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AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE EFFECTS OF CONFUCIAN FILIAL PIETY
IN THE INTERCULTURAL CHRISTIAN EDUCATION EXPERIENCE

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Abstract: The internationalization of higher education is a growing reality in state and private universities. Theological schools that wish to impart religious values in addition to liberal arts and discipline specific curriculum may experience cultural barriers that prevent the successful teaching of religious ideologies. This study investigates the implications of the filial piety as a value that Chinese learners bring to Western classrooms and how the comparing of Confucian filial piety to similar values in biblical theology serves as a means for cultural exchange and moral development. Confucian teachings of filial piety, affective domain learning, and biblical teachings of family and society are explored. The study concludes with suggestions of how to integrate similar teachings of two different cultures in order to teach religious values.

Key Words: Affective learning, China, Christian education, Confucius, Confucian Heritage Culture, culture, filial piety, higher education, Jesus, *xiao*.

Kiem Kiok Kwa in her article "A Chinese Christian Learns from Confucius" highlights aspects of the Confucian tradition that she regards as pedagogically helpful and comparable with biblical models of education.¹ Specifically, she compares how both Jesus and Confucius sought teachable moments with their disciples, and she emphasizes how Confucian pedagogy incorporates learning by doing, self-development, and intrinsic motivation for learning. Although her study offers an interesting starting point for Christians to compare Western and East Asian epistemologies, what stands out as her most profound statement is her side remark about one of her major motivations in academics. She writes,

When I began my doctoral studies, I knew that God had opened doors and provided for me, so I spent time in prayer to draw strength and guidance from Him. But it was while I was writing my dissertation that I realized that while my Christian faith was a key motivating factor, my culture also played a significant role: *I wanted that degree because it would mean so much to my parents.* As with many Chinese parents, my parents hold education in very high regard, and a daughter with a PhD was a source of great pride and joy (emphasis added).²

Many Ph.D. graduates would want their parents to be proud of their accomplishments, whether American or East Asian; however, as a North American reader of her article, I find this "shout out" quite unexpected, as if her Confucian Heritage Culture conjured a moment of filial devotion. Kwa admits that her thoughts of her parents were symptomatic of her culture. Research concurs that filial piety (*xiao*) of Confucian Heritage Cultures is significantly different from family values of other cultures.³ Embedded in Kwa's internal motivation to complete her degree was a desire to honor her parents, which raises the question of how ubiquitously filiality might motivate Chinese students in their education. It also raises the question of the extent Confucian filial piety, which lies in the affective domain of learning, might influence the learning experience for such students.

Western institutions of higher education experience more and more the internationalization of education, and the number of Chinese students enrolled in the United States is on the rise.⁴ Private Christian schools share in the internationalization just as state schools do. For example, Harding University, a Christian liberal arts university in central Arkansas, has experienced a large increase of Chinese learners. The university's Sino American Studies program has seen rapid growth from its sixteen Chinese graduate students in 2004 to one hundred thirty-nine graduate and undergraduate students from mainland China in 2012.⁵ Harding's mission

statement includes leading students "to an understanding and philosophy of life consistent with Christian ideals",⁶ and one must presume that schools like Harding would wish to fulfill its mission with each student regardless of nationality or religious background.

Christian educators who desire to share biblical theology with international students have a responsibility to explore the implications of how the affective domain resources of non-Western students influence their adopting implicit and explicit values in the curriculum. This paper investigates the implications of the filial piety Chinese learners bring into Western, Christian academic environments by presenting a brief summary of affective learning, a survey of current research on filiality in Chinese society and education, and an exploration of *xiao* in the Confucian tradition. The paper concludes with offering a comparison of the pervasive application of Confucian *xiao* on Chinese society with a biblical model for tracing Hebrew values through social stratification. This comparison provides a template for dialog between students from both Confucian Heritage Cultures and American cultures as they share in Christian educational experiences.

Prior to exploring filiality in Confucianism, a brief caveat is in order. Ryan cogently notes the dangers of focusing on cultural differences in such a way that unfounded stereotypes develop in the name of science.⁷ Ryan also criticizes Nisbett's self-admitted "broad-brush" justification of grouping Confucian Heritage Cultures into a single category of "East-Asian".⁸ Indeed, as Rao, McHale, and Pearson have noted, limiting comparisons of East-Asia to American samples dismisses differences between cultures in the Majority World.⁹ In addition, adherence to or expressions of filial piety differs regionally due to varying political-economic life-settings in rural and urban mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and among the Chinese diaspora.¹⁰ Ryan's critique reminds researchers of the ill effects cultural labels can have on students, lowering teachers' expectations and creating unfounded stereotypes. Simply stated, cultural differences should not result in labels that can be used against students in pejorative ways. At the same time, however, one cannot deny cultural differences and how they affect learning. One should not shy away from cross-cultural comparisons merely because of the risk of intercultural categories. In an attempt to respect the dignity of Chinese culture and students, this paper limits its discussion to the values rather than the types of students.

