Topics in the Philosophy of Technology: Thinking Machines

Spring 2021

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Pre-requisites: Students must have completed one full year of study.

Course Description	This course aims to train students to think philosophically about our rapidly changing—and ever more intimate — relationship with machines. The course is historically oriented, and typically focuses on some of the following subjects: artificial intelligence, robots, cyborgs, automation and science fiction speculation. This semester, we will focus on the theme of simulation..
Assessment	The final grade will be determined approximately as follows: Attendance and participation: 15% Weekly reading assignments: 15% Media review: 10% Midterm Exam: 25% Final paper: 35% Assessment dates: Midterm Exam: Wednesday 10 March Final Paper Outline: Wednesday 21 April Final Paper: Wednesday 12 May

Schedule

Meeting 1: The Western Tradition I: Plato

27 January	• Plato. 'Republic, Chapter VII.' In *Plato: Complete Works*, edited by John M Cooper, translated by G.M.A Grube. Indianapolis, Ind: Hackett Publishing Co., 1997. • Moss, Jessica. "Pleasure and illusion in Plato." *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 72, no. 3 (2006): 503–535.

Meeting 2: The Western Tradition II: Descartes

3 February	• Cottingham, John. *Descartes: Meditations on First Philosophy*. 2nd edition. Cambridge, United kingdom ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017. (Selections)

Meeting 3: The Western Tradition III: Leibniz and Kant

10 February	• Leibniz, G. W. 'A New System of the Nature and Communication of Substances'. In *Leibniz: Philosophical Essays*, translated by Roger Ariew and Daniel Garber, 1st edition. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1989. • Leibniz, G. W. 'The Principles of Philosophy, or The Monadology.' In *Leibniz: Philosophical Essays*, translated by Roger Ariew and Daniel Garber, 1st edition. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1989. • Kant, Immanuel. 'The Fourth Paralogism' A367–A380; 'Refutation of Idealism' B274–B279; 'Note to Preface of the Second Edition'. In *Critique of Pure Reason*, edited by Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood. The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

Spring Festival: 11–19 February

Meeting 4: Asian Perspectives I: Zhuangzi

24 February	• Zhuangzi. 'Qiwu Lun'. In *The Complete Works of Zhuangzi*, translated by Burton Watson, 368 Pages. Columbia University Press, 2013. • Cheng, Kai-Yuan. 'Self and the Dream of the Butterfly in the Zhuangzi'. *Philosophy East and West* 64, no. 3 (2014): 563–97.

Meeting 5: Asian Perspectives II: Vasubandhu

3 March	• Vasubandhu. 'Viṃśatikākārikā and Viṃśatikāvṛtti.' In *Seven Works of Vasubandhu, the Buddhist Psychological Doctor*, translated by Stefan Anacker. Motilal Banarsidass Publ., 1984. • Carpenter, Amber. "The third turning: Yogācāra." In *Indian Buddhist Philosophy*, pp. 155–186. Routledge, 2014.

Meeting 6: Recurrence: Nietzsche and Deleuze

10 March	• Nietzsche, Friedrich. 'On Truth and Lie in an Extra-Moral Sense.' In *Nietzsche: Writings from the Early Notebooks*, edited by Raymond Geuss and Alexander Nehamas, translated by Ladislaus Löb, 1st edition. Hackensack, NJ: Cambridge University Press, 2009. • Deleuze, Gilles, and Rosalind Krauss. "Plato and the Simulacrum." *October* 27 (1983): 45-56.

Meeting 7: Feminist Speculations: Irigaray and Plant

17 March	• Irigaray, Luce. "Any Theory of the "Subject'Has Always Been Appropriated by the "Masculine." In her Speculum of the Other Woman." *Trans. G. Gill. Ithaca: Cornell University Press* (1985). • Plant, Sadie. "The future looms: weaving women and cybernetics." *Body & Society* 1, no. 3-4 (1995): 45-64.

Meeting 8: The Imitation Game: Turing

24 March	• Turing, Alan M. 1950. "Computing Machinery and Intelligence", in *Mind*, Vol. 59, No. 236, October, pp. 433–460 • Proudfoot, Diane. "Rethinking Turing's test and the philosophical implications." *Minds and Machines* 30, no. 4 (2020): 487-512.

Meeting 9: The Experience Machine: Nozick

31 March	• Nozick, Robert. 'The Experience Machine'. In *Anarchy, State, and Utopia. New York: Basic Books, 1974.* • Bramble, Ben. "The experience machine." *Philosophy Compass* 11, no. 3 (2016): 136-145.

Qingming: 5–7 April

Meeting 10: The Virtual and the Real: Chalmers

14 April	• Chalmers, David J. "The Virtual and the Real." *Disputatio: International Journal of Philosophy* 9, no. 46 (2017).

Meeting 11: Copy and Simulation I: Baudrillard

21 April	• Baudrillard, Jean. 'The Precession of Simulacra'. In *Simulacra and Simulation*, translated by Sheila Faria Glaser, 33601st edition. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994.

Meeting 12: Copy and Simulation II: Byung-Chul Han	
28 April	• Han, Byung-Chul. *Shanzhai: Deconstruction in Chinese*. Vol. 8. MIT Press, 2017.
Meeting 13: Mind, Body and Self I: The Self in the Virtual World	
5 May	• Velleman, J. David. 'Virtual Selves'. In *Foundations for Moral Relativism: Second Expanded Edition*. Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2015. • Nguyen, C. Thi. "Games and the art of agency." *Philosophical Review* 128, no. 4 (2019): 423–462.
Meeting 14: Mind, Body and Self II: The Virtual Self in the World	
12 May	• Metzinger, Thomas. 'Out of the Body and into the Mind: Body Image, Out-of-Body Experiences, and the Virtual Self'. In *The Ego Tunnel: The Science of the Mind and the Myth of the Self*, 1st edition. Basic Books, 2009. • Nguyen, C. Thi. 'Gamification and Value Capture'. In *Games: Agency As Art*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2020.