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Cosmopolitan Confucian cultures: suggestions for future research and practice

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Abstract Is the success of the Chinese in so many domains all over the world evidence that they are cosmopolitan "citizens of the world," at home in different environments, able to negotiate all the cultural complexities of a globalizing world? Have Confucian cultures become "cosmopolitan cultures"? The revival of Confucianism in the People's Republic of China has been associated with cultural nationalism, while others argue for cosmopolitan interpretations of Confucianism. Philosophically, Confucianism is incompatible with a certain well-known liberal conception of cosmopolitanism emphasizing impartiality and individual equality, but the early Confucian texts have resources that could contribute to contemporary moral response to cultural diversity. This paper explores the relationship between Confucianism and cosmopolitanism from a different angle by asking how Chinese diasporic communities reconcile the different demands of loyalty to ancestral culture, of cultural identity, with those of living among people of other cultures; making a living and sometimes making a fortune in today's global capitalist economies; being mobile in a way that their ancestors could not even imagine; and thereby having access to more of the world than Diogenes could even dream of when he coined the term "*kosmopolitês*." It argues that there is a need to go beyond philosophical reconciliation, for more interdisciplinary studies of Confucian cultures in diasporic communities and networks, for the actual experience of these communities and networks in negotiating between cosmopolitan trends and aspirations on the one hand, and ethnocentric biases and prejudices on the other, provides better understanding of what Confucianism could contribute to contemporary cosmopolitanism and the potential of Confucianism to transform global capitalism.

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In every major cities, on every continent, in remote corners of the earth, there are Chinese communities. Chinese entrepreneurs and professionals form transnational networks of "flexible citizens," sometimes portrayed as sharing—besides language, ethnicity, and more or less real kinship affiliations—a set of Confucian-inspired values that give them a comparative advantage in the processes of global capitalism.[1] Is the success of the Chinese in so many domains all over the world evidence that they are cosmopolitan "citizens of the world," at home in different environments, able to negotiate all the cultural complexities of a globalizing world? Have Confucian cultures become "cosmopolitan cultures"? The revival of Confucianism in the People's Republic of China has been associated with cultural nationalism (Kang 2008), while Bell (2009) argues that Confucian nationalism, locating allegiance to the nation-state between family bonds and global ethical concern in Confucian "gradated" love, provides an antidote to popular xenophobic nationalism that raises the nation-state above all. Critics of nationalism have used cosmopolitan interpretations of Confucianism, often citing the ethical goal of "bringing peace to the world" from the "Great Learning" chapter of the *Record of Rites* (*Liji*) to resist such association, while others argue that Confucian concern for "all under heaven" (*tianxia*) has a very different perspective of persons and their relationship to the world when compared with cosmopolitanism, commonly understood as rejecting particularistic attachments and treating everyone equally, regardless of nationality or any other particular identities and relationships to oneself.

Philosophically, Confucianism is incompatible with a certain well-known conception of cosmopolitanism, as Ivanhoe (2014, p. 27) has shown in his criticism of Martha Nussbaum's liberal cosmopolitanism as a moral principle that views moral agents as first and foremost moral individuals, who "owe deep allegiance to no particular people, places, religions, cultures, or states; their ultimate and overriding allegiance is to what is right, with right understood in terms of the duties appropriate for a particular type of Kantian moral agent." However, he identifies a second conception of cosmopolitanism that is about moral response to cultural diversity in Nussbaum's call for multicultural education. Ivanhoe argues that the two conceptions do not fit well together and Nussbaum's desired cosmopolitan education is better supported by two alternative versions of cosmopolitanism, which he develops from two passages in the *Analects*. Ivanhoe (2014, p. 34) proposes a Confucian cosmopolitanism in which "the cosmopolitan is not a citizen of nowhere but an interested guest or visitor of various cultures and ways of life who is comfortable around the world." Neville (2012) has drawn on the resources of early Confucian texts to articulate five dimensions of contemporary cosmopolitanism—in decision making, engaging others, attaining personal wholeness, the ultimate value-identity of life, and religious sensibility—thus offering us a contemporary Confucian cosmopolitanism.

[1] Ong (1999), Weidenbaum (1996), Callahan (2002). As early as 1979, Kahn (1979) suggested a connection between Confucian values and economic development; see also MacFarquhar (1980, pp. 67–72). For a skeptical view of Confucianism's supposed positive distinctive role in capitalism, see Yao (1996).

Besides these philosophical attempts to develop Confucian cosmopolitanism, Zhao Tingyang proposes a new approach in international relations based on the concept of *tianxia* found in the Confucian ideal of "bringing peace to the world"—the *tianxia* system provides a model to address problems of world politics from a world perspective rather than the current nation-states based international system (Zhao 2005, 2009. Cf. Gan 2012; Xu 2012).

This paper explores the relationship between Confucianism and cosmopolitanism from a different angle by asking how Chinese diasporic communities reconcile the different demands of loyalty to ancestral culture, of cultural identity, with those of living among people of other cultures; making a living and sometimes making a fortune in today's global capitalist economies; being mobile in a way that their ancestors could not even imagine; and thereby having access to more of the world than Diogenes could even dream of when he coined the term "*kosmopolitês*." A brief survey of the history of cosmopolitanism in Europe and North America reveals that cosmopolitan aspirations and ethnocentric prejudices have existed in parallel even in societies where cosmopolitan philosophy is explicitly espoused. While Confucian philosophy might have cosmopolitan potential, there is also historical evidence of parochialism and ethnocentrism in Chinese societies, and even in Confucian texts. Beyond philosophical reconciliation at purely conceptual level, the project of Confucian cosmopolitanism has a better chance of living up to the pragmatic aspirations inherent in Confucianism, that is, making a real difference in the world of concrete experience, if the inquiry takes a more inter-disciplinary approach to study Confucian cultures in diasporic communities and networks. These communities and networks have actual experience of negotiating between cosmopolitan trends and aspirations on the one hand and ethnocentric biases and prejudices on the other. This paper lays the philosophical foundations for such inter-disciplinary studies to achieve better understanding of what Confucianism could contribute to contemporary cosmopolitanism and the potential of Confucianism transforming global capitalism. Within the conceptual framework of a Confucian cosmopolitanism that eschews one-sided universalism, which almost inevitably falls prey to ethnocentric conceptions, in favor of a balance between universality and particularity that focuses on specific practices in particular contexts in order to achieve cosmopolitan inclusiveness through the local and immediate, it proposes understanding cosmopolitanism in terms of local and immediate cultural practices, and considers the relevance of Confucian rituals (*li* 禮)—the central means of creating and maintaining solidarity in Confucian communities—to the creating of cosmopolitan cultures.

