



Discursive and Non-Discursive Reasoning in Chinese Philosophy

Workshop, 11–13 July, 2025

University of Zurich, Rooms RAA-G-15 (11 July) and RAA G-01 (Aula, 12–13 July), Rämistrasse 59, 8001 Zurich

This workshop explores how processes of thinking and reasoning are reflected in traditional Chinese philosophy — including forms that are not easily captured by formal or discursive logic. One avenue we pursue is the connection between vision and thought as developed in Chinese philosophical traditions. While the metaphor of vision in the European context often represents intellectual clarity or timeless truths, Chinese philosophical texts engage vision differently: as a means of attending to change, process, and the situatedness of the observer. The workshop brings together perspectives from Chinese philosophy, Buddhist studies, and related fields to examine how distinctions between discursive and non-discursive modes of thought are articulated — or problematized — in Chinese traditions, and how these

approaches may offer alternative ways of understanding reasoning itself.

Organization

Polina Lukicheva (University of Zurich), Kai Marchal (National Chengchi University Taipei), Grzegorz Polak (Maria Skłodowska-Curie University Lublin, UMCS), Rafael Suter (University of Zurich)

Further Information

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Registration for online-attendance

www.aoi.uzh.ch/registration

This workshop is organized with the generous support of



Program

Friday, July 11

10:30 – 11:30 am

Welcome Address and Introduction: Between Logic and Intuition:
On the Forms of Reasoning in Chinese Philosophy

11:30 – 12:30 am

Reasoning Within and Without Space: Reconstructing Models of
Cognition from Late Ming to Early Qing Chinese Sources
Polina LUKICHEVA (University of Zurich)

Lunch

2:15 – 3:15 pm

The Affective Nature of Knowing in Wang Yangming.
Stephen ANGLE (Wesleyan University, Middletown)

3:15 – 4:15 pm

Vision and Cognition in Wang Kentang's (1555–1613) Thought
Elena GESSLER (Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, Taipei)

Coffee break

4:30 – 5:30 pm

Buddhist Approaches to Reasoning and Argumentation in
Late-Ming China: With a Focus on Yinming 因明 Commentaries
Jakub ZAMORSKI (Jagiellonian University, Kraków)

5:30 – 6:30 pm

Concluding Remarks and General Discussion (Day 1)

Saturday, July 12

9:30 – 10:30 am

Saving Normativity in Conventional Truth: Reading the Philosophical
Constellations of Dignāga, Dharmapāla, and Bhāviveka
LIN Chen-kuo (National Chengchi University, Taipei)

Coffee break

10:45 – 11:45 am

‘Not Seeing a Thing as Right Seeing’ – the Philosophical
Implications of Selected Paradoxical and Apophatic Passages of
Tang Era Chan Texts and their Early Buddhist Āgama and Nikāya
Antecedents
Grzegorz POLAK (UMSC, Lublin)

11:45 am – 12:45 pm

The ‘Inconceivable’ as the ‘Nature of Mind’ in Ouyi Zhixu’s
Commentary on the Mahāyāna Awakening of Faith
Hans-Rudolf KANTOR (Huafan University, Taipei)

Lunch

2:15 – 3:15 pm

Trapping the Subtlety of Dao – Words, Images and Meaning in Liu
Hui’s Philosophy of Mathematics
Eva HENKE (FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg)

3:15 – 4:15 pm

What Li Shanlan's New Stylistic Code of Mathematics Reveals
about Mathematical Objects and Patterns of Thought in 19th
Century China
Andrea BRÉARD (FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg)

Coffee break

4:30 – 5:30 pm

Looking at the Same Mountain from Different Angles – Discursive
Thinking and Intuition in Luo Qinchun 羅欽順 (1465–1547)
Kai MARCHAL (National Chengchi University, Taipei)

5:30 – 6:30 pm

Concluding Remarks and General Discussion

Sunday, July 13

8:30 – 9:30 am

Standstill and Movement – Visualized Object and Invisible
Reasoning and the Limits of Explicability in Fazang’s Gold Lion
Rafael SUTER (University of Zurich)

9:30 – 10:30 am

“Being Lyrical” as a Way to Reach Cognitive Transformation - the
Alchemical “Language Games” and the Poetic Art of Aesthetic
Persuasion in Wang Chongyang’s Poems” (ONLINE)
Zofia Anna WYBIERALSKA (National Chengchi University, Taipei)

Coffee break

10:45–11:45

Seeing as Emergent from a Profound Unity: Wang Yangming on
Seeing and the Unseen
ZHENG Zemian (Chinese University of Hong Kong)

11:45–12:45

Tables and Arguments in the Works of Zhang Zai and Wang
Yangming [ONLINE]
**Michael LACKNER (Friedrich-Alexander-Universität
Nürnberg-Erlangen)**

Lunch

2:15 – 3:15 pm

Regards Oblique and Concluding Discussion
Michael HAMPE (ETH, Zurich), discussant