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Strategies of Resistance:

Modern Confucian Challenges to Philosophy's Eurocentrism

May 28, 2026 – 10.30 AM – Sala delle Trifore, San Sebastiano

In this talk, I introduce a book project—provisionally called *Sinophilosophy*—situated at the crossroads of philosophy and sinology. Taking part in the recent debates about Eurocentric forms of exclusion in philosophy, the book departs from the tendency, in the debates, to focus on how exclusion takes place in the Euro-American setting. Drawing from sociology of knowledge approaches, *Sinophilosophy* rethinks modern Confucianism (also known as New Confucianism or *dangdai xin rujia* 當代新儒家) as a counter-hegemonic practice opposed to, but also significantly impacted by, the hegemony of Euro-American philosophical knowledge. First, I argue that modern Confucian philosophy—as it developed from the early 20th century onward—is actively engaged in what sociologists call “boundary work” to reshape the boundaries of the field against the Eurocentric claim that philosophy and Euro-American philosophy are coterminous. Second, I discuss the effects Eurocentric mechanisms of exclusion inscribed in the practice of doing philosophy have on the modern Confucian counter-hegemonic project, making its success extremely arduous to achieve. Finally, I propose an alternative counter-hegemonic strategy to that adopted by most modern Confucians so far.

China as Philosophical Method:

Fusing (and Monopolizing) Sinology and Philosophy in the “New Confucian Manifesto”

June 9, 2026 – 3.00 PM – Sala delle Trifore, San Sebastiano

In this talk, I offer a new interpretation of a text commonly referred to as the “New Confucian Manifesto.” The text is often viewed by scholars as the most important document produced by the modern Confucian movement, insofar as it provides the movement with a set of guiding principles. Signed by four intellectuals associated with what is commonly known as “New Confucianism” (*dangdai xin rujia* 當代新儒家)—Tang Junyi (唐君毅; 1909–1978), Mou Zongsan (牟宗三; 1909–1995), Xu Fuguan (徐復觀; 1904?–1982), and Zhang Junmai (張君勱; 1887–1969)—the Manifesto was first published in Hong Kong in January 1958.

So far, scholars have emphasized the text’s philosophical significance or its socio-political dimensions. In contrast to such readings, I argue that the text is centrally concerned with establishing what I call “Sinophilosophy,” an autonomous intellectual field that fuses the study of Chinese culture (Sinology) with Chinese philosophy. I first discuss how the text sets out to create this new intellectual field, by singling out a common opponent against which the contours of a new habitus can be delineated and by providing a rationale for the field’s legitimacy and autonomy. I then set out to show that the text also aims to monopolize the cultural capital associated with Sinophilosophy. It does so, I argue, by assigning to the co-signatories a symbolic position in the field of Sinophilosophy that is structurally homologous to that of the emperor in imperial polity. This suggests that despite its open embrace of democracy in the realm of politics, the text nevertheless draws from the symbolic apparatus of the imperial past in its attempt at producing a new intellectual field.