

# Intellectual Non-Harming and Epistemic Friction, *Anand Vaidya*

## Study Questions

1. Without seeking epistemic friction, is there any way for each blind man to figure out what is before them?
2. What is the relationship between epistemic friction and intellectual non-harming?
3. Using examples, explain the difference between epistemic correction and completion.
4. What is the difference between positional inquiry and intellectual non-harming?
5. Could it ever be bad to adopt the attitude of intellectual non-harming?

## Suggested Further Readings

- Jain, P. (2019), *An Introduction to Jain Philosophy*. New Delhi: DK Printworld
- Robbiano, C. & Scager, K. (2020) 'Cultivating Two Aspects of Intellectual Humility: Openness and Care'. *Teaching Philosophy* 43.1: 47–69.
- Vaidya, A. (2018), 'Making the Case for Jaina Contributions to Critical Thinking'. *Journal of World Philosophy* 3.1: 53–78.
- Introduction, "Valuing diversity", *Chiara Robbiano*

# Perspectival Agility, Sarah Flavel and Brad Hall

## Study Questions

1. What is perspectivism?
2. Can I ever know that I am right and you are wrong?
3. Is the Zhuangzi's Peng bird (Ch. 1) just as limited as the small creatures that observe him?
4. Does perspectivism always lead to relativism?
5. What are the implications of perspectivism for our understanding of ourselves?

## Further Reading Suggestions

Chong, K-C. (2016), *Blinded by the Human: Zhuangzi's Critique of the Confucians*, Albany: SUNY Press.

Lai, K. (2017), 'The Zhuangzi', in K. Lai, *An Introduction to Chinese Philosophy*, 2nd edn, 188–223, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Moeller, H.G. (2004), *Daoism Explained: From the Dream of the Butterfly to the Fishnet Allegory*, Illinois: Open Court Publishing.

Parkes, G. (2020) 'In the Light of Heaven before Sunrise: Zhuangzi and Nietzsche on Transperspectival Experience', in D. Chai (ed), *Daoist Encounters with Phenomenology: Thinking Interculturally about Human Existence*, 61–86, London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic.

*Zhuangzi: The Complete Writings*. (2020), trans. B. Ziporyn, Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc.

2022 Karyn Lai, 'Freedom and Agency in The Zhuangzi: Navigating Life's Constraints', *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, Vol 30, issue 1. p.3–23

## Prasaṅga Method, Ethan Mills

### Study Questions

1. How does a *prasaṅga* argument differ from a *reductio ad absurdum* (reduction to absurdity)?
2. What is philosophical scepticism? What sorts of arguments do sceptical philosophers use? Are these arguments convincing to you?
3. Do most people know as much as they think they do? Should philosophy make us humbler about our capacity for definitive knowledge, especially when it comes to difficult or controversial matters?
4. Can beliefs, views, and theories sometimes lead to suffering? Is dogmatism bad for us? It is sometimes better to have no views, at least on some matters? Can the *prasaṅga* method help to avoid suffering, live a certain type of life, or make one less dogmatic and more open to different types of experiences?
5. What can we learn from the *prasaṅga* form today in philosophy or other areas such as politics? Is there any necessary relation between philosophical scepticism and political conservatism?

### Further Reading Suggestions

- Balcerowicz, P. (2020) 'Jayarāṣi,' *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2020 Edition). Edited by Edward N. Zalta. <<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/jayaraasi/>>.
- Carpenter, A. (2014) *Indian Buddhist Philosophy: Metaphysics as Ethics*. New York: Routledge.
- Das, N. (2018) 'Śriharaṣa,' *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2018 Edition). Ed. Edward Zalta. ><https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/sriharsa/>>
- Dasti, M. and Phillips, S. (2017) *The Nyāya-sūtra: Select Translations with Early Commentaries*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing.
- Ganeri, J. (ed.) (2001) *Indian Logic: A Reader*. Cornwall: Curzon Press.

# An Epistemic Decolonization of Culture, *Omar Rivera*

## Study Questions

1. How do Lugones and Anzaldúa's critiques shed light on the social and cultural contexts of concrete, everyday experiences of knowing?
2. How might anticolonial epistemologies contribute to anticolonial liberation?
3. With reference to Lugones' account of cultural transparency, how might we go about reconfiguring the visibility of oppressed cultures and of culture in general?
4. "Culturally transparent bodies can be kept, visible ones can be killed. One ought to see this as a colonialist epistemic principle to overcome." How does this colonialist epistemic principle shed light on prevailing modern western epistemologies (that value conceptual thinking, self-certainty and universality)?
5. How does recognizing women as queer rather than deviant reveal alternative epistemic options?

