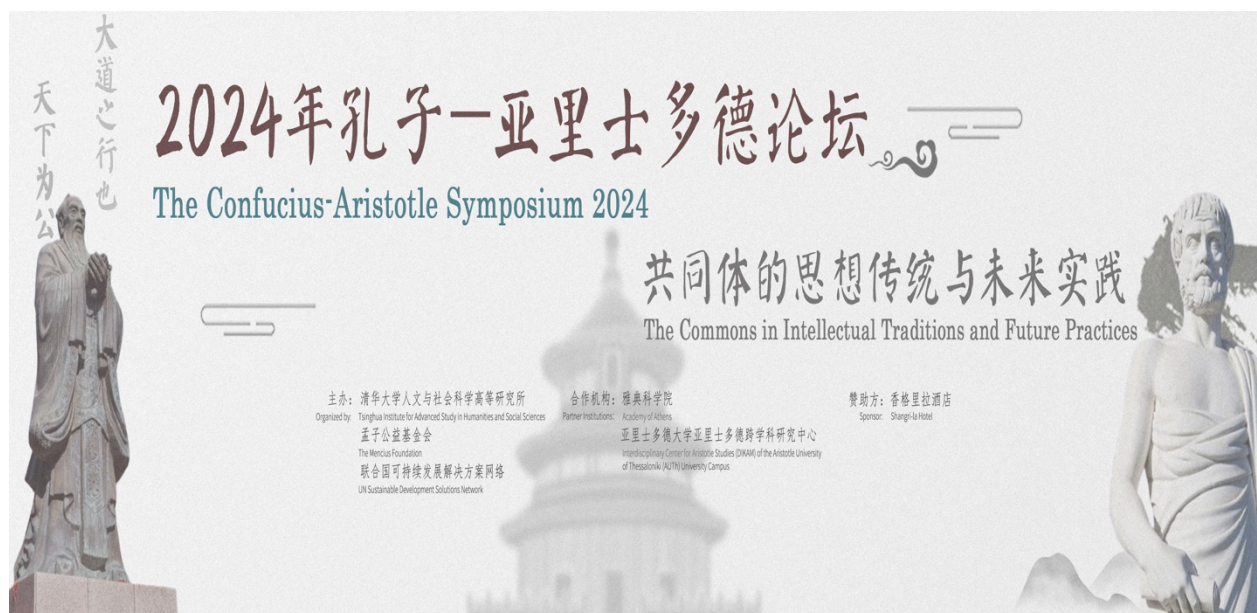




Confucius – Aristotle Symposium Program Handbook



Section 4. Confucius – Aristotle Symposium Agenda

Monday, July 8

8:00 am

Entrance

8:30 am – 9:00 am

Words of Welcome

Speakers (3 mins each)

Host: GUO Chengyan, Vice Chairman and General Secretary of China Confucius Foundation

1. DENG Yunfeng, Deputy Governor of Shandong Provincial People's Government
2. Phoebe KOUNDOURI, Professor in Economics, Athens University of Economics and Business & Technical University of Denmark and Chair of SDSN Global Climate Hub
3. Mayor of Jining
4. Maria PROTOPAPAS-MARNELI, on behalf of the Secretary General of the Academy of Athens
5. Demetra SFENDONI-MENTZOU, Founder and President of the Interdisciplinary Center of Aristotle Studies, A.U.Th., Professor Emer. of Philosophy of Science, Member of the Austrian Academy of Sciences (OeAW)
6. YU Xiaoming, Former Party Secretary of the Standing Committee of the Shandong Provincial People's Congress, Chairman of the China Confucius Foundation

9:00 am – 10:00 am

Keynote Speech: Introduction

Host: WEN Haiming, Vice Director of Nishan Center of World Civilization and Professor of Philosophy at Renmin University

1. Jeffrey SACHS, President of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network and University Professor at Columbia University.
2. CHEN Lai, Professor and Dean of Academy of Chinese Learning at Tsinghua University
3. XUE Lan, Cheung Kong Chair Distinguished Professor and Dean of Schwarzman College at Tsinghua University, Co-Chair of the Leadership Council of UN SDSN

10:00 am – 10:30 am

Coffee Break

10:30 am – 12:00 pm

Qufu Panel ONE. The Contemporary Relevance of Confucianism

Speakers (8 mins each)

1. Chair: Bryan W. VAN NORDEN, James Monroe Taylor Chair in Philosophy at Vassar College
 - Virtue Ethics and Confucianism

Confucian and Aristotelian ethics focus on four questions: what is a good life overall? what virtues does one need to live a good life? how does one cultivate the virtues? what view of human nature is consistent with our answers to the previous questions? The substantial differences between Confucianism and Aristotelianism result from the specific answers they give to these questions.

2. Youngsun BACK, Associate Professor in the Department of Confucian Studies and Eastern Philosophy at Sungkyu
 - Two Conditions of the Confucian Self

In this talk, I explore the Confucian perspective on human nature and self-cultivation, drawing from Mencius and the Korean Confucian scholar Yi Ik (Seongho). Mencius claims that human beings inherently possess moral inclinations, categorized into four types: compassion-commiseration, shame-disdain, deference-reverence, and approval-disapproval. In order to live a flourishing life, we must cultivate these into the virtues of benevolence, righteousness, propriety, and wisdom, respectively. Seongho extends Mencius' ideas, emphasizing 'forming-one-body' as essential for benevolence—feeling other's pain as one's own. Conversely, nurturing shame and disdain involves 'having-no-self,' enabling impartial and objective moral evaluation. These emotions differ in function: compassion-commiseration fosters genuine bonds within the community, while shame-disdain prevents moral transgressions. This dual cultivation approach ensures we become respectful and integral members of the community, embodying both the maximum and minimum requirements of communal virtue.

3. Hwa Yeong WANG, Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Duke Kunshan University
 - Confucianism and Feminism
4. LOY Hui Chieh, Associate Professor of Philosophy, National University of Singapore
 - Is Virtue Enough?
5. FANG Xudong, Director of Inter-Civilizations Institute, Chinese Philosophy Professor at East China Normal University
 - Guiding People with Morals: Wang Yangming's Political Theory of Virtue
道之以德：王阳明的美德政治理论

The reporter will introduce Wang Yangming's theory of virtue and politics around the rural contract formulated by him. During his tenure as the governor of Nangan, Wang Yangming formulated the "Nangan Xiangyue", which reflected his social governance philosophy. His main spirit was to use moral education as a means of governance, implementing Confucius' concept of "virtue is the way", and developing the Xiangyue theory of Confucian scholars since the Song Dynasty.

6. GONG Qun, Professor at Renmin University of China
- TBD

Q&A Section (30 mins)

Host: LI Yong, Associate Dean and Professor at Wuhan University

12:00 pm -1:30 pm

Qufu Panel TWO. The Contemporary Relevance of Aristotelianism and Chinese Philosophy

The insights of two of the most emblematic figures in the intellectual history of mankind, Confucius and Aristotle, transcend the geographical, cultural, and historical boundaries of the two most ancient civilizations, China and Greece. Their common ideas of the intimate relation of Ethics and Politics, the Doctrine of the Mean, the Principle of Social Order, the idea of the primacy of Education, the principle of Higher Life, of virtue Ethics, in general, their interest in what is the best way to live, are becoming all the more relevant today, as they can substantially contribute to a global dialogue for a more trustworthy and reasonable world.

Speakers (8 mins each)

1. **Chair: Demetra SFENDONI-MENTZOU**, Founder and President of the Interdisciplinary Center of Aristotle Studies, A.U.Th., Professor Emer. of Philosophy of Science, Member of the Austrian Academy of Sciences (OeAW)
- Aristotle's Contribution to the History of Human Thought and the Relevance of his Thought today.

For my presentation, I have chosen to refer to Aristotle. His work has an impressive impact in the history of human thought for more than two millennia and continues to be present in our intellectual lives. As part of his legacy, Aristotle leaves us his teachings on democracy, law, justice, paideia. Concepts, such as virtue, mean, practical wisdom, friendship, are fundamental to his moral and political theory. They provide answers to the central question: "How shall I reach the ultimate good, εὖ ζῆν?" Besides his philosophical work, Aristotle's contribution to science and scientific thinking is enormous. He set the foundations of the main disciplines of

science and built a dynamic model of nature, which is increasingly relevant to contemporary Physics. It is, therefore, of critical importance today to open a dialogue as to how the insights gained from Aristotle and Confucius, could lead us to a deeper understanding of the world revealed by recent discoveries in science and help us deal with problems created by the amazing development of such fields, as AI; most importantly, how they can show us the way to reach valuable conclusions as to how we can collectively face the great challenges of our time on a global scale.

