Takao Aoki, Hiroshima University

Title: “Cool Virtue: The Aesthetics of Coldness in Japanese Ritual Practices of Self-Cultivation”

In every kind of arts and martial arts, regular exercise is important.  In addition to this, in Japan, it is a cultural habit to make a training and practice in the coldest period of the year. This midwinter exercises is called Kangeiko. It seems to be derived from religious training and customs such as Shinto, Shugendo, and Esoteric part of Buddhism, etc.  In this type of artistic religious practice, performers get into the water such as the sea and river in the coldest season. This training has used its coldness or clearness or cleanness of the water to purify, refresh or enhance the player. Training such as Taki-gyo (to bathe under or in the waterfall) is done throughout the year, but there are also winter practices. As a physical condition as well as a physiological environment, at a time when it is difficult to dare, they will practice at aesthetic arts as well as martial arts. Practicing kendo and making a sword after bathing in water suggest that these practices are related to the ablution.  It is universal to use water for purification which pulls practitioner away from secular daily life to engage in sacred events. This practice by making use of water has a unique point of entwining the purification.

The practice by making use of coldness also has a unique point of entwining the sublimation there. In Japan, it has been thought that even calligraphy has such kind of effect.

Through archery training at a snow-blowing dojo, being struck by cold water of a waterfall, practicing calligraphy during a cold season, practitioners have to face with physiological difficulties, sometimes by overcoming physical fear, they could open a new dimension of their subjectivity.  Therefore, midwinter exercises are close to rituals of passage in the field of anthropology, religious regeneration and bathing purification.  However, in the Japanese culture, these religious aesthetic practices have aimed at evoking a greater subjectivity in the performer through direct contact with the coldness, so to speak, being wrapping of the body and mind by the coldness of water or air.  This experience of resurgence of conscientiousness as a greater reason will be experienced by osmotic contact with coldness of Nature like water or air. If we can find here the whole body contact type of sublime without using an optical sense of organ, then we feel the enlarged and living reason of whole body unified with the universe by coldness.

In medieval poetry in Japan, there is an example that ice is made as an aesthetic ideal under this background, but it is not limited to mere aesthetic sense, it seems to suggest the above purification process.

Jiyun Bae, Hiroshima University

Title: “Somaesthetics in the Early History of Korea: Educational Scope of Hwarang”

This paper is concerned with two things. The first is to review *Hwarang* organizations during *Silla* state (57BC~935AD) in Korea through the eyes of somaesthetics. The second is to examine educational implications of *Hwarang* from the perspective of somaesthetics.

*Hwarang* (literally “flower boys”) were elite organizations of male teenagers. Their history can be traced back to the primitive religious practices existed in the tribal state of early *Silla*. As *Silla* transformed into confederated kingdom during the 6th century, *Hwarang* was regarded as a significant organization of the state. *Hwarang* can be interpreted in various aspects, such as organizations providing well-trained warriors emphasizing patriotism, educational institute, religious side, and highlighting their integrated form of philosophy *Pungryudo*. To present day, *Hwarang* is one of the most popular symbols of Korean ethnic identity.

With the perspective of somaesthetics, *Hwarang* can be newly understood highlighting aesthetic values of their bodily activities and virtues within. Dancing with song and poem, traveling and pilgrimage were their major disciplines. Also, their philosophical background *Pungryudo* is inseparable from their bodily practices. The word *Pungryu* is currently used as the meaning of “love and enjoy the arts” in a sense of an amusement. However, it contained richer senses including virtues and the way of life.

*Hwarang* were integrated type of education not only in ways of contents and methods but also in ways of being and pursuing goals. Somaesthetic aspects of *Hwarang* show several implications to modern education.

Yanping Gao, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

Title: “The Invisible Body behind Chinese Calligraphy: Performance and the Ethics of Self-Cultivation”

As one of the highest forms of Chinese art, calligraphy is characterized by formal construction, stylistic variety and subtle beauty, and other aesthetic qualities. But behind all that, though not directly visible is the calligrapher’s body — the background that determines these foregrounded qualities and constitutes the performative space of calligraphy as a performative practice in which the artist works on self-cultivation and self-knowledge. More than any other Chinese classical art, calligraphy involves the body and its condition. The soma’s condition and quality of movement (including its restful tranquility) are inscribed in the finished works. Thus the aesthetics of calligraphy is a performative process of expressing and transforming one’s somatic state into gesture, process, and rhythm.

