

MERCEDES VALMISA

Assistant Professor of Philosophy
Andrew W. Mellon Faculty Fellow '18-19
Gettysburg College
Campus Box 404
Gettysburg, PA 17325
mvalmisa@gettysburg.edu

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

Classical Chinese Philosophy, Social Philosophy, Philosophy of Action

AREAS OF COMPETENCE

Metaphysics, Ethics, Asian Philosophy, Comparative Philosophy
In Sinology: Textuality and Manuscript Studies, Classical Chinese Art & Archaeology

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

2018- Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Gettysburg College
2018-19 Andrew W. Mellon Faculty Fellow, Gettysburg College
2017-18 Visiting Fellow, International Consortium for Research in the Humanities (IKGF), Friedrich-Alexander Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg, Germany

EDUCATION

2017 Ph.D. Princeton University, East Asian Studies (Chinese Philosophy)
Dissertation "Changing Along with the World: Adaptive Agency in Early China"
Director Willard Peterson
Committee Martin Kern, Melissa Lane, Franklin Perkins

2011 M.A. National Taiwan University, Philosophy
Thesis "Freedom in the *Zhuangzi*," Taiwan Philosophical Association Award
Director Wim De Reu

2008 M.A. Autonomous Madrid University, East Asian Studies

2005 B.A. University of Seville, Philosophy

PUBLICATIONS

Books

Adapting. A Chinese Philosophy of Action (Oxford University Press, August 2021)

Abstract, table of contents, and praise:

<https://global.oup.com/academic/product/adapting-9780197572962?cc=us&lang=en&#>

Peer-Reviewed Articles

- 2021 “What is a Situation?” in *Coming to Terms with Timelessness. Daoist Time in Comparative Perspective*, Livia Kohn ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Three Pines Press), pp. 25-46.
- 2019 “The Reification of Fate in Early China.” *Early China* 42: 147-199.
- 2019 “The Happy Slave isn’t Free: Relational Autonomy and Freedom in *Zhuangzi*.” *Philosophy Compass* 2019;e12569. <https://doi.org/10.1111/phc3.12569>
- 2019 對中國哲學的「漢學挑戰」：一個從後學科角度出發的回應 (The ‘Sinological Challenge’ to Chinese Philosophy: A Response from a Post-Disciplinary Perspective). *Chinese Philosophy and Culture* 中國哲學與文化 vol. 16: 20-50.
- 2016 “La espontaneidad no es un valor en el *Zhuangzi*” in *Daoísmo: Interpretaciones Contemporáneas*, ed. Paulina Rivero Weber (Mexico City: Facultad de Filosofía y Letras UNAM), 197-223.
- 2015 “Beyond Our Control? Two Responses to Uncertainty and Fate in Early China” in *New Visions of the Zhuangzi*, ed. Livia Kohn (Cambridge, Mass.: Three Pines Press), 1-22.

Forthcoming Peer-Reviewed Articles and Book Chapters

- 2022 “Wang Bi and the Hermeneutics of Actualization” in *The Craft of Oblivion: Aspects of Forgetting and Memory in Ancient China*, ed. Albert Galvany (Honolulu: Hawai’i University Press).
- 2022 “Should we Use Unprovenanced Materials in our Research?” in *The Ethics of Using Unprovenanced Texts for Research on Premodern China. A Scholarly Discussion*. Co-authored with Glenda Chao and Christopher Foster. *Cambridge Elements*, Erica Fox Brindley ed., Cambridge University Press.

Book Reviews

- 2019 Paul van Els, *The Wenzhi: Creativity and Intertextuality in Early Chinese Philosophy* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2018). *Monumenta Serica* 67.2: 556-560.
- 2018 Jane Geaney, *Language as Bodily Practice in Early China: A Chinese Grammatology* (SUNY 2018). *American Academy of Religion*, "Reading Religion," September 6, 2018.