2. Mary Evelyn TUCKER, Co-director & Co-founder Yale Forum on Religion and Ecology
 - Reflections on Ecological Civilization and Confucianism
3. Bishop Marcelo Sánchez SORONDO, former Chancellor Pontifica Academy of Sciences and Social Sciences
 - Aristotle's Metaphysics
4. CHEN Xia, Research Fellow of Institute of Philosophy at Chinese Academy of Social Sciences
 - Zhuangzi and McDowell on Languages
5. **Christos Pechlivanidis**, Dr. of Philosophy, [A.U.Th.](#) Scientific Associate at the Interdisciplinary Centre for Aristotle Studies
 - Aristotle on the science expert [epistemon], the mean [meson] and the rational character of virtue [arete]

Aristotle in the Nicomachean Ethics refers to ethical virtue and its characteristics. He defines virtue as a hexis (ἕξις), a state of character acquired by long practice and connected with feelings and actions, freely chosen by humans (ἕξις προαιρετική). It is in the middle (that is, it is between two vices, which are found respectively in excess and deficiency) which is determined on the basis of subjective criteria and is driven by logic and indeed the logic of the practically wise person (φρόνιμος). It is that which indicates to humans what they should do and what not. Aristotle refers especially to the science expert (ἐπιστήμων), the knower who seeks to find (ζητεῖ) and chooses (αἰρεῖται) the mean. In the final and complete definition of virtue, we understand that for a human, virtue is the hexis by which a) he/she himself/herself becomes perfect (ἀγαθός/ή) and b) fulfills his/her destiny in a perfect way.

6. HU Jing, Lecturer at University of Pennsylvania
 - Hu Shih on Universal Ethic

In the search for “universal ethics,” it is interesting to look at Hu Shih as a representative of the many early 20th-century Chinese reformers/philosophers who admired many aspects of Western civilization. Hu Shih lived from 1891-1962, so he had first-hand knowledge of the effects of Western imperialism on China. However, Hu Shih was a critic of traditional Chinese philosophy and culture who hoped to inspire his fellow Chinese to learn from and adopt many Western practices and ideals. Although he died in 1962, I think that Hu Shih's words are again inspiring in a time like ours, in which fascism and pseudo-scientific conspiracy theories are once again on the rise around the world.

Q&A Section (30 mins)

Host: WANG Kun, Associate Professor of Philosophy at Sun Yat-sun University (Zhuhai Campus)

1:30 pm – 2:30 pm

Lunch

2:30 pm - 4:00 pm

Qufu Panel THREE. Comparative Philosophy

Speakers (8 mins each)

1. Chair: Maria PROTOPAPAS-MARNELI, Emeritus Researcher of Ancient Philosophy at Academy of Athens
 - When Aristotle met Confucius. On life.

I will explore the concept of life as Confucius and Aristotle regard it. Despite the two philosophers living approximately two centuries apart, there are moments when one might feel as though they engaged in extensive discussions or that Aristotle had read in a mysterious way the Confucius' "Analects". The common target of both philosophers is the virtuous leadership of the city which must deal with its citizens' actions and living. Aristotle and Confucius aimed for a practical wisdom or a practical philosophy and tried to prove to their students that apart from the events and our attitude towards them, there is a power innate in every one of us that makes us invulnerable to the events. That is the power of our intellect and its constant training. This is the only means we must improve and cultivate in order to lead a better life for ourselves and for the others.

2. Misha TADD, Director of the Global Laozegetics Research Center and Associate Professor of Philosophy at Nankai University
 - Shared Hellenic and Chinese Views on Nothingness
3. Ludwig NAGL, Associate Professor (ret.) at University of Vienna, Austria
 - Jürgen Habermas on Confucianism, Taoism, and Greek Philosophy

In his comprehensive, 1738 pages long, two volume study "Also a History of Philosophy", first published 2019, the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas analyzes the "genealogy" of what he calls today's "secular, postmetaphysical thinking". In volume 1 he provides "A provisional comparison of the Axial age world views", reflecting in this context, inter alia, on "the two most influential Chinese teachings" Confucianism and Taoism, as well as on Early Greek Philosophy (1, 205-319).

My brief presentation has five parts: Parts 1 to 3 deal with Habermas's analyses of Confucianism, of Taoism, and of Early Greek Philosophy; part 4 offers a short reflection on some limits of Habermas's history, in which core segments of the Western Enlightenment discourse - Christian Wolff's and G.W. Leibniz's complex reconstructions of Confucius - are omitted; and part 5 deals with "Points of concurrence, as well as points of difference, between contemporary Neoconfucianism and Habermas's thought".

4. Laura GUERRERO, Assistant Professor of Philosophy at William & Mary
 - The Value of Comparative Philosophy

This presentation demonstrates the value of engaging in cross-cultural philosophy by highlighting one important historical example of intercultural exchange that continues to shape philosophical thinking today. In the early centuries of the common era in India, various important Buddhist philosophical texts were composed in Sanskrit but later lost in India. However, because of the work of Chinese scholars traveling in ancient India, those texts survive today in Chinese. Without the cross-cultural exchange of those Chinese scholars, philosophers such as myself could not today study and engage with one of the most important and influential philosophical traditions of Buddhism.

5. Yong WANG, Secretary-general of the Center for Chinese and Greek Civilizations
 - Promoting Dialogue between Chinese and Greek Civilizations

6. Marzenna Barbara JAKUBCZAK, Professor of Philosophy at Jagiellonian University in Krakow
 - Sustaining the Mind: Hints from Early Indian Philosophy

The author's aim is to discuss two main questions: (1) what goals should comparative philosophy pursue in the 21st century? (2) what hints from early Indian philosophy can we find inspiring and universally useful in the context of contemporary philosophical debate about the mind and the limits of self-knowledge? There seems to be general agreement among early Indian philosophers that any explanation of the existential problems that plague us should begin with the following insight: it is not so much that the problems are hidden in the world, but that my own ego is the problem. Therefore, the Buddha recommends getting rid of the self, while in the Upanishad and Sāṃkhya-Yoga traditions the pure self (ātman or puruṣa) is considered inevitable to sustain the integrity of the personality. A brief review of the arguments put forward by Indian philosophers will be provided with some references to contemporary theories of mind.

Q&A Section (30 mins)

Host: GAO Shan, Professor of Philosophy at Soochow University

4:00 pm - 6:00 pm

Confucius Museum Tour and Musical Performance

6:30 pm – 7:30 pm

Special Dialogue for the UN Summit of the Future: Global Ethics for New Multilateralism

Chair: Jeffrey SACHS

1. TU Weiming (Video), Chair Professor of Humanities and Founding Director of the Institute for Advanced Humanistic Studies at Peking University, Professor Emeritus and Senior Fellow of Asia Center at Harvard University.
2. Akeel BILGRAMI, Professor of Philosophy at Columbia University
3. Phoebe Phoebe KOUNDOURI, Professor in Economics, Athens University of Economics and Business & Technical University of Denmark and Chair of SDSN Global Climate Hub
4. LI Yong, Associate Dean and Professor at Wuhan University

7:30 pm – 9:00 pm

Dinner

Tuesday, July 9

9:00 am – 10:30 am

Qufu Panel FOUR. Global Ethics and Governance

Speakers (8 mins each)

This panel deals with various conceptions and aspects of the project of a global ethics. The speakers highlight alternative approaches to the main dimensions of a general normative framework, which could be taken into account in public life, with a view to improving governance in contemporary societies. We shall begin by considering the main components of a minimal core of such an ethics, involving complementary deontological and teleological or consequentialist norms of beneficence and justice and reflecting values and virtues common to diverse cultural traditions. Expanding this core, we aim at integrating particular elements which may serve the goals of pluralist societies aspiring to collective and individual flourishing. We dwell on respect for the dignity of persons, and for rights to religious freedom, on tolerance and compassion for all human beings, on the use of moral emotions, such as shame, for developing ethical sensitivity, and on the resources of metaphysical worldviews, such as that of Mahāyāna Buddhism, for sustaining a robust ethical stance. Thus, we propose a dialogue drawing on ideas of Greek, Christian, Chinese and Indian thinkers which point to central forms of expression of our common humanity.

1. Chair: Stelios VIRVIDAKIS, Emeritus Professor of Philosophy at National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, President of Steering Committee of the Center of Greek and Chinese Ancient Civilizations (KELKIP)
 - The Minimal Core of Global Ethics
2. Fr. James Dominic ROONEY, Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Hong Kong Baptist University
 - Taming Our Institutions

Pope John Paul II once argued that “...the source and synthesis of [all other human] rights is religious freedom, understood as the right to live in the truth of one's faith and in conformity with one's transcendent dignity as a person” (Centesimus Annus, 47). Modern political philosophers might be sympathetic with views that society should not be atheistic, exclude religious believers from public life, or prevent their freedom of association, but would usually reject a need for public normative judgments that human rights protections rest on orientation toward higher goods. Appealing to perspectives common to both Greek/Roman and Confucian philosophical traditions, I propose that we can preserve the intuitions common to these traditions within a modern context, arguing that robust rights to religious freedom represents a rationale for principled limitations and checks on government power. These rights therefore provide an overlooked basis for understanding the goal of human rights law.

