Philosophical Analyses on Interpenetrated Policy Humans and Nonhumans in the Study of Policy Thought

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Abstract   In seeking to understand policy humans who are existentially interpenetrated with nonhumans, this paper hypothesizes that the concept of policy humans can be analyzed through Confucius's theories of human status and based methodologically on the philosophy of things and Taoism. The policy human theorem is first tested *via* Zhuxi's theory regarding all things being non-separated from the self. Additionally, policy human theory is demonstrated by Mencius in his doctrine of loving things, which indicates that policy humans themselves are involved in the existence of things. Meanwhile, it could be verified in Taoism. Laozi, the exemplar Taoist, emphasized in his classical philosophy the mutual penetration and dependence of things for their social and individual glory and dignity. The concept is examined further in accordance with the ideas of another Taoist, namely, Zhuangzi's human-things oneness ideology. With these philosophical discourses in mind, this paper claims that policy humans are both independent beings and simultaneously interrelated with nonhumans.

Keywords   policy humans · human-things interpenetration · policy thought · Confucian philosophy of things · Taoism

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Introduction

Philosophical and even practical understandings of "What is a human being?" in the social sciences have been elusive and contested. Furthermore, academic and heuristic arguments regarding this challenging and unresolved topic have been ignored or neglected in the realm of policy sciences. Even if some early policy scholars have introduced ideas of what it means to be human into policy studies (e.g., Lasswell, 1951), their arguments have tended to prioritize human dignity and privilege. They therefore have placed those who might be referred to as "policy humans" in a position of central authority with power capable of controlling and intervening in all things for the benefit and interests of humans, rather than for the coexistence and mutual interconnectedness of all living conditions and resources.

Important questions regarding policy humans have been ontologically and practically all-inclusive in the study of policy thought. Even queries such as "Who is a human being?" and "What is his or her identity?" have long been critical to the humanities and the social sciences, particularly in human studies and human science. Undoubtedly, the notion of "policy human" is an unavoidable hypothetical notion in policy thought studies. Furthermore, some ways of conceiving of relationships between humans and nonhumans (i.e., things) are first-rate arguments in policy thought, where studies have intellectually centered on structured thinking regarding the nature and substance of policy itself (Lee, 2023).[1] Policy nature refers to the essential and ideational characterizations of policy that correspond to humans, more specifically, policy humans.

It is uncertain, however, why policy humans have pushed themselves to describe and even understand what exactly they are in their respective governing policy areas. That is, in policy studies or policy sciences, human analyses have been limited to the conditions, dignity, and personalities of humans (Lasswell, 1951), as well as holistic and comparative investigations of the anthropology of human life and activities (Barkun, 1973; Stull & Moos, 1981; Hackenburg, 1985).

A further gap in traditional theories of public policy is a lack of awareness of policy humans, who are interrelated and critically interpenetrated with nonhumans. This is because policy humans pursue mutual interests with nonhumans, who remain present in public policy. Even in the era of digital transformation, schools of public policy are reluctant to review human decisions and judgments involving both humans and nonhumans with which policy humans are closely interconnected, including some kinds of machine humanoids, namely cyborgs and certain robots (Appel et al., 2020; Hall et al., 2022). Policy studies, in short, have regrettably failed to recognize, philosophically and heuristically, that policy humans, namely those who preside over policy, have become interconnected or interpenetrated with nonhumans even as they have been at the center of and have taken over public policy *via* their physical and metaphysical policy-charged capacities.

This paper aims to place the epistemological value of policy humans—that is, their interpenetration with nonhumans—into the public policy sphere. In other words, it aims to elevate the theoretical and historical horizons of policy thought beyond the narrow-minded belief that humans are the only species with the right to exploit their ecological and natural

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[1] This paper has been revised from the chapter "The Principle of Policy Humans" from the book *The Principle of Policy Thought: A Philosophical Approach to Public Policy* (2023).

neighbors and resources. Beyond such a tired theory of anthropocentric existence is where policy humans are ontologically reflected. Even Harold Lasswell, the modern founding father of policy sciences, hypothesized this type of human as presiding over interhuman personality clashes and relations, not over humans' coexistence with nonhumans (Lasswell, 1951; Lasswell & McDougal, 1992).