Because of its deeply somatic engagement, the practice or performance of calligraphy could be regarded as a way of xiushen (修身）— somatic- and self-cultivation because shen in classical Chinese means both body and self. My paper will show how the performative practice of calligraphy helps the practitioner (even the amateur practitioner) perceive, adjust, harmonize, and store up one’s energy (qi), and thus improves the practitioner ’s self-awareness and thus her ability to be a more effective ethical agent. Meanwhile, the process of imitation (lin 临 and mo 摹) which play a big role in calligraphy practice involves a spiritual cultivation that takes the individual beyond a narrow preoccupation with one’s own self. According to Hegel’s theory on cultivation (Bildung), cultivation in some sense is a process of alienation (Entfremdung) and engagement with the Other. In the case of Chinese calligraphy, through the work of imitation, the practitioner removes her own egoism or expands and transcends the limits of her Self. So, in its deepest essence, traditional Chinese calligraphy is an art of somatic performance with important ethical functions and consequences.

James Garrison, Scripps College

Title: “The Aesthetic Life of Power: Chinese and Western Insights into the Rituals of Subject Life”

The task of accounting for how persons, how subjects are made brings a convergence between what Euro-American traditions tend to deem the separate domains of ethics and aesthetics. It is in this regard that alternative voices, particularly those from China, and even more particularly from the Confucian tradition, possess a distinct advantage. Having had such a long history in which to develop its own terms, Confucianism can address the conjunctions of ethics, aesthetics, and politics that occur in person-making in ways that the best, though still ultimately tradition-bound and reactive efforts from Euro-American critical theory cannot.

Here the path is sixfold, going through the critical post-structuralist notion of (I) becoming subject, subjectivation, and the accompanying idea of (II) autonomy alongside (III) the classical Confucian idea of ritual, *lǐ* 礼, as well as contemporary notions of (IV) subjectality, a Confucian/Marxian-materialist approach to collective unconsciousness in social ritual, (V) technique in appearance, and (VI) somaesthetic (bodily) practice. This results in an intercultural and interdisciplinary account of how a set of traditions, some newer and reacting to dominant traditions and others relatively older and with longer histories of internal conceptual development, still nonetheless converge on an important issue for philosophy generally—understanding and broadening the radically (A) relational, (B) discursive, (C) bodily, (D) ritually impelled self.

Steven Geisz, University of Tampa

Title: “Daoist Body Practice as Philosophy: Cultivating Virtue, Transmitting Content, and Philosophical Communication”

Do the traditional Chinese body practices and meditation techniques labeled “qigong” count as philosophy in any meaningful sense? What, if anything, do they reveal about the nature of philosophy and the purposes of philosophical language? Building upon work by Richard Shusterman, Barry Allen, Maxine Sheets-Johnstone, Ben Spatz, and others, I argue that at least some qigong practices should count as philosophical activity intended to transform an audience by cultivating in them various embodied virtues. I specifically consider the ways in which Daoist body practices and the practices of reading and writing Daoist philosophy in text form are surprisingly similar.

I argue for the tentative conclusion that Daoist textual philosophy and qigong practices differ in that the text-based philosophy primarily focuses on content transmission and only secondarily on transformation of the audience by cultivating embodied virtues, whereas Daoist qigong aims primarily at transformation of the practitioner and only secondarily on content transmission.

However, I further argue that the above conclusion is most plausible if one accepts a problematic but wide-spread view about the nature of language, but reflection on qigong body practices gives us reason to be suspicious of that very view of language. In the end, I suggest that both Daoist text-based philosophy and Daoist-inspired qigong practice should be seen as aiming to transmit a kind of transformation from the speaker/teacher to the reader/listener/learner of the philosophical activity, and that recognition of that fact helps us to understand both philosophy and the body practices in a fruitful way.

