

## *A Christian Reflection: Confucianism and Economics in East Asia*

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Since the end of World War II, Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore have made remarkable economic progress. During the last ten years, Thailand and Malaysia also have exerted influence on the world markets. Recognizing this influence, economists have nicknamed them the NIE's, newly industrialized economies.<sup>1</sup> Japan and Hong Kong's economic power have now reached world-market standards.



Japan's progress may be due, at least in part, to the fact that it adopted an American style democracy after World War II. Among the NIE countries Japan is considered to be the most Westernized but it is difficult to know just how Westernized Japan really is since Japanese traditional culture is still very much alive.

Confucianism binds all the cultures of East Asia together. Confucian philosophy is intimately bound up in classical Chinese characters common throughout the region. Confucian influence is readily sensed in Korea's contemporary culture, especially in its social life and family moral values,

Because the national cultures of the NIE countries are all based on a Confucianism similar to that of Korea, which has managed, in a relatively short time, to introduce a Western style economic system while adhering to its traditional Confucian ethics, many economists predict that they will develop very quickly. Some experts compare the relationship between capitalism and the Protestant ethics to the relationship of the development of capitalism and Confucian ethics in the NIE countries. During the past ten years, experts in economics, politics and in cultural studies of East Asia have discussed this hypothesis and as a result there are many excellent studies on Confu-

cianism. Journalists refer to this as a *Renaissance of Confucianism*. Scholars now consider the East Asian countries a cultural as well as a geographical entity.<sup>2</sup>

## 1. Confucianism Re-interpreted

To make a study of East Asia not only in terms of geography or anthropology but also in terms of culture and philosophy, in order to understand better the common characteristics of the East Asian peoples, we need a new concept of Confucianism. This is absolutely necessary if we are to succeed in inculturating our evangelization in the region. During the past decades, there have been many studies related to Confucianism in China and Japan. These studies have been concerned mostly with the real meaning of Confucianism and its influence on both China and Japan from the viewpoints of business management, bio-ethics, political tactics, social studies, psychology, philosophy of life and day to day family and group behavior.

The most comprehensive recent studies concern religion and Confucianism. Confucianism, generally considered a philosophy, sets down principles of social conduct concerned with the morality of the family as a group. Confucianism considered from the viewpoint of religion has been sadly neglected. A Christian study of Confucianism is also needed to examine the Christian concept of morality in order to understand the difference between Christian morality and the natural law type of morality found in China. This is another reason a new way of looking at Confucianism is essential for East Asia's evangelization program. A friendly dialogue with Confucian moralists in the near future is imperative.

Confucianism in China had its origins five or six centuries before Christ. China's history reveals a civilization that embraced an animistic religious experience. Confucius was not a religious leader enlightened like the Buddha. Rather, he organized Chinese political life and taught correct human conduct which became incorporated into the national culture. Inspired by animism rather than religious mysticism, Confucius taught a cult of respect for ancestors. Basically, he was a philosopher whose philosophy developed through the study of the Chinese language. He collected old poems and the sayings of former sages. Instead of discussing animistic experiences, he contem-

plated the human aspect of poetry. He never depreciated religious piety but his focus was on the study of humanity as such. Thus, his philosophy was an essentially humanistic anthropology. This is how he arrived at an universal ethical system for the different peoples in China. In terms of politics, he taught respect for a hierarchy of moral virtues. Above all, the politician must be virtuous and respect ancestor worship.

If we were to seek a metaphysical insight into his philosophy, we would find a fundamental respect for human life. His devotion to the cult of ancestors was based on a human vitalism. Thus he encouraged filial piety as a fundamental virtue and his code of good behavior was derived from a family type of morality that stressed the common good of the group and family instead of the good of the individual. According to Confucius filial piety was essential in a human society and for harmony in all forms of life in the universe. Ancestors and kings were symbols of vital energy. This new interpretation of Confucius thinking sheds light on the history of Confucianism in China.

Dr. Nobuyuki Kaji explains schematically the elements of Confucianism from a historical point of view:<sup>3</sup>

### ***1. Prior to Confucius***

Shamanism and shamanistic practices were based on the cult of ancestors.

