


Dao Companions to Chinese Philosophy 5

Chun-chieh Huang
John Allen Tucker *Editors*

Dao Companion to Japanese Confucian Philosophy



 Springer

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Dao Companions to Chinese Philosophy

Series Editor

Yong HUANG

Department of Philosophy

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Shatin, New Territories, Hong Kong

E-mail: yonghuang@cuhk.edu.hk

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Chun-chieh Huang • John Allen Tucker
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Dao Companion to Japanese Confucian Philosophy

 Springer

Editors

Chun-chieh Huang
National Taiwan University
Taipei, Taiwan

John Allen Tucker
East Carolina University
Greenville, NC, USA

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Contributors

Olivier Ansart (Ph.D., Paris University) has been director of the French-Japanese House (Nichi-Futsu Kaikan) in Tokyo, professor in the Faculty of Law of Waseda University, and is presently chair of the Department of Japanese Studies at the University of Sydney. He is the author of *L'empire du rite: la pensée politique d'Ogyū Sorai* (Geneva, Droz, 1998), *La justification des théories politiques* (Paris, L'Harmattan 2005), *Une modernité indigène: ruptures et innovations dans les théories politiques du Japon du xiii^e siècle* (Paris, Les Belles Lettres, forthcoming), and various articles in English, French or Japanese, mainly on political and social philosophy on eighteenth-century Japan.

W.J. Boot studied Japanese, Korean, and East-Asian history at the universities of Leiden and Kyoto, and received his Ph.D. from the University of Leiden in January 1983. The title of his dissertation was *The Adoption and Adaptation of Neo-Confucianism in Japan: The Role of FUJIWARA Seika and HAYASHI Razan*. Since then, he has been working on the intellectual history of early modern Japan and has published widely in this field. He was full professor of Japanese Language and Culture at the University of Leiden from March 1985 till December 2012, and also taught at the universities of Paris and Kyoto, and at Sophia University. Boot also edited a two-volume work, *Critical Readings in the Intellectual History of Early-Modern Japan* (Brill, 2012).

Peter Flueckiger is associate professor of Japanese at Pomona College. He received his A.B. in economics from Harvard College and his M.A. and Ph.D. in East Asian languages and cultures from Columbia University. He has also been a research student at the University of Tokyo and a visiting researcher at International Christian University. His work focuses on the intersection of literary thought with political and ethical philosophy in eighteenth-century Japanese *kokugaku* (nativism) and Confucianism. He is the author of *Imagining Harmony: Poetry, Empathy, and Community in Mid-Tokugawa Confucianism and Nativism* (Stanford University Press, 2011), as well as a number of articles, book chapters, and translations.

Chun-chieh Huang is National Chair Professor and dean of the Institute for Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences, and director of the Program of East Asian Confucianisms, National Taiwan University. He is also University Chair Professor at NTU and a research fellow at the Institute of Chinese Literature and Philosophy, Academia Sinica, in Taipei. Huang has authored three books in English, including *Taiwan in Transformation: Retrospect and Prospect* (Transaction Publishers, 2014, Revised and Enlarged edition), *Mencian Hermeneutics: A History of Interpretations in China* (Transaction Publishers, 2001), and *Humanism in East Asian Confucian Contexts* (Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2010). His most recent works in Chinese include *Confucian Classics and Their Ideas in the Cultural Interaction in East Asia* (National Taiwan University Press, 2010), *East Asian Confucianisms: Dialectics between the Classics and Interpretations* (National Taiwan University Press, 2007, Japanese translation 2014), and *A History of the Interpretations of the Analects in Tokugawa Japan* (National Taiwan University Press, 2007). Huang has co-edited a number of volumes including, with John B. Henderson, *Notions of Time in Chinese Historical Thinking* (Chinese University Press, 2006); with Erik J. Zürcher, *Time and Space in Chinese Culture* (E. J. Brill, 1995); with Fredrick P. Brandauer, *Imperial Rulership and Cultural Change in Traditional China* (University of Washington Press, 1994); with Stevan Harrell, *Cultural Change in Postwar Taiwan* (Univ. Press of Maryland, 1993); and, with Erik J. Zürcher, *Norms and the State in China* (E. J. Brill, 1993).

Jacques Joly completed his Ph.D. at the University of Paris in 1991. Before retirement, Joly taught at Notre Dame Women's College, Kyoto, and at Eichi University, Amagasaki. A specialist in Tokugawa and Meiji Confucian thought, Joly is author of *Le naturel selon ANDÔ Shōeki: un type de discours sur la nature et la spontanéité par un maître-confucéen de l'époque Tokugawa, ANDÔ Shōeki (1730–1762)* (Maisonneuve et Larose, 1996) and translator of MARUYAMA MASAO's *Nihon seiji shisōshi kenkyū* under the title, *Essais sur l'histoire de la pensée politique au Japon* (Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 1996). Joly has also published a number of scholarly articles on topics related to Japanese thought, with a focus on MARUYAMA MASAO and the idea of nature in Europe and Japan.

KOYASU Nobukuni 子安宣邦 is professor emeritus at Osaka University and a highly influential scholar of the history of Japanese thought, particularly Edo thought. Born in Kanagawa, he graduated from the Faculty of Letters at the University of Tokyo, after which he completed a Ph.D. in ethical thought at the same university. Topics critically dissected in Koyasu's many publications include: the Nativist scholars MOTOORI Norinaga and HIRATA Atsutane, the "Ancient Learning" Confucian scholars ITŌ Jinsai and OGYŪ Sorai, the Confucian discourse regarding the spirits of the dead, the relationship between the state and sacrificial rituals to gods and ancestors, FUKUZAWA Yukichi, and Japanese nationalist and Orientalist thought. He was the first scholar to incisively apply the Foucaultian concepts of "archeology" and "genealogy" to Japanese intellectual history, turning Edo scholarship from basically an attempt to find impulses toward "modernity" in Edo thought into a project of deconstructing modernity from the "outside-modernity" standpoint of Edo.

Olof G. Lidin had his first university education at Uppsala University and Stockholm University completing a bachelor degree in law and another in Russian and French studies. He worked as a UN documentary officer at the United Nations Supervisory Commission in Korea after the war, between 1953 and 1955. He subsequently enrolled for graduate studies at the University of California, Berkeley, and ended a 10-year stay there with a Ph.D. and a position as an assistant professor at University of California, Davis. In 1968 he was called to University of Copenhagen where he was appointed as professor in 1972. He has later served as acting professor at Tübingen and Humboldt (Berlin) in Germany. He is now professor emeritus, living in Holte, Denmark. In addition to *The Life of OGYU Sorai: A Tokugawa Confucian Philosopher*, Lidin has translated Sorai's *Distinguishing the Way, Journey to Kai in 1706*, and *Discourse on Government*.

MARUYAMA Masao 丸山真男 was the most influential scholar of Japanese intellectual history and political thought in postwar Japan. He became famous as a self-professed modernist who reconstructed the history of Japanese political thought, originally centered on the imperial system, on the basis of Western philosophy and social science. In 1934 he entered the Faculty of Law at Tokyo Imperial University. Along the way, he published articles criticizing the psychological mechanisms of militarism and ultra-nationalism and emerged as a leader in the democratic thought movement. In 1950 he became a professor in the Tōdai Law Faculty. In the late 1960s he became a target of attack during the student protest movement as a symbol of the “deceptive nature” of postwar democracy. In 1971 he retired early for health reasons, but was appointed professor emeritus in 1974, and made a member of the Japan Academy in 1978. His *Studies in the Intellectual History of Tokugawa Japan (Nihon seiji shisōshi kenkyū)*, written during the war, traced Japan's movement toward modern thought through the ideas of ZHU Xi learning, OGYU Sorai, MOTOORI Norinaga, and others. Maruyama's studies of FUKUZAWA Yukichi, whom he regarded as the quintessential representative of modern Japanese thought, are among his landmark contributions to the study of Japanese thought.

Wai-Ming Ng is professor of Japanese studies at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, specializing in Tokugawa intellectual history, history of Japan-China cultural interaction and Japanese popular culture. He is the author of *The I Ching in Tokugawa Thought and Culture* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000). His current research interests include *Yijing* studies in Meiji Japan, Chinese legends in Tokugawa Japan, Tokugawa interpretations of Confucian classics, Japanese communities in prewar Hong Kong, and the interaction between Hong Kong and Japan in popular culture. He is now preparing a book manuscript on the localization of Chinese culture in Tokugawa Japan.