The Affective Domain and Chinese Education

Following the successful launch of what is commonly referred to as "Bloom's Taxonomy", a means to measure levels of cognitive processing, David Krathwohl, Benjamin Bloom, and Bertram Masia sought out to develop a similar taxonomy for the affective domain of learning. The team

did, in fact, designate levels of "receiving", "responding", "valuing", "organization", and "characterization", but their endeavor did not leave them with the same satisfaction as what they had experienced with the cognitive taxonomy.¹¹ Nevertheless, the authors recorded astute observations that relate to value exchange in cross-cultural learning situations. First, the affective domain "contains the forces" that influence individual people as well as societies.¹² Second, affective learning cannot be demonstrated easily by a simple continuum; it is multidimensional: "simple-to-complex", "concrete-to-abstract", "external-to-internal", and "conscious-to-unconscious".¹³ Third, the authors observed how cognitive and affective behavior could have both a complimentary as well as an inverse relationship.¹⁴ In terms of Chinese students' learning at a Christian university, an institution's goals of teaching cognitive as well as spiritual values might have its mission compromised due to conflicting affective messages between teachers' and students' expectations in the classroom.

Martin and Briggs likewise recognize the difficulties inherent in measuring outcomes of the affective domain.¹⁵ Among their observations are the problematic broad range of concepts associated with affection and the integrative nature of values, emotions, and attitudes with cognition. Ringness also describes the affective domain by joining feelings and values closely with cognition and by connecting them to behavior. He opines that emotional states influence both student motivation and their assimilation of new information.¹⁶ Although difficult to measure, the affective domain plays an important role in student learning, and university teachers who focus solely on content transmission with little regard to the values, emotions, feelings, and motivation of their students miss opportunities to appeal to the students' whole learning experience. As Rios, McDaniel, and Stowell note, students pick up values of some sort in the classroom: "Therefore, it is equally as critical that we teach, model, and discuss the kinds of attitudes and values that would be most effective and most just in increasingly diverse classrooms".¹⁷

Chinese students who have received Confucian instructions as children bring to the classroom their individual understandings of filial piety. Some more than others may be aware of the Confucianism behind their value system, but regardless of how cognizant they may be of it, revering their parents is likely to be a value they hold close as a foundational truth.¹⁸

Current Research on Filiality in Chinese Society

Filial piety has received both positive and negative attention from the social sciences. Most studies address filial piety in two ways. First, scholars are investigating the effects societal changes have on traditional family systems. Second, educators are exploring how filial piety influences student learning when Chinese students enter into intercultural settings.

In a sense, both directions are related in that whether dealing with political policies, economic reform, or globalization, each of these challenges the traditional family structures. The review that follows limits the discussion to studies of filiality as it pertains to affective learning.

Cheng and Hui explore the perception of affective education in mainland China. According to their findings, while affective education in Western school systems tend to focus on individual and social development, their case school in southern China implemented affective education for individuals for the sake of the relationship of the collective whole.¹⁹ In short, affective education was perceived as important for moral and character development, not for the sake of individual growth but for social harmony. The authors conclude that affective education provides social and political stability during times of rapid change.²⁰

Li, Minghua, and Hongjuan recommend the shift of *deyu*, or moral education, from the common practice of transmitting China's ideologies to the creating of independent, critical citizens. The authors regard the tradition of filial piety as a vehicle for coercing Chinese citizens to adopt political agendas.²¹ Rather than using moral systems for indoctrination, moral education could be used to cultivate free-thinking and to legitimize critiques of the existing political systems.

