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Nicolas Zufferey

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ties and differences. Therefore, speaking in general, I conclude that the world would be a better place if more people would emulate Hall and Ames’ effort.

Haixia Wang Lan

Haixia Wang Lan is an assistant professor of English Rhetoric/Composition at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse specializing in comparative/contrastive rhetoric.


Tradition und Moderne (Tradition and modernity) is the collected papers offered at the 1996 conference of the German Association for Chinese Studies (DVCS) in Berlin. The DVCS meets annually, and each year the theme can be rather precise in scope (the Tang dynasty in 1991, the history and current state of German sinology in 1997), or, on the contrary, it can be virtually all-encompassing, as is the case with the collection reviewed here. Among the fifteen contributors a good balance was found between well-established and younger scholars (five were in their early thirties at the time of the conference). For each essay there is an English summary, which in some cases is long and precise enough to give a fair idea of the content, together with a list of key words (in German). Chinese characters are inserted into the text, which makes for easier reading, but on the whole the book is rather dull, as is too often the case with conference proceedings. The volume is dedicated to the memory of Wolfgang Bauer.

In China, tradition and modernity have often been seen as mutually antagonistic, and Heiner Roetz’ essay (pp. 15–35) is aimed at those in China who refuse Western values such as democracy and human rights on the pretext that they are incompatible with Chinese tradition—instead such people favor “Asian values,” that is, a collective and authoritarian model of society. Part of the problem is that the tradition on which they rely for their argumentation was in reality never either as homogeneous or as unchanging as it appears to them. In addition, there are many arguments against tradition in ancient Chinese texts, notably in Mohist and Legalist writings, and Confucius himself cautioned that tradition was not to be followed blindly. As a consequence, appeals to tradition in order to reject hu-
man rights and democracy are void. All this may not be utterly new, but Roetz deserves credit for offering a systematically arranged list, from all points of view (logical, epistemological, moral, etc.), of ancient arguments against tradition. There are also some stimulating views in his essay—for instance the idea that there was an essential relationship between the interruption of hereditary titles at the end of the Zhou dynasty and the rejection of tradition in the philosophical writings of the time.

Ulrich Lau (pp. 37–57) deals with the earlier stage of jurisdiction in China during the Zhou, before it was rationalized and formalized. In order to verify the hypothesis that in early China as well as in other civilizations law was embedded in a religious context, he examines early legal terms, showing that etymologically a number of these words were linked to ritual or sacrificial practices—thus the component “sheep” in yi (“norm”) suggests that totemic representations influenced early Zhou legal terms. Lau relies on etymology, but also on semantic comparisons between characters belonging to the same word families (see B. Karlgren and E. Pulleyblank).

Hans-Georg Möller (pp. 49–60), relying on Guo Xiang’s interpretation, tries to understand “more Taoistically” (p. 50) the famous “butterfly dream” in the Zhuangzi, which, in standard modern interpretations—for instance, that of Giles—is read as a lesson about the accidental and transient nature of human existence. In Giles’ interpretation, Zhuangzi remembers his dream when he awakes, while this is not so in Guo Xiang’s reading of the story. Giles’ interpretation cannot be labeled “absolutely wrong,” but in Möller’s view it is less Taoistic than Guo Xiang’s suggestion that waking and sleeping are two separate realities—a metaphor for the two separate realms of life and death: the story thus becomes a lesson about the Taoist sage who must lose his “self” in order to achieve a state of “non-presence” within the revolving circle of life and death. A complete translation of the Zhuangzi passage is offered with Guo Xiang’s commentary on it. One could object to Möller’s interesting contention that Taoism was not a very homogeneous “school” of thought (as is apparent from the Zhuangzi itself), with the result that it is difficult to know what is and what is not genuinely Taoistic.

Hans-Rudolf Kantor (pp. 61–81)devotes a solid essay to the problem of “Evil” according to the Tiantai school of Buddhism. This school offered a synthesis of the various writings and teachings of Buddhism in terms of period (in Buddha’s life), method (sudden doctrine, gradual doctrine, etc.), and audience. At the highest level of the Tiantai doctrine, each individual thing is identical with the whole and contains everything, and in the final analysis, good and evil themselves are identical—they are not only moral values but at the same time ontological categories that form a dynamic pattern of correlation in the world of phenomena. In order to make this essay fit the theme that forms the subject of the book, Kantor could have added that the Tiantai method of getting the best of apparently con-
tradictory doctrines in order to construct a synthesis that integrates them all was neither the first nor the least of its kind in China: from at least the Han dynasty onward, syncretization can even be considered to be an essential trait of Chinese civilization, as is apparent from the various systems of thought that, in the twentieth century, attempted to attune Chinese tradition to Western modernity.