3. Carol ROVANE, Violin Family Professor of Philosophy and Chair of Contemporary Civilization at Columbia University
 - Individual and Group Agency

Many political theories, both ancient and modern, claim that the appropriate goal of the polis is to enhance the lives of individual human beings – perhaps through the achievement of virtue, or a capacity for contemplation, or a relation to God, or the protection of rights, or a form of freedom. And sometimes, the polis itself has been conceived on the model the individual human being. In the west, this is especially clear in Plato’s Republic, and in many successive elaborations of the idea of a body politic in medieval philosophy from al Farabi to Christine de Pizan. It is also clear in Hobbes’s conception of the Leviathan and in Rousseau’s conception of the general will. But there are obvious limitations on how close the analogy can be, between the polis and the individual human being, owing to two facts: first, groups of human beings are metaphysically different from individual human beings, and second, the groups of human beings that constitute the polis are constituted for the sake of their individual human members, whereas the converse is not true – that is, individual human beings do not exist for the sake of the political groups of which they are members, and indeed they are often conceived as existing just for their own sake. However, over time, the very idea of an individual has undergone a transformation. It has become increasingly abstract, and the abstraction has come to focus on just one human capacity, namely, the capacity for rational agency. Whenever this capacity is exercised, it produces a kind of rational unity. But furthermore, it is only through the exercise of this capacity that a human being can come to exhibit such rational unity – only then does it emerge to be something that reasons and acts as one. Thus, an individual human being becomes the site of an individual rational agent only through the exercise of agency, so that it comes to exhibit the sort of rational unity that is characteristic of individual rational agency. But it turns out that the very same kind of rational unity can be achieved within a group of human beings, and in these cases, the group itself qualifies as a rational individual agent in its own right. For this reason, it has become intelligible that certain group agents, such as corporations, can enter a court of law and argue that they have the same rights as individual human beings. For the very same reason, economists are prepared to count many different kinds of things as economic agents – not only individual human actors, and legally recognized corporations, but also households for example, and indeed any entity that enters into market transactions. Thus the importance of the individual human being has given way to the importance of homo economicus, an abstractly conceived rational agent that is capable of entering into all sorts of social relations, including most especially economic relations. I suggest that contemporary political theory needs to contend with both the reality, and the power, of group agents in a way that ancient political theory did not need to do.

4. Douglas BERGER, Professor at Leiden University
 - The ABCs of Cultivating Our Humanity

The world today appears to be rupturing into ever-worsening cultural, national and political polarization, with internal, regional and global conflicts becoming increasingly difficult to solve. This brief presentation will look back at ongoing, and periodically quite heated contestations between classical Confucian and Chinese Buddhist philosophers, who not only had starkly different “big-picture” philosophical worldviews, but who were also competing for imperial subsidization and institutional influence. However, we will focus on the ways in which each tradition was influenced by and accommodated the perspectives of the other in order to attain a more comprehensive, “rounder” worldview which included them both. We in the contemporary world could benefit by not only learning about the synthetic creativity of these traditions in acknowledging and being informed by one another, but could especially heed what each has to say about the importance of reflective, deliberative understanding and compassion for all beings.

5. Siseko KUMALO, Lecturer of Philosophy at the University of Fort Hare
 - Using the Black Archive in Contemporary Democratic Process
6. Jan WESTERHOFF, Professor of Buddhist Philosophy at the University of Oxford
 - Ethical Implications of Buddhist Metaphysics

In contemporary Western philosophy we usually draw a distinction between the part investigating fundamental features of reality — theoretical philosophy —, and the part investigating values — normative philosophy. It is generally assumed that there is no argumentative route from the former to the latter: you cannot get an ‘ought’ from an ‘is’. This situation is radically different in the philosophy of Mahāyāna Buddhism, which puts emphasis on the idea that a metaphysical theory, the theory of universal emptiness, implies a specific ethical stance, a universal compassion directed at all beings, that is to be practiced by those aspiring to become Buddhas. This presentation will discuss how this connection is made. We consider how the theory of emptiness is not simply a theory of fundamental features of reality, but generates a specific way in which the world appears to us, which entails a new way in which we act in the world.

Q&A Section (30 mins)

Host: CHEN Xia, Research Fellow of Institute of Philosophy at Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

10:30 am – 12:00 pm (90 mins)

Qufu Panel FIVE. Cultural Dialogue

Speakers (8 mins each)

1. Chair: Katja VOGT (Zoom), Professor of Philosophy at Columbia University

- Approaches in Ethics
2. XIN Yamin, Professor at Zhengzhou University
- Mythos' as a Meta-Concept in Western Culture

Mr. Chen Zhongmei, a senior researcher at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, began to study the concept of mythos in the 1990s, and in 1998, he put forward the "Mythos-logos theory" with Mythos and logos as meta-concepts of western culture. Today, Mr. Chen has fully developed this theory and its academic value has been demonstrated, and a theoretical system based on philological and philosophical research has been established that can reinterpret the basic structure of Western culture. The reflection on Mythos and the construction of Mythos-logos theory are of great academic value, which will certainly help us to understand Western culture. As Max Muller put it: "He who knows one, knows none". Taking Western culture as a mirror, we can make a better judgement on Chinese culture.

3. Golfo MAGGINI, Professor of Modern and Contemporary Philosophy & Head of The Department of Philosophy at University of Ioannina
- Phenomenological Reflections on Cultural Alterity and Intercultural Dialogue

In contemporary philosophy there has been an increasing awareness that attempts at intercultural dialogues, especially when they implicate the hermeneutic encounter between Europe and Asia, show only too well that the Enlightenment ideal of universalism often hides an established hierarchy, whereas the liminal landscape between "one's own" culture and an "alien" culture is all too often not clearly delimited. In our presentation, we will use the conceptual and methodological tools of phenomenological philosophy, of Edmund Husserl's himself but also of contemporary Western and Chinese phenomenologists, such as Anthony Steinbock, Bernhard Waldenfels, Iso Kern, John Drammond, as well as Chan-fai Cheung and Chung-chi Yu. In comparison to the work done by social scientists, such as ethnologists and cultural anthropologists, phenomenological philosophy offers us, as early as Edmund Husserl's writings on the issue, an expanded perspective on interculturality based on three key themes: the theme of the world with the conceptual twofold of life-world (Lebenswelt) and cultural world (Kulturwelt), the theme of intersubjectivity with the conceptual twofold of the other and of the alien ego, last but not least, the theme of reason with the conceptual twofold of humanity and historicity.

4. Lee Yee Cheong, President of The Academy of Engineering and Technology of the Developing World (AETDEW)
- Digital Displays in Museums in China on Confucius, Buddha and Laozi and their Impact on Belt and Road Civilizations

The paper identifies the Belt and Road Initiative as the platform for poverty eradication for developing countries. The success of BRI projects is helped by the mutual understanding of the civilizations of Belt and Road countries. There is a need for Belt and Road citizens to understand the civilization underpinning of BRI with the philosophical underpinning of Aristotle, Buddha, Confucius and Laozi. This is best

done by virtual exhibit of the fusion of Belt and Road civilizations undertaken by museums in Shandong Province. This virtual exhibit will be shared with national museums of Belt and Road countries. With the current demonization of China by the West, it is also important for their citizens to understand Chinese civilization.

