

PHIL4413
Topics in Comparative Philosophy 比較哲學專題
(The Neo-Confucian Cheng Brothers and Western Moral Philosophy)

Course Outline

Time : 10:30-13:15

Location : ERB 706

Course overview

In this course, we focus on comparative ethics, paying particular attention to how Chinese philosophers, the neo-Confucian Cheng Brothers, Cheng Hao and Cheng Yi, in this case, can make contributions to significant issues raised in the history of moral philosophy in the West.

Learning outcomes

1. Develop sensitivity to the common concerns of human existence especially from a comparative perspective between eastern and western philosophy.
2. Equip students with life-long learning capacities especially through understanding of the connections between academic pursuits and life experience.
3. Relate the subject matters to human experience and/or modern life.
4. Enhance the ability to perceive philosophical problems and to solve them through comparative approaches.

Topics

In this course, we focus on comparative ethics, paying particular attention to how Chinese philosophers, the neo-Confucian Cheng Brothers, Cheng Hao and Cheng Yi, in this case, can make contributions to significant issues raised in the history of moral philosophy in the West. Starting with a discussion of methodology of comparative philosophy, this course will cover such topics as why be moral? weakness of the will, the self-centeredness objection to virtue ethics, moral particularism, the relation between the political and personal, moral metaphysics, and practical hermeneutics.

Learning activities

1. Read all assigned readings before the class;
2. Prepare at least one double-paced page (with normal font type and size) of questions, comments, and/or summary for at least one of the readings assigned for each class;
3. Attend the weekly class meeting from the beginning to the end and actively participate at classroom discussion;
4. Write one research paper of comparative nature, 15 pages minimum (double-spaced, with normal font type and size) on a topic discussed in the course or otherwise approved by the instructor. Students are encouraged to meet the instructor outside the class hours to discuss the topic and plan of the writing and get advice from the instructor; if done early enough, a rough draft may also be submitted to get the feedback from the instructor before turning in the final paper.

Assessment scheme

<i>Task nature</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Weight</i>
One typed and printed-out page of questions / comments / summaries	For 9 out of 12 class meetings (not counting the first meeting); to be turned in at the very beginning of each class; no later work or make up accepted;	35%
One research paper	The paper should state the central question you want to deal with clearly; provide a brief survey of existing views on the question; explain the main problem with each of these views; develop your own alternative view; and, finally, defend you view against objections, actual or possible.	40%

Participating at the classroom discussion	Raise questions and/or make comments on the assigned readings or the instructor's lectures during the class hour by raising your hand (it is OK to interrupt the instructor's lecture for that purpose); active participants receive additional bonus points.	10% (5% bonus)
Tutorial		15%

Recommended learning resources

For Classes 3-13:

Cheng, Hao 程顥 and CHENG Yi 程頤. 2004. *Completed Works of the Two Chengs* 二程集, 2nd ed. Beijing 北京: Zhonghua Shuju 中華書局.

Weeks 1-2

- Huang, Yong. 2013. "How to Do Chinese Philosophy in a Western Philosophical Context: "How to Do Chinese Philosophy in a Western Philosophical Contest: Introducing a Unique Approach to Chinese Philosophy." *Chinese Studies* 漢學研究, 31.2: 117-151.
- Liu, Xiaogan. 2008-2009. "Struggle Between the Two Orientations: A Study of Zhu Xi's Commentary on the *Analects* (*Lunyu*)." *Contemporary Chinese Thought* 40.2: 46-66.
- McIntyre, Alasdair. 1991. "Incommensurability, Truth, and the Conversation between Confucians and Aristotelians about the Virtues." In Eliot Deutsch, ed., *Culture and Modernity: East-West Philosophical Perspective*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- Shun, Kwong-loi. 2009. "Studying Confucian and Comparative Ethics: Methodological Reflections." *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 36.3: 455-478.
- Wong, David. 2009. "Comparative Philosophy: Chinese and Western." *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2009/entries/compaphil-chiwe/>.

