



CAS sets up contact committees in Tromsø, Trondheim, Bergen and Oslo:

Seeks better cooperation with the universities

The Centre for Advanced Study is taking the need for much better cooperation with the Norwegian universities seriously, setting up contact committees at all four universities this autumn.

Two years ago, when the Bjørgo committee submitted its evaluation of the Centre for Advanced Study, relations between the Centre and the Norwegian universities were one of the very few areas that came in for criticism. The committee saw extended and improved cooperation as an absolutely essential step towards legitimizing the CAS's existence.

The Centre's Board has risen to the challenge and has this autumn appointed contact committees at each of Norway's four universities. The committees have four to six members who are well acquainted with the CAS, and are chaired by the representative on the Board of the university in question.

The purpose of these contact committees is primarily to make the Centre for Advanced Study better known among Norwegian research environments, to achieve closer contacts with the universities, and not least to find more outstanding Norwegian scholars who merit consideration as potential group leaders at the Centre.

The deadline for nominating candidates to head groups in the 2002-2003 academic year is 1 December this year, so the four CAS committees have been given an important task to embark on right from day 1.

See more on the back page

Research groups 1999/2000

- **Classical Chinese Philology**

The group is headed by Prof. Christoph Harbsmeier, the University of Oslo;

- **Mesoscopic Physics**

The group is headed by Professor Yuri Galperine, the University of Oslo;

- **The Effectiveness of International Regimes**

The group is headed by Professor Arild Underdal, the University of Oslo.

Galperine's and Underdal's groups will be presented in Newsletter no. 1, 2000.

Systematising classical Chinese philology

This year's humanities research group at the Centre for Advanced Study has brought together the world's leading scholars in Chinese language history. Under Professor Christoph Harbsmeier's chairmanship, the project will result in a unique electronic data base which will systematically elucidate, describe and analyse the conceptual world of classical Chinese. The group discusses selected shades of meaning in the key concepts which dominated and shaped traditional Chinese thought in the fields of politics,



Professor Jiang Shaoyu participates in the group at the CAS. (Photo: Ellen Stokland)

economics, poetry, aesthetics and philosophy.

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Torstein Jøssang resigns after two terms as Chairman of the CAS Board Leaves a ship on a steady course

After six steadfast years as board chairman at the Centre for Advanced Study, Torstein Jøssang will be handing the wheel over to a suc-

cessor at the year-end. He takes pride in the Centre's achievements, and wishes the new chairman every success in the continuing work.

Under Torstein Jøssang's management, the Centre has made its mark in Norway as a stronghold of basic research of the highest quality – despite financial constraints that could have damped anyone's ardour. In close

cooperation with tireless Office Manager Unn Haaheim Hagen and Secretary Marit Finnemyhr Strøm, Jøssang has fought for the survival of the "researcher's paradise" on Drammensveien. Thanks to extensive lobbying and sales-

manship in research circles, ministries, and institutions, as well as careful nurturing of a broad Norwegian and international network, Jøssang & co have secured a firm position for the CAS in the Norwegian research landscape.

Although allocations still fall far short of what is regarded as essential to satisfactory operations, the considerable increase in the Fiscal Budget for 1998 did enable this busy 66-year-old to heave a sigh of relief, in the knowledge that the next board chairman will have enough to do in the years ahead.

Tight budgets

A great deal has happened since the physics professor first took up the chairmanship in 1993, at a time when the Centre's Fiscal Budget allocations were disastrously low. The fact that the man who launched the idea of the Centre and became

