

CEACOP seminar

Kingliness without Kings: Confucian Political Philosophy for the 21st Century

Date: 14 October 2022

Time: 10:00 am (HKT)

Venue: Online (This talk will be held via ZOOM)

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Abstract

Traditionally Confucian philosophy has relied on sages to realize its political goals of “kingliness” for a prosperous and harmonious society. Yet, sage-kings existed only in legends. Contemporary thinkers have proposed ways for counting on Confucian politicians, Confucian government, or Confucian meritocratic constitution as political means to promote Confucian social and ethical ideals. All these alternatives are ideals of the past. I argue for a bottom-up approach. In the 21st century, the only viable Confucian politics is equal representation democracy. Confucians have to promote their values by political activism through democratic participation. Thus, the goals of Confucian political philosophy for the 21st Century have to be realized in the form of “kingliness without kings”, or “politics without (depending on) politicians.”

Short Biography

Chenyang Li is Professor of philosophy at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. He is the author of *The Tao Encounters the West*, *The Confucian Philosophy of Harmony*, and *Reshaping Confucianism* (forthcoming), as well as over 100 journal articles and book chapters. He was President of Association of Chinese Philosophers in North America (ACPA), President of International Society for Chinese Philosophy (ISCP), Senior Visiting Fellow at the City University of Hong Kong, an American Council on Education ACE fellow, and an inaugural Berggruen Fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioural Sciences (CASBS) in Stanford University. Currently he serves on the editorial/academic boards of over two dozen scholarly publications and organizations.

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