the Cultural Revolution–inspired leftist riots and urban terrorism of 1967 is a well-known reversal of this historical "patriotic" tradition. This is a lesson yet to be taken to heart by the PRC cadres in charge of Hong Kong affairs today.

This book is both a welcome contribution to the study of Hong Kong as an integral part of modern Chinese history and a significant addition to the growing international scholarship on Hong Kong. While Professor Tsai stops in 1913, at the end of the tramway boycott, the continuation of this exciting story of Hong Kong society under the dual impact of British colonialism and Chinese nationalism can be found in Wai Kwan Chan, *The Making of Hong Kong Society: Three Studies of Class Formation in Early Hong Kong* (Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), whose coverage extends to the 1922 seamen's strike, and in Ming K. Chan, editor, *Precarious Balance: Hong Kong between China and Britain, 1842–1992* (Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, 1994), the fourth title of the series "Hong Kong Becoming China: The Transition to 1997."

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Tu Wei-ming. *Way, Learning, and Politics: Essays on the Confucian Intellectual.* Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993. xix, 202 pp. Hardcover $49.50. Paperback $16.95.

Not too many decades ago, Confucianism seemed easy to grasp. By its detractors it was presented in crude images: authoritarian rulers governing in the name of a fictitious mandate of Heaven, effete scholars immersed in feckless learning, individuals stifled by collective familial or larger social prerogatives. To its admirers, Confucianism posed as a many-splendored museum piece, its outdated historic glories frozen in the hostile present, an elegiac (and elegant) symbol of the demise of an ancient, resplendent civilization. By contrast, in some quarters in recent years, Confucianism has been touted with a flourish as the ideational wellspring of the dazzling economic success of the erstwhile Confucian societies of East Asia. Against this backdrop of a crammed tableau of perspectives, Professor Tu Wei-ming's scholarship has justifiably taken center stage in redefining the nature of the cultural complex of Confucianism. He approaches it not merely as an antiquarian subject worthy of historical inquiry, but also as a vital tradition capable of generating answers to questions asked in a postindustrial global world.

In this work under review, an anthology of nine essays previously published elsewhere between 1983 and 1987, Professor Tu, as an intellectual historian curious about the Confucian past and as a philosopher concerned with its contemporary relevance, continues his ongoing endeavor to expound the "Confucian vision" or "Confucian project." This time around, he does so with special reference to the figure of the Confucian intellectual. The effort to describe the vision or project of a cultural complex is to make it intelligible as a well-integrated system of relationships. This Tu does exceedingly well. In the first four essays, primarily through reading the *Analects*, *Mencius*, *Great Learning*, and *Mean*, he pinpoints the interrelated *Problematiken* of Confucian humanism in the classical period. First and foremost, he notes that in the fundamental notions of the Way (*dao*) and heaven (*tian*) is lodged the Confucian sense of transcendence. Yet, neither the Way nor heaven is the sacred other. It is that which is authentically human; it inheres in our nature, our own self. Transcendence is therefore necessarily self-transcendence.

Yet our pristine ontological repletion can only be realized in constant existential striving, a lifelong, painstaking process fraught with pain and suffering, as Tu reminds us. Ceaseless learning (*xue*) to do good by self-cultivation begins with the "elementary learning" (*xiaoxue*), which ritualizes the body and gives it the basic ethico-moral accoutrements, complemented by the "great learning" (*daxue*) that leads to the apprehension of spiritual self-awareness of one's connection to the large community and indeed the universe. Acquiring such an understanding then prepares one to assume the ineluctable role of a teacher, one who, having the sensitivity to sympathize and empathize with others, teaches by personal exemplification of moral living, as Confucius did. As such living must involve the social and political, one must inexorably be of service to state and society by moralizing politics and governance (*zheng*). As Tu shows, the Confucians clearly succeeded in doing so in Han times by institutionalizing the Confucian worldview and thereby ritualizing law and moralizing bureaucratism, although the unfortunate historical obverse of this process was that Confucian moral symbols were also politicized for the goal of ideological control.

In brief, to be a true Confucian literatus is to be an authentic human being, transcendently identified with the Way and heaven, yet at the same time meaningfully and actively engaged in state and society, patiently and doggedly working out the immanent qualities of humanity in the self. Such a figure is certainly much more than what Weber called a "well-adjusted man." He is a cocreator of heaven and earth, a sage, always in the act of creative self-transformation as a linkage to the larger whole. Confucian anthropology is thus imbued with an anthropocosmic outlook, and Confucian humanism is perforce an ethico-religious worldview.