Others argue similarly how filial piety provides a mechanism for abusive relationships. Liao et al. borrow from Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory in order to demonstrate maltreatment of children in multiple layers of the Chinese society.²² These authors suggest that authoritarian figures use filial piety to justify abuse and harsh treatment of children. So-Kum Tang argues that the obligation Chinese parents feel to punish their children when they misbehave increases the likelihood of abuse.²³ Chan, Bowes, and Wyver, reflecting Baumrind's parenting style comparisons, link Chinese authoritarian parenting and parental control of mothers in Hong Kong to Confucian filial piety.²⁴ While each of these studies roots abusive relationships in filial piety, such manipulation by authority figures departs from Confucian reciprocity, which implies not control but rather mutual concern for the other's well-being.²⁵ Furthermore, studies that criticize parental control in China oftentimes fail to consider the cultural context and what that culture considers appropriate for parental expectations and child development.²⁶ Chao notes the ethnocentrism in definitions of authoritarianism and how labeling filial piety as authoritarian fails to incorporate the deep care parents would have for their children that would normally be implied with *xiao*.²⁷ Frederiksen writes, "The Chinese often see [filial piety] as the antithesis of parental control. They contend, that where the virtue of filial piety is present, parental control is unnecessary".²⁸

Cheung and Kwan investigate the effects of modernization on filial piety in mainland China.²⁹ After surveying participants in six different Chinese cities, they conclude that areas where the traditional values are

deteriorating there is a positive correlation with one's inability to support his or her parents financially. Keng-mun Lee has similar findings in Hong Kong, but his study attributes the declining filiality to geographic mobility.³⁰ According to Cheung and Kwan, lack of fiscal means is a strong deterrent from adherence to the tradition. On the other hand, they also observe that participants with higher levels of education are better suited for providing for the needs of their aging parents.³¹ Zhan, however, demonstrates that while mainland Chinese participants with higher education valued filial piety, they tended to choose career advancement over family responsibilities.³² At first the two reports seem to contradict each other regarding the role of education, but a closer look indicates that one's allegiance to providing for his or her parents is a bottom-line oriented decision. While education may enhance one's support of a traditional value, the implementation of the value still depends on one's financial means.

Researchers have also investigated ethics of Chinese students in expatriate communities. Woodrow and Sham compare epistemological differences between British and Chinese students in the Greater Manchester schools.³³ Their study found a strong parental loyalty among the Chinese participants. Instead of filial piety's weakening in a non-Chinese setting, Woodrow and Sham report the value to be strong and undiluted by an English educational system.

Pearson and Rao compare parenting practices of Chinese and English parents with their preschool children. The authors conclude that Hong Kong families are more likely to link filial piety and academic achievement than English families. Pearson and Rao also interpret the results to say, "The possibility that ideologies may be more salient among Chinese families than among English families in relation to child-rearing outcomes is perhaps of particular note".³⁴ While I agree that values ought to be analyzed according to their cultural contexts, to say that Chinese parents are more motivated by values than English families reflects a form of ethno-rejection. Values influence behavior, and all parents have deeply rooted values that drive their parental styles. Educators, then, must consider which values students bring to the classroom and explore how they might utilize students' values for learning. The Pearson and Rao study shows that filial piety is indeed related to academic achievement, which means that teachers of students from a Confucian heritage ought to be aware that these students draw from a particular resource for learning that non-Confucian heritage students are less likely to have. Rao, McHale, and Pearson's comparison of Indian and Chinese mothers further supports the significance of academic achievement as an expression of filial piety in Confucian Heritage Cultures.³⁵

Confucius and Filial Piety

The name Confucius is the Latinized transliteration of the Chinese name Kongzi, but due to the widespread use of Confucius, this paper uses the Latin name in order to avoid confusion and to maintain consistency. Confucius (551-479 BCE) was born in Ch'u-fu, in the state of Lu in what is now the Shantung Province. Although he was likely born into an aristocratic family, by the time of his birth his family was destitute. When Confucius was only three-years-old, his father died, leaving the responsibility of his early childhood development and education in the hands of his mother. As an adult, Confucius desired at first to work himself into state government, but after a brief term in the political scene, he withdrew from policy making and resorted to the domain of philosophy and education, offering advisory services to leaders who would listen. Confucius never considered himself a sage or a creator of knowledge, but rather as a transmitter of ancient truths that would benefit his people. The primary literature that has been attributed to Confucius and thereby the source text for much of Confucianism is the *Analects*, a collection of brief dialogues between Confucius and his disciples.³⁶ The *Analects*, though some might compare to the Bible, stand as astute philosophical observations more than statements of religious rites and doctrines. According to Yu-Wei, the philosophy begins with ethics although it includes metaphysics and epistemology as well.³⁷ Because of the philosophical nature of the *Analects* and the wide-spread adoption of Confucianism by his disciples and Chinese philosophers after him, his observations have penetrated to the core of Chinese culture and have shaped the Chinese worldview in various ways for more than two millennia.³⁸

