

# Global Chinese Philosophy: European Perspectives

Workshop at the Institute of Philosophy,  
Free University of Berlin  
February 16 – 18, 2024

## Conceptual Perspective

The workshop *Global Chinese Philosophy: European Perspectives* will be hosted by the Department of Philosophy of the Free University of Berlin from February 16 to 18, 2024. The workshop is organized by Hans Feger and Fabian Heubel in cooperation with the European Association for Chinese Philosophy (EACP).

The workshop *Global Chinese Philosophy: European Perspectives* is a follow-up to the workshop *Teaching Chinese Philosophy in Europe* that took place in October 2023, also at the FU Berlin. During that workshop, the EACP established a working group to develop an "Educational Network of the European Association for Chinese Philosophy" (EN-EACP), which aims to promote and support the teaching and study of Chinese philosophy in Europe. We hope to build an educational network connecting teachers and students of Chinese philosophy as well as philosophy departments and institutions in Chinese-speaking academia. This network is necessary for connecting Chinese philosophy in Europe and Chinese philosophy in China.

For us, the conceptual starting point of this cooperation is the awareness that Chinese philosophy in Europe is necessarily different from Chinese philosophy in China. What Chinese philosophy is and can be emerges in an open and multi-layered dynamic of interpretation and discussion. Moreover, when we speak of "Chinese

philosophy", we do not only include Chinese philosophy in the historical and regional sense of philosophy developed in China (zhōngguó zhéxué/中國哲學), but also modern and contemporary Chinese philosophy, which has largely incorporated and transformed Western philosophy within the Chinese language. In Chinese-speaking academia, this broader meaning of "Chinese philosophy" is now often called hànǚ zhéxué/漢語哲學, which can be translated as Chinese-language philosophy, Sino-grammatical philosophy (emphasizing the specificity of the Chinese written language), or simply Sino-philosophy. This second meaning of Chinese philosophy thus also refers to the historical development of Chinese characters and writing from antiquity to the present, including Chinese translations and interpretations of philosophical texts originally written in foreign languages.

This double meaning of "Chinese philosophy" has far-reaching consequences for the teaching and study of Chinese philosophy in Europe. The European reception of "Chinese philosophy" has long focused on ancient and classical Chinese texts. We are convinced that today this perspective needs to be complemented by a greater attention to Chinese philosophy in the second sense, because this has simply become an important condition for entering into conversations and encounters between contemporary scholars and students in China and in Europe.

It is a great challenge for European scholars and students to teach and study classical Chinese philosophy. To further connect with modern and contemporary developments in Chinese philosophy is even more challenging, as we must also consider the study of its interpretations and transformations under the dynamic

conditions of China's hybrid modernization. Therefore, methods and perspectives of teaching Chinese philosophy in European classrooms need to reflect on how to connect classical and modern Chinese philosophy in innovative and convincing ways.

To explore this potential, the "Global Chinese Philosophy: European Perspectives" Workshop will take the three teachings (Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism) and their modernization as an entry point into different ways of understanding Chinese philosophy today and different ways of incorporating Chinese philosophy in university curricula. We encourage discussions that reflect on European interpretations around the three teachings, and the ways in which these interpretations can inform and challenge current teaching practices.

The workshop focuses on the question of how contemporary philosophical debates and transcultural encounters can inform the teaching and learning of Chinese philosophy, as well as the question of how teaching and learning experiences in Chinese philosophy can transform contemporary philosophical discourses.