

**Paul Fischer**

Curriculum Vitae, May 2020

Asian Religions and Cultures Program, Department of Philosophy & Religion  
Western Kentucky University, 1906 College Heights Boulevard, Cherry Hall Room 300  
Bowling Green, Kentucky 42101  
e-mail: paul.fischer@wku.edu  
phone: (270) 745-5758 fax: (270) 745-5261

---

**EMPLOYMENT**

**Western Kentucky University, Department of Philosophy and Religion, Associate Professor**  
August 2016-present (Assistant Professor: August 2011-August 2016)  
**American University in Cairo, History Department, Assistant Professor**  
August 2009-May 2011  
**Indiana University, Department of Religious Studies, Visiting Lecturer**  
August 2007-May 2009

**EDUCATION**

**University of Chicago, Ph.D., East Asian Languages and Civilizations** June, 2007  
Fields: • East Asian Cultural and Intellectual History  
• Chinese Historiography, Textual Criticism, and Classical Literature  
**University of Chicago, M.A., Philosophy of Religion** June, 1998  
**San Diego State University, B.A., Religious Studies** December, 1989

**PUBLICATIONS**

*The Annotated Laozi*, under review.  
*Self Cultivation in Early China*, under review.  
“Atheology, or Why Chinese Religions Matter,” under review.  
“Love and Apotheosis in Hesse’s *Siddhartha*,” chapter in *Teaching Religion and Literature*,  
edited by Daniel Boscailon and Alan Levinovitz, Oxford University Press, 2018.  
Co-editor with Lin Zhipeng, 治氣養心之術—中國早期的修身方法 (The Arts of Ordering the  
Body and Cultivating the Mind—Methods of Early Chinese Self-Cultivation), Fudan  
University Press, 2017.  
“《老子》中本体论的‘无’为心理上的‘思想开明’”(Ontological Emptiness as  
Metaphorical Open-mindedness in the *Laozi*), 《杭州師範大學學報》第 37 卷 第 6 期  
總第 219 期 (2015): 21-24.  
“儒家憂與靜矛盾的分析”(An Analysis of the ‘Contradiction’ of Confucian Anxiety and  
Tranquility), 《簡帛》第十輯 (*Bamboo and Silk* 10 [2015]): 37-49.  
“The Creation of Daoism,” *Journal of Daoist Studies* 8 (2015): 1-23.  
*Shizi: China’s First Syncretist*, Columbia University Press, 2012.  
“Intertextuality in the *Shi Zi*,” *Asia Major* 22.2 (2009): 1-34.  
“Authentication Studies (辨偽學) Methodology and the Polymorphous Text Paradigm,”  
*Early China* 32 (2008-2009): 1-43.

## **CONFERENCE PAPERS**

- “Self-Cultivation Programs in Early China,” Yale-NUS International Conference on Intertextual Dialogue in Early Chinese Writings, Singapore, May 7-9, 2020. Postponed to May 2021.
- “Confucian and Daoist Self-Cultivation in Early China,” Kentucky Foreign Language Conference, Lexington, April 16-18, 2020. Postponed to April 2021 due to Covid-19.
- “The Excellent Body in Early China,” Kentucky Foreign Language Conference, Lexington, April 20-22, 2017.
- “An ‘Empty’ Reading of the *Laozi*’s Opening Chapters,” Society for the Study of Early China, Toronto, March 16, 2017.
- “Timeliness in Early China,” 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Southeast Early China Roundtable, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, October 30-November 2, 2015.
- “《老子》中本体论的‘无’为心理上的‘思想开明’”(Ontological Emptiness as Metaphorical Open-mindedness in the *Laozi*), 治氣養心之術—中國早期的修身方法 (The Arts of Ordering the Body and Cultivating the Mind—Methods of Early Chinese Self-Cultivation) conference, Fudan University International Center for Studies of Chinese Civilization (复旦大学中华文明国际研究中心), July 1, 2015.
- “Anxiety in Early Chinese Self Cultivation,” 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Southeast Early China Roundtable, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, October 31-November 2, 2014.
- “Confucian ‘Anxiety’ and Metaphor: The Guodian Evidence,” Chicago-Wuhan Bamboo-Strip Document Conference (新出土简牍文献整理与研究), The University of Chicago, October 24-26, 2014. ([http://www.bsm.org.cn/show\\_article.php?id=2098](http://www.bsm.org.cn/show_article.php?id=2098))
- “The Role of Human *Qi* 氣 in Confucian Thought before Mengzi,” 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Midwest Conference on Chinese Thought, Southern Illinois University, April 25-27, 2014.
- “Somatic Self Cultivation in Early Ruism,” Society for the Study of Early China, Association for Asian Studies Annual Conference, Philadelphia, March 27-30, 2014.
- “An Analysis of Early Ruist Self Cultivation (先秦儒家修身法之分析),” 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Southeast Early China Roundtable, Western Kentucky University, November 1-3, 2013.
- “Character and Ultimate Principles in Chinese Philosophy,” 39<sup>th</sup> Conference on Value Inquiry, Western Kentucky University, April 11-13, 2013.
- “The Creation of Daoism,” 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Southeast Early China Roundtable, Berea College, November 2-4, 2012.
- “Fragmented Masters Texts in the First Imperial Library Catalog,” 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Southeast Early China Roundtable, Sewanee: The University of the South. October 7-9, 2011.
- “The Unusual Status of the *Xiao shuo* 小說 (Lesser sayings) Category among Early Chinese Masters Texts,” Fourth Annual Midwest Conference on East Asian Thought, Indiana University, Bloomington, April 26-27, 2008.