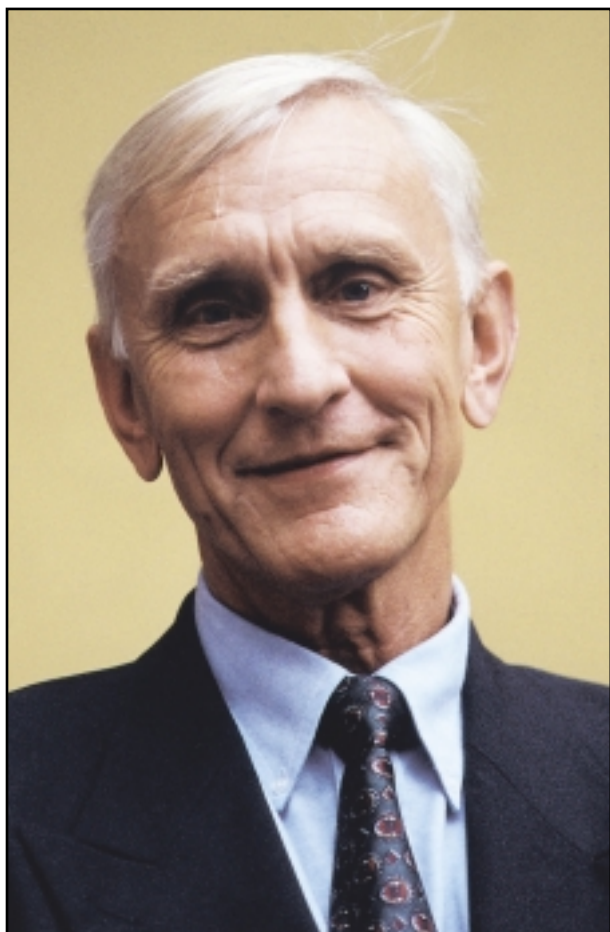
its first chairman, Gudmund Hernes, was Minister of Research at the time did nothing to brighten the outlook from the top of the Norwegian Academy building. But Torstein Jøssang was undismayed, and accepted the challenge of advancing the Centre project, on the principle of "making do with what you've got". And despite the heavy odds against it, the CAS has proved itself viable.

The CAS still has very tight budget limits to contend with, but thanks to the wholly favourable conclusions, and positive recommendations that the work must go on, arrived at by the Bjørge committee in its 1997 evaluation report, "The House of (inquiring) Spirits on Drammensveien", the Centre has been given a sufficient financial boost to ensure the continuation of its activities.

One of the first

When the Centre for Advanced Study received its first research groups in the autumn of 1992, the chairman who is now stepping down was one of the group leaders. Torstein Jøssang is a Professor of Physics at the University of Oslo, and together with his colleague and collaborator of several decades' standing, Professor Jens Feder, he headed the research by a group of physicists into "Fractal growth processes". This is an approach to understanding apparently chaotic conditions in nature, an area the two colleagues have been studying since the early 1970s, and which has attracted attention within a number of scientific disciplines.

Among other developments during the CAS year, cooperation began between some geologists and Jøssang's research group, which



Torstein Jøssang, who is retiring as Chairman of the Board of the Centre for Advanced Study at the year-end (Photo: Ellen Stokland)

New post of Director of Studies at the CAS from 1 January 2000

In addition to acquiring a new Board Chairman, the CAS will also appoint a Director of Studies to a newly established fixed-term post.

As we went to press, no decision had been taken on who was to hold either position. As soon as the appointments have been made, however, we will make the information available on the Internet, and the two incumbents will be introduced in the next issue of the Newsletter, scheduled to appear in the spring of 2000. Until this autumn, Torstein Jøssang not

only chaired the Centre's Board but was also responsible for its administrative management. From 1 January 2000, the two functions will be divided between two posts. The Director of Studies will be appointed for a three-year term, with the possibility of renewal.

Following up recommendations

The CAS is thus following up one of the recommendations of the Bjørge committee, which underlined the need for a research director whose main tasks would be to organize and

coordinate the scientific work at the Centre and to help to define its profile. The Director of Studies would also serve, the committee suggested, as the Centre's ambassador to and link with other research institutions.

According to the job description adopted by the Board, the Director of Studies will divide his or her time between administration of the research activity at the Centre, extension of the Centre's contact network, scientific work specifically aimed at the areas to which the Centre gives priority, and own research. **ES**

began making models for geological processes, the point being that physics can help to explain what happens during earthquakes, or the flow of a river. The interaction between fluids and various types of rock has also aroused the physicists' curiosity, in inquiries of special benefit to the oil industry in connection with petroleum recovery.

