lo 1972, pp. 309, 321, 330–32, 337–38, 350–52).[10] This leads Lo Kuang to an important observation regarding the extent to which narrative (and language) itself should influence the reconstruction of past events:

> A narrative is nothing but an outer form of historical events, not the content of the books of history. And while it can have an impact upon the choice and explanation of historical events, it cannot as a rule modify them. Sometimes, however, the mode of the writer's narrative can make readers misunderstand historical events, as the author's style of writing attracts or captivates them.
>
> 史事的敘述為史實的外形，而不是史書的內容；史事的敘述雖可以影響史事的選擇和解釋，但通常不能改變史事。有時，作者敘述的方式可以使讀者對史事有誤解，因為作者的文筆吸引或驅使讀者。 (Lo 1972, p. 361)

Much less should interpretations replace narrations, as can be observed in communist historiography, which by means of focusing only on revealing the class struggle in history reduces histories to mere propaganda materials (*xuanchuanpin* 宣傳品) (Lo 1972, pp. 359–62). Furthermore, interpretations are substantially confined by the three limits of objectivity in the humanities, namely the hiddenness of inner motives 1:the fact that the objects of knowledge are in flux and vary depending upon location (being usually unique) 2; humans act as both subjects and objects of knowledge, and thus lack the necessary distanciation 3 (Lo 1972, pp. 356–57). The crucial problem of the philosophy of history is therefore that of historical agency, which allows Lo Kuang to proceed from critical to theoretical reflection on history.

3. Moving towards Pleroma: Lo Kuang's Philosophy of the Historical Process

Lo's answer to the question about historical agency is actually quite clear-cut: history is created by heroes (*yingxiong* 英雄), namely creative individuals with exceptional psyches. While being created by their own times, they have a great deal of freedom and in particular a strong will (*yizhi* 意志) to create new structures of social life. However, prominent individuals become heroes not due to their personal qualities but owing to their ability to "represent" (*daibiao*) the nations (*minzu* 民族) and their acts become historical only when accepted by the masses as their new tradition (*chuantong* 傳統) of life. Heroes are the 'movers' (*zhudongzhe* 主動者) of history who take charge (*zhuchi* 主持) of its course, whereas the nations who live and breathe their innovations are the proper subject (*zhuren* 主人) of history. Accordingly, these individuals soon become a part of the nation's history and its records, which also explains why historians have to concentrate on understanding the human psyche. But even then, Lo's elitism can hardly be covered up. Comparing historical tendencies to the trends in fashion, Lo Kuang argues that it is impossible for each individual to create her or his style of life (*shenghuo fangshi* 生活方式), so it is usually taken from those who are equipped with a stronger will and/or reason (Lo 1972, pp. 348–349, 382–386, 405–409, 416–419). Significantly, Lo Kuang does not use the term "soul" (*ling* 靈) as that would suggest the theological perspective—it is all about the human psyche (*xin* 心), which directly touches upon the issue of freedom of historical agents.

In fact, Lo states that as soon as heroic innovations transform into a new historical trend, subsequent generations of heroes (as well as the people) can only be subjected to the thus created historical tendency (*shi* 勢), which seems to follow the views of Wang Fuzhi

(1619–1692) (cf. Rogacz 2020, pp. 157–65), whom Lo Kuang often quotes in the *Lishi zhexue*, but surprisingly not on this occasion. Consistently, Lo rejects the idea of absolute freedom (*juedui ziyou* 絕對自由), arguing that freedom needs some external prerequisites (*xianjue* 先決) in order for it to arise, and that the limits of reality have to be known if one is not to act blindly (*mangmude* 盲目的), relying on luck (Lo 1972, pp. 365–72). The causal limits of human agency are actual, from the perspective of the past, but they should not be seen as necessary, much less from the viewpoint of historians, for whom they are nothing but possible connections of facts:

> Causal connections in history are imagined and possible links. It stands to reason that if a certain cause A can produce effect B, it also does not have to do so, and it can even produce effect C (...) But one cannot infer from the possibility of causal relationships their mere contingency. Such people believe that (...) there cannot be a third element between necessity and contingency.
>
> 歷史的因果關係，是設想可能的關係。一種（A）原因按常情説，要產生（B）效果，但也可以不產生。而且也可以產生（C）的效果 (. . .) 由可能性的因果關係，不能走到偶然性的因果關係。有人以為 (. . .) 在必然和偶然之間，不可以有第三者。
>
> (Lo 1972, p. 373)

Hence, there still prevails, Lo argues, a false dichotomy of pure contingency versus absolute necessity. What free people do is not 'contingent' in the sense of pure accident. Although there are no two identical events, certain general observations based on many instances could be made, which then reveals the regularities of human nature. A historian's reconstruction of a causal nexus between these instances is, again, only possible and one among many. Facts, in turn, are simply actual, and one cannot infer their necessity from their mere occurrence. Hence, all the necessities are imposed from the outside of facts, as is seen in the necessitarianism of Hegel and Marx. In Lo's opinion, Marx explains the historical process as though the means of production have come out of nowhere, whereas their emergence requires the invention of free, exceptional individuals and it is therefore their will that determines the economic conditions, not the other way round (Lo 1972, pp. 374–77, 408, 416–17).