## Further Reading Suggestions

Anzaldúa, Gloria (2015), *Light in the Dark/Luz en lo Oscuro: Rewriting Identity, Spirituality, Reality*, edited by Analouise Keating. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Lugones, María (2010), "The Coloniality of Gender," in Walter Dignolo and Arturo Escobar (eds), *Globalization and the Decolonial Option*, 369–91, London, Routledge.

Lugones, María (2010), "Toward a Decolonial Feminism," *Hypatia* 25 (4): 742–59.

Quijano, Aníbal (2008), "Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism and Latin America," in Mabel Moraña, Enrique Dussel and Carlos A Jauregui (eds), *Coloniality at Large: Latin America and the Postcolonial Debate*, 181–224, Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

## Zhi (Knowing), Aaron Creller

### Study Questions

1. What is a concept cluster? Are there any words you can think of that form a concept cluster?
2. What might a concept cluster for “knowing” or “knowledge” look like from a time period other than early China? What similarities and differences are there?
3. Give an example of a reductive misunderstanding of a concept (a concept separated from the cluster of words that give it its deep philosophical meaning). How do the missing connections change the meaning of the misunderstood concept?
4. What does it mean to have a social, political, or cultural context to knowing? Do you think it is true for all, some, or no instances of knowing that they have such a context?
5. Are there any important distinctions between the differing schools in early China in how they articulate knowing and knowledge (知 *zhi*)?

### Further Reading Suggestions

- Allen, Barry. *Vanishing Into Things*. London: Harvard University Press, 2015.
- Confucius. *Analects: With Selections from Traditional Commentaries*. Trans. Edward Slingerland. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2003.
- Creller, Aaron B. *Making Space for Knowing: A Capacious Approach to Comparative Epistemology*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2018.
- Geaney, Jane. *Language as Bodily Practice in Early China: A Chinese Grammarology*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2018.
- Lloyd, Geoffrey and Nathan Sivin. *The Way and the Word*. London: Yale University Press, 2002.
- Mengzi. *Mengzi: With Selections from Traditional Commentaries*. Trans. Bryan Van Norden. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2008.
- Mozi. *The Essential Mozi: Ethical, Political, and Dialectical Writings*. Trans. Chris Fraser. Oxford: Oxford University Publishing, 2020.
- Rošker, Jana S. *Searching for the Way: Theory of Knowledge in Pre-modern and Modern China*. Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2008.
- Sturgeon, Donald. *Chinese Text Project*. <https://ctext.org> (2011). [Author’s note: While the translations in this text are my own, this is a wonderful working

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resource for accessing primary texts/concordances in both Chinese and in translation.]

Zhuangzi. *Zhuangzi: The Complete Writings*. Trans. Brook Ziporyn.  
Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2020.

## Continuous Inquiry, Chiara Robbiano

### Study Questions

1. What is the continuous inquiry that Sextus recommends? Why is it important never to stop the inquiry, but to continuously re-enact it?
2. Why does continuous inquiry not lead to epistemic nihilism?
3. Can one —according to Sextus— ever bracket one's perceptual apparatus, the goals of one's inquiry and one's disciplinary framework, one's beliefs, one's perspective, etc. and get access to the thing in itself: what is objective and the same for everyone? Is this possible according to you? Why/ Why not?
4. What is the status of the *Ten Modes*? What is their function? Give an example of how we can apply them to ourselves.
5. Why does the practice of continuous inquiry imply making oneself both critical and humble?

