

# **Alexus McLeod**

Professor

Department of Religious Studies

Indiana University

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## **Academic Positions:**

Professor, Indiana University, Department of Religious Studies, 2022-current

Professor, University of Connecticut, Department of Philosophy, Asian and Asian-American Studies Institute, 2021- 2022

(Associate Professor, 2017-2021; Assistant Professor, 2016- 2017)

Assistant Professor, Colorado State University, Department of Philosophy, 2014-2016

Assistant Professor, University of Dayton, Department of Philosophy, 2009-2014

## **Education:**

University of Connecticut, PhD, Philosophy, 2009

University of Oklahoma, MA, Philosophy, 2005

University of Maryland, BA, Philosophy with honors, Phi Beta Kappa, 2002

## **Research Areas:**

Early Chinese Philosophy, Mesoamerican Philosophy, Comparative Philosophy

## **Editorial and Organizational Positions:**

Editor-in-Chief, *The Philosophical Forum*, 2021-present

President, International Society for Comparative Studies of Chinese and Western Philosophy, 2020-present

Series Editor, *Critical Inquiries in Comparative Philosophy*, Rowman and Littlefield

International, 2015-2022

**Publications:**

[Books]:

*Creating the Dragon: Imagination, Mythology, and the Construction of Self in the Martial Arts*, Lexington Books (forthcoming)

*Routledge Companion to Global and Comparative Philosophy* (editor), Routledge (forthcoming)

*An Introduction to Mesoamerican Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press (April 2023)

*The Dao of Madness: Mental Illness and Self-Cultivation in Early Chinese Philosophy and Medicine*, Oxford University Press (October 2021)

*Transcendence and Non-Naturalism in Early Chinese Thought*, co-authored with Joshua Brown (Theology, Mount St. Mary's University), Bloomsbury (September 2020)

*The Bloomsbury Research Handbook of Early Chinese Ethics and Political Philosophy* (editor), Bloomsbury (February 2019)

*The Philosophical Thought of Wang Chong*, Palgrave Macmillan (October 2018)

*Philosophy of the Ancient Maya: Lords of Time*, Lexington Books (December 2017)

*Astronomy in the Ancient World: Early and Modern Views on Celestial Events*, Springer (July 2016)

*Theories of Truth in Chinese Philosophy: A Comparative Approach*, Rowman and Littlefield International (December 2015)

*Understanding Asian Philosophy: Ethics in the Analects, Zhuangzi, Dhammapada, and Bhagavad Gita*, Bloomsbury (November 2014)

[Articles]:

"Kuang (Madness) and Mental Illness in Early China", in Rom, ed. *Other Bodies: Disability and Bodily Impairment in Early China* (forthcoming)

"Heaven, Spirits, and Fate", in Ziporyn and Walker, eds. *Routledge Companion to Chinese Philosophy* (forthcoming)

"Independent Han Thinkers", in Ambrogio and Rogacz, eds. *Chinese Philosophy and Its Thinkers: From Ancient Times to the Present Day, Vol. 1 (Ancient and Early Imperial Thought)*, Bloomsbury (forthcoming)

"The Thought of the New Text School of Confucianism", in Ambrogio and Rogacz, eds. *Chinese Philosophy and Its Thinkers: From Ancient Times to the Present Day, Vol. 1 (Ancient and Early Imperial Thought)*, Bloomsbury (forthcoming)

"Selections from *Daodejing*, *Zhuangzi*, *Popol Vuh*, and *Chilam Balam Books*," in Rustom, ed. *Sourcebook in Global Philosophy*, Equinox (forthcoming)

"*Fa* as Model and Law in the *Huainanzi*", in Pines, ed. *Dao Companion to Philosophy of Fa*, Springer (forthcoming 2023)

"Transformative Identity in the K'iche' Maya *Popol Vuh*", in Bruno and Vlasits, eds. *Transformation and the History of Philosophy*, Routledge (forthcoming 2023)

"Philosophy in Han Dynasty China", *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (2022)

"A Daoist Conception of Virtue: The Virtue of Virtuelessness," in Guerrero and Harman, eds. *Norton Introduction to Ethics* (forthcoming)