The meaning of history, Lo Kuang reasserts, can be equated with humanity's meaning of life. History "enlightens" humans (*lishi geiren dailai guangming* 歷史給人帶來光明) about their own nature, approaching it in a concrete way, unlike anthropology and theology which also examine human nature but in an abstract manner. On the other hand, the theological approach speaks from the viewpoint of revelation and its ultimate perspective, whereas historians search for the meaning of history in singular facts and acts. Therefore, with guidance from theology, it is possible to know the meaning of the totality of history and to realize its goal (*mudi* 目的) and conclusion (*jieju* 結局) (Lo 1972, pp. 387–90). Historical studies or science cannot answer the question of the endpoint and conclusion of history—this is known only to God, who transcends history (and in whom there is no history) and to the very few individuals to whom He revealed (*qishi* 啓示) it. However, humans can partially understand it by reasoning from the facts; and as a result, philosophy can discover the basic directions of historical change which are in line with what theology knows as God's plan for humanity. This plan, though, is only general and it is not the case that all the things that happen in each person's life are predestined, as God respects human freedom. What is preordained is only the goal of history: according to God's disposition, no matter which path humanity takes, eventually it will realize its destiny, just as we all die regardless of our choices (Lo 1972, pp. 421–22, 429–36):

> The most fundamental plan for humanity has been established by the Creator and this plan has become its destiny, although what I call "destiny" is different from commonly understood fatalism. My idea is that that what the Creator has set beforehand for humanity is just the most basic plan and that He has not predetermined the lot of each human being (...) Humans enjoy freedom and do

> not have to make their way to this goal, but God guarantees that no matter the way in which humanity exercises freedom and regardless the direction towards which it is moving, ultimately it shall still reach its goal.
>
> 人類的最基本計劃，由造物主所定，這種計劃成為宿命，然而我們所稱的宿命，和普通所說的宿命論不同，我們主張創造主對人類所預先規定的，只是最基本的計劃，而不是預先規定每個人所有的遭遇 (. . .) 人類享有自由，不一定走向目的之路線，造物主便規定無論人類怎樣運用自由，走向任何方向，最終還是要走到這個目的地。 (Lo 1972, pp. 429–30)

Thus understood, destiny (*ming* 命), fully agreeable with human freedom, is what Lo Kuang interprets as not different from Confucius' and Mencius' idea of the Mandate of Heaven (*Tianming* 天命), seeing this concept as much closer to God's plan for history than the Greek and then modern notion of fate (Lo 1972, pp. 446, 453). In a similar vein and in line with his early thought, Lo Kuang maintains in his *Confucian Metaphysics* that all Five Classics and the books of Confucius and Mencius presuppose a Creator—"Heaven Above" (*Shang Tian* 上天)—which generates all beings and, importantly, gives a purpose to their free lives (Lo 1991, p. 90).

Theologically speaking, the destiny and purpose of all beings are clear: the conclusion of history will coincide with the second coming of Jesus, the creation of a new heaven and earth, and the establishment of enduring peace (*shēngpíng* 升平). God and humans shall reunite, as such is God's will. The first people, symbolized by Adam and Eve, carelessly used freedom and broke their unity with God; but without God, human life soon lost its true meaning, as did human history. That is why God entered history and sent his son as their Savior (He did not openly enter Chinese history, Lo admits, but he was secretly present in its course). Christ redeemed the sins of all humanity, although people, being free, can reject putting faith in his work. Additionally, this is what Christ needs the Church for: it has to evangelize and further endear souls. Its mission transcends history (*zai lishi yiwai* 在歷史以外), but people constituting the Church are a part of history, limited by time, space, and the weaknesses (*ruodian*弱點) of human nature. This does not mean, though, that the Church has to engage in politics, as in the historically unique conditions of the Middle Ages; on the contrary, the Church has to realize its mission through suffering (*shouku* 受苦), as the transformed Body of Christ (Lo 1972, pp. 437–49).

From a philosophical perspective, however, it is still unclear how it is possible that the predestined goal of history does not go against human will. Lo answers that crucial question by coming back to the idea that the meaning of history is identical with the meaning of life, which cannot be defined in any better way than as the search for happiness (*xingfu* 幸福). History is thus an area of human striving for happiness, even if misunderstood or ill conceived. True happiness, Lo Kuang states, converges in the end with the fulfillment of truth, beauty, and the good (*zhen-mei-shan* 真美善); and since in God there is an absolute fullness of these values, humans, even unwillingly, move towards reuniting with Him. Such is also the meaning of Christ's sacrifice, which not only saved people from their sins, but also their consequences, such as suffering and death, thereby guaranteeing the eternal realization of joy (*xinshang* 欣賞), truth, beauty and the good (Lo 1972, p. 443).