## **INVITED LECTURES**

- “The Cultivation of Timeliness in Classical Chinese Philosophy,” Pre-Modern Cultural Studies Group, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN, September 16, 2016.
- “Atheology (Or, Why Chinese Religions Matter),” Asian Studies Colloquium, Berea College, KY, October 2, 2013.
- “Saved by Grace: Soteriology in Chinese Religions,” 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Study of Religion Lecture, Western Kentucky University, April 18, 2013.
- “Hide and Seek in Early Chinese Literature,” Columbia University Society of Fellows in the Humanities, March 1, 2012.

## **REVIEWS**

- Livia Kohn, ed., *New Visions of the Zhuangzi* (St. Petersburg, FL: Three Pines Press, 2015); in *East Asian Science, Technology, and Medicine* 51, forthcoming (2020).
- Guolong Lai, *Excavating the Afterlife: The Archaeology of Early Chinese Religion* (University of Washington Press, 2015); in *Bulletin of the Jao Tsung-I Academy of Sinology* (饒宗頤國學院院刊) 4 (2017): 403-407.
- Geoffrey Redmond and Tze-Ki Hon, *Teaching the I Ching* (Book of Changes) (Oxford University Press, 2014); in *Journal of Chinese Religions* 44.1 (2016): 97-100.
- Michael Loewe, *Dong Zhongshu, a 'Confucian' Heritage and the Chunqiu Fanlu* (Brill, 2011); in *Philosophy East and West* 63.2 (2013): 306-308.
- Erica Brindley, *Individualism in Early China: Human Agency and the Self in Thought and Politics* (University of Hawaii, 2010); in *The Journal of Religion* 92.1 (2012): 158-159.
- Brook Ziporyn, *Zhuangzi: The Essential Writings with Selections from Traditional Commentaries* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2009); in *Philosophy East and West* 61.2 (April 2011): 402-404.
- Marc Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008); in *Journal of World History* 20.1 (March 2009): 153-156.

## **AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS, HONORS, GRANTS**

- Western Kentucky University Research and Creative Activities Program (RCAP), 2015-16
- Fudan University International Center for Studies of Chinese Civilization (复旦大学中华文明国际研究中心) Visiting Scholars Program, Summer 2015
- Western Kentucky University Potter College Faculty Development Grant, 2012, 2014
- Western Kentucky University Confucius Institute Sponsorship Grant, 2012
- American University in Cairo Summer Research Fellowship, 2010
- University of Chicago Harper Dissertation Year Fellowship, 2006-07
- University of Chicago Center for East Asian Studies Dissertation Writing Fellowship, 2005-06
- U.S. Department of Education Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Fellowship, 2004-05
- Fudan University-University of Chicago Study Fellowship, 2003-04
- Foreign Language and Area Studies (Title VI) Fellowship, University of Chicago, 2001-02
- Republic of China Ministry of Education scholarship for National Taiwan Normal University, 1999-2000
- University of Chicago, unendowed fellowship, 1999-2003

## **OTHER ACADEMIC SERVICE**

- Anonymous reviewer for *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 2018.
- Chair of Search Committee for Religious Studies Islam faculty, 2017.
- Chair of University Faculty Continuance, Promotion, and Tenure Committee, 2016-17.
- Co-organizer (with Lin Zhipeng 林志鵬) of the 治氣養心之術—中國早期的修身方法 (The Arts of Ordering the Body and Cultivating the Mind—Methods of Early Chinese Self-Cultivation) conference, Fudan University International Center for Studies of Chinese Civilization (复旦大学中华文明国际研究中心), July 1, 2015.
- Anonymous reviewer for *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 2015.
- Search Committee member for Religious Studies New Testament faculty, 2014.
- Co-leader of Study Abroad course “Chinese Culture” for Honors Flagship students to Beijing and Xi’an, Dec 2013-Jan 2014.

Anonymous reviewer for *Philosophy East and West*, Nov 2013.  
Host and organizer of the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Southeast Early China Roundtable, Western Kentucky University, Nov 2013.  
Wuhan University exchange professor, taught “Early Chinese Excavated Texts: Self and Cosmos” at the Early China Center (國學院), May-June 2012.  
Search Committee member for Political Science East Asian faculty (2012), Religious Studies Islamicist faculty (2011).  
Panel Chair, “Poet Sages, Reluctant Recluses, and the Classic of Tea: New Perspectives on Buddhism and Daoism,” Midwest Conference on Asian Affairs, 2007.