Tao Guoshan, East China Normal University

Title: “Body as Cultural Capital: On Aesthetic Phenomena of Contemporary Chinese People’s Everyday Life in the Consuming Society”

The popular culture has offered the resource of daily consumption and culture reproduction, formed the ordinary narration mode and realized the aesthetic daily life and the daily aesthetic cultures. The consuming society favors the living aesthetics whose core is “material aestheticized and aesthetics materialized”. For nearly 40 years, Chinese society has experienced a great deal development under the policy of her reform and opening to the outside world. As a result, it has promoted the formation of a consumer society, and all aspects of people’s daily life have been influenced by a variety of consumer goods and publicity. With the development of the income increase, credit loans, installment credit system, and the new concept of consumption society, consumption is not only a symbol of identity and taste, the body, but gradually become a symbol of cultural capital, getting the more social significance in the context of consumption. In order to stimulate the desire to consume, the original biological sense of the body has been given more social connotations. So, as Richard Shusterman says, somaesthetics can be provisionally defined as the critical, meliorative study of the experience and use of one's body as a locus of sensory aesthetic appreciation (aisthesis) and creative self-fashioning. It is therefore also devoted to the knowledge, discourses, practices, and bodily disciplines that structure such somatic care or can improve it (“Somaethetics: A Disciplinary Proposal”, see “*The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 57, No. 3, summer, 1999”, p.302). Therefore, in the body of emotional liberation, our desire for daily life has automatically separated from the spiritual dimension of faith, pointing to the concern and craving for physical satisfaction.

Meanwhile, the aesthetics of popular culture is having been accepted by people under the commodity logic, through the mass media, and with the high technology. Secular aesthetic consciousness is becoming the main theory resources for people’s thinking or even the daily aestheticization in the era of popular culture. Aesthetics is more and more pluralistic symbiosis, and is even reflected in the secular life for people’s daily consumption. That when people decide to buy and enjoy what they bought causes the aestheticization of daily life, therefore, the aesthetic consumption has become the main public experience for people’s body at this era.

Emily James, University of Edinburgh

Title: “Taming the Tension: How Models of Embodied Skill Explain the Practice of Yoga”

The paper applies the concept of embodied skill to the ancient practise of yoga, an attempt to reconcile the chasm of thought between East and West. Using existing models of skill acquisition (Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1980) and Christensen *et al.* (2016)), the paper explains how yoga may be viewed as a skill with the goal of achieving the flow state of *moksha*. The paper links the literature on skill acquisition to a model of language alighting on the body as incorporated knowledge (Sutton and McIlwain (2013)). The paper finally produces a revised model to account for the role that breath and tension relief play in a yoga practise, and how these are vital for achieving the flow state.

The body is an aesthetic entity and we can choose how we respond to our environment. Our habitual patterns and micro movements change our entire well-being and posture. We present our bodies with ideas we hold sometimes even subconsciously. The thoughts we have are shown on the body (e.g. Fuchs’ (2012) paper ‘Body memory and the Unconscious’). The ideas expressed have origins in Merleau-Ponty and Heidegger. Particularly Merleau-Ponty’s work on *maximum grip* as described by Dreyfus (1996) and Heidegger’s notions of *readiness* used to describe the way we engage in a skilled action. The ideas expressed in the paper have far-reaching implications for mental health, various physical diseases (especially back pain) and managing emotional state.

Robert W. Jones, II, Palm Beach State College

Title: “The Body is the Servant of Vice and Virute: A Somaesthetic View of Tibetan Culture”

The body is one of the keys to enlightenment for Tibetan Buddhists. Since the introduction of Buddhism to Tibet, there have been many texts, stories, and rituals devoted to exploring and utilizing the body as a site of religious practice. Utilizing somaesthetics as the primary critical approach, this paper first reviews literature (both sacred texts and folktales) that focuses on the body. This selection of literature was created for both entertainment and spiritual guidance, and often blurs traditional lines of folktale and hagiography. Secondly, this paper explores the interconnection of the body as a tool for generating merit, an important step towards gaining enlightenment. As such, this paper examines symbolic practices such as Chöd (made famous by 12th-century female practitioner Machik Lapdron), that is a visualized ritual of self-sacrifice where the practitioner offers her/ his body as a means of halting the suffering of others. The final section interrogates the problems of culture clash regarding common Western misconceptions around the role of the body and the figure of the crazy wisdom yogi, a phenomenon that Western students sometimes view as giving license to poor behavior and unethical conduct. By bringing somaesthetics into conversation with Tibetan texts this paper will bring a fresh perspective to Tibetan culture and literature.