Peter Nosco is professor of Asian studies at the University of British Columbia. Trained at Columbia, Cambridge, and Tokyo Universities, he has worked on early modern Japanese literature (as the translator of IHARA Saikaku's *Saikaku oritome*, or *Some Final Words of Advice*), Confucianism (as the editor of *Confucianism and Tokugawa Culture*), nativism or Kokugaku (as the author of *Remembering Paradise:*

Nativism and Nostalgia in Eighteenth-Century), and underground Christians (with articles in *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*). He has also published in recent years on Confucian perspectives on civil society, poverty and morality, as well as Buddhist perspectives on the globalization of ethics (in the Ethikon series). He is currently working on early modern Japanese values and evidence of individuality, and the continuity/discontinuity of these values and this individuality in the early Meiji.

Gregory Smits received his Ph.D. in history from the University of Southern California in 1992. Thereafter he spent five years at Eastern Washington University, Cheney WA. Since 1997 he has been at Penn State University, University Park, PA, where he is an associate professor of history. His early research focused on early modern East Asian intellectual history. He has also done extensive research in the early modern history of the Ryukyu Kingdom. His recent work has been on the history of earthquakes in early modern and modern Japan, including the impact of earthquakes on social history and the history of science. Smits is the author of *Visions of Ryukyu: Identity and Ideology in Early-Modern Thought and Politics* (University of Hawai'i Press, 1999), and co-editor with Bettina Gramlich-Oka of *Economic Thought in Early-Modern Japan* (Brill, 2010). His most recent book is *Seismic Japan: The Long History and Continuing Legacy of the Ansei Edo Earthquake* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2014).

Barry D. Steben is a Canadian who completed his undergraduate and graduate degrees in East Asian thought and languages at the University of Toronto. His doctoral research was done at the University of Tokyo under the supervision of MIZOGUCHI Yūzō (an influential scholar of late imperial Chinese Confucian thought), focusing on the WANG Yangming school of Confucianism in Japan and its relationship to samurai thought and Edo-period culture movements. His field of research is comparative Sino-Japanese Confucian thought, usually with the emphasis on Japan; he has also studied European intellectual history and the interaction of Western and Confucian thought in Japan and China in the nineteenth century. He has broad experience in translation from both Japanese and Chinese, including both modern and pre-modern texts. Steben has taught at the University of Western Ontario, the National University of Singapore, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and Shanghai International Studies University.

Tsujimoto Masashi 辻本雅史 is a scholar of Edo educational thought noted particularly for his penetrating studies of KAIBARA Ekken. He graduated in history from Kyoto University in 1973, and subsequently entered a Ph.D. program in the Educational Research Department at the same university. In 1990 he completed his Ph.D. at Osaka University. He was professor in the Faculty of Education at Kyoto University from 1995 through March 2012, after which he took up a teaching position at National Taiwan University. Since 1990 he has written and edited books on Japanese educational thought and the socio-cultural history of education, working to reconstruct the conventional image of the history of Japanese educational thought from a perspective that gives attention to the body as well as the mind.

John A. Tucker completed his Ph.D. at Columbia University in 1990, with a specialization in Sino-Japanese Confucianism. Earlier, at the University of Hawaii, he studied East Asian philosophy and East Asian history. He has published articles in *Philosophy East and West*, the *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, *Asian Philosophy*, the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, *Chinese Culture*, *Sino-Japanese Studies*, and *Japan Studies Review*. Tucker has published two books: *Itō Jinsai's Gomō jigi and the Philosophical Definition of Early-Modern Japan* (Brill, 1998), and *OGYŪ Sorai's Philosophical Masterworks: The Bendō and Benmei* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2006). He is also the editor of a four-volume anthology, *Critical Readings in Japanese Confucianism* (Brill, 2013). Tucker is a professor of history at East Carolina University in Greenville, North Carolina. Funding for his work on this project was provided by an East Carolina University Faculty Senate Research Grant and by a research grant from National Taiwan University's Institute for Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences.

Chapter 1

Introduction

John A. Tucker and Chun-chieh Huang

1.1 About the Anthology

This volume, part of the Dao Companion to Chinese Philosophy Series edited by HUANG Yong 黃勇, seeks to advance the study of Japanese Confucian philosophy for English language readers. It also advances a tradition in scholarship traceable through at least three previous anthologies: (i) *Japanese Thought in the Tokugawa Period 1600–1868: Methods and Metaphors*, edited by Tetsuo Najita and Irwin Scheiner (Najita and Scheiner 1978), (ii) *Principle and Practicality: Essays in Neo-Confucianism and Practical Learning*, edited by Wm. Theodore de Bary and Irene Bloom (de Bary and Bloom 1979), and (iii) *Confucianism and Tokugawa Culture*, edited by Peter Nosco (Nosco 1984). These previous volumes are not exclusively devoted to Confucianism in Japan, although most of their essays deal largely with it in one way or another. The present work boasts essays that invariably focus on Japanese Confucianism, while including themes and topics related to Buddhism, Shintō, Nativism, and even ANDŌ Shōeki 安藤昌益 (1703–1762), one of the most vehement critics of Confucianism in all of East Asia. The earlier anthologies do not describe their contents as philosophy, nor do they necessarily pertain to philosophical thought in every case, but arguably each of them furthers our understandings of Japanese Confucianism and its relevance to philosophy where the latter is understood broadly as an ongoing search for critical insight and self-reflective knowledge, even

J.A. Tucker (✉)

Department of History, East Carolina University,
A-317, Brewster Bldg., 27858-4353 Greenville, NC, USA
e-mail: tuckerjo@ecu.edu

C.C. Huang

Institute for Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences,
National Taiwan University, Roosevelt Rd. Sec. 4 1 106, Taipei, Taiwan
e-mail: cc10.huang@msa.hinet.net; chun_chieh_huang@hotmail.com

wisdom (*sophia*), about the nature of the self, society, culture, the polity, spiritual matters, and the cosmos. Methodologically, the earlier anthologies are hybrids combining studies in intellectual history informed by Western theoretical literature along with other studies analyzing philosophically significant writings by Japanese Confucian scholars and their critics. The present volume is also eclectic in methodology.

This anthology differs significantly, however, with an interpretive parameter set in *Japanese Thought* with its assertion, "... we should not seek pure philosophical statements, exemplifications of syllogistic reasoning, for this leads one to ask whether there was systematic philosophy in traditional Japan – let us say in the manner of Hume or Kant – a question destined to receive an uncomplicated negative answer" (Najita and Scheiner 1978: 5–6). Few today, other than Kantians, would suggest that philosophy need be "pure," or necessarily systematic or syllogistic in reasoning, if in fact there need be a resort to reasoning at all. Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, one of the most important philosophical texts of the twentieth century, was neither consistently syllogistic nor systematic. Rather the *Tractatus*, not unlike the *Analects* of Confucius, includes a series of occasionally brilliant but often-random observations typically declared rather than argued logically. Thus its opening declarative, "The world is all that is the case," is followed, on the final page, by a concluding confessional, "My propositions serve as elucidations in the following way: anyone who understands me eventually recognizes them as nonsensical, when he has used them – as steps – to climb up beyond them. (He must, so to speak, throw away the ladder after he has climbed up it). He must transcend these propositions, and then he will see the world aright." (Wittgenstein 1961: 5, 89). Even with its declarative and self-deconstructive propositions, the *Tractatus* remains one of the great works of philosophy.