"The Self and the Chariot (from the *Milindapañha*)," in De Cruz, ed., *Philosophy Illustrated: 40 Thought Experiments to Broaden Your Mind*, Oxford (2021)

"Responsibilities of the Father- A Problem in Early Confucianism?" in *Frontiers of Philosophy in China* (forthcoming)

"Humility in Early Confucianism", in Alfano, Lynch, and Tanesini, *Routledge Handbook on the Philosophy of Humility* (2020)

"Wang Chong's View of Spontaneity and Its Influence on Wang Bi and Guo Xiang", in Chai, ed. *Dao Companion to Neo-Daoism*, Springer (2020)

"Amadou Bamba—Integrity and the Struggle for Spiritual Cultivation," in Alston, Carpenter, and Wiseman, eds. *Portraits of Integrity*, Bloomsbury (2020)

"Comments on Ing's *The Vulnerability of Integrity in Early Confucian Thought*," in *Res Philosophica* 96; 3 (2019)

"Sacrifice: A Maya Conception of a Misunderstood and Underappreciated Component of Well-Being," *Science, Religion, and Culture* 6;1 (2019)

"*Itz* and the Descent of Kukulkan: Central Mexican Influence on Postclassic Maya Thought", *Parergon* 35; 2 (2018)

"The Role of Anxiety in the *Zhuangzi*, Indian, and Hellenistic Philosophy", in McLeod, ed. *Bloomsbury Research Handbook of Chinese Ethics and Political Philosophy*, Bloomsbury (2018)

"Some Considerations in Defense of a Radical Reading of the Mohist *Jian Ai*", in McLeod, ed. *Bloomsbury Research Handbook of Chinese Ethics and Political Philosophy*, Bloomsbury (2018)

"East Asian Martial Arts as Philosophical Practice", *APA Newsletter on Asian and Asian-American Philosophers and Philosophies* 17; 4 (2018)

"Xunzi and Mimamsa on the Source and Ground of Ritual: An Analogical Argument", *Philosophy East and West* 68; 3 (2018)

"Introduction to Special Issue on Han Dynasty Thought", with Michael Ing (Indiana University), *Asia Major*, Third Series 29; 2 (2016)

"The Convergence Model of Philosophical Method in the Early Han", *International Communication of Chinese Culture* 3; 2 (2016)

"Methodology in Comparative Chinese-Indian Philosophy", in Tan, ed. *Methodology in Chinese Philosophy*, Bloomsbury (2016)

"May You Live in Interesting Times: Reflections on the State of the Field" in *APA Newsletter on Asian and Asian-American Philosophers and Philosophy* 15; 2 (2016)

"Philosophy in Eastern Han Dynasty China (25-220 CE)", *Philosophy Compass* 10; 6 (2015)

"Replies to Brons and Mou on Wang Chong and Pluralism"; *Comparative Philosophy* 6;1

(2015)

(also included in Mou, ed. *Philosophy of Language, Chinese Language, Chinese Philosophy: Constructive Engagement*, Brill, 2018)

"Communal Moral Personhood and Moral Responsibility in the *Analects* and the *Bhagavad Gita*", in Theodor and Yao, eds. *Brahman and Dao: Comparative Studies of Indian and Chinese Philosophy and Religion*, Lexington Books (2013)

(Chinese Translation of  
"Communal Moral Personhood About Truth in Early Chinese Philosophy")

"Wang Chong" in *Berkshire Dictionary of Chinese Biography, Vol. 1* (2013)

"In the World of Persons: The Personhood Debate in the *Analects* and *Zhuangzi*", *Dao: A Journal of Comparative Philosophy* 11; 4 (December 2012)

"Ren as a Communal Property in the *Analects*"; *Philosophy East and West* 62; 4 (2012)

"Wang Chong" Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy (2012)

"Pluralism About Truth in Early Chinese Philosophy: A Reflection on Wang Chong's Approach"; *Comparative Philosophy* 2; 1 (2011)

(also included in Mou, ed. *Philosophy of Language, Chinese Language, Chinese Philosophy: Constructive Engagement*, Brill, 2018)

