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[第九辑]

中国经典文献诠释艺术学术研讨会论文集



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中国古文献学与文学国际学术研讨会论文集



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序

安平秋^{*}

近年来,对于中国古代的经典文献从诠释的角度进行多层面、多领域的研究已成为相关学科的学者关心的问题。我所在的北京大学中国古文献研究中心的一些中青年学者在这方面做了极为有益的尝试。

几年前,台湾大学中文系郑吉雄教授曾提议,由他在台湾大学主持的“文献与诠释研究论坛”和北京大学中国古文献研究中心合作召开一次经典文献诠释方面的学术研讨会,以推进中国经典文献的诠释理论、方法和实践的整合研究。2007年9月,郑吉雄教授应我们之邀来北京大学作访问研究,其中就有关学术研讨会的举办交换了意见,确定研讨主题为“中国经典文献诠释艺术”。稍后,新加坡的劳悦强教授表示愿以新加坡国立大学中文系的名义参与研讨会的筹办。至2008年下半年,会议的筹备工作基本就绪。

2008年11月23至24日,由台湾大学文献与诠释研究论坛、新加坡国立大学中文系和北京大学中国古文献研究中心三家发起主办,并由北京大学中国古文献研究中心承办的“中国经典文献诠释艺术学术研讨会”在北京大学博雅国际会议中心隆重召开,来自美国、日本、韩国、新加坡、中国台湾、中国大陆二十多家学术机构的近六十位学者出席了会议。学界精英,济济一堂,使这次会议既具有广泛的代表性又具有鲜明的国际特色。会议共收到论文五十余篇,诠释的经典涉及经、史、子、集各个部类,甚至还包括少数民族文献;思考的领域涉及语言学、文献学、经学、文学、历史学、哲学等诸多学科。

现在重读会议论文,感觉这次会议在学术上有三个特点:第一,与会学者对经学文献及儒家思想的诠释表现出浓厚的兴趣。会议重点讨论了《周易》、《诗经》、《春秋》和“四书”等经学文献的诠释问题,从文献梳理和哲学思考入手分析了中国传统诠释学的特点,同时还注意到儒家的注经传统与西方诠释学在理论上的交接。第二,与会学者对史籍、子书及相关历史现象的诠释也颇为关注,既对《史记》、《荀子》、《淮南子》、《庄子》等书的文本和思想做了新的诠释,也重新解读了“天下”观念、中日文化交流等历史现象。第三,与会学者在

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语言学、文献学、文学的诠释上提出了启发性的见解。讨论涉及韵书的编纂思想、字词的训诂释义、校释古籍的方法、文学文献的解读多个领域，却都围绕文献诠释这个主题。

为使学界朋友更为充分地了解这次会议的情况，我们将与会学者的论文加以整理并在《北京大学中国古文献研究中心集刊》刊出。整理论文之前，我们专门设立了论文集编辑委员会和审订委员会，其中编辑委员会由我中心部分老师组成，而审订委员则由与会的十一位著名学者担任。由于论文集的编辑、审订和出版周期较长，个别与会论文已在其他刊物上发表，这次不再收录，只在附录中存目。

记得在会议闭幕式上不少学者对这种以多学科整合来研究中国经典文献有了更多的期许，对北京大学中国古文献研究中心也有了更多的期许。我想，作为一所古籍学术研究机构，我们北京大学中国古文献研究中心，将与国内外同仁一起在这一领域里做更为深入地探讨。

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Confucian Role Ethics and the Moral Imagination

安乐哲(Roger T. Ames)*

Introduction

There are different ways of conceiving the moral life. A traditional occupation of moral philosophy has been to discover some fixed point of morality, some bottom line—some self-evident and irrecusable principle, an ideal pattern of life, a natural law under which all other criteria can be subsumed—and then to clarify this precept, to defend it against all comers, and then to proceed to apply it to particular cases for their resolution. In this familiar idealization of the moral life, the principle precedes the application to particular cases, and comes into play to solve moral issues as they arise. Principle must wait upon moral problems for its proper function.

Confucian role ethics is not ethical theory per se, but a relatively straightforward account of the human experience and a vision of the moral life. Moral excellence—*ren* 仁—like a work of art, is a specific expression of virtuosity and imagination. Far from entailing a strict application of some predetermined and self-sufficient moral principles to difficult situations, *ren* collects as a reservoir of moral meaning that is embodied in people in familial relations and that elevates and transforms the human experience. By preemptively disposing persons in family and community to a shared elegance in their various undertakings, *ren*'s function is to at least minimize the emergence of morally deficient situations. There is more justice to be found in creating a social fabric that precludes abusive situations than in punishing perpetrators of what is deemed unjust actions.