The heart of Confucius thought emphasizes harmony among humankind and the social order.³⁹ Kee lists "four cardinal principles" that influence Confucian ethics: "humanity, love", "faithfulness and justice", "propriety, rite, or ritual", and "wisdom".⁴⁰ Reflecting this relational impulse of the philosophy, Confucius advocated five basic relationships: ruler/subject, father/son, husband/wife, older brother/younger brother, and friends.⁴¹ Filial piety (*xiao*), then, emerges from this relational structure. *Xiao* denotes reciprocity that secures mutual care in a dependent arrangement. Chan refers to filial piety as the "foundation of the five human relationships".⁴² Hsu writes, "With their social organization centered on the family and kinship, the Chinese have traditionally held on to filial piety as their cardinal virtue".⁴³

Although the *Analects* only address filial piety in a handful of verses, *xiao* carries weight that has influenced the development and interpretation of Confucianism, providing a mechanism for stability, or harmony, in Chinese social systems.⁴⁴ According to the *Analects*, propriety begins with respect toward one's parents (*Analects* 1:2). The truly filial son

is one who learns from his father while the father is alive and continues to imitate his father after he has deceased (*Analects* 1:11), thus preserving continuity from one generation to the next.

Filial respect also enters into the religious realm in terms of ancestral sacrifices (*Analects* 2:5). Although, the carry-over into rituals can be seen in other literature,⁴⁵ one should be careful the extent he or she applies the ritual custom into modern Confucian manifestations. Christian readers may tend to assess the ancestral passages as mere paganism and group Confucianism into the same camp. However, one must keep in mind that while the *Analects* offer principles for proper living, the principles presuppose an existing culture and religious worldview.⁴⁶ The *Analects* were not creating new religious dogma, but rather they were joining existing rituals with ethics. Instead of discarding Confucian filial piety because of the ancestral worship, Christian theologians have an opportunity to seek principles of respect toward elders and ancestors that fit within a Christian theological framework. Furthermore, one could argue that the ancestral practice reflects honor and remembrance rather than worship of ancestors as deities.⁴⁷

The following oft-cited text describes vividly Confucius' reinstatement of family values: "Those today who are filial are considered so because they are able to provide for their parents. But even dogs and horses are given that much care. If you do not respect your parents, what is the difference?" (*Analects* 2:7). Regarding disagreements with one's father or mother, Confucius says, "In serving your father and mother, remonstrate with them gently. On seeing that they do not heed your suggestions, remain respectful and do not act contrary. Although concerned, voice no resentment" (*Analects* 4:18). The *Analects* took a Chinese code of ethics and canonized it in Confucian thought, setting in motion a philosophical impulse that would inspire later literature, stories, and a cosmic worldview.

Two other major works that provide more definition and application to filial piety are *The Chinese Classic of Family Reverence* and the *Twenty-Four Filial Exemplars*. The former represents Confucian teachings on filiality, and can be dated as early as the fifth century BCE.⁴⁸ The latter was recorded some time during the Medieval period, and these twenty-four tales illustrate exemplary ways, or some might say extreme ways, filial piety might be applied.⁴⁹

The Chinese Classic of Family Reverence begins with the dialogue between Confucius and Master Zeng, a disciple of Confucius. The opening lines are shared below and serve as a fitting thesis for the book:

Confucius was at leisure in his home, and Master Zeng was attending him. The Master said, "Do you understand how the former kings were able to use the model of their consummate excellence (*de*) and

their vital way (*dao*) to bring the empire into accord (*shun*), and how the people on this account were able to attain harmony (*he*) and to live with each other as good neighbors so that those above and below alike did not resent each other?"

Master Zeng rose from his mat to respond, and said, "I am not clever enough to understand such things".

