

Asian Philosophy Graduate Conference

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

November 5 – 6, 2026

Conference Location: Bobo Room, Hodgin Hall

1889 Central Ave NE, Albuquerque, NM 87106

Program Highlights

Keynote Lectures:

Don’t Dwell in the Present:
How Buddhist Conceptions of Attention Can Respond to the Crises of Attentions

Dr. Pierre-Julien Harter (The University of New Mexico)
Thursday, November 5, 4:30 – 6:00 pm
Location: Mitchell Hall 101

Dharmakīrti’s Puzzle: Causal Inferences without Causation

Dr. Parimal Patil (Harvard University)
Friday, November 6, 4:30 – 6:00 pm
Location: Mitchell Hall 101

Thursday, November 5th

Time	Presenter	Title / Event
09:00AM		Breakfast & Registration
09:30AM 09:40AM	Bertram G. Liyanage (Temple University)	Opening Remarks The Phenomenological Function of *Vyāpakaviruddhopalabdhi* in Aśoka's *Avayavīnirākaraṇa*
10:30AM	Nils Seiler (The University of New Mexico)	Propositional Reasons and the Character of Argument
11:20AM	Kedar Patwary (The University of New Mexico)	Two notions of eternality of language in the *Śābarabhāṣya*
12:00PM		Lunch
01:40PM	Alex Zhou (Indiana University)	To Be Like Them: Comparative Study on the Role of Moral Charisma in Moral Pedagogy
02:30PM	Kevin Wang (Florida State University)	Translation as Philosophical Practice: The *Zhong lun*, *Tiantai*, and the Transformation of Madhyamaka in Chinese Buddhist Philosophy
03:20PM	Hayden Berg (Villanova University)	Moral Error, Aspiration, and the Threat of *Akrasia* in Mahāyāna Buddhism
04:30PM	Prof. Pierre-Julien Harter (The University of New Mexico)	Keynote Lecture (Mitchell Hall 101) "Don't Dwell in the Present: How Buddhist Conceptions of Attention Can Respond to the Crises of Attentions"

Friday, November 6th

Time	Presenter	Title / Event
09:00AM		Breakfast & Registration
09:40AM	Tan Jun Hao Mark (National University of Singapore)	Emptiness, Non-foundationalism, and Explanations of Statespace
10:30AM	Brandon Eggleston (University of Calgary)	Walking fine lines: Assessing Rao's Realist Interpretation of Advaita Vedānta
11:20AM	Andrew Kelly (University of Hawai'i at Mānoa)	What the Lokāyata mean by *Pratyakṣa*
12:00PM		Lunch
01:40PM	Badreddine Messikh (Emir Abdelkader University for Islamic Sciences)	Substantial Motion and the Problem of Personal Identity in Islamic Philosophy: A Study in Mulla Sadra's Transcendent Philosophy
02:30PM	Nichole Miller (St. John's College)	Ternary Logic in the Poetics of Silence
03:20PM	Usman (University of Heidelberg)	Between *'Ishq* and *Khudī*: The Wisdom of Ambivalence and Ethical Transformation in Bulleh Shah and Muhammad Iqbal
04:30PM	Prof. Parimal G. Patil (Harvard University)	Keynote Lecture (Mitchell Hall 101) "Dharmakīrti's Puzzle: Causal Inferences without Causation"

Keynote Lectures

Don’t Dwell in the Present: How Buddhist Conceptions of Attention Can Respond to the Crises of Attentions

Dr. Pierre-Julien Harter (The University of New Mexico)

The mindfulness motto of dwelling in the present is often identified with how Buddhist thinkers have thought about attention. While this is indeed one way of cultivating attention, it is far from being the only conception of attention that Buddhist texts provide. This talk will focus on the mental factors that constitute any cognition according to the philosophy of the mind presented in some Abhidharma texts, in order to detail the rich account of attention that can be found in Buddhist texts. The philosophical problem that emerges from this theory is whether attention is a sound, unitary concept, or whether it should be abandoned in favor of a theory of multiple mental acts conventionally understood as “attentive capacities.” A fragmented approach has at least the benefit of providing various, adapted responses to the contemporary claim that our attention is under threat from new technologies. This talk will argue that we are facing not one but multiple crises of different attentive capacities, to which Buddhist texts can offer multiple corresponding answers.

