



## Translating Chinese Philosophy into the Western Academy: Better Late than Never

**Friday, April 7, 2017**

**LOCATION:**

*Harvill, Room 302*

**TIME:**

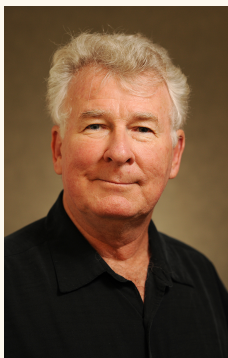
*4:00 pm*

**SUGGESTED PARKING:**

*Second Street Garage*



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"Translating" means quite literally, "carrying across; to remove from one place to another." The questions I will address in this presentation are: To what extent have we been successful in first understanding the Chinese philosophical narrative and in "carrying it across" into the Western academy? And, to what extent have we been able to grow and "appreciate" (in the sense of value-added) our own philosophical parameters by engaging with this ancient tradition?

The strategy of textual translation is to go beyond word-for-word translation in an attempt to enable students of Chinese philosophy to read the seminal texts, by providing a means of developing one's own sophisticated understanding of a set of critical Chinese philosophical terms. However, allowing Chinese philosophy to speak for itself requires a cultural translation that informs these same terms. It is in this effort to take Chinese philosophy on its own terms that we must begin from the interpretive context, taking into account the tradition's own indigenous presuppositions and its evolving self-understanding. We must be aware of the ambient, persistent assumptions that have given the Chinese philosophical narrative its unique identity over time.

Roger T. Ames is Humanities Chair at Peking University, a Berggruen Fellow, and former Professor of Philosophy at the University of Hawai'i. He is former editor of *Philosophy East & West* and founding editor of *China Review International*. He has authored: *Thinking Through Confucius* (1987), *Anticipating China* (1995), *Thinking From the Han* (1998), and *Democracy of the Dead* (1999) and *Confucian Role Ethics: A Vocabulary* (2011). His publications include translations of Chinese classics: *Sun-tzu: The Art of Warfare* (1993); *Sun Pin: The Art of Warfare* (1996) (with D.C. Lau); the *Confucian Analects* (1998) and the *Classic of Family Reverence: The Xiaojing* (2009). *Focusing the Familiar: The Zhongyong* (2001), and *The Daodejing* (2003). Almost all of his publications are now available in Chinese translation, including his philosophical translations of Chinese canonical texts. He is currently engaged in compiling the new Blackwell Sourcebook of Classical Chinese Philosophy and in writing articles promoting a conversation between American pragmatism and Confucianism.