"It is family reverence (*xiao*)", said the Master, "that is the root of excellence, and whence education (*jiao*) itself is born".⁵⁰

As Confucius begins his treatise with Master Zeng, he declares filial piety, or *xiao*, as at the heart of propriety, success, and learning. The reverence pervades all class systems and creates a paradigm for relationships. In a friend to friend or subject to governor relationship, the reverence would be regarded as loyalty (*zhong*), which is a similar virtue as filiality. So *xiao* supports a paradigm of respect, or loyalty, that extends to all levels of society. However, while *zhong* and *xiao* are similar, they are not equal. In the oldest form of the tradition, when one must choose between filiality and loyalty, the family comes first.⁵¹

According to Confucius, filiality bears cosmic significance: "Indeed, family reverence is the constancy of the heavenly cycles, the appropriate responsiveness (*yi*) of the earth, and the proper conduct of the people. It is the constant workings of the heavens and the earth that the people model themselves upon".⁵² Just as material existence demands that heaven and earth function in harmony,⁵³ so human beings must cohabitate with a system of balance, respect, and harmony. The system of filial piety reflects the natural harmony of the cosmos: "Of all the creatures in the world, the human being is the most noble. In human conduct there is nothing more important than family reverence".⁵⁴

The *Twenty-Four Filial Exemplars* contain short tales of children showing respect, self-denial, obedience, and self-sacrifice as would be the case for children who are genuinely filial. These short stories have been taught to Chinese children for centuries and have helped etch the virtue into the heart of Chinese culture.⁵⁵ David K. Jordan, professor emeritus of anthropology at the University of California at San Diego, has provided his translation of the *The Twenty-Four Filial Exemplars* online. This paper draws from Jordan's translation for the following discussion.⁵⁶

One of the stories tells of an eight-year-old boy whose family was too poor to afford a mosquito net over their bed. When the mosquitoes attacked at night, the boy refused to swat them away so that they would suckle him rather than his parents. Another tells of Wáng Xiáng, whose

mother had died and his father had remarried. In spite of the fact that his stepmother's hatred toward him drove his father's love away from the boy, one winter day Wáng Xiáng lay on a frozen river in order to melt the ice and secure carp for his family to eat. The story concludes with the lines, "We have seen stepmothers before, but never a Wáng Xiáng, until today upon the river, when he left us a model by lying on the ice".⁵⁷ The exemplars show filiality to both father and mother, illustrated well by the story "She Bit Her Finger and Pained His Heart". In this account, a young man went to the woods to collect firewood. When an unexpected guest came to their house, his mother, a bit surprised, bit her finger, drawing blood, in attempt to alert her son to return home. About the same time, the son, though still in the wood, felt a sharp pain in his heart and returned home immediately out of reverence for his mother.

One cannot overstate the significance filial piety holds in Confucian Heritage Cultures, which includes, of course, Chinese culture. The value begins with self-discipline in order to respect and honor one's parents because of the care he or she had received from his or her parents. The relationship is reciprocal and extends from family through friends, society, and government. The harmony generated from the family reflects the harmony in the cosmos and establishes the type of relationship that unites people and promotes peace.⁵⁸

Confucian and Biblical Virtues in Dialog

For quite some time Christian writers have sought comparisons between Confucianism and Christianity. Ming attempts to demonstrate how Christian teachings of the family enhance the Confucian filial piety and concludes, "I myself believe that Christianity is actually a religion of filial piety which is best suited to correct the Chinese way of filial piety, in such a way that its essence is preserved without the accretions".⁵⁹ While attractive to a Christian readership, his proposal could appear to be a bit more condescending on the good of Chinese culture than it needs to. However, I concur with Ming in that the metaphor of God as father commands a strong level of *xiao* in a vertical relationship with God, and it implies a harmonious relationship horizontally among humankind, since all stand as children of God and as spiritual brothers and sisters.

Lin likewise sees similarities in Confucian filial piety and Christianity, opining that there is "no basic conflict".⁶⁰ He offers several texts that treat parental respect such as Proverbs 1:8, 4:1, 20:20, Exodus 21:15, Matthew 19:19, and Mark 10:6-9 to demonstrate the strong emphasis on concern and devotion to parents. Indeed, a Christian can hardly think of the Chinese custom of caring for one's parents without simultaneously being reminded of "honor your father and your mother" (Exod 20:12), which in the ancient Near Eastern context applied more toward caring for elderly parents than it did parental control or showing obedience.⁶¹ In addition,

one of the most touching passages in the gospels is John 19:27 when Jesus instructs the "beloved disciple" to care for Mary as his own mother.