Dharmakīrti’s Puzzle: Causal Inferences without Causation

Dr. Parimal G. Patil (Harvard University)

The Indian Buddhist philosopher, Dharmakīrti (c. 550/600-660 CE), rejects the view that relations, including causal relations, are real. Nevertheless, he provides a detailed account of what causation consists in, how to determine whether two things are related as effect and cause, and the role that causal relations play in causal inference, which Dharmakīrti takes to be a source of knowledge. There is an obvious puzzle: Dharmakīrti's epistemology appears to require a relation that his ontology and metaphysics denies. In this paper, I discuss Dharmakīrti's views on causal relations. I show that Dharmakīrti is an eliminativist about dyadic relations; a reductionist about causation; and a causal pragmatist. I argue that the positive account of causation that supports Dharmakīrti's views is a refined version of regularity theory infused with a deflationary minimal sufficiency account. I conclude by discussing some problems with Dharmakīrti's view and proposing a solution to Dharmakīrti's puzzle.

Presenter Abstracts

The Phenomenological Function of *Vyāpakaviruddhopalabdhi* in Aśoka's *Avayavīnirākaraṇa*

Bertram G. Liyanage, Temple University

Paṇḍita Aśoka's *Avayavinirākaraṇa* ("Dismantling the Whole," c. 10th c.) is among the sharpest Buddhist attacks on the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika doctrine of the composite whole (*avayavin*), the unitary substance held to inhere in its parts and to be the true bearer of perceptible properties. Aśoka frames the entire refutation as an instance of *vyāpakaviruddhopalabdhi* — "the apprehension of something incompatible with the pervader" — naming the reason-type at the outset and again in his closing methodological summary. This framing is puzzling. In Dharmakīrti and his commentators, *vyāpakaviruddhopalabdhi* is a species of non-apprehension (*anupalabdhi*) whose function is strictly privative: from the presence of one item, it licenses the inferred *absence of an object* incompatible with it, as fire warrants denying cold. Aśoka's argument, however, establishes no object's absence. It concludes that the manifest, spatially extended object is *not a single thing*. The instrument has been lifted out of its native office. This paper asks what work *vyāpakaviruddhopalabdhi* performs in Aśoka's hands and argues that the answer can be secured only on a phenomenological reading of his position.

I argue that Aśoka relocates the negation. The incompatible characters he adduces — moving and still, occluded and unoccluded, dyed and undyed, here and not-here — are not made to negate a further object, but to negate a *second-order* ascription: that the appearing object answers to one real substance. Perception, on Aśoka's own account, merely presents the opposed characters; it is non-apprehension that withdraws the practical entitlement to count the presented field as one. What the inference removes is thus not anything given in experience — the extended, colored form expressly "remains" (*avaśiṣyate*) — but the realist's surplus posit of unity over and above that form. Read this way, the privative structure of the reason-type is preserved, while its target is raised from a first-order absence to the absence of substantial oneness.

This result, I contend, is unavailable on a metaphysical or merely logical construal of the text and becomes intelligible only phenomenologically: Aśoka affirms the structured givenness of the object while denying that its experienced unity indexes a mind-independent whole. I support the reading through his two-tier theory of opposition (*virodha*) and his explicit division of labor between perception and non-apprehension, and I distinguish this phenomenological construal from a phenomenalist one. The paper thereby clarifies a neglected function of *vyāpakaviruddhopalabdhi* and offers a principled basis for reading Aśoka's anti-realism about wholes as a phenomenology of the manifest object.