Wittgenstein aside, or perhaps because of him, understandings of philosophy and philosophical discourse have gone beyond the Western-centered paradigm that once declared the world other than Europe and areas of European descent to be barren of philosophy. Increasingly students of philosophy are recognizing what Leibniz, Kant, and Hegel noted centuries ago – that philosophy is a far grander endeavor than Western philosophy and that one dimension of its grandeur is surely Confucianism (Hegel 1892: 120–121; Tu and Ikeda 2011: 55; Mungello 1977). Whether acknowledged minimally as a moral teaching rising to the threshold of ethics, or more fully as comprising metaphysical and ontological speculations, Confucianism rated as philosophy well before the present. However, for reasons to be discussed shortly, during the twentieth century a reaction set in against recognizing Confucianism, including Japanese Confucianism, as philosophy. In China, this became conspicuous in the early twentieth century with the May Fourth Movement; in Japan, it did not occur until the post-World War II period. Yet in the same postwar period, the notion that the world harbors more philosophical wisdom than just that of the West made a comeback, and ironically this was most true in Western thinking about Asian thought, now often considered as philosophical in nature. Since the early 1960s, the Department of Philosophy at the University of Hawai'i-Manoa has led this process of rethinking the provenance and scope of philosophy with scholarship published in

UH journals such as *Philosophy East and West* and the *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, academic gatherings such as the East–West Philosophers’ Conferences, plus numerous UH Press publications – monographs and translation-studies – exploring Asian and East Asian philosophical thinking. Among Western scholars, Wm. Theodore de Bary at Columbia University has made enormous contributions to the study of Confucianism generally and Japanese Confucianism in particular, as thought, as intellectual history, and in distinctly philosophical terms as well. Since its publication in 1979, *Principle and Practicality*, a massive volume co-edited by de Bary and Irene Bloom, has incomparably advanced erudite thinking about Japanese Confucianism and its multifaceted expressions of philosophically informed practicality. Essays in *Confucianism and Tokugawa Culture* edited by Columbia-trained Peter Nosco have expanded understandings of Japanese Confucianism in its ideological, historiographical, and ontological dimensions, as well as in relation to Shintō, Buddhism, and some nineteenth-century Meiji thought.

Many other important scholars and their works contributing to the interpretive revolution in understanding philosophy as a global, and certainly Japanese Confucian, activity might be cited here as well. One is David A. Dilworth’s *Philosophy in World Perspective: A Comparative Hermeneutic of the Major Theories* published by Yale (Dilworth 1989). Another, Mary Evelyn Tucker’s *The Philosophy of Qi: The Record of Great Doubts*, a study of KAIBARA Ekken 貝原益軒 (1630–1714), published by Columbia University Press, reveals the growing interpretive shift specifically in relation to research on Japanese Confucianism (Tucker 2007). At the University of Chicago, Tetsuo Najita now, in *Tokugawa Political Writings* at least, refers to his subject as “OGYŪ Sorai’s political philosophy” (Najita 1998: xiv-xv), moving his hermeneutics into a philosophical dimension. Trained at the University of Hawai’i and Columbia, John A. Tucker, in translation-studies of the philosophical masterworks of IRŌ Jinsai 伊藤仁齋 (1627–1705) and OGYŪ Sorai 荻生徂徠 (1666–1728), published by E. J. Brill and the University of Hawai’i Press respectively, has made accessible two major Japanese Confucian texts revealing the extent to which, necessary or sufficient or not, Jinsai and Sorai were systematic and methodologically modern philosophers in their concern for language and meaning (Tucker 1998, 2006). At National Taiwan University, Chun-chieh Huang, dean of the Institute for Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences has furthered the study of Confucianism as a multifaceted intellectual force in decidedly East Asian contexts, with Japanese developments, philosophical and intellectual, well represented. Within Japan, the University of Tokyo Center for Philosophy (UTCP), founded in 2002, includes researchers studying Japanese culture and intellectual history, as well as traditional East Asian thought, hopefully in an effort, as one of the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology’s Centers of Excellence, to foster new understandings of Japanese Confucianism and its philosophical dimensions. Endorsing a broad and inclusive approach to its understanding of philosophy, UTCP similarly emphasizes the importance of understanding Japanese developments within an East Asian and ultimately global context, one aiming at providing for humanity a future conducive to “living together” (*kyōsei* 共生).

1.2 Defining Philosophy and Understanding *Tetsugaku*

Before proceeding, a detailed exposition of what this volume understands by philosophy is in order. Needless to say, it does not subscribe to narrow conceptions that apply to nothing outside of the Western fold. Nor does it recognize philosophy as a discipline that was originally or inherently Western, yet into which non-Western writings are charitably included to build bridges and promote cultural understanding. With Confucianism, there is abundant and compelling evidence that the practice of discussing ethics, politics, the mind, epistemology, the cosmos, and spiritual topics in sustained, self-reflexive, critical dialogues with a conscientious concern for precision in meaning, conceptual use, and logical development occurred with Kongfuzi 孔夫子 (551–479 BCE) and Mengzi 孟子 (372–289 BCE), about the same time that it did in the West with Socrates (c. 469–399 BCE), Plato (424–348 BCE), and Aristotle (384–322 BCE). Presumably that was why Kant himself called Confucius “the Chinese Socrates” (Tu and Ikeda 2011: 55). The practice of philosophizing was not, then, something introduced to East Asia; it existed there early on, resulting in, after Catholic missionaries encountered East Asia, the invention, *in the Western mind*, of “Confucius,” “Mencius,” and “Confucianism.” That invention did not begin or even significantly alter the processes of philosophical development in East Asia; there, what Westerners began calling “Confucianism” in the West, had long existed, under various names but with a fairly clear and unified identity, as a multifaceted form of learning including discussions of and debates over a range of topics and themes. What this anthology understands by philosophy consists precisely in this sort of ongoing engagement in critical, self-reflective discussions of and speculative theorizing about ethics, epistemology, metaphysics, political theory, and spiritual problems, as well as aesthetics, cosmology, and ontology, with the goal being attainment of a more profound understanding of ourselves, others, the world, and the universe at large. Confucians in East Asia have been doing this for over two millennia, since the time of Confucius.

When the Greco-Western term “philosophy” was introduced to East Asia, Japanese scholars led the way in translating it, first with various neologisms, virtually all of which were formed by combining ancient notions from the Confucian lexicon. The neologism that prevailed, advanced by NISHI Amane 西周 (1829–1897), was *tetsugaku* 哲學 (C: *zhixue*), a compound including the word *gaku* 學, meaning “study” and “learning,” with *tetsu* 哲, meaning “wise” (Piovesana 1963: 11–12; Takayanagi 2011: 81–84; Lam 2011: 72–73, also see Fujita 2009: 261–266). The first word, *tetsu* 哲, appears in the ancient Five Classics and later works of Confucianism literally dozens of times, invariably with the meaning of “wise” or “wisdom.” While the Five Classics were not exclusively Confucian, many scholars claimed that Confucius edited them, making the Five Classics, for those who accepted that perhaps questionable claim, profoundly if not exclusively Confucian. The second word in the neologism, *gaku* 學, was used in various discourses related to study and learning, but has ancient roots in Confucianism beginning with the opening passage of the *Analects* (C: *Lunyu* 論語 J: *Rongo*) where Confucius is

recorded as asking, “Is it not a pleasure to study (C: *xue* 學 J: *gaku*) and in time learn?” Nowhere was the notion *gaku* more extolled and promoted than by ancient Confucians and their later followers and interpreters throughout East Asia. From the beginning, then, Confucian notions were intrinsically related to the modern Japanese translation for the Western term “philosophy.”

