



## **Newsletter No. 3, September 2018**

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## EACP ADDRESSES

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### *President*

Ralph Weber  
Institute for European Global Studies  
University of Basel, Switzerland  
E-mail: ralph.weber@unibas.ch

### *Vice-President*

Bart Dessein  
Department of Languages and Cultures  
Ghent University  
Ghent, Belgium  
E-Mail: bart.dessein@ugent.be

### *Secretary*

Christian Soffel  
Institute of Sinology  
Trier University  
Trier, Germany  
E-Mail: soffel@uni-trier.de

### *Treasurer*

Helena Motoh  
Faculty of Humanities  
University of Primorska  
Koper, Slovenia  
E-mail: helena.motoh@guest.arnes.si

### *Webmasters*

Matej Zima  
Faculty of Arts, Ljubljana University  
Ljubljana, Slovenia  
E-mail: matej.zima@guest.arnes.si

Mitja Podreka  
Faculty of Arts, Ljubljana University  
Ljubljana, Slovenia  
E-mail: mitja.podreka@ff.uni-lj.si

## MESSAGE FROM THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR

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In the contemporary digital age, there is a certain tendency that the focus shifts away from traditional analog communication methods towards electronic mailing lists and social media.

However, it is essential that the European Association of Chinese Philosophy from time to time uses more traditional formats to distribute new developments in the field and to outline some particularly crucial issues concerning our association.

With this edition we are continuing the good tradition of EACP newsletters, and are planning to distribute at least one newsletter per year.

I hope you enjoy reading the contents of this newsletter, not least because there is a nice amount of good news to share. Also, I would like to remind you of our wonderful website (at <http://www.ea-cp.eu>), where you can always find up to date information on our association.

*Christian Soffel*

Newsletter Editor  
Trier University  
Institute of Sinology  
Trier, Germany  
E-Mail: soffel@uni-trier.de

**NEXT NEWSLETTER ISSUE:  
May 2019**

**DEADLINE FOR CONTRIBUTIONS:  
April 15 2019**

## REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT

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Dear EACP members!

I am very happy to present this third newsletter of our European Association of Chinese Philosophy, which is still young but growing stronger by the year. Officially founded in February 2014 in Ljubljana, Slovenia, at the initiative of Jana S. Rošker, who was also the first president of the EACP, our association is now in its fifth year and we look back with some satisfaction to two successful conferences held in Vilnius (2016) and in Basel (2017). The next biennial meeting is scheduled to take place at Ghent University from September 5-7, 2019 and will be co-organized by Bart Dessein and Ady Van den Stock. The theme of the conference is Paradigms of Change and Changing Paradigms in Chinese Philosophy. In what follows, I would like to comment on the conference theme through the eyes of our association, which of course has its own agenda and seeks to effectuate some change with regard to paradigms in and about Chinese Philosophy.

A first important point to note is that our association does not subscribe to any one paradigm with regard to how Chinese Philosophy should be taught and researched. As anyone who has attended one of our conferences comes to understand quickly, the presentations of our participants show the greatest variety in methodological ap-

proach (from exegesis to postmodern readings), the preferred time period (from the Warring States to the complicated setting of today's political world) and the overall purposes of researching Chinese Philosophy (sinological or philosophical, both at the same time, or something entirely different) —as it should be. The Board of our association mirrors this pluralism in virtually all of the just mentioned respects. In my view, this is a wonderful strength of our association. It is of utmost importance to remain an open platform for the exchange of a diversity of views (and paradigms) that are manifest in contemporary academia across the globe. Of course, as a scholarly association we strive towards academic excellence, but we are well aware that no excellence of whatever sort can be achieved where dogma holds sway and human curiosity is stifled.