Cultural exchanges

"A typical feature of a stay at the CAS is that it leads to cooperation with untraditional partners and to new approaches to familiar material," Jøssang says. Bringing scholars together from widely different disciplines has proved especially fruitful, and for his own part the physics professor has no hesitation in recommending much more extensive exchanges between different disciplines and research environments. "Physicists should mingle with researchers from other natural sciences, because inter-disciplinary cooperation increases our knowledge of natural processes. An autumn marked by a number of major earthquake disasters has added urgency to such inquiries."

During his years as chairman of the CAS Board, Jøssang has seen other exciting instances of valuable cultural exchanges, both within a single research group and between groups. The mere fact that group members come from countries as different as China, the USA and Norway is enough to cause "culture shocks", one potential result of which may be new and original insights.

"We have had researchers from over forty countries at the Centre, and every continent except Australia has been represented," Jøssang says enthusiastically. There have admittedly been very few scholars from Africa and none from South America, and most of the Asian researchers have come from India, China and Japan. But all in all the Board chairman feels that the Centre has achieved a good spread on the world map.

"It isn't really an aim in itself for the Centre to recruit scientists from all corners of the

earth," Jøssang points out, "nor do we aim for gender equality or equality of distribution among Norwegian regions. What counts is that only the very best is good enough at the CAS."

Healthy young blood

What has been an objective, on the other hand, has been to recruit some younger scholars and offer them the Centre's facilities for parts of their post-doctoral training. "Besides," says the professor, "it's healthy to get some young blood in to challenge the accepted truths which older colleagues tend to take for granted. The research groups at the CAS have consisted of an international research elite, from prestigious universities, with impressive achievements and lists of publications to their credit," Jøssang remarks, adding that this in itself guarantees the efficiency and the quality of the research at the CAS.

During his terms as chairman, Jøssang has attached great importance to a selection process which guarantees that only highly qualified candidates gain admission to the turreted building on Drammensveien. On the average, each nominee for group leader is evaluated by five internationally prominent scholars from within the same field. No other Norwegian research institutions have such a rigorous selection process – despite the fact that it need not cost a penny.

"Most scholars regard it as an honour to be asked to evaluate expert colleagues," Jøssang explains, "in addition to having an interest in obtaining access to various project descriptions, as a way of keeping up to date on international developments in their disciplines."

Complaints from elsewhere

The selection process has not escaped criticism, however. According to the universities outside Oslo, group leaders have predominantly come from the University of Oslo. Jøssang rejects the criticism, calling instead for nominations from the universities concerned. "We have found it very difficult to elicit nomi-

nations," says Jøssang, who has had to go through Norwegian research environments himself with a fine-tooth comb to find worthy candidates. He would like to see the universities contributing more to the process. The Bjørgo committee, too, regretted that most of the group leaders had been nominated by the Board chairman himself.

It is to be hoped that the new establishment of CAS contact committees at all the universities will help to ensure that larger numbers of outstanding Norwegian scholars will be assessed for group leadership at the CAS. But Jøssang emphasises that regional policy considerations must not be among the criteria for invitations to head research groups. Only academic qualifications count in the selection process.

Popular among students

Torstein Jøssang has a highly respectable record himself. As a small boy in Jørpeland, the future professor of physics already knew what he wanted to be when he grew up. A scholarship to the USA was followed by an appointment at the University of Oslo, where he has been since 1965. He and Professor Jens Feder currently attract one of the largest groups of post-graduate and Ph.D students of physics, among whom they are both very popular. In the course of the 90s, they have jointly received several awards for their efforts to advance Norwegian research and teaching.

There are few signs that the retiring Board chairman intends to take things any easier in the next millennium, after he has vacated his seat on the Board. A large number of students, and three neighbouring grandchildren, will see to it that Torstein Jøssang maintains a high level of activity. And in the autumn of 2000, Professor Bjørn Jamtveit of the University of Oslo will be heading a physics/geology group at the CAS, and has invited Jøssang to participate in his project. So it may not be too long before we meet him again on the spiral staircase in the Academy building... ES

Lectures discontinued

The CAS has decided to call a halt to the series of popular lectures, arranged in collaboration with the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters.