Policy humans are central in public policy, a sphere in which the ideas and practices of policy are under their control and authority. Nonetheless, they intervene in the needs and desires of all things, not simply those of humans, and hence this humanistic argument deviates from traditional human-centered (Fontenelle-Tereshchuk, 2020; Mellamphy, 2021) and human-flourishing ideologies (Lambkin, 2020; Davidson, 2021). In the physical and metaphysical worlds, moreover, an important issue that policy humans face arises from the fact that all things (including, of course, policy humans) are interpenetrated or share penetration with one another (Coghlan, 2016; Lenart, 2020). As an observation of human interconnectedness, this paper proposes (not for testing but rather for constructing a theoretical hypothesis) that policy humans are interpenetrated with everything.

The relational interpenetrated analysis of policy human beings can be observed and analyzed in light of a number of Confucian philosophical ideas on human‑things doctrines and teachings. The methodology and structure of this paper involves philosophically describing and analyzing the interpenetrated policy human hypothesis by employing Confucian ideas regarding things, Zhuxi's one-thing ideology, and Mencius's loving-things doctrine, all of which serve as common examples of how the interpenetration theory of policy humans can be justified. These Confucian philosophies have consistently demonstrated how people can be valued in the context of their connections with other humans and nonhuman entities, since they are perceived as related entities in both moral and social contexts. In conjunction with Confucian philosophy on the interpenetration of policy humans, the Taoist (or Daoist) ideas of Laozi and Zhuangzi can also be referred to when inquiring into the policy humans hypothesis. This is because Taoism treats human beings as a part of Nature, with which they are in harmony or, in accordance with the Tao, that is, the natural way of things. Finally, the conclusion offers brief remarks on hypothetical arguments of interpenetrated policy humans based on both Confucian and Taoist human-things doctrines. [2]

What Are Policy Humans?

It is complicated, if not impossible, to describe and define a human being. If we simply follow negative anthropological (Ogilvie, 2018) and/or "entire human being" (Saage, 2018) arguments, understandings of humans remain thoroughly elusive. At all levels, all explanations about

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[2] One of the manuscript reviewers suggested that Han Fei's strict rule of state power through legalism could be adapted to test the policy human interpenetration hypothesis. The reviewer also emphasized that traditional Chinese philosophical and political ideas are profound and complex as well as the need to explore more diverse theoretical options and discussions beyond Confucianism and Taoism. Meanwhile, the other referee recommended incorporating case analyses and related research methods to enhance the readability and accessibility of this paper. Their feedback is appreciated, and if the time and circumstances permit, the policy human theorem can be discussed further with these considerations in mind.

humans by humans themselves are inherently limited. As touched on in the introduction of this article, the human sciences and related fields of study indicate that conventional human-centered theories are limited to explaining "What does it mean to be part of humankind?" through ethical and axiological questions rather than ontological and even heuristic analyses regarding "What is a human being?" In addition, theoretical and practical investigations regarding "What is a human being in relation to things?" have long been neglected in studies of humans.

In some advanced studies, philosophical and heuristic questions regarding the interconnectivity of humans and things have been critical and even contentious in theory as well as practice. Philosophical sociology, for instance, has examined human existence through the lens of relationships between implicit notions of human nature (rather than human beings themselves) and social life as it is formally articulated (Chernilo, 2014). However, social archeologists have fiercely rejected and dispelled any notion of enchantment with "social life" (Webmoor & Witmore, 2008; Hodder, 2012). Furthermore, questions regarding the identity of policy humans as interpenetrated and related to nonhumans (not simply animals, but all things) have been raised. These questions center around why policy human beings face such a daunting task of unequivocally demonstrating their central and predominant roles and abilities in the public policy sector, most notably in the context of the Internet of Things (IoTs), along with related policy questions and practices (e.g., Holahan, 2020).

