disagreements here are useful for teaching, because they bring different ways that we might think of Bayesianism, foundationalism, and coherentism to the foreground. For example, some philosophers identify foundationalism and coherentism with "all or nothing" models of belief, whereas Bayesians argue that belief comes in degrees and often have little interest in categorical claims about belief. The two chapters can illustrate some of the different ways of understanding "Bayesianism."

It would be too much to expect the first full-length textbook on formal philosophy to also be very good. Yet that is exactly what the editors have achieved. Most importantly of all, the fact that this book does not dwell too much on areas where there are already many good introductory textbooks (like formal epistemology) makes it valuable beyond its usefulness as an agglomeration of many topics. We needed a clear, up-to-date, and accessible introduction to formal value theory and decision theory. This book is it. I am looking forward to using this text for my teaching, and I recommend it to other instructors.

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Classical Chinese for Everyone: A Guide for Absolute Beginners
Bryan W. Van Norden
Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2019; pbk, xxxiv + 127 pp., $16.00; 978-1-62466-821-0

MOG STAPLETON

At first sight, the title "Classical Chinese for Everyone" might seem a little tongue-in-cheek, reminiscent of the recent "Quantum Physics for Babies" board book and those of a similar ilk. Who, after all, other than serious students of Chinese Philosophy and future sinologists could possibly want to learn a language that to Westerners is more opaque than Latin and Ancient Greek and potentially even less useful. Furthermore, doesn't everyone *know* that Chinese is among the hardest languages for Westerners to learn, and presumably Classical Chinese even more so? Why then would anyone whose heart was not yet already set on mastering the language, and therefore presumably committed to grinding through the excellent classical textbooks already available, bother to buy and work through this book?

One easy answer to this is: Anyone with an interest in Classical Chinese Philosophy! And this will be many more people than one might first assume. There is a current movement within the Anglo-American philosophical community towards acknowledging and engaging with the contributions from intellectual communities beyond the Western. The result of this is that more and more philosophers whose area of specialisation has nothing to do

with Eastern thought are "Asia-curious." Add to this students' demand for a more diverse curriculum and the effect is a huge increase in introductory classes in non-Western thought. Given the scarce resources, many of these courses are taught by those who are unlikely to have any (formal) training in classical Chinese. As someone who falls into this category, I think that this movement towards providing more introductory courses on the "Less Commonly Taught Philosophies" (see http://www.bryanvannorden.com/suggestions-for-further-reading) is unequivocally a good thing, even if it means that (at least until the structure of the academy significantly changes) they must often be taught by non-specialists.

Nevertheless, teaching any level of classical Chinese philosophy without having received formal training in the area throws up challenges that may not occur (or at least not be as salient) when new to teaching other traditions or areas within philosophy. (Targeted guidance for the non-specialist who wants to teach Chinese philosophy has been provided in Paul D'Ambrosio and Timothy Conolly's [2017] article in this journal to help with some of these.) One challenge in particular is that when faced with two of the foundational texts of this era: the *Analects of Confucius* (also known as the *Lunyu*) and the *Daodejing* (also known as the *Laozi*), the teacher is faced with choosing amongst a plethora of available translations and interpretations, many of which seem (and are!) respectable and scholarly (there are of course many non-academic versions of both that philosophy students must be guided away from).

Classical Chinese for Everyone: A Guide for Absolute Beginners provides a good way to tackle this, and many other problems, while simultaneously offering stimulating new course material. For anyone willing to work through it, *Classical Chinese for Everyone* offers a view of how, word-by-word, and grammatical point by grammatical point, a phrase from classical Chinese philosophy can be read. Indeed it does exactly what it says on the tin: it walks the reader from a position of complete ignorance of Chinese (either classical or modern) gently, and often entertainingly, through to a state of being able to decode some ancient Chinese texts independently and compare their translations to the variety of professional translations available. It is an excellent first-step *towards* mastery for the serious student and a satisfying end in itself for the non-specialist. The limited instruction that is offered is both intentional and the book's asset. It really does presume no knowledge at all of Chinese and very gently and clearly guides the reader through decoding individual characters and quickly on to translating passages from the classic texts. The book stops before becoming overly heavy with technical detail (the reader who is keen to continue is guided onward with recommended texts for continuing to develop their expertise) rendering it short enough to be digestible to the casual reader and—importantly given the subject matter—not overwhelming either at first sight or on working through it.

