

## 14<sup>th</sup> Conference of the International Society of Chinese Philosophy (ISCP)

### President's Report

The 14<sup>th</sup> conference of the ISCP was held at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia, from 13<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> July 2005. This conference was particularly significant in the following ways:

- (a). It was the first time a conference of the ISCP had been held outside the northern hemisphere; and
- (b). It was held in conjunction with the annual conference of the Australasian Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy (ASACP), a professional society not unlike the ISCP, of philosophers working in the field of Asian philosophy. The ASACP was founded in 1991 and has so far held annual conferences in the Asian and Australasian (Australia and New Zealand) region. Some of the participants at the 2005 conference were members of both societies.

### Themes and Plenary Speakers

The theme of this conference was *Chinese Philosophy and Human Development in the 21st Century* with the following sub-themes:

- Values, health and ethics including conceptions of self, society and well-being
- Politics, international relations and globalisation issues
- Trade, economy, business and human resource development
- Culture, art and religion
- The natural environment and natural resources, built environments, and the impact of development on the natural environment
- Scientific and technological developments with particular emphasis on emergent ethical challenges

There were two public lectures organised in conjunction with the conference, one given by Professor Chung-ying Cheng (University of Hawaii) on *Doing Business Management in Chinese Philosophy: The Creativity Theory* and the other by Professor Nathan Sivin (University of Pennsylvania) on *Drawing Insights from Chinese Medicine*.

There were four plenary speakers: Dr Nick Bunnin (Oxford University), Dr John Makeham (University of Adelaide), Professor Lisa Raphals (University of California) and Professor Tang Yijie (Beijing University).

### Attendance

The 14<sup>th</sup> ISCP conference drew larger numbers than expected. There were 88 papers presented and 104 participants in total (35 from Australia and New Zealand, 23 from PR China, 21 from North America and Canada, 11 from Taiwan, 7 from Europe and 7 from Hong Kong and Singapore). This was an unanticipated but pleasant surprise given Australia's distance from Europe, China, Taiwan and North America.

Fu Foundation Essay Contest

The Fu Foundation Essay Contest to attend the ISCP conference was won by the following participants:

## CHINESE LANGUAGE

**Yang Guorong, Ph.D.**

East China Normal University, Shanghai, PRC

"The Debate over "Tian" and "Ren"—A Reinterpretation of the Zhuangzi"

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## ENGLISH LANGUAGE

**Chen Kung Hung, Graduate Degree Fellow**

East-West Center, University of Hawai'i

"Meanings in the Making: Words, Creativity, and a Philosophical Interpretation of A Book from the Sky"

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## SENIOR SCHOLAR AWARDEE

**Yang Ju-ping, Ph.D.**

College of History, Nankai University, Tianjin, PRC

" Zhuangzi and the Cynics—Their Significance to the Modern Society"

Budget

Although there were initial concerns that the registration fee might have been too high (AUD\$400 for Early Bird Registration), subsequent sponsorship arrangements enabled the President to provide all meals for all participants throughout the conference, including the conference opening reception and the conference dinner (inclusive in the registration fee). As a result the registration fee worked out to be relatively affordable.

A number of organisations very generously provided financial support for the conference. These are the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the University of New South Wales, The School of Philosophy at the University of New South Wales and the Culture Regeneration Research Society. China Southern Airlines provided two free air tickets and discount fares for participants travelling from PR China. In addition, prominent members of the Sydney Chinese community donated generously to the conference. They are Mr Philip Chau, Mr Stephen Chan, Mr William Chiu, Mr Frank Chou, Dr Michael Chung, Mr Gary Lam, Mr Amen Lee, Mr Henry Ngai, Mrs Helen Sham-Ho, Mr Peter Tseng and Mr Eric Wong.

Because of the success in sponsorship, the conference was able to provide significant financial support for all the plenary speakers as well as a number of participants from PR China.

Quality of Papers and Future Research

Papers were presented in either Chinese or English; the plenary speeches were translated prior to the conference and participants were provided with translations of the presentations. The quality of the papers at the entire conference was very high. The tone of the questions and comments were collegial and encouraging; all who attended agreed that the atmosphere of the conference was extremely friendly and supportive, and indeed very enjoyable.

Furthermore, approximately 10 of the paper presentations were made by students. This phenomenon must

be noted as it was agreed that ISCP should be encouraging and nurturing students in the field.

A significant proportion of participants at this conference were not existing ISCP members. Many new friendships were made. Also as importantly, this sets the path for future collaborative work between members of the two societies.

A number of papers presented at the conference will be published in a special issue of the *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*.

Additionally, a selection of papers will be edited by the President and published in a volume with the theme “Chinese Philosophy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Future Directions”. It is envisaged that this volume will be published by a commercial publisher with a niche market in Chinese philosophy (eg. Open Court Publishing, Hackett Publishing or Global Academic Publishing).

Presenters of papers have also been encouraged to submit (to the President) their papers for consideration for publication. If this project is viable (i.e. if it is possible to collect these papers around a theme), the President will edit another anthology of collected conference papers, also to be published by a commercial publisher.

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