5. Jacqueline Corbelli, Founder and CEO of the US Coalition on SustainChain
 - Sustainability and the Global Private Sector
6. LIU Wei, Professor of Philosophy at Renmin University of China
 - Family and Moral-Political Education in Aristotle and Confucius

Q&A Section (30 mins)

Host: LIU Wei, Professor of Philosophy at Renmin University of China

12:00 pm- 1:00 pm

Lunch

1:00 pm – 2:30 pm

Qufu Panel SIX. Common Values of Humanity

Speakers (8 mins each)

1. Chair: Pascal LIÉVAUX, Director of the Department for research on Cultural Heritage at French Ministry of Culture, Chair of the Joint Programming Initiative "Cultural Heritage and Global change"
 - Cultural Heritage: A Modern Challenge
2. Erminia SCIACCHITANO, Senior Advisor for Multilateral Affairs at the Ministry of Culture of Italy
 - Culture and Ancient Wisdom for Sustainable Development
3. WANG Ying, Director and Professor of Division of Early Modern Chinese Literary Studies of Institute of Literature at Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.
 - The modern civilization of the Chinese nation under the new pattern of human civilization
4. Martin Nkafu NKEMNKIA, Prof. Emeritus and President of NCDEIF Nkemnkia Community Development Empowerment International Foundation Africa/Europa
 - African Worldview and Wisdom as Vitalogy
5. LIU Xu, assistant professor at the Institute of East Asian Studies, Zhejiang Gongshang University
 - Matteo Ricci's Cross-Cultural Dialogue

Matteo Ricci's missionary methods are deeply shaped by the Chinese other, as his views of mission are rooted in a comprehensive understanding of Chinese culture and deep observation of the Chinese society. He did not neglect the missionary objects and directly promote Catholicism to China, but actively "adapted" to China; Secondly, Ricci's missionary philosophy is full of a spirit of dialogue, as it was formed through

dialogues and exchanges with Chinese philosophers, just like the writing style of The True Meaning of God(天主实义): Western scholars and Chinese scholars exchange, debate, and even refute their respective views in dialogue, while Ricci not only dialogues with Chinese scholars, but also communicates with Jesuit friends in Europe through letters; Finally, Matteo Ricci's missionary methods opened the way for dialogue among civilizations in the contemporary era, as Matteo Ricci's peaceful missionary methods were based on his respect for others. Through observing, understanding, and adapting to his missionary objects, he sublated himself, which not only opened himself to others but also enriched others. This is the premise, approach, and goal of dialogue among civilizations in the contemporary era as well.

6. BAI Tongdong, Professor of Philosophy at Fudan University and Member of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences
 - Beyond Nation-State and Cosmopolitanism: A Confucian New Tian Xia Model of State Identity and Global Governance

Q&A Section (30 mins)

Host: WANG Ying, Director and Professor of Division of Early Modern Chinese Literary Studies of Institute of Literature at Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

3:00 pm – 5:30 pm

Tour: Temple and Cemetery of Confucius and the Kong Family Mansion in Qufu

6:00 – 7:00 pm

Dinner

Wednesday, July 10

9:00 am -12:00 am

Opening Ceremony: Nishan Forum of World Civilization

Keynote Speakers (10 mins)

Jeffrey SACHS, President of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network and University Professor at Columbia University.

Stelios VIRVIDAKIS, Emeritus Professor of Philosophy at National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, President of Steering Committee of the Center of Greek and Chinese Ancient Civilizations (KELKIP)

12:30 am – 2:30 pm

Lunch

2:30 pm – 6:00 pm

Nishan Forum Parallel Section ONE. Exchanges and Mutual Learning among Civilizations under Global Challenges

Speakers:

1. Mayfair YANG, Professor at University of California, Santa Barbara
 - No Nature, No Culture: Chinese Buddhist Vegetarianism, Transmigration, and Kinship.

This study of living Chinese Buddhism in a society that has undergone radical state secularization proceeds from fieldwork in rural Wenzhou on the southeast China coast. Actual contemporary Buddhist practice and sentiments showed a preference and trend towards vegetarianism, in observance of Buddhist strictures against killing. A compassion for the suffering of nonhuman sentient beings is shown in the sharing in social media of videos of animal suffering to raise concern, the resurgence of 'animal-releasing rituals' and Buddhist volunteers to help abandoned pets and local initiatives against the trade and slaughter of dogs for meat. The Buddhist doctrine of transmigration (reincarnation) together with the notion of kinship across human and nonhuman species, contributes to an alternative ontology for the Age of the Anthropocene.

2. Antonia TRICHOPOULOU, Member of the Academy of Athens
 - From Mediterranean and Chinese Diet to a Planetary Diet

The Chinese and Greek diets, deeply rooted in history, represent more than just nutrients and calories; they embody foundational aspects of cultural identity with culinary traditions supporting balanced nutritional intake and lifestyle. Both emphasize a harmonious relationship with nature and community through predominantly plant-based ingredients, respect for seasonal food consumption, and environmentally friendly practices. Not surprisingly, the Mediterranean diet, exemplifying the traditional Greek diet, is recognized in the prestigious Eat Lancet Report as a model for a universally recommended healthy and sustainable diet. Recent suggestions propose adapting lessons from traditional diets globally. A healthy and sustainable planetary dietary model can be promoted by respecting locally produced foods and leveraging the nutritional principles of the Mediterranean diet. This approach tailors the benefits of the Mediterranean diet to different regions, fostering health and sustainability worldwide while honouring rich and diverse local cultural heritage.

3. Jonathan TANAKA, PhD Candidate at University of California, Berkeley
 - The Contemporary Pertinence of Aristotelian Logic

I argue that the Aristotelian approach to logic, wherein terms are the fundamental units of logical assessment, promises pedagogical, theoretical, and practical import of contemporary value. This is unique to Aristotelian logic in contradistinction to now-dominant post-Fregean mathematical, model-theoretic, or symbolic approaches to logic, wherein propositions or sentence types are the fundamental units of logical assessment. In particular, I argue that Aristotelian logic uniquely (1) illuminates and questions substantive presuppositional content in the very ideology in which our theories or claims are formulated, (2) provides a logic for fine-grained distinctions in related terms that denote distinct senses or qualifications of a single subject, and (3) makes salient rhetorical and explanatory virtue in argument construction. I argue that (1)-(3) are of paramount pedagogical, theoretical, and practical import for navigating the contemporary world, especially in relation to present challenges pertaining to information. I conclude by briefly surveying efforts to this end, especially Logic Made Accessible, an international pedagogical effort headed by myself and researchers at Columbia University.

4. Zacharias SCOURAS, Professor Emeritus of Biology & Vice President of the Interdisciplinary Centre for Aristotle Studies A.U.Th
 - Aristotle's Biological Thinking: A Contemporary View

The question "what is life" arises in every person, consciously or unconsciously, regardless of his educational level, the place and the time he lives. Any answers are influenced by temperament, the organization of society, the development of science and technology, dominant worldviews, the relationship with nature and metaphysics. Aristotle turns thought to the world of the sensible. It considers life as a continuous interaction of the parts that make it up and the environment in which it evolves.

He makes man part of biological research, defining him as a political animal, and places biology at the basis of his thinking about human affairs.

Having defined the concepts life and man, he considers that the best system for people to live together is Democracy, where through the triptych Citizen – City – State, both the city and the state should lead to the happiness (εὖ ζῆν) of the citizen, an eternal meaning that hardly tested in our times.

5. Riccardo POZZO, Professor of Philosophy, Tor Vergata University of Rome and Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences
 - Food and the Reflective Society: Reflections on Biocultural Diversity

The relationship between food and culture has been considered from a range of disciplines and approaches including anthropology, sociology, history, economics, philosophy, and women's studies. The UNESCO list of world intangible cultural heritage embraces to date 547 items. Food has much to offer to the reflective society. Biodiversity is to be studied in relation to the mobility of migrants, which has an impact on the agri-food systems. It is necessary to combine global climate change models with local scenarios of social and economic growth. We expect food to trigger a change in the mind-set as regards locating culture (anthropology of space and place) for inclusion and reflection in education, life-long learning, healthcare, urban development and regeneration. Culture cannot be but plural, changing, adaptable, constructed. Inclusion and reflection are constructed whenever we are in contact with other human beings, regardless where they come from. This we have to learn.

6. Alexis MCLEOD, Professor of Religious Studies at Indiana
 - The *Huainanzi*'s Solution for Global Diversity

Nishan Forum Parallel Section TWO. "Axial Age" Civilizations and Contemporary Society

Speakers:

1. Aaron Dean STALNAKER, Professor of Religious Studies at Indiana University
 - Cultivating Autonomy with the Early Confucians

This talk suggests that early Confucian thought can help resolve fundamental problems in modern Western ethics and political theory regarding authority and autonomy. Modern Western ideas about autonomy often make it appear irrational or tyrannical when individuals submit to any outside authority, which raises a deep question: whether and how it might be genuinely possible to help others cultivate their autonomy. I suggest that all people need to cultivate autonomy in sustained relationships of training, as analyzed insightfully by early Confucians like Mengzi and Xunzi. These relationships are necessary to develop human moral potentials, and involve rational and thoughtful submission to authorities, but not absolute or unquestioning obedience, and so avoid common critiques of authority relations.

2. Tao JIANG, Professor of Chinese and Buddhist Philosophies and Director of Center for Chinese Studies at Rutgers University
 - Reimagine the Personal in Zhuangzi's Philosophy

Zhuangzi's imaginary of personal freedom has often been interpreted as being confined to the spiritual domain with little moral-political relevance in Chinese intellectual history. However, Zhuangzi's extraordinarily rich deliberations on the personal dimension of our life can be fruitfully understood as a defense of the personal qua personal, against the accusation of selfishness automatically associated with it. Such an approach to Zhuangzi's philosophy can help to retrieve a uniquely Zhuangist conception of a person that resists the suffocating socialization which entails internalizing prevailing social values, not unlike the early modern European imaginations of a pre-social person in the state of nature. This can help to make the Zhuangzi a more attractive and more viable resource for contemporary moral-political deliberations.