Confucianism and Chineseness

According to Tu (1989, p. 6), "If the English speaking community were to choose one word to characterize the Chinese way of life for the last two thousand years, the word would be 'Confucian.'"[2] He believes that Confucianism is a permanent

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[2] Popular works on "Chinese culture" regularly includes Confucianism, and scholarly reiteration of this may be found in Fung Yu-lan's response at the Columbia University Convocation in his honor on 10 September 1982, in the *Proceedings of the Heyman Center*. This was also taken for granted by Qian Mu, Tang Junyi, Xu Fuguan and Mou Zongsan (Chang 1976).

part of the "psycho-cultural construct of the contemporary Chinese intellectual as well as the Chinese peasant" (Tu 1984, p. 80, 1989, p. 38). Yet, the relationship between Confucianism and "Chineseness" has been tenuous. Historically, Confucianism did not remain merely "Chinese"—if by that we mean the people who originate in what is today known as mainland China—and only ethnocentric prejudice could deny Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese Confucianisms their own cultural distinctiveness. If the Mongol and Manchu invaders became "Chinese" in the process of becoming "Confucian," then their very transformation also changed the very meaning of "Chineseness." In the world of fashion, the *cheongsam* has been culturally identified as "Chinese"; in fact, it is the traditional dress of the Manchus. Travelers from mainland China often find the "Chinese" food in Southeast Asia not to their taste because Malay, Indian, and other influences have transformed (and we would argue greatly enriched) the "Chinese" cuisine in those communities. Insofar as other East Asians have become Confucian voluntarily, they do not simply copy every Confucian practice from the Chinese, but rather practice Confucianism in ways adapted to their own local conditions. They certainly do not become "Chinese" just because they have become Confucian. Within China itself, Confucianism has also been only one among many components that constitute "Chinese culture." In different regions of China, Confucian teachings and practices interact with local conditions and other prevailing beliefs and customs to yield different forms of practices which were Confucian in origin or intent, but not always identified as such. In a different form of adaptation, Confucian philosophy has transformed itself to meet the challenges of Daoism and Buddhism, sometimes by incorporating elements from these rivals. This has led contemporary scholars to compare the adaptation of Confucianism confronted by the challenges of Western modernity in the last two centuries with those earlier successful adaptations.[3]

In the twentieth century, Confucianism has not always been considered an essential part of being Chinese. Inspired by Enlightenment thought, May Fourth intellectuals rejected Chinese traditional culture, especially Confucianism, in favor of science and democracy in their iconoclastic quest for a new culture. Chinese nationalists from 1925 to the mid-1950s marginalized Confucianism and the Cultural Revolution of the Mao era attacked Confucianism (Wang 1996, p. 7). The early years of Deng Xiaoping's reforms were not without its own strand of iconoclasm. In an argument reminiscent of the May Fourth movement, the 1988 television mini-series, *River Elegy* (*Heshang* 河殤), portrayed Chinese culture as tyrannical and confining; it recommended that the Chinese move in the direction of modernization, democratization, and globalization (Su 1992). The *River Elegy* was the center-piece of the "cultural fever" (*wenhua re* 文化熱) in China during the 1980s as a controversy arose about the comparative merits of Western modernism and Chinese traditional culture to China's modernization.

[3] This is the import of Tu Wei-ming's "third epoch of Confucian humanism," and before him Mou Zongsan's "third wave Confucianism."

The contrast between the People's Republic of China and the "outside world" at the end of the 1970s presented Chinese intellectuals with a "cultural dilemma: either attempt to modernize China in line with the outside world or endeavor to preserve the cultural traditions that had been the very basis for Chinese cultural pride" (Song 2003, p. 82). Chinese scholars turned their attention to Confucianism, which was singled out in the culturalist explanation of the capitalist successes of East Asian economies of Japan and the four little "dragons" in Asia (Taiwan, South Korea, Hong Kong, and Singapore).[4] It was during this "cultural fever" that Tu Wei-ming visited Beijing in 1985, an event regarded as the beginning of "the return of New Confucianism to its homeland" (Song 2003, p. 85). With the help of Confucian scholars from overseas, mainland China has been reconstructing the Confucian ideal to meet its political and cultural needs. The "culture fever" laid the groundwork for the "national studies craze" (*guoxue re* 國學熱) of the subsequent decade, Confucianism is a key part of what is considered "national studies." As impressive economic achievements encouraged the Chinese to recover their sense of cultural pride if not superiority, Confucianism is a prominent presence in the rising cultural nationalism in the People's Republic of China (Zheng 1999, pp. 67–81; see also Chen 1997; Xiao 1994). Many recognize that, if Confucianism has a permanent place in Chinese culture, its practical and philosophical reconciliation with China's current modernization and the trends of globalization must certainly shape China's future and transform Confucianism as well.

The sometimes xenophobic outpourings of nationalist sentiments in mainland China may fuel fears of the "clash of civilization" made famous by Samuel Huntington. There is no need to add to the many critiques of Huntington's thesis. The diversity of Chinese culture, or rather Chinese cultures, and their loose affiliation with Confucianism; the diversity of Confucianisms and the dispersed Confucian communities living in far apart territories with very different historical and geopolitical interests, cast doubt on Huntington's fear about a "Confucian civilization" ranging itself against "the West" (which is itself an abstraction of academic discourse). Rather than geopolitics on a civilizational scale, a study of what remains of "Confucian culture" in the Chinese *diaspora* could help us understand and thereby improve social interaction at the day to day level of peoples of different cultures living in close proximity as a result of the demands globalization impose on communities and organizations, as well as individuals. Cultures play a part in the tensions between cohesion and conflict. Such a study seeks a better understanding of how to balance the need for intra-group unity and identification with the demands of inter-group interaction in increasingly complex social processes of the new globalizing age. In the case of Confucianism, to what extent does it still serve as the cultural marker of the "Chinese"? Does Confucian culture facilitate or obstruct cosmopolitanism? As the background for the empirical study to answer these questions, the next section will examine the philosophical obstacles and resources for reconciling Confucianism and cosmopolitanism.

[4] This "post-Confucian" thesis (Kahn 1979) inspired a series of works elaborating it.