: (Chinese Translation of  
"Pluralism About Truth in Early Chinese Philosophy"); in *Zhongwai renwenjingshen yanjiu* (Chinese and Foreign Research in Humanistic Spirit), Beijing Academy of Social Sciences (2012)

"A Reappraisal of Wang Chong's Critical Method Through the *Wenkong* Chapter of the *Lunheng*"; *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 34; 4 (2007)

[Book Reviews]:

Book Review of Bryan Van Norden, *Taking Back Philosophy: A Multicultural Manifesto*, in *The Journal of Asian Studies* (forthcoming)

Book Review of Michael Ing, *The Vulnerability of Integrity in Early Confucian Thought*, in *The*

*Journal of Religion* (forthcoming)

Book Review of Chenyang Li and Peimin Ni, *Moral Cultivation and Confucian Character: Engaging Joel Kupperman*, in *Philosophy East and West* (forthcoming)

Book Review of Fung Shu Fun, *Yinyang wuxing de jiewei zhixu: Dong Zhongshu de ruxue sixiang* (The Position and Order of Yin-yang and the Five Elements: The Confucian Thought of Dong Zhongshu), in *Dao: A Journal of Chinese Philosophy* (forthcoming)

Book Review of Berruz and Kalmanson, eds. *Comparative Studies in Asian and Latin American Philosophies*, in *Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews* (2018)

Book Review of Huang, *Confucius: A Guide for the Perplexed* and Rosemont, *A Reader's Companion to the Confucian Analects*, in *Philosophy East and West* (2015)

Book Review of Zhou Guidian, *Qinhan Zhexue* (Qin and Han Philosophy), in *Dao: A Journal of Comparative Philosophy* (2011)

Book Review of Bryan W. Van Norden, *Introduction to Classical Chinese Philosophy*, in *Dao: A Journal of Comparative Philosophy* (2011)

Book Review of David Wong, *Natural Moralities*, in *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 38:3 (2011)

Book Review of Bryan W. Van Norden, *Virtue Ethics and Consequentialism in Early Chinese Philosophy*, in *Philosophy East and West* 60:4 (2010)

[Interviews, General Pieces, and Other Publications]

"Editor's Note: On Philosophy, a Pandemic, and Our International Future", *The Philosophical Forum* 53(1), 2022.

"Ancient Cultures and Mental Health", interview on *The Juke Blue Show* (<https://youtu.be/FFIYqwlfyf0>)

"Chinese Philosophy and the Dao of Madness", *3:16*, February 2022.

"An Interview With Alexis McLeod", *The Philosopher's Eye* blog, September 2021.

"Loss and Continuation: Lessons from the Popol Vuh", *Sightings*, June 2021.

Interview on *Looking for Wisdom*, "Alexus McLeod on Maya Philosophy", February 2021.

"How Do We Diversify Philosophy? Pluralism Rather than Inclusivism", *Blog of the APA*, July 2020.

Interview on "Ancient Chinese Philosophy and Mental Health", *Minds and Mics*, July 2020.

"Early Chinese Philosophers on the Role of Community in Mental Illness", *Aeon*, June 2020.

"Taking Others Seriously as Anti-Racism in Philosophy", *The Philosophers' Cocoon*, June 2020.

"The Most Important Chinese Philosophy Books" contributor on *The Reading Lists*  
<https://www.thereadinglists.com/most-important-chinese-philosophy-books>

Interview on *Philosophy of the Ancient Maya*, on *New Books in Philosophy* podcast, 2018.

"Wang Chong, o del razionalismo anticonformista. Il professor McLeod ci guida alla riscoperta di un pensatore dimenticato" (Interview with Stefano Bigliardi), *L'ateo 115* (2017)

Radio appearance on *The Attitude with Arnie Arnesen*, interview about early Chinese philosophers on death and grief, 2017.

