Sublating Sinic Relationism: On a Winding Path from Transcultural to Global Ethics

Jana S. ROŠKER*

Abstract

This paper aims to bring into the global ethics debate concrete alternative models of specific relational ethics developed in the context of Sinic traditions that have not yet been widely introduced into Western scholarship or integrated into the framework of global discourses on ethics and morality. Although much research has been done on certain elements and aspects of such ethical models, there have been no concrete attempts to incorporate them into a global axiological framework that could have helped humanity develop strategies for solving the current global crises we face.

The paper first provides a critical overview of the conceptual history, specific characteristics, and social relevance of relationism. It then addresses the question of how relational ethical models could be integrated into the value system of contemporary global ethics without reproducing the still dominant normativity of Western epistemology and its corresponding axiology. After highlighting some problems related to the methodology and structure of traditional models of comparative philosophy and ethics, the author suggests that this integration of relationism into the general framework of global ethics could be done by applying a new method, which can be tentatively called the method of transcultural philosophical sublation. Starting from different frames of reference that define the basic tenets of modern Western and traditional Chinese axiology, the author demonstrates the application of this method on the example of different conceptions of the human self.

Keywords: transcultural ethics, Sinic relationism, Ruism, Ruist role-ethics, post-comparative philosophy, sublation

Sublacija siniške odnosnosti: na ovinkasti poti od transkulturne do globalne etike

Izvleček

Pričujoči članek v diskurze o globalni etiki vnaša alternativne modele specifične etike odnosnosti, ki so se razvili v kontekstih siniške tradicije in v zahodni akademski sferi še niso dovolj znani, niti še niso bili integrirani v globalne diskurze etike in morale. Četudi so določeni elementi in vidiki tovrstnih modelov že razmeroma dobro raziskani, doslej še ni bilo poskusov njihove integracije v globalno aksiologijo, ki bi lahko človeštvu pomagala razvijati nove strategije reševanja aktualnih globalnih kriz.

*   Jana S. ROŠKER, Professor of Sinology, Department of Asian Studies, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia.
Email address: jana.rosker@ff.uni-lj.si

Članek najprej podaja kritični pregled idejne zgodovine, specifičnih značilnosti in družbenega pomena odnosnosti. Potem se posveča vprašanju, kako bi bilo možno etične modele odnosnosti integrirati v sistem vrednot sodobne globalne etike brez reproduciranja zahodne epistemologije in aksiologije, ki v njej še vedno prevladujeta. Potem ko izpostavi določene probleme, povezane z metodologijo in strukturo tradicionalnih modelov primerjalne filozofije in etike, avtorica predlaga novo metodo za integracijo odnosnosti v globalno etiko. To metodo preliminarno imenuje metoda transkulturne filozofske sublacije. Izhajajoč iz različnih referenčnih okvirov, ki določajo osnovna načela moderne zahodne oziroma tradicionalne kitajske aksiologije, avtorica prikaže uporabo te metode na osnovi različnih konceptualizacij človeškega sebstva.

Ključne besede: transkulturna etika, siniška odnosnost, ruizem, ruistična etika vlog, postprimerjalna filozofija, sublacija

Introduction: Clarifying Basic Notions

This paper will focus primarily on analysing the Sinic Ruist relational ethics and examining their broader, transcultural applicability.

The Sinic region refers to the geopolitical area that has historically been heavily influenced by Chinese writing and certain parts of the original Chinese cultures, such as the Ruist (Confucian) and Chan (Zen) Buddhist systems of ideas and, to some extent, Daoism. In addition to China itself and the main East Asian countries (Korea, Japan, Taiwan), it also includes some regions of Southeast Asia, e.g., Vietnam and, to some extent, Singapore.

The term Ruism is a phonetic translation of the Chinese term *Ruxue* 儒學, which usually refers to what is known in Western sources as "Confucianism". Literally translated, it means "the teachings of the scholars" and refers to the most influential philosophical current that originated in China and later spread throughout the East Asian region. Since the term Confucianism, first introduced by Jesuit missionaries, in Western countries primarily implies the institutionalized state doctrine and rigid, formally structured normative ethics based on autocratic hierarchies, it seems reasonable to use the term Ruist instead to emphasize that this paper will not be dealing with the official state doctrine and institutionalized national ideologies, but rather with the underlying traditional philosophies and systems of specific relational ethics. With this decision, I have taken a concrete position in the academic debates that are currently going on about which of the two English terms (Ruism or Confucianism) is more appropriate. Although the term "Confucianism" already has a relatively long-standing name recognition in the West, numerous experts on Chinese intellectual history and philosophy argue

for the change from "Confucianism" to "Ruism" with different, often convincing, arguments. David Elstein, for example, has repeatedly used the term "Ruism", (Elstein 2015a; 2015b), and Robert Eno argued for such a practice as early as 30 years ago in his book *The Confucian Creation of Heaven*. In 2016, Bin Song also made a strong argument for changing "Confucianism" to "Ruism" (Song 2017; 2019). However, in the present research paper I make some new arguments for the use of Ruism related to the necessary distinction between state doctrine on the one hand and proto-democratic ethics on the other. In this, I argue for the general use of both terms, Confucianism and Ruism, respectively, and suggest that the first term should refer to national ideologies (or the so-called "political Confucianism"), and the second to conceptual philosophical paradigms. In this way, this paper also aims to maintain the distinction between the two Chinese terms *rujiao* 儒教 and *ruxue* 儒學, both of which have previously been translated with the single term Confucianism, although their individual connotations are very different.

Moreover, in this paper I will argue for the use of transcultural approaches, because, unlike the more general notions of cross-cultural and intercultural philosophies, they explicitly aim at overcoming the traditional, i.e. static and immobile, notion of culture. Within this framework, I propose to critically modify traditional comparative methods, most of which still rely on Western evaluative criteria and methods, and to develop them by using what I tentatively call "the method of transcultural sublation". Although the term "sublation", like the term "synthesis", is also part of the Hegelian lines of thought and therefore could be problematic, it is much less invalidated. On the other hand, it encompasses all three concepts that are crucial to any process of creating something new from the interactions between two or more different objects or phenomena. In this philosophical sense, it has the three connotations of arising, eliminating, and preserving. Moreover, the term "sublation", as opposed to "synthesis", refers to a process rather than a phase. For all these reasons, I believe that a "philosophy of sublation" can better and more accurately denote new forms of cross-cultural philosophizing than any kind of synthesis or the notion of "fusion philosophy"[1] as proposed by Chakrabarti

