

ethnocentric, monological manifestations, or of that mighty one-sided *Logos* that showed off its discourse as well as its discourse's limits in Guadalajara. There is no final outcome in this endeavor because as each discourse assumes mastery over a cognitive field, it displaces others: some, indeed, for the better, but also others, at times, for the worse. Some decolonialists may be extremist or totalitarian despite their best intentions; others, less rigid and more attentive to warding off against stereotyping the Eurocentric values that they expose. My own position (given that this has also been one of my areas of specialization) is that one need not read or teach European continental philosophy in a Eurocentric way.¹³ I believe I have endeavored to do this in my own philosophical practice. Similarly, just because one studies US culture or Anglo-American philosophy, one need not do this in a racist, sexist, Anglocentric way. In fact, creating the spaces for cultural alterity in a postcolonial/decolonial key within Anglo-European philosophy is a much needed project and one that will serve to create bridges with the still underrepresented sectors of philosophy we find in the United States and similarly constituted academic constituencies of today's world.

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¹³ O. Schutte, ›Continental Philosophy and Postcolonial Subjects,‹ *Philosophy Today*, Vol. 44, 2000, pp. 8–17 [SPEP Supplement].

Living Chinese Philosophy

Abstract

The title of this essay, ›Living Chinese Philosophy‹ is a double entendre that captures the transformative nature of Chinese philosophy for those who study it, and the fact that it is a philosophical tradition taking the ordinary affairs of the day as both source of philosophical reflection and warrant for the conclusions reached. The goal of the canonical texts is not only to provide a vocabulary for thinking cogently about philosophical issues, but more importantly to encourage a personal cultivation directed at making one's life significant and transforming the ordinary into the extraordinary.

Keywords

Confucianism, comparative philosophy, role ethics, Henry Rosemont Jr., David L. Hall, D.C. Lau, non-Western philosophy, process philosophy.

My narrative as a student of Chinese philosophy and culture began many years ago. My late father wrote mystery stories; my older brother for his career taught English literature. Writing was always a part of our life at home. As a young man, I wrote a lot of poetry, and in order to find and to study with the best of my generation, I left the comfortable nest of our Vancouver home and enrolled at a liberal arts college in southern California, the University of Redlands. My passion for creative writing was well served. Redlands was a wonderful experience for a serious student, and I am grateful to that school for sending me to Hong Kong on their student exchange program.

I arrived in Hong Kong one sultry evening in the summer of 1966. I was eighteen years old and alone in a world of strange sights, colors, and smells. Indeed, I remember looking out from the window of the small Nathan Road hotel on that first evening in China, fully aware that my short life had taken an irreversible turn.

I was a young man in search of the intensity and high adventure necessary to write poetry filled with life. At Redlands I had been studying Western philosophy, and like innumerable students over the centuries, I was immediately inspired by the honesty of Socrates and his philosophical quest to ›know thyself.‹ In Hong Kong, I was introduced to Confucian philosophy, and in contrast to but perhaps complementary with Socrates's journey of self-discovery, I became fascinated by its aesthetic project of ›cultivating oneself‹ (*xiushen*), ›broadening the way‹ (*hongdao*), and ultimately, ›transforming the cosmos‹ (*ping tianxia*). During the summer studying the Chinese language at New Asia College in Kowloon I had the opportunity to meet and listen to several prominent philosophers – in particular, Tang Junyi (1909–1978) and Mou Zongsan (1909–1995) – who were asserting the enduring strength of a Chinese tradition after a long night in which a hemorrhaging China had suffered humiliation at the hands of Western imperialism. When, at the end of the summer, I moved out to Chung Chi College in Shatin for the academic year, I had the chance to study Mencius with Professor Lao Siguang (1927–2012), a thoroughly engaged intellectual who impressed many young minds including my own with his own deep philosophical passion.

