Confucian role ethics should probably drop the "Confucian" and treat the view as Ames' contribution to philosophy, appreciating his work as a guide to doing cross-cultural and historically informed philosophy. The view is born of Confucianism—and tied to a close historical and interpretive engagement with those foundational texts—but its aims (especially as an alternative to Western ethical discourse) transcend the texts.

If you have never encountered Ames' work or, for some reason, have waited to immerse yourself in the Anglophone scholarship of early Chinese philosophy, I strongly recommend this festschrift as it serves as an excellent introduction to Ames' corpus and, by extension, much of the contemporary Anglophone discussion within Chinese and Comparative philosophy. However, those familiar with Ames' work will find little new in the anthology (aside from chapters in part 2). Even when the chapters turn critical of Confucian role ethics, one finds the well-worn criticisms. Though, we do learn that Ames had planned to write a sequel to *Confucian Role Ethics: A Vocabulary* that would engage Western theories of justice. However, Ames has instead decided to offer an articulation of what it means to be a relationally constituted human in a project tentatively titled *Theorizing "Persons" for Confucian Role Ethics: A Good Place to Start*. These are not necessarily negative criticisms as the anthology gives the specialist occasion to reflect on the career and many contributions of a fellow traveler of *dao*—a traveler who, for many of us, cleared a path to a richer and more complicated understanding of Chinese philosophy.

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This fourth volume on Sichuan of the *Buddhist Stone Sutras in China* series is the necessary complement to the three earlier volumes on Sichuan, dedicated to the Grove of the Reclining Buddha (Wofoyuan), Ziyang City, Anyue County.
The present volume is, more precisely, dedicated to four caves (numbers 59 and 66 with engraved sutras and numbers 65 and 70 without engraved sutras) situated to the south of the image of the reclining Buddha. In his general introduction to the four caves that are discussed in this volume, Lothar Ledderose states the following: "Apparently the entire precinct was conceived as a giant mortuary shrine, with the colossal icon of the Reclining Buddha in the north of the valley complemented by the immensely long text of the Nirvana Sutra in the south, thus recreating the specific location, Kuśinagara, where the Buddha entered nirvana" (p. 10).

As "a giant monument to death" (p. 18), this site is indeed unique in Asia. In this volume, Dharmakṣema's translation of the "Mahayana Nirvana Sutra" (Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra; Da banniepan jing; T.12.374: 365a-603c) that is carved on the walls of cave numbers 59 and 66 is discussed by Mark L. Blum (pp. 35-62). Jessica Rawson discusses the ornaments of cave 59 that accompany the sutra text (pp. 20-34). Eric M. Greene discusses the excerpts culled from the "The Great Vehicle Great Collection Sutra on the Earth-Store Bodhisattva and the Ten Wheels" (Daśacakraśrītarṣīgarbhasūtra; Dasheng dai jizang shilun jing; T.13.411: 721a-777c) that are engraved on one of the walls of cave number 59 (pp. 63-92), and Ryan Richard Overbey discusses the excerpts that are culled from the "Scripture on the Secret Essentials of Meditation" (Chán miyao jing; T.15.613) that are carved on the same wall of cave number 59 that also the fragments discussed by Eric M. Greene are carved on (pp. 117-121). Transcriptions of the texts with references to block prints and to the Taishō edition, translations, extensive photographs of the site and of rubbings of the texts, a list with variant characters, and a general bibliography complement this work.