Since the autumn of 1995, scholars attached to the CAS have popularised their research in a lecture series held at the Academy. The lectures sometimes attracted audiences of over a hundred, but they have recently been so poorly attended that the Centre has decided to discontinue them until further notice.

Ibsen in Japanese until 2009

An Ibsen play will be produced at a Tokyo theatre every year until 2009, directed and translated into Japanese by a former CAS group member.

The Japanese theatre professor Mitsuya Mori took part in the Ibsen group at the CAS in 1993-94. Two years later he published a book containing eleven Ibsen plays in Japanese, each of which will be produced at Tokyo's Theatre X up to the year 2009, directed by the professor himself. Beyond translating the

texts into Japanese, Professor Mori has made no changes aimed at adapting the plays to a Japanese context. Henrik Ibsen is no household name in Japan, but Japanese audiences will soon be acquainting themselves with "An Enemy of the People", "The Wild Duck", and other Ibsen plays. ES

The history of classical Chinese to

古漢語類義文典

Using a specially designed data base program, a research group comprising the world's leading classical Chinese philology scholars – from China and from western universities – will make classical Chinese texts and language accessible to a much wider public, through the project known as "Synonyma Serica Comparata".

Professor Christoph Harbsmeier of the University of Oslo has assembled the world's top history of Chinese scholars in his group at the Centre for Advanced Study, which augurs well for his trail-blazing "Synonyma Serica Comparata" project, the aim of which is to produce the western world's first historical and critical dictionary of classical Chinese synonyms, in order to make the large quantities of source material accessible to a wider audience than the specialists.

Unique source material

In a historical perspective, Chinese civilisation can be seen to have been one of the world's most influential and splendidly intellectually advanced cultures. With Chinese history continuously recorded in writing from as far back as 3000 years, a unique opportunity presents itself to study the historical development of the Chinese language and the Chinese conceptual world.

In his lecture at the autumn 1999 opening of the Centre for Advanced Study, Harbsmeier underlined the great conceptual differences between classical Chinese and western languages. One cannot simply translate a word from one language to another and assume that one is reproducing the identical meaning. Every term has an entire concept attached to it which is grounded in the culture in which the term arose.

"The first Chinese word a European learns on arriving in China is 'ni hao', corresponding to 'hi'. But the Chinese only acquired the term in this century, so it is not rooted in Chinese tradition," Harbsmeier explains. "Nor do the Chinese talk about 'rights'; they are more concerned with 'obligations' towards other people. That makes concepts like 'human rights' difficult to understand in a context of Chinese culture, because 'rights' in the western sense are associated with egoism and the concept is therefore negatively charged."

"For a demand for respect for human rights to be heard in China, one would have to link it to the people's duties to the collective, and not to anything that any individual 'owns'", the professor goes on, noting that "freedom" is also a foreign word in China. A longing for freedom among Chinese today is a result of globalisation – or of Coca-colonisation.

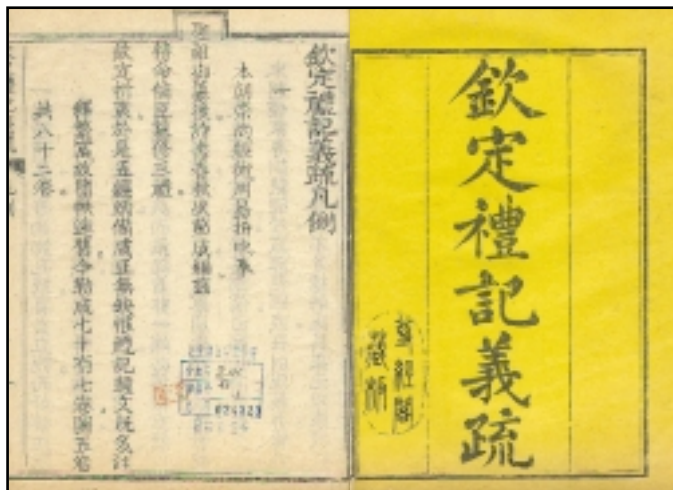
A whole series of other western terms and concepts become meaningless if one tries to translate them into Chinese – and vice versa. "We ask the wrong questions all the time," Harbsmeier believes, thinking especially of the word-to-word translations in modern dictionaries. "Instead of asking 'What is green in Chinese?', we should look for the words the Chinese use to differentiate between colours. If the concept 'green' does not exist, asking what green *is* becomes meaningless – because it *is not*."