"What Chinese Philosophers can teach us about dealing with our own grief." *The Conversation* (Oct. 30, 2017)

"Eclipse as Omen: The Human Response." *UConn Today*, (Aug. 17, 2017)

"Comparative Philosophy in an Age of Cultural Chauvinism, (or 'The Art of Traveling Without Traveling'), *Philosopher* blog, <https://politicalphilosopher.net/2017/02/23/featured-philosopher-alexus-mcleod/>

#### **Presentations:**

"Comparative Metaphysics in Maya Philosophy", Oxford Americanist Archaeology Seminar, January 2023.

"The *Huainanzi* and the Development of Contemporary Global Philosophy", Knowledge and

Action Lab Lecture, ECNU Shanghai, December 2022.

"The Divine Names: The Human Role in Construction of the Cosmos in the Maya Popol Vuh and Ibn Arabi's *Fusus al-Hikam*", IU Religious Studies Colloquium, October 2022; Comparative Metaphysics Workshop, January 2023.

"Chinese and Western Philosophical Thought and Their Influence in the Modern World", East China Normal University, July 2022.

"Comments on Lauren Pfister's *Vital Post-Secular Perspectives on Chinese Philosophical Issues*", ISCP 2022 International Conference, June 2022.

"Truth and Formulations of the Ideal Person in Early China", VICTR Truth 2022 Conference, June 2022

"How to Infuse Asian Content into Philosophy Courses", APA Live Panel, May 2022.

"Intercultural Communication and the Problem of Ownership", American Philosophical Association Pacific Conference, April 2022

"The Human Role in Construction of the Cosmos in the *Popol Vuh*", University of Tennessee at Chattanooga Philosophy Colloquium, April 2022.

"The *Huainanzi* and the Quest for a Universal Philosophy", University of Central Arkansas Workshop on the Three Teachings, February 2022.

"Comparative Philosophy as Global Synthesis", Mahan Lecture 2021, Gettysburg College, April 2021.

"Astronomy and Culture", Guest Lecture, University of Maryland, February 2021.

Author Meets Critics Session on McLeod, *Philosophy of the Ancient Maya*, American Philosophical Association Eastern Conference, January 2021.

Guest Lecture, Amy Reed-Sandoval, Latin American Philosophy course, UNLV, September 2020.

"Between Worlds: The Nature of the Cosmos in Maya Philosophy", Colorado College Spring Colloquium, invited lecture, January 2020.

"The Origins of Truth Pluralism in Early China", American Philosophical Association Eastern



Conference, Philadelphia, PA, January 2020.

"Greater Knowledge and Lesser Knowledge in the *Zhuangzi*—When Normativity Fails?" Sosa Encountering Chinese Philosophy Conference, Fudan University, Shanghai, invited lecture, April 2019.

Diversifying Syllabi Panel Discussion, American Philosophical Association Pacific Conference, Vancouver, BC, Canada, April 2019.

"Roles and the Nature of Personhood in Early Chinese and Maya Philosophy", Conference on Comparative Ancient Philosophy, invited presentation, Princeton University, March 2019.

"The Transcendent *Dao* and the Nature of Language", Yale-NUS College, Singapore, invited lecture, March 2019.

"Philosophical Naturalism in the Han Dynasty", Bard College, invited lecture, September 2018.

"Zhuangist Views of Truthmakers and Practice", 24<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Philosophy, Beijing, China, August 2018.

"Natural Propensities in the *Huainanzi*", Smith College, invited lecture, April 2018.

"Lessons on Synthesis and Unification from the *Huainanzi*", David Ross Boyd lecture, University of Oklahoma, invited lecture, March 2018.

"Comments on Michael Ing's *The Vulnerability of Integrity in Early Confucian Thought*", American Philosophical Association Central Conference, Chicago, IL, February 2018.

"Time in Maya Philosophy", Brooklyn Public Library "Philosophy in the Library" invited lecture, NYC, February 2018.

"Philosophical Exploration and the Creation of a New Renaissance", Brooklyn Public Library "Night of Philosophy and Ideas" invited lecture, NYC, January 2018.

"Embedded Identity in Maya Philosophy," 2018 Mesoamerica Meetings, University of Texas, Austin, TX, January 2018.

"Truth as a Property of Conduct in the *Zhuangzi*", American Philosophical Association Eastern Conference, Savannah, GA, January 2017.