### Further Reading Suggestions

- Bett, R.A.H. and Bett, R. eds. (2010), *The Cambridge Companion to Ancient Scepticism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cooper, D.E. (2002), *The measure of things: Humanism, humility, and mystery*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Garfield, Jay L. (2015), *Engaging Buddhism: Why it matters to philosophy*, Oxford: Oxford: University Press.
- Hadot, P. and Davidson, A.I. (1995), *Philosophy as a way of life: Spiritual exercises from Socrates to Foucault*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Sextus Empiricus (2000), *Outlines of Scepticism (Pyrrōneioi Hypotypōseis)*, Julia Annas and Jonathan Barnes trans. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Vogt, Katja (2018), 'Ancient Scepticism', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2018/entries/skepticism-ancient/>>

## Relegational Arguments, Andrew K. Whitehead

### Study Questions

1. Reflect on your own education in philosophy. How have you been taught to argue? What have you been taught is the goal of argumentation?
2. Can you think of some philosophical examples of argument by refutation that you are familiar with?
3. Can you think of some philosophical examples of argument by relegation that you are familiar with?
4. Reflect on an instance of trying to persuade someone of something (a friend, a family member, a colleague, etc.). What form of argumentation did you use? Were you successful in persuading them (genuinely)?
5. Are there instances where you believe that the relegational form would, in fact, be inferior to the refutational form? Explain your answer.

### Further Reading Suggestions

- Dōgen, and multiple translators (2011), “Dōgen” in *Japanese Philosophy: A Sourcebook*, James Heisig, John C. Maraldo, and Thomas P. Kasulis (eds.). Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, pp.141–162.
- Husserl, Edmund, and David Carr, trans. (1970), *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.
- Lakoff, George and Mark Johnson (1980), “Chapter 1: Concepts We Live By” in *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago University Press, pp.3–6.
- Mattice, Sarah (2014), “Chapter 2: Philosophical Activity as Combat” in *Metaphor and Metaphilosophy: Philosophy as Combat, Play, and Aesthetic Experience*. Studies in Comparative Philosophy and Religion Series. Lexington Books, pp.21–46.
- Whitehead, Andrew K. (2020), “Efficacious Subversion: Argument by Relegation in Chan Buddhism” in *Critique, Subversion, and Chinese Philosophy: Socio-Political, Conceptual, and Methodological Challenges*, Hans-Georg Moeller and Andrew K. Whitehead (eds.), London: Bloomsbury Academic.



## Ezumezu, Jonathan O Chimakonam

### Study Questions

1. Discuss some of the weaknesses of the Aristotelian system of logic.
2. Examine some of the major weaknesses of Asouzu's complementary logic and Ijiomah's harmonious monism?
3. Interrogate the system of Ezumezu logic.
4. Distinguish complementarity from contextuality.
5. With a specific example for each, show how the supplementary laws can navigate the restrictions of bivalence and determinism.

### Further Reading Suggestions

- Chimakonam, J. O. (2020). Ed. *Logic and African Philosophy: Seminal Essays on African Systems of Thought*. Wilmington: Vernon Press.
- Chimakonam, J. O. (2017). 'The question of African logic: Beyond apologia and polemics'. In *The Palgrave Handbook of African Philosophy*, eds. Adeshina. Afolayan and Toyin. Falola, 106–128. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Haparanta, L. (2009). *The Development of Modern Logic*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Hebga, M. 1958. Logic in Africa. In *Philosophy Today*, 4.4: 222–229.
- Hunnings, G. (1975). 'Logic, Language and Culture'. *Second Order: An African Journal of Philosophy*, 4(1)
- Ijiomah, C. (2005). 'Some Epistemological Tools with which Africans Relate to Their Realities', *Ultimate Reality and Meaning*, 28(1), 75–87.
- Jahn, Janheinz. (1961). *Muntu: An Outline of Neo-African Culture*. New York: Grove Press.
- Uduma O. (2009). 'Can there be an African Logic: Revisiting the squall for a cultural logic'. In Chimakonam, J. O. (2020). Ed. *Logic and African Philosophy: Seminal Essays on African Systems of Thought*. Wilmington: Vernon Press, 245–258.

# **Gewu (Investigation of Things), Xiao Ouyang**

## Study Questions

1. Do you have any personal experience that resonates with the Confucian practise of *gewu*?
2. *Gewu* advocated by the Cheng-Zhu school is often viewed as a counter-proposal against Buddhist and Daoist forms of self-cultivation. Do you think it succeeds in this regard?
3. Some argue that the explicit endorsement of gradual progress and life-long self-cultivation of *gewu* shows it is best suited for ordinary people, rather than geniuses who might be born with or can easily achieve the state of being “all-penetrating,” likely in a sudden enlightenment. Do you agree with this opinion?
4. This entry briefly mentions the Lu-Wang’s school’s alternative perspective on *gewu*. Some critics hold that the Lu-Wang approach might inevitably “descend into” the Buddhist path of sudden enlightenment. What do you think their argument might be? Do you agree with the argument?
5. Can you relate *gewu* to any similar notions found in your own cultural or philosophical traditions? If so, compare them.

