

minded, even ruthless men who used expedient political means, with the moralists, such as Chu Hsi and Chen Te-hsiu, losing out to politicians in the highest reaches of government. But that is probably always so, and not only in the Southern Sung or only in China. Several of the essays argue against such an interpretation by emphasizing their subjects' concern with practicability in remedying real world problems, locally if not centrally. Moral intentions were means, not ends, and expedience came into play from both sides. George Hatch's essay, a thoughtful discussion of Su Hsun's ideas about the historical role of contingency in political action, establishes a theme that recurs in several of the other essays.

In the most cogently argued essay in the volume, Peter Bol compares the "political visions" of Wang An-shih and Ssu-ma Kuang, two Northern Sung biggies who were both politic chief councilors. Both were morally driven thinkers concerned about the reach of government, and both were unconcerned with a presumed dichotomy between state and society. Bol evaluates but downplays the usual views of the struggle between Wang and Ssu-ma as ideological or intellectual (e.g., radical vs. conservative, classicist vs. historicist) to emphasize the clash between new *shih* and old-family *shih*, with the latter intent on resisting central government incursions into (their own established) 'private' interests.

There is a paradox running through these essays. There is a current theme of failure and frustration, of ineffectual political efforts, which appears contradictory to the success of the Sung government when viewed in comparison with other polities around the world in the tenth to fourteenth centuries. Perhaps all the acrimony, harping, and earnest moralizing we read about in this volume should be taken as symptoms of the achievements of Sung political practice.

WILLARD J. PETERSON
Princeton University

Confucian Moral Self Cultivation. By PHILIP J. IVANHOE. New York: Peter Lang, 1993. xii, 115 pp. \$35.95 (cloth).

This book is an outstanding study of the Confucian philosophical tradition. It focuses on the views regarding self-cultivation of five of the most influential Confucians, along with one thinker who deserves more attention than he has received. I am aware of no other work in English that introduces such a broad range of figures from the Confucian tradition with such depth and accuracy. This book is insightful on the primary Confucian texts and is superbly informed about the best secondary literature in Sinology, Chinese philosophy, and Western philosophy. This is one of those rare works that provides an accessible introduction to the novice, yet challenges the specialist scholar.

It is still far too common to hear generalizations about "the Confucian tradition" that are either vacuous or demonstrably false. In contrast, Ivanhoe provides detailed, nuanced interpretations of how individual Confucians selectively adopted, adapted, and innovated within the context provided by earlier thinkers. For example, Confucius believed that virtues are acquired. However, as Ivanhoe observes, what Confucius explicitly says is consistent with a wide range of philosophical positions about *how* virtue is acquired. Specifically, Confucius mentions both study (*xue*) and reflection (*li*) as methods of self-cultivation. This introduces a tension within Confucianism, never

definitively resolved, between learning from texts and teachers vs. learning from one's own innate moral sense.

Mencius has what Ivanhoe describes as a "development model" of self-cultivation because he believes that humans must develop their incipient virtuous inclinations (the "sprouts"). In contrast, Xunzi has a "re-formation model" because he advocates reforming, rather than developing, our original nature. (Ivanhoe's discussion of Xunzi is complemented by an excellent recent article by David Wong, "Xunzi on Moral Motivation," in Ivanhoe, ed., *Chinese Language, Thought, and Culture* [La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1996], pp. 202–23.) Although both philosophers mention study and thinking, their views on human nature lead Mencius to give somewhat more emphasis to reflection, while Xunzi comparatively emphasizes study.

Most scholars today would acknowledge that Neo-Confucianism is heavily influenced by Buddhism. However, few seem sufficiently knowledgeable about the two movements to tease out the subtle ways in which Neo-Confucianism borrowed from Huayan and Chan. (Even the late, great A. C. Graham failed in this respect in his otherwise masterful *Two Chinese Philosophers* [La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1992 [1958].) Ivanhoe is especially impressive in showing how the Buddhist influence caused concepts like *li* (principle), *si yi* (selfish thoughts), and others to assume center stage in Confucianism in a way they had not before. The result, in Zhu Xi, is a "recovery model" of self-cultivation, according to which we must recover our unchanging "original nature," which is hidden by selfish desires. The tension between study and reflection becomes apparent again when Wang Yangming, who shares the basic metaphysics of Zhu Xi, accuses him of overemphasizing study over the guidance of *liang zhi* (the innate moral sense).

Dai Zhen has not been nearly as influential as the other Confucians Ivanhoe discusses, and the best translation of his work into English has still not been published. (I refer to John Ewell's "Reinventing the Way: Dai Zhen's *Evidential Commentary Meanings of Terms in Mencius* [1777]," Ph.D. diss., University of California at Berkeley, 1990.) However, Dai is both an insightful critic of Neo-Confucianism and an interesting philosopher in his own right. Dai holds that we must begin with our untutored natural instincts, and then run them through the universalizability test provided by the Confucian principle of "reciprocity" (*she*): do not do to others what you do not want done to you. Because Dai thinks we become virtuous through an intellectual understanding of the "unchanging standards" (*buyi zhi ze*) that result from the application of this test, Ivanhoe refers to this as a "realization model."

The quality, readability, and brevity of this book would make it an excellent textbook for introductory courses. It is, therefore, deeply regrettable that Peter Lang is publishing only an outrageously priced hardback edition. It also seems that Peter Lang has not been conscientious in supplying journals with review copies. One hopes that, in the future, a more aggressive publisher will reprint Ivanhoe's book.

BRYAN W. VAN NORDEN
Vassar College

La propension des choses: Pour une histoire de l'efficacité en Chine. By FRANÇOIS JULLIEN. Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1992. 282 pp. FF 170.

The Propensity of Things: Toward a History of Efficacy in China. By FRANÇOIS JULLIEN. Translated by JANET LLOYD. New York: Zone Books, 1995. 318 pp. \$24.95.