

PHIL4371
Seminar in Chinese Philosophy
(Contemporary Significance of Wang Yangming's Philosophy)

Course Outline (Draft)

Time : Wednesday

Location : UCA 312

Course Overview

In this course, we will study the moral philosophy of the great Ming Dynasty Neo-Confucian Wang Yangming. However, we will not study him merely as a historical figure but try to bring him into conversation on, and to show his possible contributions to, some important contemporary issues in moral philosophy. The central idea of Wang Yangming's moral philosophy is *liangzhi*, which will be examined in the context of the discussion of knowing-that and knowing-how in contemporary moral epistemology as well as the discussion of belief, desire, and desire in contemporary philosophy of action; another central idea of Wang Yangming's is his idea of being in one body with ten thousand things (*wan wu yi ti*), which will be discussed in relation to the idea of empathy in contemporary moral psychology. Other philosophical issues on which we will bring Wang Yangming's philosophy to bear include the issue of moral luck and moral responsibility, the situationist objection to virtue ethics, and the debate between moral realism and anti-realism.

Advisory to Majors: to be taken in year 2 or above.

Learning outcomes (as shown on CUSIS)

1. Develop sensitivity to the common concerns of human existence especially from a comparative perspective between eastern and western of 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.

Topics

(See course outline below)

Learning activities

1. Students are supposed to attend weekly class sessions regularly; absence without excusable reasons is not tolerated;
2. Students are supposed to come to class prepared, with the assigned readings for the given class carefully read;
3. Students are supposed to actively participate at the classroom discussion by raising questions and making comments regarding either the assigned readings or the instructor's lectures or fellow students' comments;
4. Students are supposed to write two book reports on Wang Yangming's *Chuanxilu* in English, each with a minimum of 4 pages, double spaced, Times New Romans font size 12, with regular margins; each paper does not have to summarize the whole assigned readings but should focus on one or two main points that interest you most. Papers, with Veriguide, are due at the beginning (not the end!) of the dates indicated in the lecture schedule below; paper turned in after the beginning of the discussion sessions but before the end of the day are accepted with light discount (for example an A grade will be discounted as A-); papers turned in after the due date but within a week are accepted with a heavy discount (for example, an A grade will be discounted as B). After one week of the due date, no papers will be accepted;
5. Each student is supposed to give one presentation in class. The presentation is about one of the

readings assigned for weeks 4, 6, 9, 11, and 13 (excluding the readings from Wang Yangming). Do the presentation as if you are teaching this material to the class.

- Each student is supposed to write a term paper, with at least 12 pages, double-spaced, Times New Romans font size 12, with regular margins. For detail, see the guideline below. The paper, with VeriGuide is due on April 28. No late papers will be accepted.

Guidelines for Term Paper:

Choose a topic of your own interest from those discussed in class. Make sure that this is a topic about which you have something of your own to say; summarize the relevant discussions of the topic by the author(s) we read and discussed in the class; explain what part(s) of this position you have most agreements or disagreements with; develop your own position, or provide your own arguments, and explain how your arguments will be able to overcome the problems with, or further support, the position you summarize; think what objections (possible or actual, including from those authors we discussed) there might be to your arguments; try to respond such objections. Your paper may have an introductory paragraph (announce what you are going to do in this paper) and a concluding paragraph (summarize the main arguments of your paper). You may also consider divide your paper into several sections.

In addition to the required readings, you may also consult secondary literatures. Whatever materials you are using, it is imperative to indicate very clearly from which sources these materials are (title of the book, or title of the article and the journal in which the article is published, publication year, and page number).

Assessment scheme

<i>Task nature</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Weight</i>
Class preparation/participation	Preparation for and participation at class discussions	10%
Two book reports	See item 4 in “Learning Activities” above	15% each
One presentation	See item 5 in “Learning Activities” above	15 %
Term paper	See item 6 in “Learning Activities” above	45%

