**Transcendence and Immanence in Intercultural Philosophy**

**Program of Philosophy and Religious Studies, University of Macao, March 20- 21, 2015**

The purpose of this conference is to bring together invited international scholars from a variety of philosophical, theological, and literary disciplines to discuss debates surrounding transcendence, immanence, and intercultural philosophy. This theme can be interpreted both broadly and narrowly, broadly in the sense that transcendence and immanence have remained significant concepts throughout the history of Eastern and Western thought, narrowly in the sense that specific dialogues have recently surfaced for and against the priority of immanence in Chinese philosophy. The aim of this conference, then, is to present a pluralist panorama about transcendence and immanence, ranging from Eastern to Western worldviews, as well as from analytic and pragmatic traditions to phenomenological, dialectical, and other continental philosophies. Together as one collection, this scholarship should help to form a community of intercultural voices while at the same time accommodating the diverse interests of the participants.

Questions that have prompted this recent dialogue about transcendence and immanence in Chinese philosophy include:

* Is Chinese philosophy primarily a philosophical discourse about immanence? Or do concepts of transcendence play an important role in the tradition as well?
* What sorts of insights might come from an apophatic analysis of Chinese philosophy? Can apophasis also be construed in terms of immanence? Or can it only be construed in terms of transcendence?
* Is there something irreconcilable at work between the Eastern and Western traditions, a kind of impossible difference between the two ways of thinking? Or is there only one reality and in a sense one philosophy, making the differences between these traditions traversable?
* To what extent does immanence manufacture culture and how capable are we of transcending cultural biases as well as intercultural barriers?

In addition to comparisons between Eastern and Western philosophy, phenomenological accounts of transcendence and immanence offer another specialized range of possibilities for scholarship related to this conference. By emphasizing the immediacy and primacy of experience, phenomenology can be viewed as a philosophy of immanence *par excellence*. While it is possible to imagine other worlds that transcend this world, one basic insight from phenomenology is to ground speculation about abstractions and essences from within the immanent data of experience. And yet, on the other hand, transcendence remains an important problematic for much of the dialogue about phenomenology in the 20th Century, from Husserl’s analysis of horizon, adumbration, and the indirect ego to Heidegger’s solicitude, Merleau-Ponty’s work on invisibility, and Levinas’ absolute Other.

Phenomenology names only one of many possible directions, with analytic, pragmatic, dialectic, and other viable accounts offering abundant ranges of possibility for this conference as well. Transcendence and immanence also share proximity with a number of other philosophical concepts including: part and whole, infinite and finite, fragment and completion, synthetic and analytic, the other and the same, the multiple and the singular, criticism and authorship, the irrational and the rational, the impossible and the possible, and, what forms their nucleus, nothing and being. Participants are encouraged to present research on any topic related generally to this theme and in whatever way best stimulates their own research.

Invited Participants:

# Roger T. Ames, Professor, Department of Philosophy, University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa

Nahum Brown, Post-doctoral Fellow, University of Macao

Michael Eckert, Professor of Fundamental Theology and Philosophy of Religion, Universität Tübingen, Germany Pin-chai Feng, Distinguished Professor of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, National Chiao Tung University

William Franke, Professor of Philosophy and Religions, University of Macao, Professor of Comparative Literature and Italian and Professor of Religious Studies, Vanderbilt University

Fabian Heubel, Associate Research Fellow, Institute of Chinese Literature and Philosophy, Academia Sinica, Taiwan

Hans-Rudolph Kantor, Associate Professor, Graduate Institute of East Asian Humanities, Huafan University

Hans-Georg Moeller, Professor of Philosophy, University of Macao

John W. P. Phillips, Associate Professor, Department of English Language and Literature, National University of Singapore

Karl-Heinz Pohl, Professor Emeritus, Universität Trier

Antonia Pont, Lecturer in Text, Literary Studies and Professional and Creative Writing, Deakin University

Mario Wenning, Assistant Professor, University of Macao

Christian Wenzel, Distinguished Professor, National Taiwan University

Drawing for the most part on local scholars will help to keep conference expenses down to reasonable levels. We would like, however, to be able to offer three nights of lodging (from March 19- 22) to participants from outside Macao and airfare to those coming from further away. The conference will be held on March 20-21, 2015. We would like the size of the conference to remain at approximately 10- 12 participants.