**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)

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| **Course description** | 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.  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, suc 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 Acquinas 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. |
| **Course objectives** | 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. |
| **Prerequisites** | None |
| **Textbook** | * Alparslan Açıkgenç, “A Concept of Philosophy in the Qur’anic Context”, *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, 11:2 (1994), 155-181. * -----. *Islamic Scientific Tradition in History*, Kuala Lumpur: Penerbit IKIM, 2014. * M. M. Sharif, *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, 2 vols., Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1963. * Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, “23rd Word”, *The Words*, trans. Ş. Vahide, Istanbul: Sözler, 2016. * Sir Anthony Kenny, *An Illustrated Brief History of Western Philosophy* (Malden, MA, Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2006). * Fung Yu-Lan, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*, ed. By Derk Bodde (New York: The Free Press, 1966). * Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). * Willard Van Orman Quine, *From A Logical Point of View*, 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)

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| **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 | 23rd Word in *The Words* |
| **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, *Islamic Scientific Trad. in Hist.* |
| **Assignments and Assessment . Due Dates**   1. Critical Reflection on “Philosophy in the Qur’anic Context” 3rd Week 2. Critical Reflection on “23rd Word”, *The Words* …………………… 5th Week 3. Mid-term Paper (10 pages) ……………………………………………….. 8th Week   Those willing can make a presentation instead of a midterm paper.   1. Final Paper (20 pages) ……………………………………………………… 16th Week 2. Overall Participation ………………………………………………………… All Weeks | | **Percentage**  5 %  5 %  30 %  50 %  10 % |