We begin from a relational, focus-field conception of person. Tang Junyi 唐君毅 (1909—1978), one of China's most prominent "New Confucians 新儒家," invokes a feature of Chinese cosmology that provides insight into the vectoral yet always contingent nature of the human experience. For Tang

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Junyi, the Confucian understanding of “human nature” is that a provisional generalized disposition that is both persistent and always under revision in its interactions with other things. In Tang’s own words, Chinese cosmology entails the notion that “human nature is nothing but the unfolding of the natural and cultural processes themselves (*xing ji tiandao guan* 性即天道观).”

All teleological and genetic assumptions we might have about being human have to be qualified by the spontaneous emergence of novelty within any specific context, and by a creative advance in any situation’s continuing present. “Human nature,” then, is the aggregating yet open-ended disposition of human beings over time, and is an expression of the ongoing attainment of relational virtuosity (*ren* 仁) within our inherited cultural legacy (*tiandao* 天道). In fact, it is precisely the indeterminate possibility for creative change that is the most salient feature of the human *xing*. What is “innate” in the *xing* of persons is most importantly the propensity for growth, cultivation, and refinement.

In Tang Junyi’s general discussion of the Confucian understanding of human nature, he notes that *xing* has two referents; it refers to the continuing existence of a particular thing itself, and also refers that which in a thing continues the life of other things. The nature of the soil, for example, lies not only in its own conditions, but also in its propensity to grow things conducive to life itself. A Confucian conception of human beings—or better, “human becomings”—is that they too are defined relationally and collaterally—not what they “are,” but what they “do” in the world.

Tang Junyi’s definition of the nature of “human becomings” in terms of their ongoing relations within their various social, natural, and cultural environments exemplifies his proposition that “one and many are inseparable—多不分观” and at the same time challenges the familiar interpretation that we are human “beings”—that is, being human entails some ready-made “given” essence or *telos*—some innate and unchanging endowment present in us from birth.

This Confucian definition of person contrasts starkly with a foundational individualism that is default in much of Western theorizing of the human experience, and has important implications for the role human beings must aspire to in the Confucian vision of a consummate moral and religious life.

Setting the Project: The *Great Learning* (*daxue* 大学)

“Where does meaning come from?” must be one of our most fundamental philosophical questions. For the Confucian project, a personal commitment to achieving relational virtuosity within one’s own family relationships is both the starting point and the ultimate source of personal, social, and indeed cosmic meaning. That is, cultivating one’s own person through achieving and sustaining meaningful relations enlarges the cosmos by adding meaning to it, and in turn, this increasingly meaningful cosmos provides a fertile context for the project of one’s own personal cultivation.

Confucius is adamant that moral motivation is the motor of personal cultivation. Always self-effacing, he not only allows but actually insists repeatedly upon one description of himself—that he “cares deeply for learning (*haoxue* 好学).” And for him, to learn means specifically to have the unrelenting resolve to become consummate in one’s conduct as a person (*ren* 仁). Becoming consummate in one’s conduct is a lifelong project that quite literally begins at home: 君子务本,本立而道生。孝弟也者,其为仁之本与。

Exemplary persons (*junzi* 君子) concentrate their efforts on the root, for the root having taken hold, one’s vision of the moral life (*dao* 道) will grow therefrom. As for family reverence (*xiao* 孝) and fraternal deference (*ti* 弟), these are, I suspect, the root of becoming consummate in one’s conduct (*ren* 仁).^①

Importantly, such consummate conduct is irreducibly collateral and transactional—the refined and elegant expression of a relational virtuosity: “能近取譬,可谓仁之方也已 Correlating one’s conduct with those close at hand can be said to be the method of becoming consummate in one’s conduct.”^② Again, Confucius insists that “为仁由己,而由人乎哉 becoming consummate in one’s conduct is self-originating—how could it originate with others?”^③ And further, he has the highest expectations for the transformative outcome of such resolve: “下学而上达 I study what is near at hand and aspire to what is lofty.”^④

Indeed, in this Confucian tradition, there is a direct corridor from the

① *Analects* 1. 2.

② *Analects* 6. 30.

③ *Analects* 12. 1.

④ *Analect* 14. 35.

moral life to a human-centered religiousness as its ultimate manifestation. Confucian religiousness—the powerful sense of personal worth and belonging that arises through the growth of meaningful relations—is the spirituality achieved within the *inspired* family and community wherein the members *aspire* to contribute themselves utterly in their relations with others. Such religiousness is itself a *product* of the flourishing family and community and the quality of this religious life is a direct consequence of the quality of communal living. Said another way, religiosity is neither the root of the flourishing community, nor the seed from which it grows, but is rather its fruit, its radiant flower. The symbiotic association between personal cultivation and the numinous is captured in the familiar mantra that is used to distinguish Confucian familial and communal reverence from God-inspired worship: “the continuity between the human experience and the divine (*tianren heyi* 天人合一).”

