Confucian traditions are often regarded in purely historical terms and closely identified with a small set of texts that assumed canonical status more than two thousand years ago. But Confucianism has always been commentarial in nature, placing its textual and ritual traditions in critical and creative conversation with contemporary voices and concerns. Among the commitments of the Confucian Cultures series is to publish works that explore the relevance of Confucianism in contemporary, intercultural conversations.

The present edited volume, *Li Zehou and Confucian Philosophy*, presents such a conversation, focused on the work of one of the most significant philosophers of the last half century in China. In keeping with Confucian tradition, the diverse perspectives from which the volume’s contributors engage Li’s work are unified by a shared commitment to appreciating the relevance of that work for the present generation. Attention is directed to Li’s own intercultural blending of Confucian, Kantian, and pragmatic perspectives; his view of emotion as the substance or infrastructure (*qingbenti*) of morality; and his distinctive conception of human subjectivity (*zhutixing*). Yet, as the end of the second decade of the twenty-first century approaches, it is perhaps Li’s conviction that beauty is the form or practice of freedom that most strikingly qualifies his work as contemporary. As a practice of adornment, acting freely is always in some measure acting for the sake of others. This insight is as important in the realm of the political as that of the personal, and it is one that is crucially relevant in a world wherein our futures depend on the quality of our interdependence.

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