In contrast to St. Augustine, Lo Kuang's God 'cares about' world history, but unlike Bossuet, He does not realize His plans by manipulating events. Lo's solution is closer to the approach of Jacques Maritain presented in *On the Philosophy of History* (Maritain 1957), to which Lo refers. For Maritain, people, being free, realize their own goals but the results of their free actions are already known to God, and what is more, they do not realize that, being driven by God, they are getting closer to Him. As free (particularly free to commit evil), they enter into an immutable, pre-eternally fixed divine plan (Maritain 1957, pp. 59, 120–23). However, while agreeing with the general orientation of historical development as outlined by Maritain, Lo Kuang does not share its justification, which he views as still belonging to the theology of history, since it denies the autonomous meaning of world history. Furthermore, instead of depicting God as foreknowing the particular results of human actions, Lo emphasizes that the only thing known in advance is the general end

of history, which is nothing but a fulfillment of the promise made by God to humans (or simply a Covenant made with them) that their deepest desire, inscribed by Him into the human heart, shall be eventually realized. Certainly, Lo's indebtedness to Maritain goes further and includes the idea of the coexistence of good and evil in history, as well as the belief in moral progress connected with the conception of the natural ends of history (Maritain 1957, pp. 104–7, 125–26, 132–33). On the other hand, Lo deliberately avoids the language of providentialism, while his reluctance to accept the strong understanding of God's foreknowledge makes him close to the later theology of open theism (Pinnock et al. 1994), which rejects the closed nature of the future and God's knowledge.

Lo consistently argues that in pursuing permanent happiness, humans want to understand their own nature, and so history gradually manifests (*biaoxian yu wai* 表現於外) the full potential of human nature. History is a process of the self-knowledge of humanity, which became clear to humans themselves after the French Revolution, Lo Kuang maintains. In his view, this also entails the gradual increase in freedom, but not the freedom of absolute spirit (*juedui jingshen* 絶對精神) as in Hegel or the absolute freedom of the existentialists, but rather a limited, reasonable freedom inseparably connected with personal responsibility (*ziji fuze* 自己負責). The rise of democracies in the first half of the twentieth century and the independence of colonial countries after World War II were outward signs of this process. All revolutions in history, as Lo claims, were aimed at obtaining more freedom. What is more, modern technological revolutions are no exception to that rule, although the greater the technical possibilities we have, the more legal limits are required.[11] Following Hegel, Lo Kuang states that humanity has moved from the freedom of one man, through the freedom of some, to the freedom of all classes, and it will finally reach the true freedom of all people, imbued with the spirit of mutual aid (*huzhu* 互助), which, unlike its anarchist understanding[12], will be essentially law-regulated. Its regulation in the form of human rights (*renquan* 人權) is not, however, any obstacle to freedom, but the very condition for having free right to choose one's lifestyle. In fact, human history can be viewed not only as the gradual increase in freedom, but also a struggle for more human rights. Lo distinguishes five watersheds in this struggle: obtaining rights by (1) slaves, then (2) children, subsequently (3) women, (4) and social classes, and finally (5) ethnic minorities. All these rights, Lo continues, have not been obtained through class struggle, but by virtue of their legal recognition; and in the future, the latter shall replace all revolutions, much to the dissatisfaction of the Communists (Lo 1972, pp. 472–80). In that regard, Lo's progressivism is close to that of political liberalism.

This quest for higher freedom and more human rights is, for Lo Kuang, one among the directions of the future development of humanity that can be inferred from the historical facts (using reason alone). Another historical trend is a tendency towards greater unity (*tongyi* 同一) and equality (*xiangdeng* 相等). Nations, as ethnic-cultural unities that originated from blood ties (*xuetong* 血統) and were then built around the traditions (*chuantong*) transmitted alongside them, have significantly changed with the founding of political unities (*tuanjie* 團結), namely states (*guojia* 國家). From that moment onwards, each nation demands power and recognition equal to the others, which practically means that humanity marches towards world unity (*shijie datong* 世界大同), when not nations but unified humanity will be the actual subject of history (*lishi bian yi renwei wei zhuren* 歷史便以人類為主人). Lo sees the rise of international organizations after the war as a definite sign of that process and predicts that within centuries or a millennium borders will disappear and a global state or rather a global federation will be created. This also means for him that it is just a matter of time before Taiwan will reunite with mainland China. Most importantly, the rise of the world community (*hequnxing* 合群性) will be spontaneous (*ziran* 自然), accompanied by an unforced (*buneng you renhe wuli qu shixian* 不能由任何武力去實現) disappearance of the meaning of social classes. Thus united, humanity, if it is not stopped by an atomic bomb or any other cataclysm, will continue its cooperation in the course of colonizing space. These tendencies, being incredibly slow, could not have been observed until recent times (Lo 1972). On the other hand, humanity's inclination toward unification was already foretold

by the Gospel and the Confucian idea of *datong*, with an important difference between these two accounts:

