

# The First “Ruist (Confucian) Friends From Afar” Retreat in North America

1-3rd July, 2016.  
Marsh Chapel, Boston University.



Topic: “The Past, Present and Future of Ruism (Confucianism) in the United States”

## Schedule

### Day One: Friday

5:30-6:00 (pm) Arrival and Check-in

6:00-7:00 Community Dinner (Boston University, Marsh Chapel, Marsh Room)

7:00-7:05 Welcome Speech: Bin Song (Boston University, Marsh Chapel, Robinson Chapel)

7:05-7:15 Ceremony of Heaven-Worship and Confucius-Veneration (Robinson Chapel)

An American landscape painting will be hung on the front wall, and a little statue (or portrait) of Confucius placed at the side. Each member who wishes to participate will place incense on the little altar located in front of the statue (or portrait) of Confucius, and then bow to *Tian* (天, heaven/nature) in the direction of the painting which will thereby be ‘witnessed’ by Confucius. There are no strict rules for bowing. If friends want to bow to Confucius, too, this can occur after bowing to *Tian*.

7:15-7:45 Participant Introductions: ‘When, How and Why Ruism Hooked Me’ (Boston University, Marsh Chapel, Thurman Room)

Moderator: Whitney Lawrence

7:45-7:50 Break

7:50-9:20 Advance Reading for All Participants: *Higher Learning* (大學) (Thurman Room)

Seminar Leader: David Schiller

Co-Leader: Bin Song

Opening Question: TBA (to be announced) by Leader, especially the ‘Three Phases and Eight Steps’ (三綱領、八條目) .

Discussion: 90 minutes

Day Two: Saturday

8:30-9:00 (am) Community Breakfast (Marsh Room)

9:00-9:15 Ceremony of Heaven-Worship and Confucius-Veneration (Robinson Chapel)

9:15-10:45 Advance Reading for All Participants: *Analects* (論語) (Thurman Room)

Seminar Leader: Whitney Lawrence  
Co-Leader: Benjamin Butina, or other  
Opening Question: TBA by Leader, especially 11:26  
Discussion: 90 minutes

10:45-11:00 Break

11:00-12:00 Community Discussion: 'How Can Ruism Be Applied to Daily American Life?' (Thurman Room)

Moderator: Yair Lior

12:00-1:00 (pm) Community Lunch (Marsh Room)

1:00-1:40 Ruist Spiritual Exercise: Meditation (Robinson Chapel)

Performer: Bin Song. (15 minutes)  
Response: Ben Butina. (5 minutes)  
Discussion: 20 minutes.

1:40-1:50 Break

1:50-3:20 Advance Reading for All Participants: *Mencius* (孟子) (Thurman Room)

Seminar Leader: Yair Lior  
Co-Leader: Bin Song  
Opening Question: the paragraph about 'the feeling of commiseration' (惻隱之心), 'the oceanic matter-energy' (浩然之氣) or other chapters  
Discussion: 90 minutes

3:20-6:00 Community Hike

If weather allows (hopefully!), we will visit Walden Pond, Arlington Heights, or Milton Heights for community hiking. If weather does not allow, we can remain in Boston University or go to Yair Lior, or another friend's house to continue informal discussions.

6:00-7:00 Community Discussion: 'What Practical Steps Can Be Taken to Establish American Ruism?' (60 minutes) (Local Restaurant)

Moderator: Bin Song

7:00-9:00 Dinner and continuing conversation (Local Restaurant)

Day Three: Sunday

8:30-9:00 (am) Community Breakfast (Marsh Room)

9:00-9:20 Ruist Spiritual Exercise: Martial Arts (20 minutes) (Robinson Chapel)

Performer: Yair Lior, or other

9:20-9:25 Break

9:25-10:55 Advance Reading for All Participants: *Being Centered in the Everyday World (Equilibrium and Ordinarity)* (中庸) (Thurman Room)

