

Confucian Role Ethics

A Challenge to the Ideology of Individualism

In the introduction of Chinese philosophy and culture into the Western academy, we have tended to theorize and conceptualize this antique tradition by appeal to familiar Western categories. Confucian role ethics is an attempt to articulate a *sui generis* moral philosophy that allows this tradition to have its own voice. I will use the aesthetic of the casting of bronzes as an analogy for person-making in the Confucian tradition. That is, this holistic philosophy is fundamentally an aestheticism, grounded in the primacy of relationality and a narrative understanding of person, and is a challenge to a foundational liberal individualism that has defined persons as discrete, autonomous, rational, free, and often self-interested agents. Confucian role ethics begins from a relationally constituted conception of person, takes family roles and relations as the entry point for developing moral competence, invokes a creative moral imagination and the growth in relations that it can inspire as the substance of human morality, and entails a human-centered, a-theistic religiousness that stands in sharp contrast to the Abrahamic religions.

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15:00-18:00

Seminar Room, Bldg 101,

University of Tokyo at Komaba

Language: English | Admission

Free | No Registration Required