### ***2. Confucius and his influence (600 B.C.)***

Confucius' systematic use of shamanistic practices was evident in liturgy and behavior. He codified the tradition of the cult of ancestors into four categories: poetry, history, liturgy and music. He was a man of virtue, an intellectual, a man of letters with a particular love for poetry and music. Although he himself was not a shaman he respected shamanistic practices. As a philosopher he devised a code of conduct for the family and political philosophers and founded a lasting ethical, moral and political system expressive of Chinese thought.

### ***3. Further systematization of Confucianism (after 200 B.C.)***

With the centralization of national policy, the followers of Confucius developed his thought more systematically. Some of them deepened the metaphysical aspects of Confucian thought while others broadened his ideas of cosmology. As a result,

Confucianism was a dynamic force for morality and politics throughout 2000 years of Chinese history. Chinese religion, however, was not changed to any great extent by Confucianism. Even Buddhism was not able to influence Chinese traditional religious values and animism exists even today.

#### ***4. The present and future of Confucianism***

Confucianism which is such a basic element of the Chinese mind is still very much alive among the Chinese people. It has survived many critical periods of history and even the Communists have not been able to quash it completely. Still there are some aspects of Confucianism open to criticism. As regards the future, scholars would like to see its doctrines interiorized. Confucianism is more powerful than Taoism or Chinese Buddhism. In the post-industrial period, Confucianism can provide new inspiration and insights into human behavior. Sociologists and others are certainly justified in calling for a renaissance of Confucianism in these modern times.

#### **How does Confucianism contribute to economic development?**

One basic reason Confucianism can contribute to economic development is the Chinese religious attitude towards the world. For animistic countries, the natural world or the world of human beings is important not only for the living but also for the dead, (i.e. for the souls of ancestors) who can come back to this world to be venerated or loved by living people. The cult of ancestors is not simply a ceremony of a remnant of ancient days; it is the experience of communion with deceased family members. For communion the family needs to be prosperous enough to enjoy meeting with the dead. If the family is faithful in respecting its dead, it will be protected by ancestors for seven generations (about 231 years). Consequently, the family needs to be united by a voice of authority which they all recognize. Thus, the original code was essentially a code for the family. The Chinese take a positive attitude towards the world. For them China is the center of the world and a land which promises human happiness. This outlook is part of their national pride. For the Chinese, economic activities are never despised. Attaining material riches is one of life's main aims, at least in so far as it

helps further the cult of ancestors. For them worldly happiness is the result of blessings from ancestors.

Since the industrial revolution Confucianism has come in for a great deal of criticism. It was too authoritative; it favored group and family policies to the disregard of individual liberty; it was paternalistic and politically collectivistic.

In today's post-industrial period Confucianism is being re-assessed. It is no longer viewed as antagonistic toward modern progress. In fact, the NIE's have in a relatively short time developed economically without having to reject Confucianism and its practical moral code. Questions are being raised about the possible contribution of Confucianism to the economic development of the newly developed countries. Japan, which is already extensively developed, has not yet fully recognized Confucianism's part in its economic progress. Many are under the impression that Japan's miraculous industrial development is due to its having adopted a Western style democracy. Having been freed from the traditional humanism which has its roots in Confucianism and now possessing more individual freedom, and identity, the Japanese are able to exercise more personal creativity. Many Japanese actually feel that their economic success is due rather to the abandoning of the Confucian code of behavior. Then again, much of the progress can be credited to the Japanese working as groups as well as individuals.

In South Korea, where the people have retained their Confucian traditions, economic and industrial development has been almost as astonishing as in Japan. In the last decade, however, companies in Japan, rather than adapting to a Western individualistic style, have quite obviously been adhering to ancient Confucian ideals and principles in their human relationships and principles of management. Still, many Japanese capitalists have found it useful for success to adopt certain Western principles. Presently, because of cultural and traditional differences, considerable economic confusion and misunderstanding exist between Japan and the United States and Japan and Europe. This situation requires all sides to give and take and to be more tolerant and patient. The big question remains: is it necessary to completely Westernize Japan in order to maintain good relationships with the Western world and achieve economic progress? Must the Japanese give up all their good traditions? Many sociologists of the post-industrial era are critical of the

Western stress on the individual which is so often detrimental to family life. Daniel Bell, in his book, *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*, (1976), proposed the idea of a "public household" theory for contemporary American society. The general public did not readily take to his theory. In fact, even some Japanese sociologists disagree with the high value Bell places on the Japanese traditional family system and a social order that strictly control individualistic tendencies in favor of social groups and national security. The welfare of the group takes precedence over the welfare of the individual. There are ongoing discussions among Japanese and among American sociologists about what constitutes an authentic individuality for the Japanese. The challenge is how to strike the happy balance.