Chinese and barbarians in Confucian texts

Despite its very extensive *diaspora*, the Chinese for a long time had an aversion to travelling abroad, let alone more permanent migration. For long periods of its history, China was "earthbound" in the sense that "Chinese who went overseas may be seen as atypical, if not downright un-Chinese" (Wang 2000, p. 3). Between 1370s and 1893, Chinese who left China's shores without approved reason were treated as criminals upon their return. Even after the ban on foreign travel was lifted, the assumption was that Chinese migrants living abroad were "sojourners" (*huaqiao* 華僑) who would eventually return to China. Even when return became impossible or no longer desirable, compared to other migrants they gave the impression of being more resistant to assimilation into the dominant cultures of the places they had settled, although whether or not any Chinese community outside China was able to maintain its "Chinese" identity and gain recognition as a separate group also depend on the politics of the country it is located in, the politics in China and the relations between the community and its host country with China. Besides the difficulties and perils of travel and a "continental mindset" arising from China's geopolitical situation for much of China's history, the Chinese aversion to venturing too far from home could also be partly blamed on its Confucian legacy.[5]

> The Master said, "When your parents are alive, do not journey far, and when you do travel, be sure to have a specific destination."[6]

To fulfill his filial responsibility, a virtuous Confucian would stay close to home to take care of his parents on a daily basis, and any unavoidable travel should be undertaken with very specific destinations so that the traveler could be contacted if necessary; and travel should be limited to trips short enough for him to return in time for his parents' funeral should the unfortunate need arose. This is not itself a complete embargo on travel abroad even when parents are alive, and poses no limit after one's parents have passed away. Confucius himself travelled more than most of his contemporaries, spending more than a decade (497–484 BCE) outside his home state of Lu (in present day Shandong province). Unsuccessful in persuading the ruler of Lu to adopt his advice in governing, Confucius sought to put his philosophy into practice elsewhere. He served in the states of Wei and Chen, passed through the state of Song and also visited the state of Cai.[7] One might compare Confucius to present-day foreign guest workers or global talents whose employment takes them away from their home country for long periods of time; or perhaps even more tempting a comparison would be with various missionaries, since for Confucius, it was not so much a matter of seeking better economic opportunities—making a (better) living for self and family—but pursuing an arguably grander mission of setting the world on the right path. Far from being parochial, Confucian philosophy

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[5] For discussion of China's "continental mindset" and its influence on Chinese migration and China's relations with South East Asia, see Wang (2000, chap. 1).

[6] *Analects* 4.19. Unless otherwise stated, citations from *The Analects* are from Ames and Rosemont (1998).

[7] See "Events in the Life of Confucius" in Lau (1979, pp. 170–177).

could be considered expansive in extending its quest of personal-cultivation through ordering families, to governing states well, all the way to bringing peace to all under heaven (*tianxia* 天下). In not being confined spatially or even temporally, one might characterize the Confucian moral vision as cosmopolitan.

While Confucius' actual travels were confined to the "Chinese states" on the central plains between the River Yangtze and the Yellow River, traditionally known as *zhu xia* 諸夏, he did think of venturing further, beyond the borders of the civilized world as he knew it.

> The Master wanted to go and live amongst the nine clans of the Eastern *Yi* [夷] Barbarians. Someone said to him, "What would you do about their crudeness?"
> The Master replied, "Were an exemplary person (*junzi* 君子) to live among them, what crudeness could there be?" (*Analects* 9.14)

Although a Korean friend once suggested that the last line of the above passage should be read as affirming that the land of the Eastern *Yi* (somewhere in today's Korean peninsula) was populated with exemplary persons and so there was no crudeness to worry any visitor, it is more likely that the speaker was expressing the common deprecatory prejudice against those living outside the central plains. Confucius could be read as sharing this prejudice up to a point, or at least he did not think it necessary to criticize its bias. However, instead of allowing that to be a reason to avoid foreign lands, he believed that the exemplary person could and should transform barbarians were he to live among them. The same sense of cultural superiority is evident in Confucius' remark in another *Analects* passage implying that the non-Chinese tribes were comparatively inferior.[8]

> The Master said, "The *Yi* and *Di* [夷狄] barbarian tribes with rulers are not as viable as the various Chinese states [諸夏] without them." (*Analects* 3.5)

Insofar as Confucius believed himself to be the bearer of a moral mission, it should be carried out in all places under heaven. While there is a danger that sojourning among barbarians might erode one's virtue, if one could persevere in one's virtuous practice and continue to follow the way as an exemplary person should, then such exemplary behavior would lead the barbarians toward the Confucian way of personal cultivation and harmonious community based on virtue.

This attitude could be akin to Europeans colonizing other parts of the world professing to "civilize the natives." It is not difficult to find ethnocentrism in the long and complex history of the Confucian tradition. After Confucius, Mencius responded that he "had heard of the Chinese converting barbarians to their ways, but not of their being converted to barbarian ways," when some people expressed an interest in the teachings of Xu Xing, a man from what was presumably considered

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[8] The "distinction between Chinese and barbarian" (*yi xia zhi bian* 夷夏之辯) became a central issue later in the tradition and its ethnocentrism sometimes descended into xenophobia. For more detailed discussion of the "ethnocentric currents" in Confucianism, see Tan (2005a, pp. 437–39).

"barbarian" region in the south (Lau 1984, 3A4). Tang dynasty Confucian Han Yu (786–824) also rejected Buddhism for being "a cult of the barbarian people."[9] Mencius in the same passage referred to Xu Xing as "the southern barbarian with the twittering tongue." This disparaging comparison of foreigners to birds or beasts, thereby casting doubt on their humanity is also very evident in Han Yu's writings: "Make humans of [the barbarians], burn their books, make homes of their dwellings, make clear the ways of the former kings to guide them," for "humans are the masters of barbarians and beasts."[10] Han Yu at least encouraged the Chinese to treat both barbarians and beasts benevolently. During the transition from the Ming to the Qing dynasty, when China was conquered by barbarians, Wang Fuzhi (1619–1692) completely abandoned Confucius' teachings that one must maintain the standards of an exemplary person even when living among barbarians. For Wang, "it would not be dishonest to deceive them, nor inhumane to kill them, nor ethically wrong to rob them."[11] Such ethnocentric strands in the tradition certainly point to a less than cosmopolitan worldview. However, in this respect—where cosmopolitanism co-exists or is even closely intertwined with ethnocentrism—there is more similarity than differences between China and Western societies. Although cosmopolitanism originated in ancient Greece and received significant attention and development in the history of European thought, European countries historically has not been free from the taint of ethnocentrism either. The next section will examine briefly the tenuous relationship between cosmopolitanism and ethnocentrism in European history of philosophy and contemporary efforts to address the problem.