Specially designed data base

Which is precisely the principle underlying Professor Harbsmeier's ambitious research project.

A vast data base will be used to store tens of thousands of Chinese characters, accompanied by conceptual explanations and possible areas of use in English, as well as a large number of classical Chinese texts. The computer program was specially designed for the project by University Lecturer Jens Østergaard Petersen of the University of Copenhagen, who is also participating in the research group at the CAS. Harbsmeier can not praise his colleague highly enough: without Petersen's data base program, the project would never have "taken off".

The data base began being put to use a couple of years ago, we are told by the Dane, who by then had spent a good half year working on program development. The program can still be improved, and Petersen is constantly fine-tuning it. The data base is currently in a server at the CAS, so that it can be accessed by more than one user at a time. Harvard University is one of the frequent users of



The research group is studying classical Chinese texts. Here a special edition of "The Book of Rituals", printed in the 18th century for the Chinese Emperor.

be made more accessible



Professors Huan Jingui, Christoph Harbsmeier and Jiang Shaoyu are cooperating on building up the largest data base in the west for the history of classical Chinese. (Photo: Ellen Stokland)

this data base located in Oslo. Professor Michael Puett from that prestigious university notes the pioneering nature of Harbsmeier's project, and has no doubt that "Synonyma Serica Comparata" will become the most important reference tool of all for studies of classical Chinese texts. Puett will himself be joining the research group for a shorter time.

Efficient work of reference

There are a number of reasons why Harbsmeier's project is in a class of its own. The mere fact, for instance, that Chinese texts and characters are gathered in a bilingual electronic data base means that one can look up characters one doesn't understand much more efficiently. In a normal Chinese dictionary one would have to search through hundreds of characters. In Harbsmeier's data base you find what you are looking for in an instant: copy and paste in the character and the computer does the rest.

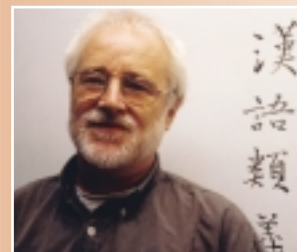
Which is no mean feat! As already mentioned, what we are concerned with is not word-to-word translation but the understanding of whole concepts. The data base will accordingly list a number of possible explanations of a term, since what it means in any particular case will depend on the context. In addition to definitions, the data base shows examples of the use of the word, criteria for using the term, and contrasting terms. And as if that were not enough, Harbsmeier & co have also stored the most important

reference books for Chinese characters in the data base, including the page in each dictionary where the character is explained. The largest such dictionary contains no less than 85,568 characters. A student or scholar can save man/years by these means, while at the same time acquiring broader foundations for interpretation.

A further important point for Harbsmeier has been to avoid basing his reference work on others. Basically, all dictionaries build on other dictionaries, which can have misleading results. A group consisting of experts in classical Chinese from both Chinese and western universities is better equipped to study the primary sources and discuss the possible meanings they arrive at. The group's discussions – held entirely in Chinese – are currently centred on recently excavated documents dating back to long before the birth of Christ.

In addition to the tens of thousands of Chinese characters that have been registered individually in the data base, a large number of Chinese texts have also been registered electronically. Some are whole books, and some are shorter texts, for instance poems. Harbsmeier tells us that the data base contains nearly all Chinese books written prior to the arrival of Buddhism in China in the third century. The oldest texts are from about 800 BC.