In the second part of the book, comprising chapters 4 through 7, while studying, respectively, Liu Yin (1249–1293) of the Yuan, Liu Zongzhou (1578–1645) of the late Ming, and a coterie of scholars in the early Qing, Tu in effect

provides further historical data to illustrate the workings of the *Problematiken* he identifies in classical Confucianism. Of course, we gain more than a rehashing of earlier themes. The absorbing account of Liu Yin's life interwoven into the Confucian fabric of philosophic presumptions is a wonderful addition to Frederick W. Mote's earlier work on Liu.[1] The clear exposition on Liu Zongzhou's complicated philosophical anthropology is a nice complement to Tang Junyi's 1975 piece on a similar subject.[2] Tu's refusal to see early Qing thought merely as a reaction to Song Learning (*Songxue*) is a needed corrective to the prevailing view that Cheng-Zhu learning, notwithstanding its promotion by the court, played little role in forging the seventeenth-century Chinese intellectual universe. However, in this essay, Tu's rather narrow focus on "erudition" as the *leitmotif* of eighteenth-century scholarship may have unduly ignored the emphasis of scholars on the apprehension of the Way. They were as earnest as their Song-Ming predecessors in retrieving the ancient truths as their ultimate end, even if their means were different, as Tu himself seems to acknowledge (p. 139). Yü Ying-shih's thesis of the rise of Qing "intellectualism" and Benjamin Elman's work on the *kaozheng* (evidential research) movement would have furnished crucial materials for a more comprehensive depiction of Qing learning. Moreover, the question of the interrelationship between political repression and scholarly activities could have been illumined by Kent Guy's study of the compilation of the *Siku quanshu*.[3] The problem of Professor Tu's decision not to incorporate insights from pertinent studies published after the initial appearance of the essays may have manifested itself most noticeably in this particular chapter.

The last two essays witness Tu's casting backward glances at history, pondering the present, and contemplating the modern (or, perhaps more appropriately, postmodern) fate of the Confucian project. In contradistinction to Joseph Levenson's despair, Tu is cautiously hopeful that the banner of a revamped Confucianism, carried by committed Confucian intellectuals, will fly high in a pluralistic universal world. In the penultimate essay, Tu identifies himself as an active participant in the movement to revive Confucianism as "New Confucianism." History shows that the ethico-religious core ideas of classical Confucianism survived the vulgarization of a politicized Confucian ideology, the philosophical impingement of Buddhist and Daoist tenets, the external onslaught of modern Western ideas, and the internal iconoclastic attack of Chinese radicalism. Once again, in the latter part of the twentieth century, interests in Confucianism have surged, and one may look forward to its "Third Epoch" of historical existence. Just as the Confucianism of the "Second Epoch," from the tenth and eleventh centuries, reformulated itself in the face of Buddhist and Daoist challenges, so it must now universalize its concerns to address the broadest and ultimate question: "the well-being of humankind." Modern-day Confucians, by establishing "dialogue with Jewish, Christian, and Islamic theologians, with Buddhists, with Marxists, and with Freudian and

post-Freudian psychologists" (p. 159), may be able to contribute to the "creation of a new philosophical anthropology, a common creed, for humanity as a whole" (p. 158).

In the final essay, Tu laments the fate of modern Chinese intellectuals, with an underlying tone of indictment. Having lost the traditional faith in an indivi-dual's being a cosmic person uniting self and heaven, deprived of a civic space for dissidence, entrapped in the antinomic combination of "cultural iconoclasm and cultural obsession," and spurred on by an "unreflective patriotism," they no longer have been able to maintain a critical posture and have become, often voluntarily and deliberately, the handmaidens of totalitarian collectivist ideology in the name of strengthening China. But now, in the wake of the Cultural Revolution, Tu optimistically pronounces, liberation may be at hand for a whole generation of intellectuals, if only they will "attain the new by reanimating the old," and tread the "fruitful path" which is the "creative interaction between Confucian humanism and democratic liberalism in a socialist context" (p. 178).

How is one to critique Professor Tu Wei-ming's work, which is both a masterly intellectual history of traditional Confucianism and a salutary philosophic manifesto of the "New Confucianism"? On the first score, I, as a student of the Confucian tradition, am reminded of these words of George Eliot: "To reconstruct a past world, doubtless with a view to the highest purposes of truth,—what a work to be in any way present at, to assist in, though only as a lamp-holder." I indeed read and borrow from Tu's work as if I were that lamp-holder. Thanks to his careful and insightful delineation of the filaments of ideas that make up Confucianism, we have come to appreciate more fully its plenitude as a cultural complex not only with practical ethico-moral, but also with transcendent religio-spiritual, import. We have also gained a better understanding of the archetypal human paragon, the *junzi*, the profound person, not merely as an individual moral being but also as a holistic cosmic actor uniting heaven and humanity. Further still, if the ultimate point of history is to understand ourselves better, Tu's critical leaps of the historical imagination, informed by sound textual knowledge, proffer much food for thought about the human condition. The Confucian philosophical anthropology, which reconciles the prima facie mundane finite self with the ultimate infinite reality of the Way and heaven without reference to the awesome Other, is surely a beneficial perspective as postindustrial and postmodern humanity seeks to describe the universality of metamaterial existence. That this anthropology is conveyed to us with such explanatory power and narrative verve is the result of Professor Tu's refusal to treat ancient texts as though they have no other raison d'être than to be decoded. He has refigured intellectual history as a dialogic process wherein he interprets texts as much as makes them in his own cultural world. Hence the production of his New Confucianism.