"*Ming*, Cultivation, and Determinism in the *Lunheng*", Wang Chong Workshop, UC Berkeley,

invited lecture, November 2017.

"Disordering the Regularities of Nature in the Astronomy of the *Huainanzi*", Body and Cosmos in China Conference, University of Pennsylvania, invited lecture, October 2017

"A Concept of Personhood Based on Classical Chinese and Traditional West African Views", American Philosophical Association Pacific Conference, Seattle, WA, April 2017

"Value Skepticism and Skepticism as a Value in the *Zhuangzi*", American Philosophical Association Eastern Conference, Baltimore, MD, January 2017

"The Madman of Chu: Mental Illness and Personhood in Early Chinese Philosophy", Columbia Comparative Philosophy Seminar, invited lecture, New York, NY, December 2016

"Chinese Astronomy and Martial Arts", Philosophy Department/Confucius Institute, Central Connecticut State University, New Britain, CT, invited lecture, November 2016

"Truth and Formulations of the Ideal Person in the *Huainanzi*", Northeast Conference on Chinese Thought, Bridgeport, CT, November 2016

"A Substantive Pluralist Theory of Truth in Early Chinese Philosophy: Wang Chong on (*Shi*)", 3<sup>rd</sup> Rutgers Workshop on Chinese Philosophy, New Brunswick, NJ, April 2016

"*Zhen* as a Truth Concept: The *Chuzhen* Chapter of *Huainanzi*", 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Midwest Conference on Chinese Thought, Chicago, IL, March 2016

"Truth Chauvinism, Deflationism, and Chinese Philosophy", American Philosophical Association 2015 Central Conference, St. Louis, MO, February 2015  
(also presenting at 2015 APA Pacific, Vancouver, BC, April 2015)

"The Role of Anxiety in the *Zhuangzi* and the *Upanishads*", American Academy of Religion annual meeting, Baltimore, MD, November 2013

"On the Concept of Truth in Ancient Chinese Philosophy" and discussion, Rutgers Summer Institute for Diversity in Philosophy, invited lecture, New Brunswick, NJ, July 2013

"On Two Methods of Philosophical Thought in the Han Dynasty", International Conference on the History of Logical Thought in China, Tianjin, China, April 2013

"The Problem of Identity in *Zhuangzi*," American Philosophical Association 2012 Eastern

Conference, Atlanta, GA, December 2012

"Ritual Duty in *Xunzi* and the *Purva Mimamsa Sutra*," American Academy of Religion annual meeting, Chicago, IL, November 2012

"Two Problems Concerning Materialism in Wang Chong's *Lunheng*," 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Midwest Conference on Chinese Thought, Bloomington, IN, April 2012

"The *Analects* and the *Bhagavad Gita* on Moral Personhood," American Academy of Religion annual meeting, San Francisco, CA, November 2011

"Community and Moral Agency", invited lecture at Nanjing University of Science and Technology, Nanjing, China, May 2011

"Jia Yi and Lu Jia on Shame, Self-Cultivation, and Social Order"; American Philosophical Association 2011 Central Conference, International Society for Chinese Philosophy panel, Minneapolis, MN, March 2011

"Ambivalence Toward Children and the Ethics of Fatherhood in the *Analects*"; American Philosophical Association 2010 Pacific Conference, International Society for Chinese Philosophy panel, San Francisco, CA, March 2010

"A Reconstruction of Wang Chong's Argument Against Han Feizi's Legalism in His Essay *Fei Han*"; American Philosophical Association 2010 Pacific Conference, Association of Chinese Philosophers in North America panel; San Francisco, CA, March 2010  
(later version presented at University of Dayton brown bag series, February 2011)

"The Human Nature Debate of *Analects* 18.5-7 and the *Renjianshi* Chapter of the *Zhuangzi*" American Philosophical Association 2009 Eastern Conference, Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy panel; New York, NY, December 2009

"Wang Chong on *Shi* and Han Dynasty Philosophical Method"; Midwest Conference for Asian Affairs 2009; Miami University, Oxford, OH, October 2009

"The Concept of *Ren* and Differing Views of the 'Chinese Character'"; Midwest Conference for Asian Affairs 2009; Miami University, Oxford, OH, October 2009

"Rejection of Community and Non-Persons in *Analects* Book 18"; American Philosophical Association 2009 Pacific Conference, Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy panel; Vancouver, BC, Canada, March 2009.