It must be admitted, however, that Nishi made no overall attempt to interpret earlier Japanese Confucian thought as *tetsugaku*. If anything Nishi, like many Meiji intellectuals who stood in awe of Western intellectual developments, was somewhat contemptuous of ideas tracing to China and so differentiated Confucianism from *tetsugaku*. NAKAE Chōmin 中江兆民 (1847–1901), another Meiji intellectual of similar mind in regard to Western ideas as opposed to those of pre-Meiji Japan and East Asia, even declared, rather polemically, that,

In Japan, there was never philosophy (*Nihon ni tetsugaku naishi* 日本に哲學ないし). While there were philologists such as MOTOORI [Norinaga] 本居宣長 (1730–1801) and [HIRATA] Atsutane 平田篤胤 (1776–1843) who dug up the graves of antiquity to study ancient texts, they did not provide clear answers about the meaning of life or the world around us. Followers of [ITŌ] Jinsai and [OGYŪ] Sorai offered new interpretations of Confucian texts, but they were nonetheless Confucian thinkers. Although some people among the Buddhist monks proposed some new ideas and created a new school, all of them remained confined to the realm of religion and so their work was not pure philosophy. Recently [there] appeared people like KATŌ [Hiroyuki] 加藤弘之 (1836–1916) and INOUE [Tetsujirō] 井上哲次郎 (1855–1944) who call themselves philosophers. And they are recognized as such. However they are just introducing in Japan theories from the West without taking time to digest them. That attitude is not worthy of philosophers. (Nakae 1983: 155; translation adapted from Dufourmont 2010: 72)

When Nakae wrote, China was moving toward a revolution that would bring the Qing 清 (1644–1911) dynasty down. Confucianism, the official curriculum for the civil service exam system since the Yuan dynasty 元 (1279–1368), appeared to many inside and outside of China as an old-fashioned if not obsolete and badly discredited teaching. KANG Youwei 康有為 (1858–1927), a late-Qing thinker, attempted to reinterpret Confucius as a revolutionary reformer whose ideas could help mediate the transformation of China into a modern nation, but his ideas did not find a significant following in either China, where they were included in his lectures from the mid-1880s, or in Japan, where his writings on Confucius were first published, during Kang’s exile from China, in the early 1900s. For an ascendant Meiji Japan increasingly ready, in some corners, to “quit Asia” (脱亞) as its leading public intellectual, FUKUZAWA Yukichi 福澤諭吉 (1835–1901), advocated, it appeared senseless to equate a Western intellectual discipline, philosophy, a source of Western cultural pride and presumably strength, with a seemingly impotent way of thinking that originated in ancient China. Better to redefine Confucian terms quickly and abandon the rest rather than attempt to retain all and find them a hindrance to modernity. Confucianism did remain a part of Meiji intellectual culture, but neither Nishi nor Nakae, nor most late-Meiji intellectuals sought to elevate it as an authentic counterpart to Western philosophy. Apart from KANG Youwei, however, there was one very important exception: INOUE Tetsujirō 井上哲次郎 (1855–1944).

1.3 INOUE Tetsujirō and the Study of Japanese Confucian Philosophy

Not long after NISHI Amane coined the term, *tetsugaku*, the first Japanese professor of philosophy at Tokyo Imperial University, INOUE Tetsujirō, defined for the discipline a distinctively Japanese dimension by authoring a monumental trilogy on the first schools of what he called “Japanese philosophy” (*Nihon no tetsugaku* 日本之哲學). Admittedly, Inoue distinguished between “Western philosophy” (*Seiyō tetsugaku* 西洋哲學) and “Asian philosophy” (*Tōyō tetsugaku* 東洋哲學), situating Japanese philosophy in the latter division. The tripartite analyses evident in Inoue’s trilogy echoed Hegel, whom he had studied while in Germany in the mid-1880s as a graduate student, but they also reflected Inoue’s national pride over Meiji Japan’s modern development and its impressive victory over Qing China in the Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895).

Each of the schools of Japanese philosophy that Inoue identified was Confucian. His trilogy, consisting of (i) *The Philosophy of the Japanese School of ZHU Xi* (*Nihon Shushigakuha no tetsugaku* 日本朱子學派之哲學) (Inoue 1905), (ii) *The Philosophy of the Japanese School of WANG Yangming* (*Nihon Yōmeigakuha no tetsugaku* 日本陽明學派之哲學) (Inoue 1900), and (iii) *The Philosophy of the Japanese School of Ancient Learning* (*Nihon kogakuha no tetsugaku* 日本古學派之哲學) (Inoue 1902), defined the major schools, their philosophers, their key ideas, and selections from major texts, plus commentary and critical reflections. Significantly the overall “three school” architectonic of Inoue’s descriptions of Japanese Confucianism has informed virtually all discussions of the subject since. While extolling a foreign way of thinking, Confucianism, as the foundation of Japanese philosophy, Inoue saw, along distinctly nationalistic lines, the most creative and profound expression of Confucianism in the Japanese School of Ancient Learning (*Nihon kogakuha* 日本古學派), composed of three major figures, YAMAGA Sokō 山鹿素行 (1622–1685), Irō Jinsai 伊藤仁齋 (1627–1705), and OGYŪ Sorai 荻生徂徠 (1666–1728). Ancient Learning stood as the new synthesis produced, as Hegelian dialectics would have it, by the opposition of the ZHU Xi School (thesis) and the WANG Yangming School (antithesis). In that Hegelian manner, Inoue saw something distinctively Japanese, “Ancient Learning,” drawing on, emerging from, and ultimately prevailing over its Chinese foundations, philosophically, much as Imperial Japan had prevailed over Qing China in warfare and modern development.

However, once that inflated sense of national and philosophical grandeur came crashing down in 1945, Inoue’s name was quickly forgotten. The reasons for this Inoue amnesia are found in postwar loathing for what were soon recognized as Inoue’s highly nationalistic and propagandistic interpretations of Japanese Confucianism, advanced with hyperbole and distortion to serve the political interests of the imperial throne, promote ultra-nationalism, and affirm an aggressive militaristic ethos for the Japanese people under the guise of such quasi-philosophical notions as “imperialism” (*teikoku shugi* 帝國主義), “nationalism” (*kokka shugi* 國家主義), and “the way of the warrior” (*bushidō* 武士道). Inoue’s mixture of Confucian philosophy

and what would later be recognized as prewar and wartime ideologies was profoundly tragic. After his death in 1944 and the war in 1945, few mentioned Inoue, even fewer called Confucianism a philosophy, and those who did study philosophy saw it entirely in Western, and most typically German terms. Nevertheless if his nationalistic, imperialistic, and militaristic interpretations can be bracketed (and that is asking a great deal), it remains significant that it was Inoue who recognized in Japanese Confucianism the most compelling and systematic statements of what could be called Japanese philosophy. Inoue's views of Confucianism as philosophy also contributed to the rise of Chinese philosophy and its recognition of Confucianism as an important branch of philosophical study. In Korea, much the same is true where Confucianism continues to be studied widely as a philosophical system. While the particulars of his interpretations were rarely endorsed outside Japan, and even rarely in Japan in the postwar period, Inoue's overall thesis, that Confucianism was an expression of East Asian philosophy (*Tōyō tetsugaku* 東洋哲學), continues to reverberate widely. Still, few credit Inoue for pioneering this development, whether in Japan or not.

In addition to his trilogy on the Japanese schools of Confucian philosophy, Inoue co-edited, with KANIE Yoshimaru 蟹江義丸 (1872–1904), a 10-volume series (with each including 500–600 pages), *Japanese Writings on Ethics* (*Nihon rinri ihen* 日本倫理彙編). The volumes are thematically grounded according to the schools that Inoue identified in his trilogy. Major works by the Japanese WANG Yangming School are presented first, in volumes 1 through 3; School of Ancient Learning texts, in volumes 4 through 6; Japanese ZHU Xi School writings, volumes 7 and 8; Japanese Eclectic School writings are in volume 9; volume 10 includes texts by so-called independent thinkers (Inoue and Kanie 1901–1903). In addition to providing libraries and universities with nicely bound modern editions of works that otherwise remained in woodblock editions, the *Nihon rinri ihen* series went a long way toward defining (or inventing) the collection of basic texts comprising what Inoue and his followers referred to as Japan's philosophical tradition. The gist of it, Inoue and Kanie could claim, was there for the reading, in over 5,000 pages of systematically grouped texts.

The textual work evident in *Nihon rinri ihen* reverberates in postwar Confucian publications found in series such as the 50-volume *Japanese Masterworks* (*Nihon no meicho* 日本の名著), published by Chūō kōronsha (1969–1978), the 20-volume *Japanese Thought* series (*Nihon no shisō* 日本の思想), published by Chikuma shobō (1969–1972); and the 67 volume *Grand Compilation of Japanese Thought* (*Nihon shisō taikai* 日本思想大系), published by Iwanami shoten (1970–1982). In these postwar series, many of the same Confucian texts presented in Inoue's and Kanie's *Nihon rinri ihen* reappear time and again. Whatever else might be said about them, the works Inoue and Kanie highlighted constitute a considerable portion (excluding Buddhist and Shintō works) of the great works of Japan's philosophical tradition.

