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## Editor's Notes

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### Editor's Notes

The Centre for International Business Ethics and Peking University Press collaborate to jointly organize an annual international conference on Business Ethics. This special issue, *International Management Review* (IMR), is a compilation of eight articles addressing Management and Business Ethics in Asia. These eight articles are extracted from the papers that were presented during the two conferences which took place in Beijing in 2005 and 2006.

The publication of the papers and the conferences mark a milestone in the cooperation between the Peking University Press and CIBE. This cooperation started in 2002 with a translation series focused on the translation of major textbooks on business ethics from English into Chinese. Eight volumes have been published by Peking University Press on the different areas of the academic discipline of business ethics, which is still a new concept to the general Chinese public. Four additional volumes are will be completed by the end of this year. To everyone's delight, these series have been exceptionally successful. one of the most elaborate textbooks on the matter, Richard T. De George's "Business Ethics", in its 5<sup>th</sup> edition in English edition (1999), and runs right now already at its is in its 7<sup>th</sup> edition in Chinese.

The two first international conferences addressed the topics of "International Business Ethics and Eastern Wisdom" (2005) and "Competitiveness and Social Responsibility" (2006). These conferences, by including contributions from diversified cultural backgrounds, with a strong focus on the Chinese as well as the Indian context, was another step towards further advancing the development of business ethics studies in China. People from all walks of life, from the business, government and academic worlds, congregated at these conferences, in order to discuss how business ethics really impact in an environment which often perceives ethics as a hindrance, especially in an extremely competitive market place. The crucial challenge was not just to communicate the main ideas of business ethics, but to also attempt to significantly broaden framework in order to include and integrate a wide range of international perspectives, especially Chinese and Indian. Incorporating these different international perspectives is important in order to have a holistic approach and insight and to convey that ethics must be and will be integrated as a most decisive element in the business strategies of modern firms.

It is astonishing and unfortunate that the deep wisdom enshrined in Asian philosophies is consistently overlooked by Western academia. In this edition of *Management International Review*, one of the most prominent Chinese specialists on Chinese philosophy Prof. Dr. Hua Xue, from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, thoughtfully critiques the vague and often superficial reference to a simplified version of the Confucian tradition. His thorough exploration of the concept of "Common Spirit" (in German "Gemeinsinn") as viewed from the Chinese traditions is a major achievement. His essay highlights all the main characteristics of business ethics and he insightfully concludes that there will not be a smooth or *harmonious* order of business or in any facet of society if there are no rules and ethical standards which inspire people to work together to achieve the *common good*. The avalanche of corporate scandals in the recent years has left in its wake a growing awareness about the consequences of disregarding ethics. Moreover, the continuous flow of disturbing news about the abuse of

fiduciary duties, insider trading etc. on a large scale on several different stock markets across the world have badly shaken the trust of investors. It would be naive to assume that the discontent about the aftermath of these abuses would automatically introduce a new and responsible attitude and approach towards socially responsible behaviour.

In August 2002 the United States Congress passed the Sarbanes-Oxley Act which required listed companies to submit certified reliable reports on their accounting. This act has without any doubt, despite involving a considerable amount of bureaucratic efforts, set a necessary legal landmark to prevent rampant abuses in the future. It is expected that other countries, and eventually reaching a global scale, will pass similar legal laws. As Zheng Zhihai Secretary General of the Society for WTO-studies points out the entry of China into the World Trade Organisation, WTO, in July 2001 marked the passing of the threshold into a global community which will never function without an obligation to stick to *the rule of law*, including the strict adherence to fight against any corrupt practises. This legal framework, however, is built upon an extremely elaborate and rich ethical tradition whose “Eastern” versions still seem persistently overlooked. Such ignorance seems to be all more unacceptable as the most populous countries, India and China, emerge as the key economic drivers, not only in Asia, but also in the world. Unless, therefore, laws are somewhat connected to these treasures of wisdom, unless people get truly educated and trained in these streams of thought, laws might quickly evaporate or easily be bypassed.

Michel Camdessus who witnessed major breakdowns in financial international markets in his former position as managing director of the International Monetary Fund, IMF, among others the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997 and the turmoil in the wake of the end of the Suharto-Regime in Indonesia, develops the required ethical principles around the notion of responsibility. Along with the very balanced and nuanced arguments of Prof. Dr. Gerhold Becker, Founding Director of the Centre for Applied Ethics at the Hong Kong Baptist University dwelling on the subject of Moral Leadership these insights based on empirical evidence will certainly inspire anybody who looks for a consistent theoretical framework which underlies a sustainable economic development. Given the complexity of the topics and the overall goal of such a dialogue between “East and West” the present issue can only be a beginning of a long term project.