Recommended learning resources

- Altham, J.E.L. 1986. “The Legacy of Emotivism,” in *Fact, Science, and Morality*, ed. by Graham Macdonald and Crispin Wright. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Angle, Stephen C. 2009. *Sagehood: The Contemporary Significance of Neo-Confucian Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Cai, Renhou 蔡仁厚. *Wang Yangming’s Philosophy* 王陽明哲學. 1983: Sanmin Shuju.
- Chen, Lisheng. 2007. *Wang Yangming’s Theory of Ten Thousand Things Forming One Body* 王陽明的「萬物一體」論. Shanghai: East China Normal University Press.
- Chen, Lai. 1997. *The Realm between Being and Nonbeing: The Spirit of Wang Yangming’s Philosophy* 有無之境：王陽明哲學的精神. Beijing: Renmin Chubanshe.
- Cheng, Chung-ying 1991. “Unity and Creativity in Wang Yang-ming’s Philosophy of Mind.” In his *New Dimensions of Confucian and Neo-Confucian Philosophy*. Albany: SUNY.
- Ching, Julia. 1976. *To Acquire Wisdom: The Way of Wang Yang-ming*. New York/London: Columbia University Press.
- Collins, John. 1988. “Belief, Desire, and Revision.” *Mind* (New Series) 97: 333-342.
- Cua, A.S. 1982. *The Unity of Knowledge and Action: A Study in Wang Yangming’s Moral Philosophy*. Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii.
- _____. 1993. “Between Commitment and Realization: Wang Yangming’s Vision of the Universe as a Moral Community.” *Philosophy East and West* 43: 611-647.
- Doris, John. 2002. *Lack of Character: Personality and Moral Behavior*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Fantl, Jeremy. 2008. "Knowing-How and Knowing-That." *Philosophy Compass* 3: 452-453.
- Flanagan, Owen. 1991. *Varieties of Moral Personality: Ethics and Psychological Realism*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Harman, Gilbert. 1999. "Moral Philosophy Meets Social Psychology." *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 99: 315–331.
- _____. 2000. "The Nonexistence of Character Traits." *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 100: 223–226.
- _____. 2003. "No Character or Personality." *Business Ethics Quarterly* 13: 87–94.
- Hetherington, Stephen. 2011. *How to Know: A Practicalist Conception of Knowledge*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- _____. Forthcoming. "Knowing-to."
- Hetherington, Stephen and Karyn Lai. 2012. "Practising to Know: Practicalism and Confucian Philosophy." *Philosophy* 87.3: 375 – 393.
- Hou, Wailu, etc. 1997. *A History of Neo-Confucianism* 宋明理學史, vol. 2. Beijing: Renmin Chubanshe.
- Hu, Yongzhong 胡用中. 2007. *A Study of Wang Yangming's View on Eradicating the Evil* 王陽明去惡思想研究. Chengdu: Sichuan Chuban Jituan.
- Huang, Xin'er 黃信二. 2011. *A Study of Wang Yangming's Methodology for Extending the Innate Knowledge* 王陽明致良知方法論研究. Taipei: Huamulan Wenhua Chubangongsi.
- Huang, Yong. 1996. "Zhu Xi on Humanity and Love: A Neo-Confucian Solution to the Liberal-Communitarian Problematic," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 23.2: 213-235.
- _____. 2006. "A Neo-Confucian Conception of Wisdom: Wang Yangming on the Innate Moral Knowledge (Liangzhi)." *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 33.3: 393-408.
- _____. 2010a. "The Self-centeredness Objection to Virtue Ethics: Zhu Xi's Neo-Confucian Response." *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 84.4: 651-692.
- _____. 2010b. "Two Dilemmas of Virtue Ethics and How Zhu Xi's Neo-Confucianism Avoids them." *Journal of Philosophical Research* 36: 247-281.
- _____. 2013a. "How to Do Chinese Philosophy in a Western Philosophical Context: Introducing a Unique Approach to Chinese Philosophy." *Chinese Studies* 31.2: 117-151.
- _____. 2013b. *Confucius: A Guide for the Perplexed*. London: Bloomsbury.
- _____. 2014a. "Why Besire Is Not Bizzare: Moral Knowledge in Confucianism and Hinduism," in *Brahman and Dao: Comparative Studies of Indian and Chinese Philosophy and Religion*, edited by Zhihua Yao and Ithamar Theodor, Lexington Books, 119-141.
- _____. 2014b. "Empathy with Devils: What We Can Learn from Wang Yangming." 2014 Songshan Forum. August 23-24.
- _____. 2014d. *Why Be Moral: Learning from the Neo-Confucian Cheng Brothers*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.
- _____. 2015. "Empathy with 'Devils': Wang Yangming's Contribution to Contemporary Moral Philosophy," in *Moral and Intellectual Virtues in Western and Chinese Philosophy*, edited by Michael Mi, Michael Slote, and Ernest Sosa, Routledge, 214-234.
- _____. 2016. "Confucian Virtue Environmental Ethics," in *Routledge Handbook of Religion and Ecology*, edited by Mary Evelyn Tucker, John Grim, and Willis Jenkins, Routledge: 52-59.
- _____. Forthcoming 1. "Knowing To: Wang Yangming's Contribution to Contemporary Moral Philosophy," in *Journal of Philosophical Research* 42 (2017).