That Inoue had served Tokyo Imperial University as the first native Japanese to hold a chair in philosophy added considerably to the prestige and credibility of his interpretations. Inoue's work can be viewed as an important academic dimension of

ongoing Meiji 明治 (1868–1912) efforts to establish that Japan was a civilized nation of the first order, one comparable, in its substantial collection of philosophical literature, to the leading Western imperialist nations bearing down on East Asia. That Inoue found philosophy in Confucianism was not necessarily mistaken, regardless of his egregiously nationalistic interpretations. What is undeniable is that with Inoue’s writings, published early in the twentieth century, Japanese Confucian philosophy emerged as a *modern* field of study. The substance of the field had existed in East Asia since the time of Confucius, and in Japan at least since the rise of a succession of distinctively Japanese statements of Confucianism in the early seventeenth century. Significantly, when Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese intellectuals considered the question, how to render the Western notion of philosophy into their vernaculars, they accepted the Japanese neologism *tetsugaku* 哲學, recognizing the appropriateness of the Meiji gloss as well as its unmistakable allusions to Confucian terms from the most ancient texts of the tradition, suggesting the antiquity of the speculative enterprise in East Asian learning (Kōsaka 2007: 12).

Had Inoue and those who echoed his appraisals not been determined to make their philosophical studies of Confucianism serve the interests of the imperial state in pre-1945 Japan, the field of Japanese Confucian philosophy might be healthier today. Rather than elevate the Confucian tendency to stand with integrity and remonstrate against wrongheaded rule and misguided government policies, Inoue refashioned traditional Japanese Confucian ethics into a “national ethic” (*kokumin dōtoku* 國民道德) consisting of filial piety and patriotism, self-denial and self-sacrifice, and service unto death for the cause of imperial glory. A prolific author-editor, Inoue produced a succession of increasingly ideological, but nominally philosophical works such as his 1905 publication, compiled with ARIMA Sukemasa 有馬祐政 (1873–1931), *The Bushidō Library* (*Bushidō sōsho* 武士道叢書), in three volumes (Inoue and Arima 1905). In 1912, he published *An Outline of National Morality* (*Kokumin dōtoku gairon* 國民道德概論), a text extolling the virtues of Japanese in relation to their imperial throne, military spirit, and the virtues of their national ethics (Inoue 1912). Anticipating the propaganda treatise, *Fundamentals of Our National Essence* (*Kokutai no hongī* 國體の本義) compiled by the Ministry of Education nearly a decade later, Inoue published his *Our National Essence and National Morality* (*Waga kokutai to kokumin dōtoku* 我が國體と國民道德) in 1925 (Inoue 1925). During the same years that *Kokutai no hongī* was in circulation as a text for public school instruction, Inoue authored yet another work, *The Essence of the Japanese Spirit* (*Nihon seishin no honshitsu* 日本精神の本質), published in 1934 (Inoue 1934a). The same year, he returned to *bushidō*, publishing volume one of his compilation, *The Collected Works of Bushidō* (*Bushidō shū* 武士道集), the second volume of which he published in 1940 (Inoue 1940). Reportedly Inoue was working on the third and final volume when he passed away in 1944. In 1939, two years after Japan’s invasion of China, Inoue authored a work addressing Japan’s mission there entitled, *East Asian Culture and the Future of China* (*Tōyō bunka to Shina no shōrai* 東洋文化と支那の将来) (Inoue 1939).

In 1941, Inoue coedited, with NAKAYAMA Kyūshirō 中山久四郎 (1874–1961), a work for the imperial military forces entitled, *Fundamental Meanings of Battlefield*

Precepts (*Senjin kun hongī* 戦陣訓本義) (Inoue and Nakayama 1941). Following Japan's successful initiation of a series of military initiatives in the Pacific, Inoue published another volume on *bushidō*, *The Essence of Bushidō* (*Bushidō no honshitsu* 武士道の本質) (Inoue 1942). As a scholar, Inoue had moved from defining Japanese philosophy in terms of Confucianism to defining a national ethic (*kokumin dōtoku* 國民道徳) with substantial portions coming from Confucianism, thus mixing ideas about thinkers earlier identified as philosophers with the creation of what later scholars would agree was little more than imperialistic and militaristic propaganda masked as an ethics for the nation. With this, however, Inoue had arguably poisoned the well of Japanese Confucian philosophy that his early work, even with its ardent nationalism, had done so much to provide. His death in 1944 shielded him from seeing the fate of his lifework, but surely he must have had some inkling how badly things would turn out.

Following Japan's defeat in World War II, the notion of Japanese Confucian philosophy was virtually discredited. Inoue's voluminous writings were largely ignored no doubt because they consisted of so many tragically irresponsible interpretive fabrications (Nakamura 2007: 33–35). Philosophy as a discipline was redefined, away from Inoue's understanding of Japanese Confucianism and toward another dimension of its expression by one of Inoue's early students, Kyoto Imperial University professor of philosophy NISHIDA Kitarō 西田幾多郎 (1870–1945). Rather than emphasize the importance of tracing the beginnings of Japanese philosophy within Japanese intellectual history, Nishida drew creatively on notions from German, Japanese, and Zen Buddhist thought to formulate a new synthesis that was highly original and systematic. Although some of Nishida's thinking has been interpreted as advancing pro-imperial ideologies (Heisig and Maraldo 1995), it never went to nearly the lengths that Inoue's did and so has fared better in postwar Japan as the widely recognized beginning point of Japanese philosophy. Along the way, Inoue and his claims about Japanese Confucian philosophy have been all but omitted from contemporary Japanese discussions of the nature of Japanese philosophy and its history as an area of study within Japanese history. It should be added, however, that even Nishida had to affirm the philosophical world that Inoue fashioned. Consequently, he too recognized that Confucianism had been considered as philosophy, mentioning as much in his New Year's address to the emperor in 1941 (Nishida 1950: 267–268; Cheung 2011: 58–59). That aspect of Nishida's thought, surely deriving from Inoue, has been nearly forgotten as well, along with Inoue.

The ethics, metaphysics, political thought, epistemological theories, and spiritual speculations of Japanese Confucianism continued to be studied in postwar Japan, but most Japanese scholars doing so have refrained from calling them “philosophy” and instead cast the subject matter of their research as “thought” (*shisō* 思想), “intellectual history” (*shisōshi* 思想史), or “ideology” (*ideorogii* イデオロギー), distancing their work nominally from the disciplinary area Inoue advanced. Yet arguably in these studies of thought and intellectual history, the substance of Japanese Confucian philosophy remains evident even though it is rarely spoken of as philosophy. Recent Western scholarship on Japanese philosophy generally and Japanese Confucian philosophy within it has contributed substantially to reviving the credibility of the

study of Japanese Confucianism as philosophy. One work exemplifying this is the massive reader, *Japanese Philosophy: A Sourcebook* (Heisig et al. 2011). An earlier and briefer survey, *Japanese Philosophy*, also interprets Japanese Confucian thinking as philosophy (Blocker and Starling 2001). The diversity so characterizing the field of Confucian philosophy generally and Japanese Confucian philosophy in particular has prompted Chun-chieh Huang 黃俊傑 at National Taiwan University to suggest that far from a single intellectual force, Confucianism should be understood as a plurality of multifaceted teachings and so referred to as “Confucianisms” (Huang 2010). Readers of this volume will presumably come to appreciate Huang’s enlightened suggestion because if anything the studies presented here well illustrate the fact that there was never a single, monolithic Japanese expression of Confucianism, philosophical or otherwise.

The Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology’s establishment of the University of Tokyo Center for Philosophy (UTCP) also offers great hope for the revival of studies of Japanese Confucianism as philosophy. UTCP understands philosophy in the widest possible sense, as including philosophical thought, intellectual history, cultural studies, religious studies, cultural studies, and reflections on science and technology, all as geared toward the fundamental idea of “living together” (*kyōsei* 共生). The essays in this volume similarly reflect a wide range of approaches to philosophical wisdom about Japanese Confucianism, including ones drawing on intellectual history, thought, and cultural studies. Hopefully they too will contribute to, through understanding, a better and more cooperative future for humanity.