> This tendency involved people who realized that they are people and that all other people are people, too, and that people can live together in peace. The Christ's Gospel was the first thought to announce that there is one humanity and a unified history of mankind (...) Ancient Chinese quite early on developed their conception of Great Unity or universal fraternity between all people living within "Four Seas". The Ancient Chinese, however, considered China to be the center of the world and that the surrounding barbarians are to be assimilated with the Chinese.
>
> 這種趨勢是人發現自己是人，也發現凡是人都是人，人和人要合群安居。基督的福音是第一種思想，告示人類是同一的人類，人類的歷史是同一的歷史 (. . .) 中國古人早有大同的思想，早有四海皆兄弟的博愛，但是中國古人是以中國為天下之中心，周圍野蠻的民族可以和華夏的人同化。 (Lo 1972, p. 482)

In other words, while sharing the ideal of panhuman community, classical Chinese culture recognized the Chinese people as privileged group from which thus understood universalism proceeds and therefore saved some elements of dualism. However, Lo Kuang is silent on the issue that analogous dualism is actually stronger within Christian Good News: peace is to be realized "in the last days" within the community of believers, while those who do not have faith in the Christ are to be (justifiably) excluded from the unity of God's children. Jesus words, "Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to turn a man against his father, a daughter against her mother" (Matt. 10:34–35a), are quite telling in this regard.

In fact, Lo Kuang admits that political transformations are deeply rooted in particular cultures and they actually derive from and follow cultural ones. The latter are not, first of all, as disruptive as frequent changes of power, and they therefore guarantee the continuity of social life. Furthermore, it is by means of culture that humanity becomes self-aware of its own needs and frames new styles of life. In fact, culture (*wenhua* 文化) is nothing but a rational style of social life, whereas "civilization" (*wenming* 文明) is defined by Lo as all conditions that enable humans to cherish truth, beauty and good within a given style of social life. There were, in this sense, periods when civilization declined, such as the European Dark Ages, which are, nonetheless, a part of the history of this culture. Insofar as there are some general conditions for living a good life, civilization transcends history, and it is history that follows its structure. On the other hand, Lo immediately adds that only those civilizations that were able to absorb new elements without losing their identity can continue to exist and develop (Lo 1972, pp. 15, 483–84, 489–92).

In light of the idea that world history is driven by the human pursuit of happiness, which has to coincide with the search for truth, beauty, and the good, and that this aspiration is expressed and realized by means of culture, Lo Kuang observes that the most fundamental tendencies of world history—discoverable from the facts themselves—concern the development of science (*kexue* 科學), art (*yishu* 藝術), and religion (*zongjiao* 宗教), which correspond (respectively) with each of these core values of life. Search for truth 'fuels' gradual and cumulative (although at times discontinuous) scientific progress, which is followed by the development of technology. The increasing influence of science upon society also shows the changing proportion of these three spheres of culture. A little surprisingly, Lo agrees with Comte's law of three stages with regard to Western history[13], complementing it with his own, separate schematization of the development of Chinese culture, which in his view has passed through the period of philosophy (in preimperial times), then the period centered on art (imperial until the Qing), and finally—under Western influence and after establishing the Republic—the period of science. Whereas primitive people relied almost solely upon imagination (*xiangxiang* 想象), and consistently explained the world through myths (*shenhua* 神話), science is now becoming a commonly recognized basis of knowledge about the world and ourselves. On the other hand, imagination has not 'vanished' from

history and it now resides in the domain of art, the works of which are, unlike those of science, essentially unrepeatable and inimitable, and just as beauty transcends time and space, so art does not follow any discernible laws of development (Lo 1972, pp. 454–59, 465–69).

Finally, the search for the good is realized through morality, the main source of which are world religions. Lo Kuang does not refrain from observing that morality (*lunli* 倫理) derives from the rules governing the life of social groups, but he also holds that some part of morality (called by him *daode* 道德) acquired universal value which goes beyond its historical context. In fact, it is history that can be judged from the viewpoint of that morality, as can be seen with many examples of premodern chronicles in both Eastern and Western cultures. So what belongs to this *daode*, which, unlike historically relative morals, transcends the limits of time? In his answer, Lo Kuang points to Confucian morality and believes that its virtues, particularly filial piety (*xiao* 孝) and loyalty (*zhong* 忠), are immutable principles of social life. What changes are only the ways of their historical manifestation, not the virtues themselves (Lo 1972, pp. 494–99). This is closely related to Lo's critical thesis that it is human life (namely the ways and styles of social life) that changes throughout history, not human nature itself (*bushi renxing de jinhua* 不是人性的進化) (Lo 1972, pp. 522–23). Hence, in Lo Kuang'view, the quest for happiness, necessarily accompanied by the pursuit of freedom and equality, expressed in the cultural form of the search for beauty, the good, and truth does not lead to the emergence of new elements of human nature; much less does it entail an evolution of humanity into something more developed. It is rather all about the historical unfolding of what is already 'there,' what lies 'dormant' until proper circumstances occur.