Policy humans have influence and authority over public policy. In turn, policy has arisen from such humans' physical and metaphysical capacities, resulting in the ideational term "policy human" differing from traditional views of humans grounded in anthropological human studies. Nevertheless, even if policy-laden and policy-focused humans' superior and authoritative capabilities have influenced and intervened in the fates and lives of humans and nonhumans, the *first* idea of policy human thought is that all things in the policy world (including humans themselves) are intellectually and practically connected (Coghlan, 2016; Lenart, 2020).

A policy human is a central actor or leader who oversees public policy, through which he or she is interconnected and interpermeated with all things. Policy humans in policy thought, therefore, are not the only type of humans. Even though they may be capable of deciding and entertaining their own goals and concerns, they cannot ignore nor plunder the interests and needs of other species. Policy human thought proposes that policy humans are just one type of human beings with certain spiritual, physical, and judgmental capabilities that lead them to set and achieve policy and philosophical goals by acting in concert with a society formed through a symbiotic relationship between humans and nonhumans. In other words, they cannot be isolated *homo sapiens* acting as a sovereign manager or ruler of all things in the universe. Rather, they are one kind of such things, with which they are interpenetrated.

Given the underlying assumption that policy humans are interpenetrated or interconnected with things, prior to philosophically testing this hypothesis, intellectual judgements regarding "What are things?" are necessary in analytical arguments regarding interpenetrated policy humans. Things, i.e., nonhumans, can be recognized as the subjects and themes of policy. Examples of such things include animals, plants, God or deities, the dead, and machine humanoids, such as avatars, cyborgs, and humanoid robots.

These kinds of things can be divided into two types, physical and metaphysical; physical things are objects and/or subjects that policy humans recognize in their policy actions and performances as part of existing matter. Materialism or physicalism has historically been used

to understand these types of things. Unlike material things, however, "intellectual things" are somewhat mysterious and confusing. Therefore, humans cannot easily identify what the substance of such things are in the secular world. Additionally, such metaphysical things consist of psychological and spiritual objects or properties in the context of normative or philosophical analyses where "things" are comprehensive and systematic intellectual entities (Fiocco, 2019). Such an understanding can be referred to as an object-oriented or entity-oriented ontology (Cimatti, 2020) rather than a knowledge of things (Duncan, 2022) or thing(s) knowledge (Kletzl, 2014).

In policy, we cannot claim that nonhumans are identical to policy humans, neither in intellectual nor in practical terms, even if policy humans do not discriminate against nor exploit nonhuman entities and nature *via* their interventions. That is, policy humans are epistemologically and sometimes practically distinct from things. Consequently, "things" can be understood as policy subjects and themes that are inextricably connected with policy humans in the policy arena.

Policy humans perceive "things" as holistic subjects, which contradicts empirical physicalism and mind-body dualism. In exploring the philosophical arguments of policy humans, the term "things" in Confucianism has been understood in terms of human and nonhuman interactions at the individual and societal levels. For instance, Zhuxi called this idea "one-thing," and Laozi referred to it as his Taoist theory of "non-doing." Using references to this policy human interpenetration proposition, the next two sections of this article will survey the abovementioned hypothesis vis-à-vis Confucianism and Taoism.

Interpenetrated Policy Humans in the Confucian Philosophy of Things

Human thought in Confucianism has persistently illustrated a relational analysis of human beings, who can be seen as ethically and morally socialized with other humans and things. Even though humankind was created *via* the interaction of *yin* (negative) and *yang* (positive) forces, i.e., the combined activities of Heaven and Earth (*Shuowen Jiezi*), Confucian human thought does not regard humans as simply another species or thing in the world. Specifically, Xunzi, one of the three most revered Confucian philosophers, stated that animals and other things cannot measure up to humans with respect to life, vitality, knowledge, and reasoned intellectual and decisional capabilities (*Xunzi*, Chapter 9, Volume 5).

