

Individualism In Early China Human Agency And The Self In Thought And Politics

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New findings unveil a missing piece of human prehistory

The skull of an ancient human discovered in northeastern China may belong to a previously ... that the skull likely belonged to a male individual who died at about age 50. An analysis of the ...

New human species 'Dragon man' may be our closest relative

The finding, based on analysis of a more than 140,000-year-old human skull reportedly found in Harbin City, China, in 1930 ... skulls of Homo sapiens, or early humans, currently resides at ...

'Dragon Man,' not Neanderthals, is closest human relative, researchers say

A new species of ancient human discovered in China may replace Neanderthals as ... be more than 146,000 years old and came from a male individual, aged around 50. Researchers said the skull ...

Scientists hail discovery of new human species dubbed 'Dragon Man'

The strange skull appeared soon after the Japanese invaded northeast China in the early 1930s ... The nearly complete human skull had an elongated cranium from which a heavy brow bone protruded ...

'Dragon Man' skull may be new species, shaking up human family tree

Larger cultural forces like Western hegemony, rampant industrialism and mass consumerism have facilitated the spread of a catastrophic form of climate control.

Climate Change: How Comfort Became Something an Individual Could Purchase

The Human Rights Council in a midday meeting held an interactive dialogue with the High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Ukraine, followed by an interactive dialogue ...

Human Rights Council Holds Separate Interactive Dialogues on the Situation of Human Rights in Ukraine and in the Central African Republic

This citizen score comes from monitoring an individual's social ... rating their worth as a human being – and it forces others to respect that rating. “China’s proposed social score ...

China's "Social Credit System" Will Rate How Valuable You Are as a Human

Quantum physicist Mario Krenn remembers sitting in a café in Vienna in early 2016, poring over computer printouts, trying to make sense of what MELVIN had found. MELVIN was a machine-learning ...

AI designs quantum physics experiments beyond what any human has conceived

China's government rejected U.S. accusations of forced labor in Xinjiang and accused Washington on Thursday of hurting global trade after lawmakers endorsed import curbs and ...

China says US measures on Xinjiang threaten global trade

In the first of two exclusive video interviews, MedPage Today Editor-in-Chief Marty Makary, MD, MPH, of Johns Hopkins in Baltimore, discusses the strategy and public health messaging in the early days ...

The U.S. Fumbled the Early COVID Response in Two Major Ways

As COVID-19 cases begin to rise again in North Carolina, a team of researchers at UNC's Gillings School of Global Public Health says a universal coronavirus vaccine could be on the horizon. What You ...

Early study shows universal coronavirus vaccine could prevent future pandemics

image captionThe Uyghurs are the largest minority ethnic group in China's north-western ... everything from number plates to individual faces. According to Human Rights Watch, police are also ...

Who are the Uyghurs and why is China being accused of genocide?

Jin's cases and others like it reflect a lack of oversight on the companies responsible for determining what threats new construction or business activities pose to human health and the environment.

China's perverse incentives plague environmental impact reports

In early June, the ministry approved ... Mimi Lau covers human rights, religion and civil society in China. She spent seven years in southern China as the Post's Guangzhou Correspondent before ...

The Chinese student protests putting 'independent' college merger plans on hold

From early in the pandemic, virologists suspected that animals traded at wet markets in Wuhan—one of China's biggest ... a large farmers market, where individual vendors sell fresh fish ...

New data shows Wuhan markets were ripe for diseases to jump from animals to people

This model, the authors write, fits the United States and China ... class open up very early, before kindergarten, rather than during college. So for reducing overall human capital inequality ...

Is Education No Longer the 'Great Equalizer'?

Others want clarity on reports, citing American intelligence, suggesting that there were early ... China could be studied in BSL-2 labs because there was no evidence that they directly infected ...

A Top Virologist in China, at Center of a Pandemic Storm, Speaks Out

That the data was deleted “should make us skeptical that all other relevant early Wuhan sequences have ... the sequences were also removed from the China National GeneBank DataBase, another ...

