



EACP  
EUROPEAN  
ASSOCIATION  
FOR  
CHINESE  
PHILOSOPHY

## **Newsletter No. 2, August 2016**

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## MESSAGE FROM THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR

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With this second newsletter, the 'European Association for Chinese Philosophy' has entered its second working year and is looking forward to its first 'Biannual Conference' on which you will find more information further on.

In these digital times, information on the Association and its activities is regularly updated on the EACP website (<http://www.ea-cp.eu/>) that has thus become the major means of communication among the association's members.

Starting with this second newsletter, an overview of recent publications by the EACP members will be included. We therefore kindly ask all EACP members to send the bibliographical references of their latest publications to the Newsletter Editor. Also announcements of workshops, conferences and other events in the field of Chinese philosophy are welcome.

As always, a newsletter is and will remain the product of its members. For the benefit of all those interested in Chinese philosophy, I therefore kindly invite you to send me any information of which you think it might be of interest for your colleagues in Chinese philosophy for inclusion in the association's newsletter.

Contributions should be sent by E-mail. Please remember to check your copy carefully before sending it. Workshop and conference reports should not exceed 600 words. Calls

for papers should not exceed 100 words. Remember to include all relevant information when contributing new book titles (author, title, publication place, publisher, year, pp., price in EURO and ISBN). Names and titles in non-Latin script (Cyrillic, Chinese, ...) are welcome provided that the author's name is in transcription and a short content summary in English is included.

Every effort is made to include all relevant news, but the Editor reserves the right to edit all contributions for publication.

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**NEXT COPY DEADLINE:**

December 15, 2016

**NEXT ISSUE:**

January 2017

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**REPORT FROM THE  
PRESIDENT**

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Dear EACP members!

I am pleased to greet you once again in this second newsletter of our European Association of Chinese Philosophy, which was officially founded in February 2014 in Ljubljana, Slovenia.

The primary goal of the Association, which aims to encourage and advance all academic and scholarly activities related to Chinese philosophy in all European countries and beyond, is to open a dialogue between scholars of Asian (especially Chinese) intellectual history and create and maintain a platform for fruitful cooperation and exchange of ideas. Thus, one of the main tasks of the EACP is to organize bi-annual conferences on Chinese thought.

I am extremely happy to announce that the first EACP conference entitled “*Thinking across Borders: Philosophy and China*” was a great success. It took place between 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> June 2016 at the Lithuanian Vilnius University, which was founded in 1579 and is thus one of the oldest and most famous establishments of higher education in Eastern and Central Europe.

This first EACP conference was organized by Vyitis Silius, who was the vice-president of the association and was now elected new president on the General assembly that also took place at the conference. Hence, this is the last *Letter of the President* I am writing to the EACP members in this position. At this opportunity, I want to congratulate the new president for his election and wish him a lot of success for his future activities. Simultaneously, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to him for organizing such a significant, interesting and beautiful event, which will doubtless become an important part of the historical memory of our young association.

You can find additional information in the new president's report on the conference in this newsletter as well as on the EACP conference website. In this letter, however, I would also like to draw your attention to some of the past conferences and other forms of international academic meetings that were organized or co-organized by EACP members in 2015 and 2016. The information about them and their descriptions can be found on the Announcement page at the website of EACP.

In addition, the EACP members have published numerous academic essays, books and collections on various topics connected to Chinese and broader East Asian intellectual history. However, this first two years were not crucial only in regard to our rich academic harvest: the excitement I feel about these issues is not about expansion. It is about improvement! The proper methodology for studying Chinese philosophy – which is still interpreted primarily from the perspective of traditional Western social sciences and humanities – is found not only in the recognition of a "different theoretical model", but in the relativization of the value systems and perception structures. What do I mean when I mention the necessity of relativizing values? This does by no means mean that all values are equally important, applicable and realizable. Some of them are even highly problematic and cannot be justified by their specific cultural backgrounds. However, since the dominant discourses in Western philosophical theory are based on the concept of truth, the awareness that there are very

few objective, universally valid values, is of utmost importance for those Western scholars concerned with Chinese philosophy. While the value-systems that shape modern Western societies are based upon concepts such as individualism and free will, East Asian societies were dominated by a strong sense of familism and belonging to a community (and, to a certain extent, still are). These concepts and identification patterns represent the foundations for various value system(s), which should thus be seen as relative. In order for this relativization to take place, we need to obtain an insight into the conceptual structures and connections among the concrete historic, economic, political and cultural (philosophical) systems that underlie the Chinese social reality. The awareness of these underlying foundations – which inevitably also influence the basic theoretical approaches, methods and conceptual framework – constitute a platform that allows for the understanding of Chinese philosophy on its most profound levels.