For Xunzi, humans are the most valuable things in the universe because they can distinguish right from wrong and good from evil in all things, not just the human species. This capability is important to consider when analyzing the hypothesis of human interpenetration. Policy humans are neither biologically nor epistemologically equivalent to things, even if all things are equal in terms of their ontological character. Through their distinctive policy capacities, policy humans recognize and take responsibility of their human obligations, at least in the realm of public policy, to develop and nourish the identities and dignity of all things, a task that is at the center of policymaking and policy analysis.

The hypothetical argument is well understood in the Confucian philosophy of things and has increasingly contributed to critical studies of human nature and its harmony with reality in human life (Kwok, 2016; Zhao, 2019). By no means have such intellectual and semantic analyses always been successful, as they have sometimes involved disputes over "What is a

thing or things?" and "How can we explore things in connection with human conditions and circumstances?" Theories of "things" in Confucianism confer authority on Confucian scholars and philosophers, including Confucius himself and his scholastic followers, such as Mencius and Zhuxi, to investigate the interpenetrations of policy humans.

For Confucius, the doctrine of "things" is well known from the classical text *Great Learning*. This theory holds that by appreciating the nature and purpose of things, we may gain the fullest understanding of what actually occurs in the context of humans and things. Thus, humankind can contribute to the well-being and prosperity of all things. In this case, "things" undoubtedly encompass humankind. Furthermore, Confucius clarified his doctrine of things as a matter of how humans can survive and thrive by being interpenetrated with things. More specifically, if we attain the standard of happiness for humans, we can simultaneously achieve a corresponding standard for others or other things (*Doctrine of the Mean*). This thinking can be summarized as the interconnected or interpermeated realization of "I and all things," which informs the philosophical analysis of policy humans' interpenetration with nonhumans.

Zhuxi explained his thinking about Confucian theories of things in his footnotes, claiming that all creations in the world are "identical" to the self. He also emphasized that "all things in the universe are indistinguishable from me," and that if he is correct, "Heaven and Earth are immediately virtuous" (*Chapters on the Doctrine of the Mean*).[3] As indicated in this short passage, human beings can discern their ontological value through their coexistence with other things because the self or "I," Heaven, and Earth form an identical tripartite. This has been called Zhuxi's "one-thing ideology." In this theory, the adjective term "identical" does not mean semantic equivalence but is instead an acknowledgement of the parallels between humans and nonhumans.

With reference to reading of Zhuxi's *Chapters on the Doctrine of the Mean,* Confucian theories regarding things can inform the intellectual approaches of realizing and developing the Way of things. Zhuxi argued that:

> If the human virtue of sincerity cannot be taken seriously, then there are no things in the world. As such, a *junzi* (a Confucian term for an ideal man in his character and humanity) maintains his sincerity with high standards of integrity. If he does so, he realizes his own humanity as well as the congenital values of things. (*Chapters on the Doctrine of the Mean*)

For such a person, humans become congruent with things if they can arrive at or ontologically realize their humanness as well as the dignity of things. In short, Zhuxi's one-thing doctrine refers to an incorporated singularity as part of an understanding that humans and nonhumans are interconnected.

Confucius's philosophy of things as well as Zhuxi's one-thing doctrine can be heuristically expanded if Mencius's "loving things" metaphor of "I have all things in myself" is applied to

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[3] For readability in this policy-focused study, I have not specified the sources of the Confucian texts and their phrases or passages printed in their original Chinese characters. Nonetheless, in purely philosophical studies, citations referencing specialists who are familiar with Classical Chinese are theoretically indispensable for an in-depth analysis of each argument.

the policy human principle of interpenetration. For Mencius, who was believed to be a true follower of Confucian ideologies and teachings despite being four generations of students removed from Confucius, a benevolent polity is impossible in State[4] politics and administration unless the value of "we love all things," namely, the value-laden philosophical assumption that all things are interrelated with humans and nonhumans, is appreciated and practiced (Munro, 2016). One of Mencius's statements on the practicality of royal politics is a good example of the loving things theory in practice:

> A *junzi* capable of influencing State politics and policy has bottomless affection for things but does not serve them benevolently; he treats people with compassion, rather than affection. Nonetheless, he acts with love to his relatives and maintains kind and friendly relations with them. Following that, he loves all things. If we could attain the personality of a *junzi*, we could claim nothing less than "I have all things in myself." Therefore, all people can be inspired by his humanity. Whenever a *junzi* walks down the street and stops somewhere, everything is wonderful. (*Mencius*, Volume 13)

If Mencius's love of things, that is the notion of "I have all things in myself," is reviewed for its philosophical discourse regarding the policy humans' interpenetration hypothesis, one can see the policy human as someone who presides over policy and influences it. Nevertheless, one cannot successfully respond to the benefits and needs of things if he or she fails to be interpenetrated with all things. In practice, policy humans intervene in the conditions of things through their loving care and development, recognizing that policy is sensitive to the beliefs and practices of policy stakeholders and targets. In other words, Mencius established his political philosophy by exhibiting his conceptual understanding of things. This is because "I" as a human being embrace all things in myself, both ontologically and heuristically.

Taoist Arguments for the Interpenetrated Policy Humans Hypothesis

Before moving on to the policy human theories put forth by Taoist philosophers, it is important to note that the reason why Taoism is discussed in conjunction with Confucian ideas regarding things is to help clarify the hypothesis of policy humans further. Although Taoism can be traced back to a philosophical lineage independent from Confucianism, the founding Taoist philosophers, Laozi and Zhuangzi, believed that the term "Tao" denoted the philosophical and practical acknowledgement that all things themselves are nothing and fulfil their existing values without deviating from their identified character (Simandan, 2018; D'Ambrosio, 2020; Jiang & Zhang, 2020).

Even though there is no consistent historical or chronological connection between Laozi and Confucius, their ideas regarding the "nature of things and human beings" relate to the interpenetration theory of policy humans in its philosophical and practical engagements (Zhang & Yang, 2015; D'Ambrosio, 2020). Additionally, *neo*-Confucian philosophy has been influenced

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[4] I use "State" with a capital "S" to distinguish between "the State" (the nation-state) and "a state" (a governing system and/or society).

by both the ideas and concepts of Taoism, which focus on the personal cultivation of so-called Taoist ethics and morality (Yin, 2017; De Meyer, 2020). Founded and developed by the prominent Taoist scholars Laozi and Zhuangzi, Taoism's core principles include openness and responsiveness to the essential features of all things, which are interconnected with human beings (Nelson, 2014). In this respect, the notion of interpenetrated policy humans can be considered in light of the thinking of these two influential Taoists.

First, the ultimate Taoist, Laozi, proposed that humans as ordinary persons observe and abide by the moral code of the human‑things relationship, which is identified by mutual penetration and reliance on the simultaneous realization of the interests and values of humans and things. He stated in his seminal Taoist text that "The sage manages affairs without doing anything and acts without saying anything. He facilitates everything without taking credit and without claiming ownership" (*The Book of the Way and Virtue*, Chapter 2).

A typical Confucian sage or *junzi* works in service of the world, rather than for the sake of his own acclaim or glory. Nevertheless, the performance of a *junzi* cannot be overlooked or obscured in the secular world because, according to Laozi, he appears to work for the world without engaging in any hypocritical action. That is, he attains the ideal of *wu wei*, which can be considered Laozi's theory of "non-doing" or "non-action" in the study of things. Laozi wrote that:

> All things do not say anything even if they are the owners of the natural law of growth and decline; they do not possess any things even though they cultivate them; and they do not hold on to any accomplishment even as they work and endeavor without effort. (*The Book of the Way and Virtue*, Chapter 2).

The non-doing philosophy has been intellectually observed as the effortless dominance of nonaction and non-interference in the affairs of others but also taking responsibility for things since all things, including humans themselves, are always in a process of mutual attainment (Ye, 2022). It has been argued further that "Actions developed from 'non-doing' are more than merely efficient and effective [as] can be measured by than cost-benefit criterion" (Allen, 2015). Some scholars have argued that Laozi's "non-doing" principle is expressed through awareness or understanding of the Way, in which the Way is itself a living attitude and behavior that brings human existence into an interconnected harmony with the world or mundane existence (e.g., Giles, 2013; Blake, 2017).