In this sense, Lo shares the fundamental premise of the Confucian philosophy of history, according to which history unfolds the Dao of human nature (Rogacz 2020, pp. 175–76). As a matter of fact, Lo Kuang not only almost openly agrees with such a view, but also complements it with an additional dimension, which he considers inseparable from Confucianism, namely the idea that the destiny appointed by God is inscribed in human nature and, accordingly, human Dao follows the Heavenly Dao, moving towards the unity of God and humans. The explicit understanding of *Tianming* as destiny determined by God and the reading of 天人合一 *Tiān-rén héyī* as the unity between God and human beings presumes, however, not only a reinterpretation of the Confucian historical thinking through the prism of Lo Kuang's own philosophy of history, but most importantly treating Confucianism as a religion, which he readily does. Just as in his earlier thought, also in *Lishi zhexue* Lo argues that Confucius and Mencius believed in God (*Tian*) and that the Confucian Classics consist entirely of religious works, albeit the religion in question pertains to faith rather than to any institution (Lo 1972, pp. 506–507), which is strictly connected with an important distinction made by Lo.

Analogously to morality, Lo Kuang distinguishes institutional religions from religious faith (*xinyang* 信仰). Following Comte, he states that the former have evolved from primitive fetishism, through polytheism to monotheistic religions, the most developed of which—and this is clearly the point of departure from Comte's view—embody the true faith and the timeless morality (again, Lo sees religions, and not any secular ethics, as the true sources and 'movers' of morality). This religious development is surmounted by the appearance of Catholicism[14], which, however, quite soon became criticized and simultaneously overrationalized by science, no matter how deeply the conceptual categories of the latter were actually rooted in its theological notions. Under the influence of scientism, moral relativism, and consumerism, Western societies walk away from religions, although the current role of Christianity in Africa and South America, as well as the European fascination with Asian mysticism in the 1960s, show that this secularization does not foredoom the fall of religious faith. Faith is the basic human need that gives people release of their hearts (*xinyang wei renqiu zixin anding de yaoqiu* 信仰為人求自心安定的要求); it comes from irremovable existential fears (*xinsheng weiju* 心生畏懼) of suffering and death (which are, from a theological perspective, the consequences of original sin). Furthermore, Lo thinks

that humans will never be able to fully control (*wuneng weili* 無能為力) their lives and the external world, that there will always be things beyond human comprehension, and that, as a result of all these factors, faith will never disappear nor even lose its significance. What will disappear are all the religions whose meaning does not transcend history—they will simply be absorbed by history. On the basis of that premise, Lo Kuang is convinced that Catholicism, the transcendent (*chaoyu lishide* 超於歷史的) meaning of which comes directly from Christ, will never meet such fate (Lo 1972, pp. 462–42, 501–505, 509, 512–13).

Another hint at the transcendent value of Christianity is, according to Lo, to be found in the fact that while many world religions, Chinese religions included, described the origins of evil and its social consequences, only Christianity guarantees that in the last resort the good shall prevail, the promise without which the historical quest for happiness will not succeed. This is, however, patently false, given both Chinese Buddhism's and Daoism's faith in the ultimate triumph of innate human goodness (whether understood as Buddha-nature or as the unfolding of the Dao in human development). Until the last days, though, no matter the soteriology, evil will continuously co-exist with good. New inventions, new forms of culture and new political formations (such as democracy) will entail new kinds of evil, to which humanity will try and have to collectively respond. Unfortunately, unlike scientific knowledge, good does not cumulate, and this requires people to recapture the good of the previous generations (Lo 1972, pp. 511–20). Lo does not specify how this will be done, but it may be supposed that in light of the legal recognition of human rights, progress in freedom and increasingly equal institutions, which Lo Kuang sees as tendencies following from historical facts, human beings (during their process of socialization) will be able to make their path to moral development much faster than their predecessors. What counts most is that even if they fail, all the temporary retrogressions notwithstanding, God guarantees that humanity will accomplish its historical mission.

4. Conclusions

The overall structure of Lo Kuang's philosophy of history is thus noticeably consistent, perhaps even too unitary. To recapitulate its starting premise: the meaning of historical facts is identical with the meaning of human life, namely the search for happiness. Accordingly, humans, driven by their own nature and led by heroes, move freely towards what they consider a greater happiness, realizing at some point in time that this requires ever greater freedom and equality. In this sense, Lo Kuang combines Aristotle's individualistic teleology of happiness with Hegelian collective finalism of freedom. Unlike Hegel, however, Lo sees freedom as instrumental for accomplishing happiness, and that is why he does not share Hegelian pessimism. Yet, Lo's belief that happiness, freedom, and equality can be unitedly obtained without any internal antagonism or dilemmas is untenable in light of numerous arguments put forth by contemporary social and political philosophers. Lo also closes his eyes to the difficulty of reconciling freedom and equality with the values of truth, the good, and beauty, which he views as almost automatically attainable on the way towards humanity's happiness. Undoubtedly, the source of his unbridled optimism is external and comes from God, who turns out to promise not only the fulfillment of the human desire for happiness, but also the compatibility between happiness and other sought-after social goods and values.