Western cosmopolitanism and ethnocentrism

When asked, "Where are you from?" Diogenes the Cynic (ca. 412–323 BC) was reputed to have answered, "*kosmopolitês*," thus inventing a term which has been translated into "cosmopolitan" or "world-citizen" in English. In ancient Greece where the concept was born, the citizen is member of a *polis*, a city-state, which defines at least in part his identity, and demands his entire allegiance. Diogenes's new term takes the citizen out of the city, and expands his horizon to encompass the world. However, the equating of *Kosmo* with "world" is problematic. There is some question as to when the term came to mean the universe, and even then it was distinguished and even contrasted with, rather than included, the earth. It is also possible that during Diogenes time, "*kosmopolitês*" might mean instead "citizen of an ordered city"—in that case, it is advocating that one's allegiance should be to an ideal order rather than any physical city or actual political entity. In ancient Greece, Cynic cosmopolitanism is part of a personal ethic directed towards the pursuit of

[9] "Memorial on the Bone of Buddha" (*Lun fogu biao* 论佛骨表), in Han (1935, p. 333). Translated in de Bary and Bloom (1999, vol. 1).

[10] "The Source of the Way" (*Yuandao* 原道) in Han (1935, p. 131) (de Bary and Bloom 1999, p. 573); "The Source of Humanity" (*Yuanren* 原人), in Han (1935, p. 133) (author's translation).

[11] Wang (1936, p. 607). For more on the ethnocentric strands in Confucianism co-existing with cross-cultural learning and philosophical resources that could contribute to different cultures achieving mutual understanding and peaceful interactions, see Tan (2005a).

happiness or human flourishing, centered around the doctrine of *autarkeia*, self-sufficiency emphasizing indifference to all things external and independence from circumstances, including independence from political community. For Cynics, only virtue (*aretê*) has intrinsic value and the cultivation of virtue is a personal quest. They were generally dismissive of conventional politics and advocated following the laws of nature instead of the conventional laws of the Greek cities. The true city for the Cynic was an ideal community of Cynic sages sharing a way of life regardless of geographical location. Cynic cosmopolitanism constitutes an important part of Greek and Roman Stoicism which flourished between 300 BCE and 200 CE. A Cynic sage would acknowledge only another cynic sage as equal and fellow cosmopolitan. The Cynics did not view everyone as the *de facto* member of a universal community. The Cynic community of sages is a highly exclusive ideal. It can be universalized only if all human beings successfully follow the Cynic way of life, a highly speculative anarchist utopia which lies in a possible but improbable future.

In Stoicism, cosmopolitanism transforms itself into the universal community of common humanity. Instead of allegiance to a specific *polis* which defines one's *de facto* citizenship, Stoicism maintains that human beings owe allegiance to the entire *cosmos*. Instead of restricting one's good behavior to those who share one's birth place by accident, a fellow citizen in the restricted conventional sense, or those who happen to share one's particular characteristics or are associated with oneself in particularistic relations, the Stoics treat all fellow human beings as equally deserving of respect because of their common humanity. To behave ethically is to promote the good of all humanity, not the good of some partial group at the expense of another. Seneca (ca. 4 BCE–65 CE) considered each human being as belonging to two communities,

> the one, which is greatly and truly common, embracing gods and men, in which we look neither to this corner nor to that, but measure the boundaries of our citizenship by the sun; the other, the one to which we have been assigned by the accident of our birth."[12]

Epictetus (ca. 55–135 CE) considered all human beings "the children of Zeus," and as such sharing the divine characteristics of reason, which enable human beings to participate in a community governed by divine laws. In Cicero's (106–143 BCE) account of cosmopolitanism, the world is a city ruled by divine laws, and human beings together with gods are world-citizens because of their shared reason. A supporter of the Roman Empire, Cicero believed that a benevolent empire could bring about a political state on a world-wide scale that would realize this ideal. Not everyone in the world worshipped Zeus or defined humanity by rationality; probably only the Romans would accept as legitimate a world-state in the form of the Roman Empire. The understanding of what is "universal" was not free from individual Stoic's particular social and historical perspectives, which now seem parochial and ethnocentric from others' perspectives.

[12] *De Otio* 4.1, quoted in Sellars (2007, p. 1).

The core belief of Roman Stoicism in reason and law as qualifying humanity for a universal community bears a strong resemblance to the notion of the kingdom of ends populated by free rational law-makers who obey their own laws in the moral philosophy of Immanuel Kant. Stoic cosmopolitanism also inspired Kant, whose universalist moral viewpoint becomes the cosmopolitan perspective in his political philosophy and philosophy of history. A political state is a union of people under rightful law (Reiss 1991, p. 138). Law as coercive order is necessary because human beings are imperfect and therefore do not always act as they ought, but instead often fight among themselves and act in a violent and malevolent manner. Human conflicts and the means to deal with those conflicts both arise from what Kant called "the *unsocial sociability* of men, that is, their tendency to come together in society, coupled, however, with a continual resistance which constantly threatens to break this society up" (Reiss 1991, p. 44). One key argument of modern cosmopolitanism we owe to Kant is that the purpose of politics, to resolve human conflicts justly and peacefully, if it is to be achieved at all, must be achieved on a world-wide scale.

For Kant, justice in a state requires "a constitution allowing the *greatest possible human freedom* in accordance with laws which ensure *that the freedom of each can coexist with the freedom of the others*" (Reiss 1991, p. 23). Kant's emphasis on reason and law not surprisingly goes with a belief that human beings have inalienable rights, including freedom and equality. Having a perfect civil constitution will not be enough to protect the rights of its citizens if a state is threatened by the action of other states without such constitutions. States with perfect civil constitutions will not go to war with one another, but those which treat their people unjustly are likely to conduct wars of aggression even against peaceful states. This makes the transition from war to peace a key political problem for Kant. Perpetual peace is a requirement for universal justice. While Kant relied on providence to guarantee perpetual peace, he also prescribed the political arrangement that would lead us towards that goal: discarding the ideal of a world state as unviable, he advocated a federation of states governed by rightful constitutions, which will also regulate international relations according to rightful laws that they agree to. Kant insisted that, even for his time,

> The peoples of the earth has entered in varying degrees into a universal community, and it has developed to the point where a violation of rights in *one* part of the world is felt *everywhere*. The idea of a cosmopolitan right is therefore not fantastic and overstrained; it is a necessary complement to the unwritten code of political and international right, transforming it into a universal right of humanity. Only under this condition can we flatter ourselves that we are continually advancing towards a perpetual peace. (Reiss 1991, p. 108)

