

HISTORY AND ASIAN STUDIES 233 (Spring, 2007)

CONFUCIANISM, DAOISM, BUDDHISM: INTELLECTUAL HISTORY OF CHINA

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Office Hours: MTh 10:00-11:00

and by appointment

This upper-level lecture-discussion course will explore the most important intellectual traditions of China--Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism--with particular emphasis on the ethical and religious values of these three traditions. In the first half of the course, we will read, discuss, and write about the formative development of Confucianism and Daoism in China from about 1500 BCE to 221 BCE. In the second half of the course, we will explore the rise of Buddhism from the 3rd century CE onward, and the subsequent development of the Confucian, Daoist and Buddhist traditions into the twentieth century. Our method will be to read and discuss primary written sources (in English translation) from within these philosophical, religious and cultural traditions. We will try to understand the "inner logic" of each author, each tradition, and each written source, on its own terms. Lectures will provide historical background on the development of these three philosophical and religious traditions. In frequent class discussions, we will focus on the interpretation of primary sources in these three traditions, and will consider their ethical implications for their own time and for us today.

This course meets the requirements for the Values Perspective. The emphasis throughout the course will be on these three traditions as fundamental and systematic approaches to the most important philosophical, religious, and moral questions that human beings can ask. What is the meaning of human life? Is there a "higher power" than human beings that should be recognized and paid homage? How should human societies be organized? What is the proper relationship between human beings and the natural world? What is the proper relationship between human societies that hold different and even contrasting beliefs and values? How is human morality defined? How do people think about morality in each of these traditions? What is the relationship between theory and practice in determining what is moral and immoral? How does each of these traditions deal with the problem of evil?

In one sense, our approach will be historical in that we will examine each of these traditions through their chronological and geographical development. But in a deeper sense, our approach will be philosophical in that we will concern ourselves with a limited number of classic texts in these traditions, and we will approach these texts as fundamental expressions of philosophical and religious ideas with potentially universal significance. We will take these traditions seriously, not just as objects of intellectual analysis, but as living traditions with real contributions to make to our own understanding of human morality in the contemporary world and in the world we face in the twenty-first century. As we grapple with the issues and the sacred texts that have shaped life in China for over two thousand years, we will also naturally reflect on contrasts and similarities between these values and the values and traditions that have shaped contemporary civilization in the United States and Western Europe. Students of varied backgrounds will in turn enrich this course with their own unique perspectives.

All students will write weekly reaction papers on the readings and class discussions, and regular class attendance is expected. You will need to do at least 9 satisfactory reaction papers during the semester. On days when other written work is due, no reaction paper will be expected. In your reaction papers, you should reflect on the readings, lectures and class discussions, and evaluate these traditions from your own personal perspective. In addition, there will be an in-class midterm exam on March 1 on early Chinese thought. There will also be two short papers: 1) a 4-6 page paper on Buddhism in Chinese culture, due March 27th, and 2) a 4-6 page paper on a topic of your own choice on some contemporary ethical question in the light of Confucian and/or Daoist and/or Buddhist values, due May 2nd. There will also be an in-class final exam on May 4th on the last half of the course.

In the final paper (4-6 pages), you will construct an argument for the contemporary relevance (or irrelevance) of Confucian, Daoist, or Buddhist values on some issue of your own choosing. For example, you might draw on the Buddhist tradition to develop a philosophy of non-violence that you consider relevant to the political realities of today's world. You might write a Confucian critique of modern American society, or a feminist critique of Confucian values, or you might argue for the compatibility of Confucian and feminist values. Of the values we have studied in this course, which seems most relevant to today's world? What, if anything, sets those values apart from the dominant values of society in the United States today? You could examine any contemporary moral issue from the perspective of one or more of the traditions we have studied. Examples might include ecology, abortion, world hunger, capital punishment, vegetarianism, the relationship between individual rights and collective rights or needs, the relationship between consumption and conservation of world energy sources, etc. The possible list of topics is almost endless. **You must use at least three additional sources for your final paper (beyond the required readings for the course).** All papers must have a complete bibliography listing all sources consulted with all publication (or Internet web site) information included. Any evidence of plagiarism in either paper will result in an F for the course. You must clear your final paper topic with me by April 13.

Following our exploration of the fundamental principles of Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism in the first half of the course, we will study the later development of these values in the second half of the course, and examine the ways they interacted in the last one thousand years. We will examine the relationship between Buddhism and the rise of Neo-Confucianism in the middle period of Chinese imperial history, and will examine the development of these traditions right up to the present day.

Exams and Due Dates for Written Work:

Mar. 1	In-class Midterm Examination on Early Chinese Thought
Mar. 27	4-6 Page Buddhism Paper Due
Apr. 13	Final Paper Topics Due
May 2	4-6 Page Final Paper Due
May 4	In-Class Final Exam

Grades for the course will be determined on the following basis:

Class discussion and weekly reaction papers	20%
In-Class Exam on Early Chinese Thought	25%
4-6 Page Paper on Buddhism in China	15%
4-6 page Paper on a Contemporary Issue	15%
In-Class Final Exam	25%

The goal of the course is to introduce you to these three religio-philosophical traditions, and to stimulate you to think about the ethical questions raised and addressed by these traditions. In the process, we will all work to think systematically about the relationship between Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism, and the ethical issues we face in our own lives today.