## Further Reading Suggestions

- Gardner, D., (2007), *The Four Books: The Basic Teachings of the Later Confucian Tradition*, Hackett Publishing Company, Inc.
- Zhu, X. and Lü Zuqian (1967), *Reflections on Things at Hand*, trans. W. Chan, New York: Columbia University Press.
- Chan, W. (1987), *Chu Hsi [Zhu Xi]: Life and Thought*, Hongkong: The Chinese University Press.
- Ouyang, X. (2019), ‘Towards moral teleology — a comparative study of Kant and Zhu Xi’, *Rivista di estetica*, 72 | 2019: 99–124.
- Angle, S. and Justin Tiwald (2017), *Neo-Confucianism: A Philosophical Introduction*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

## Karma, Peter D. Hershock

### Study Questions

1. Karma is, among other things, a theory of causality. How does karmic causality differ from views of causality in western philosophy?
2. Compare the karmic account of what happens with death with those offered by other religious and philosophical traditions. Do you find the karmic account appealing? Convincing? Why?
3. There is a strong tradition of debate in western philosophy about reality and extent of free will and the scope of deterministic accounts of reality. How do Buddhist theories of karma address issues of chance, necessity and freedom?
4. The theory of karma implies that moral standards cannot be fixed since the conditions that lead to suffering, conflict and trouble are subject to change, both historically and culturally. Discuss this perspective in relation to efforts to establish universal and eternal moral truths. Which do you find more compelling?
5. Technological change transforms the scope of human action and our capacity to intentionally transform our living conditions, but also those of other sentient beings. Consider how the concept of karma might shed interesting critical light on such technological issues as the agency of artificial intelligences, anthropogenic climate change, and gender reassignment surgeries.

### Further Reading Suggestions

- Walshe, M. (1995). *Sakkapañha Sūta*, Digha Nikāya 26, translated in M. Walshe as *The Long Discourses of the Buddha*, 395–406, Boston: Wisdom Publications.
- Goodman, C. (2009). Vasubandhu, *Abhidharmakośa* (excerpt), trans. W. Edelglass and J. Garfield ed. *Buddhist Philosophy: Essential Readings*, 299–308, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Zongmi (Tsong-mi) (1995). *Inquiry into the Origins of Humanity: An Annotated Translation of Tsung-mi's Yuan jen lun with a Modern Commentary*, translated and with commentary by Peter N. Gregory, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Thanissaro Bhikkhu, *Kamma: A Study Guide*, an introduction to Pali Buddhist teachings on karma, including primary source translations, available online: <https://www.accesstoinsight.org/lib/study/kamma.html>

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- Gowans, C. (2013). "Ethical Thought in Indian Buddhism," in S. Emmanuel, edited, *A Companion to Buddhist Philosophy*, 429–451, New York: Wiley-Blackwell
- Hershock, P. (2007). "Valuing Karma: A Critical Concept for Orienting Interdependence Toward Personal and Public Good," in C. Prebish, D. Keown and D. Wright (eds.), *Revisioning Karma*. (Journal of Buddhist Ethics Online Books).
- Cho, F. (2014). "Buddhism, Science, and the Truth about Karma," Religion Compass 8/4: 117–127.

# Relational Knowing, *Monika Kirloskar-Steinbach*

## Study Questions

1. Why are “imperialist comparisons” considered to be problematic?
2. What does it mean to say that “messy issues of unjust privilege” (Dalmiya 2016: 279) impact the way we do comparative philosophy?
3. Why should the tendency to regard preselected world philosophies as paradigms of philosophizing per se worry us?
4. Work out a list of core philosophical concepts you have learnt in your philosophical classes. Set them in relation to some phenomena of our interconnected world. Do these concepts help you make sense of this world?
5. Have you attempted to read this text relationally? If so, what difference has this mode made to your reading?