Family and the Beginnings of Moral Competence

In the *Analects* we find repeatedly the same radial structure of personal cultivation that is expressed in the *Great Learning*, where the vision of the moral life emerges from immediate family relations and is then, as a direct extension of family roles, extrapolated to inform one’s dealings within the community more broadly: 弟子入则孝，出则弟，谨而信，泛爱众，而亲仁。行有余力，则以学文。

As a son and a younger brother, be reverent in familial relations at home (*xiao* 孝) and be deferential to elders (*ti* 悌) in the community; be cautious in what you say and then make good on your word (*xin* 信); love the multitude broadly and be intimate with those who are consummate in their conduct (*ren* 仁). If in so behaving you still have energy left, use it to improve yourself through more academic pursuits (*xuewen* 学文).^①

Indeed, just as family is the pervasive metaphor in the Confucian worldview, familial reverence (*xiao* 孝) is both the beginning and the consequence—the means and the end—of Confucian learning. Just as one acts consummately *ren* in order to become consummately *ren*, one *xiao*’s in order to become *xiao*. Given the central role of the family in Confucianism,

^① *Analects* 1. 6. See also 1. 2, 1. 7.

appropriate family feelings are that resource from which our pathways through life emerge. The expectation repeated several times in the *Analects* is that one embarks on this journey with one's parents, and never in their lifetime ventures far from them in person or in spirit.^① The Confucian life is a family life lived together.

The *Classic of Familial Reverence* (*Xiaojing* 孝经) like the *Analects* begins by establishing the centrality of familial reverence in the project of becoming consummately human. The opening passage that seeks to set the theme for this canonical document states clearly that family feeling is the ground of both personal worth and education: “夫孝，德之本也，教之所由生也。 It is familial reverence (*xiao*),” said the Master, “that is the root of excellence (*de*), and whence education (*jiao*) itself is born.”^②

The character translated “familial reverence (*xiao* 孝)” is constituted by “elders (*lao* 老)” and “son, daughter, child (*zi* 子),” encouraging an existential understanding of what this particular combination of images would mean. Like *ren* that requires us to access and to build upon our own existential sense of what it would mean to become consummate as a “person,” *xiao* too has immediate reference to our lived experience.

In the passage cited here, Confucius in correlating family reverence and education is taking advantage of the cognate relationship between the character for “education (*jiao* 教)” and that for “familial reverence (*xiao* 孝),” where the graph for “education (*jiao* 教)” simply adds on the “branch (*zhi* 支)” radical, suggesting as it does that on the family tree, the younger generation branches out from the root and trunk of the generations that have come before. The classical *Shuowen* lexicon defines “education (*jiao*)” transactionally and generationally as “that which those above disseminate and those below emulate.” Importantly the character for education (*jiao*) itself underscores the centrality of familial reverence (*xiao*) to the actual content and purposes of education, just as the cognate relationship both of these characters have with the term “emulating (*xiao* 效)” emphasizes the modeling role that the older generation has in instructing its progeny.

In this first chapter of the *Classic of Family Reverence*, the content of “family reverence” is again defined in a way that recalls the radial and aspirational structure of the *Great Learning* by beginning most concretely from attention to one's own physical well-being and then extending this

① *Analects* 4. 19–21.

② All passages from the *Xiaojing* are adapted from Rosemont and Ames (2008).

concern outward to achieving distinction for one's progenitors:

不敢毁伤,孝之始也。立身行道,扬名于后世,以显父母,孝之终也。

Vigilance in not allowing anything to do injury to your person is where family reverence begins; distinguishing yourself and walking the proper way (*dao*) in the world; raising your name high for posterity and thereby bringing esteem to your father and mother—it is in these things that family reverence finds its consummation. This family reverence then begins in service to your parents, continues in service to your lord, and culminates in distinguishing yourself in the world.

The vocabulary surrounding this central notion of “family reverence” provides concrete guidelines for moral conduct by acknowledging the practical, situated, interpenetrating, and dispositional nature of all goods, values, and virtues. While we do have a compelling sense of how to act as mothers to our sons and uncles to our nieces, we must struggle to find real insight into the meaning of “courage” or “justice” as abstract virtues. In seeking directives for moral conduct, the ambiguity that invariably attends our practical understanding of such complex family relations is offset when we attempt to identify, stipulate, and apply what initially might seem to be more clear yet turn out to be profoundly vague moral principles.