BOOKS REQUIRED FOR PURCHASE

Frederick Mote, *Intellectual Foundations of China*
 Wm. Theodore deBary and Irene Bloom, *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, Vol. 1, 2nd edition
 Simon Leys, trans., *The Analects of Confucius*
 D. C. Lau, trans., *Mencius*
 Burton Watson, trans., *Hsun Tzu: Basic Writings*
 Victor Mair, trans., *Tao Te Ching*
 Burton Watson, trans., *Chuang Tzu: Basic Writings*
 John H. Berthrong, *Transformations of the Confucian Way*
 Nelson Foster and Jack Shoemaker, eds., *The Roaring Stream: A New Zen Reader*
 Arthur F. Wright, *Buddhism in Chinese History*
 Livia Kohn, *Daoism in Chinese Culture*
 George Crane, *Bones of the Master*

WEEKLY TOPICS, READING AND WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

Jan. 18 Intro to the course; Early Chinese World View

Mote, *Intellectual Foundations of China*, chs. 1-2; David Keightley essay in Ropp, *Heritage of China*, "Early Civilization in China" (Xerox handout); Berthrong, *Transformations of the Confucian Way*, Introduction.

Jan. 22, 25 Confucius and the *Analects*

de Bary & Bloom, *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, chapters 1 and 2; Mote, *Intellectual Foundations*, pp. 26-46; Leys, *The Analects of Confucius*, Foreword, Introduction, and chs. 1-20 (with notes); Berthrong, *Transformations*, pp. 13-22.

Jan. 29, Feb. 1 Mencius

Mote, *Intellectual Foundations*, pp. 46-54; Mencius, Intro. and pp. 1-144; Berthrong, *Transformations*, pp. 23-27.

Feb. 5, 8 Hsun Tzu

Hsun Tzu: Basic Writings, pp. 1-55, 79-111, 139-171; Mote, *Intellectual Foundations*, pp. 54-58; Berthrong, *Transformations*, pp. 27-34.

Feb. 12, 15 Early Daoism: The *Tao Te Ching*

Tao Te Ching, Preface and pp. 1-161; Mote, *Intellectual Foundations*, pp. 59-73; Kohn, *Daoism in Chinese Culture*, ch. 1; de Bary & Bloom, *Sources*, pp. 77-94.

Feb. 19, 22 Early Daoism: *Chuang Tzu*

Mote, *Intellectual Foundations*, pp. 73-76; *Chuang Tzu*, pp. 1-140; Kohn, *Daoism in Chinese Culture*, ch. 2; de Bary & Bloom, *Sources*, pp. 95-111.

Feb. 26 Review for Mid-term Exam

Mar. 1 In-Class Mid-term Examination on Early Chinese Thought

Mar. 5-9 Mid-term Break

Mar. 12, 15 Indian Buddhism and Its Spread to China

Wright, *Buddhism in Chinese History*, chs. 1-5; de Bary & Bloom, *Sources*, chs. 15; Nelson & Shoemaker, *The Roaring Stream*, chs. 1-3, 5, 8.

**Friday March 16: Field Trip to Barre Center for Buddhist Studies, 8:00 AM to 1:00 PM
Introduction to Buddhist Meditation, with MuSoeng (Director of the Barre Center)**

Mar. 19, 22 Major Schools of Chinese Buddhism: Tiantai, Huayan, Pure Land, Chan

Wright, *Buddhism in Chinese History*, ch. 6; de Bary & Bloom, *Sources*, pp.433-38, 440-42 444-50, 481-83, 491-529; Nelson & Shoemaker, *The Roaring Stream*, chs. 13, 14, 16, 17, 21-22, 24, 26-27.

***** Mar. 26 Buddhism Paper Due in Class *****

Mar. 26, 29 Confucian Response to the Buddhist Challenge: Song Neo-Confucianism

Berthrong, *Transformations*, chs. 3 & 4; de Bary & Bloom, *Sources*, pp. 587-95, 667-69, 682-89, 697-724, 731-36.

Apr. 2, 5 Ming and Qing Neo-Confucianism (and Unity of the Three Teachings Movement)

Berthrong, *Transformations*, chs. 5 & 6; de Bary & Bloom, *Sources*, pp. 819-51, 855-74, 923-24.

Friday April 6: 1:30 to 4:30 PM, Dana Commons, 2nd floor, Introduction to Zen Meditation, with Zen Teachers Melissa Blacker and David Rynick

**Saturday April 7: 9:30 AM to 12:30PM, Zen Meditation Retreat
First Unitarian Church, 90 Main Street**

Apr. 9, 12 Later Daoism and Popular Chinese Religion

Kohn, *Daoism in Chinese Culture*, chs. 3-11.

***** Apr. 12 Final Paper Topics Due in Class (paper title with a one-paragraph explanation)**

Apr. 16, 19 Chinese Religious Values Today

Berthrong, *Transformations*, ch. 6; George Crane, *Bones of the Master*, chs.1-13.

Apr. 23, 26 Buddhist-Daoist Values Today

George Crane, *Bones of the Master*, chs. 14-27 and Epilogue.

Apr. 30 Last Day of Class: Review for the Final Examination

*****May 2, Final Paper Due*****

***** May 4, 8:00-10:00 AM, In-Class Final Exam *****