



Australasian Society for Continental Philosophy

**Australasian Society for Continental Philosophy
Annual General Meeting 2021 (Bond University and Zoom), 10 December 2021**

Chair's Report

Prepared by Dimitris Vardoulakis

1. Acknowledgement to country

I acknowledge the traditional custodians of Gadigal land, where I am speaking to you from today. I acknowledge the elders of the Eora people who have had a continuing connection with this land for 60 thousand years. I also acknowledge the Yugembeh people who are the tradition custodians of the land where the in situ conference is held, as well as the many colleagues who are joining the AGM through Zoom from many other indigenous lands. If you would like to acknowledge the land that you are joining the AGM from in the minutes, please email Marilyn Stendera at ascp.executive@gmail.com

2. Covid challenges

I would like to open by acknowledging also the immense challenges that most of us have faced this year, both personal and professional. I would like to acknowledge in particular colleagues who are under pressure from University cutbacks, such as those currently occurring at Federation University, Deakin University and the University of Sydney. We all stand in solidarity with our colleagues.

3. Thanks to Bond University

One of the major challenges for the ASCP in relation to Covid-19 has been the conference, which had to be cancelled last year. I would like to publicly express the Society's gratitude to Bond University who agreed to host the conference again in 2021. This was a particular important decision for the Society as the uncertainty with COVID-19 made the organizing a significant challenge. On behalf of the entire Executive, I would particularly like to thank Daniel Brenan who has been the driving force of the conference at Bond University. It is a great success that our conference has been the largest philosophy conference to be held in Australia in 2021.

It has been a busy year for the ASCP executive. Please let me outline what we have achieved this year and our plans for the future.

4. Regular meetings of the executive

Taking advantage of everyone getting used to meeting over Zoom, the ASCP executive established regular meeting occurring every month. The meetings were minuted. The engaged participation of the members of the Executive created a vibrant environment to workshop ideas and to action our plans.

5. Revision of the Constitution

One of the most significant undertakings for 2020 has been the revision the Society's Constitution (Agenda item 4). The most significant changes include a renewed emphasis on EDI, clarifications on the conditions of membership, and better definitions of the roles of the members of the Executive.

6. Policy developments and actions plans

The revised Constitution provides the conditions for revamping our entire policy suite. This has already started and it will be completed in 2022 following ratification of the new Constitution at the AGM. The policies and plans will be outline at the 2022 AGM.

7. Journal

According to the Constitution (§9.4 of the 2021 version), the ASCP is to be associated with a journal so as to produce one special ASCP issue per year. For many years, the ASCP worked with *Parrhesia*. We are grateful for the co-operation of the editors of *Parrhesia* for a long period of time and we acknowledge the journal's contribution to the ASCP. However, *Parrhesia* has entered a phase where its direction does not clearly align with the aims of the ASCP. For this reason, the ASCP Executive has sought a different journal. The Executive approved the association with a new journal published by a major publisher, who have agreed to underwrite the ASCP issue of the journal. Unfortunately, the proposal has not yet been ratified by the Advisory Board of the University Press that publishes the journal yet. As soon as this happens, we will inform our members, hopefully in early 2022. The Executive believes that this is a fantastic opportunity for the ASCP and its members, both to internationalize and to provide support to ECRs through two internships.

8. Advisory Board

According to the Constitution (§7.4 of the 2021 version), the ASCP should have an Advisory Board. We are committed to establishing such a Board in 2022. We aim to be inclusive and outward looking, inviting a range of philosophers both from Australia and overseas who have an interest in supporting the aims of the ASCP.

