

INTRODUCTION TO CHINESE PHILOSOPHY

22-PIE-ICP

Spring 2024

Wednesdays, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m., Szamarzewskiego 89C, Room 215

An elective lecture in English for Erasmus+ and international students

30 hrs, 5 ECTS

Dr. Dawid Rogacz, Faculty of Philosophy

General description

- a comprehensive introduction to the classical (pre-Qin) Chinese philosophy (no prior knowledge of Chinese language or culture required)
- a discussion of Chinese thought through the prism of its relevance for the universal and contemporary problems of social life
- an insight into the culture and society of ancient China

Learning outcomes

After the module, a student:

- is familiarized with the thought of the greatest ancient Chinese philosophers
- possesses the ability to understand and interpret the source texts of Chinese thought
- is able to analyze and compare the core concepts of classical Chinese philosophy
- knows the influence of Chinese philosophy beyond China's society and culture
- has improved their intercultural communication skills

Course Requirements and Grading

Students are evaluated based on: participation in the course (10%); preparation of a short essay on selected problem of Chinese philosophy (40%), and comprehensive oral exam covering all thinkers discussed during the classes (50%).

Syllabus

Week 1. Stylistic and theoretical distinctiveness of Chinese philosophy

Classical Chinese * Style of Chinese philosophy * Its theoretical distinctiveness

Elective reading: Jana Rošker, *Interpreting Chinese Philosophy. A New Methodology*, Bloomsbury, London 2021, 1-7.

Week 2 and 3. Origins of Chinese thought

Chinese myths and legends about the rulers * Shang religion * Origins of Zhou culture * *Book of Changes* * *Book of Documents* * *Book of Songs*

Elective reading: David Keightley, "Shang Divination and Metaphysics." *Philosophy East and West* 38:4 (1988), 367-397.

Week 4 and 5. Confucius

Confucius as a person * *Spring and Autumn Annals* * *The Analects* * Confucius on education and its limits * Confucius' ethics and moral philosophy * Confucius' political philosophy

Obligatory reading: *Analects* Book Seven

Week 6 and 7. Mencius

Guodian manuscripts * *Great Learning* and *Doctrine of Equilibrium* * Mencius' on human nature * Mencius' moral theory * Mencius' metaphysics and philosophy of history

Obligatory reading: *Mencius* Book 6A

Week 8. Xunzi

Xunzi's anthropology and ethics * Xunzi's social and political philosophy * Xunzi on nature and history * Knowledge and language in Xunzi

Obligatory reading: *Xunzi* Chapter 17

Week 9 and 10. Mozi and the Mohists

Mo Di and the Mohists * Impartial care * Political consequentialism * Heaven in Mohism * Mohist philosophy of politics and history * Mohist logic and philosophy of language

Obligatory reading: *Mozi* Chapters 4 & 28

Elective reading: Zhang Jialong, Liu Fenrong, “Some Thoughts on Mohist Logic.” In *A Meeting of the Minds: Proceedings of the Workshop on Logic, Rationality and Interaction*, ed. J. van Benthem, S. Ju, F. Veltman, College Publications, London 2007, 85-102.

Week 11. School of Names

Deng Xi, Yin Wen and Dialecticians * Hui Shi’s paradoxes and their meaning * “White horse is not a horse”: the arguments * The philosophy of Gongsun Long

Obligatory reading: Gongsun Long, *On White Horse*

Week 12. Laozi

The cosmogonic turn * Yangism * Laozi, Laoists, and the *Daodejing* * Dao, *you*, and *wu* * Laozi on *de* * Laoist conception of state and society

Obligatory reading: *Laozi* (selection)

Week 13. Zhuangzi

Zhuangzi: thinker and the work * Zhuangzi’s Dao * Zhuangzi on knowledge, perspectives, and language * Zhuangzi on action, efficiency, and freedom * Zhuangzi on music and culture

Obligatory reading: *Zhuangzi* Chapter Two

Week 14. Chinese Statism I

The Art of War * Sunzi on conflict * The Diplomats and their rhetoric * School of Agriculture * Ancient Chinese theory of economy * Shen Dao and origins of ‘Legalism’ (*fajia*)

Obligatory reading: *Sunzi* (“Art of Warfare”) Chapters 1-3; *Shenzi* Fragments 2-3

Week 15. Chinese Statism II

The reforms of Shang Yang * Shang Yang's political philosophy * Shang Yang's philosophy of history * Han Fei's critique of Confucianism * Han Fei's political philosophy * First Emperor and the ideological foundations of his empire

Obligatory reading: *Hanfeizi* Chapter Five

For background and overview of the classical Chinese philosophy please consult the following texts:

1. Bryan Van Norden, *Introduction to Classical Chinese Philosophy*, Hackett Publishing, Indianapolis 2011.
2. Karyn Lai, *An Introduction to Chinese Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2008.
3. JeeLoo Liu. *An Introduction to Chinese Philosophy: From Ancient Philosophy to Chinese Buddhism*, Blackwell Publishing, Maiden 2006.
4. Chan Wing-tsit, *A Sourcebook in Chinese Philosophy*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1969.
5. Dawid Rogacz, *Chinese Philosophy of History. From Ancient Confucianism to the End of the Eighteenth Century*, Bloomsbury Academic, London 2020.

Specific, obligatory readings for each class will be provided at the first meeting.