

Lingnan University
Department of Philosophy

Course Title	: Man and Heaven in Chinese Philosophy
Course Code	: PHI4364
Recommended Study Year	: 3 rd Year
No. of Credits/Term	: 3
Mode of Tuition	: Lecture and tutorial
Class Contact Hours	: 2 hours Lecture/week; 1 hour Tutorial/week
Category in Major Programme	: Programme Elective –Chinese Philosophy Profile
Prerequisite(s)	: N/A
Co-requisite(s)	: N/A
Exclusion(s)	: N/A
Exemption Requirement(s)	: N/A

Brief Course Description

In the history of philosophy, no matter whether Western or Eastern, the problem of ontological being and sensible being, and that of their relationship have remained central themes for centuries. They constitute an important element in metaphysics, ethics and epistemology. In Western philosophy, ontological being ('Heaven' in Chinese thought) and sensible being ('Man') belong to the world of substance and the world of phenomena respectively. It is generally thought that these two worlds are not inter-permeable in the sense that there is a strict boundary forbidding sensible beings to 'transcend' to the world of substance. Contrarily, in Chinese philosophy certain ways of 'transcendence' is possible. This view is commonly held by Confucianism, Daoism and Chan's Philosophy. In this course, students will study the idea of Heaven, the possible ways of approaching it and further discuss the status of man in the cosmos in different schools of thought.

Aims

To provide students with knowledge about the idea of Heaven and its significance in Chinese philosophy and also to reveal the relationship between Heaven and Man. By the end of the course, students are expected to grasp the major distinctive characteristic of Chinese philosophy so as to have a deeper understanding of its branches, i.e. of ethics, metaphysics and epistemology.

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. understand the idea of Heaven and its significance in Chinese philosophy
2. articulate the relationship between Heaven and Man in Chinese philosophy
3. characterise the distinctiveness of Chinese philosophy
4. evaluate critically the thoughts of the unity of man and heaven in different schools

Indicative Content

1. Introduction
 - a. The distinctive approach of the Heaven-Man problem in Chinese philosophy
 - b. The change of the idea of *Tian* (Heaven) in early Chou
2. The possible unity of man and heaven
 - a. The early Confucian tradition
 - i. Confucius

- Tian* and *Tian Ming* (Decree of Heaven)
 - His Cosmos feeling and the view of the status of man
 - ii. Mencius
 - Human nature generated by Heaven
 - The way from moral mind to Heaven
- b. The Daoist thought
 - i. Laozi
 - The spilt of Man and Heaven
 - Return to *Dao* (the Way)
 - ii. Zhuangzi
 - From the relative to the absolute
 - Genuine Man: reunified with Heaven
- 3. Heaven personified: Mozi
 - a. Heaven's intent
 - b. The objection of fatalism
- 4. Heaven naturalised: Xunzi
- 5. From Heaven to Man and from Man to Heaven
 - a. The doctrine of the mean
 - Cheng* (sincerity) and *Ming* (enlightenment)
 - The unity of Man and 'Heaven and Earth' through moral practice
 - b. The Commentary of Yi
 - The principle of cosmology and the principle of morality
- 6. Correlative cosmos-building
 - a. School of Yin-Yang
 - b. The corresponding features of human world and Heaven in Dong Zhongshu's philosophy
- 7. From the Way of Heaven to the Way of Man: Neo-Confucianism
 - a. The classification of 'three systems' and their views of The Way and man
 - b. The possibility of 'immanent transcendence'

Teaching Method

Lectures and tutorials

Measurement of Learning Outcomes

1. Tutorial presentation: mainly corresponding to LO1, LO3. Students will give oral presentations on assigned readings. They are expected to summarize, paraphrase and respond critically to the arguments in these texts.
2. Essay writing: mainly corresponding to LO2, LO4. Students will write a philosophical essay, the topics of which correspond to the contents of the lectures. They are expected to present their interpretations and criticisms effectively.
3. Final examination: mainly corresponding to LO1, LO2 and LO3. The examination will assess students' basic knowledge of concepts and theories of Heaven and Man in Chinese philosophy.

Assessment

Tutorial Presentation (30%)

Essay Writing (30%)

Final Exam (30%)

Attendance (10%)

Required Readings

Graham, A.C., *Disputers of the Tao: Philosophical Argument in Ancient China*, La Salle, Illinois: Open Court, 1989.

張立文等著，《道》，北京：中國人民大學出版社，1989。

Supplementary Readings

李杜，《中西哲學思想中的天道與上帝》，台北：聯經出版事業有限公司，1978。

霍韜晦（編），《安身立命與東西文化》，香港：法住出版社，1996。

呂理政，《天、人、社會：試論中國傳統的宇宙認知模型》，台北：中央研究院民族研究所，1990。

劉翰平，《儒家心性與天道》，台北：基礎道德文教基金會，1991。

徐蓀銘等著，《理》，北京：中國人民大學出版社，1991。

周伯達，《心物合一論 — 申論道與器之全體》，台北：台灣學生，1999。

周伯達，《甚麼是中國形上學：儒釋道三家形上學申論》(上、下冊)，台北：台灣學生，1999。

徐復觀，《中國人性論史：先秦篇》，第六版，台北：台灣商務印書館，1982。

牟宗三，《心體與性體》，台北：正中書局，1968。

Important Notes:

- (1) Students are expected to spend a total of 9 hours (i.e. 3 hours of class contact and 6 hours of personal study) per week to achieve the course learning outcomes.
- (2) Students shall be aware of the University regulations about dishonest practice in course work, tests and examinations, and the possible consequences as stipulated in the Regulations Governing University Examinations and Course Work. In particular, plagiarism, being a kind of dishonest practice, is “the presentation of another person’s work without proper acknowledgement of the source, including exact phrases, or summarised ideas, or even footnotes/citations, whether protected by copyright or not, as the student’s own work”. Students are required to strictly follow university regulations governing academic integrity and honesty.
- (3) Students are required to submit writing assignment(s) using Turnitin.
- (4) To enhance students’ understanding of plagiarism, a mini-course “Online Tutorial on Plagiarism Awareness” is available on <https://pla.ln.edu.hk/>
- (5) Students must adhere to the University’s guidelines and practices when using Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools. The official documents “Guidelines for Using GAI Tools at Lingnan University” and “Best Practices for Ethical and Responsible Use of GAI Tools in Course Assessments” can be found here: <https://www.ln.edu.hk/tlc/generative-artificial-intelligence/gai-guidelines-best-practices>.