There is a logical sequence between Kantor’s subject and the following essay by Ralf Moritz (pp. 83–98) on the task for Neo-Confucianism of reconciling the imperfection and differentiation of reality (what “is”) with the oneness and perfection of what “should be.” Moritz insists that this effort of rational integration and unification of differences was a reflection of the social changes of the time: it matched the necessity of overcoming the contradiction between the complexity of a premodern society on the one hand and a standardized elite that shared with the ruler a very unified view of government on the other.

Volker Klöpsch (pp. 99–112) evokes the Chinese appropriation of the figure of Mulian (Maudgalyayana), a disciple of the Buddha who became a very important figure in Chinese literature and drama. One explanation for Mulian’s popularity in China was his descent into hell in order to save his mother, a story that resonated with the Chinese concern with filial piety (xiao). The core of the essay is a translation of the very vivid description offered by the famous writer and poet Zhang Dai (1599–1684) of a private theatrical performance arranged in a family setting; this shows that Mulian was no longer the exclusive property of institutionalized religion—even if the performance remained religious in nature.

Bernhard Führer (pp. 113–142) devotes his attention to the Shaobingge (Pancake ballad), a work that is reminiscent of the prophecies of Nostradamus. In its present form(s), the Shaobingge is a compilation of obscure political “predictions” concerning various events of the Ming and Qing dynasties. It was ascribed to Liu Ji (Liu Bowen), a famous adviser to Zhu Yuanzhang, the founder of the Ming dynasty. Like other similar works, the predictions were written post eventum—in the case of the Shaobingge, at the end of the Qing. But, in fact, the Shaobingge is only the last chapter (?) in a long story: until the end of the Ming, the prophecies made to Zhu Yuanzhang were in fact ascribed to people other than Liu Ji, and there are traces of Ming divination books with names very close to the Shaobingge (e.g., Zhengbingge and Quebingge). Führer’s excellent scholarship may appear to be employed on a rather secondary object, but in many respects (creation by accretion, problems of authorship, attribution to past figures, existence of concomitant versions, etc.) the story of the Shaobingge is instructive for the history of ancient Chinese texts in general.

Martin Kern (pp. 143–163) analyzes the classification scheme in Yao Nai’s famous anthology GuwenCi leizhuan (A classified compendium of ancient-style literary compositions) (1779), where texts are grouped according to their “respective situational uses” (e.g., discussions, prefaces, edicts) rather than according to liter-
ary or formal criteria. On the whole, Kern’s analysis is convincing: his contention that genre theory in ancient Chinese literature was not purely formal (or literary) is certainly true. There was a sort of fascination with categorizing in ancient China, where classifications were offered in all the fields of human knowledge, and in this respect Kern’s essay is a useful contribution to an important subject. The fact remains that the thinking behind these classifications often eludes modern Western rationality, and a small criticism that comes to this reviewer’s mind is that Kern perhaps overestimates the homogeneity and strictness of classification in the Guwen ci leizhuan; thus, Yao Nai did not dismiss formal considerations altogether—as is apparent from the binomial nature of the title of each chapter.

Helga Scherner’s long essay on Sun Yat-sen and the May Fourth Movement (pp. 165–193) is a description of the ideas of the intellectuals at that time, and of the differences between the Xin qingnian’s radical views and the more moderate ideas of Sun Yat-sen. The essay is a good synthesis, but it does not shed much new light on the question; a matter of surprise is the very few references made to recent Western scholarship on the May Fourth Movement. On the other hand, Scherner must be commended for quoting a number of Chinese sources that are often mentioned but rarely read.

For her part, Gabriele Goldfuss (pp. 195–206) discusses the various strategies of transformation imagined for Buddhism at the beginning of the century in order to make this religion compatible with modernity. Goldfuss contrasts two main tendencies: there were people who intended simply to reform Buddhism and others who, more radically, tried to reinvent it, for instance by transforming it into a very intellectualized system of thought, stripped of its ritual and religious aspects. A few studies have been devoted to the challenge of modernity for Buddhism at the turn of the century in China, including Goldfuss’ excellent doctoral paper (as yet unpublished) on the lay editor and Buddhist supporter Yang Wenhui. In Goldfuss’ view, Yang embodied a third tendency within Buddhism at the time, rather conservative as far as doctrine and institutions are concerned (religious and clerical features of Buddhism were to be preserved), but at the same time innovative in terms of social action and education.

An interesting point to be made here is that the most popular forms of Buddhism today are in many respects close to Yang Wenhui’s ideals. Thus, the late lamented Helmut Martin (pp. 207–222) examines the revival of popular Buddhism in contemporary Taiwan, the most patent manifestation of which is the success of the Ciji Gongdehui (Tzu Chi Compassion Relief Association). This movement, with several million followers (mainly women) in Taiwan alone, puts a strong emphasis on social relief and humanitarian action. It has done particularly well on the occasion of natural disasters both in Taiwan and on the continent, and is now active far beyond the Chinese world; its medical branch (TIMMA), notably, is present in many Third World countries. In a book devoted to the tension be-
tween tradition and modernity, Martin could have discussed the relationships between these new forms of Buddhism, which to some extent were influenced by Christian ideas of charity, and traditional Buddhism, which also supported social action. (See, on the same subject, a more recent study by Chien-Yu Julia Huang and Robert P. Weller, “Merit and Mothering: Women and Social Welfare in Taiwanese Buddhism,” in *Journal of Asian Studies* 57, no. 2 [1998]: 379–396.)

