

EASTERN PHILOSOPHY- PHIL 298

FALL 2007

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Office hours: Tue/Thurs 3:00-4:00 p.m. and by appointment

Days & Time: MWF 1:00-1:50

Location: MYBK 206

This course offers an introduction to some of the most important Buddhist and Brahmanical thinkers in Classical India. We will begin with an inquiry into the methods and scope of Indian philosophy with a focus on rationality, debate, and the sources of valid cognition, as first outlined by Gautama; second, Nāgārjuna will acquaint us with the method of Buddhist dialectics; in Vasubandhu, we will discover a unique type of pragmatic idealism; Vātsyāyana and Udyotakara will introduce us to a complex metaphysical dualism backed by an elaborate method of analytical inquiry; for a thorough rational defense of key Buddhist doctrines (and a lively Buddhist-Nyāya debate) we will turn to Dignāga and Dharmakīrti; then, Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla will present us with a comprehensive synthesis of the two most dominant schools of Buddhist thought in India: Madhyamaka and Yogācāra; finally, in Vācaspati we will recognize one of the most unbiased and erudite thinkers in Classical India. We will conclude with readings from Confucius, Laozi, and Zhuangzi, highlighting the differences between Classical Indian and Chinese thought. This course aims to provide students with more than a superficial exposure to the philosophical sophistication of Eastern thought and make them sensitive to common assumptions and misconceptions about the nature and scope of Eastern Philosophy.

Required Texts

Jonardon Ganeri,	<i>Philosophy in Classical India</i> (Routledge)	PCI
Kisor Kumar Chakrabarti,	<i>Classical Indian Philosophy of Mind</i> (SUNY)	CIPM
Matthew Kapstein,	<i>Reason's Traces</i> (Wisdom)	RT
Theodore Stcherbatsky,	<i>Buddhist Logic</i> Vol. 1, (Kessinger)	BL
Mark Siderits,	<i>Buddhism as Philosophy</i> (Hackett)	BP
James Blumenthal,	<i>The Ornament of the Middle Way</i> (Snow Lion)	OMW
P. Ivanhoe & B. Norden	<i>Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy</i> (Hackett)	RCCP

Tentative Reading Assignments

August 22-24	Introduction; <i>Rationality and Experience</i> (PCI: 9-25)
August 27-31	Buddhism and Philosophy (RT: 3-22); Buddhism as Philosophy (BP: 1-14); Nyāya Philosophy (CIPM: 1-16);
September 3-7	Rationality and Debate (PCI: 25-40); Cognition and its Object (CIPM: 19-43); Rationality and the Doctrine of Emptiness (PCI: 42-68);
September 10-14	Buddhist Epistemology (BP: 208-230); Sources of Knowledge (BL: 59-78);
September 17-21	Perception (BL: 146-161); Judgment (BL: 204-216; 226-230);
September 24-28	Causality (BL: 119-131); Causality and Free Will (BL: 131-154); Causality, No-self and Ethics (BP: 69-84);
October 1-5	Madhyamaka on Ultimate Reality (BP: 180-191); Yogācāra on Ultimate Reality (BP: 146-158); Dharmakīrti on Ultimate Reality (BL: 181-195);
October 8	The Yogācāra-Madhyamaka Synthesis (OMW: 235-246);
October 10	MIDTERM
October 15	FALLBREAK
October 17-19	The Self: East and West (RT: 29-44); Searching for the Self (RT: 53-67); Self and Personal Identity (CIPM: 55-68);
October 22-26	Advaita and Nyāya on the Self (CIPM: 191-205); No-Self and Personal Identity (BP: 32-46);
October 29-November 2	Vasubandhu on Personal Identity (RT: 350-366); Vātsyāyana on Personal Identity (378-383); Personal Identity and Vitalism (RT: 161-174)
November 5-9	Nyāya: Consciousness and the Body (CIPM: 115-126); Buddhism: The Aggregated Self (BP: 105-113); Consciousness, Embodiment and the Dancing Girl (RT: 135-156)
November 12-16	Confucianism (RCCP: xi-xvii; 1-16)
November 19	Confucianism (RCCP: xi-xvii; 17-44)
November 22	THANKSGIVING
November 26-30	Taoism (RCCP: 161-180)
December 3	Taoism (RCCP: 207-226; 243-250)

Requirements: two short essays (5-6 pages; 20% each), two quizzes (5% each), a midterm and a final exam (25% each).

You must bring the assigned text to class.