Propositional Reasons and the Character of Argument

Nils Seiler, The University of New Mexico

In his book *Perception*, Bimal Krishna Matilal notes that the sources of knowledge (*pramāṇa*), the cornerstone of South Asian epistemology, have both causal and evidentiary roles (35-36). Their causal role consists in their predominant position in causal chains that result in knowledge-events. Their evidentiary role is that they are or provide evidence for what we know and what we say. As Matilal says, "in the term *pramāṇa*, the notion of 'cause' and 'because' merge into one" (105). Aside from this somewhat enigmatic claim, Matilal is general in his account of how exactly *pramāṇas* play this evidentiary role and provides no sources we might consult to understand his claims. He is, of course, right; *pramāṇas* really do play these roles. The question is: how do they do this and what account do South Asian philosophers provide?

This paper provides one account of the evidentiary role the *pramāṇa*s play for South Asian philosophers and the kind of reasoning or argument it engenders. Taking the *Carakasaṁhitā* (c. 1st BCE – 1st CE) as my source, I argue that the *pramāṇas* play a foundational role in the kind of argument this text develops. Specifically, I argue that *Carakasaṁhitā* develops a theory of propositional reasons (*hetu*) usable in argument, which are grounded in the *pramāṇas*. In other words, I argue that the *pramāṇas* are the evidentiary basis for propositional reasons. As a result, the ability of a propositional reason (*hetu*) to function in argument is partially constituted by its being based on a *pramāṇa*. This role of the *pramāṇa*s provides the inter-subjectively accessible basis for reasoning and argument, as well as the normative character of reasoning. In other words, the standards of correctness in reasoning are partially accounted for by the *pramāṇas* themselves.

I conclude this paper by presenting some problems with the kind of reasoning this project supports. Of central concern to this account, I argue that *Carakasaṁhitā's* notion of propositional reasons (*hetu*) is too weak to enable the inferences it is supposed to warrant. Secondarily, I argue that the move from the notion of *pramāṇa* qua cause to "because", in a normative sense, is underdeveloped and vulnerable to problems. For example, how exactly can we move from the non-propositional causal function of *pramāṇas* to the propositional reasons they are supposed to support?

Two notions of eternality of language in the *Śābarabhāṣya*

Kedar Patwary, The University of New Mexico

The *Mīmāṃsāsūtra* argues that there is a natural (*autpattika*) relationship between word (*śabda*) and meaning (*artha*). Śabara interprets the word *autpattika* as *nitya*, eternal, arguing that the word, the meaning and the relationship between them is eternal. Consider, for example, the common noun cow. The *nityatā* thesis would claim that the word “cow” has always and will always denote the same animal—one with a dewlap. The Mīmāṃsaka is motivated to develop this thesis for two different reasons: (a) to secure the authority of the *Vedas* as the only source of knowledge for *Dharma* (duty or righteousness) and (b) to respond to accounts of language that undermine (a). In this presentation I will only be concerned with the latter. I will argue that Mīmāṃsā in fact formulates two different notions of eternality—*vyavahāra-nityatā* (eternality of linguistic practice) and *kūṭastha-nityatā* (absolute eternality of the word). They are motivated by and are responses to two different conventionalist accounts of language. I will clarify what these two accounts hold and evaluate Mīmāṃsā's response to them.

To Be Like Them: Comparative Study on the Role of Moral Charisma in Moral Pedagogy

Alex Zhou, Indiana University

Comparative religious ethicist Aaron Stalnaker states in his book, *Mastery and Dependence*, that many people question the existence of “ethical experts”. Stalnaker pushes back on this sentiment and argue for the existence of (also the need for) ethical masters. Even with the existence of moral experts, however, the question of “what motivates people to want to learn from them” remains unanswered. This paper explores the motivation for individuals to follow “moral master” and pursue ethical excellence, in other words, what makes people want to follow masters of ethical conduct? I approach this question from a textual comparative perspective with Confucian and Platonic texts. I argue that the motivation to learn from the ethical masters stems from the masters’ moral charisma.

Translation as Philosophical Practice: The *Zhong lun*, *Tiantai*, and the Transformation of Madhyamaka in Chinese Buddhist Philosophy

Kevin Wang, Florida State University

By tracing the movement from the *Zhong lun* to *Tiantai*, this paper argues that Chinese Buddhist philosophy is best understood neither as passive reception nor as purely indigenous invention. It emerges through transformative acts of translation, commentary, and philosophical reorganization.