Hong Kong at this time was poor – very poor. For us students, there were stones in the rice and not much at all in the soup. But there was an exciting curriculum taught by young professors, and I developed important friendships with my classmates and teachers that have lasted these many decades. As the year in Hong Kong progressed, there were anti-foreign riots, and on more than one occasion, my young friends and I were stranded overnight at someone's home, afraid to go out on the streets. But these classmates took good care of me, and if I learned something of Chinese philosophy from classroom lectures and books, I certainly learned much more from a community of people who were remarkably different from the world I had known until then – a community of people who in the process of deepening their caring relationships brought to life the wisdom of the Chinese tradition.

The following summer, with a copy of D. C. Lau's (1921–2010) *Daodejing*¹ in my hand, and as a much older ›young‹ man, I looked

¹ R. T. Ames and D. L. Hall (trans.), *Daodejing: Making This Life Significant*, New York: Ballantine, 2003.

back on the receding lights of Hong Kong from the deck of the President Cleveland as we sailed out of the harbor on a homeward journey to first San Francisco and then on to Canada. I was now a student of Chinese philosophy.

From those beginnings at Redlands, it took me fully thirteen years at university to complete my PhD. Why? Because Chinese philosophy was not taught then in Western philosophy departments, and for the most part, is not taught now. Western philosophy as a professional discipline has to this day invoked geographical rather than philosophical criteria to persuade itself and the world that philosophy is an Anglo-European enterprise. The counterintuitive implication of this tacit assumption is that cultures beyond this Anglo-European sphere are not interested in the pursuit of wisdom. Having lived and studied in Hong Kong, I found this premise parochial and unworthy, and with the passage of the years, I became increasingly committed to challenging a Western philosophical tradition burdened with this profound ethnocentrism.

In order to study Chinese philosophy at the University of British Columbia, I had to do two bachelors' degrees in five years, one in Chinese and one in philosophy. In pursuing a masters degree, it was the same. I went to National Taiwan University for two years, doing my course work in the philosophy department and having the opportunity to study with Fang Dongmei (1899–1977). In 1972 I returned to the University of British Columbia from Taiwan to finish my three-year masters degree in the Asian Studies department, not philosophy.

While at National Taiwan University I came to a realization about the status of philosophy in the world that astounded me. For a long time now, in the world's seats of higher learning, Western philosophy – that is, almost exclusively European philosophy – has constituted the mainstream curriculum worldwide. And this situation is not simply a matter of Western arrogance; there is a good deal of self-colonization as well. This self-understanding of professional philosophy is a fact as true in Taipei, Tokyo, Seoul, Beijing, and Delhi as it is in Boston, Oxford, Frankfurt, and Paris. If indigenous Asian philosophies have been ignored abroad, they have also been significantly marginalized within their home cultures. William James (1842–1910) had it almost right when he prefaced his Gifford lectures at Edinburgh by allowing that »it seems the natural thing for us [Amer-

icans] to listen whilst the Europeans talk« (James 2008: 11),² except that he might have included the Asian philosophers along with the Americans as the natural audience for Anglo-European philosophy. And little has changed in the century and more since 1901.

After studying Chinese philosophy again in an Asian Studies department in Japan for two years, I was finally able to enter a program at the University of London in which I could study Chinese philosophy with philosophers. It was at the University of London that I had the opportunity to study with D. C. Lau, in his time perhaps the most distinguished translator of Chinese philosophical classics. And it is Professor Lau, in his unrelenting insistence that we must go back and think through the original texts, who has had the greatest influence on my approach to Chinese philosophy. From the beginning, Professor Lau had little patience with reliance upon secondary academic discussion that floated high above the philosophical literature. His first question on my first day as his student was: »How many times have you read the *Huainanzi*?«³ And he was chagrined at my most inadequate answer, »All of it?« He pointed to the library with a wry smile. And for years after finishing my PhD with Professor Lau, I would spend months during the summer with him in his Hong Kong study piled high with books reading the *Huainanzi* together. I learned from Professor Lau what it means to be a student's teacher, and over the years we collaborated on the first and one of the most important fascicles of the *Huainanzi*, »Tracing Down to Its Source« (*yuandao*), along with a translation of the recently recovered »second *Sunzi*«⁴ – the *Sun Bin Art of Warfare*.⁵

At London in the SOAS library and in subsequent years when Angus Graham (1919–1991) was a visiting professor with us at the University of Hawai'i, I had the opportunity to study with him, and became particularly intrigued by his efforts to continue the work of

Marcel Granet (1884–1940) and Joseph Needham (1900–1995) on »correlative thinking« as a signature of Chinese philosophy.