I am also particularly proud of the fact that we are a truly European association with the institutional bases of members spread all across the continent (and beyond). From the beginning, we have been concerned with addressing power imbalances that continue to influence greatly who gets to attend conferences, has access to funds for research more generally and has her or his publications recognized by peers around the world. Our currently modest attempts are confined to generating a diverse membership, keeping fees within reasonable limits and—within the context of the Young Scholar Award—issue travel grants to

the extent we can, i.e. depending on the acquired funds for hosting a conference. The best we all can do, it seems to me, is to continue and raise awareness of the many publications and activities that are constantly forthcoming, be it in French and Italian, or Icelandic and Polish. The fact that Europe works and thinks in many languages is making matters more difficult, it is certainly true, but we could also look at it in terms of a wealth of working material. For one thing, it surely matters whether one faces the omnipresent question of translation from Chinese into Spanish or into Finnish. Not only because of translational issues, but also more generally there is still a host of good reasons to do academic work in one's native language especially in disciplines where language matters, and who would say that it doesn't matter in philosophy?

I am not sure whether a truly inclusive European association would be a paradigm-changer of any sorts, but I believe that enlarging the scope of one's scholarly radar is a most rewarding experience with concrete scholarly value. There are also considerable networking effects. Just being aware that there is someone working on a similar topic (even in an otherwise inaccessible language) might pave the way towards more engagement and who knows it might even end in invitations to workshops and conferences, collaborations or simply the recognition of further views to consider, embrace or reject. If our association can contribute to such

results, we would have achieved quite a bit.

Be that as it may, I am excited to see the many activities taking place within our association, some examples of which this newsletter features in the following pages. The membership with FISP is a major stepping stone and I wish it will come to stand for the further professionalization and continually increasing importance of our association. Despite all of this, there is still a lot of work ahead of us. It is with this sense of ambition that I hope to see as many of our members as possible and also many new members at our next conference in Ghent. The deadline for submission of individual papers and/or panels is February 28, 2019. Please help us spread the word and join us in Ghent to make our association stronger and our platform richer (no pun concerning membership fees intended).

*Ralph Weber*  
EACP President

**REPORT OF THE 2ND  
BIENNIAL CONFERENCE OF  
THE EACP AT THE  
UNIVERSITY OF BASEL**

**“GLOBAL CHINESE  
PHILOSOPHY”**

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Chinese Philosophy stands today as a topic that attracts scholars from around

the world and that is making impressive headway on finding its place in the established discipline of philosophy. But what is the appropriate place for Chinese philosophy? Would not the fact that Chinese Philosophy has become global lead to the conclusion that “Chinese” philosophy can by now be considered simply as philosophy? Such a conclusion would be welcomed by some and give the shivers to others (very much depending on what is understood by the term ‘philosophy’). These were the questions at the heart of the 2nd Biennial Conference of the European Association for Chinese Philosophy (September 7–9, 2017) held in Basel, Switzerland. It reflected the fact that the global reality of Chinese Philosophy poses a challenge to the use and meaning of places put into relation to it, such as China—for which often a special relationship is claimed—or Europe—which highlights a longstanding and complicated historical relationship, but which also figures in the name of the association convening the conference and hence hopefully has some use and some meaning. The conference theme, “Global Chinese Philosophy” was broadly designed to attract scholars from within Europe, but also from around the world.

The main aim was to bring together as many researchers and young scientists as possible working in the field of Chinese philosophy. This aim was mainly fulfilled as the conference featured almost 100 presenting participants. By this, the amount of participants was al-

most doubled from the first edition of the conference that took place in Vilnius in 2016. The association could also almost double its membership numbers. As the only association existing in this field in Europe, the event was of crucial importance for researchers to update each other on work currently undertaken and to introduce young researchers to the community. There were several panels organized by and featuring scholars from Taiwan and the People’s Republic of China. Besides, individual scholars from Singapore, Taiwan and the People’s Republic of China participated. The conference was also highly successful in attracting young researchers from Europe doing a PhD in Asia, which gave them a major opportunity to relink with European academia. Moreover, our association is firmly rooted in Central and Eastern Europe and attracts many participants from these parts of Europe, which is both exceptional and remarkable. Since Switzerland is a comparatively expensive place to host a conference, we made a special effort to find ways to reduce costs for participants with limited budgets. To this end, we also arranged for a Young Scholar Award, which attracted 18 full paper submissions by PhD and MA students, which consequently went through three rounds of blind review. The three ex aequo awardees finally were:

- Stefano Gandolfo (Oxford University, UK) “Escaping the Methodological Scylla and

Charybdis of ‘Chinese Philosophy:’ Introducing Zhi-ology”

- Mercedes Valmisa (Princeton University, USA; University Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany), “Adaptive Agency in Early China”
- Christopher Yang (Harvard University, USA), “Attention (思) in the Mencius”

The three winners received modest award prize money, free accommodation and a travel grant. In addition, five more young scholars were subsidized with a travel grant.