3. Tamara ALBERTINI, Director of Islamic Studies and Chair Professor of Philosophy at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa
 - Deep Hospitality and a New Approach to Comparative Philosophy

Deep Hospitality is the name I gave to my theory of hospitality, which posits that the host is as much a guest as the guest is a host. This concept is rooted in Hegel's pattern of mediation, where opposites find their grounding in a middle point. Deep Hospitality envisions hospitality as a form of guardianship, suggesting that world civilizations and cultures rely on each other for their continuity. This interdependence fosters a sense of mutual respect and shared responsibility. By viewing hospitality through this lens, we open up a new path for comparative philosophy. This methodology is driven by humility, intellectual curiosity, and playfulness, aiming to avoid the colonial or otherwise aggressive appropriation of resources and knowledge from other traditions. Instead, Deep Hospitality promotes a more inclusive and respectful approach to engaging with different cultures and philosophies. It encourages scholars to approach comparative philosophy not as a means to dominate or extract, but as a way to learn from and contribute to the collective wisdom of diverse cultural traditions.

4. Nikolaos PARASKEVOPOULOS, Prof. Emeritus of the Law Faculty at Aristotle Univ. Thessaloniki Greece, Former Minister of Justice, Transparency and Human Rights of Greece

- Aristotle on Epistemological and Ethical Elements of Justice

From the times of Aristotle and Confucius and up to the modern era's inventions and institutions, experience and dialogue have served as a bonding agent for a sustainable living, civilization and justice. Now, given our interest in the evolution of both human thought and artificial intelligence, this issue is revisited. AI holds the potential to offer insight that can foster social peace and global sustainability. Yet, AI also bears vital risks. Even if a concordant Justitia Robotica is pure fantasy, as

robots are fueled by data that encapsulate contradicting opinions, the challenge lies in ensuring the functional compatibility of coexistence between justice and AI. Aristotle's ontology of knowledge, acting as a window that allows the two systems to “see” each other, retains significance, allowing the environment (nature - society) to determine, rectify, and reorient the algorithms towards eudaimonia.

5. Eleftheria N. GONIDA, Professor of Educational and Developmental Psychology at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
 - Global Education Challenges: Aristotelian 'Paideia' for Sustainable and Flourishing Learning Communities

In the face of global educational challenges, Aristotelian 'Paideia' offers a powerful theoretical framework for fostering sustainable and flourishing learning communities. Focusing on the holistic development of the learner, 'Paideia' integrates intellectual and moral education to meet the contemporary need for competent and ethical global citizens who can make a positive difference in society. Cultivating intellectual and moral virtues in school/educational contexts, such as critical thinking, self- and co-regulated learning, integrity, respect and civic responsibility, can better prepare students to analyze complex issues, deal effectively with the abundance of information, interact competently with technology, use AI responsibly, and contribute to respectful and safe school/educational communities that combat violence, bullying, stigma and discrimination. This approach improves academic outcomes, enhances the well-being of students and teachers, and ensures the development of ethical, reflective individuals capable of contributing to a sustainable future.

6. **Christina PAPACHRISTOU**, Dr. of Philosophy, A.U.Th. Scientific Associate at the Interdisciplinary Centre for Aristotle Studies
 - Aristotelian and Chinese Concepts of the Role and Function of the HEART

In my paper I intent to examine: (a) Aristotle's theory of the heart (καρδία) as the most important organ of the body (ἀκρόπολις οὔσα τοῦ σώματος) and the seat of sense perception (αἰσθάνεσθαι) and (b) the concept of the heart (心 xīn) in ancient Chinese philosophy and especially in Confucianism as the imperial palace of the body and the centre of both emotions (情 qíng) and thought (思 sī). In addition I shall outline and explore new scientific studies that are beginning to see the emergence of a new more complete understanding of how the brain and heart interact in a dynamic and complex relationship. Recent work in the new field of neurocardiology “has established the view that the heart is a sensory organ and an information encoding and processing centre, with an extensive intrinsic nervous system that's sufficiently sophisticated to qualify as a heart-brain” (Dr. Sarel).

Nishan Forum Parallel Section THREE. Chinese Modernization and Western Modernization

Speakers:

1. Chelsea Cathern HARRY, Professor and Assistant Chairperson of Philosophy at Southern Connecticut State University (USA)

- Modernizing Ancient Wisdom to Address the Climate Crisis

Moral philosopher, Stephen Gardiner, has argued that our ethical failings underpin our insufficient response to anthropogenic climate change. Among these failings are a lack of scientific knowledge and a misguided anthropomorphic view of the relationships between humans and the rest of nature. My presentation addresses the ways that modernizing ancient wisdom can help us rectify these moral failures and thus lead us to positive action toward climate crisis remediation. In the East, Confucianism and Daoism teach that there is unity among humans and the rest of nature. According to Consul General Huang Ping, China has modernized this ancient Chinese wisdom by planning for several green initiatives. In the West, Aristotle was the first to set out a clear method by which he would develop a complete φύσεως ἐπιστήμη (phuseos episteimes), or science of nature that included a comprehensive historia of natural beings. Modernizing Aristotle's systematic desire to know about plants and animals, and thus to develop a respect for all of nature, would give us the tools to address the climate crisis from an appropriately ethical standpoint.

2. John GRIM, Co-founder and Co-director of Yale Forum on Religion and Ecology

- Indigenous Thought and the Modern Dilemma

These remarks focus on the ways in which Indigenous community-governance, pragmatic-thought, and verbal-oriented languages are entangled in stories about selves-in-the-world. "Entanglement" refers to Indigenous perspectives on an inter-folding cosmic wholeness that generates the material world. "Self" suggests a category of individuation and potential integration from the cellular to multicellular realities. Cosmovisions are the stories that integrate that living wholeness into the lifeways of the people. Lifeways is a helpful term that emphasizes the integration of spheres of activity in Indigenous communities often separately understood as economics, medicine, religion, jurisprudence, et al. Materialism refers to Indigenous views of a living material world that communicates within as well as without, for example, with humans. This paper explores how Indigenous humanities emerge in the narration of cosmovisions as eco-spiritualities now manifest in contemporary environmental activism on behalf of a material world.

3. Luděk SEKÝRA, Chairman of The Sekyra Foundation

- Topic TBD [possibly about promoting democracy and critical thinking?]

4. Bryan W. VAN NORDEN, James Monroe Taylor Chair in Philosophy at Vassar College.

- Virtue Ethics and Confucianism

5. **Dimitra BALLA**, Dr. of Philosophy, A.U.Th, Scientific Associate at the Interdisciplinary Center for Aristotle Studies.

- Aristotle on the Biological Basis of Ethics and Politics: The Concept of "Natural Virtue"

In the "Nicomachean Ethics," Aristotle addresses the problem of the origin of human virtue (ἀρετή), and argues that a capacity to acquire virtue is rooted in the human

beings' biological status. In this presentation, I will try to identify the nature of this capacity, in light of the distinction made by the philosopher between natural (φυσική) and proper (κυρία) virtue. Natural virtue forms the basis for proper virtue, and, as is shown by the numerous examples in the "History of Animals," it consists of several natural dispositions (ἡθη, ἔξεις), which are common not only to the human species but also to other animal species. But among all animals, only human beings are called by their nature to fully transform their natural virtue into a perfect virtue, and fulfil thereby their species' end (τέλος), which is not to merely live (ζῆν) but to live well (εὖ ζῆν). I will conclude that, nowadays, Aristotle's above conception of the human beings' biological status is valuable for a deeper understanding of our moral and political responsibility towards our planet and all our cohabitants.

Nishan Forum Parallel Section FOUR. Inheritance and Innovation of Civilizations in the Process of Modernization

1. Mary Evelyn TUCKER, Co-director & Co-founder of Yale Forum on Religion and Ecology
 - Reflections on Ecological Civilization and Confucianism
2. Jan WESTERHOFF, Professor of Buddhist Philosophy at the University of Oxford
 - Ethical Implications of Metaphysics
3. Chiara ROBBIANO, Associate Professor of Philosophy at Utrecht University
 - Confucian Frameworks and Embodied Practices in Education

Not feeling at home, loneliness, fear of diversity, mental health issues might affect students and teachers. The root of these problems might be hidden assumptions about the separation of body and mind, me and others, education and life. My suggestion is to introduce the framework of education as "self-cultivation", or cultivation of 仁 ren, and simple embodied practices in education. Re-framing education as self-cultivation requires us to re-frame teachers and students, as 1. embodied, 2. relational, 3. transformable. For each of these characteristics, I will introduce a passage from Confucius' Analects and an embodied practice, geared to transform the class into a mini-community of learning, where all contribute from diverse backgrounds and positionalities, respond to each other's inputs, feel at home and "establish others in seeking to establish themselves" (Analects 6.30).

