

# Melanie Coughlin

Department of Religion and Culture  
Department of Philosophy  
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**AOS:** Japanese Philosophy

**AOC:** Asian Philosophy, Modern and Contemporary European Philosophy, Social Philosophy  
including Decolonial, Disability, and Feminist Theory

## Education

**McGill University** (Montreal, Canada)

PhD, Philosophy, July 2021

Thesis: "Realizing Wisdom and Compassion Through Nishitani's Notion of the Emptiness in Affect"

Co-Supervisors: George di Giovanni, Philosophy, McGill University and Thomas Lamarre, East Asian Studies, McGill University and East Asian Languages and Civilizations, University of Chicago

Internal Examiner: Garth Green, Religious Studies, McGill University

External Examiner: Takeshi Kimoto, Global Studies, Chukyo University

**Kyoto University** (Kyoto, Japan)

Japan Foundation Research Fellow April 2014

Research Project: Nishitani's Engagement with 19<sup>th</sup> Century German Philosophy

Research Supervisor: Keta Masako, Philosophy of Religion

**Kansai University** (Osaka, Japan)

MEXT Scholarship Research Student October April 2009

Research Project "Nishitani's Nietzsche: On the Historicity and Actuality of Conscience"

Research Supervisor: Inoue Katsuhito, Comparative Religion

**University of Ottawa** (Ottawa, Canada)

Master of Arts, Philosophy February 2008

Thesis: "Nietzsche's Re-Interpretation of the Promise-Making Conscience as a Will to Power"

Supervisor: Sonia Sikka, Philosophy

Committee Members: Jeffrey Reid, Philosophy, and Denis Dumas, Philosophy

**Carleton University** (Ottawa, Canada)

Bachelor of Humanities, Concentration in Philosophy June 2003

## Fellowships, Awards and Grants

Start-Up Research Funds, Faculty of the Humanities and Social Sciences, Memorial University, 2024

Research Assistant Procurement Grant, Digital Pedagogy Project, Chair in Teaching Innovation, Carleton University 2023

Design Grant for Asynchronous Online Course “PHIL 2700 Introduction to the History of Asian Philosophy,” Education Development Centre, Carleton University 2019

Design Grant for Asynchronous Online Course “RELI 1716 East Asian Religions,” Education Development Centre, Carleton University 2017

Travel Grant for the Seminar for the Study of Japanese Culture and Religion, Centre for Information on Religion (CIR), Tokyo 2014

Travel Grant for Interdisciplinary Translation Project, Centre for Asian and Pacific Studies, University of Iowa 2014

Research Fellowship at Kyoto University, Japan Foundation 2013

Graduate Research Enhancement and Travel Award, McGill University 2011

Intensive Language Study Grant, German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) 2009

Research Scholarship, Japanese Ministry of Education (MEXT) 2007-2009

## Work

### Assistant Professor

Memorial University of Newfoundland Fall 2024-present

Fall 2024	PHIL 1002 Introduction to Philosophy
Fall 2024	RELS 2400 Buddhism
Winter 2025	PHIL 6067 Special Topics: Nishitani's <i>Religion and Nothingness</i>
Winter 2025	RELS 2420 Chinese Philosophy and Religion

### Course Instructor

Carleton University Fall 2013-Winter 2024

Winter 2024	PHIL 2700 A Asian Philosophy
Winter 2023	FYSM 1210 A Special Topics in Philosophy “What We Argue About”
Fall 2022	RELI 2410 A Buddhism
Winter 2022	RELI 3420 A Early Buddhism
Fall 2021	RELI 2410 A Buddhism
Winter 2021	PHIL 2700 R Introduction to the History of Asian Philosophy
Sum 2020	RELI 1716 R East Asian Religions
Winter 2020	PHIL 2700 R Introduction to the History of Asian Philosophy
Winter 2020	RELI 1716 R East Asian Religions
Winter 2019	PHIL 2700 A Asian Philosophy
Sum 2018	RELI 1716 A East Asian Religions
Winter 2018	RELI 1716 R East Asian Religions
Fall 2016	RELI 1716 A East Asian Religions

Fall 2015 RELI 3233 A Buddhism Beyond India  
Sum 2015 RELI 1716 A East Asian Religions  
Fall 2014 RELI 1716 A East Asian Religions  
Fall 2013 RELI 1716 A East Asian Religions

Contract Instructor, McGill University 2015

Summer 2015 PHIL 237 Contemporary Moral Issues

### Education Development Contractor

Open Educational Resources (OER) Ranger at Carleton University, eCampus Ontario 2023-2024

Panelist, "Accessible Teaching and TAing Practices," Academic Disability Collective, Virtual, August 2022

Author, "RLST 2286 Chinese Religions," Department of Religious Studies, Laurentian University and University of Sudbury, 2021 (cancelled midway due to university's funding crisis and subsequent restructuring)

Workshop Leader, "Welcome to My Online Classroom for Faculty Members," Education Development Centre, Carleton University, May 2020

Evaluator, "Request For Proposal: Learning Management System" (Blackboard, Brightspace, and Canvas), Carleton University, February 2020

## Research

### Peer-Reviewed Publications

2024. "Religion, Ableism, and Identity: Jericho March Becomes Canadian Marathon of Hope in the Freedom Convoy," Carleton University Roundtable, *Studies in Religion / Sciences Religieuses* 54, no. 1 (April 23, 2024): 46-47.