Conventional wisdom has it that the concept of individualism was absent in early China. In this uncommon study of the self and human agency in ancient China, Erica Fox Brindley provides an important corrective to this view and persuasively argues that an idea of individualism can be applied to the study of early Chinese thought and politics with intriguing results. She introduces the development of ideological and religious beliefs that link universal, cosmic authority to the individual in ways that may be referred to as individualistic and illustrates how these evolved alongside and potentially helped contribute to larger sociopolitical changes of the time, such as the centralization of political authority and the growth in the social mobility of the educated elite class. Starting with the writings of the early Mohists (fourth century BCE), Brindley analyzes many of the major works through the early second century BCE by Laozi, Mencius, Zhuangzi, Xunzi, and Han Feizi, as well as anonymous authors of both received and excavated texts. Changing notions of human agency affected prevailing attitudes toward the self as individual—in particular, the onset of ideals that stressed the power and authority of the individual, either as a conformist agent in relation to a larger whole or as an individualistic agent endowed with inalienable cosmic powers and authorities. She goes on to show how distinctly internal (individualistic), external (institutionalized), or mixed (syncretic) approaches to self-cultivation and state control emerged in response to such ideals. In her exploration of the nature of early Chinese individualism and the various theories for and against it, she reveals the ways in which authors innovatively adapted new theories on individual power to the needs of the burgeoning imperial state. With clarity and force, Individualism in Early China illuminates the importance of the individual in Chinese culture. By focusing on what is unique about early Chinese thinking on this topic, it gives readers a means of understanding particular "Chinese" discussions of and respect for the self.

This study of the self and human agency in ancient China persuasively argues that an idea of individualism can be applied to the study of early Chinese thought and politics with intriguing results. It introduces the development of ideological and religious beliefs that link universal, cosmic authority to the individual in ways that may be referred to as individualistic, and illustrates how these evolved alongside and helped contribute to larger sociopolitical changes of the time.

Explores the religious, political, and cultural significance attributed to music in early China. In early China, conceptions of music became important culturally and politically. This fascinating book examines a wide range of texts and discourse on music during this period (ca. 500–100 BCE) in light of the rise of religious, protoscientific beliefs on the intrinsic harmony of the cosmos. By tracking how music began to take on cosmic and religious significance, Erica Fox Brindley shows how music was used as a tool for such enterprises as state unification and cultural imperialism. She also outlines how musical discourse accompanied the growth of an explicit psychology of the emotions, served as a fundamental medium for spiritual attunement with the cosmos, and was thought to have utility and potency in medicine. While discussions of music in state ritual or as an aesthetic and cultural practice abound, this book is unique in linking music to religious belief and demonstrating its convergences with key religious, political, and intellectual transformations in early China. “This is an enormous contribution to the field in terms of addressing some early conceptions of music and its social, cultural, and political role in the developing political and cosmic system based on correlative thinking, or as the author puts it, a ‘cosmology of mystical resonance.’” – Joanne D. Birdwhistell, author of *Mencius and Masculinity: Dynamics of Power, Morality, and Maternal Thinking*

A richly empirical discussion of ethnic identity formation in the ancient world, presenting the peoples of China's southern frontier.

"In this innovative study, Erica Brindley examines how, during the period 400 BCE-50 CE, Chinese states and an embryonic Chinese empire interacted with peoples referred to as the Yue/Viet along its southern frontier. Brindley provides an overview of current theories in archaeology and linguistics concerning the peoples of the ancient southern frontier of China, the closest relations on the mainland to certain later Southeast Asian and Polynesian peoples. Through analysis of Warring States and early Han textual sources, she shows how representations of Chinese and Yue identity invariably fed upon, and often grew out of, a two-way process of centering the self while de-centering the other. Examining rebellions, pivotal ruling figures from various Yue states, and key moments of Yue agency, Brindley demonstrates the complexities involved in identity formation and cultural hybridization in the ancient world and highlights the ancestry of cultures now associated with southern China and Vietnam"--

History mattered to the political elite in Ancient China. Leung explores why it was so important and to what end.

