

as a means of self-criticism. Nor does he mention leading Buddhist thinkers like Inenaga Saburō or Tanabe Hajime, who, from nearly opposite political angles, infused their postwar works with a critical approach toward those who supported imperialism, including Tanabe, who discussed his own support for the imperial enterprise.

I am not suggesting, however, that Victoria's book is, deliberately or not, one-sided because I think the work fulfills his goal of creating "a 'sourcebook' of wartime pronouncements by Zen and other institutional Buddhist leaders, both lay and clerical" (p. xv) by letting the words of these figures speak for themselves. In doing so, he has punctured not a few holes in many trial balloons that have been launched in facile support of Zen as a socially aware form of mysticism by those who remain closed to learning of the notorious circumstances surrounding the war. In that sense, Victoria has made a profound contribution to overall Zen scholarship.

My critical comment is that in his two books thus far, Victoria has not taken the opportunity to attempt to point beyond the reprehensible and glaring shortcomings toward a compromise view of Zen and its complex connections with society in a way that deals constructively with the strengths as well as the weaknesses of the tradition. I assume that Victoria on some level cares very deeply about Zen and its place in Japan and the world, so the challenge would be to help define Zen's role creatively lest the tradition get buried under an avalanche of criticism or, contrariwise, lest the research behind these books gets relegated to the realm of sensationalism.

A Treatise on Efficacy: Between Western and Chinese Thinking. By François Jullien, translated by Janet Lloyd. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004. Pp. x + 202. \$22.00.

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In *A Treatise on Efficacy: Between Western and Chinese Thinking* François Jullien argues that the different ways Chinese and Western thinkers have dealt with warfare and diplomacy reflect important differences in how the two cultures understand human action in the world. When Chinese texts such as the *Sunzi* and the *Guiguzi* are set up as counterpoints to the Europeans Clausewitz and Machiavelli, Jullien argues that the Aristotelian inheritance of the latter pair is shown to be the cause of their inability to provide clean theories with the consistent predictive power they desired. Chinese strategists, by contrast, meet with no such limitations in the realm of human interaction. The basic difference between Western and Chinese thought that Jullien seeks to demonstrate is that "one *constructs* a model that is then projected onto the situation, which implies that the situation is momentarily 'frozen.' The other *relies* on the situation as on a disposition that is known to be constantly evolving" (p. 189; italics in original).

Jullien's regular use of the generic terms "Western" and "Chinese" in constructing his comparison will likely give many comparative philosophers pause. But this

need not be a source of worry, as he is careful not to essentialize the two world-views. While he is pointing out patterns and tendencies in the thinking of Europe and China, he is not positing an essential incommensurable difference between them. Rather, he is pointing out that “what remains underdeveloped in the one context is more developed in the other” (p. 145). He goes on to say, “The purpose of our foray into China is not to imagine—let alone fabricate—other ‘mentalities’ It is simply to make use of other possible sources of intelligibility” (ibid.).

Jullien begins by showing that Western thought regards human action as something that imposes itself on the world in order to bring about a predetermined goal. This is a natural consequence of the belief that the world is created: belief in creation implies something existing outside that creation, thus an intention behind that creation, and thus a transcendent norm toward which things within that creation aim. This two-leveled ontology of creator and creation yields a distinction between theory and practice, wherein practice always aims—and ultimately fails—at implementing an ideal that is established by theory. This worldview has led to demonstrable success in the sciences but meets with frequent frustration in the arena of human interaction. This limitation has been recognized by strategists in the West but has never been successfully resolved.

Aristotle was the first to identify and try to resolve this problem. He posited *phronesis* as the skill that enables an individual to apply a model to the world successfully. For Aristotle such successful action consists of first identifying one’s desired end and then reasoning back to one’s present situation in order to establish the best means to achieve that end. Jullien’s analysis shows that Clausewitz was working with the same model more than two thousand years later. Clausewitz believed that earlier attempts at creating a general theory of warfare had failed to achieve their goal—namely, to provide a model of warfare that a general could use to ensure victory—because the opponent’s actions are unpredictable. The system that the military strategist is dealing with, then, is not mechanistic, and consequently plans are easily frustrated by ever-changing circumstances. But Clausewitz was unable to conceive of strategy as based on anything other than plans.