Among many Western democratic countries, especially the United States, there has been a great loss of family values, of social safety and of moral values in general.<sup>4</sup> In Japan, traditional beliefs still seem to have the edge and in spite of its many disadvantages, Confucianism maintains a universal humanistic ideal compatible with a Christian way of life.

### **Confucianism and Buddhism for Japanese Political and Economic Leaders**

China's acceptance of Buddhism has always fascinated scholars. According to Confucian historians, China never completely converted to Buddhism. Rather, Chinese Confucianism integrated Buddhism in order to improve the Confucian way of life. As we know now, Confucius himself was never interested in any metaphysical study of the ultimate being or in an after life. Confucian scholars never showed interest in the salvific morality of Buddhism. Confucianism in early times was essentially a way of life in this world not a way to another transcending the present.

It is impossible for a Confucianist disciple to abandon this world to become an enlightened person. This becomes clear when we see so many Japanese capitalists interested in Zen meditation. For example, a former prime minister, Yasuhiro Nakasone or Toshimitsu Doko used to practice Zen meditation everyday. Mr. Nakasone and Mr. Doko had many followers who wish to be leaders in politics and economics. Certainly they did not do this to attain the Buddhist goal of life in another

world. Rather they sincerely wished to be selfless leaders and succeed in their respective fields of activities by achieving their earthly goals in Japan's highly developed contemporary society. Their world was a Confucian world of order, harmony and good behavior. They were convinced that their personal realization of an ideal world depended especially on overcoming selfish desires.

Contemporary American sociologists, among them Daniel Bell and Robert Bellah, are trying to find a new synthesis of individual rights and community good. They wish to return to the transcendental values of Christianity to find a solution to the crisis of community in American society and to restore true democracy.

For their part, East Asian intellectuals study Confucianism or Buddhism not only for purposes of religious research but also for their social or moral values. From this perspective, it is clear that the teachings of Confucius are more relevant than Buddhist doctrines and that the religious base of Confucianism is an important subject for further research.

Japanese executives, young and old, are presently studying the doctrine of emptiness so fundamental to Buddhism. For instance, *Hannya Shingyo*, (The Heart Sutra), a rather short and practical teaching of this doctrine is popular among businessmen. They study its teachings like a prayer every day. Some also practice writing this sutra with a writing brush in order to meditate more fully on its profound meanings. Do they wish to be completely detached from this world's happiness? Not at all! They meditate on the philosophy of emptiness so as to achieve a good position in their company or to concentrate all their attention and energies for the benefit of their company. For certain types of businessmen, this is a soteriological morality.<sup>5</sup>

In the renewal of Buddhism in Japan after World War II, perhaps the most important sect has been the Sokagakkai movement. Political power in Japan has been very much influenced by members of the Komeito, the political branch of the Sokagakkai. Voters who rejected the Western Socialistic type of party because it was influenced by Marxism, have accepted this political party.

Perhaps because of its more religious or cultural character, the renewal of Zen Buddhism in Japan has not been so generally popular as the Sokagakkai movement. Zen meditation is popu-

lar with artists and intellectuals and for counteracting modern nihilism in the developed countries. The post modern mentality in Japan is just as nihilistic as it is in European countries, and conspicuous among the cultural activities of today's Japanese youth. Nihilism among Japanese intellectuals can be contravened by the *emptiness* doctrine of Buddhism or by the Confucian concept of morals. Originally, the Japanese integrated Buddhism into an animistic religion (Shintoism) and Confucian morality. We find the same tendency operative today in the renewal of Japanese Buddhism.