The choice of main speakers was motivated by the contrasting profiles in the following criteria: Thomas Fröhlich (modern China, not mainly analytical philosophy, political philosophy, based in Europe), Loy Hui-chieh (ancient China, mainly analytical philosophy, theoretical philosophy, based in Asia). Both keynote speeches were well attended. Thomas Fröhlich (University of Hamburg) spoke on “Beyond Confucian Delusions and Illusions. Critical Issues in Chinese Philosophy Today” and Prof. Loy (National University of Singapore) addressed the topic “Getting Through to a Warloving Ruler: The Mohists and their Elite Audiences”.

We were happy to have received so many submissions that addressed the conference topic directly and several

that added critical angles to them. Of course, there was also a wide variety of other topics. There were altogether 29 panels, with topics ranging e.g. from Chinese Philosophy and Environmentalism; Limits of Global Chinese Philosophy?; Chinese Philosophy between Sinology and Philosophy; Chinese Philosophy, Postmodernism and Poststructuralism; Moral Psychology, Agency and Politics in Early Chinese Philosophy; Chinese Philosophy in Republican China to Modern Chinese Philosophy and Its Uses. Presentations were given in either English or Chinese. The conference brought together scholars academically based in 24 different countries. Europe was broadly represented: UK, Norway, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, France, Iceland, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Finland, Slovenia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Spain, Lithuania, and Estonia. As already mentioned, there were scholars from the PRC (incl. Hong Kong), Singapore and Taiwan. Others came from the USA, Australia, Israel and Russia.

Overall, the event proved to be a great opportunity to learn about the diverse work of many scholars from all corners of Europe and beyond, and it was encouraging to see the impressive number of participants. We hope that this trend continues as we seek to professionalize our association’s work and to set ever higher standards for the study of Chinese philosophy in Europe. Among the expected results were high-quality contributions to the field, various networking effects around scholars

who share research interests and also, last but not least, some visibility for the many participating young scholars.

*Ralph Weber*

**CALL FOR PAPERS  
3rd BIENNIAL  
CONFERENCE OF THE  
EACP**

**GHENT, SEPTEMBER 2019**

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The **3rd Biennial Conference of the European of Association for Chinese Philosophy** (EACP) will take place at Ghent University (Belgium) from September 5-7 2019. The conference theme of this edition will be *Paradigms of Change and Changing Paradigms in Chinese Philosophy*. We are kindly inviting scholars of Chinese philosophy to submit proposals for individual papers or panels to Bart Dessein (bart.dessein@ugent.be) and Ady Van den Stock (ady.vandenstock@ugent.be).

Abstracts should be limited to 250 words. Panel proposals should include the title and a brief description of the panel, as well as the names, affiliations, and contact details of the participants. Please also provide the titles of each participant's presentation. The **deadline for submission is February 28, 2019**. Notice of acceptance of proposals will be sent to your e-mail ad-

dress by the end of April 2019, with instructions on how to register and submit the conference registration fee (EACP members: 60 EUR for scholars and 20 EUR for students, non-members: 80 EUR for scholars and 30 EUR for students).

To encourage participation and inclusion of young researchers, there will be a **Young Scholars Award**. MA holders and PhD candidates who submit a paper proposal should indicate whether they wish to compete for the award. Winners of the award will be receiving a full travel grant as well as prize money.

The official languages of the conference are English and Chinese.