In Preparation

- "Unapologetic Border Crossing: *Never Willing to Maintain a Single Course of Action.*"
- Invited chapter: "Truth and Ideology in Classical China: The Mohists versus the *Zhuangzi*" in *Practices of Truth in Philosophy: Historical and Comparative Perspectives*, eds. Pietro Gori and Lorenzo Serini (New York: Routledge).
- Invited chapter on *Zhuangzi* for *Chinese Philosophy and Its Thinkers: From Ancient Times to the Present Day*, volume 1, eds. Selusi Ambrogio and Dawid Rogacz (New York: Bloomsbury).
- Invited chapter for book *Relationality in East Asian Context*, ed. Kwak Jun-Hyeok (New York: Routledge Series of Political Theories in East Asian Context).

FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS, AND AWARDS

2020	Andrew W. Mellon Curricular Development Grant
2019	Andrew W. Mellon Curricular Development Grant
2018	Andrew W. Mellon Faculty Fellowship
2017	Young Scholar Award, European Association for Chinese Philosophy
2016	Laurence S. Rockefeller Graduate Prize Fellowship, University Center for Human Values, Princeton University
2015	Harold W. Dodds Honorific Fellowship for Outstanding Performance and Professional Promise, Princeton University
2012	Tsang Yee and Wai Kwan Chan So P*71 Fellowship for Chinese History and Culture
2012	Princeton University Summer Language Fellowship for the study of Japanese in Ishikawa, Princeton in Ishikawa
2012-15	Princeton Interdisciplinary Program in the Humanities Reading Group Fellowship

- 2011 Taiwan Philosophical Association Prize of Excellence to Best M.A. Chinese Philosophy Thesis Written in Chinese
- 2011 Princeton University Graduate Fellowship
- 2011 Princeton University Pre-Enrolment Language Fellowship for the study of Japanese in Tokyo, International Christian University
- 2009-11 Taiwan Ministry of Education Fellowship for Graduate Studies, National Taiwan University (NTU), Philosophy Department
- 2008 Taiwan Ministry of Education Scholarship for Mandarin Language, Normal Taiwan University, Mandarin Training Centre
- 2007 Instituto de Crédito Oficial (ICO Spain) Chinese Summer Language Program at Beijing University
- 2005 University of Seville, Philosophy Department Research Grant
- 2003 European Union Erasmus Mundus Grant, University of Jules Vernes at Amiens, France

INVITED TALKS

- Book Talk *Adapting. A Chinese Philosophy of Action*. Non/Humanity Seminar, Bucknell Humanities Center, Bucknell University, March 3, 2022.
- Book Talk *Adapting. A Chinese Philosophy of Action*. University of California, Santa Barbara, Winter Term 2022, TBD.
- Author-Meets-Critics Panel, Invited Program, American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division Meeting, January 2022, Montreal, Canada. *Panel cancelled due to Covid-19*.
- Author-Meets-Critics Panel, Invited Program, American Academy of Religion, Annual Meeting, San Antonio, Texas, November 2021.
- “Adapting: Acting with Efficacy in a World of Interrelations and Co-Dependencies.” American Academy of Religion, Annual Meeting, San Antonio, Texas, November 2021.
- “Relational Agency.” International Society for Comparative Studies of Chinese and Western Philosophy Online Conference (ISCWP), Fall 2021 (date TBD).
- Panel “A Discussion of *Fa* in the *Shenzi*.” The Columbia Society for Comparative Philosophy, Zoom, October 22, 2021.
- “Relational Ethics in Classical Chinese Philosophy.” National Taiwan University, Philosophy Department, Taipei. April 2020. *Cancelled due to Covid-19*.