Having finished at the University of London in 1978, I was most fortunate on the recommendation of D. C. Lau to receive an appointment in the philosophy department at the University of Hawai'i, the only philosophy program in the Western world that at that time offered the PhD in Chinese, Japanese, Indian, Buddhist, and Islamic philosophies. The philosophy department at the University of Hawai'i was and remains today a unique program. The first chair of the department in the 1930's was Wing-tsit Chan (1901–1994), and he together with Charles Moore (1901–1967) in South Asian philosophy established an integrated program in world philosophy. The premise of the program is that students who study non-Western philosophy are much stronger if they do so within the context of a Western philosophy department rather than a religion or Asian Studies program. And that students who have Western philosophical training are often able to bring fresh perspectives to an understanding of the Chinese tradition.

Such comparative training is an advantage for students not because Western philosophy has a »rigor« lacking in the Chinese tradition that is »necessary« or »essential« to good philosophizing. Rather it is useful because comparative philosophy is hybridic and expansive in providing an alternative vantage point, and Chinese philosophy in particular has a capaciousness that enables the student to see beyond technical Western arguments. There is a Chinese expression: »I cannot see the true face of Mount Lu because I am standing on top of it; that captures the same idea expressed by Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936) when he observed: »What knows he of England whom only England knows.«

That the benefits of comparative philosophy move in both directions is a fact still lost on many Western philosophers. That is, our study of Western philosophy can be much enhanced by reflecting on perennial problems with different languages and with alternative sets of categories found in the non-Western traditions. As a specific example, while process thinking is relatively new within the context of Western philosophy in figures such as A. N. Whitehead (1861–1947), Henri Bergson (1859–1941), William James, and John Dewey (1859–1952), the *qi*-cosmology of the long Chinese tradition entails a process worldview that begins historically as early as the compilation of

² W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature*, Rockville, Maryland: Manor, 2008.

³ Liu An, *The Huainanzi*, J. S. Major et al. (trans.), New York: Columbia University Press, 2010; D. C. Lau, and R. T. Ames (trans.), *Yuan Dao: Tracing Dao to its Source*, New York: Ballantine, 1998; R. T. Ames, *The Art of Rulership: A Study of Ancient Chinese Political Thought*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994.

⁴ R. T. Ames (trans.), *Sun Tzu: The Art of Warfare*, New York: Ballantine, 1993.

⁵ D. C. Lau, and R. T. Ames (trans.), *Sun Bin: The Art of Warfare*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003.

the first of its philosophical classics, the *Book of Changes*.⁶ An interest in process philosophy has emerged over the past century in the Western narrative as a strong current in the internal critique of substance ontology, and might be much enhanced by a closer look at the developed Chinese process sensibilities. Indeed, I met my first collaborator David Hall (1937–2001) at the gates of China because he was trying to go beyond Whitehead's appeal to eternal objects and the primordial nature of God in looking for greater coherence in process thinking. What are often construed as ›alternative‹ traditions might be better seen as ›complementary‹ and mutually enriching resources. Indeed, our philosophical worlds remain less to the extent that they remain exclusive.

Shortly after arriving at the University of Hawai'i, I began a professional relationship with David Hall that would produce six books: a combination of first interpretive studies followed by philosophical translations of several of the classics. Indeed, this happy Hall and Ames collaboration over nearly a quarter of a century was a sustained attempt, however imperfect, to bring together both philological and philosophical skills in our interpretive studies of classical Chinese philosophy, and then to apply this interpretive context in our new philosophical translations of seminal texts.