The influence of Immanuel Kant is still evident in the concerns of liberal cosmopolitanism today, revolving around issues of global justice which have become more pressing as the new global economy creates more inequalities both within and across national boundaries, defending universal human rights and calling renegade governments to account for their abuses, debating the need for global democracy if there is to be democracy at all, agonizing over the right approach to

the global threat of terrorism, criticizing the current institutions of international relations and arguing for radical reforms in terms often reminiscent of Kant's cosmopolitan views. Such cosmopolitanism focuses its attention on the world stage, and the boundaries of concern are those dividing nation-states. The moral universalism associated with this Enlightenment legacy has come under strong criticism. This is partly because historically what has been offered as "universal" is now considered merely Eurocentric, and worse, it has been tainted by being used to justify colonialism as a mission of "civilization."[13] In practice, universalism has shown a dangerous tendency towards uniformitarian intolerance for differences, which could poison cosmopolitanism even in the postcolonial era. Its hostility to particularistic affiliations, partial sentiments, and special responsibilities to significant others, also leads to the criticism that universalist cosmopolitanism values humanity only in the abstract; it is untenable in its failure to take seriously "the value of particular human lives, the lives people have made for themselves, within the communities that help lend significance to those lives" (Appiah 2005, pp. 222–223).

Martha Nussbaum attempts to rescue liberal cosmopolitanism from Enlightenment universalism by drawing on a more ancient source. Her interpretation of Stoic cosmopolitanism attempts to render less stark the opposition between the universal and the particular, for a more positive tension between the two, so that being a cosmopolitan in the Stoic sense does not mean rejecting the particular in favor of the universal, or abandoning local identifications and affiliations. Valuing one's identifications and affiliations does not entail that some particular individuals or groups are more worthwhile than other human beings, even to oneself, but rather recognizes that "it makes sense for me to do my duties where I am placed, that the human community is best arranged in this way" (Nussbaum 1997, p. 9). This argument that the special attention and concern for the local and particular simply is the most sensible way to do the most good universally is one way liberal cosmopolitans have responded to the challenge of taking ethical partiality seriously.

> Appiah (2005, p. 216) takes a similar line.
> It is because humans live best on a smaller scale that liberal cosmopolitans should acknowledge the ethical salience of not just the state and the county, the town, the street, the business, the craft, the profession, the family *as* communities, as circles among the many circles narrower than the human horizon that are appropriate spheres of moral concern. …
> To contemplate cosmopolitanism of this variety is to contemplate the *task* of cosmopolitanism, which is debate and conversations across nations.

Appiah (2005, p. 256) himself defends a "rooted cosmopolitanism" which is "a form of universalism that is sensitive to the ways in which historical context may shape the significance of a practice"; rooted cosmopolitanism is not a "dialogue among static closed cultures, each of which is internally homogeneous and different from all others; not a celebration of a collection of closed boxes." Indeed, Appiah does

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[13] Coleman and Higgings (2000). Stoic cosmopolitans were straightforward in their support for colonialism (Nussbaum 1997, p. 14).

not even want to talk about cultures. For him, "cultural differences" is not the best description of what divides or unites neighbors and nations. However we describe those differences, conversation is one way of bridging them. According to Appiah (2005, p. 257), cosmopolitan conversations do not depend on shared beliefs or common capacity for reason; instead what makes cosmopolitan experience possible is "the grasp of a narrative logic that allows us to construct the world to which our imaginations respond." This creative tension between universality and particularity, evident in the history of Western cosmopolitanism itself is significant for attempts to construct Confucian cosmopolitanism which requires a balance between universality and particularity.

Given the Western origins of cosmopolitanism, does Confucian cosmopolitanism mean imposing Western conceptual categories on Confucianism? Wholesale adoption of ancient Greek or Roman conceptual frameworks, or Enlightenment philosophical theories and political commitments will not yield a viable *Confucian* cosmopolitanism. This exercise does require borrowing some Western conceptual tools, but using them in a different cultural context will also transform them, even as their use transforms Confucianism. Confucian cosmopolitanism therefore culturalize cosmopolitanism in a particular way; it also modernizes Confucianism by drawing on the resources of cosmopolitan traditions to reconstruct Confucian philosophy for contemporary living; it resists a revival that hankers after the past which tends to be painted in rosy colors, obscuring the undesirable aspects of historical traditions. In reconstructing Confucianism to include a Confucian cosmopolitanism, admitting historical ethnocentrism is the first step to reminding today's Confucians to guard against similar prejudices, while availing themselves of elements in Confucian philosophy which could contribute to the daily practices of a cosmopolitan. It is an attempt to join the conversation about what it means today to be a "citizen of the world" from different cultural perspectives, and how to *live* a cosmopolitan life on a day to day basis.

Cosmopolitan tendencies in contemporary Confucianism

The claim that a Confucian cosmopolitanism is possible must be qualified to avoid misleading conclusions. Given their different philosophical psychologies, the Confucian conception of *de* is not identical to the Cynic conception of *arête* (although both are often translated as "virtue"). Confucianism as a world philosophy with followers living in different parts of the world may in one sense parallel the Cynic cosmopolitan ideal of a community of Cynic sages sharing a way of life regardless of geographical location, but Confucians would not treat all places or all communities with the same equality that Cynics, and later the Stoics, would treat fellow cosmopolitans. While their care and concern could reach out infinitely to other Confucians and even non-Confucians as fellow humans worldwide, there is ethical gradation in care and concern for different persons and communities. A Confucian could care for all under heaven, but not equally or in the same way since some persons are related more closely to oneself in ways that generate

differential ethical responsibilities towards such particular others.[14] Unlike liberal cosmopolitans, Confucians would consider it irrelevant to insist on "equal worth" once it is admitted that those most closely related to us have priority in our ethical consideration.[15] The universal inclusiveness of Confucian cosmopolitanism will be accompanied by a high degree of differentiation that takes particularities of specific situations into account.

