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## **The Unlikely Buddhologist: Tiantai Buddhism in Mou Zongsan's New Confucianism by Jason Clower (review)**

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each other (Appiah, pp. xv–xvii). Given the significant overlap in topics, it would be interesting to know what Herschok thinks about Appiah’s version of cosmopolitanism, and whether it is the same as the idea of cosmopolis discussed here.

*The Unlikely Buddhologist: Tiantai Buddhism in Mou Zongsan’s New Confucianism.* By Jason Clower. Leiden: Brill, 2010. Pp. xvi + 279. Hardcover \$146.00, €113.00, ISBN 978-9-004-17737-6.

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Is Mou Zongsan, an important twentieth-century Confucian scholar, relevant for Western readers? Jason Clower gives an affirmative answer in his book *The Unlikely Buddhologist: Tiantai Buddhism in Mou Zongsan’s New Confucianism*: Mou could at least offer, from a different perspective, inspiration to Westerners on issues relating to morality, happiness, and the relationship between value and being. Clower chooses to introduce these issues from the vantage point of Mou’s reading of Tiantai Buddhism, for he finds Mou’s extolling of Buddhism intriguing, given his strong Confucian affiliation, and attempts to offer an informed account of Mou’s (Tiantai) Buddhist studies.

The book is divided into seven chapters. The first states the author’s aim in studying Mou’s interpretation of Tiantai Buddhism, together with an introduction to Mou’s times and his objectives, as well as the New Confucian agenda; the second focuses on Mou’s “two-level ontology,” the philosophical framework that underlies his philosophizing; the third and fourth present Mou’s interpretation of Buddhist philosophies in the light of Tiantai Buddhism; the fifth and sixth explicate Mou’s assessment of Buddhism. It is only in the final chapter that Clower attempts an appraisal of how Mou uses Buddhist philosophy.

Investigating Mou’s philosophy, which encompasses the philosophies of China, Buddhism, and the West, has always been a daunting task, and Mou’s somewhat obscure terminologies and convoluted argumentation add to the difficulty. Against this background, Clower’s informative exposition of Mou’s buddhology is a commendable achievement. Together with his adept use of analogies and more mundane examples to drive home many of Mou’s ideas, he allows readers interested in Chinese and Buddhist philosophies yet unfamiliar with Mou to be initiated more easily into his system of thought without losing sight of his limitations. Readers also can get at least a glimpse into a sophisticated reading of Buddhism by a great philosophical mind of modern China that offers them a novel and controversial perspective for understanding Chinese Buddhism.

Unlike many critics of Mou, Clower exhibits sufficient intellectual sympathy with Mou’s project and tries to clarify what may sometimes seem mysterious and confusing in many of Mou’s terminologies and concepts. His “defense” of Mou against Fung Yiu-ming’s criticism is illustrative of this, and serves to introduce readers to a

common misunderstanding about Mou's paradoxical method. Clower is right in saying that, for Mou, non-discriminating and discriminating methods are not mutually exclusive, as the former presupposes the latter.

In his attempt to explain Mou's purpose in undertaking an in-depth study of Chinese Buddhism Clower makes two sound observations. The first regards Mou's intention to solve the problem of the Confucian "perfect good." Clower's reading of Mou's exposition of this problem is lucid, though it could have been more comprehensive had he included a discussion of the theoretical difficulties Mou encountered. In this respect, Mou's main problem lies in his concept of existence, or, more precisely, phenomenal existence, which in Mou's discourse is considered a fabrication of the discriminating human mind acting on the basis of a noumenal reality. Mou was reticent on the problem of the relationship between the one and the many—that is, how the same noumenon can take on different forms in the discriminating mind, as well as the problem of why phenomena are necessary if they were simply conjured up into existence by the discriminating mind. Whether these difficulties arise out of Mou's resorting to the Kantian phenomenon-noumenon distinction and the Tiantai notions of the momentary thought and Threefold Truth to explain the necessity and transformability of existence is a question Clower should have addressed.