1.4 Beginnings: Defining Terms and Defining Politics

Readers familiar with previous accounts of Japanese Confucianism – especially those following Inoue’s interpretations – might expect this volume to open with an essay on the Confucian thought of FUJIWARA Seika 藤原惺窩 (1561–1619) or HAYASHI Razan 林羅山 (1583–1657), two figures at the headwaters of early-modern developments in Confucian philosophizing in Japan. Previous studies in earlier anthologies and publications on Japanese Confucianism have by no means exhaustively explored every dimension of Seika and Razan, but those thinkers have received considerable attention (de Bary 1979: 127–188; Boot 1982; Ooms 1984: 27–61; Tucker 1992: 41–60; Paramore 2006: 185–206). This volume opens with a different approach to the study of the beginnings of early-modern Japanese Confucianism: an examination of the thought of MATSUNAGA Sekigo 松永尺五 (1592–1657) as developed in his *Ethics* (*Irinshō* 稟倫抄). Sekigo, a disciple of Seika and contemporary of Razan, articulated a system of Confucian philosophizing that can be described as distinctively Japanese insofar as it encompasses, through systematically syncretic interpretations, Shintō, Buddhist, and Daoist teachings into its accounts of Confucian philosophical terms. This kind of all-embracing philosophical statement, while not unheard of in medieval Japan, had earlier been more typically formulated by Zen

monks giving the syncretic philosophy advanced a decidedly Buddhist core around which Confucian teachings were added. Sekigo's text is at its core Confucian, but where possible incorporates examples from the life of the Buddha, Siddhartha Gautama (ca. 563–483 BCE), as well as Buddhist teachings in an effort to establish the pervasive validity of Confucian teachings. Along the way, Sekigo establishes a kind of philosophical united front, merging potentially opposing forces from East Asian religio-philosophical traditions to check the appeal of the dangerous foreign heterodoxy that Sekigo could not tolerate, Christianity. Writing in 1640, two years after the Christian-inspired Shimabara Uprising (*Shimabara no ran* 島原の乱) had been brutally quashed by Tokugawa forces, Sekigo authored the postscript to his Confucian syncretism, explaining it not as an abstract system having little relationship to realities of the day, but as a statement meant to instill in its readers ethical sensibilities that would render them immune to dangerous Christian teachings. In articulating his system by way of philosophical lexicography, or the semantic analysis of philosophical terms, Sekigo was equally engaging in an exploration of philosophical language and meaning of a kind that Confucius spoke of in the *Analects* as “the rectification of terms” (C: *zhengming* 正名 J: *seimei*). There Confucius explained the rectification of terms as a fundamentally necessary step toward achieving right political order in governing a realm. In this respect Sekigo's philosophical system, developed by defining philosophical terms, represents one statement of Confucian political philosophy in early-modern Japan. As the first English language study of Sekigo's Confucianism, the opening essay reveals a new dimension of Japanese Confucian philosophy in the early seventeenth century.

1.5 Discussions of the Spiritual

In the *Analects*, Confucius remarks that wisdom (C: *zhi* 知 J: *chi*) consists partly in “revering ghosts and spirits, but distancing oneself from them” (敬鬼神而遠之) (*Analects* 6/22). In another passage, Confucius is said to have “offered sacrifices to the spirits as if they were actually present” (祭神如神在) (*Analects* 3/12). When asked about the way of spirits, Confucius responded with a question, “Why need you be able to serve spirits when you have not been able to bring yourself to serve other people? (未能事人,焉能事鬼)” (*Analects* 11/12). In another passage Confucius is described as “not talking about ... spiritual matters” (子不語 ... 神) (*Analects* 7/21). One of the distinctive features of Neo-Confucianism, however, was that it devoted considerable energy to discussing spiritual matters. CHEN Beixi 陳北溪 (1159–1223), a late-Song follower of ZHU Xi's 朱熹 (1130–1200) Neo-Confucian teachings, wrote more in his accounts of spiritual matters (C: *guishen* 鬼神 J: *kishin*), than he did on any other notion in his lexicography of Neo-Confucian philosophical concepts. Other major compilations of ZHU Xi's philosophical discussions such as the *Classified Conversations of Master Zhu* (C: *Zhuzi yulei* 朱子語類 J: *Shushi gorui*) and the *Grand Compendium of Neo-Confucian Notions* (C: *Xingli daquan* 性理大全 J: *Seiri dazen*) equally featured Zhu's comments on spiritual topics. In part,

Neo-Confucians felt compelled to address these as a way of responding to Buddhist claims about heavenly paradises, myriad realms of hell, ceaseless reincarnation, and other spiritual notions. Among early-modern Japanese Confucian scholars influenced by these texts as well as other standard works of Neo-Confucian literature such as ZHU Xi's *Commentaries on the Four Books* (C: *Sishu jizhu* 四書集注 J: *Shisho shitchū*), discussions of ghosts and spirits proliferated. Perhaps more so than in China and Korea, Japanese Confucians felt it necessary to address these topics due to the continued vitality of Buddhism as well as the widespread nativist beliefs of Shintō regarding the nature of *kami* 神. The prevalence of such discussions has not been lost on Japanese scholars studying Japanese Confucianism. KOYASU Nobukuni's 子安宣邦 *On Spirits: The Discourse of Confucian Intellectuals* (*Kishinron: Juka chishikijin no disukūru* 鬼神論: 儒家知識人のディスクール), plus ASANO Sanpei's 浅野三平 modern edition and translation of ARAI Hakuseki's 新井白石 (1657–1725) and HIRATA Atsutane's 平田篤胤 (1776–1843) essays on *kishin*, make evident the enduring importance of this topic to understandings of Japanese Confucian philosophizing (Koyasu 1992; Asano 2012).

In his essay “Spirits, Gods, and Heaven in Confucian Thought,” W. J. Boot explores this discourse in considerable detail, showing that it was no random miscellany of writings lacking in theoretical cohesion and rigor. Instead Boot reveals the discourse as one far more unified in terminology and content than might have been imagined. In exploring this discourse, Boot examines the ideas of a wide variety of thinkers including HAYASHI Razan, MINAGAWA Kien 皆川淇園 (1734–1807), OGYŪ Sorai, ARAI Hakuseki, and AIZAWA Seishisai 会沢正志齋 (1782–1863). In these thinkers Boot finds considerable shared ground such as the tendency to avoid appeal to what Westerners so like to conceive the spiritual in terms of, things immaterial and supernatural. Rather Confucian theology, as Boot refers to it (it could also be called philosophical theology), is largely at one in its agreement that *kishin* are not immaterial but instead are manifestations of material force (C: *qi* 氣 J: *ki*, translated elsewhere in this volume as “generative force”), and that they are not “supernatural” but rather firmly grounded in the natural world of human existence and daily activity. For those thinkers who did not, like Yamagata Bantō 山片蟠桃 (1748–1821), flatly deny their existence, Confucian theorists were in part motivated by their understanding that defining a spiritual theology was immediately relevant to the practice of ancestor worship, one of the forms of religiosity comprehended and acted upon on the grounds of a detailed philosophical analysis of what exactly the nature of family ghosts and spirits consisted in. Given the importance of having people focus on this form of religiosity rather than any number of other activities that might undermine the socio-political order, a philosophical anthropology of matters spiritual was imperative. Also important for many Confucians, especially those like Hakuseki, was the sectarian need to define well-thought out Confucian accounts of *kishin* so as to preempt Buddhist theories and practices regarding the spiritual. What is perhaps most valuable about Boot's essay is that in exploring *kishin*, he offers simultaneously a study of Confucian thinking and thinkers throughout the Tokugawa period. One of the more interesting sections is Boot's examination of Razan's writings on *kishin* which pertain as much to Shintō deities as to

Neo-Confucian metaphysical and ontological notions. While some students of Chinese philosophy might be tempted to view Japanese Confucian philosophy as little more than a recapitulation of Chinese positions (and this was a claim Inoue made about the Japanese ZHU Xi School), Razan's analysis of the spiritual in terms of the self-division of Kuninotokotachi no mikoto 国常立尊, the first deity of the *Chronicles of Japan* (*Nihon shoki* 日本書記) shows that there is considerable innovation in Japanese philosophical attempts at coming to terms with the divine.