- “The Co-Action Paradigm,” The 50th Annual Symposium *Past and Future in a Philosophical Look East* at California State University, Fullerton. March 18-20, 2020. *Cancelled due to Covid-19*.
- “What is a Situation?” Scott and Heather Kleiner Colloquium Series, Philosophy Department, University of Georgia, September 25, 2020 (Zoom).
- “¿Qué Significa Entender a los Demás? Wang Bi y la Hermenéutica de la Actualización,” Cátedra Bolívar Echeverría, Universidad del Azuay (Ecuador), June 29, 2020 (Zoom).
- “The *Zhuangzi* and its Contemporary Significance.” *The Council of Taiwanese Chambers of Commerce in Europe* 歐洲台灣商會, August 30, 2020 (Zoom).
- “On Non-Human Agency,” Neo-Confucian Studies Seminar, Columbia University, March 6, 2020.
- “De la Forma de los Cuerpos al Cuerpo sin Forma: Adaptación en la Filosofía China Clásica.” *Pensar a Través del Cuerpo en la Antigüedad: Grecia, India, China*, Tabakalera San Sebastian, Spain, June 5-7, 2019.
- Syllabus Make-Over Competition: Who Can Create the Best Multicultural Syllabus? APA Committee on Asian and Asian-American Philosophers and Philosophies, American Philosophical Association, Pacific Meeting, Vancouver, April 17-20, 2019.
- “Forgetting for Getting: Wang Bi’s Reading of the *Zhuangzi*’s Fishnet Allegory that Revolutionized *Zhouyi* Exegesis.” *Global Reception of the Classic Zhuangzi* 莊子: *Han to Tang*, University of California at Berkeley, March 7-9, 2019.
- “Contentment Does Not Make Us Free: Relational and De Facto autonomy in Dialog with the *Zhuangzi*.” Seminars at National Chengchi University, Taipei, November 16 & 20, 2018.
- “Integrating Chinese Philosophy and Chinese Studies,” Panel Discussion. KU Leuven, April 9, 2018.
- “Adapting *versus* Conforming: Two Models of Agency in the Context of Early Chinese Divination Practices.” International Consortium for Research in the Humanities Lecture Series, IKGf, FAU, Erlangen, January 9, 2018.
- “The ‘Sinological Challenge’ to Chinese Philosophy: A Response from a Post-Disciplinary Perspective.” *Pre-Qin Thinkers: Philosophical Thoughts and Debates*, Chinese University of Hong Kong, December 15-16, 2016.
- “Beyond our Control? Two Responses to Uncertainty and Fate in Early China.” Daoism: Tradition and Transition. 9th International Conference on Daoist Studies. Boston University, May 29-June 1, 2014.
- “Spontaneity is not a value in the *Zhuangzi*.” First International Conference in Buddhism and Daoism UNAM, Mexico City, December 3-7, 2012.

PRESENTATIONS (SELECTED)

- “We are not so free, but oh, that’s why we can be free at all,” Beyond Free Will: Varieties in Understanding of Choice, Luck, and Necessity. Vilnius, Lithuania, June 20-23, 2022.
- “Unapologetic Border Crossing,” 12th East/West Philosophers’ Conference *Walls: Thinking Through Insularity*. Originally May 22-29, 2020; postponed to May 2022.
- “Can Objects be Agents?” International Society for Chinese Philosophy, Berne, July 2-5, 2019.
- “The Non-Subjective Agency of Fate (*ming* 命): Can Objects be Agents?” American Philosophical Association, Pacific Meeting, Vancouver, April 17-20, 2019.
- “Adaptive Preferences *versus* Adaptive Agency: Theoretical Perspectives on Dealing with Constraints.” Association for Asian Studies National Meeting, Denver, March 21-24, 2019.
- “What is Adaptive Agency?” South East Early China Roundtable, University of North Florida, October 19-21, 2018.
- “Adaptive Agency in Early China.” 2nd Biennial Conference of the European Association for Chinese Philosophy. Basel, Switzerland, September 7-9, 2017.
- “The World is a Cage, or The Place of Freedom in Early Chinese Philosophy.” 11th East/West Philosophers’ Conference, East-West Center, Honolulu, May 30, 2016.
- “Adaptive Measures in the Zhou Conquest: An Unorthodox Portrayal of King Wu.” Association for Asian Studies, Seattle, March 30, 2016.
- “Phenomenality in the *Zhuangzi*.” American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division Meeting. Atlanta, Georgia, December 27-30, 2012.
- “Is the Ideology of the Mandate of Heaven Already Present in Western Zhou Bronze Inscriptions?” Southeast Early China Roundtable, Berea College, Kentucky, November 2-4, 2012.