On the other hand, the position of God in Lo's philosophy of history is far from a typical deux ex machina. God is introduced only as a guarantee of the fulfillment of the deepest human desires, and those who do not have faith in Him will simply live an aimless and meaningless life in the very same world. No person or any event is, as in Bossuet's view, directly guided or controlled by God. Even the Church is born to suffer rather than rule over the people amidst secularization and de-institutionalized personal faith. Of course, all the tendencies of history 'discovered' by means of philosophical insight into historical facts can be expressed just as well or in fact more easily or simply based on Christian revelation; and in this sense, Lo Kuang shares St. Thomas Aquinas' approach of using two roots for knowing the 'ultimate matters,' with philosophy (in this case of

history) interpreted as a rational explanation of things otherwise revealed by God. Given Lo's realistic orientation in his philosophy of historiography, we may safely identify him with a Neo-Scholastic movement. His reluctance to treat God's foreknowledge and future as closed, however, departs from many neo-Thomist philosophers. It is also noteworthy that throughout *Lishi zhexue*, Lo Kuang consistently operates with psyche (*xin*) rather than soul (*ling*) and purposively blurs the lines between its philosophical and psychological image; on top of that, he sees historical development as growing out of common human nature (*renxing* 人性), mentioning the notion of 'spiritual nature' (*shenxing* 神性) only once and without any relevance for his reflection upon history. Going without any apocalyptic eschatology, Lo Kuang pictures the conclusion of history as its last step rather than any sudden end, viewing it as a natural prolongation of strictly secular human pursuits, which significantly differs him from the standpoint of St. Augustine. What is more, despite his ardent anti-communism, Lo's vision of Great Unity (*datong*)—the international community of free, equal and emancipated people—is not very far from socialist utopias, all the more since Lo's God actually lets history take its own course.

Lo would respond to such comparisons by saying that God has not forsaken history and he indirectly determines its course through the desires inscribed by Him in universal human nature. That is why Lo Kuang relates to Confucianism, which assumes under his reading its conformity with the ways of God (*Tian-ren heyi*), and he adopts a non-fatalistic idea of destiny set by God (*Tianming*). Furthermore, he recognizes the Confucian virtues as an absolute, non-temporal core of contingent moralities and seems to treat the conceptual vocabulary of Confucian thought as a preferable philosophical base of Christian theology. To this end, however, Lo reinterprets Confucianism as a type of non-institutional religious faith, which has a striking resemblance to Jesuit accounts of Confucianism as a cult of the Supreme Being devoid of churches and priests (Rogacz 2018, p. 73), an image that might have an impact upon his own understanding of the future of the Catholic Church, and the accuracy of which raises objections amongst the critics of Sino-Theology, such as Liu Xiaofeng.[15] This notwithstanding, Lo Kuang's references to Confucianism, at least in his philosophy of history, are rather auxiliary, and by no means are they a plain transposition of Christian truths into the domain of Confucian historical thinking, or vice versa.

It should be rather concluded that Lo Kuang creatively and quite originally reaches for a variety of philosophical conceptions of the historical process and historiography, from Confucian through Hegelian and socialist even to the analytic ones, struggling to construct a distinctively Christian yet strictly philosophical approach to history that is best suited to the contemporary predicament of the global society.

Funding: This research was funded by National Science Center (Poland) grant number 2019/33/B/HS1/00244.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement: Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement: Not applicable.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Notes

1 On the differences and similarities between the metaphysics of Lo Kuang and Mou Zongsan and their mutual criticism, see (Liao 2017, pp. 107–11). In general, Lo believes that there is an insuperable gap between Heaven and humanity and accuses Mou of "pantheism".

2 Daoism, in turn, is interpreted by Lokuang (1946a, pp. 257–60) as "metaphysical agnosticism".

3 Western philosophy of history is divided into ancient/classical (*gudai*), modern (*jindai*), and contemporary (*dangdai*), whereas the Chinese one is divided into ancient (from *Shujing* to Tang dynasty), medieval (Song-Ming), and modern (Qing and the Republic).

4 *Lehrbuch der historischen Methode und der Geschichtsphilosophie* (Bernheim 1889) by Ernst Bernheim became a model manual of historical methodology, which also had a great impact upon the formation of modern Chinese historians.

[5] Heinrich Rickert, a leading philosopher of the baden school of Neo-Kantianism, argued (Rickert 1924) that unlike the natural sciences, history does not study brute facts, but phenomena related to relevant cultural values. What is more, the objectivity of the historical sciences requires the objectivity, namely transcendentality, of these values.

[6] Lo gives a controversial example of Nazi occupation, arguing that Hitler wanted it to have an absolute historical value, but it ultimately has only a relative one. This is debatable, as many post-war institutions (mostly international) and laws (cf. the Radbruch formula) have as a result changed the world for good, even if that goes against the original 'absolutist' intentions of Hitler.

