

**PHIL 3672**  
**Topics in Continental Philosophy**  
**歐陸哲學專題**  
*The Philosophy of Mythology*

**Course Outline**

**Office Hours:**

**Moss: W 2:30-3:30pm**

**Tutor: TBD**

**Time : W 10:30am-12:15pm**

**Location :**

**LHC 101**

**W 12:30-1:15pm**

**LHC 101**

**Course overview (as shown on CUSIS)**

The course examines selected topics in Continental Philosophy. The course specifically investigates Ernst Cassirer's philosophy of mythology as it is presented in his *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, Vol. 2: Mythical Thought*.

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

**Learning outcomes**

1. Students will demonstrate familiarity with the *primary* source texts.
2. Students will be able to successfully articulate and defend a philosophical thesis of their own.
3. Students will develop the capacity to think through a philosophical problem, reconstruct a philosophical argument from a primary text, and develop the capacity to construct their own critiques.
4. Students will have a basic comprehension of Ernst Cassirer's symbolic theory of culture and his philosophy of mythology.
5. Students will be able to compare and contrast Cassirer's philosophy of mythology with other significant philosophies of mythology in the Continental tradition.

**Topics**

Ernst Cassirer

Philosophy of Culture

Philosophy of Symbolic Forms

Philosophy of Religion

Philosophy of Mythology

The Sacred and the Profane

Time, Space, Number, and the Self-Consciousness in Mythological Consciousness

Totemism and Sacrifice in Mythology

### Learning activities

Each meeting will consist of a lecture followed by a period of discussion. Please attend lectures and participate in class discussions. Each lesson is approximately 2 hours and 30 minutes.

### Assessment scheme as prescribed on CUSIS (revise if necessary)

<i>Task nature</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Weight</i>
Argument Reconstruction	See Below	10%
Argument Critique	See Below	25%
Participation	See Below	15%
Seminar Paper	See Below	50%

### Backup plan for assessment in case face-to-face teaching and assessment is not possible due to the pandemic

\*The Assessment plan is *the same* for all modes of instruction.

### Remarks on Assessment Scheme (if any)

#### 1. Argument Reconstruction:

I shall provide you with passages from the texts which we are reading, and I will ask you to choose one passage to work on. You will re-construct the argument contained in that passage. Reconstructing the argument will require you to carefully explicate the premises, (both implicit and explicit) and the conclusion of the argument. In order to succeed on this assignment, students must re-phrase the arguments *in their own words*. No quotations of the passage will be allowed. There is *no length requirement* for this assignment.

#### 2. Argument Critiques:

The Argument Critiques consist of three parts. In respect to the critique, I shall provide you with passages from the texts which we are reading, and I will ask you to choose one passage to work on. You will re-construct the argument contained in that passage, and formulate a critique of that passage. The last stage consists in formulating a reply to the criticism that you raise. I encourage you to utilize the texts that we are reading in formulating the criticisms; you are encouraged to employ the philosophers against each other. Argument Critiques in 12 point font should probably range from 3 to 6 double spaced pages in length.

#### 3. Seminar Paper:

The seminar paper will require students to uncover a philosopher problem in one of the texts that we have read together and clearly explicate that problem. Following the explication of the problem, students should work through various solutions to the problem and clearly formulate their own thesis concerning that problem. Students are welcome to use their Argument Critiques as a possible groundwork for their Seminar Paper. The term paper requires students to consult and cite at least one work of secondary literature in addition to the required readings. The term paper should *not* be more than 6-8 double spaced pages

#### 4. Participation:

Attendance is mandatory and *absence will damage your grades*. Two unexcused absences are permitted. For each unexcused absence beyond two, one-half a letter grade will be deducted from your final grade. In case of emergencies, either notify me of your absence ahead of time, or plan to bring some formal documentation of your absence. Without documentation, I will not accept absences as excused.

#### 5. Late Work/Make-Ups:

Every day the paper is late, one half a letter grade will be deducted from the final grade for the assignment. If you would like a grade changed, you must provide me with a detailed written argument for why you think it should be changed, otherwise I will not consider it.

### Grade Descriptor

Please refer to: [http://phil.arts.cuhk.edu.hk/~phidept/UG/Grade\\_descriptors.pdf](http://phil.arts.cuhk.edu.hk/~phidept/UG/Grade_descriptors.pdf)

### Required Reading

*The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms. Mythical Thinking. Volume 2*

<https://www.routledge.com/The-Philosophy-of-Symbolic-Forms-Volume-2-Mythical-Thinking/Cassirer/p/book/9781138907201>

### Recommended learning resources

See Blackboard

### Course schedule

<i>Week</i>	<i>Teaching Mode</i> <i>Online / in-campus</i>	<i>Required reading</i> [PDFs supplied via Blackboard]
1	TBD	Introductory Lecture and Discussion: From Aristotle to Kant
2	TBD	Cassirer's Philosophy of Symbolic Forms/Preface
3	TBD	Introduction: the Problem of a Philosophy of Mythology
4	TBD	Mythological Consciousness of the Object
5	TBD	Particular Categories of Mythical Thinking
6	TBD	The Basic Opposition: The Sacred and the Profane
7	TBD	The Articulation of Space in Mythical Consciousness/Space and Light
8	TBD	The Mythical Concept of Time/The Formation of Time in the Mythical and Religious Consciousness
9	TBD	Mythical Number and the System of Sacred Numbers
10	TBD	Myth as a Form of Life: The I and the Soul
11	TBD	Mythical Class Formation: Totemism
12	TBD	The Concept of Personality and the Personal Gods
13	TBD	Cult and Sacrifice
14	TBD	The Dialectic of the Mythical Consciousness

### Details of course website

We will use Blackboard for this course. Lecture notes and information on assignments and papers will be posted on the website. **Contact details for teacher(s) or TA(s)**

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<b>Teacher</b>	
Name:	Moss, Gregory
Office location:	Room 426, Fung King Hey Building
Telephone:	3943 9875
Email:	gs moss@cuhk.edu.hk

<b>TA</b>	
Name:	TBD
Office location:	TBD
Telephone:	TBD
Email:	TBD

**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.