2023. "The Nihilism of Idealism in Nishitani's and Nietzsche's Passionate Thinking of History," *Journal of Nietzsche Studies* 54 No. 1 (Spring 2023): 102-132.

"A Translation of Kyoto School Philosopher Keta Masako's 'The Problem of Evil in Pure Land Buddhism'" with Jessica L. Main and Melissa Anne-Marie Curley. *Philosophy East & West* 67:1 (January 2017): 192-228.

"西谷の宗教に対するリアリゼーションと根源的な悪の自覚" (Nishitani's Realization of Religion and the Elemental Awareness of Evil) 西田哲学会年報第9号 (9<sup>th</sup> Annual Publication of the Nishida Philosophy Association's Proceedings) (July 2012): 110-118.

### Invited Publications

2025. Translation of Nishitani Keiji's "The Duty of Critique and the Problem of Fascism" in *Global Philosophy: A Sourcebook*. Edited by Mohammed Rustom. Sheffield: Equinox Publishing

### Book Reviews

Review of *Tanabe Hajime and the Kyoto School: Self, World, and Knowledge* by Takeshi Morisato," *Journal of Buddhist Ethics* 30 (2023):

<https://blogs.dickinson.edu/buddhistethics/2023/11/13/review-tanabe-hajime-and-the-kyoto-school/>

Review of *Japanese and Continental Philosophy: Conversations with the Kyoto School*, by Bret Davis, Brian Schroeder and Jason Wirth. *Eastern Buddhist* 43 Nos. 1 & 2 (Spring 2012): 299-303.

Review of *Frontiers of Japanese Philosophy 2: Neglected Themes and Hidden Variations*, by Victor Sōgen Hori and Melissa Anne-Marie Curley. *Eastern Buddhist* 40 Nos. 1 & 2 (Spring 2009): 238-249.

Review of *The Logic of Hegel's Logic*, by John Burbidge in *De Philosophia Graduate Student Journal* 19 No. 2 (June 2006).

### **Panels Organized**

“Modernity in Buddhism, Buddhism in Modernity: Non-Duality and Affectivity,” Society for Phenomenological and Existential Philosophy, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas, October 2022

“Disability and Existentialism” co-organized with Chris Nagel as a joint session for the Canadian Philosophical Association and the Society for Existential and Phenomenological Theory and Culture, University of Calgary, May 2016.

### **Invited Workshops**

Participant, “Workshop in Buddhist Ethics 4,” Barre Center for Buddhist Studies, Barre, June 2024

Session Leader, “日本宗教・日本哲学と翻訳 (Japanese Religion and Philosophy and Their Translation),” Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture, January 2024

Participant, “Workshop in Buddhist Ethics 3: Gender and Animal Ethics,” University of British Columbia, September 2022

### **Presentations**

R = Paper refereed in full

I = Invited

I “Access,” Panel on Accessibility, Research and Knowledge Exchange on Critical Disability Studies, Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Applied Health Research, St John’s, January 2025

I “Why Should We Theorize the Imagination along with Miki and Nishitani?” Miki Kiyoshi Lecture Series, virtual, December 2024

“Hermeneutical Injustice in Religious Studies” and “Yoritaka Shinenobu’s Disability Theory,” Panel on Hermeneutical Justice at the Intersection of Religious Studies and Disability Studies, American Academy of Religion, virtual, June 2024

“The Problem of ‘Humanity’ for a Decentralized Philosophy of Religion,” Panel on Decentralizing the Philosophical Inquiry into Religion, The Global-Critical Philosophy of Religion Unit, American Academy of Religion, November 2023

R “A Critical Role for Karma in Care,” Society for Phenomenological and Existential Philosophy, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas, October 2022

“Nishitani’s Skilful Means for an Image in the Right to Die Movement.” Association for Asian Studies, virtual, March 2021.

“On Nishitani’s Wartime to Post-War Standpoints: Is Nothingness to Emptiness Enough?” 49<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Southwest Conference on Asian Studies, virtual, October 2020.

