tutions that characterize China's hyperurban modernity? Assuming Confucian ritual indeed inculcates an ethic of reciprocity and respect for authority, it is not hard to imagine how it therefore undergirds such common Chinese social problems as bribery, nepotism, and vote buying—problems that have roiled China's social critics since the May 4th Movement. In the little-dragons scholars' Weberian terms, reciprocity is associated with the personalism that conceivably undermines the rationalization of Chinese institutions.

Whether it works or not as a civil religion, the mainland Chinese Communist Party's on-again, off-again interest in Confucianism (e.g., Hu Jintao's vaguely Confucian "harmonious society" campaign) makes for some fun reading. Stentorian Confucianesque pronouncements of party officials sometimes border on the comical, but because no one can laugh the effect is somehow tragic. I remember seeing in Beijing a Hugo Boss perfume advertisement that featured two Italianate lovers locked in an almost violently passionate embrace. The slogan read, "Harmony is overrated." I laughed aloud, startling the strangers near me on the escalator. For those of us who love the Confucian classics, Boss's marketers may be on to something. The writings of Mencius, for instance, open with a diatribe against too great a focus on profits—not a bit "harmonious" with the current CCP line! Harmony may indeed be overrated as a Confucian value, a point Sun graciously soft-pedals.

Although some sections might be difficult for undergraduates, this text is likely to be very popular in graduate seminars on comparative religion, Confucianism, and the sociology of religion. More of an introduction to Confucianism may be necessary for a full understanding of what Sun is up to, but this book is certainly one of the most important English-language texts on Confucianism.

Taken for Grantedness: The Embedding of Mobile Communication into Society. By Rich Ling. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2012. Pp. xiv+241. $34.00.

Wesley Shrum
Louisiana State University

Few sociologists will disagree that the mobile phone has "rearranged the social furniture of our experience" (p. 81). This unprecedented phenomenon of diffusion, along with its social consequences, is analyzed in Rich Ling's outstanding new book on mobile telephony, *Taken for Grantedness: The Embedding of Mobile Communication into Society*. Mobiles, as my African colleagues call them, have reorganized the experience of personal communication throughout the world and are the closest technology we have to a (1) true extension of the body that is (2) likely to become virtually universal. Ling's contribution in the present volume is twofold. First, he pro-

vides an account of a transformation in social organization that is still too recent to have settled down, in any easy sociological sense. Mobile interactions are nothing short of a major social transformation in progress, one much understudied by academic sociologists, with few important exceptions. *Taken for Grantedness* is an analysis of the domestication of technology, using a bit of quantitative data, but mostly interview and focus groups (tending to teenagers) to review the basic dimensions of new mobilities.

Second, Ling develops a comparative approach to technologies of mediation, examining mobiles, clock time, and automobiles in terms of their means of diffusion, vocabularies of justification (and counternarratives of social ills), effects on social ecological factors, and reciprocal expectations for usage. While the mediation of nearly everything is a common theoretical move (present author pleads guilty), there is ample justification for its use where technologies directly concern the means of social organization. The trinity of coordination (clocks), transportation (automobiles), and communication (mobile phones) is employed for comparative technology analysis.

Ling moves, sometimes explicitly, sometimes furtively, between paradigms of local and distanced social interaction. He suggests a general pattern of transition from local to distanced to copresent (but not colocated) interaction. Clocks allowed planned movements of persons outside a local area, while cars provided flexibility and encouraged movement away from urban areas and mobiles reconnected persons who had become dispersed. My main caveat is that landline phones are not part of this story, since this connectivity was accomplished during the grand era of autos. But the analysis is not so much historical as conceptual, yielding a logic of copresence and coordination, where the focus is mobiles (four chapters) rather than its comparison cases (one each).

Most important is the sheer speed of diffusion. Clock time required over 200 years to emerge as a fundamental mechanism of social organization, while the mobile took fewer than 20. Throughout the world, the question When do we meet? can be understood and answered by a simple system of reference, in standardized units measured reliably by widely available timepieces. The mobile, on the other hand, answers *both* the question How do we meet? (call me when you're nearby) and the question What do we do when we can't? (call me anyway). The automobile and the social ecology that surrounds it (principally the suburbs) is a mediating technology because it allows a high degree of individualized control over movement over large distances. Cars are less a mechanism of coordination than clocks or cells, but all mediating technologies, according to Ling, are subject to what he calls the "Katz principle" (after James Katz, "Mainstream Mobiles in Daily Life," in *Handbook of Mobile Communication Studies*, ed. James Katz [MIT Press, 2008]). Once usage reaches an unspecified threshold, *your* refusal to use the technology creates a problem for *me*.

Taken for Grantedness tells us, in clever and readable language, how we arrived at our current state of mobility and what it means at this moment.

Readers will enjoy the history of the development of clock time (Would it be better if the hands stayed put and the dial moved?) and its social consequences (the length of an hour used to be flexible several centuries back—I'm hoping this fact explains why undergraduates leave at peculiar times during lectures).

Over time, clocks, cars, and cells are domesticated, taken for granted, routinized, embedded in the fabric of interaction. As Ling argued in his earlier book—*New Tech, New Ties* (MIT Press, 2008)—the most important sociological consequence of mobile communication may be its potential impact on the relationship between spatial location and social interaction. One of Ling's central points in all his work is that the mobile "enhances the cohesion of the closest sphere of family and friends" (p. 138). A mobile affords choice between interacting with colocated and distant persons—a choice that often favors (remote) family and friends over strangers who are physically present. This theory of "bounded solidarity," based on Randall Collins's interaction ritual theory, predicts a preference for interactions with friends/family owing to the generally greater potential for positive emotional energy (*Interaction Ritual Chains* [Princeton University Press, 2004]). If so, we might expect shifts in social networks and spatial interaction patterns, one version of which my colleagues and I documented in a longitudinal study of core networks (Antony Palackal et al., "Are Mobile Phones Changing Social Networks?" *New Media and Society* 13 [2011]: 391–410): the size of core networks has declined, while the family/friend component has increased in south India.

One of the foremost scholars of the mobile phone, as well as one of most eclectic theorists, Ling's development of the bounded solidarity framework should have extensive research implications. But one must ask the big question of any shifting phenomenon: What will be the eventual impact of mobiles on the future of social interaction once the initial period of adaptation and absorption is past? A return to business as usual can well be imagined in which the primary impact of mobiles on social encounters is simply inconsequential. In the meantime, however, it is incumbent on sociologists to examine the patterns associated with the most rapidly adopted technology in history.