Moral Error, Aspiration, and the Threat of *Akrasia* in Mahāyāna Buddhism

Hayden Berg, Villanova University

Ignorance is understood to be among the primary causes of suffering in Buddhist philosophy. Suffering arises from ignorance insofar as it leads us to act upon false assumptions and behave in ways which go against our own best interest and the best interest of other sentient beings. Ignorant misconceptions, such as the belief in a permanent self, are fundamentally responsible for actions which lead to suffering. In the *Apology*, Socrates makes a similar claim when he suggests that no one who acts against what is best does so on the supposition that they are doing so. In other words, no bad actor acts knowingly – either they act correctly based on the knowledge they possess, or they are ignorant in some important sense which precludes them from correct action. Against this position of 'Socratic intellectualism,' Aristotle poses the observable reality that some actors *know* what they do is bad and act poorly anyway. This is the case of *akrasia* which Aristotle discusses in the *Nicomachean Ethics* as among those types of character to be avoided.

In this paper, I explore how Buddhists in the Mahāyāna tradition would respond to such an Aristotelean critique of an 'intellectualism' which prioritizes ignorance as the cause of moral errors. I argue that Buddhists from Dharmakīrti to Śāntideva illustrate how ignorance can be understood as the cause of moral error while still accounting for the akratic phenomenon not as a type of character to be avoided, but as an important step on the journey toward enlightenment. I begin by addressing how ignorance is understood in mainstream Buddhist philosophy as both a deeply ingrained way of seeing and thinking as well as something which applies to metaphysical rather than just particular ethical facts. I then discuss Śāntideva's Madhyamaka work, the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, as illustrating the way that a certain kind of akratic sensibility – being caught between a moral ideal and a deeply habituated way of being – is a necessary prerequisite to a Buddhist path toward enlightenment which understands the overcoming of ignorance as an aspirational goal rather than one that can be accomplished quickly.

Emptiness, Non-foundationalism, and Explanations of Statespace

Tan Jun Hao Mark, The National University of Singapore

This paper is a project in comparative metaphysics, bringing Mahāyāna Buddhist metaphysics to bear on debates about fundamentality in analytic philosophy. Foundationalist ontologies hold that reality has some fundamental level from which other metaphysical facts are explained. One reason for preferring such views is that fundamental things are thought to explain modal statespace: the range of ways the world could possibly be. I argue that this explanatory role has been overstated. What is required to explain a modal statespace is not fundamentality itself, but a set of more basic structural features: objects must be individuated, admit different local states, and be capable of recombination into different global possibilities. None of these requirements depend on the objects being fundamental. To show this, I develop a non-foundational metaphysical model inspired by Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* and the Mahāyāna Buddhist notion of *śūnyatā* ("emptiness"). On this model, objects do not possess self-sufficient intrinsic existence, but are constituted by the relations they bear to other objects. Nevertheless, such non-fundamental objects can still suffice to provide a robust explanation of statespace. I then address the main challenges facing this picture: the nature of their metaphysical dependence and the threat of regress. Finally, I suggest that the *śūnyatā*-inspired model has a further advantage: because objects are not fixed entirely by intrinsic essences, it can more naturally accommodate changes in the roles and identities objects take on as their relations change.

Walking Fine Lines: Assessing Rao's Realist Interpretation of Advaita Vedānta

Brandon Eggleston, University of Calgary

According to the Advaita Vedānta, or non-dualist, school of thought within Hindu philosophy, only unqualified *Brahman* (i.e. God) ultimately exists. Many contemporary scholars interpret Śaṅkara, the most famous classical proponent of Advaita, to regard the world as illusory. Srinivasa Rao (1996) disagrees with this interpretation. He argues that ascribing reality to the world is consistent with Advaita as long as *Brahman* is understood to be the material and efficient cause of the world. I argue that conceiving of *Brahman* as the genuine material and efficient cause of a non-illusory world too closely resembles Viśiṣṭādvaita, or qualified non-dualism, which is a competing school of thought. I support this argument by drawing on Lipner's (1984) paper which discusses the methods of discourse of Rāmānuja, the most famous classical proponent of Viśiṣṭādvaita. I conclude by considering the pedagogical value, for the sake of achieving liberation, of conceiving of *Brahman* as the genuine material cause, but only apparent efficient cause, of a non-illusory world.