There follows an essay by Katharina Wenzel-Teuber (pp. 223–238) on the current policy of the Communist Party toward religion in China, or, more precisely, the policy as it existed in 1996—an important difference, indeed, because the essay was written before the massive Falun Gong protests of April 1999, which had a very important impact on the religious situation in China. But if Wenzel-Teuber’s essay has in a few respects been overtaken by events, her main contention that the Chinese government was taking a tougher stance against religions has received ample confirmation; and she rightly emphasizes that there is a contradiction in religious policy, where along with a determination to control religious movements there must at the same time be a tolerance for activities that contribute to social integration and moral education, which also help to supplement the official deficit in welfare, and which, last but not least, help to attract the foreign capital essential for financing development projects.

Peter Kupfer (pp. 239–257) is concerned with the rise of Han chauvinism in modern-day China—a consequence, of course, of the growing importance of the country on the world scene, but also the result of ambiguous incitements on the part of a government that increasingly relies on nationalism to retain its power (as Kupfer aptly remarks, “patriotism” and “socialism” have become true synonyms in contemporary political rhetoric). And, of course, Han chauvinism is also a reaction to the growing consequences of the irrevocable opening up of the country to the world and the brisk march into the “information age,” which represent a challenge to national identity and traditional values. While several of Kupfer’s conclusions will perhaps fail to win wholehearted support (thus he is probably too optimistic about the pace of technical progress in China), he is probably right that the incorporation of China into the world community will not automatically convert all its inhabitants to the idea that China is a country like any other. The present reviewer also agrees with Kupfer’s view that Western sinology has a share in the blame, to the extent that it contributed to the creation of a myth of China and of Chinese civilization. Undoubtedly, Han chauvinism is not on the decline, as is apparent from the recent promotion of Chinese characters to the status of the fifth contribution of Chinese civilization to humankind, an instructive development that Kupfer discusses at length.

Caroline Draeger (pp. 259–273) offers an interesting and well-documented outline of the development of literature written in Chinese in Malaysia and Singapore. Before 1965, there was an increasing demand among the Chinese living
on the Malay Peninsula for a regional literature dealing with local problems, and thus different from mainland and Taiwanese literature. However, literature as a whole suffered from war and political unrest, and one had to wait until the early sixties to see the development of a truly regional literature. After 1965 and the independence of Singapore, the literature in that city suffered from censorship and, more critically, from the pervasive influence of English. In Malaysia, the situation was scarcely better, the Chinese being confronted by all sorts of discrimination. On the whole, the literatures of Malaysia and Singapore have never been very successful, but Draeger nonetheless believes that they deserve to be seen as independent regional literatures.

Considered individually, the majority of the essays here rate from good to excellent, but as a collection the book lacks homogeneity, a defect that is unavoidable in such collective undertakings but that to some extent could have been mitigated by more active intervention on the part of the editors. This does not make things easy for the reviewer, who hesitates between considering the book as a whole and seeing it as a mere collection of unrelated essays. In fact, the latter is probably closer to the truth: only three essays (by Roetz, Goldfuss, and Kupfer) address directly the theme announced by the title of the book: tradition and modernity. Contributions such as the ones by Martin and Wenzel-Teuber, which deal with the development of ancient ideas and practices (mainly religious) in modern China can also be said to fall within the scope of the title. As for the bulk of essays dealing with ancient China, the links with the main theme are, with some exceptions (e.g., Lau and Moritz), very indirect, if they can be said to exist at all. Generally speaking, it is unfortunate that nowhere in the book is a conceptual approach offered to the very notions of “tradition” and “modernity,” nor is there a systematic discussion of the possible ancient equivalents of these words.

As far as disciplines are concerned, religion (and particularly Buddhism) is strongly represented with five essays, while only one essay is devoted to Confucianism (by Moritz) together with a few paragraphs in Roetz’ contribution; this is certainly not enough, because Confucianism rather than Buddhism is at the core of Chinese civilization and the discussions on tradition and modernity in China today.

In style, too, there is a discrepancy between essays that are accessible to the general reader and others that are not. Their difficulty notwithstanding, a number of contributions (especially those by Roetz, Moritz, Goldfuss, Martin, Wenzel-Teuber, and Kupfer) have implications that are of interest to any student of China, while the remainder are rather the province of specialists in the respective fields.

Nicolas Zufferey

Nicolas Zufferey is a senior lecturer in the Department of Chinese Studies at the University of Geneva.