The policy human hypothesis holds that policy humans, as ordinary policymakers and performers, can follow the practical and philosophical code of human‑things interpenetration. It is also clear that each person and thing conforms to the law of Nature, through which policies linking human destiny and dignity with that of all things have been implemented. Similarly, the policy human, as an entity of all things, will perform his or her main responsibility without claiming humans as the sole focus of all his or her work, i.e., for fame or reward. In contrast, he or she will decide to be responsible for all affairs pertaining to things in the policy realm. For Laozi, even if humans cannot be viewed as active and predictable workers, they strive to benefit themselves as well as others because they realize that the secular world is interrelated and interconnected with humans. This is the practice of the Way, i.e., non-doing, and it is the accordance with the natural order.

Another classical Taoist thinker, Zhuangzi underscored the connection between "I" and "things" to be more of a simulated or synchronized philosophy than Laozi's notion of non-doing. Zhuangzi began his human‐things principle metaphorically with his iconic verse:

> When we look at the world through the lens of difference, we realize that all things are multifarious. When we look at the world apart through the lens of the Way or Tao, there are no distinctions, nor high and low. If we view everything in instrumental and teleological terms, then all things themselves are alive everywhere. If they are not alive, they cannot exist anywhere. 'I,' Heaven, and the earth were born all born at the same time. All things and 'I' have already been one (*Zhuangzi*, Phrase 17, Outer Chapter).

As the part of Zhuangzi's pronounced notion of "one" or "oneness," human beings are connected with all things because "I" create every kind of society in which things do not inherently exist independently. Therefore, the pronoun "we," referring to humans, is the one and and only thing in the world. Furthermore, separated but interconnected things including humankind, of course, are created from an original oneness, which it is not a prescriptive value but a condition for things to become objectified (Kwok, 2016).

The ideological "oneness" or "one-thing" doctrine, nonetheless, might be contentious in the realm of policy because "I" am a presider over policy and/or precursor who influences the power of policy, whereby "I" am scheduled to decide the future and dignity of things. Faced with this such a paradox, Zhuangzi intellectually and empirically devised his "mountain tree" anecdote to explain how we can find a heuristic answer to this puzzle.:

> When I went out for a walk on a mountain, I encountered a logging worker in the area who passed by a big tree with huge branches and thriving foliage. I asked him the reason why he did not pay attention to it, and the logger replied by saying that the tree was incompatible with his objective to log timber-trees. I muttered to myself that the tree could live its entire lifespan because it was ill-suited to the logger's intention. After that interaction, I went down the mountain to visit a friend of mine and had a chance to stay at his home. Welcoming me, he ordered his servant to boil a goose as a treat for me. So, a house servant asked us to choose between a goose who cackled and one who did not. My friend said, "Kill the one that cannot cackle." I knew inherently that the goose was killed due to his poor-quality cackling. On the next day, one of my students asked about the events of the previous day that I had experienced. Smiling, I told him about my day and added that I would prefer to be in a position between the usefulness [of the cackling goose] and the uselessness [of the tree]. However, I confessed such an answer cannot be appropriate to the Way, even if it is almost close to it because it cannot be viewed as independent from both sides. One who enjoys the Way of Nature cannot be constrained by any limitation or obstacle. (*Zhuangzi*, Phrase 20, Outer Chapter)

Zhuangzi's anecdote of the mountain tree can be teleologically appreciated as part of a human-centered ideology in which humankind assesses and judges the quality of timber as well as the cackling ability of the goose. That is, the tree and the goose can be judged by human's instrumental and subjective criteria or egocentric aims as much as from the naturalist perspective

(Kwek, 2019). However, an interconnected analysis of the anecdote offers a harmonized world between humans and nonhumans, including an animal and a plant.