---

1   Fusion refers to the process or result of joining two or more things together to form a single entity. It is often even associated with the process of melting, which normally results in a unity in which particular elements of the two or more entities that have been melted (or fused together) become completely unrecognizable and are essentially alienated. The amalgamated unity, which arises through a fusion, is, of course, a qualitatively new substance. Now, if we consider fusion as a metaphor for a certain mode of philosophical reasoning, then we have to admit that new philosophical insights are always based upon new cognitive substances. However, genuine philosophizing as a creative process can hardly be based upon an amalgamated unity of distorted elements, for it must be based upon certain discrete philosophical grounds.

and Weber (2016). The sublation method is tightly linked to two other methods that are, in my view, also important parts of transcultural discourses. The first is linked to the awareness of the different culturally conditioned frameworks of reference. Indeed, different cultures produce different referential frameworks, which are, on the other hand, linked to different methodologies applied in the process of perceiving, understanding and interpreting reality. A referential framework in this sense can be defined as a relational structure of concepts, categories, terms, and ideas, as well as values, which are applied in the cognitive processing of the objects of comprehension. It also includes paradigms and perspectives that influence and define the comprehension and evaluation of particular semantic elements within this structure, as well as the structure as a whole. The knowledge of these frameworks enables scholars to apply in their interpretations the method of so-called discursive translation, which is not limited to a verbatim linguistic transfer, but must include the interpretation of specific textual/speech structures, categories, concepts and values existing in diverse socio-cultural contexts.

Backgrounds

In recent years, much research has been done on different ethical models that have historically evolved in different cultural traditions, but without exploring how they can be integrated into a global axiological context still dominated by the (pre-)modern values of the Western Enlightenment and its paradigms of individual-based morality.

In today's world, however, these research agendas are of utmost importance because it is becoming increasingly clear that current crises, such as severe environmental disasters, inequitable distribution of resources, viral pandemics, etc., are global problems that cannot be fully resolved within the narrow framework of individual countries or nation-states.[2] They must also be addressed within the larger framework of global cooperation and solidarity. All this, of course, presupposes the development of a genuine intercultural dialogue, i.e., a dialogue that goes beyond the currently fashionable terminology of European Union (EU) administrative nomenclature and can lead to a transcultural exchange of knowledge and ideas.

---

2   This does not mean, of course, that nation-states should be abolished and a world government established. The nation-state mechanisms that enable us to legislate our actions under democratic self-determination and to put them into practice through appropriate administrative structures are still important. However, as long as we also think in terms of borders, which means that we do not give due consideration to the humanity of those who live outside our own borders, we are on the wrong path.

Indeed, debates about a new universal ethics are booming.[3] The idea of a global ethics that is supposed to function as an interculturally valid moral regulator of economic globalization is also currently enjoying much popularity. Against this rich, but simultaneously limited research background, it is certainly worthwhile to investigate new possibilities of integrating Sinic ethical paradigms into the global ethics discourse. Although some solid research has been done into Sinic, particularly Ruist ethics (see below), a new paradigm of incorporating its crucial elements into a global scale of ethical regulations on an interpersonal as well as broader social level has yet to be established.

The abovementioned lively interest in ethics and the search for binding standards for a global civil society also stands in sharp contrast to the erosion of social cohesion, traditional norms and standards within local societies that can currently be observed worldwide. The philosophical and political discourse on universally valid ethical standards for a humane civil society is thus intended to compensate for the moral and social disintegrations and aporias that have *de facto* emerged in the structure of today's post-industrial societies and in the wake of a now global capitalism. Even though the economic rationality of the global market economy has proven to be a powerful driver of social change and dissolution in this process, it can only be understood as a means to achieve higher-level goals of action and not as a goal or even an end in itself of human existence. It is obvious that economic globalization—also from the perspective of its actors—requires ethical regulation by superordinate horizons of meaning.

The theoretical search for global ethics thus ultimately arises from economic constraints, for the globalization of the economy, technology, and the media automatically requires a globalization of ethics in the sense of a necessary minimum of common ethical norms. This raises the question of where these norms or standards are to come from when economic-technological interdependencies, in their pervasive utilitarian logic, have dissolved local commitments and ways of life worldwide. In this sense, all references to the common moral substance of all theories with universal claims remain limited to the framework of global structures and relations of economic, political, and axiological domination, and thus these theoretical discourses raise more questions than they can answer.

---

3   These studies belong to different disciplines. In the fields of linguistics, cultural and cognitive sciences, anthropology of ethics, etc., many corresponding studies have been carried out. Although they do not explicitly aim at renewing a "global" ethics, the implications of such research may bring us closer to this goal than many purely philosophical studies. Indeed, the authors of these works do not base their research on "universal" concepts or problems, but rather seek naturalistic, empirically validated foundations for understanding human interactions that are crucial to any form of social ethics (e.g., Klenk, 2019; Lambek 2010). In particular, the "ethical turn" in anthropology clearly demonstrates the need for theoretical alternatives to traditional ethics research.

In this context, it is important to distinguish between the concepts of global ethics on the one hand and universal ethics on the other. We must critically question the project of a "universal" ethics, since it is inherently and (unnecessarily) unifying and slides into the search for some fundamental principles, values and virtues. In this regard, we need to find a way of deepening and broadening transcultural approaches, which means building the foundations of a global ethics on more inclusive forms of human interactions, such as Henry Rosemont's (2015) proposal to apply the concept of "homoversal" instead of "universal".

The problematic nature of "universal ethics" is already evident in the contemporary conceptualization of the term "moral values" as such. It originated in economics and was imported into moral philosophy only in the late 19th century, and since today it can no longer be associated with a positive historical goal, its function is rather negative and destructive. It is limited to the incessant defence against the constant threat of paternalistic systems of meaning based on the supposedly universal concepts of individual autonomy, freedom, and self-determination, as well as on all other central rights developed as part of the Western Enlightenment. On the other hand, this attitude has also led to the dangers of radical ethical relativism, which at first glance is based on principles of egalitarian diversity, but in reality—due to its fundamentally still Eurocentric criteria—is misleading, discriminatory, and therefore problematic.

