

PHIL 4831
Seminar in Eastern Philosophy 東方哲學研討
The Kyoto School

Course Outline

Time : Lecture: T 12:30-14:15

Location : CYT 201

Tutorial: T 14:30-15:15

Office Hours: Per Appointment

Course overview (as shown on CUSIS)

The course examines selected topics in Eastern philosophy. This course will focus on 20th century Japanese philosophy, with special attention given to the main figures of the 20th century Japanese philosophical tradition Kyoto School: Nishida, Tanabe, Nishitani, and Ueda. Offerings with different subtitles can be taken up for credit, up to a maximum of two times.

Advisory to Majors: to be taken in year 3 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 the unique philosophical positions of central figures in the Kyoto School
5. Students will be able to reconstruct the influence of central Western and Eastern philosophical and religious traditions on Kyoto School thought

Topics

Metaphysics and Epistemology of the Kyoto School
Philosophy of Mind and Forms of Self-Consciousness
Philosophical Logic in the Kyoto School
Japanese Existentialism
Modernity and Alienation
Philosophy of Religion
Personal Identity
The Problem of the Meaning of Life and Nihilism
Emptiness
Nothingness
Mysticism
Comparative Philosophy (The Kyoto School and Western Philosophy)

Comparative Religion (Zen, Pure Land Buddhism, and Christianity)

Nishida Kitarō

Nishitani Keiji

Ueda Shizuteru

Tanabe Hajime

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%

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

Recommended learning resources

1. *The Philosophy of the Kyoto School*

<https://www.springer.com/gp/book/9789811089824>

2. *Nishida Kitarō: The Man and His Thought*

https://www.amazon.com/Nishida-Kitar%C5%8D-Thought-Japanese-Philosophy-ebook/dp/B01LYXMA0E/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=Keiji+Nishitani+Nishida&qid=1604472102&sr=8-1

3. *The Kyoto School: An Introduction*

https://www.amazon.com/Kyoto-School-Introduction-Robert-Carter/dp/1438445423/ref=sr_1_3?dchild=1&keywords=Keiji+Nishitani+Nishida&qid=1604472158&sr=8-3

4. *The Buddha-Christ as the Lord of the True Self*

https://www.amazon.com/Buddha-Christ-Fritz-Buri/dp/0865545367/ref=sr_1_2?dchild=1&keywords=Fritz+Buri&qid=1604472253&sr=8-2

5. *Nishida Kitarō's Chiasmatic Chorology*

<https://iupress.org/9780253017864/nishida-kitaros-chiasmatic-chorology/>

Course schedule

<i>Week</i>	<i>Required reading</i> [PDFs supplied via Blackboard]
1	Introductory Lecture and Discussion
2	Keiji Nishitani, <i>Religion and Nothingness</i> Ch. 1
3	Keiji Nishitani, <i>Religion and Nothingness</i> Ch.2
4	Keiji Nishitani, <i>Religion and Nothingness</i> Ch.3
5	Keiji Nishitani, <i>Religion and Nothingness</i> Ch. 4
6	Keiji Nishitani, <i>Religion and Nothingness</i> Ch. 5
7	Keiji Nishitani, <i>Religion and Nothingness</i> Ch. 6-7
8	Ueda Shizuteru, <i>Meister Eckhart in Comparison with Zen Buddhism</i> [Translation by G.S. Moss]
9	Nishida Kitarō, <i>Inquiry into the Good; Bashō</i>
10	Nishida Kitarō, <i>Bashō</i>
11	Nishida Kitarō, <i>The Logic of the Place of Nothingness and the Religious Worldview</i> [Excerpts]
12	Nishida Kitarō, <i>The Logic of the Place of Nothingness and the Religious Worldview</i> [Excerpts]
13	Tanabe Hajime, <i>Philosophy as Metanoetics</i>
14	Tanabe Hajime, <i>Philosophy as Metanoetics</i>

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)**

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

Teacher	
Name:	Moss, Gregory
Office location:	Room 426, Fung King Hey Building
Telephone:	3943 9875
Email:	gsmoss@cuhk.edu.hk

TA	
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.