We do not find in today's Japan a real renewal of classical Confucianism. What we find, instead, is simply the revival of an animistic religion which forms the common base of Confucianism in history. There is no doubt that Confucianism will exert an influence for a long time to come. My question is: Can Christianity inculturate animistic religious traditions in East Asia? Christian missionaries make a sincere and honest assessment of what has been done in this regard in the past and study ways to deal with this issue in the future. The evangelization of cultures is for the Catholic Church today one of its major tasks and challenges.

## Brain Death

Although Japan ranks among the most advanced countries in the fields of biotechnology and medicine, it has great difficulty accepting brain death as a criterion for deciding the actual moment of death and as a consequence it is also reluctant to encourage the transplantation of organs. While the government wishes to support the practice of organ removal at brain death, lawyers and about 50 percent of the population object to the idea.<sup>6</sup> The fundamental reason lies in the traditional attitude towards death and family relationships. To transplant organs when the brain is dead but the heart is still beating is, for many Japanese, tantamount to lacking respect for the dead. According to the teaching of Confucius, an important element of ancestor cult is that the corpse should be kept in an integral state and buried in a cemetery in order to join its ancestors. Without this respect for a corpse, the vital link with ancestors is disrupted. The Confucianistic theory of vitalism is important both for the living and the dead. The doctrine of vitalism is not solely



concerned with biology; it has religious connotations. The concept of Confucian filial piety which maintains a link with deceased ancestors is also concerned with the living and the dead and is a sign of respect for the continuation of life. In other words, filial piety venerates vitalism and is truly an animistic religious act. We can now begin to understand the concept of human relationships in Confucianism and see how beautiful it is. Individuality or personality is secondary in the Confucian idea of vitalism in which the life of an individual is more than just a personal concern.

Human life must be respected for its collective value as it exists in family groups, clans, etc. We might say that we are shaped by those who have gone before us. This concept of personhood is different from that expressed in the Bible. In the Bible human beings have a unique value because God personally speaks to each individually. This concept is clear in God's covenant with the human race. The Westernized Japanese do not fully understand the Christian idea of respect for the human person. For individuals themselves to decide, on their own initiative how to deal with their problems of life and death shows a lack of respect for the relatives who have died before them. The quality of life must not be considered from a subjective or emotional point of view only. The problems of life and death concern the welfare of the whole community with its hundreds or even thousands of years of traditions, cults, and rituals. This is the reason the Japanese government does not force brain death legislation on its citizens since they say that brain death is only the beginning of dying. The government is listening to the voice of the people formed by hundreds of years of tradition. Confucianism provides built-in safeguards against any misguided interpretations of the ultimate meaning of life and death.

The concept of brain death and organ transplants has awakened the present generation of Japanese to their traditional Confucian-influenced ways of thinking which many Westerners thought had already been lost through technological and scientific progress. Some intellectuals upset by the idea of brain death as the criterion for life and death and by organ transplantation say it is interesting to find so many Japanese reaffirming their original identity.<sup>7</sup> This reaction is certainly not due to nationalism. Rather it has something to do with culture shock. This is a

time for the Japanese to dialogue with Western, Islamic, Jewish cultures, etc. to preserve and protect what they believe regarding respect for life. These differences may be valuable in confronting the problem of the evangelization of cultures. It is very important for us to keep up our studies of bio-ethics and interculturalization with the various cultures of the world. How will the Japanese look upon brain death in the future? If we study the history of Confucianism in China, we find that Confucian teachings survived by considering first of all the national interests, the good of the whole, before considering the individual. The Chinese have shown an exceptional capacity for adapting to their known world in every crisis of their long history. Wise Confucianists were not only speculative thinkers but practical men of business and politics. For centuries they have relied on their wit and their tenacity to survive in the land of their pride, the country they call China and which for them is the center of the world.

The Japanese, consciously or subconsciously, are still influenced by Confucian thinking on the death of a human being. Some traditionalists are already offering a Confucian solution to the problem. Those opposed to recognizing brain death as the moment of death and to the consequent transplantation of living organs insist that, before removing organs for transplantation, that respect be shown to a corpse by having a ceremony, perhaps performed by a Buddhist priest, related to ancestor cult. What the traditionalists are most unhappy about is the seeming lack of respect for the dying in today's highly technologically organized hospitals. They sense the need for the development of deeper and quality relationships among doctors, nurses and patients. They also feel there needs to be real consultations with all the family members concerned, that informed consent and presumed consent should be carefully monitored. They reject the so-called *informed consent* which they maintain is no more than an medical explanation showing little or no respect for the human body. They understand *informed consent* as nothing more than a way of justifying a medical operation.

