

Letter to prospective Ryerson Philosophy MA students

Dear prospective students,

My name is Antoine Panaïoti and I have been Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Ryerson University since July 2017. I hold a B.A. in Philosophy and Religious Studies (Joint Honours Program) from McGill University and an M.Phil in Oriental Studies from the University of Cambridge. I also wrote a PhD dissertation at the University of Cambridge under the joint supervision of (now) Emeritus Professor Raymond Geuss (Philosophy) and Doctor Eivind Kahrs, Reader in Sanskrit (South-Asian Studies). My dissertation critically examined the reception of Indian Buddhist thought in the work of Arthur Schopenhauer and Friedrich Nietzsche. As a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Post-Doctoral Fellow at the Université de Montréal's *Centre de recherche en éthique*, I drew from my doctoral work to produce a monograph entitled *Nietzsche and Buddhist Philosophy*, which was published with Cambridge University Press (and, after appearing in Portuguese and Turkish, is now being translated into Mandarin Chinese).

My research interests are fairly diverse. I am a careful student of both Nineteenth-century German Philosophy, particularly Nietzsche, and Early Classical Indian Buddhist Thought, particularly Madhyamaka philosophy from Nāgārjuna (2nd century C.E.) to Candrakīrti (6th–7th century C.E.). More generally, I am fascinated with all things related to selfhood and personal identity, especially as these relate to moral psychology (broadly defined).

In addition to my abiding interest in Nietzsche's use and abuse of Buddhist themes and ideas, I have a keen interest in the reception of Buddhist thought in: (a) contemporary analytic philosophy (viz., the work of such philosophers as Derek Parfit and Galen Strawson); (b) contemporary cognitive neuroscience and psychotherapy (viz., in connection to embodied-enactive cognitive science and rise of so-called 'secular mindfulness practices', respectively); and (c) Western philosophical scholarship more generally. I am particularly concerned, in this connection, with metaphilosophical issues — especially tensions between the 'philosophy as therapy' framework and other more theory-focused or cognitivist conceptions of philosophy, which, I feel, result in many Western scholars presenting a distorted picture of what Indian philosophy was, if I may be pardoned the colloquialism, 'all about'. More recently, this has led me to dust off my Ancient Greek and Latin to revisit the Hellenistic Schools of Late Classical Antiquity, and more generally to pay closer attention to those moments in the Western philosophical tradition when philosophy was conceptualized as a practice of self-transformation and -healing (viz., the late Wittgenstein).

An important current project of mine focuses on Nietzsche's metaphilosophical reflections. I am currently working a monograph on this topic, unambiguously entitled *Nietzsche as Metaphilosopher*.

As regards the supervision of MA students, I would happy to supervise work on Classical Indian Philosophy, Nietzsche, Indian-Western comparative philosophy and/or mind science, and metaphilosophy (especially though not only from a cross-cultural perspective).

Kindest regards,

Antoine Panaioti