University of Zurich[UZH]

Department of Philosophy

Master Class

About Analytic Philosophy

Christoph Schuringa
Northeastern University London

9th & 10th June 2026

Synopsis

Analytic philosophy is the dominant mode of academic philosophy in many parts of the world today. Its dominance in these places is such that it can seem to have been 'naturalized' to the point that it just counts as philosophy as such. Nevertheless, analytic philosophy has a history, and like all history (conceived as the past actions and thoughts of human beings) it has a social dimension. The character of analytic philosophy as fundamentally ahistorical and acultural can help to keep this social history obscured.

We will explore what it might be to reconstruct the social history of analytic philosophy, on the basis of a reading of my book, *A Social History of Analytic Philosophy*. Questions we may address include: How was analytic philosophy first formed, and under what social and political conditions? Can there even be said to be such a thing as analytic philosophy, or should this be regarded as only ever an umbrella term for a range of different streams in philosophy? Is 'continental philosophy' anything more than an invention on the part of analytic philosophers? Could the divide between analytic and 'continental' philosophy ever be bridged? What are the connections between analytic philosophy, liberalism, and bourgeois ideology, and how crucial are these connections to what analytic philosophy is and can be? How should we understand the different political functions that analytic philosophy has served in different parts of the world (including in South America, in western mainland Europe, the former Eastern Bloc, and China)? And what might the future of philosophy look like, globally?

Programme and Readings

Tuesday, 9th June 2026

9:30 – 12:30
The 'elements' of analytic philosophy; its ancestor movements

Christoph Schuringa: *A Social History of Analytic Philosophy*, chapters 1–4.

14:00 – 18:00
The formation of analytic philosophy and the invention of 'continental' philosophy

Christoph Schuringa: *A Social History of Analytic Philosophy*, chapters 5–6.

Wednesday, 10th June 2026

9:30 – 12:30
Passages in the social history of philosophy of language, logic and metaphysics

Christoph Schuringa: *A Social History of Analytic Philosophy*, chapters 7–8.

14:00 – 18:00
Ethics, social thought and the ideology of analytic philosophy

Christoph Schuringa: *A Social History of Analytic Philosophy*, chapters 9–10.

The sessions include participant comments on the topics discussed.

Registration: phd@philos.uzh.ch

Readings: https://www.philosophie.uzh.ch/mc

Venue
KOL-F-103
University of Zurich
Rämistrasse 71
8006 Zurich

No fees apply. Participants are expected to have read the texts.