- “Nishitani’s Critique of Fascism Applied to Recent Anti-Immigration Discourse.” 69<sup>th</sup> Midwest Conference on Asian Affairs, virtual, October 2020.
- “Cunning Snakes and Crazy Harpies: Nishitani’s Critical Confrontation with Unconscious Nihilism Today.” Centre for Advanced Research in European Philosophy, Western University, Ontario, March 2019.
- R “Nishitani’s Critique of Ideology: Emptiness in Affect.” Canadian Philosophical Association, Université du Québec à Montréal, Québec, June 2018.
- R “Nishitani’s Distinction between Skepsis and Doubt.” Canadian Philosophical Association, Ryerson University, Ontario, June 2017.
- “Keta Masako and Remorse over Boundaries.” Canadian Society for Women in Philosophy, Mount Allison University, New Brunswick, November 2016.
- “A Buddhist Contribution to Disability Studies: Nishitani’s Notion of Non-Ability.” Society for Existential and Phenomenological Theory and Culture, University of Ottawa, Ontario, June 2015.
- “西谷の宗教論—フョイエルバッハの感覚論は何故、問題であるのか (Nishitani’s Theory of Religion: What is at Issue in Feuerbach’s Understanding of Sensibility?)” at the CIR Seminar, Centre for Information on Religion, Tokyo, Japan, June 2014.
- “Nishitani’s Engagement with German Philosophy” McGill-Centre for Research on Religion Graduate Conference, McGill University, Montréal, Québec, October 2012.
- “Nishitani’s Philosophy of Religion and Shinran’s Awareness of Evil.” Canadian Jacques Maritain Association, Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Ontario, July 2012.
- “Nishitani’s Response to Nihilism Through Shinran.” International Association for Shin-Buddhist Studies, Otani University, Kyoto, Japan, August 2011.
- “西谷のリアルな基準を問う：西田の宗教批判と対比しつつ” (Querying Nishitani’s Real Standard in Comparison with Nishida’s Critique of Religion). Nishida Philosophy Association, Nishida Memorial Centre, Kanazawa, Japan, July 2011.
- R “Hermeneutical Understanding Through Phenomenology.” The Society for the Study of Existential and Phenomenological Theory and Culture, University of New Brunswick and St. Thomas University, Ontario, May 2011.
- “Nishitani’s Interpretation of Feuerbach: Toward a Phenomenology of the Imagination.” Transcontinental Philosophy: Interpreting Philosophy Across Borders and Idioms, Collegium Phaenomenologicum, Città di Castello, Italy, July 2010.
- R “MacIntyre’s Nietzsche and the Language of Postmorality.” Nietzsche’s Postmoralism: Research Project on Nietzsche and Morality, University of Southampton, Southampton, United Kingdom, July 2010.
- R “Re-interpreting Inside and Outside According to an Affective Notion of Will to Power.” Western Canadian Philosophical Association, University of Regina, Saskatchewan, October 2009.

## Commentaries

- Commentary on Julianne Chung’s “Moral Cultivation: The Aesthetics and Ethics of Karesansui Gardens.” Canadian Philosophical Association, Université du Québec à Montréal, Montréal, June 2018.

- Commentary on Al Whitney's "Thinking through Plasticity and Dying." Society for Existential and Phenomenological Theory and Culture, Ryerson University, Ontario, May 2017.
- Commentary on Casey Ford's "Deleuze and the Ground of Difference." Society for Existential and Phenomenological Theory and Culture, University of Calgary, Alberta, May 2016.
- Summary Commentary for the "Disability and Existentialism Panel" by Joshua St. Pierre "Temporality, Precarity and Disability," Shelley Tremain "Dialogues on Disability" and Jane Dryden "Freedom, Transcendence and Disability: Rethinking the Overcoming Story." Joint Session for the Canadian Philosophical Association and the Society for Existential and Phenomenology Theory and Culture, University of Calgary, May 2016.
- Commentary on R. Mason's "Understanding Dukkha: An Argument Against Mark Siderits' Interpretation." Canadian Philosophical Association, Brock University, Ontario, June 2014.
- Commentary on Mark Migotti's "Bearing Life Lightly, Taking Life Seriously: Nietzsche and Schopenhauer, Ethics and Crisis." Western Canadian Philosophical Association, October 2009.

## Service

- Administrator, International Nishida Philosophy Reading Group (2021-present)
- Panelist, "Leading with Accessibility Confidence Panel," Disability Employment Awareness Month, Memorial University of Newfoundland (2024)
- Co-Chair, Research Committee, Disability Justice and Crip Culture Collaboratory research lab, Carleton University (2023-2024)
- Referee, Journal of East Asian Philosophy (2021-present)
- Working Group Member, Enhancing Engagement with Japan, Carleton University (2017)
- Program Coordinator, Annual Meeting of the Society for Existential and Phenomenological Theory and Culture, SSHRC Congress (2013-2015)
- Co-Organizer, Centre for Research on Religion-McGill International Graduate Student Conference, McGill University (2012)
- Co-Organizer, Philosophy Department Annual Faculty and Graduate Student Retreat, McGill University (2011-2012)
- Assistant, Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy's 49<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, McGill University (2010)