This book rewrites the story of classical Chinese philosophy, which has always been considered the single most creative and vibrant chapter in the history of Chinese philosophy. Works attributed to Confucius, Mozi, Mencius, Laozi, Zhuangzi, Xunzi, Han Feizi and many others represent the very origins of moral and political thinking in China. As testimony to their enduring stature, in recent decades many Chinese intellectuals, and even leading politicians, have turned to those classics, especially Confucian texts, for alternative or complementary sources of moral authority and political legitimacy. Therefore, philosophical inquiries into core normative values embedded in those classical texts are crucial to the ongoing scholarly discussion about China as China turns more culturally inward. It can also contribute to the spirited contemporary debate about the nature of philosophical reasoning, especially in the non-Western traditions. This book offers a new narrative and interpretative framework about the origins of moral-political philosophy that tracks how the three normative values, humaneness, justice, and personal freedom, were formulated, reformulated, and contested by early Chinese philosophers in their effort to negotiate the relationship among three distinct domains, the personal, the familial, and the political. Such efforts took place as those thinkers were reimagining a new moral-political order, debating its guiding norms, and exploring possible sources within the context of an evolving understanding of Heaven and its relationship with the humans. Tao Jiang argues that the competing visions in that debate can be characterized as a contestation between partialist humaneness and impartialist justice as the guiding norm for the newly imagined moral-political order, with the Confucians, the Mohists, the Laoists, and the so-called fajia thinkers being the major participants, constituting the mainstream philosophical project during this period. Thinkers lined up differently along the justice-humaneness spectrum with earlier ones maintaining some continuity between the two normative values (or at least trying to accommodate both to some extent) while later ones leaning more toward their exclusivity in the political/public domain. Zhuangzi and the Zhuangists were the outliers of the mainstream moral-political debate who rejected the very parameter of humaneness versus justice in that discourse. They were a lone voice advocating personal freedom, but the Zhuangist expressions of freedom were self-restricted to the margins of the political world and the interiority of one's heartmind. Such a take can shed new light on how the Zhuangist approach to personal freedom would profoundly impact the development of this idea in pre-modern Chinese political and intellectual history.

The first part of *Against Individualism: A Confucian Rethinking of the Foundations of Morality, Politics, Family, and Religion* is devoted to showing how and why the vision of human beings as free, independent and autonomous individuals is and always was a mirage that has served liberatory functions in the past, but has now become pernicious for even thinking clearly about, much less achieving social and economic justice, maintaining democracy, or addressing the manifold environmental and other problems facing the world today. In the second and larger part of the book Rosemont proffers a different vision of being human gleaned from the texts of classical Confucianism, namely, that we are first and foremost interrelated and thus interdependent persons whose uniqueness lies in the multiplicity of roles we each live throughout our lives. This leads to an ethics based on those mutual roles in sharp contrast to individualist moralities, but which nevertheless reflect the facts of our everyday lives very well. The book concludes by exploring briefly a number of implications of this vision for thinking differently about politics, family life, justice, and the development of a human-centered authentic religiousness. This book will be of value to all students and scholars of philosophy, political theory, and Religious, Chinese, and Family Studies, as well as everyone interested in the intersection of morality with their everyday and public lives.

In China, the debate over the moral status of emotions began around the fourth century BCE, when early philosophers first began to invoke psychological categories such as the mind (xin), human nature (xing), and emotions (qing) to explain the sources of ethical authority and the foundations of knowledge about the world. Although some thinkers during this period proposed that human emotions and desires were temporary physiological disturbances in the mind caused by the impact of things in the world, this was not the account that would eventually gain currency. The consensus among those thinkers who would come to be recognized as the foundational figures of the Confucian and Daoist philosophical traditions was that the emotions represented the underlying, dispositional constitution of a person, and that they embodied the patterned workings of the cosmos itself. Curie Virág sets out to explain why the emotions were such a central preoccupation among early thinkers, situating the entire debate within developments in conceptions of the self, the cosmos, and the political order. She shows that the mainstream account of emotions as patterned reality emerged as part of a major conceptual shift towards the recognition of natural reality as intelligible, orderly, and coherent. The mainstream account of emotions helped to summon the very idea of the human being as a universal category and to establish the cognitive and practical agency of human beings. This book, the first intensive study of the subject, traces the genealogy of these early Chinese philosophical conceptions and examines their crucial role in the formation of ethical, political and cultural values in China.

Focusing on early Chinese ethical and political thought across multiple schools and thinkers, this book presents a comprehensive overview of the research being done in Chinese comparative ethics and political philosophy. In addition to chapters on Chinese comparative and interpretative thought, The Bloomsbury Research Handbook of Early Chinese Ethics and Political Philosophy brings early Chinese ethics and political philosophy into conversation with Western and Indian Philosophy, as well as Western Theology. Contributors discuss numerous texts and schools in Pre-Qin and Han Philosophy, including Confucianism, Daoism, Mohism, the Xunzi, the Liyun, and the Zhuangzi. The volume also shows how early Chinese ethical and political theories can be used to contextualise contemporary philosophical issues, such as metaethics, human rights, emotions, and the connection between ethics and metaphysics. The Bloomsbury Research Handbook of Early Chinese Ethics and Political Philosophy is an ideal resource for undergraduate and postgraduate students encountering early Chinese ethics and political philosophy for the first time.