A persistent obstacle to a deeper understanding of *xiao* arises from a common and simplistic equation between filial reverence and obedience. *Xiao* that derives from the bottom-up deference and respect children owe their elders must be distinguished clearly from *pater familias*, the top-down power and privilege of the father that we associate with Roman culture. Indeed, family relations like all relations within a Chinese ecological cosmology are collateral. The elderly certainly bask in the deference of the younger generation, but the expectation is that members of the younger generation too derive considerable pleasure from attending to the needs and feelings of their seniors.

An important consideration in understanding the workings of family reverence is that instruction is to be conducted through modeling rather than by fiat. The elder generation teaches their children appropriate deference most effectively by demonstrating the same quality of respect in their interactions with the grandparents of their children, and in their remembrances of their children's ancestors as well. Children come to emulate what transpires among the more senior relatives within the home.

But deference is only the more obvious part of the equation. At times being truly filial within the family, like being a loyal minister within the

court, requires remonstrance (*jian* 諫) rather than automatic compliance. And this remonstrance, far from being discretionary or optional, is considered a stern obligation. In the *Xunzi* too, much of an entire fascicle is devoted to the complexity of these relations, challenging any simple reading of family reverence or loyalty as obedience. It provides ready examples of where it is in fact unfilial and disloyal to comply with the demands of one's superior.^①

Remonstrance is an inclusive and reflexive concern; it is focused on the "we." How can *we* do better? As such, it must be distinguished from the kind of protest that is exclusive and dialectical—an objection directed at "you." Of course, to be effective in altering patterns of behavior, such remonstrance must be pursued with enormous sensitivity and tact, and with considerable imagination as well.

A second important stratum of familial bonding is captured in the expression, "fraternal deference (*ti* 悌):" that is, the respect expressed within the same generation by younger brothers for their elder siblings. Indeed, similar to *xiao* as the appropriate relation between elders and children, this fraternal attitude is thought to be so natural and obvious that the graph expressing it is composed of nothing more than "younger brother (*di* 弟)" together with "thoughts and feelings (*xin* 心)." The expectation is that these patterns of fraternal deference first nourished within the immediate family will overflow such initial boundaries and ripple out into the extended community to consolidate it as a super-family.

A third stratum of family reverence that is itself an extension of both family reverence (*xiao*) and fraternal deference (*ti*) is a devotion to a circle of friends (*you* 友) that range across generational bounds, and that require responses analogous to those of family members.

A Explanatory Vocabulary: *shu* 恕, *zhong* 忠, *yi* 义, *xin* 信, and *de* 德

The *Analects* provides us with an explanatory vocabulary for understanding how *ren*—a cultivated disposition to seek optimal meaning within the familiarly grounded relations that define any situation—eventuates in the moral growth of persons and their communities, and how the aggregating wisdom over time produces an *ethos*—a persistent communal

^① *Xunzi* 20.

cultural identity. How do we proceed to make the most of a situation? How do we get the most out of our conditions, human resources and otherwise? And what are the long-term outcomes of personal growth for the community and for the culture?

We begin from the moral uncertainty that attends the human experience. There is truly a momentousness to the moral life. As Confucius says, “不曰‘如之何如之何’者，吾末如之何也已矣。There is nothing that I can do for someone who is not constantly asking himself: ‘What to do? What to do?’”^① Each actual situation initially presents its own configuration of relations that needs to be inventoried and assessed with discernment. But beyond the given facticity of any state of affairs, it also entails a range of possibilities for further growth and articulation, the scope of which is dependent upon our own cultivated quality of responsiveness and upon that degree of imagination required to conjure forth what is optimally appropriate. Each encounter is unique, and requires a quality of moral intelligence to be brought to bear in order to maximize its possibilities.

Moral imagination is vital because some responses are going to be better than others. This graduated differential among possibilities means that, as a counterweight to merely habituated responses, every moment will require keen attention to alternatives and the exercise of informed judgment.

Confucius’s vision of the moral life requires unremitting attention in all of our concrete situations in order to find the most productive way forward. The demands of the moral life are unrelenting. There are no moral holidays for *ren* conduct. Indeed, it is because of Yan Hui’s capacity to sustain this attention to achieving *ren* in all of his conduct that Confucius lavishes praise on his favorite student: 回也，其心三月不违仁，其余则日月至焉而已矣。

With my student, Yan Hui, he could go for several months without departing from consummate thoughts and feelings; as for the others, only every once in a while might consummate thoughts and feelings make an appearance.^②

Whatever compass and capacity one is able to achieve in one’s fondness for learning, *ren* conduct requires that such learning be made relevant to what is immediately at hand: 博学而笃志，切问而近思，仁在其中矣。

Learn broadly yet be focused in your purposes; inquire with urgency

① *Analects* 15. 16.