For Clausewitz, warfare is composed of distinct engagements, separate moments in time where an army seeks to impose a plan on the world. Seeing warfare as composed of distinct moments means that time is an opponent, for time brings with it change and uncertainty and thus a greater chance that one’s plans will be frustrated. Opportunity, then, is something unexpected—a chance happening at a specific moment that can be taken advantage of only through great skill and improvisation. Clausewitz concluded that success in war is always due in some part to luck.

Chinese military strategists, by contrast, deny that luck is ever a factor in military success. In his *Art of Warfare* Sunzi says that victory is certain for a general who properly understands circumstances. The idea of a transcendent norm, and thus the idea of a preconceived goal that humans force the world to match—that is, a severe dichotomy between theory and practice—is not present in Chinese thought. The Chinese view of the world as continual and processual, when applied to warfare, sees time as constant and predictable and thus as an ally. Opportunity is never un-

expected; it is part of the natural evolution of the circumstances. For Sunzi, warfare is a continual process that is not composed of distinct events. Conflict does not begin on the battlefield; it begins with the original reading and manipulating of circumstances. The competent general does not set foot on the battlefield until victory is already certain.

Sunzi sees circumstances, which include the behavior of one's opponent, as enabling rather than frustrating. In the Chinese worldview humans identify tendencies that the world presents and work with circumstances to bring out their natural effects most efficiently. The Chinese aim for *transformation* rather than *action*. Action, as Clausewitz' view of warfare demonstrates, is confined to a single moment and a single location. Transformation, by contrast, leads to effects that are both permanent and wide-ranging. To the Chinese sensibility, then, a successful general examines the situation as part of a continuing present, reading the tendencies that are provided, and manipulating circumstances in subtle ways to enable a context to develop wherein the desired end will come about of its own accord.

The Chinese worldview thus provides something that Clausewitz was unable to find: a standpoint from which to question his own presuppositions. And as Jullien points out, this standpoint has a lot to say about the limitations of the Aristotelian inheritance. Most of these things amount to a single critique: an ideal of action, as opposed to transformation, leads to gross inefficiency. Whereas the Western framework sees the goal of warfare to be the destruction of the enemy, the Chinese have in mind rather the *deconstruction* of the enemy. It takes much less energy to bring the enemy over to one's side than to destroy the enemy utterly. The high premium that the Chinese sensibility places on efficiency is seen in the central role that *wuwei* plays in their thought.

Wuwei, often translated as non-action, is present throughout the Chinese classics but is particularly prevalent in the *Daodejing*. Jullien explains that *wuwei* does not entail the lack of action that the standard translation seems to imply, but neither is it the forceful action advocated by the Aristotelian tradition. *Wuwei* is a matter of understanding oneself as part of the world instead of as outside, acting on the world as on an object. This epitomizes Chinese military strategy. The skilled general recognizes that the further a situation has progressed the more difficult it is to change the course of events. The most efficacious action, then, occurs much earlier in a situation's development—upstream, to use Jullien's imagery—where the action goes unnoticed and requires almost no effort. The skilled general is also able to recognize when no outcome is favored by a situation, when the propensities have not yet developed, and understands that in these instances waiting patiently is better than undertaking any action at all.

This attitude is also prevalent in the *Guiguzi*, where it is applied to strategies of diplomacy and political persuasion. Jullien says that since the Chinese worldview does not view humans as distinct from the world, it sees the manipulation of people as just another aspect of manipulating circumstances to one's own advantage. The *Guiguzi* takes this to the extreme, showing how a diplomat can come to dominate the ruler while continuing to be viewed as a subordinate. The purpose of speech, it

says, is not to convey information but rather to gather it—to get others to speak and thereby reveal their position so that one can take advantage of the situation. In this view one comes to dominate the other by conforming to the other's wishes, thereby coming to be trusted completely. A thorough understanding of the ruler's desires allows one to speak strategically when giving advice, focusing on different aspects of situations, ultimately manipulating the ruler's perception to the point where the ruler spontaneously makes decisions that the diplomat desires. This differs markedly from the view of persuasion that dominates in the West: from the rhetorician of ancient Greece to the politician of the twenty-first century, persuasion occurs publicly, using explicit argumentation to demonstrate the correctness of one view over another. Jullien points out that in ancient Greece deception is at most a side note to the art of persuasion, and even Machiavelli does not couple deceit with the potential of the situation into a consistent thesis.