What the Lokāyata mean by *Pratyakṣa*

Andrew Kelly, University of Hawaii at Mānoa

Although, Lokāyata epistemology is known to admit perception as the only valid means of knowledge, what they actually mean by “perception” is unclear. Their own claims are highly fragmented, while rival characterizations misrepresent their view to the point of incoherence.

To develop a workable understanding, this project will focus a set of implicit claims in Jayarāśi Bhatta’s *Tattvopaplavasimha* (TUS). Here, Jayarāśi suggests that knowledge is gained by a direct bodily perception that allows recognition of discrete material objects without reflection.

I will begin by addressing the problems with rival characterizations relative to existing texts. Then I will attempt to reconstruct the view from fragmentary positive claims of the “sophisticated Cārvāka-s,” Udbhata and Jayarāśi. Here I will focus on (1) *tattvopaplava* as a critique of ideal theory and (2) the place of *anubhava*, or direct bodily experience relative to that critique. Specifically, I claim that this direct bodily experience is what the Lokāyata mean by *pratyakṣa*, and it stands alongside everyday practice and critical reflection to make up “the Worldly Way.” I will conclude this reconstruction by showing how this account corresponds with the original rival view since, in the end, rival descriptions are what survive of this schools views. This criterion blends with their views against certain kinds of inference.

Finally, I will lend this reconstructed view some speculative support from contemporary emotion theory and virtue epistemology. Specifically, I will attempt to show that Jayarāśi’s description of direct bodily experience can be explained in the terms of Damasio’s somatic marker hypothesis and meets the criteria of fully apt knowledge described in *Knowing Full Well* (2011), by Ernest Sosa. Emotions as a kind of direct bodily experience produces accurate, adroit, and apt environmental awareness to maintain physical well-being. Satisfaction, a cognitive state that results from the successful maintenance of physical need represented by an emotion, constitutes a cognition that produces meta-awareness bodily activity. Thus, contra Sosa, a Cārvāka might argue that fully apt emotional knowledge can be attained without discursive reflection over doxastic states. This, of course, is the epistemic goal expressed by Jayarāśi at the end of TUS.

Substantial Motion and the Problem of Personal Identity in Islamic Philosophy: A Study in Mulla Sadra's Transcendent Philosophy

Badreddine Messikh, Emir Abdelkader University for Islamic Sciences

This paper examines the problem of personal identity within the context of continuous ontological transformation, through a philosophical approach grounded in Mulla Sadra's Transcendent Philosophy (al-hikmah al-muta'aliyah). The study begins from the observation that human beings experience themselves as unified entities over time, despite profound physical, psychological, and cognitive changes. This raises a fundamental philosophical question: how can the unity of the person be maintained in the face of continuous existential change? In other words, how can the sense of persistent identity be reconciled with the reality of ongoing ontological transformation that affects human existence at every moment?

The central problem concerns the foundation of personal identity: is it based on a fixed essence, as assumed in some traditional metaphysical frameworks that consider identity grounded in an unchanging substance? Or is it grounded in dynamic existential continuity, as proposed by Mulla Sadra's theory of substantial motion, which redefines existence as a graded and intensifying reality rather than a static and separate essence?

The study adopts an analytical and critical methodology aimed at deconstructing the concept of personal identity in philosophy. It reviews major classical and modern approaches to this problem, highlighting the limitations of each in explaining the unity of the person over time. It then proceeds to analyze the ontological foundation of substantial motion in Mulla Sadra's thought, showing its close connection with the principles of the primacy of existence and the gradation of existence. This framework allows reality to be understood as a continuum of intensifying modes of being rather than fixed essences.

