



Intercultural Philosophy & Communication

Center for European Studies

Intercultural Philosophy & Communication

Full course description

Quite a few western universities nowadays are interested in giving courses in 'world civilizations'. Most of these courses want to describe and analyse the different cultures of the globe, especially the eastern ones, by looking at their anthropological, sociological, political, historical and/or aesthetic characteristics. As such they intend to offer a clear-cut picture of the civilizations in question without having the objective to evaluate them from a different, read 'outside', point of view.

A more evaluative approach comes forward when, in courses of Intercultural Communication, the difficulty of communication between different cultures will be discussed: then it becomes clear that often communication will be frustrated by obstacles that find their causes in cultural aspects. Even at a very superficial level communication between civilizations can become disturbed and quite ineffective, due to cultural peculiarities that form the background of every possible act of communication. Most of these courses confine their attention to this 'every day aspect' of the phenomenon: they study, from an anthropological and/or sociological position, the well known problems that participants meet when they are engaged in the process of communication with partners who are of a culturally different origin.

It is interesting though to go further than that. If one assumes that acts of communication are intrinsically related to a specific culture, then it is important to probe deeper than the superficial level and to find out if and how at a more 'intellectual' layer a civilization's philosophical mindset is responsible for the organization of its communication. As such there is clearly a philosophical perspective in the study of intercultural communication and this insight becomes even more urgent if one reflects on the philosophical question regarding the sheer possibility of having any intercultural communication at all! Furthermore and on the basis of the foregoing it is possible to comprehend intercultural communication as in essence a manifestation of intercultural philosophy and the other way round. In every piece of communication between cultures there will be a meeting of different philosophies and when culturally dissimilar philosophies get together there can or even must be an appearance of communication.

The aim then of this course is to discuss the intercultural relation between philosophy and

communication. It has the form of a two-sided programme that reflects the observation that, in the intercultural context, communication and philosophy are in fact two sides of the same coin.

The first side approaches the phenomenon of communication between cultures from a philosophical point of view. Not only the possibility and appearance of communication between civilizations will be debated but also, depending on their relevance for the discussion of the topic, the typical philosophical mindsets and attitudes of the different cultures will be addressed.

The second side relates this all to the question of how to understand, describe and evaluate the meeting between world philosophies as a phenomenon of intercultural communication.

The general framework of the discussion will be delivered by some classical models that were developed within the Theory of Communication. They function as tools that enable one to understand why and how culturally dissimilar philosophies can influence the process of intercultural communication and why and how the form and appearance of this kind of communication can or should be regarded as a kind of intercultural philosophy itself.

This course consists of 32 class hours divided over 7-8 weeks. In Summer it will be divided over 4-5 weeks. Students earn 6 ECTS credits when they obtain a passing grade.

Disclaimer: trips and visits related to the course are conditional. E.g. Dutch travel advice should be positive regarding the region that will be visited and institutions should be able to accept visitors. In case a proposed trip or visit cannot continue due to circumstances, alternatives may be organized.

Course objectives

By the end of the course, students will have gained knowledge of the following topics:

1. Three classic models of communication.
2. The most important characteristics of Chinese (and Japanese), Indian and western (including Islamic) philosophical traditions.
3. The most significant interpretations of the philosophical notions of 'the good', 'the individual', 'truth', 'beauty' and 'reality' in them.
4. The programme of 'Intercultural Philosophy and Communication': its two-sided structure, motivation, parameters and conditions.

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Make clear how 'Intercultural Communication' is shaped and conditioned by philosophical aspects and how 'Intercultural Philosophy' can or should be regarded as a particular manifestation of communication.
 2. Make clear why then 'Intercultural Philosophy' and 'Intercultural Communication' are in essence two sides of the same coin.
 3. Demonstrate how principles of 'Intercultural Philosophy and Communication' can be applied to describe, analyse, understand and evaluate those cases in which the communication between cultures is involved.
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Prerequisites

None. A minimum number of 8 students is required for the course to take place.

This course is only open for Baylor University students

Recommended reading

The main literature for this course consists of two books and a reader:

Asian Philosophies, John M. Koller, ISBN 13:978-0-205-16898-9

A Sourcebook in Asian Philosophy, John M. Koller and Patricia Koller, ISBN 0 02 365811 8

CES students receive their books on loan from CES.

PHI2003

Period 4

5 Feb 2024 - 5 Apr 2024 Period 6

28 Jun 2024 - 14 Jul 2024

ECTS credits:

6.0

Instruction language:

English

Coordinators:

[H.M.S. Timmermans](#)

[K.A.R. van Leendert](#)

Teaching methods:

Lecture(s), Presentation(s)

Assessment methods:

Attendance, Presentation, Final paper

Keywords:

Comparative philosophy and communication, Intercultural philosophy and thought