Confucian humanism is essentially a community type of respect for the family, the clan, and the nation. Consequently, the acceptance of any brain-death criterion and the subsequent transplantation of organs will only be brought about by a recognition of new family relationships and cooperation with medical

progress. Along with the wisdom of modern scientific progress and the economic progress of the East Asia areas, Confucian ideals should certainly be maintained.

Buddhism and likewise the Christian Church, has no serious opposition to the brain-death criterion. They even encourage the transplantation of organs as a charitable work.<sup>8</sup>

Among the various Japanese religions, Shinto in particular, is strongly opposed to the brain-death criterion and the transplantation of organs. However, like the Buddhists, Shinto followers will accept the teaching of Confucianism for the solution in the future. Here is an example from Japanese history. The emperor in Japan has always acted as a shaman in the imperial liturgy, a role important to Japanese national unity. He was also given a political role based on the role of the Chinese emperor. So the issue of brain death, thanks to the Confucian dynamic way of adapting, and thanks to the Japanese traditionalists, will find a solution to satisfy most people.

For more than one hundred years, Japan has been open to occidental cultures. After World War II Japan was especially open to Western technology and science. On all levels Japan has been deeply influence by Western cultures. Today, like other developed countries in the West, Japan must find a way to overcome *modernity* in order to live like true human beings. There is no model for this new way of life. In an effort to find a model, and without denying the benefits of Western culture so prominent in every day life, Japanese intellectuals are seeking a dialogue with the traditional cultures of Japan, Shinto, Confucianism and Buddhism.

The issue of brain death is significant in this perspective. East Asian countries are facing the same problem now and seeking answers consistent with their own cultural and religious backgrounds.

### **Animistic Religions and Christianity**

The reason that Confucianism is recognized as a dynamic force of morality even in the post-industrial countries of East Asia lies in its animistic origin. An animistic religion or moral code is always attractive when the natural environment is endangered. In Japan some scholars have studied with great interest the environmental ethics found within the animistic religious

morality of the Ainu minority. Japanese scholars are losing interest in Western monotheism and humanistic morality. They consider Western cultures, especially their information culture in the consumer society, as alienating people from themselves and from their humanity.

Once Westernized, the Japanese cannot easily revert to an animistic religion and to its morality as the ultimate truth without prejudice to a naturalism which is nothing but a simple synthesis of ecological data. Those who prefer animism to Christianity are obviously not satisfied with the doctrinal definition of a supreme God, as presented by the enlightenment of Western philosophy. This is also a reaction to the lack of spirituality in the Western way of life.

If people find in Confucianism, with its animistic background, a rational development of animistic insights, they will surely begin to re-appreciate Confucianism.

It is time for Christianity to develop the doctrines of creation and incarnation further in order to evangelize those peoples with a traditional animistic mentality. As regards animistic cultures in East Asia, missionaries might announce the Gospel as salvation not only for human beings but also as a guide to protect the world of nature. This would be one way of inculturating evangelization in East Asia.

So far, Christian missionaries have announced a personal God without alluding to the natural environment with its animal life and all other natural forms. There has been an excess condemnation of animistic practices as idolatry. This presentation of the Gospel has been too simple. As regards Christian love, the stress has been on a personal relationship to the world of nature without a connection with God's love. In Confucianism the teaching of love begins with a code for the whole of humanity. The ideal of love is respect for the life of citizens in the family, group or community. This is far from slavery and blind obedience to political authority. The fundamental principle of filial piety is based not only on one's own personal energy but more especially on ancestral vitalism, that is, the energy coming from those who have gone before.

Society should not simply be an ordered system of human relationships. It must be a community of life receiving energy and authority from ancestors symbolizing the continuation of life. Is it not possible for Christ, the Incarnate God, to come to

the community to strengthen its life first before a personal unity is reached among individual members of the community? An individualistic type of salvation is not necessarily authentically Christian. The renewal of Vatican Council II has fully realized the importance of community in the life of the Church and the world today. The Papal document *Centesimus Annus* insists on solidarity as an authentic Christian virtue. Forgetting who is our neighbor and who are our neighbors on this small planet can lead to individualism at its worst.