TEACHING

Gettysburg College (2018-present)

Remote Learning (Online Teaching)

Spring 2021: WORLD PHILOSOPHY, INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY

Fall 2020: PHILOSOPHY OF MONSTERS, NOTHINGNESS, ZHUANGZI

Spring 2020 (pandemic irruption): WORLD PHILOSOPHY, INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY

Courses Introduced to the Curriculum, Designed, and Taught

FYS 138	PHILOSOPHY OF MONSTERS	FALL 2019, 2020, 2021
PHIL 216	CLASSICAL CHINESE PHILOSOPHY	FALL 2018, 2019
PHIL 355	NOTHINGNESS	FALL 2020, 2021
PHIL 366	GREAT PHILOSOPHERS: THE ZHUANGZI	FALL 2019, 2020

Courses Redesigned and Taught

PHIL 101	INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY	SPRING 2020, 2021
PHIL 240	WORLD PHILOSOPHY	SPRING 2019, 2020, 2021

Courses Co-Taught

PHIL 466	SENIOR THESIS SEMINAR	FALL & SPRING 2018-19-20-21
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Courses Co-Designed

PHIL 212	PHILOSOPHICAL METHODS
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Senior Theses Directed

Randy E. Feeley '21, "The Emotions and Academic Philosophy"	FALL 2020
Jingwei Zhang '20, "Civilization as a Collective Body"	SPRING 2020
Lexus Davis '20, "Intersectional Identities and Oppression"	FALL 2019
Li Jianrui '19, "Being is Becoming. Western Metaphysics and Alfred North Whitehead"	SPRING 2019

Collaborative Student-Faculty Research

- Carter Hanson '22, Mahan Research Fellow
Conducted comparative research on Chinese and Greek notions of fate and determinism. SUMMER 2021
 - Lilianna Mischke '21, Mahan Research Fellow
Copy-edited and commented on several articles and the full manuscript of my book *Adapting*. FALL 2019-SPRING 2021
 - Richard Macksey National Undergraduate Humanities Research Symposium at Johns Hopkins University (online) SPRING 2021
- Mentored 3 students to present their original research at the symposium.

- California State University, Fullerton, Philosophy Symposium SPRING 2020
Mentored 4 students to act as discussants at the symposium where I was an invited speaker. *Cancelled due to Covid-19*
- Gettysburg College CAFÉ Symposium FALL 2020 & 2021
Mentored 6 first-year students to present their original research conducted during our FYS at CAFÉ.
- Gettysburg College workshop “Chinese Philosophy: Body, Agency, Praxis” SPRING 2019
Organized workshop, invited, speakers, and mentored 4 students to act as discussants at the workshop.
- David DeBole ’2019, Ph.D. candidate at Johns Hopkins. SPRING 2019- 2021
Mentored David to apply for graduate school programs in Philosophy and Political Theory.

Advisees

Fall 2020-Fall 2021 12 First-Year Advisees and 8 Philosophy Major advisees

Previous Teaching Experience

University of Seville (Invited Professor)

PHIL/EAS CHINESE PHILOSOPHY SPRING 2018

Princeton University (Teaching Assistant)

REL 225 The Buddhist World of Thought and Practice FALL 2015

Language Teaching

MANDARIN AND FRENCH, Madrid Cultural Centre 2006-2008

SPANISH, Beijing Foreign Studies University SPRING 2006

SPANISH, International House Seville FALL 2005

Teaching Certificates

McGraw Center Teaching Seminar Certification, Princeton University 2016

Teaching Transcript Program Certification, Princeton University

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2015

Spanish as a Second Language Certification, International House Spain

2005

SERVICE

Gettysburg College (2018-present)

- *Subcommittee on Student Course Evaluations*: Spring 2021
 - Researched the shortcomings of SETs as an instrument for the evaluation of teaching effectiveness, and alternative models for the evaluation of teaching effectiveness.
- *Junior Faculty Advocacy Group* (founding member): Fall 2020 onwards
 - Researched pandemic-related challenges, their intersections with race, gender, and ability, and proposed initiatives to minimize their impact.
- *Curricular and Departmental Diversification in Philosophy and Broader Impact on Campus*:
 - Created new courses in non-Western philosophical traditions.
 - Changed major and minor requirements to fairly include an equal number of prerequisites in Western and non-Western philosophy courses.
 - Created new Diversity and Inclusion Statement: <https://www.gettysburg.edu/academic-programs/philosophy/diversity-inclusion-statement>
 - Started a conversation to revise core curricular courses' content and audit course titles.