Continued on the next page



Christoph Harbsmeier

Christoph Harbsmeier is heading the research group in classical Chinese philology. He has been Professor of Chinese Philology at the University of Oslo since 1985. He has taught at universities in several countries. He was also the first non-Chinese in history to be appointed to a chair in the discipline Chinese at China's leading Peking University. Harbsmeier has received a number of distinctions for his outstanding research.

Group members:

- Prof. Christoph Harbsmeier, University of Oslo (leader);
- Ph.D. candidate C. Anderl, the University of Oslo;
- Professor Lothar von Falkenhausen, UCLA;
- Professor Huang Jingui, the Zhejiang University;
- Professor David Keightley, the University of California at Berkeley;
- Professor David Knechtges, the University of Seattle;
- Professor Michael Lackner, the University of Göttingen;
- Professor Andrew Plaks, Princeton University;
- Professor Michael Puett, Harvard University;
- Professor Jiang Shaoyu, Peking University;
- Prof. Edward Shaughnessy, the University of Chicago;
- Professor Chang Taiping, the University of Seattle;
- Professor Qiu Xigui, Peking University;
- Professor Chen Guying, National Taiwan University, Taipei;
- Professor Pang Pu, the Peking Academy of Social Sciences;
- University Lecturer Jens Ø. Petersen, the University of Copenhagen.

Greater efficiency at the CAS

Professor Harbsmeier is very pleased to be able to work on his project at the CAS. He has stayed at similar centres in other countries, but is in no doubt that although the others enjoy much more generous budgets, research productivity per krone invested is much higher at the Norwegian research centre.

"That I was free to assemble the research group myself was very lucky for us," Harbsmeier believes. "At other centres of advanced research, those in charge select group members without taking into account how well they cooperate. The hand-picked participants in my project make up a highly efficient group and cooperate excellently. Personally I have never led such a challenging and productive life as at this moment."

Harbsmeier and his colleagues join many others in pointing to the important social benefit of being able to engage in research together without any other commitments. The long hours they work are an indication that the scholars enjoy each other's company: none of them pack their bags to go home before nightfall. ES

Taiwanese philosophy professor visited the CAS:

Exile became an eighteen

"Happiness springs from unhappiness, and unhappiness from happiness," says Taiwanese philosophy professor Chen Guying. The dynamic and contrary forces of Taoism are not least among the influences on his own life. He visited the CAS this autumn.

by Ingvild Bokn

Professor Chen Guying visited the Centre for Advanced Study this autumn and took part in the research group in Chinese philology headed by Professor Christoph Harbsmeier. He is now back at the National Taiwan University in Taipei, where he is a professor at the Department and Graduate Institute of Philosophy.

Driven into exile

1979 was a fateful year for Chen, who had to leave his homeland Taiwan for political reasons. But the eighteen years in exile did give him the opportunity to visit many countries, experience different research environments, and meet many interesting people.

Chen worked at Taiwan University until 1979, when his political convictions made it impossible for him to stay. He was deprived of his right to teach and forbidden to have any contacts with his students. Having lost his livelihood and position, he finally saw no other solution than to leave Taiwan. "It was a difficult time, but unhappiness springs from happiness and happiness springs from unhappiness," Chen says pensively. "If I hadn't had to leave Taiwan, I would never have met so many fantastic people, for instance in California and Peking."

From 1979 to 1984 he was attached to the University of California at Berkeley

as a researcher, and from 1984 to 1997 he lived in China, and held a chair in ancient Chinese philosophy, with special emphasis on Taoism.

A metaphysical way of thinking

Taoism is a Chinese philosophical system founded by the Chinese philosopher Lao Zi in the 6th century BC. The "tao" – or "way", as the term can be translated – denotes the hidden principle of the universe.

"This faith," Chen explains, "places less emphasis on good deeds. The focus is more on harmonious interplay with one's surroundings, which automatically ensures right living.

According to Taoism, the universe is in a balance between the opposed forces Yin and Yang, which maintain a state of dynamic tension between them. Yin is feminine and liquid and symbolises the forces of the moon and the rain. Yang is masculine and solid and symbolises the forces of the sun and the earth.