4. Anastasia GIANNAKIDOU, Professor of Linguistics and Director of the Center for Hellenic Studies at the University of Chicago
 - Civic friendship and language

Aristotle's concept of friendship is an important pillar, I will argue, of the conversation between civilizations if the goal is the betterment of humanity and overcoming current crises. Language plays a big role in framing the categories of conversation, and it is often used to create Platonic caves that hinder friendship, and the ability to see common humanity. I will suggest ways in which this can be overcome.

5. Siseko KUMALO, Lecturer of Philosophy at the University of Fort Hare
 - Using the Black Archive in Contemporary Social Process
6. Nicholas JONES, Professor of Philosophy at The University of Alabama in Huntsville
 - Finding the Way and Returning Home

For the Confucian philosopher Xunzi, harmony involves things being generous to each other. For the Greek philosopher Plato, harmony involves things not meddling with each other. Because generosity requires giving to others and noninterference requires leaving them alone, there is an apparent conflict between how Xunzi and Plato envision harmony. This talk presents a vision of harmony that removes the appearance of conflict. The source for the vision is the Huayan tradition of Buddhism, and in particular a building metaphor from the Huayan monk Fazang. The talk uses information about Tang-era architecture to explain Fazang's metaphor. The explanation shows how to reconcile the insights about harmony from Xunzi and Plato.

7. Ann A PANG-WHITE, Director of Asian Studies and Professor of Philosophy at the University of Scranton
 - Decolonizing Confucian Feminism in a Transcultural Context

For some, the title of this presentation is perhaps an enigma. Where lies the feminist potential of Confucian philosophy, given its patriarchal past and present? Is Chinese philosophy "philosophy" at all, given its characteristic aesthetic approach to knowledge and truth? We must examine carefully and reflectively what feminism is and what counts as philosophy. Only then can we become objective judges on the feminist potential of Confucian philosophy. This talk will tackle the meaning of feminism, especially the third-wave feminists' critique of the 1st and the 2nd wave feminism as being neocolonial, and it will challenge the narrow definition of philosophy that is based on an abstract, logocentric, either-or binary reasoning of exclusion. Building on a new and broadened perspective of feminism and philosophy for the contemporary world, the talk seeks to uncover hidden resources—textual, historical, philosophical, and lived examples of Confucian men and women—to illustrate the reality and the potential of a decolonized Confucian feminism in a transcultural context.

Nishan Forum Parallel Section FIVE. The Modern Civilization of the Chinese Nation with Renewed Traditions

1. HU Jing, Lecturer at University of Pennsylvania
 - Hu Shih on Ethical Thoughts
2. Malcolm KEATING, Associate Professor of Philosophy at Smith College
 - The Virtues of Debate

Premodern Indian philosophers recognized the virtues of debate in two ways. First, debate requires individual virtues, such as the ability to be dispassionate in pursuit of what is true. Second, the truth-seeking practice of debate, performed well, has virtues that benefit individuals and society, such as reducing suffering. In this talk, I explain both of these insights, which are not well-known but are interconnected with the tradition's more widely known concern for human liberation and practices of emotional and attentional regulation through meditation and yoga.

3. Achilles TSALTAS, President of the Democracy & Culture Foundation
 - Democracy and the Confucius-Aristotle Dialogue

An Aristotle-Confucius dialogue could well turn into a mutually admiration meeting. Essentially, it would bring up only a few opposing views. At the most fundamental level, Aristotle's position that the institutions of political society are the product of nature (and not of "convention") is very much in harmony with Confucius' view that authority is hierarchical (natural order) and the ruler's responsibility is to sustain human welfare.

The presentation will try to identify the predominant similarities between Aristotle's "Politeia" and Confucian culture, and the relation of both to democracy, by concentrating on areas of compatibility, incompatibility and convergence. Naturally, the issue of authoritarianism (defined as "respect for authority") predominant in Confucian culture and indirectly so in Aristotle's writings will draw special attention.

4. Dag HERBJØRNSRUD, author and a global historian of ideas at Center for Global & Comparative History of Ideas (SGOKI)
 - Peace of Mind, State of Peace

At the beginning of Book II of The Analects, Confucius says that if one guides "by virtue", the common people will "reform themselves." Receiving a question from the official Chi K'ang Tzu about government (Book XII), Confucius answers: "To 'govern' (cheng) means to 'rectify' (cheng). If you set an example by being correct, who would dare to remain incorrect." And: "In administering your government, what need is there for you to kill? Just desire the good for yourself and the common people will be good."

In the 5th century BCE, Mozi (墨子) argued that the ones governing should promote "impartial care"/"universal love" (jian'ai, 兼). In this way, "states are not attacking one another" (Book 4:1), because "when everyone regards the states of others as he regards his own, who would attack the others' states?" (4:3).

In the late 17th century, the Ethiopian philosopher Walda Heywat (c. 1627–1700), a student of Zara Yaqob (1600–1693), argued that we should use our rationality to inquire all "truths". He wrote an Inquiry (Hatata) contending that we ought not follow those who only love their own kind: "We must understand and take seriously that all human beings are created equal." (Ch. 14) Arguing against the abuse of authority, Walda Heywat insisted that one should not "mistreat those who live under your power" (Ch. 32).

In this talk, I'll argue that classical philosophy could be a vital way to more understanding, balance & benevolence in the 21st century. Because, after all, a common goal for the world's people, however far-fetched it might seem in 2024, should still be to seek "Peace of Mind, State of Peace".

5. May SIM, Professor of Philosophy & Director of Asian Studies Program at the College of the Holy Cross
 - Resources from Aristotle and Early Confucians for Human Rights

Aristotle's philosophy lies at the root of modern Western philosophy and culture emphasizing an individual's reason and ability to choose, but his goal of a virtue-oriented life is more akin to Confucianism's life of virtue. They agree in a single conception of the good life.

They also lack the concept of 'human rights', because neither conceives of flourishing as protection from an oppressive state (made up of competing ideas of the good life). Rather, the state provides people with the social, economic and political conditions for cultivating virtues.

If human rights protect individual freedom, Aristotelians and Confucians would endorse the positive freedom to engage in cultivating and exercising the virtues, rather than the negative freedom to choose whatever interests one has. Aristotelians and Confucians can offer resources from their common goals in the virtues for justifying a certain type of liberalism. Hence, human rights are compatible with these virtue-oriented traditions.

6. Jonathan FLOWERS, Assistant Professor of Philosophy at California State University, Northridge
 - Reconsidering Confucian Social Media

Nishan Forum Parallel Section SIX. Artificial Intelligence and Human Civilizations

1. Yannis IOANNIDIS, Professor of Informatics & Telecom at Univ of Athens and Co-Chair of UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network Global Climate Hub
 - ABCD Technologies: AI, Blockchain, Computation, Data
2. L. K. Gustin LAW, Harper-Schmidt Fellow in the Society of Fellow and Collegiate Assistant Professor at the University of Chicago
 - Topic TBD

Thursday, July 11

10:00 am – 11:30 am

Opening Ceremony

Host: WANG Hui

Speakers (5 mins each)

1. President of Tsinghua University
2. Jeffery SACHS, President of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network
3. MENG Liang, General Secretary of The Mencius Foundation

12:00 pm—1:30 pm

Lunch

2:00 pm—4:00 pm

Beijing Panel ONE. Civilization in History: Principle, Transfiguration and Rebirth

The Book of Changes said, “The dragon appears in the field, all under heaven begins to be adorned and brightened.” The generation and maintenance of civilization had elevated human existence from earth to heaven and from individuality to all the people under heaven. However, as people gradually moved away from the founding moment of civilization, the core principles of civilization often became dim; they no longer had the self-evidence that could be shared by elites and ordinary people; the improvement of the physical quality of life and the disorderly growth of expert knowledge were not helpful in solving the numerous divisions in political and social attitudes and opinions; the institutions, concepts, and mentality that once supported the formation and maintenance of civilization gradually became incomprehensible. In the evolution of history, it is often through the reaffirmation of the original principles of civilization that reforms have been made, reconstructing institutions and learning to promote the rebirth of civilization. How can we put forward a constructive agenda for thinking about the clash or cooperation of civilizations through the investigation of these historical processes?