Intercultural research in the field of Chinese philosophy should approach the Chinese cultural and linguistic area through its own language and texts. Such an approach is of key importance, for this is the only way (at least within the frame created by the very essence of Western methodologies) in which we can overcome the absolute dichotomy between the active subject and the passive object in cultural research. In Chinese language the use of primary sources provides an insight into the structure of issues and interpretations that are charac-

teristic of the socialization process, as well as the contents and methodological approaches that form the research subjects.

Another difficulty found in the research of classical philosophy is the understanding and mediating of traditional contents, both oral and textual, which are structured in accordance with the various grammatical and semantic systems. The essential postulates of modern academic discourses (as well as the methodologies deriving from them) continue to be a part of the “indisputable” discourses of the Western (especially European) tradition. Trying to squeeze the different aspects of various ‘non-European’ realities into such formal templates and procedures can lead the researcher to an interpretative dead-end or, even worse, result in a total misconstruction of the subject matter. At the same time, if we wish to communicate the results of our researches in a way that can be understood by the general academic community, we must adhere to these procedures and templates.

The EACP has a rare opportunity to develop novel capabilities that will lead to a new era in the research of Chinese philosophy and strengthen the existing programs that make us unique and impactful. The new capacity and additional talents, which will be encouraged through the Young Scholars Award, can undoubtedly improve the future research of Chinese intellectual history in Europe and beyond. With their help we hope to ensure a greater impact in the years ahead, but this will happen only with partnerships and in

cooperation with individual researchers, academic institutions and foundations with an interest in the fruitful development of research in Chinese philosophy. Hence, I would like to thank all of our committed members who have joined us on our journey so far! And – since our future depends on what we are doing today, I would like to conclude by paraphrasing Søren Kierkegaard, exposing that in order to develop, our life must be lived forwards. On the other hand, the EACP is committed to the exploration of Chinese intellectual history, because life can only be understood backwards. The main driving force that guides this understanding is our curiosity. In spite of the increasingly mechanistic and profit-oriented evaluations of our academic work in our globalized world, we should not give it up. Each day, it should guide us through the opaque jungle of questions, connected with the marvelous structure of reality, and the mysteries of life. In this sense, I wish all of you a great, productive and active 2016, full of curiosity and exciting findings!

And last, but not least – I am looking forward very much to meeting you again at the second EACP conference, which will take place in Basel (Switzerland) in September 2017 and will be organized by Ralph Weber.

Jana S. Rošker  
EACP president (2014 –2016)

**REPORT OF THE INAUGURAL  
CONFERENCE OF THE EACP AT  
VILNIUS UNIVERSITY**

**“THINKING ACROSS THE BORDERS:  
PHILOSOPHY AND CHINA”**

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The inaugural conference of the EACP took place on June 9–11, 2016, at Vilnius University (Lithuania). The chair of the organizational committee of the conference was Vytis Silius, the vice president of EACP. The organization of the Conference was financially supported by Vilnius University Confucius Institute, the Directorate for Research and Innovation of Vilnius University and a private sponsor.

The Conference had 62 participants from more than 20 different countries and regions, presenting papers in 18 panels. In the Opening Ceremony all participants were greeted by the Vice Rector of Vilnius University prof. Nijolė Radavičienė, the Director of the Centre of Oriental Studies at Vilnius University prof. Valdas Jaskūnas, the Director of Vilnius University Confucius Institute prof. Audrius Beinorius, and the President of EACP prof. Jana Rošker. The invited keynote speakers of the Conference included prof. Carine Defoort, Leuven University, and prof. Peng Guoxiang, Zhejiang University.