This happy collaboration of Hall and Ames changed over the years. Tragically, the David Hall side of the project that burned most brightly, also burned most quickly, and in the company of his family and his friends, he died in his desert one spring day in 2001. Hall was a Chicago Divinity School and Yale University trained Western philosopher, and as such, he brought much imagination and ›views‹ to our work. What I brought to the collaboration was philological training in ancient Chinese philosophical texts that hopefully made our scholarship more responsible, coupled with an important anthropological sense of what seems right within a Chinese context from having spent many years living in Chinese academic communities. For me, the study of Chinese philosophy is much more than merely academic; it is a profoundly personal and transformative quest that has been inspired by the close personal relationships I have enjoyed over the years with teachers and colleagues at Chinese universities.

Having found the collaborations with David Hall and Professor

⁶ R. Lynn (trans.), *The Classic of Changes*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2004.

Lau an enormous source of personal and professional growth, I also sought out my present collaborator, Henry Rosemont, Jr. (1934–). Rosemont is an analytic philosopher by training and, as a student of Noam Chomsky (1928–), a rigorous linguist of the first order. Like my introduction to David Hall, I had come to know Rosemont by using his publications on the Chinese language in my own work.

As a graduate student, I first met Henry Rosemont (as I did Hall) in the pages of the comparative philosophy journal, *Philosophy East and West*. Fresh from his post-doctoral work with Chomsky at MIT, Henry wrote an article ›On Representing Abstractions in Archaic Chinese‹⁷ that in its arguments was so original and has been so enduring as to have served a generation later as the foundation for the ›Introduction‹ and ›Appendix‹ to our collaborative translation of the *Analects of Confucius*.⁸ Perhaps the most radical argument in this article is Rosemont's ›uniqueness thesis,‹ a considered challenge to the commonplace that most linguists in the study of language focus on speech almost to the exclusion of its written forms. Far from the written form being derivative of and accidental to the spoken language, the written and spoken forms of the Chinese language (until this last century) are importantly different in their semantic, syntactic, and phonological constraints, and both must be taken into account in philosophical speculations about the nature of Chinese thinking.

And Rosemont argues for the priority of context and semantic information over syntax and phonetics in the decoding of classical Chinese texts. In Chinese education, the more formal features of the language have traditionally been learned from the rote memorization of specific canonical texts that provide intellectuals a shared reservoir of contextualized usages from which they can draw analogies in their own creative expression. Rosemont's insight here is that the Chinese worldview, whether words or persons, begins from ontological parity and the uniqueness of the particular and its context.

In all of these insights into the nature of the early Chinese language and philosophy, the thread of Rosemont's arguments is that broadly speaking the Chinese concern was not so much with ontology or epistemology as it was with the primacy of the dynamic relations

⁷ H. Rosemont, Jr., ›On Representing Abstractions in Archaic Chinese,‹ *Philosophy East and West*, Vol. 24, No. 1, 1974, pp. 71–88.

⁸ R. T. Ames and H. Rosemont, Jr. *The Analects of Confucius: A Philosophical Translation*, New York: Ballantine, 1998, pp. 1–70, and pp. 271–317.

that not only obtains among and between things, but indeed constitutes them as transitory events. Said another way, the emergent cosmic order in a Chinese world is best understood as the art of correlating and contextualizing within the eventfulness of the human experience. Culture is the production of meaning through the efficacious coordination of the phonetic and the semantic, the semantic and the syntactic, the visual and the oral, the metaphorical and the more literal, the particular and the contextual, and most importantly, the formal and the informal (or the determinate and the indeterminate).

At the heart of Rosemont's philosophical life is a rejection of top-down wholesale, centralized strategies for achieving order – ethical, social, political, religious – whether such strategies be Stalinist, Papal, or Maoist, the hegemony of large capitalist corporations, or the arrogant unilateralism of our own federal government in the States. Instead, Rosemont advocates a decentralized, participatory, and inclusive conception of order always made local by appeal to the indigenous impulse.