Chen describes Taoism as a metaphysical way of thinking, in which "wu-wei" is a key word. He uses the English term "non-interference" to describe the Chinese concept. "Respect for others, letting people grow without control or interference, are important elements of Taoism," the philosophy professor explains, noting that both people and states could learn a great deal from such an approach. "The USA, for instance, is very concerned to press its ideology and its values on other states. The Americans could learn a great deal from the Taoist way of thinking," Chen maintains.

Patient Chinese

The Professor believes that the Chinese are a patient people precisely because of the influence of Taoism. He compares them to the gentle movement of water through a landscape. "They adapt to their surroundings," he points out. In the USA he registered a difference between Chinese and American students in that respect. If any form of conflict at all arose, the Chinese students quickly withdrew.

Many Chinese and Taiwanese students, as well as other intellectuals, are also attracted to Taoism because it symbolises freedom. Chen thinks one explanation can be that the mode of government exercised by the leaders in Peking



The philosopher Lao Zi, founder of philosophical Taoism, is often depicted riding a bull. (The Cambridge Encyclopedia of China 1991)

-year exploration of experience

involves extensive control. China's leaders do not like Taoist ideas which focus on the freedom and development of the individual.

Chen says that Taoism is very closely linked to Chinese tradition, language, culture and history. These are factors which make translation into other languages difficult. Nor is Taoism as widespread in the west as for instance Buddhism. There is moreover a distinction between religious and philosophical Taoism; the Taoism most western people have heard about is a popularised version which confuses the two.

According to Vincent Goossaert, a Belgian who wrote his Paris doctoral dissertation on the history of Taoism, perception in the west of philosophical Taoism is largely a matter of the history of the translation of "Daode jing" (classical Taoist literature, written about 300 BC). With a few exceptions, the versions which gained the greatest influence in the western world were produced by people with little if any knowledge of Chinese who rewrote "Daode jing" to fit their own agendas. XIX-century German idealism, Christian ideology, theosophy, liberalism, feminism, new age and many other currents of thought exploited Taoism for their own purposes. With so many different impressions, Taoism as the western world knows it becomes a very vague philosophy.

Back in Taiwan after 18 years

Chen Guying returned to Taiwan two years ago, after eighteen years abroad, and is once again a professor of philosophy at National Taiwan University. Those who once withdrew his right to teach have been replaced by former colleagues and others who share his views. But the years away from Taiwan led to many positive and interesting experiences, among which he makes special mention of the different research environments around the world and his meetings with many great personalities.

While working in Peking, one of those he met was Deng Xiaoping, the politician often referred to as "China's strong man". In 1985, Deng expressed a wish to meet a Taiwanese intellectual, and Chen was chosen. In a two-hour conversation, they discussed the need for more translations of well-known philosophers like Kant and Aristotle, the need for urban and land reforms in Taiwan, and human rights.

The professor describes Deng as very forthright and no diplomat. His response to Chen's concern for the many imprisoned Taiwanese intellectuals was to say that "things would get better if agreement could be reached that



Professor Chen Guying from Taiwan spent 18 years in exile, which gave him the opportunity to become acquainted with research environments all over the world. "My misfortune became my good fortune," says the professor, who this autumn visited the Centre for Advanced Study. (Photo: Ellen Stokland)

China and Taiwan were one country". Taiwan's wish for independence is a burning issue. In Chen's opinion, most Taiwanese citizens want reforms but not radical change; he describes Taiwan's leader Lee Teng-Hui as an idealist whose personality reflects Japanese influence.

Chen believes China is engaged in psychological warfare against Taiwan, but is also genuinely worried by Taiwan's huge arms investments in the last couple of years. It is a shame, he says, to see so much money spent on arms while minimal resources go to the universities.

A pioneering project

As one of the leaders of the international organization for the study of Taoism, Chen has visited a number of European universities. This has enabled him to watch the development of Chinese studies in many countries, and he has noted a widespread interest in philosophical Taoism. He finds Professor Harbsmeier's project at the CAS especially exciting, and says it is unique in its approach to the Chinese language and the Chinese way of thinking.