## Further Reading Suggestions

- Bashir, S. (2017), ‘Eurocentrism, Islam and the Intellectual Politics of Civilizational Framing,’ *InterDisciplines: Journal of History and Sociology*, 8, (2): 21–36.
- Daya Krishna (1986), ‘Comparative Philosophy: What It Is and What it Ought to Be,’ *Diogenes*, (34): 58–69.
- Mungwini, P. (2013) ‘African Modernities and the Critical Reappropriation of Indigenous Knowledges: Towards a Polycentric Global Epistemology,’ *International Journal of African Renaissance Studies – Multi-, Inter- and Transdisciplinarity*, Vol. 8, (1): 78–93.

## Action and Praxis, Jin Y. Park

### Study Questions

1. Can philosophy be understood as an activity that is region or gender specific?
2. What is the primary nature of philosophy? Is philosophy about theory, ideas or action?
3. Is philosophy's goal to find a universal objective truth, or is it an ideology that presents the philosopher's position in understanding the external world as Pak Ch'iu claims?
4. What is the relationship between logic and politics according to Pak?
5. In what sense does formal logic explain the failure of civil society's promise of freedom and equality for all, according to Pak Ch'iu? Do you agree with him? Why? Why not?

### Further Reading Suggestions

- Krummel, J. (2016), 'Introduction to Miki Kiyoshi and his Logic of the Imagination', *Social Imaginaries* 2(1): 13–24.
- Miki, K. (2016), 'Myth,' J. Krummel (trans.), *Social Imaginaries* 2 (1): 25–69.
- Park, J. (2016), 'Burdens of Modernity: Baek Seonguk and the Formation of Modern Korean Buddhist Philosophy', in Youngsun Baek and Philip J. Ivanhoe (eds.), *Traditional Korean Philosophy: Problems and Debates*, 197–221, New York: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Park, J. (2017), *Women and Buddhist Philosophy: Engaging Zen Master Kim Iryöp*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Park, J., trans. (2014), *Reflections of a Zen Buddhist Nun: Essays by Zen Master Kim Iryöp*, Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press.

## Ataraxia, Frans A.J. de Haas

### Study Questions

1. Would you derive tranquillity of mind from your trust in what you take to be an unshakeable truth, or rather from abstaining from any commitments? Or do you prefer a third alternative?
2. Does the current state of natural science constitute the truth about nature from which we can derive certainty and tranquillity of mind?
3. How is the peace of mind Epicureans get from a life in a secluded garden with like-minded souls different from our satisfaction within our social media bubble?
4. Does the Pyrrhonist attitude to life allow for the study of philosophy?
5. Do you think it is possible to live the life of a Pyrrhonist? Why (not)?

### Further Reading Suggestions

- Epicurus *Letter to Menoeceus*, in Inwood, B. and L.P. Gerson (1994), *The Epicurus Reader. Selected Writings and Testimonia*, Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company.
- Hard, R. and C. Gill (1997), *Marcus Aurelius Antoninus: Meditations*, Ware: Wordsworth.
- Annas, J. and J. Barnes (2000), *Sextus Empiricus: Outlines of Scepticism*, 2nd edn, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nussbaum, M.C. (1994), *The Therapy of Desire: Theory and Practice in Hellenistic Ethics*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Kuzminski, A. (2008), *Pyrrhonism. How the Greeks Reinvented Buddhism*, Lanham: Lexington Books.

## Emptiness, Jason M. Wirth

### Study Questions

1. What are some of the ways that Buddhist thought can help us understand the science of ecology better and make it more relevant to the crisis at hand? Are there other “spiritual” philosophical traditions that can also help? Which ones, and how so?
2. Why is Buddhist thought, including the thought of emptiness, not traditionally considered primarily a dogma but rather a medicine? On what ailments is it working? How does it change how we appreciate the power of philosophy if we consider it as therapeutic? Can you think of other philosophers who were sympathetic to this metaphor?
3. Do you think the canon of western philosophy is implicated in the ecological emergency? If so, how so? If not, why not?
4. How does the Buddhist thought of emptiness challenge some of the fundamental notions of European thought?
5. Why do you think indigenous sources of philosophy have not been taken seriously? What price have we paid for not doing so?

