

PHIL 348/548: Comparative Philosophy

Instructor: Richard Hayes

Office hours: Mon 1:00–3:00PM

Office: Humanities 525

Telephone: 277–8232

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Classroom: HUM 518

Or by appointment

rhayes@unm.edu

1 Subject matter of the course

Is philosophy a uniquely European enterprise, or is it a universally human activity found in many (or all) cultures? When one does comparative philosophy, what is one comparing, and why? In this seminar we shall examine the reflections of Wilhelm Halbfass, B.K. Matilal, and Joel Kupperman on these questions. We shall then undertake to practice comparative philosophy by studying writings of a Roman Stoic, a Chinese philosopher and an Indian Buddhist—all of whom write about living the ideal life.

2 Required Texts

The following texts are available for purchase in the UNM bookstore: Kupperman (1999), Xunzi (2003), Śāntideva (1996) and Marcus Aurelius Antoninus (1983). Other books that you may find useful for getting further background information are listed in the references at the end of this syllabus. Readings for seminars that are not contained in the books listed above will be made available on WebCT.

3 Basis of evaluation

3.1 Undergraduate students (PHIL 348)

The main basis of evaluation will be three essays on topics that will be announced on WebCT. A modest part of the evaluation will be based on attendance and quality of participation in class discussion.

Assignment	Date due	Weight
1st essay	February 19	25%
2nd essay	March 12	30%
3rd essay	April 30	35%
Class participation		10%

3.2 Graduate students (PHIL 538)

Evaluation will be based on three projects. First, each student will prepare a paper, to be read in class, taking as a point of departure one of the readings assigned on the day the paper is read. The aim should be a paper that takes 20–30 minutes to read aloud. Second, each student will prepare a 5–10 minute response to another graduate student's

in-class presentation. This response is to be written and read aloud.¹ Third, each student will write a philosophical essay on a topic connected with the subject of comparative philosophy arrived at in consultation with me.

Project	Weight
Paper read in class	30%
Response to a paper	20%
Philosophical essay	40%
Class participation	10%

4 Schedule of readings

Date	Readings
Jan 22	Introduction to Kupperman (1999, 3–13); The scope of ethics (Kupperman, 1999, 123–157); Philosophy as communication (Kupperman, 1999, 181–193)
29	“The East, the Other” (Matilal, 2002, 265–277); “Religion and value” (Matilal, 2002, 175–195); The demands of ethics (Kupperman, 1999, 161–177)
5	The formation of self as and ethical problem, and the fluidity of self (Kupperman, 1999, 17–89)
Feb 12	“Ethical relativism and confrontation of cultures,” and “Pluralism, relativism and interaction between cultures” (Matilal, 2002, 218–262)
19	“Spiritual exercises” Hadot (1995, 81–126)
26	Meditations Books 1–6 (Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, 1983, 3–60)
Mar 5	Meditations Books 7–12 (Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, 1983, 61–129)
19	Xunzi (2003, 1–58)
26	Xunzi (2003, 69–124)
Apr 2	Xunzi (2003, 125–174)
9	Choice (Kupperman, 1999, 97–120) and the demands of ethics (Kupperman, 1999, 161–177)
16	Śāntideva (1996, 3–62)
23	Śāntideva (1996, 63–132)
30	“India and the comparative method” and “Europe, India and ‘the Europeanization of the Earth’” (Halbfass, 1988, 419–442)

¹Because each paper read in class will have a response, the main presenter must get a copy to the respondent a week before the presentation is delivered in class.

References

- Chan, Wing-tsit. *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1963.
- Feng, Yu-lan. *A History of Chinese Philosophy*. Translated by Derk Bodde. Volume 1 . Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1953.
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- Graham, A. C. *Disputers of the Tao: philosophical argument in ancient China*. La Salle, Ill.: Open Court, 1989.
- Hadot, Pierre. *Philosophy as a Way of Life*. Edited and with an introduction by Arnold I. Davidson. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 1995.
- Halbfass, Wilhelm. *India and Europe: An Essay in Understanding*. Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1988.
- Halbfass, Wilhelm. *Tradition and Reflection: Explorations in Indian Thought*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1991.
- Kupperman, Joel J. *Learning from Asian Philosophy*. New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Marcus Aurelius Antoninus. *The Meditations*. Translated by G. M. A. Grube. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1983.
- Matilal, Bimal Krishna. *Philosophy, Culture and Religion: The Collected Essays of Bimal Krishna Matilal: Ethics and Epics*. Ed. Jonardon Ganeri. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Mohanty, Jitendranath. *Reason and Tradition in Indian Thought: An Essay on the Nature of Indian Philosophical Thinking*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Mohanty, Jitendranath. *Essays on Indian Philosophy Traditional and Modern*. Ed. Purushottama Bilimoria. Delhi; New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Śāntideva. *Bodhicaryāvatāra*. Translated with introduction and notes by Kate Crosby and Andrew Skilton. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.
- Xunzi. *Basic Writings*. Translated by Burton Watson. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003.