Weeks 3-4

- Bradley, F.H. 1935. *Ethical Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University.
- Gauthier, David 1982. "Three Against Justice: The Foole, the Sensible Knave, and the Lydian Shepherd." In *Midwest Studies in Philosophy* 7. Morris, MN.: University of Minnesota Press.
- Hobbes, Thomas 1998. *Leviathan*. Ed. by J. C. A. Gaskin. New York: Oxford University Press. [XV: Of Other Laws of Nature]
- Hume, David. 1957. *An Inquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*. New York: The Liberal Arts Press. [Section 9, Part II]
- Plato. 1963. *Republic*. In Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns, eds., *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. [Book Two]
- Huang, Yong. "Joy (*Le* 樂): Why Be Moral?" (Manuscript)

Weeks 4-5

- Davidson, Donald. 1969. "How Is Weakness of the Will Possible?" In his *Essays on Actions and Events*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980.
- Davidson, Donald. 1982. "Paradoxes of Irrationality." In Richard Wollheim and James Hopkins, eds., *Philosophical Essays on Freud*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Plato. 1963. *Protagoras*. In Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns, eds., *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. [XXXVII-XXXVIII]
- Aristotle. 1915. *Ethica Nicomachea*. In W.D. Ross, ed., *The Works of Aristotle*, vol. 9. Oxford: Oxford University Press. [Book VII, Chapter 3]
- Huang, Yong. "Knowledge (*Zhi* 知): Why Weakness of the Will Is Not Possible."

Weeks 6-7

- Aristotle. 1915. *Ethica Nicomachea*. In W.D. Ross, ed., *The Works of Aristotle*, vol. 9. Oxford: Oxford University Press. [Book IX, chapter 8]
- Toner, Christopher. 2006. "The Self-Centeredness Objection to Virtue Ethics." *Philosophy* 81: 595-617.
- Solomon, David. 1997. "Internal Objections to Virtue Ethics." In Daniel Statman, ed., *Virtue Ethics: A Critical Reader*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press.
- McKerlie, Dennis. 1991. "Friendship, Self-Love, and Concern for Others in Aristotle's Ethics." *Ancient Philosophy* 11: 85-101.
- Kraut, Richard. 1989. *Aristotle on the Human Good*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Huang, Yong. "Virtue (*De* 德): Is a Virtuous Person Self-Centered?" (Manuscript)

Weeks 8-9

- Dancy, Jonathan. 2004. *Ethics without Principles*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. [Chapters 2, 3, and 5]
- Dancy, Jonathan. 2009. "Moral Particularism." *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2009 Edition). Ed. by Edward N. Zalta. URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2009/entries/moral-particularism/>.
- Huang, Yong. 2005a. "A Copper Rule Versus the Golden Rule: A Daoist-Confucian Proposal for Global Ethics." *Philosophy East and West* 55.3: 394-425.
- Huang, Yong. "Love (Ai 愛): Confucian Ethics between Generalism and Particularism." (Manuscript)

Weeks 10-11

- Cohen, G.A. 2002. *If You're an Egalitarian, How Come You're So Rich?* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. [Chapters 8 and 10]
- Ackerman, Bruce. 1990. "Neutralities." In *Liberalism and the Good*. Ed. by Bruce R. Douglass, Gerald M. Mara, and Henry S. Richardson. New York and London: Routledge.
- Barry, Brian. 1990. *Political Argument*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press. [Chapter 4]
- Huang, Yong. "Liberal Neutrality, State Perfectionism, and Confucianism: A Neglected Dimension." (Manuscript)
- Huang, Yong. "Propriety (Li 禮): Why the Political Is Also Personal." (Manuscript)

Week 12

- Rawls, John. 1985. "Justice as Fairness: Political not Metaphysical." *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, Vol. 14, No. 3 : 223-251.
- Rorty, Richard. "Priority of Democracy to Philosophy." In his *Objectivity, Relativity, and Truth*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1990.
- Huang, Yong. "Creativity (Li 理): Metaphysics of Morals or Moral Metaphysics"

Week 13

- Gadmaer, Hans-georg. 2001. "Hermeneutics as Practical Phillosphy" and "Hermeneutics as a Theoretical and Practical Task." In his *Reason in an Age of Science*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Huang, Yong. "Classics (Jing 經): Hermeneutics as Practical Learning." (Manuscript)

Course schedule (subject to change at the instructor's discretion)

<i>Week</i>	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Required reading</i>	<i>Tutorials</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
1-2	Introduction and methodology of comparative philosophy			
2-3	Why Be Moral			
4-5	The weakness of the will			
6-7	The self-centeredness objection to virtue ethics			
8-9	Moral theory vs. Anti-theory			
10-11	The political and the personal			
12	Moral metaphysics			
13	Moral hermeneutics			

Contact details for teacher(s) or TA(s)

Teacher	
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Academic honesty and plagiarism

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>

With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures. For group projects, all students of the same group should be asked to sign the declaration.

For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment. Assignments without the receipt will not be graded by teachers. Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.