This is a genuinely generally accessible book. Van Norden manages to make what might be an intimidating subject matter to those without experience of non-Western languages and/or who are not one of those who find learning grammar intuitive or fun, into a puzzle-like challenge. The style of writing is extremely clear and unaffected. Importantly Van Norden does not assume any understanding of grammar beyond a basic primary school grasp of nouns, verbs, and adjectives (and even these are explained). Additionally, common sentence patterns—vital for grasping classical Chinese—are described with plenty of examples of the patterns in action. Every grammatical term and concept that is needed in order to understand how these grammatical characters function in the passages provided (the most common ones that a reader of early Classical Chinese philosophy is likely to come across) is introduced in normal, everyday language that even the most grammar-phobic could not find intimidating. Indeed, the recognition that occurs that grammar is really just about recognising patterns and seeing how these change the meaning of words will give the reader confidence for further engaging with the textbook *A New Practical Primer of Literary Chinese* by Paul Rouzer that Van Norden recommends and the *Outline of Classical Chinese Grammar* by Edwin Pulleyblank that he points to regularly in footnoted "nerd notes" to elaborate on grammatical points.

The book is made up of an introduction in which Van Norden explains how Chinese characters are composed and thirteen "lessons" almost all of which start with a short and generally well-known extract from a classical Chinese philosophical text. Everything is provided for the reader to start to decode the characters and the short passages from the classic texts right from the first lesson. The extracts of the texts themselves are satisfyingly printed in the traditional form of vertical lines from right to left which gives the reader the magical feeling of really engaging with the original ancient texts. The vocabulary needed to decode each short passage is provided as well as step-by-step instructions on how to understand how certain characters work with others to give different meanings to each phrase. There is also supplemental information that gives the reader both cultural and philosophical context and sometimes really helpful advice that has deeper philosophical relevance.

Van Norden uses the text to highlight some philosophical issues that are tied to the peculiarities of the language but that strongly shape how one ought to approach these texts. The reader will also get a basic grounding in some of the main Confucian virtues from working through the text, but more than this, they will learn that some of the basic grammatical features of Classical Chinese shape the very content of the philosophy. A stark example of this is that a single character can be both a noun and a verb. While one can of course be told this in the abstract, without knowing any of the language, seeing how this functions in practice (e.g., "君君, 臣臣, 父父, 子子," from Analects 12.11, which might be translated as "rulers act as rulers, ministers act as ministers, fathers act as fathers, sons act as sons") helps the student understand concretely that much of Chinese Philosophy is grounded in this active processual feature

of language. Here the distinction between *being* a ruler/minister/father/son, and *acting as* a ruler/minister/father/son is brought out: a fundamental feature of Confucian philosophy that pervades the whole of Classical Chinese philosophical writings whether as a result of repeating or developing the concept or responding to it. Van Norden helpfully explains the context of the passage so that students can start to understand what might otherwise be a rather opaque statement, and uses it to give a brief introduction to role ethics.

Additional pedagogical features of the book that are worth mentioning are the regular reminders in lessons of related concepts that have been taught in previous lessons. This is especially helpful for those still building their understanding of grammatical concepts to help them connect what they have learnt to what is being taught. This helps the reader who is working through the book to both remember and to integrate the material. Van Norden also provides helpful pointers to characters that look very similar to ones that are introduced and could be easily confused—which can even be helpful to those who have some background in Chinese. Supplementary to the textbook, the publisher provides additional resources on their website. These are quite helpful to the learner (and any would-be teacher), especially the character worksheets.

In summary this book provides an excellent pedagogical tool for either teaching or self-study. The chapters are very short with very clear learning points presented in concise natural language so the reader never feels overwhelmed and gains a sense of mastery over each point. The size of the book is very manageable. Someone with (even very little) background in Chinese (either classical or modern) could easily work through the book in a couple of weeks. Is this book really for "everyone"? It is unlikely that it is going to head the bestseller's list in your local supermarket, but certainly interested teenagers and adults without a formal background in philosophy, foreign languages, or grammar will be able to read and enjoy playing with translating the passages. It would be an ideal addition to any Introduction to Chinese Philosophy course.

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Current Controversies in Philosophy of Religion
Edited by Paul Draper
New York: Routledge, 2019; hbk, 191 pp., $140.00; ISBN 978-1-138-18346-9;
   eBook, $28.98; 978-1-315-64568-1

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Current Controversies in Philosophy of Religion is an edited volume of nine contributors (including the editor) who specialize in one way or another in the field of philosophy of religion. The volume opens with Paul Draper's crisp,