Chair: Carol ROVANE, Violin Family Professor of Philosophy and Chair of Contemporary Civilization at Columbia University

Speakers (15 mins each)

1. ZHANG Zhiqiang, Director and Professor of Institute of Philosophy at Chinese Academy of Social Sciences
- 通古今以究天人:中国文明的历史超越性问题
2. Lorenzo MARSILI, Philosopher and Director of the Berggruen Institute Europe

- Towards a New Universalism

Suppose an AI started claiming a speaking place at the table of its own regulation: No regulation without representation. It too, it claims, has conscience enough for its voice to be heard in matters of its government. This is happening today. We are witnessing the closure of three hundred years of exceptional Western domination over humanity and of humanity's domination over the planet. Voices and languages around the table multiply - whether it is those of the global south or those of an ebullient earth. The result in the West is a feeling of disorientation and loss of control. "The world is fragmenting". I argue instead we are on the cusp of a new axial age. The multipolar schism of the human world and the constraints placed on it by the ecological condition of the earth combine to liberate the space for a planetary consciousness to emerge. This will lead to the complete reconstruction of our concepts, policies, and institutions. The task is such that only a great catastrophe may shake the tree and empower us to conduct such reconstruction. I argue the best solution is planetary pragmatism, or the gradual development of concrete and limited practices, policies and institutions of universal scope akin to Foucault's transition from the general to the specific intellectual.

3. Dominic SACHSENMAIER, Chair Professor at Göttingen University, Co-Founder of Joint Center for Advanced Studies
 - Civilization and Globality: Comparing Visions during the 1920s and Today
4. DING Yun
 - TBD
5. Dato Afifi AL-AKITI, Fellow of the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies at the University of Oxford
 - Building Bridges of Muslim civilization between Aristotle and Confucius

Now more than ever, we need international, intercultural, and civilizational dialogues: we need to build bridges, both within and between countries throughout the world. However, the historic cultural and political dominance of the West has meant that, for decades and even centuries, the focus of international bridge-building has been between the West and other countries and cultures, as with the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations project. This, in turn, means that the equally important bridges that should – and indeed do – exist between Eastern civilizations have often been side-lined or overlooked. For this reason, it is opportune for us to consider the Muslim civilization as a forgotten link that has historically served as the bridge between Western civilization, exemplified by Aristotle, and Eastern civilization, embodied by Confucius, both making their own surprising way into the Muslim world.

4:00 pm—4:30 pm

Coffee Break

4:30 pm—6:30 pm

Beijing Panel TWO. Public Dimensions in Polity: Governance, Wealth and Ethnic Groups

Since the World War II, the spread of the theory and practice of the nation-state on a global scale has changed the face of world politics, economy, and ethnic relations, but it has also been infiltrated, questioned, and challenged by these cross-border forces. Nowadays, if the purpose of establishing a nation-state is no longer evident, how do we re-describe the division between the inside and the outside in the world order? In *Of the Social Contract*, Rousseau mentioned that, “no more peoples are being formed.” When we look back to the ages when polities were being formed, we find that nation-state in the modern sense did not exist yet. By observing the polities in Greece, Rome, Medieval Europe, Zhou Dynasty, Qin and Han Dynasties, we see the development of ruling activities, the circulation of wealth, and the shifting of ethnic boundaries. These polities generated different movements of centralization and decentralization, and the public dimension of the polities was also formed in this process, providing ideological and institutional preconditions for later historical development. What lessons can these inquiries provide for us to think about the future of modern nations, states, and world order?

Chair: Akeel BILGRAMI, Professor of Philosophy at Columbia University

Speakers (15 mins each)

1. Peter Fibiger BANG, Professor of Roman History at University of Copenhagen
- Empire in World History
2. WU Fei, Professor and Director of Ritual Research Center at Peking University
- TBD
3. Scott COOK, Tan Chin Tuan Professor of Chinese Studies and Head of Studies for History of Chinese Studies and Yale-NUS College at National University of Singapore
- Righteous Warfare in Ancient Chinese Thought

The main value in studying the ancient world lies in both the positive and negative examples it furnishes us for reflection on how the ideas and problems with which it grappled might still apply to our world today. Among ancient Chinese philosophical wisdom, the issue of “Righteous Warfare” provides an important instance of how well-intentioned doctrine can, if misused, be harnessed for malicious purposes. Drawing upon examples from the Mozi 墨子, which denounced aggressive warfare, and the Mencius 孟子, Xunzi 荀子, and Lüshi chunqiu 呂氏春秋, each which allowed for certain kinds of hostile military action under defensible circumstances, this talk discusses how ancient Chinese thinkers conceived of and justified the notion of righteous warfare, the historical lessons that ensued from this, and the implications that such lessons continue to hold to this day.

4. Daniele ARCHIBUGI, Professor of Italian National Research Council and Birkbeck at University of London

- Cosmopolitan Democracy in a Divided World

The never dormant cosmopolitan aspiration had ignited with new hopes at the end of the cold war. After the roaring 1990s, it almost seemed that it was possible to live without enemies and that the democratic regimes of the West would also extend to the East and South of the world. There was the hope that two apparently idiosyncratic terms, cosmopolitanism and democracy, could be merged into the same project.

Unfortunately, two wars of aggression, the one in Afghanistan and Iraq, have had the deleterious effect of losing the leading role that Western countries could have claimed. A new war of aggression in Ukraine has seen the West united in defending its principles, but the failure to find a fair solution in Palestine has made impossible to build a hegemonic coalition involving emerging countries. We have suddenly returned to a cold war climate without yet knowing what are the forces and interests that have led the planet to fear again a nuclear conflict.

We are thus again in the contradictory situation in which global challenges are increasingly pressing (in just over five years, the world had to deal with financial crises, environmental emergencies and pandemics) while the attempt to respond to them with shared global governance has given disappointing results.

Should we resign ourselves to believing that international relations are again dominated by geopolitical logic and the rivalry of states? Or is it possible to revive the hopes seen at the end of the Cold War and guide globalization through some of the principles and values of democracy?

The problem is to identify who could be the protagonists of a new season capable of affirming a democratic global governance and which could build bridges among communities. These “bridge builders” should impose a new way of thinking which reject the idea that the players of international politics should be restricted to the governments of states, which finds deleterious considering politics as the realm of a friend/enemy opposition and which should try to go beyond the logic of “us” versus “them”. Against this traditional view of international politics, it should be recognized the importance to enlarge the number of participants to global decision-making by empowering international organizations, giving voice to non-governmental organizations and develop notions of cosmopolitan citizenship.

5. Agnieszka Karolina ROSTALSKA, FWO Senior Postdoctoral Research Fellow at Ghent University

- Political Authority and Social Justice: Philosophical Insights from South Asia

Ancient scholars in South Asia dedicated considerable attention to the principles of effective governance. In this context, I will focus on the Arthaśāstra (AŚ), the primary Indian treatise on statecraft. This text is comparable in importance to Plato’s Republic (Politeia), Sun Tzu’s The Art of War, or Han Feizi. According to the Arthaśāstra, a successful ruler prioritizes not only the effective governance of the people and the land, but also focuses on promoting prosperity, harmony, and welfare of all its inhabitants. In this brief presentation, I will delve into the concept of “wealth” (ārtha) and its various means of attainment. Additionally, I will highlight

the fundamental ethical concepts from 1st-2nd century CE India which which continue to hold global relevance in contemporary times.

7:00 pm – 8:30 pm

Dinner Banquet

Welcome Remarks: PENG Gang, Vice President of Tsinghua University

Friday, July 12

8:00 am—10:00 am

Beijing Panel THREE. Sustaining the Mind: From Embodied Skill to AI Platform

Plato's inquiry into the cognitive process in "Meno's Paradox" resonated in twentieth-century discussions regarding embodied skills. The "tacit knowing," eluding simple articulation, prompted reflections on the interplay of mind and body, being and tools, and the socialization of technology. The recent development of artificial intelligence has no doubt intensified such reflections. As complex coding systems lead to an increasing gap between the comprehensible behavior of a device and its actual computational process, questions arise regarding the "embodied" aspect of these intelligent black boxes. The "body" here not only involves the biomimetic and physical aspects of a terminal device, but also encompasses the massive computational power and social resources used by AI platforms. What kind of individual and communal form does this sustaining infrastructure imply, and what political, economic, and legal-ethical challenges does it face in reality? Can the rich discussions concerning mind and technique in classical Western and Chinese thought serve as inspiration for resolving these issues?

Chair: Herta NAGL-DOCEKAL, Professor Em. of Philosophy at University of Vienna and full member of the Austrian Academy of Sciences.