Within this context, Mulla Sadra's notion that the human soul is "corporeally originated and spiritually subsistent" is employed as a key interpretive principle for understanding the development of the human soul from sensory perception to imagination and finally to intellect, while preserving its essential unity throughout this process.

The paper further argues that, in Sadrian philosophy, the soul is not a fixed substance to which change is externally added. Rather, it is identical with existential motion itself, meaning that it is in a continuous process of becoming without losing its internal unity. Change, therefore, does not imply discontinuity of identity but constitutes its very mode of existence.

The study concludes that substantial motion establishes an alternative metaphysical model for understanding personal identity, one that transcends the traditional opposition between permanence and change. Identity is neither a fixed essence outside time nor a fragmented series of mental states, but rather a dynamic and graded unity that preserves its continuity through the unfolding of existence itself. Consequently, the human person is redefined as a being-in-becoming, whose identity is constituted through the trajectory of existence rather than the permanence of attributes. This opens new horizons in Islamic philosophy for rethinking the concepts of self, time, and being.

Ternary Logic in the Poetics of Silence

Nichole Miller, St. John's College

This essay takes as its starting point a visceral experience: reading Hallaj's "Silence" and feeling its aesthetic force exceed anything a paraphrase could deliver. The question it pursues is how the poem achieves this—and why poetry, which uses the same raw material as rhetoric—specifically semantics and syntax—has a unique ability to communicate meaning far more fiercely than a collection of definitions, proofs and declarations. The impact of the poet's aesthetic choices can be directly experienced, not simply concluded; the import to the reader's understanding exceeds mere intellectual gleanings. The essay will offer an original translation and will focus on how the content and the form of al-Hallaj's poem work together to provoke feeling and promote a deep, immediate experience for the reader.

In order to examine how the language of "Silence" builds a bridge between the logical and the ontological, one has to consider how the ternary logic provides an underlying structure to the poem. In a binary system, meaning is produced through opposition alone—light/dark, being/non-being, and even human/divine. Ternary logic introduces a third term that is neither the first nor the second but something altogether distinct, capable of preserving opposition while dissolving polarity. The essay will refer to the development of ternary logic through Islamic thought, specifically to Ibn al-Arabi's explicit use of ternariness in the *Ringstones of Wisdom*, where the generative principle of existence itself is said to stand on three. The essay will consider how the ternariness woven into Hallaj's poem (two centuries prior to al-Arabi's treatise) offers easier access to meaning and a fuller description of our experiences.

"Silence" expresses its message through content, form, and meaning in how it explores our human experience, language and the divine. The first ten lines call us to new ways of thinking. They move us briskly through states of being; they force us out of stasis through nominal stages. Each triptych is a small enactment of that liminal third space where meaning refuses to settle. The final eight lines are a reckoning: an acknowledgement that all of our attempts to map transcendence have ultimately failed and that language is as ill-suited as any medium for the task. Even when language is stretched to its limits, it is still bound to convention. And yet, al-Hallaj uses language to repeatedly bring us right up to the edge of the ineffable. He opens up the negative space in speech that, in spite of language's inevitable failure to describe that liminal space, allows us to feel assured of its existence.

Between *‘Ishq* and *Khudī*: The Wisdom of Ambivalence and Ethical Transformation in Bulleh Shah and Muhammad Iqbal

Usman, University of Heidelberg

Ambivalence is sometimes defined in modern philosophy as indecision, contradiction, or unsteady commitment. This paper contends that the philosophical traditions of Muhammad Iqbal (1877–1938) and Bulleh Shah (1680–1757) invite a fundamental reconsideration of this presumption. Ambivalence serves as a type of practical wisdom that permits moral judgment without reducing reality to strict conceptual dichotomies, rather than denoting epistemic uncertainty or ethical weakness. I argue that this overlooked perspective is a unique contribution of South Asian Islamic philosophy to current discussions about relationality, ethical agency, and selfhood.