"In China, data bases usually only publish material in its original Chinese wording," he points out. The texts in Harbsmeier's data base have all been translated into English, which makes the material accessible also to people who are not specialists in classical Chinese. In

addition to the translations into English, the texts in the data base have been analysed in a way which permits comparative studies of the history of ancient Chinese and western concepts. "This is a valuable method because it leads to a shared understanding of the different cultures," Chen says, and believes that Harbsmeier's project will influence the development and methodology of Chinese studies.

According to Chen, research in China and Taiwan into the Chinese language, mode of thought and culture is often a lonely occupation, whereas in Harbsmeier's project a number of leading scholars participate and collaborate.

"This is socially stimulating and rewarding, since we deliver lectures to each other and meet in discussion groups," the professor goes on enthusiastically, adding that the social aspect has made his weeks at the CAS particularly enjoyable. He also speaks warmly of the willingness of the Norwegian government and academic institutions to support a project concerned with the ancient Chinese language and civilisation. He thinks of Norway as culturally and academically as well as materially rich. Support for a project like Professor Harbsmeier's would not be readily forthcoming in China, where the authorities tend to support research projects in the fields of technology and economics.



Tore O. Vorren

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Sub-dean Kirsti Ytrehus
Professor Erik H. Egeberg
Professor Sidsel Saugestad.



Kathrine Skretting

Trondheim: Deputy Kathrine Skretting (chair)
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Professor Johan A. Aarli
Professor Magne Espedal
Professor Helge Dyvik.



Aanund Hylland

Oslo: Professor Aanund Hylland (chair)
Professor Christoph Harbsmeier
Professor Inger Moen
Professor Ragni Piene
Professor Nils Christian Stenseth
Professor Erling Eide.

The CAS establishes contact committees

The establishment of contact committees at the Norwegian universities will improve communications and relations between the CAS and Norway's academic environments.

Following a Board decision this autumn, the Centre for Advanced Study has set up contact committees at all four Norwegian universities, in order to improve communication and cooperation between the Centre and the academic environments.

To begin with, the committees will have four to six members who are familiar with the Centre's activities. Each committee will be chaired by that university's representative on the CAS Board, and the other members know the Centre well after spending periods of research there. Committee members will represent the three subject areas represented at the CAS – humanities, natural sciences/medicine, and

social sciences. The Rector of each university approves the membership of its contact committee.

The CAS committees are free to organize their work as they themselves see fit. Their main tasks are to spread information locally and build up formal and informal networks. Chairman of the Board Torstein Jøssang assumes that some of the committee work will be directed at such local channels of information as university publications and the Internet. Another possibility would be to hold seminars, information meetings, and discussions, or to host informal lunches or coffee breaks in the canteen.

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For more information concerning nominations of candidates to head groups at the Centre for Advanced Study in the academic year 2002-2003, see our Internet pages: <http://www.shs.uio.no/News/>

The Centre for Advanced Study

The Centre for Advanced Study is an independent foundation with a board appointed by the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters and the Universities Council. Prominent Norwegian and foreign scholars are invited for one-year stays to engage in research in the Centre's premises in Drammensveien 78, where it is housed in the turreted section of the Academy's villa.

The CAS is exclusively a basic research institution, where participants have no other obligation than their own research. Each year, activities are organized in three research groups, with from six to eight members each. The work of each group is planned and organized around a common theme and headed by one or more prominent scholars.

Groups are normally chosen within each of the following three areas:

- Humanities
- Natural sciences/medicine
- Social sciences/law

The Centre for Advanced Study was officially opened on 1 September 1992.

The Board of the CAS:

Professor Torstein Jøssang (chairman)
Professor Jan Fridthjof Bernt (deputy chairman)
County Governor Ann-Kristin Olsen
Deputy Rector Kathrine Skretting
Professor Tore O. Vorren
Professor Johan A. Aarli
Secretary-General Hans M. Barstad (observer, the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters)

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