Speakers (15 mins each)

1. DUAN Weiwen
 - TBD
2. ZHAO Tingyang, Professor of Institute of Philosophy at Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.
 - 人工智能会成为经验主义者还是理性主义者?
3. George ZHENG, Distinguished Professor of Public Law at Shanghai Jiao Tong University
 - Human Faces of Artificial Intelligence
4. ZENG Yi
 - TBD
5. CHHEM Rethy Kieth, Professor at CamTech University, member of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network.
 - Compassionate AI: Embodying Buddhist Ethics in Technology

This paper explores the integration of Buddhist ethics into the development and application of artificial intelligence (AI), advocating for the creation of compassionate AI systems. Drawing on core Buddhist principles such as the middle path (Madhyamā), non-violence (ahimsa), and compassion (karuna), we argue for an ethical framework that prioritizes the well-being and dignity of all sentient beings. By examining historical precedents, particularly the leadership of figures like Jayavarman VII, King of Angkor (13th century CE), we illustrate how these principles can guide contemporary technological advancements. The paper examines

practical methodologies for embedding Buddhist ethical values into AI design, development, and deployment, highlighting the potential for AI to enhance human capabilities and foster global harmony and ethical stewardship. Through this lens, compassionate AI emerges as a transformative force, aligning technological progress with the profound wisdom of Buddhist ethics, addressing global challenges, and promoting ethical AI governance and policy.

10:00 pm—10:30 pm

Coffee Break

10:30 am – 12:30 pm

Beijing Panel FOUR. Indra's Net: Ecology as a Methodology

The *Avatamsaka Sutra* weaves an Indra's net where each jewel is reflected in other jewels; *Zhuangzi* depicts a natural world where all the myriad things are ontologically equal. Observing things on their own terms, such Eastern wisdom beyond anthropocentrism align remarkably with the recent ecological turn in the humanities. In this context, ecology is not merely concerned with contemporary environmental crisis or climate change; rather, it demonstrates a methodological significance due to its material-oriented ontology, and an interconnected, encompassing view of analysis. How does the ecological approach to thinking bring new insights into human existence, the interrelation of the myriad things, and philosophical inquiries into identity and difference? How does an ecology-based political and ethical order contribute to addressing challenges in real life, and how is it manifested in the environmental practices of China and other third-world countries? Drawing inspiration from ecological ideas in Eastern intellectual and religious traditions, this panel aims to envision a shared ecological prospect for human beings and the myriad things.

Chair: Krishna PATHAK, Professor of Philosophy at Delhi University

- The Sinking World and Lessons from Buddha's Great Renunciation

Speakers (15 mins each)

1. Mayfair YANG, Professor at University of California, Santa Barbara
 - No Nature, No Culture: Chinese Buddhist Vegetarianism, Transmigration, and Kinship
2. Zhan Ru
 - TBD
3. Sothy KHIENG, Professor of Social Entrepreneurship at Cambodia University of Technology and Science
 - Cambodia Buddhist Economics, Sustainability, and Wisdom

In Buddhist doctrines such as the Four Noble Truths and Non-violence (Ahimsa), the philosophical foundation of Buddhist economics, true well-being arises not from

consumption, but from a mindful reduction of desires. This philosophy translates into economic practices that promote environmental sustainability. Unlike the Western models which seek short-term growth, this model recognizes impermanence (Anicca) and interconnectedness of everything alive. According to 'Right Livelihood,' businesses should engage in activities which do not harm the environment while ensuring fair shares for all living beings. How can Buddhist economics act as a moral framework leading to sustainability – a way forward for humanity on earth?

4. Chelsea Cathern HARRY, Professor and Assistant Chairperson of Philosophy at Southern Connecticut State University (USA)
 - Eco-logy: On Aristotle's Logic of Environment

Aristotle's philosophical and scientific insights represent the pinnacle of ancient Greek wisdom, whose legacy in Western thought can at once not be overestimated and is often left unacknowledged in contemporary discourse addressing our greatest global issues. Chief among Aristotle's contributions to the histories of philosophy and science is the idea that there is a logic to nature, a system of causes and elements to explain the being of all life, that this is discoverable by way of a method of investigation, and that all of this is worth knowing. The logos or study of Eco, from Oikos, is an inquiry about our home, the home of all living beings that is part of the very fabric of who we are and what we have the potential to become. It is also a study of us, who are always already at home. In Aristotle, we find an ecology that assumes the interconnectedness of all life: humans, plants, and animals, focusing on our core psychic similarities before differentiating us in the pursuit of species-specific knowledge. In my presentation, I explicate what I call Aristotle's logic of environment, pointing to how it joins ancient Chinese wisdom in promoting unity among all beings and thus speaks to the way forward as we come face-to-face with the effects of anthropogenic climate change.

12:30 pm—1:30 pm

Lunch

2:00 pm – 3:30 pm

Beijing Panel FIVE. Historical and Philosophical Perspectives and Contemporary Practices on the Commons

The world today is facing an enormous crisis of the commons, ranging from the shrinking of local and regional commons to the planetary problems of ecological diversity, climate warming, and marine pollution. The recent rise of concepts such as the Anthropocene and Capitalocene has brought the prospect of the tragedy of the commons to the forefront of public attention. Yet our ability to think and strategize is far from being adequate. The current global policy response to the climate crisis is to control carbon emissions through carbon trading, which not only makes it difficult to control carbon emissions, but also

deepens inequalities between the global North and South. Can trading build a more shared destiny of humanity? Or does the logic embedded in carbon trading reveal an absence? From the Enclosure Movement in England in the sixteenth century, to the colonization of the world by the core capitalist countries in the West, to the revolutions and worldwide anti-colonial movements of the twentieth century, the process of modernity has involved dramatic transformations in the categories of *gong* (public) and *si* (private) as well as in the relationship between *gong* and *si*. While Harding's lecture in 1968 brought the issue of the “tragedy of the commons” to the public, and Elinor Ostrom's work in 1990 presented the possibilities of commons management, today's grave challenges require us to remobilize historical resources and practical experiences from all over the world to further expand our strategic thinking and policy recommendations about the “commons.”

Chair: Erminia SCIACCHITANO, Senior Advisor for Multilateral Affairs at the Ministry of Culture of Italy

Speakers (15 mins each)

1. WANG Yahua, Professor & Associate Dean of School of Public Policy and Management at Tsinghua University
 - Dialogue between Eastern and Western Wisdom in Governing the Commons
2. Mansee Bal BHARGAVA, Entrepreneur, Researcher, Educator, Speaker, Mentor
 - Future water crises and management learning from the historical and contemporary philosophies

India is among the most water stressed countries in the world. While climate change induced water crises are evident in the form of droughts, floods, cyclonic disturbances, sea level rise, erratic precipitation, etc., the induced water crises urbanization are evident in the form of pollution and social-cultural-political disparity manifested through lack of access to freshwater due to asymmetric distribution of the water services. The rising water crises in a country that is abundant in water resources, traditional wisdom, laws and policies, and technological advancements is worth questioning and resolving.

The answer to the present water crises and the concerns for conserving for the future lies in taking a diagnostic approach in understanding the historical and contemporary water governance and management from the perspective of the associated philosophies. Since we need to realize the fundamentals of water governance and management to walk the talk for the future water security.

The essay looks into the cogent knowledge of water governance and management in India through the lens of ancient religious-spiritual practices and modern technological advancements. The essay describes the mention of water crisis and management from the time when the Vedas were written besides, looking into other scriptures from the Quran, the Guru Granth Sahib, the Bible, and the scriptures of Jainism and Buddhism. It then takes a cognitive assessment of the new age startups and initiatives of nature based and IOT based water solutions.

Through a literature study, the objectives are, to review the philosophies that lay the foundation of the historical and contemporary water practices; and to explore and explain the directions for the future of water governance and management in India. The learning from history suggests robustness in the present water governance and management approaches. Technology is crucial however, the complex social-ecological systems/problems of water call for some vital water information, education, and communication in the lines of social-spiritual awareness and awakening among the masses, importantly among the classes who manufacture and manipulate the water crises.

3. YE Jingzhong

- TBD

3:30 pm – 4:00 pm

Coffee Break

4:00 pm -5:30 pm

Round Table

This roundtable presents an opportunity to discuss and expand upon the previous five sessions. The discussion could be centered around the topic of whether we need new universals; how we understand the relationship between universality and publicness or commonality (as pertaining to a community with a shared destiny)? Do issues of ecology and the commons enter into the realm of communality, or do they exist only as objects that communities act upon? How do our discussions of universality or communality relate to questions about inequality and imperialism?

Speakers:

1. WANG Hui, Cheung Kong Chair Distinguished Professor and Director of the Tsinghua Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences at Tsinghua University
2. Jeffrey SACHS, President of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network and University Professor at Columbia University.
3. Vania VIRGILI, interim Director General of the European Research Infrastructure for Heritage Science and Technological Research Director at the Institute for Heritage Science of the National Research Council of Italy
4. Sam Crane, Professor at Williams College
5. LIU Qian, Founder and Chief-Executive-Office at Wusawa Advisory and former Managing Director of The Economist Group in Greater China

5:30 pm – 7:00 pm

Dinner

7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Holographic Event: Aristotle – Mencius Dialogue

Speakers:

1. Jeffrey SACHS, President of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network and University Professor at Columbia University.
2. Jeffrey MENG, Chairman of the Mencius Foundation, the 79th descendant generation of Mencius