As we will see below, the application of the method of sublation aims—*inter alia*—at overcoming such an impasse as the relationship between universal and relativistic ethics, a construct that can be observed in numerous contemporary research results. In fact, both categories are rooted in the established and still prevailing global power relations and their axiological implications. These power relations continue to manifest themselves in the West's dominance in epistemological, scientific, and ideational interactions and exchanges with Eastern Asia and the Global South. Although the majority of technological and economic power is shifting from Western to Asian regions, and although their rapid global rise has created new challenges for the United States, the EU, and individual European governments, the "East-West" dialogue is still dominated by the axiological, intellectual, and operational conceptualizations of Western traditions. The reason for the continued dominance of the West in this basic paradigm of exchange is related to the fact that modernization, which provided the epistemological and scientific foundations for today's global system, was "exported" from Europe to the rest of the world, including the Sinic regions. This process also entailed a "modernization" of knowledge and created an asymmetrical relationship between the two sides, in which European indifference to Asia and Asian interest

in Europe were anything but balanced.[4] The crucial question, then, is whether and how this epistemological asymmetry can be balanced. One of the reasons why contemporary Sinic philosophy deserves special attention from a European perspective is that, through the reception and transformation of Western sources (which it was actually forced to do two centuries ago), it has accumulated a transcultural potential that philosophy in Europe has yet to gradually develop. Indeed, we must realize that in the context of the current dynamics of progress, we can hardly think about "Europe" without adopting a global philosophical and ethical perspective. Yet, although much research has been conducted in recent decades on various issues of traditional East Asian, especially Ruist, ethics, only a few studies (e.g. Bell 2010; Elstein 2015a; Lee 2014) have focused upon a possible reconstruction and renewal of some of their basic principles in order to integrate them into a normative system suitable for contemporary societies. A tendency of such reconstructions was clearly visible since the dawn of the 20th century within the intellectual current of New Ruism (*Xin Ruxue* 新儒學), which was defined as the search for a synthesis between Western and traditional East Asian thought in order to develop a system of ideas and values capable of solving the social and political problems of the modern, increasingly globalized world. Philosophers belonging to this school of thought have attempted to reconcile "Western" and "traditional Chinese" ethical norms and principles to create a theoretical model of modernization that cannot be confused or equated with "Westernization". On such foundations, we need to build upon, develop, and upgrade the research already conducted by the major proponents of this school of thought, which was followed by a broader and more general development of the academic field known as the Ruist (or Confucian) revival.

Li Zehou also posited a number of important theories on specific Ruist ethical models and proposed several new, highly influential paradigms for interpreting classical Chinese ethical thought. For the main research agenda of the present article, his elaborations and explanations of the notion of relationism (*guanxizhuyi* 關係主義) are of crucial importance (see Li 1980; 1995; 2010).

---

4   In a personal correspondence that took place in February 2022, Vytis Silius has made me aware of the fact that this imbalance is problematic not only because of Europe's moral claim to Asian societies in terms of "fair play". We cannot limit our understanding of this asymmetry problem to the issue that it harms Asia (because it is unfair, (post)colonial, because it distorts Asian traditions, etc.). Even if such claims are correct, it is even more important to recognize (especially on a political, but also on a philosophical level) that such orientations are very harmful for Europe itself (and the West in general). Economic and technological power is shifting to Asia, whether we really understand how Asian societies work or not. However, if Europe continues to adopt such an ignorant and careless attitude towards Sinic societies, it runs the risk of finding itself in a world system whose deep foundations it does not understand.

A similar concept regarding classical Ruist ethics was proposed by Heiner Roetz, particularly in his studies on Chinese ethics of the Axial Age, and on the impact of its central tenets on Chinese and Sinic modernity (see Roetz 1993, 2017), and on the pragmatic character of Ruist ethics (see Roetz 2013). His work on Axial Age ethics is particularly important in the transcultural perspective, especially because of his important critique of Jasper's concept of the Axial Age in relation to the historical and social conditions of the establishment of ancient Chinese ethics, while his work on Ruist pragmatism is crucial for clarifying the question of the fundamental nature and social function of Ruist ethics and its possible transcultural connotations. Indeed, the latter category of Roetz's work serves as an important critique of the communitarian interpretation of Ruist ethics. According to Roetz, such an interpretation is part of a counter-discourse to the European Enlightenment. In his view, however, such explanations do not do justice to pragmatism's actual indebtedness to the Enlightenment. Therefore, these works propose a specific approach that differs from the prevailing ways of thinking in the study of classical Ruist ethics.

The most influential proponents of the opposite approach are David L. Hall and Roger T. Ames (see especially Hall and Ames 1987; 1995; 1998; 2018). In developing their "focus-field" model of the Ruist Self, they are more oriented toward pragmatic symbolic interactionism. Their model is based on the *ars contextualis* paradigm of Chinese philosophical thought, which in turn can be productively contrasted with Western systems of "general ontology" and a "science of universal principles".

Both of the above approaches (i.e., Roetz's along with Hall and Ames') are important and useful. In spite of their mutual differences, their respective basic systems should not necessarily be viewed as controversial opposites, but rather as complementary methods of analysis and interpretation. Both perspectives on the above material will therefore constitute parts of the basic theoretical framework of the proposed research, arguing—among other issues—for the relevance of pragmatist doctrines to the ongoing project of a critical modern "reconstruction" and not merely a restoration of classical Ruist ethics. Both approaches are important because they emphasize that Ruism, despite its ancient origins, is a living ethical tradition with contemporary relevance. These aspects were also highlighted in the collection of essays edited by Kam-por Yu, Julia Tao, and Philip J. Ivanhoe, *Taking Confucian Ethics Seriously* (2010).

Traditional Ruist ethics cannot be fully equated with any of the classical European ethical discourses, but on the other hand, it contains many of their respective elements and can be seen as a combination of several such disciplines—some

scholars see it as closely related to deontological ethics (e.g., Lee 2014), others to virtue ethics (e.g., Huang Yong 2016; 2020). As we approach the goal of this paper, we need to consider all of these aspects.

Proceeding from the relational character of the Ruist ethics, Roger T. Ames and Henry Rosemont developed the concept of so-called role-ethics, which is based on a careful analysis of classical Ruist moral philosophy and represents one of the most innovative and productive contemporary interpretations of the elementary structure and social connotations of Ruist ethics (e.g. Rosemont and Ames 2016). Although developed only recently, these fundamental works have already become classics in relation to the concept of role ethics, and inspired many other interpretations of certain aspects and consequences of this type of ethics. Within such a framework, the Ruist role-ethics is seen as an attempt to formulate a *sui generis* ethical system that gives this tradition its own voice. Both scholars emphasize that this processual, holistic philosophy is based on the primacy of relationality and therefore poses a challenge to the basic liberal individualism that has defined people as discrete, autonomous, rational, free, and often self-interested agents.

As mentioned above, further development of the comparative perspective is also important. In this regard, three edited volumes containing research results from many eminent scholars should be mentioned, namely the special issue of the *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* on the comparative origins of classical Chinese and Greek ethics (see Cheng Chung-ying 2002), and an important book on classical Ruist ethics and its comparison with discourses based on the individual self and individual rights, with the title *Confucian Ethics: A Comparative Study of Self, Autonomy, and Community* (Shun and Wong 2004). An important anthology dealing with comparisons between ancient Ruist moral philosophy and ethics on the one hand and contemporary Western ethics on the other is also the book *Encountering China* (Sandel and D'Ambrosio 2018).