My now several collaborations have been motivated by what we have all regarded as a profound weakness in the way in which Chinese philosophy has been introduced into the Western academy. The Chinese corpus is constituted by profoundly ›philosophical‹ texts – the *Book of Changes*, the *Analects*, the *Zhongyong*,⁹ the *Daodejing*, *Sunzi: The Art of Warfare*, and so on – and yet this body of literature has not been treated as philosophy. These texts have been translated and interpreted initially by missionaries, and more recently by sinologists. That is to say that, to date the Chinese philosophical corpus has only incidentally and tangentially been engaged by philosophers. This assertion is meant neither to impugn the usually good intentions of the missionaries nor to pretend that there is any substitute for the sophisticated philological, historical, literary, and cultural sensibilities that we associate with good sinology. Indeed, it has been a vicious circle in which a non-philosophical reading of the Chinese corpus fails to attract the attention of a philosophical audience who thus do not engage the Chinese tradition philosophically, and so it turns.

Given this marginalization of other philosophical traditions, philosophy as a discipline has an unfulfilled responsibility to our acad-

emy. An essential occupation of philosophers is to identify and describe the generic traits of the human experience in order to locate problems within the broadest possible context. And these defining generic characteristics are importantly different as we move from one cultural and epochal site to another. Philosophers have the responsibility to seek out and to understand the uncommon assumptions that distinguish cultures both as a resource for addressing philosophical problems, and as a preventative against cultural reductionism and the misconceptions such ethnocentrism produces. Thus, the absence of philosophers in the interpretation of Chinese philosophy to a Western audience has come at a cost.

It has become a commonplace to acknowledge that, in the process of Western humanists attempting to make sense of the classical Chinese philosophical literature, many Western assumptions have inadvertently been insinuated into the understanding of these texts, and have colored the vocabulary through which this understanding has been articulated. Chinese philosophy has been made familiar to Western readers by first ›Christianizing‹ it, and then more recently, by ›orientalizing‹ it as a poetical-mystical-occult worldview that is the converse of our own commitment to the enlightenment of reason. To the extent that Chinese philosophy has become the subject of Western philosophical interest at all, it has usually been analyzed within the framework of categories and philosophical problems not its own.

The recent recovery in archaeological finds of new versions of existing texts and the further discovery of many documents that have been long lost, has in the English-speaking world occasioned the re-translation of many of the Chinese philosophical classics, and has provided both a pretext and an opportunity for philosophers to step up and rethink our standard readings. Most importantly, it has presented us with the challenge of trying, with imagination, to take these texts on their own terms by locating and interpreting them within their own worldview.

In developing a strategy for our new philosophical translations, we collaborators have worked out a structure that includes an introduction that provides an interpretive context, an evolving glossary of key philosophical terms, a self-consciously interpretive translation, and the inclusion of the definitive critical Chinese text. In describing our translations as ›self-consciously interpretive,‹ we are not allowing that due to our own license we are less ›literal‹ than other translations. On the contrary, we would insist that any pretense to offer a

⁹ R. T. Ames and D. L. Hall (trans.), *Focusing the Familiar: A Translation and Philosophical Interpretation of the Zhongyong*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001.

literal translation is not only naïve, but is itself a cultural prejudice of the first order.

To begin with, we would assert that English as the target language carries with it such an overlay of philosophical assumptions that, in the absence of reference to an extensive introduction and glossary, the philosophical import of the Chinese text is seriously compromised. Further, a failure of translators to be self-conscious and to take fair account of their own Gadamarian ›prejudices‹ with the excuse that they are relying on some ›objective‹ lexicon – a lexicon that, were the truth be known, is itself heavily colored with cultural biases – is to betray their readers not once, but twice.

Just as each generation selects and carries over earlier thinkers to reshape them in their own image, each generation reconfigures the classical canons of world philosophy to its own needs. We too are inescapably people of a time and place. And a most cursory understanding of the classical Chinese philosophical literature itself – always genealogical and historicist – would require that we acknowledge ourselves as such. The self-consciousness of our interpretation, then, is not to play fast and loose with the literary corpus, but rather to endorse its premises.