Western sociologists and political scientists are re-appraising Confucian ethics for the economic development of East Asia. At the same time, various East Asian intellectuals, especially among the Japanese are criticizing Western technologies, cultures and Christianity.<sup>9</sup>

Missionaries are responsible for announcing an authentic Gospel, one that includes people, other living creatures and inanimate nature.

Already, recent studies about Chinese thought suggest a new orientation in the theological expression of the Gospel for the inculturation of evangelization.<sup>10</sup>

Robert Bellah, a sociologist of religion, is trying to find a transcendental level present in all religious beliefs. In his recent book, *Beyond Belief: Essays on Religion in a Post-traditionalist World*, we find a comparative study of the fundamental aspects of Confucianism and Christianity. One essay concerns the concept of the family wherein he compares the father and son relationship in both religions to show the difference between traditional Chinese and traditional Western culture. For Christian theologians this may suggest a new paradigm for the mystery of the Holy Trinity.

Biblical monotheism explained through Western thinking must be reevaluated in order to overcome the simplistic argument of monotheism vs. pantheism. This task requires immediate attention if the inculturation of the Christian message about God is to take root.

Westerners feel that an immanent definition is an essential character of Chinese thought, whereas a transcendent definition is essential for Western thinkers. A recent study proposes a new interpretation of this fixed way of thinking: Robert C. Neville observes, "According to the category of ontological creativity, all definitions of things are immanent in the sense of being

harmonies of relational conditional features and integral essential ones: no definition of a thing makes a relational reference to a transcendent creator. At the same time, there is an asymmetry in the existential status of things" (*Understanding the Chinese Mind*, p. 60). These examples, among many of recent renaissance studies about Chinese thought invite us who are Christian theologians and all concerned to deepen our theological thinking with a new paradigm.

## **Conclusion**

What I propose in this paper is for us to look at East Asia not only as a geographical region but especially as a cultural unity. The existence of a Confucian culture and heritage among the majority of the peoples of East Asia is evident. The realization that this culture exists among these peoples will naturally foster a deeper sense of solidarity.

To understand peoples through their culture is more important than trying to understand them by their geographical position on a world map or by their anthropology. This is the reason I believe that evangelization in the future will require missionaries to make a serious effort at inculturation. Confucianism, as a common cultural heritage of East Asian peoples should be studied seriously, disregarding popular prejudices against Confucian ideas of morality.

The hypothesis on the effective relationship between Confucianism and the economic development of the NIE countries has not yet been scientifically proved. While many Confucian scholars do not take favorably to the idea, many politicians and journalists regard this hypothesis rather favorably. In any case, this theory provides a strong stimulus for on-going research on the relationship of Confucianism to economics. The interpretation of Confucianism I have presented here is one of the more important facets of recent research on Confucianism.

Because of its sophisticated spirituality, Buddhism can be very seductive. As a result, many Catholic scholars seriously study the philosophy of Buddhism and even practice its spiritual exercises. The religious elements of Confucianism, on the other hand, especially those regarding its animistic aspect is almost totally neglected or disregarded. Scholars only study the moral superstructure of Confucianism as if it were a sophisticated type

of morality. Confucianism is not simply a system of refined ideas like Buddhism. Rather it is a type of humanism that is integral to and consistent with the mentality of East Asian peoples.

Since Vatican Council II, moral theology, like other theological disciplines, has seen a spirited renewal. Many claim that moral theology in the East Asian area should be contextualized or inculturated.

For my part, I look forward to a new way of thinking and doing moral theology, one that will be more helpful for moral decision-making in our particular cultural context, as John Mahoney has suggested in his writings on the reform of Catholic moral theology traditions in the West.<sup>11</sup>

To achieve our task in our small corner of the world, I would like to invite our European and American colleagues to help us with their fraternal spirit of cooperation and their moral and intellectual support.