The special panel of Young Scholar Award (YSA) was held during the Conference, where the finalists of YSA – Joseph Ciaudo from Inalco (ASIEs) and Université de Strasbourg, Richard J. Sage from LMU Munich, and YUAN Ai from University of Oxford – presented their papers submitted for the Award. The winner of

the Award was later selected by vote of the Board of EACP and announced during the Closing ceremony of the Conference. Joseph Ciaudo was selected as the winner of YSA of the Inaugural Conference of EACP and awarded with a 1000 EUR prize. Two other finalists each was awarded with 500 EUR prizes.

The collection of articles will be prepared for publishing in two journals: *Asian Studies* (University of Ljubljana) and *Problemos* (Vilnius University).

The Board Meeting and the 2<sup>nd</sup> session of the General Assembly also were held during the Conference. The Regional Representatives of EACP have been invited to take part at the Board Meeting without the voting rights. The Board has decided that the 2<sup>nd</sup> Conference of EACP will be held in September, 2017 at the University of Basel, and will be organized by Ralph Weber. In order not to have biennial conferences of EACP at the same year as the biennial conferences of the European Association for Chinese Studies (EACS), the beginning of the cycle for EACP Conferences was decided to shift to 2017, considering the year 2016-2017 as a transition period. As the Chair of the Organizational Committee of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Conference of EACP, Ralph Weber, University of Basel, has been voted by the Board to become a new Vice President of EACP. From 2017 onwards the EACP conferences will be taking place every 2 years. It was decided that the place of the future conferences will be rotating with an aim of balancing the initiatives among different regions of Europe.

During the 2<sup>nd</sup> session of the General Assembly of EACP following decision were made:

1. The mandate of the first President of EACP Jana Rošker has come to an end with the completion of the Inaugural Conference, thus the Board has suggested Vytis Silius (Vilnius University) as a candidate for the position. The General Assembly has voted to appoint Vytis Silius for President of EACP for the transition period until 2017.

2. Ralph Weber (University of Basel) was introduced to the General Assembly as the new Vice President of EACP and the organizer of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Conference of EACP at University of Basel.

3. The General Assembly has extended the mandate of the present Board members for one more year to fill in the transition period until the 2<sup>nd</sup> Conference of EACP. The Board consists of the following members:

- Jana Rošker, University of Ljubljana
- Vytis Silius, Vilnius University
- Helena Motos, University of Primorska
- Bart Desein, Ghent University
- R- Ralph Weber, University of Basel
- Ivana Buljan, University of Zagreb
- Lun Du, University of Duisburg-Essen

4. The Executive Committee, which represents the central part of the Board, consists of the following members:

- President: Vytis Silius
- Vice president: Ralph Weber
- Treasurer: Helena Motos
- Secretary: Bart Desein

The program of the Inaugural Conference of EACP can be accessed at

[http://www.oc.vu.lt/dokumentai/EACP2016\\_program\\_long\\_su\\_welcome\\_speech.pdf](http://www.oc.vu.lt/dokumentai/EACP2016_program_long_su_welcome_speech.pdf) .

The Book of Abstracts of the Inaugural Conference of EACP can be accessed at

[http://www.oc.vu.lt/dokumentai/book\\_of\\_abstracts\\_EACP\\_2016\\_Vilnius.pdf](http://www.oc.vu.lt/dokumentai/book_of_abstracts_EACP_2016_Vilnius.pdf).

### **RECENT PUBLICATIONS BY EACP MEMBERS**

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and Maja Veselič. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, pp.191-212.

Dessein, Bart (2015). Book review of A Confucian Constitutional Order: How China's Ancient Past can shape its Political Future, by Jiang Qing, Princeton: Princeton University Press. In: *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 41/1, pp.214-217.

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Rošker, Jana S. “Kua wenhua yanjiu de yixie wenti: Zhongguo zhexuede fangfa lun wei li”, *Hanxue yanjiu*, 2015, [Vol.] 18, str. 6-16. [COBISS.SI-ID [58494562](#)]

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## 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!

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