### Further Reading Suggestions

- Coulthard, Glen Sean. 2014. *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Klein, Naomi. 2015. *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Nāgārjuna (2013), *Nāgārjuna’s Middle Way (Mūlamadhyamakakārikā)*. Translated and edited by Mark Siderits and Shōryū Katsura. Boston: Wisdom Publications.
- Snyder, Gary, *The Practice of the Wild*. Berkeley: Counterpoint, 2010.
- Tucker, Mary Evelyn and Duncan Ryūken Williams, eds. 1997. *Buddhism and Ecology: The Interconnection of Dharma and Deeds*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Wirth, Jason M. 2017. *Mountains, Rivers and the Great Earth: Reading Gary Snyder and Dōgen in an Age of Ecological Crisis*. Albany: State University of New York Press.



# Shinjin-datsuraku (dropping the bodymind), Rein Raud

## Study Questions

1. What do we gain and what do we lose by separating mind and body into different entities?
2. Does consciousness set human beings essentially apart from the rest of reality?
3. Why does Dōgen see existence as taking place in the mind?
4. Why do we normally rely on pre-patterned relationships with others in our daily life?
5. Would you like to be enlightened in the way Dōgen understands this mental state? Why (not)?

## Further Reading Suggestions

Davis, Bret W. 2019. "The Philosophy of Zen Master Dōgen: Egoless Perspectivism". *Oxford Handbook of Japanese Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dōgen. 1985. *Moon in a Dewdrop: Writings of Zen Master Dōgen*. Translated by Kazuaki Tanahashi et al. New York: North Point Press.

Dōgen. 2002. *The Heart of Dōgen's Shōbōgenzō*. Translated by Abe Masao and Norman Waddell. Albany: SUNY Press.

Kim, Hee-jin. 2004. *Eihei Dōgen: Mystical Realist*. Boston: Wisdom Publications.

Raud, Rein. 2015. "Casting off the Bonds of Karma: Watsuji, Shinran, and Dōgen on the Problem of Free Will." *Journal of Japanese Philosophy* 3: 53–69.

# “I” as the Absolute Present, Yoko Arisaka

## Study Questions

1. Describe a concrete moment of pure experience. Focus on a particular moment. Is the flow of experience “subjective”, “objective”, or both at the same time?
2. Explain in what sense I “am” the whole of reality as unfolding: “Where” is this “I”, and what is its content?
3. Recall a past event (personal or historical). Describe the way in which it is an unfolding in the present. “Where” is the past? Do the same exercise using a future event.
4. Explain in what way pure experience is also thought, emotion, will, action, memory, imagination, as well as perception.
5. Are you convinced that there is no constant “I” as substance and essence? If not, articulate your position and discuss with someone who holds the anti-essentialist view of the self, such as Nishida’s.

## Further Reading Suggestions

- Nishida, Kitaro (1986). M. Yusa, trans. “The Logic of *Topos* and the Religious Worldview,” *The Eastern Buddhist* 19(2): 1–29 & 20(1): 81–119.
- Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/nishida-kitaro/>
- Carter, Robert E. (1998). *The Nothingness Beyond God: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Nishida Kitarō*. St. Paul: Paragon House.
- Kopf, Gereon (2001). *Beyond Personal Identity: Dōgen, Nishida, and a Phenomenology of No-Self*, Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press.
- Kopf, Gereon (2017). “Self, Selflessness, and the Endless Search for Identity: A Meta-psychology of Human Folly”, in Dalfert, Ingolf and Kimball, Trevor, eds. *Self or No-Self? The Debate About Selflessness and the Sense of Self*. Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck. 239–262.

## Vital Force, Pius M. Mosima

### Study Questions

1. Is there a specifically and exclusively African philosophy?
2. What is the content of the philosophy of forces as explained by Tempels?
3. What is it that makes the philosophy of vital force a philosophy of Africans?
4. Is implicit and communal philosophy as indicated by Tempels a real phenomenon?
5. What does it mean for philosophy, for epistemology and ontology, when it is culturalized, that is, when it starts to comprehend itself as culturally and historically situated?
6. How can the exploratory work of the notion of vital force foster our intercultural understanding?