In seeking to challenge the existing interpretations, we try to be at once deconstructive and programmatic. That is, we have begun from the concern that the popular translations of these philosophical terms often do not adequately respect the degree of difference between a persistent Western commonsense and the ways of living and thinking in which these early Chinese texts were located and produced. What seems to be the most comfortable choice of language, and what at first blush makes the best sense to the translator within the target language might well be a signal that what is originally *not* familiar is, at a stroke, being made so. The conventional translation of *dao* as ›the Way‹ or *tian* as ›Heaven‹ or *li* as ›ritual‹ are rather obvious examples of overwriting the Chinese language with assumptions that are alien to it. Indeed, it is just such a formula of translations that has been authorized and has been insinuated into our standard Chinese-English dictionaries and glosses.

Hence, to encourage those who would consult these reference works to do so with the uncritical assumption that this set of translations will provide them with a ›literal‹ and thus ›conservative‹ rendering of the texts is to become complicit in an entrenched cultural equivocation. Our argument is that this persistent formula of translations

is in fact radical in the interpretation it promotes. To our mind, to consciously or unconsciously transplant a text from its own historical and intellectual soil and replant it in one that has an importantly different philosophical landscape is taking liberties with the text and is radical in the sense of tampering with its roots. And it is our concerted effort, however imperfectly accomplished, to locate the text within its own conditions that is properly conservative.

But our goal has not been to replace one inadequate formula for translating Chinese philosophical terms with yet another inadequate set of equivalencies. Our translations of key terms have always been intended as no more than suggestive ›placeholders‹ that refer readers back to the glossary to negotiate their own meaning, and to hopefully appropriate the Chinese terms for themselves. Along with Wittgenstein who understands that the limits of our language are the limits of our world, we would argue that in order to understand the Chinese philosophical tradition, the student is going to need more language. It will only be when students of Chinese philosophy are able to bring a sophisticated understanding of *dao* and *tian* and *li* to a reading of a Chinese text in the way in which we have developed a nuanced sense of *kosmos*, *logos*, and *nous* in our reading of the classical Greek corpus that we will begin to take the Chinese world on its own terms.

Let me say something about these collaborations as a signature of my career. First, I have always seen this way of working as an object lesson in what we have to learn from Confucian philosophy. Association is a fact; nothing does anything by itself. And nowhere is this truer than in personal growth and the production of knowledge. In authoring monographs with Lau, David, and Henry, I had the benefit of not only finding such intellectual intimacy with very different but equally wonderful scholars, but I also had to become them in the sense of two becoming one. I had to take ownership of the whole product. I could not appear at a professional meeting, and when asked about a certain philosophical claim, demure by saying that it was introduced by my collaborator and I did not understand it either. Collaboration requires not only that you understand everything, but also that you endorse it all. My most recent monograph, *Confucian Role Ethics: A Vocabulary* (2011)¹⁰ was an elaboration of the 2008 Ch'ien Mu lectures that I gave at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and

¹⁰ R. T. Ames, *Confucian Role Ethics: A Vocabulary*, Hong Kong, and Honolulu: Chinese University Press and University of Hawai'i Press, 2011.

hence it was published under my name as the single author. But in fact it is a confluence of a fully shared life, and should properly have all of our names on the cover.

In the many years that have ensued since my first adventure in Hong Kong, I have continued my interest in Confucianism, and my personal narrative has continued too.¹¹ I have now been a student of Confucian philosophy for more than half a century, and two questions arise: How has the study of this tradition affected me personally, and more importantly, how will the rise of an increasingly Confucian China during these few decades affect the world broadly?

In response to the first question as to how the study of Confucianism has changed me personally, one might well ask, if our Chinese philosopher friends can call themselves Kantians and Heideggerians, can a foreigner like me become a Confucian? The resistance of other, more exclusive cultures to embrace Confucianism might arise from the reluctance of one culture to model and redefine itself on the values of another. But then ›Confucianism‹ is only a Western translation of the more inclusive idea of *ruxue* that references a social class and the intergenerational transmission of a culture, rather than the life and legacy of one person named Confucius. Although the nominal ›goal‹ of Confucian practice was identified by the canonical texts as cultivating ›the way (*dao*)‹, in fact, *dao* seems to have designated something more like a journey with a distinctive *direction* of intergenerational transformation than any specific *destination*. Emphasizing landscape and traveling rather than any predetermined end, the road for Confucianism seems clearly better than the inn, and human enjoyment of our sojourn together more important than any quest for certainty.