Students from Confucian Heritage Cultures and students from Western, theological backgrounds have much in common and much to learn from each other. Although religious backgrounds may differ, filial piety serves as a common value between Confucian worldview and biblical teachings. As Chinese students assimilate into Christian institutions, the international diversity brings an opportunity for mutual dialog and cultural exchange. One way to build bridges between Confucian and Christian thought would be to teach common views of filial piety in the form of units or course content. The limit with this approach is that it keeps the values, an affective domain item, in the cognitive domain of learning. Confucian writers regard filial piety as a core value that pervades the entire social structure of society. Simply learning that the Bible also teaches to honor parents falls short of demonstrating similar social parallels that reach deeply into Hebrew culture that influence the canonical teachings. A better approach would be to create learning experiences that connect Confucian filial piety with biblical ethics that can be applied to Chinese and American societies.

Two features of Chinese thought reflected in filial piety that bear relevance to this comparison are the five basic relationships and the harmony embedded in the filial piety system. First, the five relationships reflect several layers of society. The father/son relationship serves as the core (*Analects* 1:2), but closely related are the husband/wife and the older brother/younger brother parallels. The father and son relationship serves as the type or the example for the other two familial layers. In each case, one plays the father role of having authority over and responsibility for the subordinate, and the other plays the son role as the subordinate who receives care and reciprocates by caring for and honoring the superior. The social structure is not egalitarian, but it is symbiotic in the sense that both participants need each other to hold the system in place. Therefore, the husband provides for his wife, and his wife reciprocates by attending to his domestic needs. The older brother watches out for his younger brother, and the younger brother reciprocates with respect and obedience when necessary.

In a similar way, the next layer of society, the friends, also operates in this dependent system of reciprocity. Those with higher levels of wealth provide work. Those in lower strata economically fulfill their professional duties out of gratitude and responsibility to their employers. Likewise, rulers provide for their subjects, while subjects honor those in authority and obey the laws of the land. The Confucian stratification may be illustrated as in Figure 1.

Second, filial piety represents cosmic harmony. Just as the material world exists symbiotically and harmoniously, humanity must find ways to emulate the cosmic harmony in their relationships. *Xiao* provides the

value that imitates best the *yin* ("receptive, soft, submissive") and *yang* ("creative, hard, aggressive").⁶² As stated in the *Analects*, "Achieving harmony (*he*) is the most valuable function of observing ritual propriety (*li*). In the ways of the Former Kings, this achievement of harmony made them elegant, and was a guiding standard in all things large and small. But when things are not going well, to realize harmony just for its own sake without regulating the situation through observing ritual propriety will not work" (*Analects* 1:12).

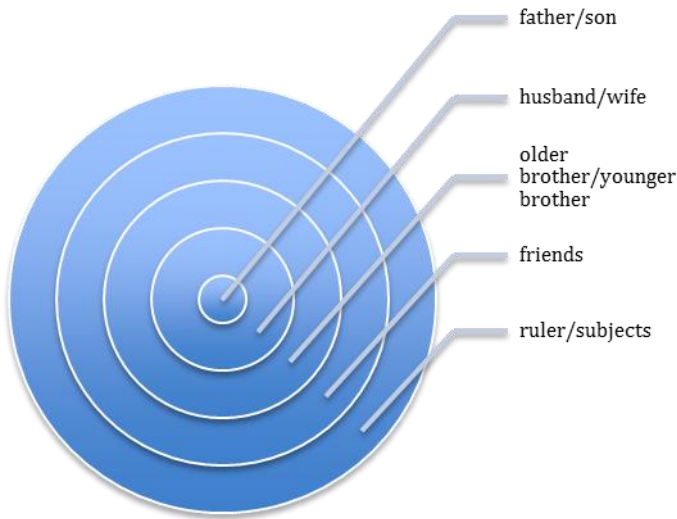


Figure 1. Confucian five basic relationships as layers of society.

The five basic relationships as illustrated here bear a similar resemblance to Bronfenbrenner's ecological social system. He describes the most immediate connections or interactions with others as the microsystem.⁶³ Liao et al. who use Bronfenbrenner's system as a template for analyzing child abuse in China regard the microsystem as the family.⁶⁴ The mesosystem, according to Bronfenbrenner, is the "interrelations among two or more settings in which the developing person actively participates".⁶⁵ Liao et al. see the school as the primary mesosystem for Chinese students.⁶⁶ Bronfenbrenner's exosystem includes events, activities, and settings that have an effect on an individual though he or she is not an active participant.⁶⁷ Two components Liao et al. regard as exosystem activities for Chinese children that affect parenting are the work related stress of parents and rural to urban mobility or migration.⁶⁸ Finally, Bronfenbrenner's macrosystem comprises a collection of the three lower systems that form continuities, or "consistencies", at the sub-cultural or cultural level. It is in this area where a society shares common

beliefs and values.⁶⁹ Liao et al. place filial piety in the macrosystem as a shared value among various sub-cultures in China.⁷⁰

The ecological view of Chinese culture has its appeal, especially when considering the social layers implicit in Confucian thought. However, the *Analects* and Bronfenbrenner have two different objectives in mind. Whereas the *Analects* trace the stratification of values and ethics through social relationships, Bronfenbrenner traces the development of human behavior from molar activities of an individual to one's interactions with others. The more human interactions are involved, the more complex the ecology. Morals and ethics, then, emerge as negotiated regulations, which is why he places shared values in the macrosystem.