Since the paper deals with Sinic societies, we also need to be familiar with the historical and theoretical works that explored the process of spreading Ruist ethical thought and culture from China to other Sinic countries and regions. There is a large amount of literature in this research area, and in this regard, but I will mainly consider the works of the few main Sinophone theorists in this field. In this context, I will mainly proceed from the theoretical concepts developed by Huang Chun-chieh in his transcultural Sinic methodology (see Huang Chun-chieh 2005; 2014; 2018) such as the notions of "decontextualization", "recontextualization", and "*glocal* knowledge".

First Steps on the Path to Global Integration of Sinic Ethics

On the basis of this rich material that has already elaborated in many different ways on several of the most important questions of Sinic ethics and its relational models, I seem to be well-equipped enough to provide a critical introduction of Sinic ethical thought into Western scholarship and, more importantly, to incorporate it into discourses on new models of global ethics. However, these endeavours are far from reducing the complex relationship between "universalist ethics" on the one hand and local "Sinic ethics" on the other to some minimal moral standards, norms, or "values". It seems much more sensitive to discuss it from the perspective of alternative social structures and ways of life that resist the assimilationist tendencies of Western ethical discourses by offering new forms of intellectual and life-world experience—that is, a different ethos. Apart from the fact that the dominance of Western axiology is a relic of the colonial and postcolonial period, which was developed in the course of modernization along Western lines and has spread in this form to virtually all regions of the world, one of the main reasons why the Sinic model of relational ethics has been systematically marginalized and misinterpreted so far is the fact that it does not represent a system based on some "other moral values",[5] but is rather rooted in a different ontology of human and social existence.

I believe that Sinic ethical models could make an extremely valuable contribution to such a system of a new global ethics, which could better address the multiple cultural, socio-political, environmental, epistemological, and moral crises of the contemporary world. A transcultural approach can critically and constructively challenge prevailing models of social structure based on individualism. Elsewhere, I have already shown (2021) that traditional Sinic ethical models are not based on collectivist social structures, as is widely assumed in the West, but are rather rooted in relational ethics, which is based on the concept of an individual person whose identity is constituted by and emerges from relationships with fellow human beings. In this context, it is important to refer to the notion of "relational self" and introduce its significance to Western and global scholarship.

The reasons for our stepping onto this path of integrating relationism into the discourses on global ethics are tightly linked the general crises faced by humanity in today's globalized age. These various crises are, of course, interrelated. At the time of writing this article, the explosive spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the Russian attack on Ukraine, have—each in their own way—underscored the

---

5   In this context, it is worthwhile to elaborate and develop Henry Rosemont's (2015) critical notion of "value-orderings" which holds that differences between reasonable ethical systems are not due to "different values" but to different orders of those values.

urgent need to develop methods and forms of supranational collaborative models and problem-solving strategies. Among other things, this pandemic crisis has clearly demonstrated that one of the most effective tools in the fight against such diseases, taken by governments of all countries, is precisely interpersonal solidarity, which must also include a certain degree of self-discipline. Such attitudes play a significant role in all pacifist endeavours to make an end to military conflicts, and they have certainly played a role in the strategies used by Sinic societies to control, and in some cases even eliminate, the spread of the coronavirus. In this regard, most of the Sinic countries have been more successful and efficient than those nations in the Euro-American regions. In my previous work (e.g. 2021), I have clearly shown that the reasons for this difference are not related to the alleged "traditional obedience" of the Sinic population or to the autocratic nature of traditional Sinic state structures. Although it is clear that the autocratic systems of PR China and North Korea have used a range of repressive measures in dealing with the pandemics, we do not have enough reliable and transparent data on their effectiveness. On the other hand, the governments of several "soft" Sinic democracies, such as Taiwan, South Korea, post-colonial Hong Kong, and Singapore, have taken no such measures and yet have been extremely successful in containing the spread of the virus. It is therefore safe to assume that the reasons for the above-mentioned discrepancy have less to do with concrete current political orders than with traditional ethical systems that have emerged and prevail in the various cultural and linguistic areas studied and that normatively prescribe certain culturally conditioned patterns of interaction for large parts of the population.[6]

Here, the contrastive analysis, which represents (as will be shown below) the first segment of the sublation method, could prove itself as a useful tool. Indeed, a contrasting view of the model of individualistically defined ethics on the one hand and relational role ethics on the other may offer new opportunities to gain deeper insights into the general factors that determine the understanding of the relationship between the individual and society. Moreover, this type of analysis can provide us with an efficient differentiation tool for the theoretical selection of

---

6   In this context, I will start from my cross-cultural (Taiwan-Central Europe) empirical study (2012) of the respective understandings of the concept of autonomy. The results of this study clearly showed that even in the third millennium, there is a great discrepancy between these understandings in Europe and the Sinic region, respectively. While most European informants clearly postulate the importance of the individual before society, a large majority of the Taiwanese population remains convinced of the interdependence between the individual and society, which leads to the attribution of great importance to the latter. This instrumental function of society or community manifests itself in a better recognition of the need for social behaviour (e.g., cooperation, solidarity) when confronted with social problems, i.e., problems that affect not only the rights and interests of the individual but also society as a whole (see also Shun and Wong 2004).

positive factors and for the elimination or modification of those strategies that prove to be insufficient. These operational tools will serve us as valuation criteria for the creation of a theoretical framework that will not only provide a good basis for further research, but, above all, an effective method for putting this transcultural knowledge into practice, especially in the fields of legislation and education.

In the next step, we must consider that the classical Sinic model of the "relational self" is deeply embedded in traditional Ruist role-ethics, which is the fundamental paradigm of Sinic ethical relationism. We need to remember (see Rošker 2021) that such a model of social roles, which is informed by ethical normativity, shapes a relational network rooted in the specific, culturally conditioned ideals of individual moral emotions on the one hand and social empathy on the other. In this context, the specific features of Ruist models of hierarchy and their impact on existing patterns of social discrimination, e.g., in relation to gender roles[7] are also important.

Sublating traditional Ruist ethics and integrating them into global discourses also means shedding light on the current needs and demands of contemporary societies in order to find new ways of understanding interpersonal and intercultural interactions that could help us develop new models of cooperation and solidarity as new strategies against current and future global crises. These requirements are certainly linked to the urgent need to resolve the bankruptcy of the current model of liberal democracy and its close connection to the global economy, with its deeply unjust system of production and reproduction of wealth and poverty, freedom and chains, war and peace.