Broader Service

Mentorship

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| 2018-2019 | Mentor, Job Candidate Mentoring Program for Women in Philosophy |
| 2018 | APA Committee on Asian and Asian-American Philosophers and Philosophies; curricular diversification section |

Boards

- European Association for Chinese Philosophy (EACP), elected board member, 2019-2021; reelected 2021-2023.
- Association of Chinese Philosophers in America (ACPA), elected Secretary-Treasurer 2020 & 2021.
- International Society for the Comparative Studies of Chinese and Western Philosophy (ISCWP), elected Secretary-Treasurer, 2020-2023.

Referee for Book and Journal Manuscripts

- Lexington Books
Bloomsbury Publishing

Res Philosophica

Philosophy East and West

Journal of World Philosophies

Early China

Dao. A Journal of Comparative Philosophy

Workshops, Conferences, and Panels Organized

- 2021 EACP Online Conference “Chinese Philosophy: Paths Between Convergence and Divergence” December 3, 2021.
- 2021 ISCWP Online Conference, Fall 2021, Date TBD
- 2019 Chinese Philosophy: Body, Agency, Praxis. Gettysburg College, Feb 8, 2019.
- 2018 Panel “Integrating Chinese Studies and Chinese Philosophy: Problems and New Methodological Orientations” (Organizer, Chair, Discussant). Association for Asian Studies, Annual Meeting, Washington D.C., March 22-25.
- 2016 The Princeton Early Text Cultures Workshop. Princeton Graduate School and Oxford University, April 16 and 17, 2016.
- 2016 Panel “Revisiting Old Heroes, or Non-Traditional Readings of Traditional Figures” (Organizer, Presenter). Association for Asian Studies, Annual Meeting, Seattle, March 31-April 3, 2016.
- 2015 *Bellum vs zhan* 戰: A Comparative Workshop on Early Military Thought. Princeton East Asian Studies Program and IHUM, April 4, 2015.
- 2014 Philosophy of the Past: Early Chinese Philosophy in Context. Council of the Humanities and East Asian Studies Program, Princeton, February 22, 2014.
- 2014 Memory and Adaptation in Early China. IHUM Reading Group “Philosophical Topics in Early China,” Princeton University, March 2-4, 2014.

Editing

- Martin Kern, *The Stele Inscriptions of Ch'in Shih-huang: Text and Ritual in Early Chinese Imperial Representation*, American Oriental Series 2000. Contrasted, proofread, and edited Chinese translation: 柯馬丁, 秦始皇石刻: 早期中国的文本与仪式. Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 2015.
- Martin Kern, several articles. Contrasted and proofread Chinese translation and compilation: 文本與文化記憶: 早期中國的書寫、儀式和詩歌研究 [Text and Cultural Memory: Studies in Early Chinese Writing, Ritual, and Poetry]. Beijing: Sanlian, 2016.

Memberships

Association of Asian Studies

Association of Chinese Philosophers in America

American Philosophical Association

Comparative Philosophy Toward World Philosophy

European Association for Chinese Philosophy

International Society for Chinese Philosophy

International Society for the Comparative Studies of Chinese and Western Philosophy

STUDY IN ASIA

2012 SUMMER	JAPAN	Princeton in Ishikawa: Japanese Intensive Language Program.
2011 SUMMER	JAPAN	International Christian University: Japanese Intensive Language Program.
2009-2011	TAIWAN	National Taiwan University, Philosophy Department: MA in Chinese Philosophy.
2008-2009	TAIWAN	Normal Taiwan University, Mandarin Training Center: Academic Mandarin and Classical Chinese.
2007 SUMMER	CHINA	Beijing Foreign Studies University: Advanced Mandarin.
2006	CHINA	Beijing Languages and Cultures University: Beginner Mandarin.

LANGUAGES

SPANISH	Native
ENGLISH	Near native
MANDARIN	Advanced
CLASSICAL CHINESE	Advanced
FRENCH	Advanced
JAPANESE	Reading
ITALIAN	Reading and Listening