Bradley Douglas Park, St. Mary’s College of Maryland

Title: “‘Mineness’ is not Enough: ‘Here-ness,’ ‘Now-ness’ and the Calibration of Subjectivity

The *Phenomenology of Perception* is a development on early Heidegger in that it highlights the body as the proper locus of our intentional involvements. More specifically, Merleau-Ponty appeals to the concept of a “body schema” (*schéma corporel*) for articulating our pre-objective insertion in-the-world. The body schema names the holistic unity of the felt body out of which its capacity for directed movement surges forth; it constitutes the *acting-perceiving* body as “subject” in contrast to the “body image,” or the *perceived* body as “object.” The body schema also offers an important reframing of the notion of “mineness,” as the immediate sense of ownership over one’s experience, which would seem to be the condition for the possibility of Heidegger’s more existential notion of individuation. Indeed, this pre-reflective, non-inferential sense of ownership or mineness is basic to any conventional accounting of the first-personal dimension of subjectivity.

The Sino-Japanese traditions insist upon the lower *dantian* (Ch.) or *hara* (J.) as the ultimate center of the body-mind, and thereby as fundamental to cultivational practices of presence. I propose that taking this insistence seriously not only serves as an important philosophical reminder of the body’s primordial relation to gravity and the significance of balance, but through this reminder can also further articulate the concept of the body schema and its role in the constitution of subjectivity. Ultimately, I will defend the claim that here-ness and now-ness represent the proper normative standpoint for recalibrating one’s biology and, by extension, the mine-ness of subjectivity.

Feng Wang, East China Normal University

Title: “Body Perception in Virtual Reality”

In the virtual reality image, the individual keeps his visual viewing by the helmet or glasses and other VR equipment, getting the formation of image around, at the same time, interacting with the image through the device keys or other ways, the interactivity is in control, which is more realistic in a view of interactive effect. In this interactive image, the body seems to be in the center of the image, which of course is to see the perspective of the decision, three-dimensional images seem to form around the body, and constitute a three-dimensional outward extension of the space. The body seems to be present in this scene, as it's just a virtual image, the body is outside the device, but is involved in the image based on the device formation, the body is actually a comprehensive perception (now mainly visual) plane. Compared to body perception, which is more than a layer of equipment access plane as a docking body of the intermediary, the intermediary one led to both the body is absent, and also the presence of docking intermediary in the general meaning of the absence and Presence. The absence of the body of everyday sense (direct sense) is directly absent, and it is directly contradictory to the presence, both of which cannot appear at the same time; and mediation perception is a coexistence of absent and presence, and the image presented on the intermediary In fact, the body is absent, which is not in it, but for relying on intermediary equipment to access the image of the integrated sense of the plane, the body is present. It may be called body perception with compared to the actual physical sense. That is to say, what is involved in the virtual reality of the image is more a perception of body rather than a direct body, since the body conception and everyday sense are much closer, from the effect point of view, they can be mixed. But from the mechanism, they may lead to different ways of body perceptions, and also to a new formation of cultural perception.

Jiajun Wang, East China Normal University

Title: “From Suspceptibility to Responsibility: Somaesthetics and the Body of the Other”