[7] In his *Teoria e storia della storiografia* (Croce 1920), Croce argues that history is a free art of understanding particulars, a "philosophy in motion," whose the content is identical with the present acts of thought. Any attempt at constructing the "science of history" by means of looking for the laws of history is built solely on metaphysical essentialization of human thought.

[8] In his polemics with Hempel, Lo does not go into details, but the disagreement is there. The relation of deductive entailment in Hempel and Oppenheim is transitive, and although Hempel did consider some paradoxes of the transitivity of confirmation (see Hesse 1970), he did not 'see' them in historical explanations.

[9] For Lo, animal life is an ahistorical first in the phenomenological sense, as he claims that it has not changed through the centuries, and then in a 'deeper' metaphysical sense, as in his eyes animals do not have freedom and their individual way of life is identical with populational patterns, cf. (Lo 1972, pp. 381, 415; 1984, p. 76).

[10] This view is close to the recent 'postnarrativist' standpoint of Kuukkanen (2015), but Lo's hypothesis, unlike Kuukkanen's thesis, is not to be extracted nor guessed from the narrative—its whole meaning lies in guiding and structuring the narrative. On the other hand, Kuukkanen speaks of specifically historical, and not philosophical, interpretations.

[11] In the sense that with invention of, for instance, cars, we have greater freedom of travel, but this also gave rise to hitherto absent traffic regulations.

[12] The concept of mutual aid comes from the Russian anarcho-communist writer Pyotr Kropotkin (1842–1921), whose *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution* (Kropotkin 1902) and *The Conquest of Bread* (Kropotkin 1892) had a great influence upon Chinese anarchists and the first Chinese Marxists as well (e.g., the co-founder of the Communist Party of China, Li Dazhao). Kropotkin argued that it is mutual co-operation rather than class struggle that pushes social development forward; the importance of the roots of the former are already seen in the co-operation of animals and as such mutual aid is an essentialy social and pre-state (and pre-legal) phenomenon.

[13] Comte argued that humanity has developed from the theological stage of its history through its metaphysical phase up to the era of science. Maritain (1957, pp. 93–95), in turn, rejects the Comtian law as "erroneus (...) sophistry."

[14] While writing about both the Catholic and Confucian faiths, Lo Kuang never speaks of Confucian (institutionalized) religion, neither from a historical perspective nor in terms of a postulate for the future.

[15] Liu's critique of Lo's "Confucian interpretation of Christianity" is, however, indirect and general, and despite the title of the English collection of his writings, surprisingly it does not deal with the philosophy of history, cf. (Liu 2015, pp. 4, 12, 96, 200). Note that all references to Lo Kuang come from Leopold Leeb, the translator.

References

Acta. 1972. *Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani II: Periodus Secunda, Pars III*. Rome: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis.

Bernheim, Ernst. 1889. *Lehrbuch der historischen Methode und der Geschichtsphilosophie*. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot.

Bossuet, Jacques-Bénigne. 1681. *Discours sur l'Histoire Universelle*. St-Augustin: Cap-Rouge.

Brown, Joshua R., and Alexus McLeod. 2021. *Transcendence and Non-Naturalism in Early Chinese Thought*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Carr, Edward H. 1961. *What is History?* Cambridge: University of Cambridge and Penguin Books.

Croce, Benedetto. 1920. *Teoria e storia della storiografia*. Bari: Laterza.

Cronin, Richard. 1965. The Theology of History. *Philippine Studies* 13: 687–706.

Hempel, Carl G. 1942. The Function of General Laws in History. *The Journal of Philosophy* 39: 35–48. [CrossRef]

Hesse, Mary. 1970. Theories and the transitivity of confirmation. *Philosophy of Science* 37: 50–63. [CrossRef]

Kropotkin, Pyotr. 1892. *The Conquest of Bread*. Paris: Tresse et Stock.

Kropotkin, Pyotr. 1902. *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution*. New York: McClure Phillips & Co.

Kuukkanen, Jouni-Matti. 2015. *Postnarrativist Philosophy of Historiography*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Legge, James. 1877. *Confucianism in Relation to Christianity: A Paper Read before the Missionary Conference in Shanghai on May 11th, 1877*. Shanghai: Kelly & Walsh.

Liao, Xiaowei. 2017. Luo Guang, Mou Zongsan dui ruxue xingshangxue de butongde quanshi 罗 光、牟宗三对儒学形上学的不同诠释 [Lo Kuang and Mou Zongsan's Variant Understandings of Confucianism]. *Xueshu Lunheng* 1: 87–111.

Liu, Xiaofeng. 2015. *Sino-Theology and the Philosophy of History. A Collection of Essays by Liu Xiaofeng*. Translated by Leopold Leeb. Leiden: Brill.

Lo, Kuang. 1944. De jure peregrino missionario in Sinis [Law for Foreign Missionaries in China]. In *Luo Guang Quanshu* 羅光全書 *[The Complete Works of Lo Kuang]*. Taibei: Taiwan Xuesheng Shuju, vol. 39, part 1.