- _____. Forthcoming 2. "Moral Luck and Moral Responsibility: Wang Yangming on the Confucian Problem of Evil," in *Why Classical Chinese Philosophy Matters in a Global Age*, ed. by Mingdong Gu, Routledge.
- Hutton, Eric L. 2006. "Character, Situationism, and Early Confucian Thought." *Philosophical Studies* 127:37-58.
- Ivanhoe, Philip J. 2002. *Ethics in the Confucian Tradition: The Thought of Mengzi and Wang Yangming*. Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett.
- _____. 2011. "McDowell, Wang Yangming, and Mengzi's Contributions to Understanding Moral Perception." *Dao* 10: 273-290.
- Kupperman, Joel L. 2005. "Morality, Ethics, and Wisdom." In *A Handbook of Wisdom: Psychological Perspective*. Edited by Robert J. Sternberg and Jennifer Jordon. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lai, Karyn L. 2012. "Knowing to Act in the Moment: Examples from Confucius' *Analects*." *Asian Philosophy* 22.4: 347-364.
- Lewis, David. 1988. "Desire as Belief." *Mind* (New Series) 97: 323-332.
- Liu, Xiaogan 劉笑敢. 2008a. "Between Two Orientations 遊走於兩種定向之間." In the *Journal of Chinese Philosophy and Culture* 中國哲學與文化, No.3, *Orientations in Interpretations of Classics* 經典詮釋之定向. Guilin 桂林: Guangxi Shifan Daxue Chubanshe 廣西師範大學出版社.
- Mou, Zongsan 牟宗三. *Wang Yangming's Teaching on Extending the Innate Knowledge* 王陽明致良知教. Taipei: Zhongyang Wenwu Gongyingshe.
- Mower, Deborah S. 2013. "Situationism and Confucian Virtue Ethics." *Ethic Theory Moral Practice* 16:113-137.
- Nagel, Thomas. 1979. *Mortal Questions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Neville, Robert Cummings. 2001b. "Two Forms of Comparative Philosophy." *Dao: A Journal of Comparative Philosophy* 1.1: 1-13.
- Nivison, David S. 1996a. "The Philosophy of Wang Yangming." In his *The Ways of Confucianism: Investigations in Chinese Philosophy*, edited with an Introduction by Bryan W. Van Norden. Chicago & La Salle: Open Court.
- _____. 1996b. "Moral Decision in Wang Yangming: The Problem of Chinese Existentialism." In his *The Ways of Confucianism: Investigations in Chinese Philosophy*, edited with an Introduction by Bryan W. Van Norden. Chicago & La Salle: Open Court.
- McDowell, John. 1998. *Mind, Value, and Reality*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Møllgaard Eske. 2004. "Doctrine and Discourse in Wang Yangming's Essay 'Pulling Up The Root and Stopping up the Source.'" *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 31: 377-388.
- Nagel, Thomas. 1979. *Mortal Questions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Park, Seungbae. 2013. "Against the Besire Theory of Moral Judgment." *Oranion F* 20: 5-17.
- Ram-Prasad, Chakravarthi. 2005. *Eastern Philosophy*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson.
- Raphals, Lisa. 1992. *Knowing words: wisdom and cunning in the classical traditions of China and Greece*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press.
- Ryle, Gilbert. "Knowing That and Knowing How." *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 46: 1-16.
- _____. 1968. *The Concept of Mind*. New York: Barnes & Noble.
- _____. 1990. "Conscience and Moral Conviction," in his *Collected Papers*, vol.2. Bristol: Thoemmes.
- Sarkissian, Hagop. 2010. "Minor Tweaks, Major Payoffs: The Problems and Promise of Situationism in Moral Philosophy." *Philosophers' Imprint* 10.9: 1-15.

