**What is Apophatic Thinking and Why is it Relevant Today?**

**Discussions around William Franke's *A Philosophy of the Unsayable***

**Participant Biographies**

**William Franke:**

William Franke is Professor of Philosophy and Religions at the University of Macao and Professor of Comparative Literature at Vanderbilt University. His books include *Secular Scriptures: Modern Theological Poetics in the Wake of Dante* and *The Revelation of Imagination in the Bible and Homer through Virgil and Augustine to Dante* (both forthcoming in 2015).  *A Philosophy of the Unsayable* (2014) is sequel to*On What Cannot Be Said: Apophatic Discourses in Philosophy, Religion, Literature and the Arts* (2007). Previous books include *Dante and the Sense of Transgression* (2013);*Poetry and Apocalypse: Theological Disclosures of Poetic Language*(2009); and*Dante’s Interpretive Journey* (1996). He is a research fellow of the Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung and has been Fulbright-University of Salzburg Distinguished Chair in Intercultural Theology and the Study of Religions.

**Stephen Palmquist:**

Stephen Palmquist (D.Phil., Oxford University) is Professor of Religion and Philosophy at Hong Kong Baptist University, where he has taught since 1987. His 155+ publications (translated into 12+ languages) include over 80 refereed journal articles and book chapters, published in 25+ countries. Among his 10 books are *The Tree of Philosophy* (1992/2000), Kant’s *System of Perspectives* (1993), *Kant’s Critical Religion* (2000), *Cultivating Personhood: Kant and Asian Philosophy* (2010), and *Comprehensive Commentary on Kant’s Religion within the Bounds of Bare Reason* (Wiley-Blackwell, forthcoming 2015). In 1999 he founded the Hong Kong Philosophy Café, now comprising four branches and over 800 members.

**Anthony C. Adler:**

Anthony Curtis Adler is Associate Professor of German and Comparative Literature at Yonsei University’s Underwood International College in South Korea, where he has been teaching since 2006. He has published essays on Fichte, Hölderlin, Goethe, Kant, H.C. Andersen, Hannah Arendt, and Agamben, and is currently finishing two book projects: *Labyrinthine Dances: Choreography, Economy, and the Politics of Gesture in Hölderlin’s Hyperion*, and *Celebricities: Celebrity, The Phenomenology of Television, and Gadget-Life.* He is also the author of *The Afterlife of Genre: Remnants of the Trauerspiel in Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (Punctum, 2014) and a translation and critical introduction of Fichte’s *The Closed Commercial State*. (SUNY, 2012)

**Qingjie James Wang:**

Qingjie James Wang (Ph.D, Tulane University) is Professor of Philosophy at Chinese University of Hong Kong. His areas of specialty are Heidegger's philosophy, Phenomenology, East-West Comparative Philosophies, Moral Philosophies, etc. His books include *Heidegger and a Hermeneutical Interpretation of Confucianism and Daoism* (2004); *Heidegger and a Starting Point of Philosophy* (2015, forthcoming). He is also a Chinese co-translator of *Heidegger's Sein und Zeit* (1987); translator of *Heidegger's Kantbook* (2011); and *Einfuehrung in die Metaphysik* (new translation, forthcoming).

**Lucie Bernier:**

Lucie Bernier studied in Freiburg im Breisgau, Erlangen, Berlin, Madrid and Montréal. She has an Honours B.A, in German and Hispanic Studies from McGill University in Montréal where she also received her Master degree in Comparative Literature. She obtained her PhD degree in the same field from the Université of Montréal. After teaching one year in the French department of the FuJen University in Taipei, she accepted a position as an Associate Professor in Comparative Literature at the Chung Cheng University in Central Taiwan, where she helped to set up the program. She later became (full) professor in Comparative Literature. She then took a professorship at the Shih Hsin University in Taipei. This was followed by two years as Dean of General Education at the Hong Kong Baptist University-United International College-Beijing National Normal University in Zhuhai where she created and directed a Centre for Foreign Languages. Since 2011 at the University of Saint-Joseph, Lucie Bernier is currently the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Chair of the Philosophy Department. She publishes books and articles in French, English and German. Her main interests are as follows: 1) Chinese and European literary and intellectual relationships, 2) Intellectual history, 3) Compared Philosophy, and 4) Post/Colonial Literature.