Many researchers still limit Somaesthetics to the subject itself, focusing on the subject of self-body training. Such view is just too confined to the body of the subject itself, but not extended it to the other's body. No doubt self-body training can shape the mind, and can also be achieved to some extent the purpose of shaping the virtues. However, Somaesthetics itself contains more ethical possibilities than the self-cultivation if we take the body of the other into account. The French philosopher Levinas, one of the greatest European thinkers who contributed to contemporary ethics, had studied much more of “the other” which is in his eyes higher than the self. The researchers often ignore the dimensions of body in his ethics. This article hopes to use Levinas's ideas to extend Somaesthetics to physical ethics. In the ethics of Levinas, the "face" of the other person first opens the first ethical commander "Thou shalt not kill" with its nakedness and vulnerability, and the subject has a "susceptibility" for the other. This "susceptibility" can be reflected in the emotional and physical dimensions directly without going through reason and thinking. The "proximity" between the self and the other will be first reflected in the body's feelings, like a handshake or eye contact. In short, without the dimendion of the body, Levinas’s grand plan to shape ethic as the first philosophy, or make ethics beyond the logos cannot be fully realized. The exact name of the Somaesthetics could be “the study of the sensibility of the body”, but in China, because of the translation, people usually understand Somaesthetics as the study of the beauty of the body, so that it does not have much connection with ethics. But as we noticed, through Levinas’s thought, we can find susceptibility or sensibility is inherently relevant to ethics. Therefore, it is possible to extend the Somaesthetics to the field of physical ethics through this approach. This requires us not only concern about the self’s body, but also concern about the body of the other. Furthermore, the practice of Somaesthetics should not only train the self’s body, but also learn to feel the body of the other. The feel of the body of the other is associated with both aesthetics and ethics of the body.

Shuguang Wang, University of North Carolina

Title: “Analyzing the Expression of Body Conciousness in the Literary Works of Han, Wei, and Jin Dynasties”

The tense relationship between us and our bodies has been an important trend worldwide. As a crucial part of sports culture, the body, or “soma” which is more a word for both body and heart, plays an important role in physical education. However, the term “体育” is from abroad and therefore calls for help to link to ancient China. The time period of Han, Wei and Jin Dynasties, an era of "awakening", showed abundant body types and expressions, and deserves more attention. Through the study on the literary works of this time period , using the research method of literature, logical analysis, interdisciplinary research method and the historical research method, this thesis tries to comb the body expression in these ancient Chinese literature, so as to further expand the concept of body in physical culture, to explore more about the interactions between the ancient people and the social and cultural backgrounds they live in, and meet the need to discover the more indigenous body sense. Hopefully, it could enrich relevant researches in the field of physical education. This thesis holds that: The body concept in the awakening time of Han, Wei and Jin Dynasties has a strong ability to convey traditional culture, and it plays its own part in China's history. In the literature, the body could mainly be analyzed from three dimensions and two lens. New understandings of the physical culture and the body should be built nowadays.

Yuyu Wu, East China Normal University

Title: “The Salvation of Body: Zhang Ailing’s Body Poetics”

Since the New Period, The value of Zhang Ailng’s literature has been “re-found”. The literary direction, which she represents, is called another tradition of the new literature on equal terms with Lu Xun by the academic circle. But, in any case, to achieve enlightenment and liberation can’t bypass the body. In Zhang Ailing's writings, the body gets to the stage, which has been suppressed for thousands of years. They have the temperature, breath, pleasure, pain, happy of life, and fear of death. Zhang Ailing's body poetics contains the possibility of modernity salvation: Not only does the body means subversion and rebellion against the established order, but also its own autonomy has acquired a self-evident legitimacy and justification. For that matter, it is not only another tradition against Lu Xun, instead it means the deepening or even completion of Lu Xun's tradition.

Guohua Zhu, East China Normal University

Title: “The Modern Transformation of Body Writing: A Case Study of Sinking”

There was little representation of the body in literature and art works in ancient China. Similar to the West, a vehicle of desire, the body was regarded as a barrier to spiritual freedom, which means that the body not only had little spiritual value, but also was an enemy to it. Most paintings had no representation of the body, particularly the nude body. In the mainstream literary works, the description of the body was not significantly important. Such was, however, common in popular and pornographic literature.

The event about Yu Dafu’s *Sinking* brought a key shift, which meant that when China entered modernity, the body found an opportunity of reinterpretation. Zhou Zuoren’s defense for *Sinking* indicated that the body not only related to ethics, but also to knowledge. Since the body became the object of knowledge, the ethical controversies over it came to an end. During the Cultural Revolution, the body disappeared again in literary works. After that, the body writing no longer had anything to do with the Other and resistance, or objective knowledge, but a consumerist object with the logic of capitalism.