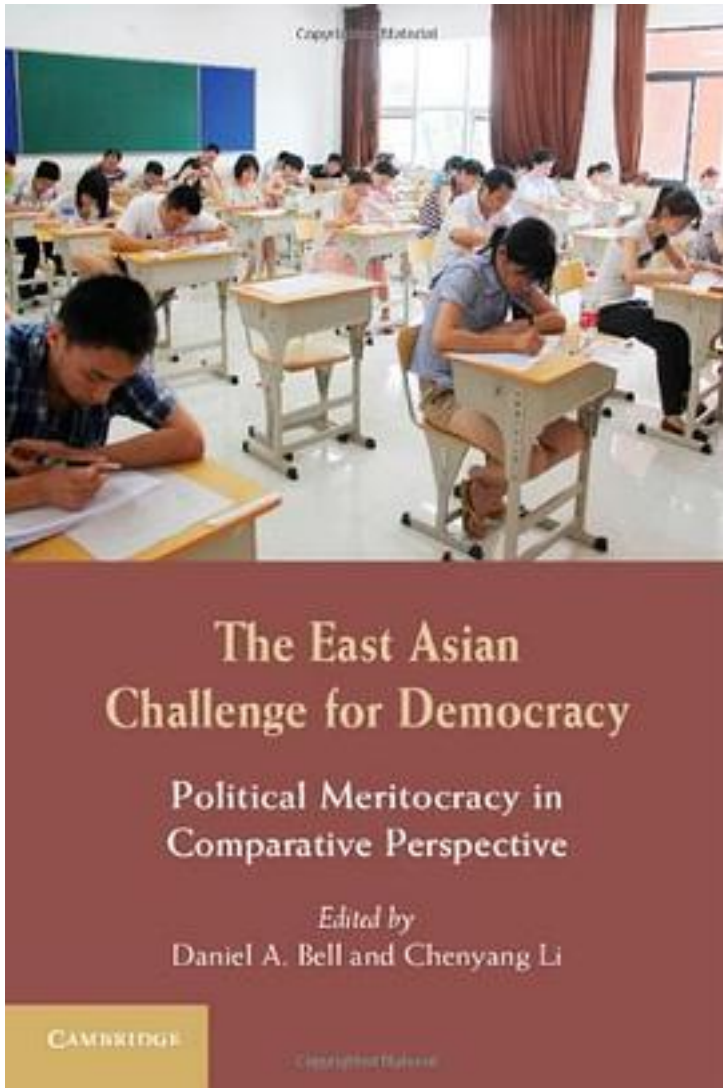


# The East Asian Challenge for Democracy



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The rise of China, along with problems of governance in democratic countries, has reinvigorated the theory of political meritocracy. But what is the theory of political meritocracy and how can it set standards for evaluating political progress (and regress)? Can meritocracy be reconciled with democracy and if so, how? What is the history of political meritocracy and what can it teach us today? How is political meritocracy practiced in contemporary societies – in China, Singapore, and elsewhere – and what are its advantages and disadvantages in terms of producing just outcomes and contributing to good governance? To help answer these questions, this volume gathers a series of commissioned research papers from an interdisciplinary group of leading philosophers, historians, and social scientists. The result is the first book in decades to examine the rise (or revival) of political meritocracy and what it will mean for political developments in China and the rest of the world. Despite its limitations, meritocracy has contributed much to human flourishing in East Asia and beyond and will continue to do so in the future. This book is essential reading for those who wish to further the debate and perhaps even help to implement desirable forms of political change.

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Chenyang Li is Associate Professor and Founding Director of the philosophy program at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. Previously, he served as Professor and Chair of the Philosophy Department at Central Washington University, where he received the Distinguished Research Professor Award, the Outstanding Department Chair Award, and the Keys to Success Award (Student Service). He was a 2008–2009 American Council on Education Fellow. His research interests include Chinese philosophy, comparative philosophy and value theory. Among his publications are *The Confucian Philosophy of Harmony* (2013), *The Tao Encounters the West: Explorations in Comparative Philosophy* (1999), and *The Sage and the Second Sex: Confucianism, Ethics, and Gender* (editor, 2000), and more than eighty journal articles and book chapters.

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