



University of Brighton

School of Humanities and Social Science Research Seminar Series

1pm Wednesday 17th April 2024 (BST)

Room 218, Mithras House, Moulsecoomb campus
OR

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Meeting ID: 374 209 705 221

Passcode: ngtRFi

Dr Canglong Wang, HSS, University of Brighton

‘Reclaiming tradition: Confucian activists as citizens
in contemporary China’

Abstract: This presentation is based on a recent publication, which explores three core elements of citizenship – right, responsibility, and act – and their implications for the rise of Confucian activists in the revival of Confucian education in present-day China. Adopting a qualitative research strategy, the study draws from two sets of resources: public speeches by a leader in contemporary Confucian classical education, and interviews with teachers and parents at a Confucian school. A critical discourse analysis of the data is conducted to identify and examine the emerging themes. First, the study identifies the widespread circulation of the discourse of right (*quanli*) to education within the field of Confucian education. Second, focusing on the emerging discourse of righteousness (*yi*), it reveals how this particular Confucian ideology, articulated through local terminologies, generates a sense of civic responsibility and obligation. Third, it investigates the Confucian idea of “extending innate knowledge” (*zhi liangzhi*) and its contribution to the conversion of internal, individual ethical reflection to creative, civic acts. Based on the findings, this study challenges the popular characterization of Confucianism as a *contradiction* to citizenship. The revival of Confucian education offers an opportunity to explore a more nuanced understanding of the effects of Confucianism on the formation of the ‘Confucian citizen’.



Roof

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All staff and students are welcome to attend

For further details contact Mark Erickson: m.erickson@brighton.ac.uk