Seminar Leader: Bin Song

Co-Leader: David Schiller

Content: TBA, especially Chapters 1, 21 and 22

Discussion: 90 minutes

11:00-12:00 Interdenominational Christian Service in Marsh Chapel. Br. Lawrence's sermon on Ruism and Christianity (Marsh Chapel Nave)

12:00-1:00 Community Lunch (Barbeque, BU Beach)

1:00-1:35 Ruist Spiritual Exercise: Calligraphy (Robinson Chapel)

Performer: Yair Lior (15 minutes)

Response: Whitney Lawrence (5 minutes)

Discussion: 15 Minutes

1:35-1:45 Break

1:45-2:30 Community Discussion: 'Various Topics Relating to Retreat Experience' (Thurman Room)

Moderator: Bin Song

2:30-2:45 Ceremony of Heaven-Worship and Confucius-Veneration (Robinson Chapel)

2:45-3:00 Closing Speech: Bin Song (Robinson Chapel)

#### Key Participants:

Bin Song:

PhD, Western Philosophy (Nankai University, China), and currently PhD student of Religious Studies at Boston University. Founder, Boston University Confucian Association (BUCA). Some of his online publications can be found at: <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/bin-song/>

David R. Schiller:

Independent Scholar, Translator, Dancer, and Arts Manager. B.A, Philosophy and Liberal Arts, St. John's College. Author of 'CONFUCIUS: Discussions/Conversations, or the Analects [Lun-yu]: Translation, Commentary, Interpretation', Volumes 1 and 2, Saga Virtual Publishers, 2011. Amazon page: <http://www.amazon.com/CONFUCIUS-Discussions-Conversations-Analects->

[Lun-yu/dp/0981748317/ref=la\\_BooIZ5L2LS\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1460941161&sr=1-1](http://www.bu.edu/lun-yu/dp/0981748317/ref=la_BooIZ5L2LS_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1460941161&sr=1-1)

Br. Lawrence A. Whitney:

University Chaplain for Community Life of Boston University. PhD Candidate, School of Theology at Boston University. Academic expertise includes the comparative study of Ruism and Christianity: <http://www.bu.edu/chapel/staff/ministry/lwhitney/>.

Yair Lior:

PhD and Lecturer of Religious Studies at Boston University. Co-founder of Boston University Confucian Association. Dissertation focuses upon the comparative study of Ruism and Judaism: <http://www.bu.edu/religion/yair-lior/>.

Benjamin L. Butina:

Ben Butina found a home in Ruism after many years of searching among various traditions. He is a longtime meditation practitioner and a meditation teacher. Ben stumbles through the Analects at [stonechimes.com](http://stonechimes.com) and is co-founder of the Facebook group, Friends from Afar: A Confucianism Group. He is currently pursuing a PhD in Psychology while working in the learning and development field. Most importantly, he is a husband and father of four. He lives in Western Pennsylvania.

Logistics:

All indoor activities will be held at Marsh Chapel, Boston University: 735 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, MA 02215. For friends from outside Boston, please find your own way to arrive. If you plan to take a flight, a train or a bus, Boston friends could receive you at the airport or the station. If you need pick-up service, please contact Bin Song (see below).

Low Cost Rooms (\$72 per night) in campus have been reserved. You can book it through this website: <http://stay.bu.edu/Search.aspx?nightCount=2&arrivalDate=2016-07-1&roomCount=1&location=10%20Buick&promotion=Boston%20Confucianism&people=0>. Also, we can host a couple of friends for free. If you need it, please contact Bin Song.

A registration fee of \$60 needs to be paid on your arrival at Marsh Chapel. The fee will be used to purchase two breakfasts (Saturday and Sunday), one lunch (Saturday), and one dinner (Friday). Sunday lunch will be provided by Marsh Chapel, and Saturday dinner will be taken at a local restaurant.

Registration will be open until June 24th. If you are interested in this retreat, please send an email to Bin Song: [binsong1981@gmail.com](mailto:binsong1981@gmail.com).

For any further questions, please contact:

Bin Song. MP: 702-724-3171. Email: [binsong1981@gmail.com](mailto:binsong1981@gmail.com).