Sublation as an Innovative Method of Transcultural Comparisons

Undoubtedly, such a global perspective is of great importance for the development of all scientific and academic disciplines of our time. This is especially true for the humanities, which have hitherto developed in a fragmentary manner, within the

---

7   It is certain that the Ruist relational ethics involves hierarchies. Relational ethics is rooted in family relationships based on the structural inequality between parents and children. Analogously, such a hierarchical structure is also projected onto the relationships between superiors and their subjects in Ruist political philosophy. Theoretically, the structure of these hierarchical models is not based on attitudes or expectations of absolute authority and corresponding obedience, but on the responsibility of superiors to their subordinates, for it is modelled on the basic pattern of the parent-child relationship, in which the authority of the former is based on experience and loving care, while the attitude of the latter is grounded in natural dependence. But these are, of course, only the theoretical paradigms of Ruist ethics. In later Confucian practice, especially during the periods of autocratic regimes, they were frequently and continuously misused to legitimize absolutist rule.

framework of individual discourses isolated from one another, often confined to the framework of particular histories of ideas and languages. Therefore, we need to promote the transcultural exchange of knowledge and ideas, which is more important than ever in today's globalized world and in a time of widespread crises. As the central crises and problems of our time manifest themselves on a global scale, a globalization of epistemology is also necessary, since such crises and problems can only be solved through informed and up-to-date scholarship that takes into account the issues of equality and justice of all cultures and peoples while meeting the demands of our time. Importantly, this globalization of scientific discourse must not be based on standardization rooted (as it has been) in the economic-political supremacy of those regions that have established the current centres of global power and dominance, but on equality that is different from sameness because it is based on cultural, linguistic, and axiological diversity.

As we have seen, the traditional comparative methods have several shortcomings, concerning both their methodological and axiological principles. Therefore, the model of comparison must be developed in the sense that it overcomes these shortcomings and also the mere identification of similarities and differences between the two *comparanda*.

After months (if not years) of heated debates, it seems high time for scholars working on transcultural philosophy to develop certain methodological and theoretical innovations in this field of research. In this context, I propose to elaborate and apply a new methodological paradigm that can be used in transcultural philosophy and ethics. I tentatively refer to this paradigm as the method of transcultural philosophical sublation (see Rošker 2021). Here, this new method will be applied in the concrete procedure of integrating traditional Sinic relational ethics into current discourses and debates on the possibilities and methods of developing new models of global ethics and their productive transformation in light of current global developments in the search for global solutions to global crises.

Problems related to contemporary global ethics are thus viewed through the lens of transcultural philosophy in the narrower field of Sinic, particularly East Asian studies. As the prefix "trans-" of the term "transcultural" suggests, the methods employed in our research aim to "transcend", that is, to surpass and overcome the rigid, isolating, and essentialist notion of culture (Silius 2020, 275). At the same time, it points to the possibility of its transformation.

As already indicated, I will proceed here from the assumption that the ontology of culture is not based on an immutable substance, but on the relations between different factors that constitute it as a category. Such an understanding is based on the fact that different communities, shaped and developed in the course of their

respective historical and geopolitical developments, form different cosmologies, language structures, and frames of reference. Transcultural research is therefore a process that goes beyond the orthodox, static formulation of culture and thus opens up the possibility of creating new horizons for theorizing content that originally belonged to separate systems or categories.

However, this does not mean that there are no different cultures. Different cultures are still something real, just like different languages or grammatical and cognition structures. They are all dynamic, constantly evolving and changing entities that form the ideational context of human life in individual communities and societies. The same is true for the highly contested concept of cultural identity (see Jullien 2016; Heubel 2021). In our quest to integrate Sinic ethical models into the framework of global ethics, one must also critically question the prevailing argument that "a culture has no identity because it is constantly changing" (Jullien 2016, 20). Instead, I subscribe to Fabian Heubel's idea that a culture can only change if and because it has identity(ies) and constantly produces them (Heubel 2021). However, this does not mean that identity is a "phantasm". Rather, identities are ways of being, and denying their existence is not only naïve, but can also lead to a dangerous denial of reality.[8]

But my aim is not to limit transcultural philosophy to the level of such cultural identities, even if they are changeable and dynamic. I want to find out in what way we can integrate Sinic relationism into the field of global ethics, which I understand as a system of certain basic ethical standards that can connect and be shared by people from different cultures, religions, and nations enabling them to face global crises in a constructive way. In doing so, I would like to apply the methods recently developed within the framework of transcultural post-comparative philosophy (Kahteran and Weber 2021, 214), which aims to overcome certain problems associated with traditional intercultural comparisons.

As indicated at the beginning of this article, scholars see the main problem with such comparisons as having a unifying methodology and a single philosophical language and applying it to culturally concrete and diverse material. In my view,

---

8   This fact is of immense importance not only for the global exchange of knowledge, but also for Europe and our efforts to free it from the relics of its colonial history, which to some extent still manifests itself in the problematic nature of the current type of "intercultural dialogues" because they are often still based on (albeit mostly unconscious and latent) Eurocentric and Orientalist approaches. Europe, composed of different cultures that use different languages and have developed in different historical traditions, urgently needs to find a way to reflect self-critically on the notion of its own cultural identity. Therefore, a better knowledge of transcultural interactions is important not only for European international relations on a global level, but also internally, i.e. in terms of interactions among individual European countries.

however, the core problem is much deeper and much more complex, because the methodology in question is a system underlying one of the philosophies being compared, namely the Western one. There is no third, "objective" methodology. Thus, the *tertium comparationis* in terms of the methodology chosen and the axiological criteria for evaluating the two (or more) *comparanda* is determined by one of them, and usually by the one belonging to the Western philosophical discourses. On the basis of a thorough reflection and analysis of such problems inherent in traditional cross-cultural comparative procedures, I have tried to develop a method of transcultural sublation that belongs to the new models of transcultural philosophizing called postcomparative philosophies. Such methods aim to develop new forms of transcultural philosophizing and to overcome the impasses of traditional comparative philosophy through procedures of "conceptual comparison" instead of relying only on the "comparison of concepts".

As I have explained elsewhere (2022), the transcultural sublation method can be carried out in five steps:

- *Step 1: Similarities*—first we identify the similarities between the two comparanda.

- *Step 2: Differences*—then we identify the differences between them by looking at the main paradigms of the frame of reference to which they belong.

- *Step 3: Dialectic of eliminating and preserving*—in the next step we eliminate certain aspects of the two comparanda and preserve certain other elements.[9]

- *Step 4: Sublation*—the process established in steps 1 to 3 leads us to a cognitive shift that is the prerequisite for the possibility of realizing step 5.

- *Step 5: New insight*—this new insight is the result of the shift accomplished in step 4. This new insight may manifest itself in one or more new ideas, propositions, or theses. (ibid.)

Unlike most other elaborations and developments of the comparative method, and also unlike traditional dialectics, which follows more or less automatic principles, the sublation method is not guided by a programmed process of necessary change. It does not follow strict and unchanging regular principles. While steps

---

9   This decision does not arise automatically from the internal structure of dialectical thinking (as, for example, in Hegelian dialectics), but is the result of a conscious decision made on the basis of inspiration arising from the tension between the differences identified in step 2.