"The Psychologization of the Confucian *Ren*"; American Philosophical Association 2007 Eastern Conference, International Society for Chinese and Western Philosophy panel; Baltimore, MD, December 2007.

(also presented at University of Connecticut, Philosophy Brown Bag Series, October 2007)

"Beyond *Qingtan*: A Reappraisal of the Philosophical Method of Wang Chong"; American Philosophical Association 2005 Pacific Conference, International Society for Chinese Philosophy panel; San Francisco, CA, March 2005

"The Evolution of *Anatta*: Contemporary American Conceptions of the Theravada "Not-Self"; Society for Indian Philosophy and Religion 2004 conference on globalization, Buffalo, NY, October 2004

### Awards:

Provost Commendation for Teaching Excellence, University of Connecticut, Spring 2017, Fall 2017, Spring 2018, Fall 2018, Fall 2020

### [Ph.D. Dissertations and MA Theses directed]:

Christopher Rahlwes, Ph.D., University of Connecticut (2023), *Negation, Denial, and Silence: What Classical Indian and Chinese Proto-logics Tell Us About Negative Speech Acts*

Kristin Culbertson, Ph.D., University of Connecticut, *Embracing the Non-Ideal: A Suffering-Oriented Ethical Approach*

Lake Davidson, MA, Colorado State University, *Inclusive Just War Theory: Confucian and Mohist Contributions*

Joshua Brown, Ph.D. (Theology), University of Dayton (committee member), *Incorporating Xiao: Exploring Christ's Filial Obedience through Hans Urs von Balthasar and Early Confucian Philosophy*

### Professional Memberships:

American Philosophical Association (Eastern Division Member)

Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy

International Society for Comparative Studies of Chinese and Western Philosophy (President, 2020-2023, Vice President 2017-2020)

American Academy of Religion

**Department/University Service:**

Graduate Committee, Religious Studies Dept.- Indiana University, 2022-present

UConn College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Strategic Planning Committee, 2019-2020

UConn College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Committee for Courses and Curricula, 2019-2022

University of Connecticut Humanities Institute Advisory Board member, 2018-2020

Tenure and Promotion Committee, Philosophy Dept.- University of Connecticut, 2017-2018

Climate Committee, Philosophy Dept.- University of Connecticut, 2016-2022

Graduate Committee, Philosophy Dept.- University of Connecticut, 2016-2022

Philosophy Department Advisory Committee-University of Dayton, 2010-2012, Colorado State University, 2015-2016

Faculty Council Representative, Philosophy Dept.- Colorado State University, 2015-2016

Coordinator for "Called to Question: Faith and Reason in Community" Living Learning Community- University of Dayton, 2012-2013

Faculty Global Intercultural Study Travel Program Participant-University of Dayton, 2011

Common Academic Program Pilot Service-University of Dayton, 2010-2011

**Professional Service:**

President, International Society for Comparative Studies of Chinese and Western Philosophy, 2020-2023 (VP 2017-2020)

Editorial Board: *Comparative Philosophy, Philosophy and Global Affairs*

Co-Host, New Books in Philosophy podcast (on New Books Network), 2019-2021

Creator of *Unpolished Jade: A Chinese Philosophy Blog* (<http://unpolishedjade.wordpress.com>), and contributor to *Warp Weft and Way: A Group Blog of Chinese and Comparative Philosophy* (<http://warpweftandway.wordpress.com>)

Peer reviewer for numerous journals and publishers

Host and organizer of *2018 Northeast-Midwest Conference on Chinese Thought*, Storrs, CT, April 2018

Host and organizer of *9<sup>th</sup> Annual Midwest Conference on Chinese Thought*, Dayton, OH, May 2013; also MCCT committee member; Northeast Conference on Chinese Thought committee member

American Academy of Religion, Chinese and Indian Religions Compared Steering Committee Member, 2016-2019