Ruism is the elegant life of the gentle people made possible by having committed themselves to the transformative power of personal growth and practical wisdom. It is the continuing story of a fellowship among literati whose cultural literacy serves their succeeding generations as a model for a philosophy of life that elevates and brings joy to the daily lives and activities of the people. Who would not want to be included in thus aspiring to live inspired lives as human beings?

Even if we ourselves for whatever reason might want to resist

¹¹ See, for example: R. T. Ames, *Living Chinese Philosophy*, Insight Media, 2007 [two-hour documentary].

this possibility of becoming Confucians, we must allow that Confucius himself would answer this question in the affirmative. In the opening passage of the *Analects*, Confucius is reported to have said, »To have students coming from distant quarters – is this not a source of enjoyment.« In his time during the Spring and Autumn period, for him as a resident of the state of Lu a ›foreigner‹ from distant quarters would be someone from the state of Chu or Jin. And again, Confucius told his students that he himself wanted to go and live among the nine tribes of the Eastern Yi barbarians. When asked if exemplary persons could live among such crudeness, he answered that were exemplary persons to live among them, they would cease to be barbarians. Indeed, when an aging Confucius continued to be frustrated in his native state of Lu, he chose to take his most promising students to go and live for more than a decade among the ›foreigners‹ to see if with these foreigners he could effect the cultural transformation that had eluded him at home. And then consider also how Korea, Japan, and Vietnam – ›Eastern‹ barbarians all – are continuing examples of how Confucianism can transform and be transformed by foreign cultures in a profound and lasting way.

In answer to the second question of how will a Confucian China change the world broadly, we must allow that in a single generation, the rise of Asia, and in particularly the rise of China, has precipitated a sea change in the prevailing economic and political order of the world. In the quarter century since 1989, the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) has grown to include twenty-one Asia-Pacific nations with forty percent of the world's population, the GDP in the Asia-Pacific region has more than tripled, and trade in and with the region has increased by over four hundred percent. The Chinese economy has grown at annual double-digit rates to overtake Japan as the second largest economy in the world, and is predicted to become the world's largest economy sometime in the 2020's.

Asian development generally and the global impact of China's growth more specifically are producing seismic changes in the world's economic order and international relations. To date, these changes have remained largely entrained and thus easily traced within the boundaries of the emerging economic and political conditions. But this reconfiguration of economic and political dominance nevertheless opens possibilities for cultural changes of the sort required to challenge an elite world cultural order that has long been dominated by a powerful liberalism, especially since this liberalism has proven

impotent with respect to the global predicaments and equity issues that promise to shape the course of the twenty-first century. Challenges might be posed from, for example, the perspectives of indigenous peoples, or from religious traditions like Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism. But there is much to recommend considering the cultural resources offered by what Robert Bellah (1927–2013) referred to as ›secular religions‹ like Confucianism.

When we look for the cultural resources necessary to respond to the current global predicament, primary among them are resources suited to replacing the familiar competitive pattern of single actors pursuing their own self-interest with a collaborative pattern of players strengthening possibilities for coordination across national, ethnic, and religious boundaries. Evidence is that many in Asia today feel that Confucian culture can make valuable contributions to the articulation of a new world cultural order. And enormous resources are being invested in China and other Asian cultural spheres to renew traditional Confucian learning as a repository of values and conceptual resources that can be drawn upon to shape their own responses to contemporary dynamics. As is now widely appreciated, Confucian culture celebrates the relational values of deference and interdependence. That is, relationally-constituted persons are to be understood as embedded in and nurtured by unique, transactional patterns of relations – a conception of person that contrasts rather starkly with the more familiar model of discrete, self-determining individuals associated with liberal democracy. Might a contemporary Confucian ethic that locates moral conduct within a thick and richly textured pattern of family, community, and natural relations not indeed be a force for challenging and changing the international culture order?

–Roger T. Ames, *University of Hawai'i, USA*

Book Review