Some scholars who contrast Confucianism as a philosophy emphasizing the particular, even the parochial, with the universalistic drives in traditional Western philosophical thinking insist that "all under heaven (*tianxia* 天下)" does not mean "the world" for Confucians; it had been mostly limited to actual places of their experience. Without detracting from the significance of Confucian emphasis on the particular, the concrete in experience, which kept them from abstract universalism, nor denying that some Confucians had been guilty of ethnocentrism of their own, we do Confucianism an injustice if we do not acknowledge that the philosophy has intellectual horizons beyond what Confucians actually experienced, and that it could be understood to advocate a vision of an ideal world of cultivated exemplary persons living in harmonious communities, which are not limited to only the actual territories Confucians have hitherto known or considered "civilized." As Confucians' knowledge of what lies "under heaven" expanded over the generations, the Confucian moral vision could and should expand to correspond with their expanded world. Historically, the spread of Confucianism from China to other parts of East Asia, notably Korea, Japan and Vietnam, and its lasting influence in those countries testifies to its potential as a mobile and expansive, universalizable tradition. If Confucius thought that he could live among the *Yi* clans and at least retain his own virtuous ways, if not influence them with his exemplary practices, then his followers today could live anywhere in the world and still aim to remain committed to the ways of Confucius.

Although Chinese intellectual history did not replicate the exact opposition between the universal and the particular which underlies the history of cosmopolitanism, there is a tension between what could be considered cosmopolitan Confucian aspiration of helping everyone practice *de* so that *dao* would prevail in the whole world—no one is excluded from its moral vision—and the ethnocentrism implicit in Confucius' understanding of his moral mission in terms of "this culture" (*siwen* 斯文) passed on by the legendary Chinese sage- kings (*Analects* 9.5). The "conversion" of non-Chinese tribes which invaded China itself and established the Yuan and the Qing dynasties is highly significant for Confucianism's claim to potentially universal transformative power which has little to do with coercion. However, if mishandled, Confucian aspiration could also fall prey to universalistic ethnocentrism. For example, if the spread of Confucianism to places such as Korea,

[14] Confucians were criticized for not "loving everyone impartially" by Mozi, who lived in the fourth century BCE. For a discussion of that debate, see Van Norden (2003). See also discussions of Confucian extension of ethical consideration in an expanding circle of "graduated love" in Tan (2004, pp. 72–74), Tu Wei-ming's and Roger T. Ames's contributions in Ames et al. (1994, pp. 181–182, 204–207).

[15] This does not mean that any kind of inequalities would be acceptable to Confucians, but the Confucian view of equality as a value is a complex issue that this paper cannot take up fully; for a discussion of Confucianism and equality, see Tan (2016).

Japan and Vietnam is seen as a process of "civilizing" otherwise barbaric peoples, especially if the influence was not due to exemplary virtue but to military might of imperial China, then the Confucian "cosmopolitan ideal" of "bringing peace to all under heaven (*ping tianxia* 平天下)" is no less imperialistic and ethnocentric than European colonialism. That imperial China had treated these outlying regions as "tributary states" and no doubt saw itself in a "civilizing role," without being in anyway self-conscious or apologetic about its ethnocentrism, is a historical legacy that, coupled with current geopolitics, makes many in East Asia uneasy at any mention of a "*tianxia*" system if it implies Chinese domination in any way. While these concerns of *realpolitik* should not be dismissed, we should also consider the spread of Confucianism from the perspective of social interactions of non-state actors: historically the degree to which Confucianism came to characterize East Asian societies could not be entirely credited to the coercive power of colonial or neo-colonial relations with China.[16]

The same tension between the universal and the particular remains in the aspirations of contemporary Confucians such as Tu Wei-ming, who on the one hand claimed that Confucianism is quintessential "Chineseness," yet on the other hand proclaimed its global relevance as a kind of cosmopolitan humanism. Addressing the challenges of globalization, Tu Wei-ming (Tu 1992, p. 339) observes that the "conceptual framework informed by the exclusive dichotomy of universalism and particularism" gives rise to a kind of "schizophrenia."

> If we insist upon an either-or choice between global consciousness and local commitment, we—self-styled cosmopolitan citizens of the world under the influence of Enlightenment mentality—are prone to condemn all alien forms of quests for roots as narrow-minded and dangerous particularisms. Curiously, at the same time, our own commitment to ethnicity, gender, mother tongue, fatherland, class, and faith often compels us to take radically exclusivist position despite our avowed cosmopolitanism.

Tu believes that the Confucian golden rule, and the related glossing of general virtue of humanity (*ren* 仁) in terms of "wishing to establish oneself, one establishes others; wishing to enlarge oneself, one enlarges others," could transform the contradictions between global consciousness and local commitment into "an intimate mutuality."[17]

Tu's works have borrowed creatively from other cultures, even as they promote Confucianism, while contributing to inquiries that cut across cultural boundaries. For Tu (1984, p. 80, 1998a, XXVII), despite Confucianism being part of "the psycho-cultural construct of the contemporary Chinese intellectual as well as the Chinese peasant," its identification with "Chineseness" does not prevent Confucianism from contributing meaningfully "to the cultivation of cultural competence, ethical intelligence, and spiritual values of young people East and West." In the

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[16] It might be argued that this is true of other imperialistic colonial powers as well. However, it is not necessary for my purpose here to judge which colonization was more pernicious or contemptible.

[17] *Analects* 6.30, 12.2, 15.24. Chan (1963, pp. 14–18) translates *ren* as 'humanity' and considers it the general virtue that is the source of all specific Confucian virtues; see also Chan (1975).

"third Epoch of Confucian Humanism" envisioned by Tu Wei-ming, Confucians would be exemplary world citizens, whose cultural accomplishments are comprehensible to other cultures and respectful of them. Such cosmopolitan Confucianism would also contribute to the core values of a "fiduciary global community" (Tu 1992, p. 343).[18] And cosmopolitan Confucians, "as citizens of the global community, maintain the universality of human rights…profess the desirability of democracy as providing to this day the most effective framework in which human rights are safeguarded."[19]

Robert C. Neville's "Boston Confucianism" offers us insights into how Tu's ideal of a global community of exemplary world citizens is realized from below, at the most basic level of day-to-day interpersonal encounters. Unlike Tu who emphasized the presence of cosmopolitan values in Confucianism, their incorporation into or their complementing Confucian philosophy, Neville (2000, pp. 15–23) highlights the function and power of rituals (*li*) in Confucianism and uses the notion to critique Boston society and suggest ways of civilizing its day-to-day interactions. By generalizing Confucian *li* to include "the entire pyramid of signs or of organic and social habits," he argues that Confucianism could help Boston develop certain meaningful significatory forms—ritual forms of family, friendship, and civility—to shape social habits to improve its family, working, social, and civic life (Neville 2000, p. 14). The mobility and expansiveness of the tradition may testify to its global relevance or potential, without being necessarily cosmopolitan in the sense that a "citizen of the world" would not confine her loyalty to a community fixed in location, but would recognize as her fellow citizens anyone anywhere in the world who adheres to the same philosophical vision in practice. While this is not a question addressed directly by Neville, Confucian rituals might have a role to play in building cosmopolitan communities via the search for global civil society. Rituals have been at the center of discussions of civility among scholars of Confucianism. Ritual forms of civility govern how individuals relate to and play official and semi-official roles in their community. The theme of civility has received some attention in recent civil society discourse from Confucian perspectives, and others have argued that instead of imposing a new world order through top-down globalization, we should aim for global civil society, or focus on transnational communities and social movements that involve individuals on an everyday basis in nurturing global citizenship.[20] The allegiance of members of global civil society and transnational movements would be cosmopolitan, and their success would depend on skills and excellences which are "portable" as well as effective in bridging cultural and other differences that otherwise divide people from different parts of the world.