Bulleh Shah and Iqbal face a similar philosophical dilemma in spite of their disparate historical and intellectual backgrounds: how can the self, continue to be morally receptive to the Other without either destroying its identity or retreating into dogmatic certainty? I contend that rather than offering opposing solutions, Bulleh Shah's *‘ishq* (transformative love) and Iqbal's *khudī* (dynamic selfhood) philosophies offer complementing ones. According to Bulleh Shah, *‘ishq* reveals identity as essentially relational by upending established categories such as self and other, believer and unbeliever, friend and enemy. According to Iqbal, *khudī* is a dynamic process of ethical self-realization attained via focused interaction with God, people, and history rather than an independent ego. When taken as a whole, these ideas present a philosophical explanation of the self that neither absolutes nor rejects uniqueness.

The study suggests that the interaction between *‘ishq* and *khudī* leads to what I refer to as “the wisdom of ambivalence”: the ability to maintain conviction without succumbing to absolutism and to embody paradox without giving up ethical duty. According to this explanation, ambivalence is an ethical and epistemological virtue that enables true transformation rather than being a state of hesitation or compromise. The paper challenges the inclination to see Bulleh Shah solely as a mystical poet and Iqbal primarily as a philosopher of selfhood or Muslim nationalism by situating them in an extended philosophical discourse. Rather, it contends that both promote a common philosophical vision in which ethical transformation is accomplished by creatively navigating conflict rather than resolving it.

The paper shows how South Asian Islamic philosophy provides a unique framework for reconsidering ethical agency, relational selfhood, and the philosophical significance of paradox in a world increasingly shaped by polarized and binary modes of thought by recovering this idea of ambivalence.

About the Conference

Asian philosophy, broadly construed, comprises many rich and varied traditions that are gaining prominence in the English-speaking academic landscape. The UNM Asian Philosophy Graduate Conference (APGC), organized by the UNM Department of Philosophy, aims to bring together emerging scholars to engage in meaningful dialogue on ancient and modern Asian philosophical traditions. As one of the only conferences that focuses on Asian philosophy, APGC fills a gap in the scholastic landscape by providing graduate students a platform to discuss their work and meet others in the field. In our second iteration of this annual conference, we are grateful for the continued support and enthusiasm as we spotlight exciting new research.

South Asian Philosophy at the University of New Mexico

Since its inception, the Department of Philosophy of the University of New Mexico has been defined by a pluralistic approach to philosophy. Diverse philosophical traditions, canons, and methodologies have always been represented. Asian philosophy, specifically South Asian philosophy, has played a prominent role in the pluralistic mission of the department.

The Focus emphasizes philosophical engagement with the theories and arguments of South Asian philosophy based on the ability to read its literature with philological and historical sophistication. The latter entails both accessing targeted texts directly in the original languages and reading primary literature extensively in translation. The development of proficiency in either Tibetan or Sanskrit is stressed. As students acquire broad knowledge of the history of philosophy, both Western and Asian, they will also develop a philosopher's ability to think clearly, critically, and creatively. It is hoped that these diverse competencies will enable students to engage with and contribute to multiple disciplines, since South Asian philosophy lies at the cross-section of several fields of study. For more information about our South Asian focus, visit https://philosophy.unm.edu/graduate/south-asian-focus.html

Acknowledgments

APGC is organized by Mak Rui Teng Phoebe, Jack Swick, Kedar Patwary, Addison Hinton, Utkarsh Chawla, and Sanghyeon Kim.

We would like to gratefully acknowledge the generous support of the **Department of Philosophy**, the **Office of Academic Affairs**, the **Office of the President,** and **Graduate Studies** at the University of New Mexico. We extend our sincere thanks to Department chair Dr. Adrian Johnston, the South Asianist faculty Dr. Pierre-Julien Harter and Dr. Emily McRae, department administrators Michelle Gallegos and Abigail White, and our readers and volunteers Robert McKinley, Nils Seiler, Ryan Binz, and Massiel Valladares, whose contributions made this conference possible.