② *Analects* 6. 7.

yet reflect closely on the question at hand—consummate conduct (*ren*) lies simply in this.^①

Shu is defined frequently in the classical texts and in the *Shuowen* lexicon by reference to *ren* 仁, “consummate conduct,” as the desired outcome of *shu*. The association between *shu* and *ren* is one of function. Just as *ren* is analogical—a coordination of both similarity and difference in one’s roles and relations—so *shu* too is a matter of correlating one’s own conduct with the behavior of others.

There can be no question about the central importance of *shu* in the Confucian moral vocabulary. *Shu* expresses both moral uncertainty and the creative search for an appropriate response. When Confucius claims that his “way (*dao*)” is bound together with one continuous strand, one of his senior protégées, Master Zeng, defines this thread: 夫子之道, 忠恕而已矣。

The moral vision of the Master is doing your utmost (*zhong* 忠) and putting yourself in the other’s place (*shu* 恕), nothing more.^②

On another occasion, making *shu* even more primary, Confucius identifies *shu* as “有一言而可以终身行之者 the one expression that can be acted upon until the end of one’s days.”^③

The centrality given *shu* respects the unparalleled importance of imagination in moral judgment. Imagination is not perceived as supplemental or subsidiary or remedial, but an empathetic capacity requiring education and nurturance. Like aesthetic judgment, imagination is an attempt to correlate detail with the whole picture, and in so doing, broaden the context for moral consideration.

Shu has been translated variously as “altruism” (Wing-tsit Chan), “reciprocity” (Tu Wei-ming), “consideration” (Waley), “do not do to others what you do not want them to do to you” (Fingarette), and “using oneself as a measure in gauging the wishes of others” (Lau).

Shu contrasts sharply with more abstract and calculative analytic or theoretical strategies for determining moral conduct. Understood as “putting yourself in the other’s place,” it is the most fundamental gesture of a concrete, contextualizing moral disposition. It entails a recognition of the importance of “deference” both in the sense of taking under consideration the interests of others, and deferring action until we overcome uncertainty in our

① *Analects* 19. 6.

② *Analects* 4. 15.

③ *Analects* 15. 24. Compare *Analects* 5. 12 and 12. 2.

moral inquiry. *Shu* is a contextualized doubt in search of a guiding belief to stabilize our actions.

Shu is a fundamentally aesthetic disposition initially shaped within the *xiao*- and *ti*-governed family bonds where “person” is defined by concrete roles and relations—this son responding to this grandmother, both as an object of deference and as a resource for personal growth. Subsequently, *shu* is then extended as a quality of responsiveness in relations outside of the home. “Putting yourself in the other’s place” (*shu*) is thus an omnipresent and indispensable disposition for living life thoughtfully that requires both a memory that recalls analogous situations and an imagination that provides a serial rehearsal of possible scenarios and an anticipation of their consequences. *Shu* is prompted by uncertainty—a perplexity in how to respond in a particular situation. It then requires a conjuring forth of how the alternative possibilities one can imaginatively construct might play themselves out. Finally it eventuates in crafting what one determines to be the appropriate disposition for conduct. One shapes a response through a process of analogical thinking, taking the present circumstances and associating them with other remembered or imagined correlates. There is a role for deliberation in *shu* certainly; but we do not want to overly rationalize this process. There is also a central place for a cultivated disposition and feeling. Just as a critical skepticism can become a matter of habit, so too can an empathetic responsiveness to others can become a sedimented pattern of conduct. In fact, the evolution of a *shu* disposition lies in its potential to grow from a more deliberative exercise to become a kind of moral artistry.

Certainly one of the most revealing passages in the canonical literature that stresses the central place of artistry and imagination in Confucian role ethics is the *Zhongyong* elaboration on this notion of *shu*:

子曰：“道不远人。人之为道而远人，不可以为道。《诗》云：‘伐柯伐柯，其则不远。’执柯以伐柯，睨而视之，犹以为远。故君子以人治人，改而止。忠恕违道不远，施诸己而不愿，亦勿施于人。”

The Master said, “The vision of the moral life (*dao*) is not at all remote. If someone considers this moral life to be something that is distant and inaccessible, they have taken a wrong turn. In the *Book of Songs* it says:

In hewing an axe-handle, in hewing an axe-handle—
The model is not far away. ①

① *Book of Songs* 158; compare Karlgren (1950):103.