1 and 2 are still relatively clear, steps 3 and 4 are based on the subjective decision of the person using the method. This creative subjectivity allows for the emergence of additional, often unprecedented insights. Unlike most methods that follow the strict principles of formal logic based on the laws of identity, contradiction, and the excluded middle, and rooted in the ontology of being as substance, this method is based on the arbitrary decision made by a subjective (and free) mind. Drawing on Ralph Weber's conceptualization of the "*tertium*" (Weber 2014), Vytis Silius explains the position (and implications) of such "free" subjectivity as follows:

> What is important in this observation, is that if we keep in mind that this "third"— the comparer—can never be neutral, we better embrace that she is rather proactive, that is, that she intentionally directs her research. It means that such a proactive researcher is not "comparing" two external positions with respect to a neutral "third" position, but is really forging her own philosophical position. She might be drawing inspiration and insight from the first two (in positive or negative manner), but in the end—and most importantly—the outcome is a new and current (present) philosophical position. (Silius 2021, 268)

Here, of course, we are confronted with the old divide between the (natural) sciences and the humanities. Although both are academic discourses that must follow a coherent logic and certain principles, the former apply primarily a quantitative methodology, the latter a qualitative one.

Against this background, let us try to show in what way relationism could be integrated into the axiological system of global ethics through a process of sublation. Relationism is, of course, a broad category that includes various elements. It is a social model, comparable to individualism. Although in our attempt to integrate Ruist ethics into the framework of global ethical discourse we might try to sublate individualism and relationism, and in this way possibly arrive at a new, less rigid and more inclusive model of ethics suitable for today's world, the two categories are simply too broad to be sublated in their entirety and at once. Actually, individualism and relationism can be seen as two different frameworks of reference, which also include different semantic connotations of concepts and notions that are constituting the respective pattern or network of the two frameworks. Therefore, we must start from certain particular elements that make up these two systems, and then gradually work our way to the extremely complex entities that make up relationism as a totality of a social structure or system. In this essay, I begin by sublating two different conceptions of personhood that underlie individualism and relativism, respectively.

1. *Similarities:* The human Self as an individual person.

2. *Differences:* Self as abstract and independent individual vs. Self as relational and interdependent individual.

3. *Dialectic of elimination and preservation:* Elimination of independence, preservation of interdependence. From this arises the problem of human rights.

4. *Sublation:* Human rights are important and must be preserved, but there is no necessary and direct connection between the types of social structures on the one hand and the types of institutional orders on the other.

5. *New insight:* The concept of human rights must be expanded to include the rights of the interdependent relational Self.

Ad 1. Similarities: The human Self as an individual. In both systems, the importance of human beings is of central importance. They both proceed from human personhood as an individual Self. This is because the concept of personhood contains a general mode of self-reflection or self-understanding. In this sense, the similarity is that both systems include specific conceptualizations of what is called the human Self, which can be defined[10] by its ability to turn inward and engage in self-reflection, by its ability to form interpersonal relations with other human Selves, as well as by its executive function as an agent that makes choices, exerts control, and engages in self-regulation. The human Self as such always refers to an individual person. This is why it can be stated that individualism, as well as relationism, both proceed from the notion of the individual Self as regards the basic constitution of personhood.

Ad 2. Differences: Independent Self vs. relational Self. If we consider the frame of reference of individualism and relationalism, respectively, we can easily see the following differences in the conceptualization of the individual human Self. In the two systems considered, the individual human Self can be understood either as separate from other human beings (an isolated and independent individual) or as connected to them in a relational network that forms communities and societies. In the first case, the individual's identity is constituted by his or her pure self-reference (independent, isolated Self); in the second case, it is constituted by the relationships that the individual lives in society (relational Self). Let us briefly highlight the origins as well as the implications of these differences. The

---

10   There are many definitions of the human Self, but what most of them have in common are the three characteristics mentioned above; see, e.g., Schroeder (2013). This is also the definition based on the connotations in which the term is understood and applied in this article.

two systems are based on two possible ways of relating the individual to society. The first proceeds from a dialectics based upon a method, grounded in the strict Cartesian separation of *res extensa* and *res cogitans*, which has been placed into a model of mutually exclusive opposites. In this model, the individual Self is viewed as being in contradiction with society. In this view, the autonomy of the individual Self is possible only if it can maintain its independence from society, whose actions are considered heteronomous with respect to the Self. The second assumes a dialectic of correlative complementarity, in which the individual Self is in an interdependent and mutually complementary relationship with the social network in which it is embedded, that is, with the community and with society. In such a system, autonomy can only be achieved within this complementary relationship between the individual and society. This does not mean that the individual Self cannot be autonomous. Since the interests and concerns of the Self cannot be separated from the interests and demands of its relational social networks, the autonomy of the relational Self is also relational. As long as society is not something that is external to the individual Self, it is not considered a heteronomous entity, i.e., as something external.[11]

Ad 3. Dialectic of elimination and preservation: Independence vs. interdependence. Given these similarities and differences, we will retain the concept of the individual Self, which is central to both systems under consideration. On the other hand, we eliminate from this concept the character of independence, which is an important feature of the abstracted and isolated Self, and preserve the concept of interdependence, which is a main condition of a relational Self. In doing so, we start from the assumption that this independence is in fact an illusion, because no individual can survive completely outside society. Therefore, abstract concepts may not be an appropriate basis for real life decisions and actions. By taking away the very concept of independence from the individual, we have in effect eliminated the conceptual basis of modern Western individualism, whose relationship with society is contractual, as if they were partners in some kind of business relationship. In this context, we have actually eliminated this kind of individualism that underlies the constitution of liberal democracy. On the other hand, relationism, based on the interdependence we have retained, represents a

---

11   This does not at all mean that relational individuals cannot see themselves as separate from governments and rulership. If governments focus on the welfare of society and all individuals living in it, they can—in theory—become part of this relational network. When they do not, they are seen as a heteronomous entity that has to be eliminated from society. This important distinction was well described, for example, in the core definitions of the traditional Confucian concept of the Mandate of Heaven (*Tian ming*), which served as an evaluative criterion for legitimising rule. In Ruist philosophy, people have not only the right, but even the responsibility to overthrow a despotic ruler (Xunzi s.d., Wangzhi 5).

more realistic way of linking the individual and society, but one that can easily be abused for the interests of state and government precisely because the individual is so closely embedded in the social web. Relationism has often led to autocratic (or even totalitarian) social orders precisely because of its possible embedding in networks of hierarchical social structures.[12] In theory, relationism has been associated with meritocratic governments and political orders, but in practise they have never prevailed. We are dealing here with a somewhat paradoxical situation: the unrealistic conceptualization of the Self has led to the establishment of a real political system, while the realistic conceptualization of the Self and society has never been implemented in political practise. The abolition of independence and the maintenance of interdependence may therefore lead to various problems related to the issue of the protection of human rights. These problems arise because of the issue of social control, which is inherently present in relationism: its existence and its possibly all-pervasive function can threaten two important elements of human rights, namely human dignity (which manifest itself in the withdrawal of intimacy and privacy) and individual integrity, that can be threatened due to the high valuation of authorities.[13]

