

REL 290B TAOISM

Spring 2012
MWF 12:30-1:30
AH 302

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Office hours: MW 3:00-4:30 and by appointment

Taoism (or Daoism) may be described most succinctly as the indigenous high religion of China. However, emerging from an ancient and ongoing process of assimilation and integration of elements of Chinese culture and history, the parameters and details of Taoism defy an easy definition. This class focuses on the historical development of Taoism from pre-Han concepts and practices, the formation of organized Taoist traditions with the Celestial Masters (*Tianshi* 天師), Upper Clarity (*Shangqing* 上清), and Numinous Treasure (*Lingbao* 靈寶) movements from the Han through the Tang Dynasty, and the emergence of the Complete Perfection (*Quanzhen* 全真) tradition and inner alchemy (*neidan* 內丹) techniques in the Song and Yuan Dynasties. We will conclude with some consideration of Taoism in contemporary Chinese culture.

This course meets the Group 4 distribution requirement.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

EXAMS

Your final grade will be based on four equally weighted exams; each exam is worth 25% of your final course grade. These exams will focus on material from each unit of our course:

- Exam I (Feb 24): foundational elements
- Exam II (March 24): Early Taoist traditions; the Celestial Masters and the Upper Clarity
- Exam III (April 20): Numinous Treasure and Taoism in the Tang and Song Dynasties
- Exam IV (May 17): Modern developments: Complete Perfection, inner alchemy, and Taiji

However, because Taoism is characterized in part by an ongoing integration and recycling of earlier ideas and practices according to socio-historical developments in China, each of these exams will be, in a sense, cumulative. The specific format of these exams and my expectations for them will be announced at least one week in advance.

All students must satisfactorily complete every exam regardless of whether they are taking this course for a letter grade or an a pass/fail basis.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Failure to attend, prepare for, and participate in class will negatively affect your course grade and your experience of our class. However, because students at DePauw are *expected* to attend, prepare for, and participate in class, neither attendance nor in-class participation will directly factor into your final grade. In other words, you will not be directly rewarded for meeting the basic requirements for a student at DePauw. Frequent absence, lack of preparation, and a reluctance to engage the material through thoughtful classroom discussion will significantly impair your ability to adequately consider semester paper topics, to express your views in writing, to perform adequately on exams, and your overall enjoyment of our course. Should you miss a class for any reason it is your responsibility to obtain class notes from a fellow student (not from your instructor).

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Students are expected to uphold the standards for academic honesty established at DePauw. Students should familiarize themselves with the relevant section of the student handbook:

<http://www.depauw.edu/univ/handbooks/dpuhandbooks.asp?ID=521&parentid=518>

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

DePauw University is committed to providing equal access to academic programs and University administered activities and reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities, in compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act and Amendments (ADAAA). Any student who feels she or he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability or learning challenge is strongly encouraged to contact Pamela Roberts, Coordinator of Academic Success and Student Disability Services, for further information on how to receive accommodations and support. Academic Success and Student Disability Services is located in Harrison Hall, 302 A, 765-658-6267.

It is the responsibility of the student to share the letter of accommodation with faculty and staff members within the first two weeks of class or within one week of the letter's receipt. Accommodations will not be implemented until the faculty or staff member has received the official letter. Accommodations are not retroactive. It is the responsibility of the student to discuss implementation of accommodations with each faculty and staff member receiving the letter.

TEXTS:

- Robinet, Isabelle. *Taoism: Growth of a Religion*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997.
- Laozi, Stephen Addiss, and Stanley Lombardo. *Tao Te Ching*. Boston: Shambhala, 2007.
- Bokenkamp, Stephen. *Early Daoist Scriptures*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997.

ADDITIONAL READINGS

Additional required readings, marked with an asterisk (*) in the course schedule below, are available on our Moodle class-site. They are listed below with full bibliographic citation information in the order that they will be read.