1.6 Exploring the Borders

Japanese Confucianism is often addressed in relation to thinkers who lived on Honshū, Shikoku, or Kyūshū, i.e., the major islands of the Japanese archipelago. There have been exceptions: Julia Ching called attention to the life and thought of ZHU Shunshui 朱舜水 (1600–1682), the Ming 明 loyalist who fled China following the Manchu conquest, ending up in Japan serving the Lord of Mito domain, TOKUGAWA Mitsukuni 徳川光圀 (1628–1700), as a Confucian scholar-advisor (Ching 1979: 189–229). ABE Yoshio 阿部吉雄 (1978) revealed the influence of Korean prisoners-of-war such as KANG Hang 姜沆 (1567–1618) on FUJIWARA Seika and others. Abe also called attention to the impact of Korean editions of Chinese texts such as the 1553 Jinju 晉州 edition of Beixi's *The Meanings of Human Nature and Principle* (C: *Xingli ziyi* 性理字義 J: *Seiri jigū*) on Japanese Confucian writings. Abe further revealed the significant sway that Korean Neo-Confucian philosophers such as Yi T'oegyē 李退溪 (1501–1570) and alternatively, Yi Yulgok 李栗谷 (1536–1584), had on YAMAZAKI Ansai 山崎闇斎 (1619–1682), his Kimon 崎門 school, and a number of other Tokugawa Confucians. Wm. Theodore de Bary and Irene Bloom have shown that appreciating the complexity, depth, and philosophically nuanced nature of Japanese Confucianism involves more than knowing the *Analects* and *Mencius*. The substantial Chinese literature of Song Confucian philosophy including the writings of ZHOU Dunyi 周敦頤 (1017–1073), ZHANG Zai 張載 (1020–1077), SHAO Yong 邵雍 (1011–1077), CHENG Hao 程顥 (1032–1085), CHENG Yi 程頤 (1033–1107), and ZHU Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200), plus important texts from Yuan thinkers such as XU Heng 許衡 (1209–1281), Ming Confucians LUO Qinshun 羅欽順 (1465–1547) and WANG Yangming 王陽明 (1472–1529), and Qing Confucians such as DAI Zhen 戴震 (1724–1777), cannot be dismissed as an irrelevant other if one hopes to achieve an authentic, well-informed understanding of Japanese Confucianism (de Bary and Bloom 1979; Bloom 1987).

Gregory Smits's study of SAI On's 蔡溫 (1682–1761) Confucian thinking makes a pioneering contribution to understandings of Japanese Confucian philosophy by casting it in the light of an important Confucian philosopher-statesman from the islands of the Ryūkyū 琉球 kingdom, now modern Okinawa 沖縄. Building on his important monograph on Ryūkyū thought and politics (Smits 1999), Smits offers a portrait of SAI On as a pragmatic Confucian philosopher in action, one intent on useful reforms of the Ryūkyū kingdom that would help make it more materially

prosperous and culturally enlightened. Of particular interest in Smits's study is his focus on SAI On's thinking on social engineering; his philosophically-informed understanding of destiny or fate 命, one emphasizing aggressive initiative and hard work, while leaving the fruits of one's labor to heaven 天; and SAI On's efforts to battle superstition and ignorance that led many in Ryūkyū to rely on shamans and divination as indicators for their lives. Smits's work on the latter two dimensions of SAI On's thought in many respects continues themes also explored in Boot's examination of Japanese Confucian thought on *kishin*. In combatting those forces while seeking to encourage those in authority and in positions that would give them leverage in effecting positive change, SAI On served as a Confucian philosopher-official of the first order. With his work on SAI On, Smits contributes most significantly toward establishing a fuller and more accurate understanding of the very multifaceted nature of Japanese Confucianism during the early-modern period.

1.7 The Body

TSUJIMOTO Masashi's 辻本雅史 study of KAIBARA Ekken's 貝原益軒 (1630–1714) Confucian thought emphasizes a recent trend in philosophical studies of the body, especially within the context of Asian philosophy generally. An anthology edited by Thomas P. Kasulis, Roger T. Ames, and Wimal Dissanayake, *Self as Body in Asian Theory and Practice*, explained the centrality of the body in Indian, Chinese, and Japanese philosophical systems (Kasulis et al. 1993). Within the context of Japanese philosophy and cultural practice, Thomas Kasulis has pioneered discussions of the importance of the body in the thinking of a range of scholars and cultural practices, not just Confucian, making clear the pervasive importance of the body in daily life, dramatic performances, ceremonial events, Buddhist and Shintō thought, and even phone conversations. In many respects Kasulis' discussions go a considerable way towards showing that the mind-body problem so familiar to students of Western philosophy is simply not recognized in Asian philosophical discussions even when those discussions address problems related to the mind and the body (Kasulis 1993: 229–320). In modern Japanese philosophy, Shigenori Nagatomi has explored the pioneering philosophies of the body by ICHIKAWA Hiroshi 市川浩 (1931-) and YUASA Yasuo 湯浅泰雄 (1925–2005) (Nagatomi 1993: 322–346). Beginning with Ichikawa's *The Body as Spiritual* (*Seishin to shite no shintai* 精神としての身体, 1975) and Yuasa's *The Body: Toward an Eastern Mind-Body* (*Shintai: Tōyōteki shinshinron no kokoromi* 身体: 東洋的身心論の試み, 1977), these two thinkers have published many studies examining the religious, philosophical, and cultural dimensions of the body, often drawing on the insights of Western philosophers such as Husserl, Marcel, Sartre, and Merleau-Ponty (Midgellow 2007: 180). Yet existing studies of Japanese philosophical understandings of the body have yet to focus specifically on the Confucian dimensions

of the problem, highlighting the extent to which views of the self as the body and body as the self are grounded in Japanese Confucian philosophizing.

Tsujimoto Masashi's "Spiritualizing the Physical in Edo Period Confucianism: The Somatization of Learning in the Thought of KAIBARA Ekken" innovates by taking the body (*shintai* 身体) as the focus of its interpretations of Ekken's thinking, especially as Ekken's thought is developed in his *Precepts for Children* (*Wazoku dōjūkun* 和俗童子訓) and his *Precepts on Nourishing Life* (*Yōjōkun* 養生訓), two works that reflect in many important respects conceptualizations of study, learning, and living prevalent during Ekken's day. In his analyses of Ekken's thought, Tsujimoto emphasizes how the ZHU Xi philosophical system that Ekken took as one of his starting points gave primacy, within its metaphysics, to principle (C: *li* 理 J: *ri*) over material force (C: *qi* 氣 J: *ki*), and to the "unmanifest" (C: *wei fa* 未發 J: *mihatsu*) over the "manifest" (C: *yifa* 已發 J: *ihatsu*). Ekken's approach, however, was to emphasize the material side of the metaphysical equation, noting how in learning to write characters, to read texts, and to master manners and etiquette, learning is of a physical sort, bringing into play at every turn the material force of the body. In Ekken's view, according to Tsujimoto, the emphasis on the body and material force was informed by Ekken's recognition that the human mind was a volatile and potentially precarious faculty, ever capable of changing erratically. The result, in Tsujimoto's view, is that a rise in corporeality occurred in conjunction with the move by many Japanese philosophers such as Ekken away from ZHU Xi's system of thought. Tsujimoto emphasizes that while this move is conspicuous in Ekken's thinking, it is hardly unique to him. Similar body-centered philosophical positions are evident in the thought of NAKAE Tōju 中江藤樹 (1608–1648), YAMAZAKI Anshai 山崎闇齋 (1619–1682), and OGYŪ Sorai 荻生徂徠 (1666–1728). Tsujimoto adds to his findings on the body by noting that, especially in Ekken's thought, the emphasis on the physical body as the self was something associated with children's education where learning how to do something, often through guided development or training of physical habits, was more emphasized than discursive learning regarding why something is or should be done. In exploring the prominence of the physical, somatic nature of the self and learning in Ekken's Confucian philosophy, Tsujimoto contributes significantly to understandings of the Confucian sources of modern and contemporary developments in Japanese discourse on the self.