### Further Reading Suggestions

- Apostel, L. (1981), *African Philosophy: Myth or Reality?*, Gent-Story Scientia.
- Diagne, S. B. (2016), *The Ink of the Scholars: Reflections on Philosophy in Africa*, Dakar: Codesria.
- Hountondji, P. J. (1996), *Sur la 'philosophie africaine': Critique de l'ethnophilosophie*, Paris: Maspero; translated in English in 1983, *African Philosophy: Myth and Reality*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Jahn, J. (1961), *Muntu: An Outline of Neo-African Culture*, New York: Grove Press.
- Masolo, D. A. (1994), *African Philosophy in Search of Identity*, Bloomington/Indianapolis: Indiana University Press/Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Mosima, P. M. (2016), *Philosophic Sagacity and Intercultural Philosophy: Beyond Henry Odera Oruka*, Leiden, Netherlands: African Studies Centre.
- Mudimbe, V.Y. (1988), *The invention of Africa: Gnosis, philosophy, and the order of knowledge*, Bloomington & Indianapolis/London: Indiana University Press/Currey.
- Roothaan, A. (2019), *Indigenous, Modern and Postcolonial Relations to Nature: Negotiating the Environment*, London: Routledge.

## Nature, *Marzenna Jakubczak*

### Study Questions

1. What kind of connection can you see between the climatic circumstances typical of South Asia and symbolic imagery inspiring the conceptions of nature developed in the Indian tradition?
2. Why is social hierarchy considered to be in harmony with the natural, or cosmic, order according to the Vedic texts?
3. How does the idea of self-sufficient and spontaneously creative nature affect our perception of the natural environment?
4. What are the pros and cons of the symbolic identification of nature with femininity as personified as a woman, Goddess or cow?
5. How can we protect endangered species and prevent ecological degradation by revising our understanding of nature?

### Further Reading Suggestions

- Chapple, Christopher K. and Mary Evelyn Tucker (2000), *Hinduism and Ecology: The Intersection of Earth, Sky, and Water*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Griffith, Ralph T. H. (1896–97), *The Hymns of Rigveda*, Benares: E.J. Lazarus (accessible at [sacred-texts.com](http://sacred-texts.com)).
- Jacobsen, Knut A. (1999), 'Humankind and Nature in Buddhism', in Eliot Deutsch and Ron Bontekoe (eds), *A Companion to World Philosophies*, 381–391, Oxford: Blackwell.
- Koller, John M. (1999), 'Humankind and Nature in Indian Philosophy', in Eliot Deutsch and Ron Bontekoe (eds), *A Companion to World Philosophies*, 279–289, Oxford: Blackwell.
- Nelson, Lance E. (ed.) (2000), *Purifying the Earthly Body of God: Religion and Ecology in Hindu India*, New Delhi: D.K. Printworld.

# Africa, Delphine Abadie

## Study Questions

1. From the outset, the challenge of defining Africa is linked to knowledges produced with the aim of dominating its inhabitants by imperial Europe. Recognizing this epistemological dependence, must an endogenous proposal necessarily be designed as a conceptual opposition to the West?
2. Could a certain degree of cultural essentialism still be relevant to address la question de l'identité africaine, notamment celle des Afro-descendants hors Afrique?
3. According to Kwasi Wiredu, traditional African folk thought should only be compared to its western counterpart. Do you agree? What could qualify as western folk thought?
4. Critics such as M. Towa, P. Hountondji or F. Eboussi Boulaga accuse ethnophilosophy to believe reason relative. In your opinion, is there a risk that these critics might commit the opposite excess? Do they postulate the superiority of western philosophical reason as the only valid model? Is it legitimate to do so?
5. Could you think of any examples, drawn from political events, popular culture, media coverage, etc. that bear witness to the contemporary vitality of the imagination supported by the colonial library?

## Further Reading Suggestions

- Diagne, S. B. (2016), *The Ink of the Scholars: Reflections on Philosophy in Africa*, Dakar: CODESRIA.
- Eboussi Boulaga, F. (2014), *Muntu in Crisis. African Authenticity and Philosophy*, Trenton: Africa World Press.
- Hountondji, P. (1983), *African Philosophy. Myth and Reality* (2nd ed.), Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
- Mudimbe, V.Y. (1988), *The Invention Of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy, And The Order Of Knowledge*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Wiredu, K. (ed.) (2004), *A companion to African philosophy*, Blackwell Companions to Philosophy, 28, Malden: Blackwell Pub.