As we are used from the previous volumes of this excellent series, texts, ornaments, niches, and statues are interpreted within a historical and religious context. Mark L. Blum hypothesizes on a connection with the hermeneutics of Zhiyi (538-597). Given that the Nirvana Sutra and the "Lotus Sutra of the Wonderful Law" (Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra; Miaofa lianhua jing; T.9.262: 1a-62c) were given the same status in Zhiyi's "classification of the doctrine" (pan jiao), and that the Lotus Sutra is carved elsewhere on the site, a connection of the site to the Tiantai tradition is not unlikely (p. 59). Mark L. Blum herein follows the opinion of Stephen F. Teiser, given in the first volume on Sichuan of this series. The importance of the Lotus Sutra and the Nirvana Sutra on the site makes the presence of the figure of the reclining Buddha problematic. As Mark L. Blum states (p. 59): "In both the Nirvana Sutra and the Lotus Sutra, Śākyamuni talks about entering nirvana but he never does. In other words, even in the Nirvana Sutra the Buddha does not die, so why is the nirvana scene, which is normally understood to visually represent his death, carved?" He therefore suggests that depicting the reclining Buddha might have
been given in by continued influence of the pre-Mahayana story of the death of the Buddha, and he, interestingly, remarks that the reclining Buddha in Wofoyuan is lying on his left side, not on his right side. This, so he suggests, may have to be interpreted as that the Buddha as depicted here is not dead, that is, the death of the Buddha is pictured as an expedient means to present his Dharma body essence (p. 60).

From the colophon dated 735 that is attached to the excerpts of “The Great Vehicle Great Collection Sutra on the Earth-Store Bodhisattva and the Ten Wheels” and of the “Scripture on the Secret Essentials of Meditation,” we learn that it was a lay person by the name of Li Shi, a resident of the nearby Changjiang County, who donated money to have these texts carved, instead of a continuation of the Nirvana Sutra. As these excerpts have been culled from larger texts, it is likely that a particular message was provided. Eric M. Greene suggests that the excerpts “hold up meditators as the supreme ‘fields of merit’ for the faithful, all the while deflecting any expectation that such meditators will claim, or even possess, the kinds of special attainments or powers that might arouse government suspicion” (p. 92). Or, as Lothar Ledderose states: “Whoever arranged the text ignored, on purpose, all positive references to the power and importance of auspicious meditative visions, concentrating more generally on methods of meditation. The monk or monks responsible thereby took a specific stance in the controversial early eighth-century discussions about the concept and practice of meditation. This was the period that saw the rise of Chan as a school in its own right. It was also the time when Emperor Xuanzong (r. 712–756) asserted the control of the state over Buddhism. In an edict of 724 he questioned meditation as the sole source of Buddhist legitimacy. The choice of the two meditation texts in cave 59 was thus not a lighthearted deviation from the Nirvana Sutra program, but rather an attempt to reaffirm the value of meditation in a climate of governmental suspicion” (p. 12).

Against the same background of government suspicion vis-à-vis Buddhism, Jessica Rawson explains the presence of the carvings of parts of the “Sutra on the Profound Kindness of Parents” as in line with Confucian piety. She explains that “The dissemination of the Sutra would itself help repay the kindness of parents” and that the accumulation of merit gained by such a donation would be instrumental in letting ones relatives, most especially one’s parents, “to achieve an advantageous rebirth or even an afterlife in a Buddha’s paradise” (p. 32). She here sees a connection with the particular version of the “Spell Spoken by Buddha Amitābha” (Amituo fo shuo zhou; T.12.369: 352a–b) in cave 46, discussed in the third volume on Sichuan in this series. Ryan Richard Overbey explains the presence of the carvings of parts of the “Sutra on the Profound Kindness of Parents” as that this scripture about mothers and their children “may have held special appeal for Chinese Buddhist woman” (p. 121).
Jessica Rawson, finally, traces the origins of the ornaments that are complementing the carvings in cave 59 back to Central Asia and the Indian subcontinent, "where frames, ultimately derived from the Hellenistic Mediterranean world, were common for Gandharan and later sculpture" (p. 28).

As in the previous volumes of this series, philological, historical, art historical, and archaeological approaches importantly modify and adjust our generally accepted knowledge of Buddhism in the Tang era. Buddhism is shown in its dimension of a lived religion in its at times troublesome relation with the central government. One can only praise the Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, the Institute of Archaeology and Museology at Peking University, the Chengdu Municipal Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology, the Sichuan Provincial Research Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology, and the Bureau for Cultural Relics of Anyue County for their excellent work.

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NOTES


Howard Chiang is constructing a field of Chinese sexuality history. In his single-authored After Eunuchs: Science, Medicine, and the Transformation of Sex in Modern China (2018), he capstoned an archival-based, generically appropriate, history monograph. The volume under review here is one of many he has edited and co-edited on related topics ranging from queer sexuality to