Ad 4: Sublation: In the context of our goal, these problems can be solved by sublating (and thus abandoning) the assumption of a necessary direct link between social (or communal) networks on the one hand and institutional orders on the

---

12   Not only many Orientalist and Eurocentric theorists, such as the author of *Oriental Despotism* (Wittvogel 1957), but also those who take in their analyses into account human and cultural, and not just ideological and utilitarian factors—often warn of the inherent connection between despotism and hierarchical, authority-based structures of familial relationships and corresponding norms (see, e.g., Arendt 1958, 26–27). This is of course true, although we must additionally point out that even in the broader community defined by what Arendt calls the public sphere, which is the social network of autonomous and free-thinking individuals, relations between individuals cannot be based on the realization of the principle of equality. Equality can only be realized at the level of moral or axiological equality, not in the sense of equal evaluation of deeds, practices and works of individuals. The model of equality presented in the ideologies of liberal democracies is therefore hypocritical in its essence.

13   (Also see footnote 7). Incidentally, the ideal of privacy or intimacy as a sphere protected from outside interference by other people or society as a whole took shape in Europe only at the dawn of the 18th century as a rebellious reaction against "what we would today call the conformism inherent in every society" (Arendt 1958, 39). Members of any social order are expected to behave in a certain way, prescribed by a myriad of different principles and rules that always serve to "normalize" people and their ways of acting. In this framework, the peculiarity of the so-called pre-modern societies is only that—with the aim of achieving such "normalization"—they tended to establish systems that eliminated or abolished all spontaneous or exceptional individual achievements (ibid., 40). Modernization, however, can also be defined—having left behind the semi-feudal structures of the 18th century and the class categories of the 19th—by the rise of the so-called "mass society", in which various social groups are absorbed into the social whole in much the same way that individuals were absorbed into traditional families.

other. Moreover, the third step of this sublation process has shown that our choice between preservation and elimination must be linked to our goal of establishing adequate first-order protection mechanisms, which—in the context of a global ethics—must be taken into account before applying the principles of particular socio-political orders or regimes that might be guided by the interests of particular institutions, social classes or economic considerations. In this context, we still start from the imperative of protecting human rights, one of the most important social and ethical mechanisms in this regard, whose consolidation has had (and should have in the future) a great impact on education, legislation and many other crucial areas that regulate social interactions. At present, however, the concept of human rights is closely linked to the notion of the independent and atomic individual.[14]

Ad 5: New insight. This sublation has led us to a new insight, a new understanding of the fact that the current concept of human rights—together with the principles that guide their protection—is problematic. Since personhood, which includes integrity and dignity as two of the central elements of any autonomous individual Self, cannot necessarily be separated from its fellow human beings, its protection (i.e., the protection of its physical life, dignity, and integrity) need not necessarily be limited to individualism and its contractual connection between the individual and society. *Ergo*, the concept of human rights, which is one of the central mechanisms for ensuring this protection, can no longer be limited to the rights of the individual as an independent Self, but must be extended to the rights of the individual as a relational Self.

---

14   This connection raises many problems. Unrestricted freedom of individual movement, for example, is one of the basic human freedoms, in part and precisely because Western countries are in a position where they can afford to guarantee such freedoms to their citizens. When it comes to freedom in the opposite direction, to the free entry of, say, people from the Global South into a Western state, the state has the right to close its borders without anyone being able to accuse it of violating human rights. At the same time, the individual nature of the concept of human rights leads to a situation in which the rights of social groups are left out. The exception is the right to national sovereignty under the doctrine of national self-determination, and this is the only collective right that has gained recognition in this discourse. Marginalized communities that would need more rights than other independent individuals within individual states include, for example, women, the elderly, minority groups of indigenous people, members of non-Western cultures, and members of the LGBTQ+ community who are at the bottom of the social ladder even in countries not accused of human rights violations. This individualizing perspective of human rights deprives discriminated groups of the basis of any political action, the subject of which is not the individual but the group. Thus, it is not surprising that a variety of rights that are fundamental to members of many non-Western cultures do not fall within the scope of what is defined as human rights. Among them, for example, is the right of the individual to grow old and die among his or her loved ones, and not in a designated institution (Rošker 2005, 213).

Conclusion

In this context, it should be emphasized that a personhood as an individual Self can have a relational character without losing its autonomy, integrity, or dignity. Since relationism consists of individual personhoods (although—or more precisely because—their identities are constituted by the relationships they live), it does not contradict the individual rights of the personhood, and does not necessarily constitute a heteronomous influence on individual personality. Therefore, their fundamental values can be integrated into the value system of global ethics. As indicated at the beginning of this essay, there are two main reasons why such an extension is necessary. First, we live in an era of globalization, which at the same time means that we face global crises, i.e. crises that need to be solved through global cooperation. Therefore, we cannot simply rely on the endless expansion of existing liberal political systems created by ideas and ideologies based on individualism but must strive to create new types of democracy (or even better, *politeia*) that would be truly capable of meeting our global (and globalised) needs. Second, such global cooperation (beyond the unequal structures of economic exploitation and the absolute obsession with material profit) can only be built on a solid foundation of mutual transcultural learning and exchange of knowledge and ideas, including patterns and models of ethical valuations, decisions and behaviour.

Acknowledgements

References

Arendt, Hannah. 1998. *The Human Condition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Bell, Daniel. 2010. *China's New Confucianism: Politics and Everyday Life in a Changing Society*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Chakrabarti, Arindam, and Ralph Weber. 2016. "Introduction." In *Comparative Philosophy without Borders*, edited by Arindam Chakrabarti, and Ralph Weber, 1–33. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Cheng Chung-ying 成中英, ed. 2002. *On Comparative Origins of Classical Chinese Ethics and Greek Ethics. Special issue of the Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 29 (3).

Cheng, Chung-ying, and Nicholas Bunnin, eds. 2002. *Contemporary Chinese Philosophy*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Elstein, David. 2015a. "Classical Ruist Political Thought." In *Democracy in Contemporary Confucian Philosophy*, 23–41. New York: Routledge.

———. 2015b. "Contemporary Confucianism." In *The Routledge Companion to Virtue Ethics*, edited by Lorraine Besser-Jones, and Michael Slote, 237–51. New York: Routledge.

Eno, Robert. 1990. *The Confucian Creation of Heaven: Philosophy and the Defence of Ritual Mastery*. New York: SUNY.

Hall, David, and Roger Ames. 1987. *Thinking through Confucius*. NY, Albany: SUNY.