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- _____. 2011. "Wang Yang-ming on Self-Cultivation in the Daxue." *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 38: 96-113.
- Slingerland, Edward. 2011. "The Situationist Critique and Early Confucian Virtue Ethics." *Ethics* 121.2: 390-419.
- Slote, Michael. 2010. *Moral Sentimentalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Smith, Michael. 1994. *The Moral Problem* (Basil Blackwell).
- Stalnaker, Aaron. 2006. *Overcoming Our Evil: Human Nature and Spiritual Exercises in Xunzi and Augustine*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.
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- _____. 2012. "Oneness and Self-centeredness of the Moral Psychology of Wang Yangming." *Journal of Religious Ethics* 40.1: 52-71.
- Tu, Weiming 杜維明. 1976. *Neo-Confucian Thought in Action: Wang Yang-ming's Youth (1472-1509)*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press.
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- Williams, Bernard. 1981. *Moral Luck*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wong, David. 1989. "Universalism versus Love with Distinctions: An Ancient Debate Revived." *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 18: 241-272.
- Zhang, Xianghao. 1997. *A Biographical Study of Wang Shouren 王守仁評傳*. Nanjing: Nanjing University Press.
- Zheng, Fuchun 鄭富春. 2010. *Interpretation of Wang Yangming's Innate Knowledge 王陽明良知學研究*. Taipei: Huamulan Wenhua Chubanshe.
- Zhong, Caijun 鐘彩均. *The Development of Wang Yangming's Philosophy 王陽明思想之進展*. Taipei: Wenshizhe Chubanshe.
- Zangwill, Nick. 2008. "Besires and the Motivation Debate." *Theoria* 74: 50-59.
- Yang, Xiaomei. 2009. "How to Make Sense of the Claim 'True Knowledge is What Constitutes Action'." *Dao* 8: 173-188.
- Yao, Xinzhong. 2013. "Philosophy of Learning in Wang Yangming and Francis Bacon." *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 40: 417-435.

Course schedule

<i>Week</i>	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Required reading</i>	<i>Tutorials</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
1 (January 11)	Introduction of the Course			

2 (January 18)	Ryle's Distinction between Knowing-that and Knowing-how The liberal neutrality 1: the classical argument	Wang Yangming: <i>Chuanxilu 1</i> Ryle 1946, 1968 and 1990		
3 (January 25)	Wang Yangming and the Knowing-that/Knowing-how Distinction	Wang Yangming: <i>Chuanxilu 1</i> (continue) Huang forthcoming 1		
4 (February 8)	The Humean Philosophy of Action: Belief, Desire, and Besire	Wang Yangming: <i>Chuanxilu 1</i> (continue) Smith 1994, Lewis 1988, Collins 1988, and Zangwill 2008		
5 (February 15)	Wang Yangming's <i>Liangzhi</i> as a Besire	(Book Report 1 due) Huang 2014a		
6 (February 22)	Empathy	Wang Yangming: <i>Chuanxilu 2</i> ; Slote 2010: Chapters 1-3		
7 (March 1)	Wang Yangming on Empathy with Devils	Wang Yangming: <i>Chuanxilu 2</i> (continue) Huang 2015		
8 (March 8)	Wang Yangming's Empathy and Environmental Virtual Ethics	Wang Yangming: <i>Chuanxilu 2</i> (continue) Huang 2016		
9 (March 15)	The Idea of Moral Luck	(Book Report 2 due) Williams 1981: chapter 2; Nagel 1979: chapter 3		
10 (March 22)	Wang Yangming on Moral Luch and Moral Responsibility	Wang Yangming: <i>Chuanxilu 3</i> Huang Forthcoming 2		
11 (March 29)	Moral Realism, Anti-Realism, and Response-dependent Theory	Wang Yangming: <i>Chuanxilu 3</i> (continue) McDowell 1998: chapter 7		
12 (April 5)	Wang Yangming: A Moral Realist, an Anti-realist, a Response-dependent Theoriest, or a Stimulation-dependent	Wang Yangming: <i>Chuanxilu 3</i> (continue) Ivanhoe 2011		
13 (April 12)	Situationist Criticism of Virtue Ethics	(Book Report 3 due) Doris 2002		
14 (April 19)	Wang Yangming's Response to Situationism	(To be added)		

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

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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.

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