If we examine Zhuangzi's response to his disciple more closely, we see that policy humans might stray away far from a constrained judgement on both sides of the epistemological and teleological deliberation between humankind and things. Nonetheless, in reality, policy humans intervene in actions *via* their policy decisions to identify and understand the benefits and dignity of both humans and nonhumans in a way that corresponds with their policy goals and values. Such an analytical argument can be justified with the following assertion by Mencius:

> Dragons and snakes cannot always be classified as dangerous beings because they are subject to countless transformations due to their social and environmental conditions. Each cannot pursue or cling to another thing or dimension, as everything is reshaped and adjusted according to time and circumstances. (*Mencius*, Volume 20)

Whilst we incorporate Zhuangzi's useless tree and useful goose anecdote and Mencius's saying about changing positions into the interpenetrated policy humans hypothesis, we can see that even though policy humans cannot become animals or plants, they are responsible for policy matters and adjust to constantly changing conditions and environments as a result of their interconnected interactions with things. That is, policy humans are wholly aware of a world in which humans and things interact.

Conclusions

This paper initiated philosophical reflections on "What is a policy human?" in the context of policy thought, which centers on the intellectual analysis of the nature of policy. Stated differently, policy humans ontologically and heuristically evaluate the human-made sphere of policymaking and policy analysis. Of course, policy is a human construct; therefore, factual and scientific evidence, as well as justifications, are, in practice, essential for policymaking. Nonetheless, it is all the more important that we comprehend and acknowledge the real and intellectual presence and qualities of policy humans.

Policy humans are, in essence and in practice, interpenetrated or interpermeated with nonhumans. Even though we have often indulged in theories of human dominance advocated by those in the human-centered fields of studies and in anthropocentric analyses, the hypothetical arguments of policy humans discussed in this paper can be made effective through consideration of humans' interpenetration with things, not simply the prosperity and well-being of humans themselves. This human conscientiousness is the initial assumption in the study of policy thought.

The hypothesized idea of "policy humans as interpermeated with shared interests and values of things" was analyzed and evaluated based on principles of Confucianism, particularly Confucius's theories of things, which are well-known from an investigation of things, Zhuxi's one-thing ideology, and Mencius's idea of loving things and identifying them with the self. Moreover, with respect to Taoist ideas that corresponds to the relationship between human things, the hypothesis of interpenetrating policy human was examined through the writings of two Taoist philosophers, Laozi and Zhuangzi. In this context, Taoism was not seen as separate

from Confucianism, in light of the two schools' persuasive notions of the nature of things as determined by an analysis pertaining to humans.

The Confucian philosophy of "things" as well as the Taoist ideology of "things" are both central to philosophical studies and debates in metaphysical analyses of *homo sapiens*. However, such debates are beyond the scope and goal of this paper, as well as the author's academic pursuit. Therefore, the arguments and initiatives regarding policy humans here tended to be based on a hypothetical understanding of human nature and conditions under which policy humans coexist with nonhumans in order to ensure their mutual survival and growth. Furthermore, humans cannot exist in isolation and independence from the realm of policy, where all things, including humans, are fundamentally and practically interconnected and interrelated for mutual benefit and prosperity.

The interpenetrated policy human theorem is intellectually supported by dignified human constructs of argument and analyses. It draws on Confucius's philosophy of the attainment of all things. Zhuxi identified with Confucius's ideology on human existence in his insistence that all things cannot be secluded from or cut off from the self, as Heaven and Earth are identical to the self. Mencius declared in his work on the politics of humanity, "I love all things, I have them in myself." Additionally, the Taoist Laozi illustrated the idea of human‐things interpenetration by focusing on the mutual penetration and dependence among things for the sake of their collective as well as individual glory and dignity. Moreover, for Zhuangzi, human beings are part of an integrated whole because humans and things are independent yet interrelated. They are essentially created by and exist with Heaven, i.e., the Tao or the Way of things. In short, policy humans both ontologically and physically coexist with nonhumans, which has implications for their shared life and for the future of the policy world.

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