### **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

*Introduction to Chinese Culture* (Introductory undergraduate): Win 2014  
*Introduction to Asian Studies* (Introductory undergraduate): Spr 2019  
*Introduction to East Asian History* (Introductory undergraduate): Fall 2009  
*Traditional East Asia* (Advanced undergraduate): Spr 2017  
*East Asian Religions* (Introductory undergraduate): Fall 2007, Fall 2008, Fall 2011  
*East Asian Religion and Literature* (Intermediate undergraduate): Fall 2007  
*History of China* (Advanced undergraduate): Spr 2010  
*Cultural History of China* (Continuing education): Jan-May 2002  
*Chinese Thought* (Advanced undergraduate, taught in Chinese): Fall 2014  
*Excavated Texts in Early China: Self and Cosmos* (Advanced undergraduate): Sum 2012  
*Classical Chinese Philosophy and Religion* (Intermediate undergraduate): Spr 2011  
*Chinese Literature* (Intermediate undergraduate): Fall 2013, Fall 2015  
*Confucianism* (Intermediate undergraduate): Fall 2008, Spr 2012, Spr 2014, Spr 2016, Fall 2018  
*Daoism* (Intermediate undergraduate): Spr 2008, Spr 2009, Spr 2013, Spr 2015, Spr 2017  
*Zen Buddhism* (Intermediate undergraduate): Spr 2008, Spr 2009  
*Classical Chinese* (Intermediate undergraduate): Spr 2012, Spr 2013, Spr 2015, Spr 2017  
*The Meaning of Life: Atheism to Zen* (Introductory undergraduate): Fall 2014, Spr 2019  
*World Religions* (Introductory undergraduate): Fall 2011, Spring & Fall 2012-2018  
*Religious Explorations* (Advanced undergraduate): Spr 2019  
*Text and Context* (Graduate student seminar): Fall 2012, Fall 2016  
*Pedagogy* (Graduate student seminar): Fall 2012, Spr 2014

### **RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS**

- Chinese Cultural and Intellectual History (Literature, philosophy, religion, art, politics)
- Traditional Chinese Textual Criticism (Text formation and transmission, excavated texts)
- East Asian Religions (Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism, Zen, Shinto, Popular religions)

### **STUDY ABROAD**

Beijing University 北京大学, Beijing, China: Senior visiting scholar (高级进修生) in the Chinese language department (中国语言文学) August 2004-July 2005  
Fudan University 复旦大学, Shanghai, China: Regular visiting scholar (普通进修生) in the Chinese department (中文系) January 2004-June 2004  
National Taiwan Normal University 國立臺灣師範大學, Taipei, Taiwan: exchange student in the Chinese department September 1999-June 2000  
Feng Chia University 逢甲大學, Taichung, Taiwan: Chinese Language Center student March 1992-March 1994

## **LANGUAGES**

Chinese, Classical Chinese, Japanese, German

## **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

Society for the Study of Early China  
Association for Asian Studies  
American Historical Association  
Southeast Early China Roundtable

## **REFERENCES**

Professor Edward Shaughnessy  
The University of Chicago  
East Asian Languages and Civilizations  
301 Wieboldt Hall  
1050 East 59<sup>th</sup> Street  
Chicago, IL 60637  
(773) 702-5801  
eshaughn@uchicago.edu

Professor James Ketelaar  
The University of Chicago  
Department of History  
Social Sciences 513 / Box 98  
1126 East 59th Street  
Chicago, IL 60637  
(773) 834-0763  
jketelaa@uchicago.edu

Professor Jianjun He  
University of Kentucky  
Modern and Classical Languages,  
Literatures, and Cultures  
1441 Patterson Office Tower  
Lexington, KY 40506-0027  
jianjun.he@uky.edu

Professor Ke Peng  
Western Kentucky University  
Department of Modern Languages  
251 Ivan Wilson Fine Arts Center  
1906 College Heights Blvd. # 31029  
Bowling Green, KY 42101-1029  
ke.peng@wku.edu

Professor Donald Harper  
The University of Chicago  
East Asian Languages and Civilizations  
301 Wieboldt Hall  
1050 East 59<sup>th</sup> Street  
Chicago, IL 60637  
(773) 702-8533  
dharper@uchicago.edu

Professor Jun Yoo  
Yonsei University  
Department of Korean Language & Literature  
Seodaemun-gu Yonsei-ro 50  
Yonsei daehakgyo oesolgwang 214  
Seoul, South Korea 03722  
02-2123-2265 / 010-6369-0676  
yoojun@yonsei.ac.kr

Professor David Brakke (previous chair)  
Ohio State University  
Department of History  
230 Dulles Hall  
230 West 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Columbus, OH 43210  
(614) 292-2174  
brakke.2@osu.edu

Professor Audrey Anton  
Western Kentucky University  
Department of Philosophy and Religion  
Cherry Hall Room 300  
1906 College Heights Blvd.  
Bowling Green, KY 42101-1029  
audrey.anton@wku.edu