———. 1995. *Anticipating China*. NY, Albany: SUNY.

———. 1998. *Thinking From the Han: Self, Truth, and Transcendence in Chinese and Western Culture*. NY, Albany: SUNY.

———. 2018. "Dewey, China, and the Democracy of the Dead." In *Justice and Democracy,* edited by Marietta Stepaniants, and Engelbert Kaempfer, 257–75. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Heubel, Fabian. 2021. *Was ist chinesische Philosophie? Kritische Perspektiven*. Hamburg: Meiner.

Huang, Chun-chieh. 2005. "How is 'East Asian Confucianism' Possible?" *Journal of Shandong University* (*Philosophy and Social Sciences*) (1): 455–68.

———. 2014. *Humanism in East Asian Confucian Contexts*. Bielefeld: transcript-Verlag.

———. 2018. "Why Speak of 'East Asian Confucianisms'?" In *Confucianisms for a Changing World Cultural Order*, edited by Roger T. Ames, and Peter H. Hershock, 75–86. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Huang, Yong. 2016. "Confucian Environmental Virtue Ethics (Focusing on Wang Yangming)." In *Routledge Handbook of Religion and Ecology*, edited by Willis J. Jenkins, Mary Evelyn Tucker, and John Grim. Taylor & Francis Group, ProQuest Ebook Central. http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/cuhk-ebooks/detail.action?docID=4605468. Accessed February 10, 2022.

———. 2020. "Why Confucian Ethics Is a Virtue Ethics, Virtue Ethics is Not a Bad Thing, and Neville Should Endorse It." *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 47 (3): 283–94.

Jullien, François. 2016. "Une culture n'a pas d'identité car elle ne cesse de se transformer." Interview with Anastasia Vécrin. *Libération*, October 1, 2016: 20–21.

Kahteran, Nevad, and Ralph Weber. 2021. "Towards Post-Comparative Philosophy: Interview With Ralph Weber." *Asian Studies* 9 (2): 211–21. https://doi.org/10.4312/as.2021.9.2.211-221. Accessed February 18, 2022.

Klenk, Michael. 2019. "Moral Philosophy and the 'Ethical Turn' in Anthropology." *ZEMO* 2: 331–53. https://doi.org/10.1007/s42048-019-00040-9. Accessed February 18, 2022.

Lambek, Michael, ed. 2010. *Ordinary Ethics: Anthropology, Language, and Action*. New York: Fordham University Press.

Lee, Ming Huei 李明輝. 2014. "Dangdai xin rujia 'Ruxue kaichu minzhu lun'de lilun yihanyu xianshi yiyi 當代新儒家「儒學開出民主論」的理論意涵與現實意義 (The Meaning and the Practical Significance of the Contemporary New Confucian "Theory of Developing Democracy from Confucianism." *Asian Studies* 2 (1): 7–18. https://doi.org/10.4312/as.2014.2.1.7-18. Accessed February 18, 2022.

Li Zehou 李澤厚. 1980. "Kongzi zai pingjia 孔子再評價 (A Reevaluation of Confucius)." *Zhongguo shehui kexue* 2: 77–96.

———. 1995. "'Lunyu jindu'qinyan"《論語今讀》前言 (Foreword to the 'Reading the Analects Today')." *Zhongguo wenhua* (1): 26–34.

———. 2010. *Lunlixue gangyao* 倫理學綱要 (*An Outline of Ethics*). Beijing: Renmin ribao chuban she.

Roetz, Heiner. 1993. *Confucian Ethics of the Axial Age*. Albany, New York: SUNY.

———. 2013. "A Comment on Pragmatism in Chinese Studies." In *Dongya shiyu zhong de ruxue: Xiandai de huiying* (*Confucianism in East Asian Perspective: Modern Responses*), edited by Yang Chen-Te, 279–99. Taipei: Academia Sinica.

———. 2017. "Die Achsenzeit im Diskurs der chinesischen Moderne." *Polylog* (38): 63–80.

Rosemont, Henry, Jr. 2015. *Against Individualism: A Confucian Rethinking of the Foundations of Morality, Politics, Family, and Religion*. Lanham: Lexington Books.

Rosemont, Henry Jr., and Roger T. Ames. 2016. *Confucian Role-Ethics: A Moral Vision for the 21st Century?* Taibei: National Taiwan University Press.

Rošker, Jana S. 2005. *Na ozki brvi razumevanja: medkulturna metodologija v sinoloških študijah*. Ljubljana: Znanstvena založba FF.

———. 2012. "Cultural Conditionality of Comprehension: The Perception of Autonomy in China." In *Reinventing Identities,* edited by Cao Qing, 26–42. Tianjin: Nankai daxue chuban she.

———. 2021. *Interpreting Chinese Philosophy: A New Methodology*. London, New York: Bloomsbury Academic.

———. 2022. "Comparing Logical Paradoxes through the Method of Sublation: Hui Shi, Zeno and the 'Flying Arrow Problem'." *Asian Studies* 10 (2): 299–312. https://journals.uni-lj.si/as/article/view/10500/10196.

Sandel, Michael, and Paul D'Ambrosio. 2018. *Encountering China*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Schroeder, Sarah L. 2013. "The Remarkable Human Self." In *APS – Association for Psychological Science*, December 24, 2013. https://www.psychologicalscience. org/observer/the-remarkable-human-self. Accessed March 3, 2022.

Shun, Kwong-Loi, and David Wong, eds. 2004. *Confucian Ethics: A Comparative Study of Self, Autonomy, and Community*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Silius, Vytis. 2020. "Diversifying Academic Philosophy." *Asian Studies* 8 (2): 257–80.

Song, Bin. 2017. "Dr. Bin Song on the Meaning of Ru 儒 for Confucianism." *Huffpost*, August 14, 2017. https://www.huffpost.com/entry/dr-bin-song-on-the-meaning-of-ru-%E5%84%92-for-confucianism_b_59793cf7e4b09982b7376212. Accessed February 8, 2022.

———. 2019. "Comparative Metaphysics and Theology as a Scientific Endeavor: A Ruist (Confucian) Perspective." *Socio-Historical Examination of Religion and Ministry* 1 (2): 203–24.

Weber, Ralph. 2014. "Comparative Philosophy and the Tertium: Comparing What with What, and in What Respect?" *Dao: A Journal of Comparative Philosophy* 13 (2): 151–71.

Wittfogel, Karl August. 1957. *Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power*. London: Yale University Press.

Xunzi 荀子. s.d. *Chinese Text Project online open-access library*. https://ctext.org/xunzi. Accessed June 15, 2020.

Yu, Kam-por, Julia Tao, and Philip J. Ivanhoe, eds. 2010. *Taking Confucian Ethics Seriously*. New York: SUNY.