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[18] See also a similar assertion of centrality of Confucianism to Chinese culture and its relevance to global ethics in the works of another third-generation new Confucian, Liu (2001).

[19] Unpublished text of the 1995 Inaugural Wu Teh Yao Memorial Lecture in Singapore, p. 5; most of it has been published in Tu (1998b). On "the third Epoch of Confucian Humanism," see Tu (1993, chap. 8). See also more detailed discussion of Tu's portrayal of contemporary Confucians as "exemplary world citizens" in Tan (2005b, pp. 186–190).

[20] For Confucian perspective on civil society, see Rouner (2000, pp. 187–221), Tan (2003). On global civil society, see Falk (1993), Delanty (2000, pp. 58–64).

Confucian Li in the Chinese diaspora as cosmopolitan cultural practice

Neville's emphasis on Confucian *li* in his discussion of Confucianism as a "portable tradition" provides an important lead in the search for concrete cultural practices that keep an overseas Chinese community together as a distinctive cultural entity, but at the same time enable it to adapt to globalization in the modern era. The Chinese have prided themselves on their "kingdom of rites and ceremonies (*liyi zhi bang* 禮儀之邦)." *Li* distinguished the Chinese from the barbarians in the regions surrounding the states of the central plains between the Yellow River and the Yangtze. "The central states are the states of ritual propriety (*liyi* 禮義)" (He 1931, Duke Yin 7th year). Contemporary Chinese scholars acknowledged the ethnocentric bias in such attitudes and emphasized that the non-Chinese tribes, many of which are now part of the political entity of the PRC, also have their own *li* even if they may not use that term to describe those practices. "*Li* was also culture; Chinese *li* distinguished Chinese from other ethnic groups, each of which had its own *li*" (Ebrey 1991, p. 14; see also Chen 1991, pp. 57–64).

Confucian *li* may be "distinctively Chinese mechanisms for achieving social and cultural cohesion," nevertheless their function bears close resemblance to the rituals studied by Western social scientists (Ebrey 1991, p. 7). Hermeneutical study of Confucian texts to grasp the meaning of *li* in the Confucian tradition, as well as study what it means in practice could be combined with contemporary anthropological and other social science perspectives of ritual as cultural practices central to the making of community. For example, Lincoln (1989, p. 53) argues that ritual is "an authoritative mode of symbolic discourse and a powerful instrument for the evocation of those sentiments (affinity and estrangement) out of which society is constructed."[21] Ritual plays an important role in sustaining human communities, and some see its loss as a critical contributing factor to various forms of social pathology and individual psychological malfunction. Some argue that rituals are necessary and inevitable phenomena in any culture (Rappaport 1971; Geertz 1973, pp. 92–93; Mahdi et al. 1996). They are means of setting up distinctions within a community, as well as marking the boundaries between insiders and outsiders. They also serve semiotic or communicative functions facilitating and differentiating social interactions. Julian Huxley used "ritualization" to denote "adaptive formalization and canalization of motivated human activities so as to secure more effective communicatory ('signaling') function, reduction of intra-group damage, or better intra-group bonding." Ritual is a way of mobilizing individuals "as self-regulating participants in social encounters" (Huxley 1966, p. 258; see also Goffman 1967, pp. 44 and 54; Rappaport 1971, p. 63). As an important part of human interaction, relevant across cultures, ritual has been defined as conventional acts of display

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[21] A quick scan uncovers articles such as "Art and Ritual as Method of Social Control and Planning" (*Ethics*); "Ritual as a Mechanism for Urban Adaptation" (*Man*); "Topical Talk, Ritual and Social Organization of Relationships" (*Social Psychology Quarterly*); "Ritual in Family Living" (*American Sociological Review*); "Children and Civility: Ceremonial Deviance and Acquisition of Ritual Competence" (*Social Psychology Quarterly*); "The Language and Ritual of Socialization: Birthday Parties in a Kindergarten Context" (*Man*).

through which one or more participants communicate information concerning themselves.

Rituals may be ubiquitous in all cultures, but in no other cultures is it as highly developed as *li*, or as prominent and pervasive as *li* in every aspect of Chinese civilization throughout its history, from philosophy to political system and bureaucracy, to mundane every day activities. Confucius did not invent the idea or the practice. The term *li* (禮)—variously translated as "rites," "rituals," "ceremony," "ritual action," "ritual propriety," "propriety," "decorum," "manners" "courtesy," and "civility"—initially referred to religious ceremonies and rituals. Ancient texts and other archeological discoveries provide evidence that, from very early in their history, the Chinese performed rituals for sacrifice and divination for various major events, funerals and mourning, as well as rituals for preparation and conclusion of war, and other military ceremonies, for forming of alliances, paying of tribute and various diplomatic transactions between separate political entities, for banquets, farming and hunting, to mark entry into adulthood, and marriage. The term *li* also referred to the classifications and rules of the clan and bureaucratic institutions. There were hundreds and thousands of different kinds of *li* of varying importance.[22] It is not surprising that special expertise developed and became necessary to ensure the proper conduct of such ceremonies and rituals. Confucius and his followers, the *ru*, were such experts on *li*.

Information gleaned from the early texts and pieced together from archeological discoveries pertains mainly to the *li* of the ruling and aristocratic class. There is in fact an explicit statement about its social exclusiveness: "Rituals do not extend down to the common people; corporal punishments do not extend up to the grand ministers."[23] The statement is not so much denying that the common people have social norms which structure and facilitate interaction as denying them a certain form of excellence which came to be identified with *li*. Through their philosophical reflection on the nature, purpose, value, and functioning of *li*, Confucius and his followers generalized the normativity of *li* so that the idea became one of *human* excellence rather than aristocratic excellence.