An ecological view of culture and society provides a useful image of beginning with a core and adding complexity in an outward direction. Using a Bronfenbrenner analogy, the ecology fits together like a Russian nesting doll. However both the Confucian and biblical traditions regard values that begin with the individual and work their ways through the rest of society. This present analysis of the affective domain of students presupposes ethics that begin at the micro level, not at the macro level. In this sense, the Bronfenbrenner model breaks down.

Youngblood offers a biblical template of cosmic social order from the Book of Proverbs.⁷¹ He observes how Proverbs addresses self-control using imagery that reflects multiple levels of society. According to Youngblood, Proverbs depicts the household as a microcosm of the cosmos. He notes the parallels between Proverbs 3:19-20 and 24:3-4 where wisdom and understanding are described as the foundation of both the earth and the house and where knowledge is described as their inhabitants.⁷² Although self-control is not the same as filial piety, Proverbs' instructions for the son to obey and heed wisdom parallels the type of outcomes anticipated in the *Analects* by those who are filial. Proverbs 23:24 offers a positive example of children bringing honor to parents: "The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice; he who fathers a wise son will be glad in him". Proverbs 19:26, on the other hand, depicts a negative example: "He who does violence to his father and chases away his mother is a son who brings shame and reproach". Proverbs also speaks of the discipline of a father over a son that preserves righteousness in the home, a dynamic which would extend throughout society. One such verse is 17:2: "A servant who deals wisely will rule over a son who acts shamefully and will share the inheritance as one of the brothers". Just as God holds the cosmos in order, parents have been delegated the responsibility to maintain order in the home.⁷³

Youngblood next demonstrates the connection in Proverbs between self-control and the cosmos through the fortified city motif.⁷⁴ His purpose is to show how the imagery of a fortified city resembles both individual self-control as well as God's control over creation. Proverbs 25:28 illustrates well the relationship between the city and the individual: "A

man without self-control is a like a city broken into and left without walls". Youngblood concludes, "Thus just as the heavenly dome defined the boundaries of the cosmos and protected the cosmos from the forces of chaos, so did a city's outer wall define the limits of the city and protect it from invasion".⁷⁵

While Youngblood's study of self-control in Proverbs does not equate to a study of Confucian *xiao*, one cannot help but notice how both Confucius and Proverbs construct an important thread by which values pervade all levels of society. In fact, Youngblood suggests a similar model of four levels of divine order that may be seen in Figure 2.

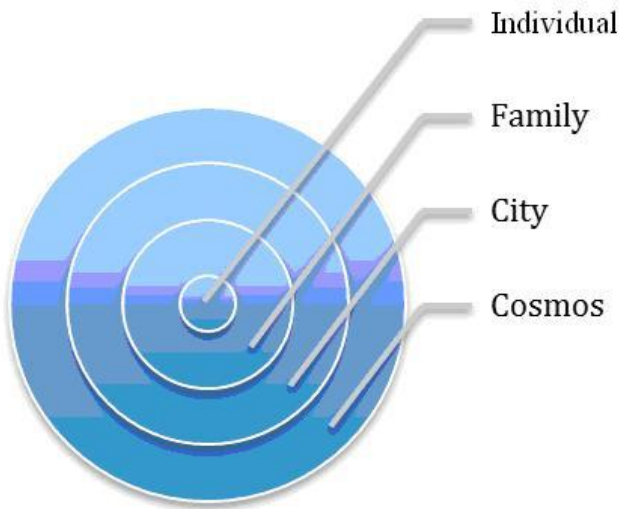


Figure 2. Levels of divine order.