1.8 OGYŪ Sorai

It would be virtually impossible for any volume on Japanese Confucian philosophy to overlook OGYŪ Sorai. Although by no means the most beloved or accessible of Japan's Confucian thinkers, there can be little doubt about the erudition evident in Sorai's philosophical writings and the extent to which he mastered much of the Confucian canon, in the Chinese original as well as its earlier Japanese expressions. Olof G. Lidin, the premier Western authority on Sorai's life and thought, provides an interesting interpretive angle on Sorai's overall philosophical perspective

as evidenced in what appears to be Sorai's first major text, *Report of the Elegant Emissaries* (*Fūryūshishaki* 風流使者記, ca. 1710) (Lidin 1983), a work commissioned by Sorai's patron, YANAGISAWA Yoshiyasu 柳沢吉保 (1658–1714), chamberlain to the shogun Tsunayoshi 綱吉 (1646–1709), and in one of Sorai's last works, *Discourse on Government* (*Seidan* 政談, 1728), a set of practical political proposals submitted at the request of then shogun Yoshimune 徳川吉宗 (1684–1751). Although Lidin was one of the first Western postwar scholars to translate Sorai's philosophical writings and the first and only Western scholar to author a biography of Sorai, one describing Sorai in its pioneering title as a “Confucian philosopher” (Lidin 1970, 1973), his purpose here is not to analyze Sorai's philosophical writings philosophically, but rather to offer a philosophical characterization of Sorai's first and last writings, the former a travelogue that Lidin was the first to translate into English (Lidin 1983) and the latter, a political text suggesting administrative reforms, which Lidin has also translated into English in its entirety for the first time (Lidin 1999). By no means a typical philosophical analysis, Lidin suggests that Sorai's *leitmotif* in these very different works is his evident sense of “compassion” (C: *ren* 仁 J: *jin*) for humanity.

1.9 Whence Modernity?

Sorai is in part at the center of an essay by Olivier Ansart, author of *L'empire du rite: La pensée politique d'Ogyū Sorai* (Ansart 1998). Ansart's essay explores what he calls the “philosophical moment” between Sorai and KAIHŌ Seiryō 海保青陵 (1755–1817), one that brought to the fore assumptions necessary to justify basic structures of modern society, establishing that in the non-Western, non-modern context of Tokugawa Japan, a moment existed during which imaginative thinkers moved toward a modern standpoint. In making this case, Ansart marshals philosophical theory for the sake of an argument that is as proximate to intellectual history as philosophical analysis. But the division between the two, intellectual history and philosophical understanding, and certainly as it pertains to understandings of OGYŪ Sorai, has been all but irrevocably blurred in postwar Japan by the important studies of MARUYAMA Masao 丸山眞男 (1914–1996). Doing justice to the complexity of Maruyama's analysis of Sorai's thought requires going well beyond the limits of this introduction, but suffice it to say that Maruyama saw in Sorai, and especially Sorai's emphasis on the ancient sage kings as creators of institutions, something he referred to as “the logic of invention,” a distinctively modern element in Sorai's thought that heralded the beginnings of a modern political consciousness in Japan (Maruyama 1952). Maruyama's discussions have fascinated students of Japanese thought, especially in the West, and most especially in the wake of Mikiso HANE's translation of Maruyama's work under the title, *Studies in the Institutional History of Tokugawa Japan* (Maruyama 1974). Many have contested Maruyama's views, first published as journal articles in the mid-1940s, but not a few continue to hold that his writings remain the starting points for any future study of modern Japanese

thinking. When one considers that Sorai's ideas, like those of most Confucians, had been characterized in a major way by Tokyo Imperial University professor of philosophy INOUE Tetsujirō 井上哲次郎 (1855–1944) as expressions of “Japanese philosophy” (*Nihon no tetsugaku* 日本之哲学), there are good reasons for seeing Maruyama's writings, and those who have since addressed them, either positively or negatively, as having a philosophical dimension. Ansart's essay must be situated, then, as with so many contemporary studies of Japanese Confucian thinking, somewhere between intellectual history and philosophical history.

Ansart does not agree with Maruyama's characterization of modernity, but he does believe that Maruyama was onto something of considerable importance. Ansart sees the question of the locus of “modern political theory” as one that is alive and open, and suggests that the distinctive elements to look for are: a metaphysics disenchanted with appeals to nature and affirming instead a form of positivism; a theory of rational instrumentality in epistemology; the doctrine of freewill and personal responsibility in moral psychology; and an understanding of society as contractual in its relationships. In Sorai, Ansart sees the first element of modern political theory realized to a large degree in Sorai's emphasis on the sage kings as creators/inventors who transform reality rather than claim that all is an expression of nature. However, Sorai's move toward modern political theory stops there; the remaining three elements of modern political theory, in Ansart's view, are developed in the thought of Seiryō. With copious citations and a masterful command of Seiryō's works, Ansart presents a strong argument for the appearance of modern political theory in the philosophical transition from Sorai's thought to Seiryō writings, a claim that will surely challenge all who might have imagined that the question was settled and the case closed.

1.10 The Nature

The importance of Sorai to Japanese Confucian philosophy is evident in the number of very significant thinkers that he either taught or influenced in one manner or another. Peter Flueckiger expands his expertise on Sorai (Flueckiger 2011) with a new study of DAZAI Shundai 太宰春台 (1680–1747) that effectively suggests this point via its examination of Shundai's thought on the inborn nature (C: *xing* 性 J: *sei*), especially as Shundai's thinking on that seminal Confucian topic was developed in relation to Sorai's. One aspect of Flueckiger's study is his argument that Shundai's position on the nature is more pessimistic than Sorai's in that Shundai considers the nature something that might have to be overcome with rigorous practice and effort in order to bring it into harmony with the Confucian Way, if that is possible at all. In part, Shundai's somewhat pessimistic appraisal of the inborn nature is more so than Sorai's because Shundai posits a state of nature far removed from Sorai's vision of an originally cooperative and mutually supporting and sustaining society. Shundai instead sees the natural condition as one in which human beings may take human form, but have hearts and minds that are no different than those of the wildest

of animals. As a result, the state of nature is one wherein the strong have their way with the weak, overwhelming them as they see fit for whatever reason, if any at all. But most importantly, Shundai follows the Tang Confucian scholar HAN Yu 韓愈 (768–824) in identifying different grades of nature in humanity, with the idea being that different people have different expressions of inborn nature so that rather than a unified and consistently “good” or “evil” nature, people have as many different types of nature as there are people. Simply put, contrary to Mencian and Xunzian efforts to characterize human nature in *a priori* terms, Shundai holds that inborn natures are simply not the same. Flueckiger also calls attention to how Shundai viewed coming into conformity with the Way as a process or external control of one’s behavior so that regardless of what is thought or felt, one actually does the right thing in action. Thus it is conceivable for a person to be doing the right thing, but thinking all the wrong thoughts in the process. For Shundai, such a situation is not necessarily a bad thing, and might well be an acceptable step along the way toward a fuller internalization, as opposed to mere external manifestation of, the Way. One of the most interesting portions of Flueckiger’s essay discusses the political thinking of Shundai and Sorai and how Shundai, unlike Sorai, allowed for borrowings from Daoist, Mohist, and Legalist thought. Indeed, in his *A Record of Political Economy* (*Keizairoku* 經濟錄) Shundai endorses as appropriate for a degenerate age such as his own a quasi-Daoistic approach to government with the ruler engaging in “non-action” (C: *wuwei* 無爲 J: *mu’i*). In this regard, Flueckiger suggests, Shundai formulates a more adaptable, even if not necessarily philosophically consistent, expression of Confucian thinking than had Sorai.

1.11 Doubters, Critics, and Common Ground

Studies of Confucian philosophy often explore debates among Confucian thinkers, but do not typically examine criticisms of Confucian philosophizing from outside the fold. But to overlook such critiques is to disregard a deeply rooted aspect of Confucian philosophical learning, one that links the Confucian approach to knowledge, reason, and thought to – if a return to the question of modernity is allowed – the Western philosopher with whom so much of the paradigm shift resulting in the rise modern philosophy is associated, René Descartes (1596–1650). In his *Discourse on the Method* (*Discours de la méthode*) and *Principles of Philosophy* (*Principia philosophiae*), Descartes sought both to combat skepticism and simultaneously define a methodology for arriving at certain knowledge. Ironically the method he proposed was systematic doubt: by embracing skepticism, so to speak, he sought a way of overcoming it. While reportedly engaged in doubt, Descartes realized that thought and therefore the thinker, exist, formulating this realization in his famous conclusion, “I think, therefore I am” (*Je pense, donc je suis*, or as cast in Latin, *Cogito ergo sum*). Certainty about existence then was a clear and distinct byproduct, in Descartes’ mind, arising from his confrontation with doubts about