Lo, Kuang. 1972. Lishi Zhexue 歷史哲學 [A Philosophy of History]. In *Luo Guang Quanshu* 羅光全書 *[The Complete Works of Lo Kuang]*. Taibei: Taiwan Xuesheng Shuju, vol. 18, part 2.
Lo, Kuang. 1984. Zhong-Wai Lishi Zhexue Zhi Bijiao Yanjiu中外歷史哲學之比較研究 [Comparative Studies in the Chinese and Foreign Philosophies of History]. In *Luo Guang Quanshu* 羅光全書 *[The Complete Works of Lo Kuang]*. Taibei: Taiwan Xuesheng Shuju, vol. 19, part 2.
Lo, Kuang. 1985. Shengming Zhexue [The Philosophy of Life]. In *Luo Guang Quanshu* 羅光全書 *[The Complete Works of Lo Kuang]*, revised ed. Taibei: Taiwan Xuesheng Shuju, vol. 2.
Lo, Kuang. 1991. Rujia Xingshangxue 儒家形上學 [Confucian Metaphysics]. In *Luo Guang Quanshu* 羅光全書 *[The Complete Works of Lo Kuang]*, revised ed. Taibei: Taiwan Xuesheng Shuju, vol. 4, part 2.
Lo, Kuang. 1996a. Metaphysical Philosophy of Life. In *Luo Guang Quanshu* 羅光全書 *[The Complete Works of Lo Kuang]*. Translated by Carlos Tee, Ernest Li Chang-yi, and Nancy Du. Taibei: Student Book Co., vol. 41.
Lo, Kuang. 1996b. Essays on Chinese Philosophy. In *Luo Guang Quanshu* 羅光全書 *[The Complete Works of Lo Kuang]*. Taibei: Student Book Co., vol. 42.
Lokuang, Stanislao. 1945. La sapienza dei Cinesi: Il confucianesimo [The Wisdom of the Chinese: Confucianism]. In *Luo Guang Quanshu* 羅光全書 *[The Complete Works of Lo Kuang]*. Taibei: Taiwan Xuesheng Shuju, vol. 40, part 1.
Lokuang, Stanislao. 1946a. *Una concezione filosofica cinese: Il taoismo [Chinese Philosophical Conception: Taoism]*. Roma: Scientia catholica.
Lokuang, Stanislao. 1946b. *Ricchi e poveri nel confucianesimo e nel taoismo [Richness and Poverty of Confucianism and Taoism]*. Rome: Edizioni liturgiche missionarie, 37p.
Lokuang, Stanislao. 1951. *La spiritualità dei cinesi [Chinese Spirituality]*. Rome: Centro internazionale di comparazione e sintesi, 10p.
Lokuang, Stanislao. 1952. *La storia delle religioni in Cina [History of Religions in China]*. Torino: Società editrice internazionale.
Lokuang, Stanislao. 1956. *K'ung-fu-Tzu (Confucio): La grande scienza; Il giusto mezzo (tsong-yin); I dialoghi (Lun-yu) [Confucius: Great Learning, Doctine of the Mean, Dialogues]*. Milano: Ist. Culturale Italo-Cinese.
Lokuang, Stanislao. 1957. *Il pensiero cinese [Chinese Thought]*. Milano: Edizioni di Comunità, 10p.
Löwith, Karl. 1949. *Meaning in History; The Theological Implications of the Philosophy of History*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
Maritain, Jacques. 1957. *On the Philosophy of History*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.
O'Daly, Gerard. 2020. *Augustine's City of God: A Reader's Guide*, 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Pfister, Lauren. 2020. Zhu Xi and Christianity. In *Dao Companion to Zhu Xi's Philosophy*. Edited by Kai-chiu Ng and Yong Huang. Cham: Springer, pp. 681–737.
Pinnock, Clark H., Richard Rice, John Sanders, David Basinger, and William Hasker. 1994. *The Openness of God: A Biblical Challenge to the Traditional Understanding of God*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, Carlisle: The Paternoster Press.
Rickert, Heinrich. 1924. *Die Probleme der Geschichtsphilosophie: Eine Einführung*, 3rd ed. Heidelberg: Carl Winters Universitätsbuchhandlung.
Rogacz, Dawid. 2018. The birth of enlightenment secularism from the spirit of Confucianism. *Asian Philosophy* 28: 68–83. [CrossRef]
Rogacz, Dawid. 2020. *Chinese Philosophy of History: From Ancient Confucianism to the End of the Eighteenth Century*. London: Bloomsbury.
Słowikowska, Anna. 2019. The Contribution of Bishops from the Communist States to the Doctrine of the Second Vatican Council in Respect of Church–State Relations. *Roczniki Nauk Prawnych* 29: 173–99. [CrossRef]
von Balthasar, Hans Urs. 1964. *A Theology of History*. London and New York: Sheed Ward.
White, Hayden. 1973. *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.