The interest of this comparison lies not in the specific value, self-control, but rather in the similar social model exemplified in the Bible that reflects the ancient Near Eastern worldview. When teaching biblical concepts in multicultural contexts, searching for common values lays the groundwork for joining the thought world of the differing cultures. Yet, if the discussion remains in the cognitive domain only, then student learning may also fail to penetrate affective and psychomotor domains of the students' development. The fact that the Israelite community integrated the values through each level of society in a way similar to the Confucian tradition may illuminate a strategy for teachers who teach biblical content and spiritual values interculturally. Both models may be seen side by side in Table 1.

	Confucianism	Proverbs
Value:	Filial piety	Self-control
Stratification:	Father/son	Family
	Husband/wife	
	Brothers	
	Friends	City
	Rulers/subjects	
		Cosmos
Leading to:	Harmony	Order

Table 1. A comparison of cosmic harmony/order between Confucianism and Proverbs.

Integrating Affective Learning in Multi-Cultural Classrooms

Because content is easier to measure than values, much of institutional assessment concentrates on cognitive learning. When assessment instruments attempt to measure institutional values, the temptation is to address how well the students understand and know the values rather than measure how well they receive, responding to, value, organize, and characterize them. This kind of measurement in a mono-cultural setting presents challenges because of the ambiguous nature of the affective domain. When cultural diversity is added to the environment, the assessment of affective learning becomes even more problematic. Yet, the presence of diversity makes intentional affective instruction more imperative.

As Christian universities see increased enrollment of students from China, the theology curriculum ought to reflect changes that account for diverse cultural values. Filial piety has been the subject of this paper, serving as a sample of the kind of value that Chinese students may bring that would simultaneously benefit American students as well as provide a vehicle for assimilating biblical teachings in Chinese ethical frameworks. This paper has demonstrated the pervasive significance of filial piety that extends through each level of society in a Confucian worldview, and it has also provided a biblical model of a value that in a similar way extends through each level of society. The road ahead, then, must be to create ways for entering into a dialogical world between the two worldviews.⁷⁶

One way to generate creativity and reflection is to design case studies based on biblical narratives that call on students to reflect. For example, the Joseph narrative starting in Genesis 37 provides a complex family system from which one may glean spiritual truths. While teaching the story, students may be asked to reflect on the role of Joseph in this story.

In what ways was Joseph showing respect to his father and older brothers? In what ways does Jacob's love for his son contribute to the results of the narrative? What kind of justice would you expect to be brought to Joseph's older brothers? How does God as the heavenly father manage the meta-narrative?

In addition to case studies, students may be given a biblical teaching such as "honor your father and mother" and show how they would intend to demonstrate this honor to their own parents. They may also be asked to share how this value would influence treatment of others at the friend, classmate, professional acquaintance, and political levels. Where both Chinese students and American students are in the same class, time should be given to compare responses and process the differences.

A final example is addressing the difficult passages where the Bible appears to contradict filial piety, such as Luke 14:26 where Jesus says, "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple". An interesting question to ask is "What does one do when parental authority and God's authority are not in harmony?" Students may be grouped in small groups according to nationality in order to accentuate cultural responses to this passage and to avoid an individual's culture from being silenced by domineering group leaders. Then the groups may compare their responses and reflect on the groups' process, reasoning, and results, using the differences between groups as points of conversation. The measurable result would be to demonstrate an enhancement of each student's horizons regarding intercultural values, individual presuppositions, and biblical application, which could be assessed in a follow-up reflection paper assigned to each student. The goal of the process would not be to show which group was right but to provide a mechanism for values to be shared and enriched through meaningful, biblical dialog.

Intercultural education faces the daunting task of accomplishing institutional goals in spite of having students with variegated backgrounds, languages, and philosophical impressions of the world. Christian education faces similar challenges, but more is at stake. With sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ being at the heart of Christian schools, educators at such institutions must find ways to share biblical values that penetrate the hearts of all students. Frederiksen reminds his readers "that much of the opposition to Christianity is cultural and not religious. The church has been unnecessarily offensive to the Chinese people..."⁷⁷ I agree with Frederiksen that the best step forward is for American Christians to facilitate common experiences with Chinese students and to learn to respect the Confucian Heritage Culture.

American educators faced with a rising population of students from Confucian Heritage Cultures would serve their students well by drawing from Confucian filial piety for teaching and learning in the international

classroom. Confucian filial piety adds a valuable ethical principle often overlooked by American students unfamiliar with Confucian philosophy. In addition, filial piety, sharing a common view with the Bible of societal harmony, offers a bridge between Confucian virtues and biblical ethics of family and society. American Christian educators who wish to communicate biblical values in an international classroom may find Confucius' xiao a helpful medium.

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