# Science Fiction in/as Philosophy, *Ethan Mills*

## Study Questions

1. How do you define “science fiction”? How does science fiction relate to philosophy?
2. What are some of your favorite works of science fiction? What are some of the philosophical aspects of these works?
3. Do you think philosophy can be done through science fiction?
4. How do you think issues of Orientalism and cultural appropriation affect attempts to find connections between science fiction and non-western philosophies?
5. Find a work of science fiction that incorporates elements of one or more ideas from a non-western philosophical tradition. What philosophical lessons can we learn from this work? Can we use these lessons to do philosophy and come to new philosophical insights?

## Further Reading Suggestions

- Hopkinson, N. and Mehan, U. (eds.) (2004) *So Long Been Dreaming: Postcolonial Science Fiction & Fantasy*. Vancouver: Arsenal Press.
- Imarisha, W. and brown, a. m. (eds.) (2015) *Octavia's Brood: Science Fiction Stories from Social Justice Movements*. Oakland: AK Press.
- Liu, K. (ed.) (2019) *Broken Stars: Contemporary Chinese Science Fiction in Translation*. New York: Tor Books.
- Saint, T. K. (ed.) (2019) *The Gollanz Book of South Asian Science Fiction*. Gurugram: Hachette India.
- Thomas, S. R. (ed.) (2000) *Dark Matter: A Century of Speculative Fiction from the African Diaspora*. New York: Warner Books.

## Unconditioned, *Russell Re Manning*

### Study Questions

1. Can it really be atheistic to affirm the existence of God?
2. How compelling do you find Kant's distinction between phenomenal and noumenal realities?
3. How different from traditional western philosophical and theological accounts of ultimate reality do you find the continental philosophers' notion of the unconditioned?
4. The Swiss theologian Karl Barth called the idea of the unconditioned a 'frosty monster' when compared to the idea of a personal God: was he right?
5. What could be the further ethical and political consequences of an understanding of ultimate reality as the unconditioned?

### Further Readings Suggestions

- Caputo, J. D. (2001), *On Religion*, London: Routledge.
- Critchley, S. (2012), *The Faith of the Faithless. Experiments in Political Theology*, London: Verso.
- Crockett, C., B. K. Putt and J. W. Robbins, eds. (2014), *The Future of Continental Philosophy of Religion*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Taylor, M. C. (2007), *After God*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Tillich, P. (1952), *The Courage to Be*, New Haven: Yale University Press.

# Shinjin Gakudō (Studying the Way with Body and Mind), Bret W. Davis

## Study Questions

1. Does philosophy have different methods and aims in different traditions?
2. How does a “problems and arguments” approach differ from a “way of life” approach to philosophy?
3. How do the “spiritual exercises” of ancient Greek philosophy compare and contrast with those of Buddhism?
4. What role has “embodied-spiritual practice” played in Buddhist philosophy?
5. How has the role of rational argumentation been treated in different Buddhist traditions?

## Further Reading Suggestions

- “Commuting Between Zen and Philosophy: In the Footsteps of Kyoto School Philosophers and Psychosomatic Practitioners.” In *Transitions: Crossing Boundaries in Japanese Philosophy*, edited by Francesca Greco, Leon Krings, and Yukiko Kuwayama, 71–111. Nagoya: Chisokudō Publications, 2021.
- Davis, Bret W. (2022) *Zen Pathways: An Introduction to the Philosophy and Practice of Zen Buddhism*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Dōgen. (2002) *The Heart of Dōgen’s Shōbōgenzō*. Translated by Norman Waddell and Masao Abe Albany: SUNY Press.
- Emmanuel, Steven M., ed. (2013) *A Companion to Buddhist Philosophy*. West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Hadot, Pierre. (2002) *What Is Ancient Philosophy?* Translated by Michael Chase. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Parkes, Graham. (2020) “Nishitani Keiji: Practicing Philosophy as a Matter of Life and Death.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Japanese Philosophy*, edited by Bret W. Davis, 465–83. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Śāntideva. (1995) *The Bodhicaryāvatāra*. Translated by Kate Crosby and Andrew Skilton. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Shaner, David Edward. (1985) *The Bodymind Experience in Japanese Buddhism: A Phenomenological Study of Kūkai and Dōgen*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Yuasa, Yasuo. (1987) *The Body: Toward an Eastern Mind-Body Theory*. Edited by T. P. Kasulis. Translated by Nagatomo Shigenori and T. P. Kasulis. Albany: State University of New York Press.