

TENTATIVE SYLLABUS FOR

RNK-PHIL 541: COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES IN THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY

(3 credits (ECTS 8 credits); 3 hours of class time per weekly lecture for a 14-Lecture semester, 3+0)

Course description	<p>In general this course is a history of philosophy presented in a comparative perspective. However, we first need to agree on an idea of philosophy which clarifies the nature of philosophical inquiry as well as the nature of philosophy as a particular discipline. The focus of attention will be on the concept of system in philosophy. Then certain significant problems that characteristically identify philosophy will be chosen in ontology, epistemology and philosophical anthropology which may be loosely defined as the philosophy of man and society. Certain relevant issues from morality and cosmology will also be included.</p> <p>In our approach Indian, Chinese and Greek traditions of philosophy are put into their proper historical context which will enable the student to compare and contrast main ideas developed in all these civilizations. There will be a special emphasis on major philosophers only, such as Plato, Aristotle and Plotinus in Greek philosophy, Confucius and Menzius in Chinese philosophy. The course then will do the same with regard to Islamic and Western civilizations. In Islamic civilization main representatives, such as Sufyan al-Thawri, Hasan al-Basri and Abu'l-Hudhayl al-Allaf will be surveyed. There will be some emphasis on philosophers such as al-Ash'ari, al-Maturidi, al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, al-Ghazali and Ibn al-'Arabi; also contemporary Muslim thinkers will be discussed briefly. In Western civilization there will be a brief survey of the emergence of philosophical thought and then how this thought further progressed with the works of Augustine, Anselm, John Scotus Erigena, Thomas Aquinas and Nicholas Cusa. Scientific revolution and its impact on Western philosophy will be discussed. Kant, Hegel and Whitehead will get special attention. The present situation of these philosophies will be evaluated and main characteristics of these philosophies will be ascertained.</p>
Course objectives	<p>This course first of all aims at enabling the student to develop an understanding of philosophy as an independent discipline and compare and contrast ideas developed in different civilizations in order to appreciate different perspectives in philosophy. It is hoped that the student will be able to gain sufficient knowledge about the developmental processes of thought in history in different civilizations and to gain the skills of comparative approach in the light of the knowledge s/he may acquire in this course.</p>
Prerequisites	<p>None</p>
Textbook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Alparslan Açıkgenç, "A Concept of Philosophy in the Qur'anic Context", <i>American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences</i>, 11:2 (1994), 155-181. ➤ -----, <i>Islamic Scientific Tradition in History</i>, Kuala Lumpur: Penerbit IKIM, 2014. ➤ M. M. Sharif, <i>A History of Muslim Philosophy</i>, 2 vols., Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1963. ➤ Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, "23rd Word", <i>The Words</i>, trans. Ş. Vahide, Istanbul: Sözler, 2016. ➤ Sir Anthony Kenny, <i>An Illustrated Brief History of Western Philosophy</i> (Malden, MA, Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2006).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Fung Yu-Lan, <i>A Short History of Chinese Philosophy</i>, ed. By Derk Bodde (New York: The Free Press, 1966). ➤ Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, <i>Indian Philosophy</i>, 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). ➤ Willard Van Orman Quine, <i>From A Logical Point of View</i>, New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1963.
Assessment & evaluation	Reading reflections (2) (10%, 5% each) and midterm assignment (30%), Attendance and participation (10 %), final assignment (20-page term paper) (50%).
Attendance	Required through Zoom
Medium of instruction	English
Leading Instructor	Prof. Alparslan Açıkgenç
Guest instructors	Prof. İbrahim Özdemir Prof. Edward Moad

Tentative Course Content (May be modified to suit the needs)

(During a 14 week-semester, there will be two classes each week. Each class will be 1.5 hour in total.
Classes start at 16:00 Istanbul Time; 14:00 London Time; 21:00 Kuala Lumpur Time)

Topics	Learning Objectives & Description of Topics	Reading assignments and Guest instructors
Lecture 1 Introduction and discussion	The nature of philosophy as a discipline. The nature of philosophical inquiry.	Açıkgenç, “Philosophy in the Qur’anic Context”.
Lecture 2 Philosophy in a comparative perspective	Philosophy in ancient civilizations: Chinese, Indian Egyptian, Babylonian and Greek Islamic and Western civilizations	Relevant sections of the textbooks given above.
Lecture 3 The concept of system	The concept of system in philosophy System philosophers in history and their systems	Açıkgenç, “Philosophy in the Qur’anic Context”.
Lecture 4 Being and reality 1	Ontology as the branch of philosophy and its subject matter. Ontology in different civilizations: Plato on being	Quine, ch. 1 and the relevant sections of the textbooks given above.
Lecture 5 Being and reality 2	Western ontologies Ontological theories in Islamic philosophy	Prof. Edward Moad

Lecture 6 Knowledge and truth	Epistemology as the branch of philosophy and its subject matter. Epistemology in different civilizations	Relevant sections of the textbooks given above.
Lecture 7 Theories of truth	A theory of knowledge and truth	Relevant sections of the textbooks given above.
Lecture 8 Philosophy of nature	Conception of nature in different civilizations Aristotle, Ibn Sina and al-Ghazali	Relevant sections of the textbooks given above.
Lecture 9 Environmental philosophy	Conception of environment in different civilizations	Prof. Ibrahim Özdemir
Lecture 10 Cosmology	Cosmological theories in civilizations Confucius, Aristotle, Kant and Ibn Arabi	Relevant sections of the textbooks given above.
Lecture 11 Human nature 1	Philosophical theories of human nature in different civilizations	Relevant sections of the textbooks given above.
Lecture 12 Human nature 2	Nursi on human nature	23 rd Word in <i>The Words</i>
Lecture 13 Social philosophy	Conception of society and social theories in different civilizations	There will be additional reading besides the ones given above
Lecture 14 Philosophy of Science	Scientific Process and the nature of science Scientific traditions and globalization	Açıkgenç, <i>Islamic Scientific Trad. in Hist.</i>
Assignments and Assessment . Due Dates		Percentage
1. Critical Reflection on "Philosophy in the Qur'anic Context" 3 rd Week		5 %
2. Critical Reflection on "23 rd Word", <i>The Words</i> 5 th Week		5 %
3. Mid-term Paper (10 pages) 8 th Week		30 %
Those willing can make a presentation instead of a midterm paper.		50 %
4. Final Paper (20 pages) 16 th Week		10 %
5. Overall Participation All		

Weeks	
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