Clower's second observation is that Mou found the Tiantai Perfect Theory useful in resolving the intramural disputes among Song-Ming Neo-Confucians. Undoubtedly, Mou's ranking of the various Song-Ming Neo-Confucian schools is informed by Tiantai doxography. Yet the relationship between Tiantai Buddhism and (Neo-)Confucianism in Mou's New Confucianism is far more complicated. On the one hand, his formulation of a three-school typology of Neo-Confucianism owes a great deal to the Tiantai Perfect Theory. Mou's rediscovery of the Wu Wufeng-Liu Jishan School in his typology is manifestly informed by the pattern of "paradoxical identity" in Zhiyi's discourse on the Perfect Theory. On the other hand, his reading of Tiantai Buddhism is unmistakably shaped by his Confucian concern for the necessity of existence and hence ontology. This naturally predisposed him to offer an ontological interpretation of Tiantai Buddhism, which in turn enabled him to gain new perspectives on Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism. Evidently, there is a high degree of circularity in his discourse on Tiantai Buddhism and Confucianism.

What is missing in Clower's work is a discussion of Mou's third aim: to rank Confucianism, Buddhism, and Christianity in terms of the criteria established by Tiantai perfect teaching. Mou was not a mere philosopher but a cultural nationalist with the professed aim of reviving Confucianism in the twentieth century against the challenge from Christianity. One may even say that responding to the Christian challenge had always been a hidden agenda in his philosophical efforts. The particular mode of Tiantai discourse and its system of doctrinal classifying and ranking thus caught Mou's attention. Based on this Tiantai system, Mou developed his own system for ranking religions that goes well beyond the intramural disputes among Buddhist sects to encompass Confucianism and Christianity. Hence, a more comprehensive study of Mou's Tiantai Buddhism and how he appropriated it in the service of Confu-

cianism should also include Mou's lifelong effort to distinguish Christianity from the other three Eastern religions and their teachings.

Notwithstanding these inadequacies, Clower's work stands out as the first of its kind in the study of Mou's philosophy, providing readers with the necessary insights into Mou's buddhology and other philosophical concerns. He has thus made Mou Zongsan more easily accessible to Western readers, and in this particular regard, Mou's disciples should thank Clower for bringing Mou's philosophy to a wider audience in the West.

*The Self: Naturalism, Consciousness, and the First-Person Stance.* By Jonardon Ganeri. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. Pp. xii + 374. ISBN 978-0-199-65236-5.

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In thinking about the self there is a tension between the affirmation of ourselves as owners of mental occurrences and the reduction of those mental occurrences to neurophysiological events. Are we independent entities, or are we just brains? Or is there a middle way by which we can have it both ways, that is, to render the self as something over and above its psychophysical properties in spite of being rooted in the physical? Jonardon Ganeri in his *The Self: Naturalism, Consciousness, and the First-Person Stance* develops a liberal naturalist conception of the self, the middle position between hard naturalism and supernaturalism.<sup>1</sup> The book considers three versions of Indian liberal naturalism: Cārvāka, Buddhism (mainly Yogācāra), and Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, richly elaborated by incorporating recent discussions in phenomenology and philosophy of mind as well as Greek and Islamic philosophy. Ganeri defends a Nyāya Ownership View, according to which the self is a unity of *immersed self*, *participant self*, and *underself* where, unlike in the Platonic 'combat' model, the tripartite self attains a constitutional inner unity:

My thesis is that in a full account of human subjectivity three distinct dimensions in the concept of self are in play, corresponding to three elements in the notion of ownership, each having a naturalistically legitimate role in any viable conception of self. There is an *immersed self*, the aspect of first-person presentation in the content of consciousness, 'ownership' here referring to a phenomenologically given sense of mineness. There is a *participant self*, the inhabitation of a first-person stance, 'ownership' involving the relations of involvement, participation, and endorsement that sustain autonomy. Finally, there is an *underself*, the procedural monitoring of all the states, autonomous or alienated, that one embodies, 'ownership' now implying a relation of unconscious access to one's states of mind and their contents. (p. 14)

Fully first-personal subjective consciousness is at once *grounded* (in 'friction' with the world and subject to its constraints), *lived* (in experiential openness and presence to the world), and *engaged* (with the pulls and demands of emotion and attention on the world). Therefore, a self is a unity of coordination, immersion, and participation. (p. 329)