> Parrots can talk yet remain birds; gorillas can speak, yet remain beasts. Now if humans yet have no *li*, even though they can speak, do they not also have the heart-minds of beasts?
> … Hence sages created *li* to teach people in order that, by their having *li*, humans may themselves to be different from beasts. (Sun 1989, 1:10–11)

In the *Analects*, *li* regulates human relations, from those in the family (*Analects* 2.5) to that between ruler and subject (*Analects* 3.18, 3.19). It enables one to take one's place in the community (*Analects* 16.13) and its chief value lies in promoting

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[22] According to the *Book of Rites* (Sun 1989, 2:651), "Primary rituals number three hundred; secondary rituals three thousand." Author's translation.

[23] *Book of* Rites (Sun 1989, 1:81–82). Similar to the exclusion of "barbarians," this exclusion of the lower classes has been rejected by contemporary studies. Han dynasty scholar, Zheng Xuan (127–200 CE) already clarified that it was the common people's lack of time and material resources which prevented them from observing all the ritual details. See Chen (1991, pp. 36–42). However, it remains true that we know almost nothing about the *li* of the common people of that early period.

harmony (*Analects* 1.12). It is essential to ideal government (*Analects* 2.3) and governs every aspect of a cultivated person's life. It is the constitutive means to ideal humanity (*ren*).

> Yan Hui inquired about authoritative conduct (*ren* 仁). The Master replied, "Through self-discipline and observing ritual propriety (*li* 禮) one becomes authoritative in one's conduct."
> …
> Yan Hui said, "Could I ask what becoming authoritative entails?" The Master replied, "Do not look at anything that violates the observance of ritual propriety; do not listen to anything that violates the observance of ritual propriety; do not speak anything that violates the observance of ritual propriety; do not do anything that violates the observance of ritual propriety." (*Analects* 12.1)

In the contemporary context, one might argue that unless there are appropriate Confucian rituals to realize ideals such as *ren* or *yi*, Confucianism could not be revived—for it is not supposed to be merely armchair philosophy or ideology—otherwise it would be no more than what historian Yu Ying-shih (1997, p. 32) calls a "wandering spirit" (*youhun* 游魂).

Chapter 10 of the *Analects* portrays Confucius in various ritual performances. According to Eno (1990, p. 7), the *Analects* contain "not merely instructive sayings of the Master but inter-subjectively validated ideas, communal values exemplified by life experiences of the speakers in the act of *li*" (see also Tu 1985, p. 83). Instead of a body of doctrine, early followers of Confucius primarily constituted a community through their ritual activity. While philosophically Confucians contended with other schools during the *Spring and Autumn* and Warring States period, they were defeated politically by Legalists during the reign of the First emperor who allegedly had Confucian scholars buried and Confucian texts burned. During the Han dynasty, emperors turned to Chinese scholars with knowledge of texts which came to be associated with a retrospectively constructed *ru* lineage to devise new political rituals for the imperial court as well as operate the administrative machinery inherited from the Legalist state. Over the centuries, Chinese scholars edited and provided detailed commentaries and expositions of Confucian ritual classics such as the *Yi Li* and the *Li Ji*, and they wrote new manuals from imperial ritual codes to private etiquette books, all of which shaped the performance of rituals from early imperial times (Ebrey 1991, chap. 2). There is no denying that *li* is central to Confucianism and its strongest link with Chinese society.

Right up to the modern period, the traditional Chinese social order was characterized as Confucian ritual order (Fei 1992; Ch'ü 1961). Lin (2001, p. 187) identifies social ritual as one of three types of social control in traditional China—the other two being the powerful state machinery and the kinship group—interwoven into a comprehensive power structure to obtain maximum social conformity. Over time, *li* became identified with traditional and conventional "rules of conduct." As such, *li* rigidified over time. It was as rigid rules of conduct that "ritual doctrines" (*lijiao* 禮教) became oppressive and came under attack by the

May Fourth intellectuals. Lu Xun (1990) equated it with "cannibalism" in his *Diary of a Madman*. This is a degradation rather than a realization of the idea representing one of the key moral achievements in Confucius' teachings. Confucian *li* is better understood as valued cultural norms of various day to day activities and practices, which facilitate social interaction, promote solidarity and harmony, which have stood the test of time but are not unchangeable.

A survey of the practices through the ages shows that rituals do change. Philosophically, change is permitted and even considered desirable at times, even though some changes should be resisted.

> The Master said, "The use of a hemp cap is prescribed in the observance of ritual propriety (*li* 禮). Nowadays, that a silk cap is used instead is a matter of frugality. I would follow accepted practice on this. A subject kowtowing on entering the hall is prescribed in the observance of ritual propriety (*li* 禮). Nowadays one kowtows only after ascending the hall is a matter of hubris. Although it goes contrary to accepted practice, I still kowtow on entering the hall." (*Analects* 9.3)

We no longer follow the above ritual form of entering someone's residence, but it does not mean any manner of entry is acceptable; the *li* might have changed, but swaggering into another's home without so much as a "hello" or wearing shoes for the outdoors into Chinese homes would definitely transgress ritual propriety. Few Chinese children still follow the ritual actions recommended in the traditional ritual texts, such as help their parents out of bed, make the preparations for them to wash up, ask if they are warm enough, massage their limbs, prepare their breakfasts, and so on (Sun 1989, 2:728–729). However, filial children would still have their own set of ritual actions when it comes to showing concern for and taking care of their parents. Some rituals of banquets (e.g. wedding banquets) and festival gatherings—regarding forms of invitations, welcoming guests, seating arrangements, kinds of food served, activities such as toasting and encouraging guests to drink—still survive and other rituals are modified to various extents. How have some of these rituals been modified or new rituals evolved when social interactions involve people from different cultures, or take place in different settings created by new globalization processes?

In a new era of globalization, Confucians must adapt their *li* to new circumstances, to novel social interactions in encounters with multiple cultural others. A study of the cultural transformation in overseas Chinese communities, with regard to their adaptation and changing understanding of *li* could enlighten us about how to go about building cosmopolitan cultures, through successful adaptation to retain cultural identity while opening the community to harmonious interaction with other cultural communities, to value the particularistic relations of those most closely related to oneself while extending one's concern in a cosmopolitan orientation. This would require inter-disciplinary studies that go beyond the scope of this paper.

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