*Bart Dessein*

EACP Vice-President

**BRIEF REPORT OF THE 24th  
WORLD CONGRESS OF  
PHILOSOPHY IN BEIJING**

**FISP MEMBERSHIP**

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Numerous EACP members actively participated at the 24th World Congress of Philosophy, which took place in Beijing from August 12th until August 20th. At this congress, the EACP

has organized a round table in partnership the Taiwanese Society of Chinese Philosophy. The round table was devoted to the problems of methodology of Chinese philosophy. In the introduction, Jana S. Rošker has introduced the activities and the main goals of the EACP.

At the same congress, the EACP has also been accepted as a regular official member of the International Federation of Philosophical Societies FISP (Fédération internationale des sociétés de philosophie), which is the main organizer of the World Congress of Philosophy. According to the information provided by the confirmation letter of its general secretary, Luca M. Scarantino, the EACP was admitted as a “Full Member with 1 vote.”

*Jana Rošker*

**REPORT OF THE  
CONFERENCE AT THE  
AKADEMIE FÜR  
POLITISCHE BILDUNG  
IN TUTZING**

**“APPROACHES TO THE  
FAMILY”**

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The family is an important point of reference in thinking about the role of individuals and community in the Chinese tradition. There is hardly any ref-

erence to the Confucian tradition without mentioning “filial piety”. In a German-Chinese conference on “Approaches to the Family”, held in Tutzing/Bavaria, the importance of the family for human freedom and responsibility was examined from the perspective of European philosophy and the Confucian tradition.

The conference was organised by Michael Spieker from the Academy for Civic Education in Tutzing/Bavaria and Guo Yi from Seoul National University. It was already the third joint German-Chinese conference in Tutzing and the fifth in a series that began initiated by Claudia Bickmann in Cologne in 2011. The aim of those conferences is to foster the discourse on methodological questions of philosophies in east and west: More interesting than the exchange of different theses is the way in which central topics are approached, with an emphasis on the contributions on methodological reflection within German Idealism. 20 Scholars from China and Germany were engaged in intense discussions about the role of the family and of the difficult standing of the individuals inside the family – both in tradition and today. Lectures and comments were given by among others Richard King (University of Bern), Christian Soffel (University of Trier), Chung-Ying Cheng (University of Hawai‘i) and Roger Ames (Beijing University).

At least in the west it is already a commonplace of those who speak of the



philosophy of the family to begin with the fact that this topic is largely neglected, namely not treated at all. Looking at the present, this may be even more true in the West than in the East. From the tradition that the conference was looking at, it is certainly by no means the case that the fact that there are people only within family constellations has not been taken into account. Reflection is made more difficult by the fact that “family” meant completely different things at different times. The concentration on the small family of mother, father and child is a very recent development in world history. But what has always been the subject of reflection under the title “family” is the question of the relationship of the individual to his finiteness, which has its clearest expression in the family context: Thus no one comes from himself, but every person has an origin not chosen by himself. No one can grow up alone and even dying is experienced as a deficit, namely as lonely, when it is lived through completely alone. How to deal with this finiteness is one of the questions that the family also takes into consideration. Other issues were those of human freedom in but also of the family, as well as that of justice in view of the family ties of man. After all, is the state also a kind of family or must it be clearly separated from the connecting logic of the family?

The interpretations of Western and Chinese colleagues differed considerably here. While there was great unity

regarding the importance and precarious situation of the family as well as the persons of different gender living in it.

*Michael Spieker*

Akademie für Politische Bildung, Tutzing, and Katholische Stiftungshochschule München

## **EACP Membership Payment**

If you would like to become a member of the European Association for Chinese Philosophy, please:

1. Create a user account at the EACP page: <http://ea-cp.eu/user/register>
2. Complete the application form (You must be logged in to view the form. Please be sure to include all the required information).
3. After your membership is approved, you will be notified immediately.
4. The payment of the membership fee should be done to the EACP account according to the instructions at: <http://ea-cp.eu/members/membership-fee>
5. You will become an active member after the payment of the membership fee.

Welcome!

# EACP OFFICERS

***President***

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***Secretary***

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***Newsletter Editor***

Christian Soffel

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Matej Zima