Jullien provides valuable insight into the nature of Chinese thought and the ways it differs from the dominant mode of thinking in the West. In providing pairs of subtly contrasting words—goal versus consequence, action versus transformation, persuasion versus manipulation—he helps us recognize significant patterns in the differences between Chinese and Western thought. His use of warfare and political strategy as an illustration of these differences brings with it significant benefits. He points out that warfare “is particularly well suited to reveal the dead-ends into which any concept of efficacious action will lead us if it proceeds from model-making” (pp. 9–10). But just as the limits of the Aristotelian framework prove to be a hindrance to fully understanding warfare, so, too, do the limits of the framework of warfare risk being a hindrance to fully understanding Chinese thought. In reading the Daoist as a military strategist, for instance, Jullien seems to reduce the *Daodejing* to the *Sunzi*. Certainly there are points of overlap between the two texts, and Jullien brings these out very well. But there are also important differences between the two texts—differences that Jullien's analysis tends to minimize. This uneven analysis causes him at times to misrepresent the *Daodejing*.

Jullien's account of efficacy and efficiency is insightful, but it fails to ask the further question of what the purpose of efficiency is. As a result, we are left without an account of excellence. To be efficient militarily is to win battles with minimal loss of resources, but to be efficient socially is to bring about harmony in the world. The text that bears Sunzi's name is an art of warfare, but the *Daodejing* purports to be an art of *living*. Of course the *Daodejing* does not deny that warfare is sometimes necessary (Jullien's application of Daoist sentiments to warfare is by no means indefensible), but it views warfare as a last resort. When it is necessary to go to war this is a sign that social harmony has been disrupted. If we then succumb to the temptation to focus only on the military arts, we miss out on the moral, aesthetic, and religious experience that are part of an efficacious life.

In stressing transformation rather than discrete events as a paradigm of thought, Jullien offers us a sense of causality in which all the elements of a situation play a role in the creation of effects: “a means can never be altogether isolated from the context within which it is used and is therefore never completely analyzable, never

perfectly identifiable" (p. 37). Causes and effects, in this account, are not the isolated entities that the traditional Western framework has understood them to be. This view has important ramifications for the notion of agency, as Jullien recognizes. He says that "Once the world is no longer an *object* to act upon, you become an integral part in its becoming" (p. 89; italics in original). But despite such illuminating comments as this, he seems to retain an extrinsic sense of agency in his analysis. He says that "potential is circumstantial—it only exists thanks to the circumstances and vice-versa" (p. 22), but he does not make it clear that the agent is one of the circumstances that contribute to the potential of the situation. His statement that *wuwei* implies not only allowing the situation to develop on its own but also "get[ting] it (the situation) to tolerate us" (p. 105) seems to imply that we are somewhere outside the situation itself.

The image Jullien provides of acting with a situation rather than acting on the world is valuable, but a more faithful image might be of *participating in* the situation, as a part of the propensity of things. Rather than simply sitting back and allowing the various aspects to play their part in the development of a situation, one participates in the part-playing. One is not a referee but rather one of the players. The general's decision to engage in battle is a response to the character of the particular situation, but that decision is itself a part of the situation and plays a role in its becoming. The efficacious general—and the Daoist sage as well—recognizes that he is not outside the system, that agency is simply one aspect of the myriad things, one of many aspects in a mutually determining process. As such, agency is implicated within the process of transformation as interdependent with all the other factors.

Despite these concerns, *A Treatise on Efficacy* represents a valuable step in helping people from both the Chinese and Western traditions to understand themselves and each other. As we continue to negotiate the dangers that the twenty-first century provides in the realm of human interaction, we need more people who can provide the sort of insight Jullien has into the limitations of our own worldview and the possibilities for moving beyond it effectively.

Imagining Japan: The Japanese Tradition and Its Modern Interpretation. By Robert N. Bellah. Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 2003. Pp. 254.

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While Robert Bellah is probably best known for his work on religion in America, his earlier work focused on Japanese intellectual history, culture, and religion, and it is to these subjects that he has returned in this latest book, *Imagining Japan: The Japanese Tradition and Its Modern Interpretation*, almost five decades after publishing his seminal work *Tokugawa Religion*. In returning to Japan, Bellah brings to this broad overview of dominant themes within Japanese tradition, social structure, and intellectual and cultural history the grasp of a historical sociologist deeply rooted and