COURSE SCHEDULE

I. FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENTS

M – Jan 30: Course introduction

W – Feb 1: “Taoism”

Robinet, pp ix-xvii, 1-6

F – Feb 3: Foundational concepts

Robinet, pp 7-23

M – Feb 6: The Warring States: Laozi

Robinet, pp 25-30

Tao te ching “Introduction” and “Translator’s Preface” pp vii-xx

W – Feb 8: *Laozi*

Tao te ching pp 1 - 81

F – Feb 10: The Warring States: Zhuangzi

Robinet, pp 30-35

* “Introduction” to *Zhuangzi*

M – Feb 13: *Zhuangzi*

* *Zhuangzi* (selections)

W – Feb 15: The Warring States: *Chuci* and *fangshi*

Robinet, pp 35 - 39

* Kroll - “An Early Poem of Mystical Excursion”

F – Feb 17: The Warring States: the *Guanzi*

Robinet, pp 39-41

* Roth - “The Inner Cultivation Tradition of Early Daoism”

M – Feb 20: Elements under the Han

Robinet, pp 42-50

W – Feb 22: Elements under the Han

Robinet, pp 50 - 52

* Kohn - “Laozi: Ancient Philosopher, Master of Immortality and God”

F – Feb 24: **EXAM 1**

II. EARLY TAOIST TRADITIONS

THE CELESTIAL MASTERS (*TIANSHI* 天師); A.K.A. ORTHODOX UNITY (*ZHENYI* 真一)

M – Feb 27: The Celestial Masters

Robinet, pp 53-65 66 - 77

W – March 1: The *Xiang'er Commentary*

Bokenkamp, pp 29-65

F – March 3: The Celestial Masters

Robinet, 66 - 77

M – March 6: *The Commands and Admonitions*
Bokenkamp, pp 149-183

W – March 8: *The Inner Explanations*
Bokenkamp, pp 186-224

THE HIGHEST CLARITY (*SHANGQING* 上清)

F – March 10: Ge Hong and Immortality
Robinet, pp 78 – 91

M – March 13: Immortality techniques
*Campany - “Living off the Books: Fifty Ways to Dodge *Ming*”

W – March 15: Immortality techniques
Robinet pp 91 - 113

F – March 17: Shangqing
Robinet, pp 114- 132
* Bokenkamp. “Declarations of the Perfected”

M – March 20: Practices of the Highest Clarity
Robinet 132 -148

W – March 22: *Purple Texts*
Bokenkamp, 275-302

F – March 24: **Exam II**

M – March 26: *spring recess*

W – March 28: *spring recess*

F – March 30: *spring recess*

III. THE INFLUENCE OF BUDDHISM AND GOVERNMENT

NUMINOUS TREASURE (*LINGBAO* 靈寶)

M – April 2: Buddhism in China
**The Scripture in Forty-two Sections*

W – April 4: Lingbao
Robinet, pp 149 – 165
* Bokenkamp – “Sources of the Ling-pao Scriptures”

F – April 6: Lingbao ritual
Robinet 166 – 177

M – April 9: Limitless Salvation
Bokenkamp, pp 373-394, 405 - 432

W – April 11: The Tang Dynasty
Robinet, pp 189 – 195
* Benn – “Religious Aspects of Hsuan-tsang’s Taoist Ideology”

F – April 13: The Tang Dynasty

Robinet, pp 196 - 211

* Ōfuchi – “The Formation of the Taoist Canon”

M – April 16: Song Dynasty (Divine Empyrean and Heavenly Heart)

Robinet p 177 – 183

* Hymes – “Celestial Heart Daoism”

W – April 18: Thunder Rites

* Reiter – “The Discourse on the Thunders”

F – April 20: **Exam III**

IV. TAOISM IN THE MODERN ERA

COMPLETE PERFECTION (*QUANZHEN* 全真), INNER ALCHEMY (*NEIDAN* 內丹), AND
THE MARTIAL ARTS

M – April 23: Complete Perfection

Robinet, pp 212- 228

W – April 25: the *Scripture of the Yellow Court*

* Kroll – “Body Gods and Inner Vision”

F – April 27: Inner Alchemy Practices

Robinet, pp 228 - 256

M – April 30: Supreme Ultimate Fist (*Taijiquan*)

* Davis and Chen - *Taijiquan Classics* (excerpts)

W – May 2: Physical exercise and the Martial Arts

* Wang and Barrett – “Profile of a *Daoyin* Tradition”

F – May 4: the Wu-tang Clan

* “The Chief Priest of Wudang Mountain”

M – May 7: Daoism in Contemporary Chinese Culture

A Chinese Ghost Story

W – May 9: Daoism in Contemporary Chinese Culture

A Chinese Ghost Story (cont.)

Final Exam: May 17 (Thur.) 8:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Any changes to the above reading schedule or any other element of this course as laid out in this syllabus will be announced no less than one week before such changes go in effect.