However, it is one thing to endorse the contemplative or even charismatic purpose of historical knowledge. It is quite another to profess the onset of a living

philosophical movement able to arouse, in Lovejoy's words, "metaphysical pathos" in contemporary sensibilities. In terms of goals, no one can argue with the ideal advantages that Professor Tu's pursuit of an ecumenical force might accrue in the present world rife with festering chauvinistic tribal nationalisms and divisive, obdurate fundamentalisms. But what are the practical realities? Ideas such as those advanced by Tu are powerful and are often spearheads of social and political transformation, but to be successful agents of change, they must not outrun the existing symbolic resources. Many a time Tu notes the deftness of traditional Confucians in tapping the symbolic resources of the Chinese universe. (He does not define the term "symbolic.") Hence the potency of their ideas. Let us use the term "symbolic" broadly, as Robert Darton does, in connection with acts that convey meanings.[4] Then we have to ask whether in China, and in the world today, rituals related to virtues-cum-praxis such as *zhong* (loyalty) and *xiao* (filial piety) are truly meaningful anymore. And what do concepts such as the Way and Heaven symbolize or signify? Given the dominant lineal way of thinking and perceiving, will collapsing transcendence and immanence, which is the Confucian way of looking at enlightenment, appear to be sensible and comprehensible? In other words, in accordance with Pierre Bourdieu's theory, are there *habitus*, historically and culturally generated nonconscious dispositions which regulate ideas and practices, that are congenial to accommodating Confucian tenets? In the absence of such *habitus* that render behaviors and ideas matter-of-fact and commonsensical, the radical alterity or otherness of the teachings of New Confucianism cannot be overcome.[5] It will then remain an academic discourse. As such, it may be no more than the esprit de corp of the elite few, masquerading as transcultural capital for the liberation of humanity.

There are two additional problems, both acknowledged by Professor Tu himself: institutions and language. Ideas can be autonomous but are not free-floating; they require and demand embodiment. Apart from the academy, are there social and political institutions or spaces that will actively embody the New Confucianism? In the very pages of this publication, the lively discussions on Professor Wm. Theodore de Bary's *The Trouble with Confucianism* unanimously point to the paramount fact that the traditional Confucian intellectual had no real power base, no roomy civic space in which to operate.[6] Of course, their successors still do not. Even within the academy, the competing knowledge of the sciences and other practical subjects has succeeded in erecting an alternative model of the learned person. Many Chinese and East Asian students pay scant notice to the humanities and join the sciences in droves. Will the Confucian *humanitatis* ever be able to reclaim themselves as the *magister vitae*, the teacher of life?

The problem of language is also thorny. The propagation of the Confucian vision as a living universal message is only truly possible with the ready availability of Confucian texts in languages other than classical Chinese. How can this be

achieved, and how soon, if ever? Even in Chinese-speaking communities, how evocative or intelligible are those texts written in a scholastic language? Whereas once this language neatly corresponded to cultural symbols and realities, and was capable of creating a contextually comprehensible and meaningful verbal universe, it now may no longer serve as the vehicle of new conceptions.

Registering such thoughts of doubt is by no means a denigration of Professor Tu's endeavor, but a sharing of his dismay with the modern corruption of the ideal of an intellectual. While he envisions the human vessel of the *junzi* refilled with reanimated and reformed Confucianism, I envisage the vessel broken. In the end, I wonder if Chinese intellectuals, bereft of their traditional leadership, have not become at best what Karl Mannheim portrayed as the free-floating critics of entrenched ideologies and agents of utopian projections, and, at worst, henchmen of partisan causes or, recalling Hu Shih's epithet of the Confucian, "weaklings" of marginal sociopolitical relevance.

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NOTES

1. "Confucian Eremitism in the Yuan Period," in Arthur F. Wright, ed., *The Confucian Persuasion* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960), pp. 202–240.

2. "Liu Tsung-chou's Doctrine of the Moral Mind and Practice and His Critique of Wang Yang-ming," in Wm. Theodore de Bary et al., eds., *The Unfolding of Neo-Confucianism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1975), pp. 305–331.

3. Yü Ying-shih, "Some Preliminary Observations on the Rise of Ch'ing Confucian Intellectualism," *Tsing Hua Journal of Chinese Studies* 11 (1 and 2) (December 1975):105–146; Benjamin A. Elman, *From Philosophy to Philology: Intellectual and Social Aspects of Change in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984); and R. Kent Guy, *The Emperor's Four Treasuries: Scholars and the State in the Late Ch'ien-lung Era* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987).

4. "The Symbolic Element in History," *Journal of Modern History* 58 (1) (1986): 223.

5. Bourdieu's theory of the *habitus* is interspersed in many of his recent writings. One of the most coherent discussions of the theory can be found in his *The Logic of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), pp. 52–65.

6. *China Review International* 1 (1) (Spring 1994): 10–47.