**Sabine Lenore Müller:**

Sabine Lenore Müller is a lecturer for British Cultural Studies at the University of Leipzig. She specializes in ecocriticism, comparative literature (especially poetry) and film studies. Her PhD, which she completed at the National University of Ireland/Galway,  focused on the environmental philosophy of W. B. Yeats and R. M. Rilke. While in Galway she organized 3 international conferences/symposia on questions of ecocriticism and initiated an international green studies network. She co-hosted a summer school on ecocritical theory at the University of Tübingen in 2014. She has published articles on the metaphysical conceit as a form of epistemological criticism (2011), on Yeats in T. S. Eliot's perception (2015), on constructions of the animal human divide in British history (2015) and on various questions in film studies.

**Andrew W. Hass:**

Andrew W. Hass is Reader in Religion at the University of Stirling. His interests and publications operate at the intersection of religion, theology, literature, art, hermeneutics and philosophy, with recent interest in the idea of nothing (*Auden’s O: The Loss of One’s Sovereignty in the Making of Nothing* – SUNY, 2013) and negation (*Hegel and the Art of Negation* – IB Tauris, 2014). He was the Executive General Editor of the journal *Literature and Theology: An International Journal of Religion, Theory and Culture* from 2004-2014.

**Nahum Brown:**

Nahum Brown is a Post-doctoral Fellow in the Philosophy and Religious Studies Programme at the University of Macau. In 2014, he received his PhD in Philosophy from the University of Guelph, Canada. His current research focuses on historical and contemporary philosophies of possibility. He is also interested in alternative conceptions to the law of non-contradiction, especially in Hegel and Deleuze. He is polishing a manuscript for publication entitled “Ontologies of Productive Constraint.”

**David Chai:**

Born in Toronto (Canada), David Chai holds Masters (2005-2006) and Doctorate (2006-2012) degrees from the University of Toronto where from 2010-2013 he served as a Sessional Lecturer for the Department of Philosophy and the Department of East Asian Studies. Professor Chai’s principal area of research is Chinese philosophy with a focus on Daoism, specifically Zhuangzi. Secondary areas of research include Modern European philosophy, phenomenology, hermeneutics, and comparative philosophy. Professor Chai endeavors to bring together the philosophical traditions of East and West wherever possible and is currently doing so by way of the doctrine of meontology—the study of nothingness.

**Karl-Heinz Pohl:**

Karl-Heinz Pohl was born in Saarlouis, Germany, in 1945. He received his PhD in East Asian Studies at the University of Toronto in 1982. From 1987-1992, he was Professor of Chinese Literature and History of Ideas at Tübingen University (in Germany). Then from 1992-2010, he was the Chair of Chinese Studies at Trier University. He is now retired. His fields of research include: Chinese History of Ideas; Ethics and Aesthetics of Modern and Pre-Modern China; Intercultural Communication and Dialogue Between China and the West. His publications include: Aesthetics and Literary Theory in China – From Tradition to Modernity (2006); Chinese Ethics in a Global Context. Moral Bases of Contemporary Societies (2002); Chinese Thought in a Global Context: A Dialogue Between Chinese and Western Philosophical Approaches (1999, edited with Anselm W. Müller); and Cheng Pan-ch'iao: Poet, Painter and Calligrapher (1990).

**Hideko Mitsui:**

Hideko Mitsui is Assistant Professor of Japanese Studies at the University of Macau. She received her doctorate in Anthropology from Stanford University, C.A., and has held teaching and research positions in the U.S., U.K., Switzerland and Japan before coming to Macau. She has written extensively on the problem of forgetting and remembering WWII and war crimes in Japan and beyond, focusing particularly on the issue of the “comfort women” (Japan’s military sexual slavery during WWII) and the transnational social movement for the redress of wartime violence in Asia. She has also written on the social imaginary and Otherness in contemporary Japanese society.

**Mario Wenning:**

Mario Wenning is a faculty member of the University of Macau and research fellow at Sun Yatsen University, Guangzhou. His work focuses primarily on social and political philosophy in an intercultural context. Apart from his scholarship in these areas, Mario has been engaged in translating recent German philosophy and has organized a number of international conferences. He was been awarded fellowships from the Humboldt Foundation, the Mercator Foundation, the Liberty Fund and the Cusanuswerk.