## Notes

1. Since the 1960's, the South-East Asian countries have been united for political security against Communism and for regional economic development under the "ASEAN" organization. Since then, the region has experienced a remarkable transition and made preparations for the future. Since the 1970's, Singapore and Hong Kong have made great progress in industry, technology, and economics. During the same period, South Korea and Taiwan have also realized unprecedented progress in their economic development.  
At present, economists generally agree that Asia will become an important region for economic affairs.  
Since the 1970's, sociologists and economists have used a new method to assess real development in the East Asia areas especially. They have tried to rediscover the cultural backgrounds of these developing countries. They have been surprised to find Confucianism still quite alive in East Asia. This is why the title "Renaissance of Confucianism" is used even among scholars.
2. A recent trend in sociological studies was identified in a 1987 regional study during an international symposium, "How to think about the Confucian Renaissance" held by international experts in economics, politics and Confucianism at the Prince Hotel, Tokyo. These studies have been made known by the work of Léon Vandermeersch: "Le nouveau monde sinise" 1986, Press Un. de France.  
From 1985-1987, Princeton University organized a series of seminars on East Asia and Confucianism. These studies have been published under the following title "The East Asian Region: Confucian Heritage and Its Modern Adaptation", edited by Gilbert Rozman, Princeton University Press, 1991. In these studies, objectives are Confucianization (the deep-

ening of tradition), De-Confucianization or Re-Confucianization (the modern transition). This reveals a new orientation of Confucianism which used the dialectic method: Confucianization - De-Confucianization - Re-Confucianization.

Weiming, Tu, Hjetmanek, Milan G. & Wachman, Alan (eds) "The Confucian World Observed: A Contemporary Discussion of Confucian Humanism in East Asia" University Press of Hawaii, 1992.

Reg Little and Warren Reed, "The Confucian Renaissance - Origin of Asia's Economic Development - The Simul Press, 1989.

Hans Wilhelm Vahlefeld "Japan-Herausforderung ohne Ende", 1992. V.D.A.

3. Kaiji Nobuyuki, born 1936, professor of Osaka University, specialist in the history of Chinese philosophy, author of several books and articles about Confucianism. There have been many studies about Confucianism in the last two decades using a renewal of methods. One, for example is: Roberto Eno, "The Confucian Creation of Heaven" State University of New York Press, 1990.
4. Recently a new religious movement among Japanese businessmen has become popular. Although basically Buddhist inspired, the morality is Confucian without employing classical Confucian ideals. This new religious movement called "Science of Happiness" is accepted by senior businessmen. Its founder, Ryûhû Okawa himself belongs to an elite class of business executives.
5. The April 1992 issue of "President" a monthly review for elite businessmen in Japan contained a collection of articles about "The Heart Sutra" by Buddhist scholars. (Basically, teachings on detachment and inordinate desire of material wealth in order to be more useful to one's company.)
6. Helen Hardacre's report in "East-West Center Conference on Japanese Spirituality", University of Hawaii (January 13-17, 1992) explains a fundamental religious problem concerning brain death in Japan. The title of her report: "The Response of Buddhism and Shinto to the Issue of Brain Death and Organ Transplant" is an important work. Hardacre does not mention Confucianism explicitly, but the explanation of Shinto contains Confucian viewpoints.
7. Since the brain death debate started, Professor Takeshi Umehara of Kyoto University, a well-known philosopher, has published articles and books criticizing much of Westernized contemporary Japanese thought. He favors the traditional animistic religion and morals of Japan. He defends an ecological policy based on Shinto, and expresses a Japanese naturalistic religious world view.
8. Helen Hardacre's Report gives academic reasons why Buddhist doctors do not oppose brain death as recognition of death.
9. Professor T. Umehara criticized modern Western philosophy and Christianity influenced by that philosophy. So far theologians have not taken his criticism seriously. However, he represents Japanese traditionalist thinkers who are disillusioned with Christianity. One of the serious tasks ahead for the inculturation of evangelization in Japan is an honest dialogue with such sincere thinkers.
10. Robert N. Bellah, "Beyond Belief", University of California Press, 1991. Robert E. Allinson (editor), "Understanding the Chinese Mind: The Philosophical Roots," Oxford University Press, 1989.
11. I am especially interested in "Seeking the Spirit" (1981) and "The Making of Moral Theology" (1987).