9. Congress Conference in Humanities and Social Sciences

The ASCP executive was approached by Dan Woodman, the Chair of the Council of the Humanities and Social Sciences, who invited the ASCP to join with many other professional organizations in a Congress style annual conference. This arrangement gives us the following advantages:

- 1) The ASCP will retain full autonomy to organize our conference as we please (i.e. the ASCP will have control over the program, keynotes, streams and submissions).
- 2) CHASS will take responsibility for the venue (which in 2022 will be the University of Melbourne campus) and provide logistical support. This will lead to higher professional standards offered to our members and potentially lower registration fees.
- 3) Participating in such a Congress size conference qualifies the ASCP to apply for funding from state governments. The 2022 Congress conference will be held in Melbourne. We have been awarded \$10,000 through a grant from the Victorian Government.
- 4) Our members will have the opportunity to also attend other conferences in neighbouring disciplines, all of which will be held at the same place over a period of ten days or so.
- 5) The Congress conference will offer the ASCP exceptional opportunities to lobby policy makers of both the University sector and the government. The Congress conference is supported by the Australasian Council of Deans of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (DASSH), and it is planned that the Federal Education minister and/or senior officials will be invited to visit the conference.
- 6) There's no obligation to participate in the Congress conference every year. If the ASCP wants to hold the conference separately one year, we are free to do so. There is no "lock in" contract.

For all these reasons, the ASCP executive decided to accept the invitation of CHASS to join the Congress conference in 2022. The conference will be held at the University of Melbourne.

10. Working with the Australasian Association for Philosophy

The ASCP executive discussed the unprecedented challenges faced by Philosophy in the current circumstances, and we decided to reach out to the AAP so that we can co-operate and co-ordinate actions to protect the interests of philosophy as a whole in Australia. The meeting took place in March. The ASCP was represented by the Chair, Dimitris Vardoulakis, and the Secretary, Marilyn Stendera. The AAP by Stuart Brock (CEO), Neil Levy (President) and Eliza Goddard (Executive Officer). This was a very cordial meeting and the AAP invited us to co-host the 2023 conference. We had to decline the invitation because of the Congress conference, but we believe that this signals a new spirit of co-operation with the AAP for the benefit of philosophy as a whole in Australia. On behalf of the ASCP executive, I would like to thank the AAP for their co-operation.

11. Social media

The ASCP wants to enhance communication between scholars, both within Australia and from overseas. For this reason, we are placing increasing emphasis on the use of social media, such as Facebook and Twitter. The Executive thanks Brigid Martin, communications officer for the ASCP, who has revamped our social media presence. I encourage everyone to subscribe to the ASCP social media and to post whenever they organize a talk, workshop or conference.

12. ASCP panel at SPEP

The ASCP has continued to work toward the internationalization of the discipline and to assist our members to present their research overseas. This year, the ASCP organized again a satellite panel at the SPEP conference. The panel took place on Sunday September 26. There were five speakers, Robyn Ferrell, Richard Colledge, Mathew Abbott, and Rhonda Siu and Scott Doidge did a joint paper. The ASCP executive would like to thank Daniel Brennan for organizing the panel and the participants for their presentations.

13. ASCP book series

Two books were published in 2021 in the book series affiliated with the ASCP and published by Rowan & Littlefield:

Max Deutscher, *Towards Continental Philosophy: Reason and Imagination*

John McIntyre, *The Limits of Scientific Reason: Habermas, Foucault, and Science as a Social Institution*

We would like to thank the editors of the series, Simone Bignall, P. Diego Bubbio, Joanne Faulkner and Paul Patton, for their work on this series.

14. Appointment to officer positions (clarification)

According to the Constitution (in all previous versions and in the 2021 one), there is a distinction between elected members (the chair, deputy chair, treasurer, secretary and international liaison), and the officer positions. The elected members need to nominate at the AGM and voted by all members. But, according to the constitution, the officers are appointed by the Executive. In the past, the practice has been sometimes to ask colleagues to nominate for the officer positions at the AGM. We have decided to follow the letter of the Constitution and to leave the appointment of officers to the discretion of the Executive. But I would like to stress very strongly and unequivocally that the Executive has its door always open to colleagues who want to contribute to the profession. If anyone wants to be involved in any capacity, please contact the Chair or any other member of the Executive.

15. Raising issues and participating in subcommittees (reminder)

I should also remind everyone that as a member you have the right to raise any issue for consideration at the Executive. Further, all active members are eligible to be members of sub-committees formed by decision of the ASCP executive. Please contact the Chair or any other member of the executive if you want to raise an issue or participate in committee work.