We feel also privileged that this issue includes also a significant contribution from Prof. Dr. Henri-Claude de Bettignies, distinguished professor of business ethics at the China-European business school in Shanghai, who can rightly be considered as one of the outstanding pioneers in business ethics. Very early he proved to be a trendsetter when he realized how important the Asian region will turn out, not just simply in the area of economic, but as well in the ethical environment. His paper reveals a remarkable attempt into which awareness, values, which kind of education, especially in business schools, is needed in order to make China’s development truly beneficial for its own country, as well as for the whole world. This book is born out of the dialogue between people from very different cultures and traditions of thinking. It is our strongest wish, that these fragments might inspire other scholars and business people, especially coming from China and India, to join this process of *looming* by taking further a research which always needs to be connected with empirical evidence,

dwelling in the famous insight of “*seeking truth from facts.*”

本期《国际管理评论》特刊，是 2005 和 2006 两年国际经济伦理研究中心和北京大学出版社联合举办的经济伦理国际研讨年会的优秀论文集。其中收录的八篇文章都是从两次研讨会上选出的探讨亚洲经济伦理与管理的精品。本期研讨会论文集的出版标志着国际经济伦理中心与北京大学出版社的合作进入了一个新的阶段。从 2002 年引进翻译经济伦理系列教材的开始，今年已经是国际经济伦理研究中心与北京大学出版社合作的第 6 个年头，已经有八本涉及经济伦理不同分支领域的学术著作翻译成中文并由北京大学出版社出版发行，由此把经济伦理这一全新的概念带入中国公众的视野。今年我们还将陆续出版四本伦理学方面的著作。令人欣喜的是，这一系列经典著作得到了中国读者的广泛认可和大力支持。其中由理查德·T·德·乔治撰写的《经济伦理学》英文版第五版（1999）的中文译本从 2002 年出版以来，今年已经到第七版。

从 2005 年开始，国际经济伦理研究中心开始举办经济伦理国际研讨年会。2005 年研讨的主题是：东方智慧与国际经济伦理，2006 年的主题是：竞争力与社会责任。研讨会收到来自各种文化背景特别是中国和印度的投稿，是我们致力于推动中国经济伦理研究向前发展的又一举措。商界精英、政府官员、教授学者以及来自各行各业的人士齐聚一堂，为在这样一个经济高速发展、伦理意识相对薄弱的中国推广经济伦理献计献策。其中最大的挑战不是核心经济伦理思想的讨论，而是如何在一个国际视角包括中国、印度在内的多文化氛围内扩大经济伦理的理论架构。因为如果要使伦理成为现代公司战略发展中的核心要素，一个国际化的整体分析方法和定位是必不可少的。然而令人难以理解的是，博大精深的亚洲哲学一直为西方学术界所忽视。本期国际管理评论中，中国社会科学院博士、哲学教授薛华对孔子精神模糊不清的、肤浅的引用做出了详细的评论。他从中国传统哲学角度对“共同精神”作了开创性的深入探索。他的文章几乎涉及经济伦理所有的主要特征，并且深刻地阐述了伦理将激励人们为了共同利益而努力奋斗。他认为如果没有伦理标准和规则，和谐的经济秩序和社会秩序都是空谈。

近年来频频爆发的公司丑闻，使人们越来越深刻的意识到漠视伦理的严重后果。然而，接踵而来的来自世界各大证券市场的信托责任和大宗内部交易丑闻，也已经严重动摇了投资者的信心。但是这些负面的结果是不可能使当事人能自发的改变不负责任的态度和行为的。2002 年 8 月，美国国会颁布了致力于规范公共公司会计改革和投资者保护的“萨班斯法案”。毫无疑问，这部法案虽然昂贵，却是防止未来会计舞弊的必要之举和里程碑。值得期待的是，其他国家，乃至全世界，都能够出来类似的法律。中国 WTO 研究院秘书长郑志指出：2001 年 7 月加入 WTO，标志着中国融入了全球社会，同时也意味着中国要遵守承诺，严守法律，特别是加强反腐败。然而，中国法律体制，应该建立在博大精深的、长久被忽视的东方伦理传统的基础之上。对于东方伦理的忽视，在人口稠密的大国：中国和印度成为亚洲乃至世界经济动力中心的时候，更是无法想象的。如果不是很好的吸收了东方智慧的养料、如果人民没有得到关于这些古老思想的教育和培训，法律可能会被轻而易举的绕开或者滥用。

国际货币基金组织前主席，目睹了世界金融市场的多次金融危机，特别是 1997 年亚洲金融危机和印度尼西亚萨哈特政权结束时的动乱，在文章中提出了基于责任的必需的道德原则。香港浸会大学应用伦理中心创始人 Gerhold Becker 博士，通过实证分析，详细论述了道德领导力是可持续经济发展的基础。同时，我们也非常荣幸能够得到著名的中国中欧商学院经济伦理教授翟博思博士的大力支持。他是经济伦理学界的优秀先锋，他很早就预见性的认识到，亚洲地区在经济上、特别是伦理环境上重要性。他的文章大胆尝试说明什么样的意识或价值观、什么样的教育，特别是商学院的教育能够使中国向有益于自身、有益于全球的方向发展。这本论文集是来自不同文化传统的人们的思想碰撞。我们真诚希望这本集子起到抛砖引玉的作用，吸引更多的，特别是来自中国和印度的学者和商界人士加入到这一“追寻真理”之征途。

--Dr. Stephan Rothlin & Professor Yang Hengda, (March, 2007)