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Daoism-Spring 2010

Chinese people have had a Variety of faiths. During the long course of China's feudal society. Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism used to serve as the three mainstays for Chinese culture and civilization and pervasively and persistently dominated the traditional Chinese mind, They permeated not only the ruling circles and political institutions of the upper classes, but also the beliefs and customs of the people from the lower social strata. Hence, without an adequate knowledge of Chinese religions as it were, one can hardly obtain a sound knowledge of Chinese tradition, nor can one very well know about the way of life of the Chinese people and Chinese society.

In the process of its rise to its decline throughout the country's feudal society, religious Daoism established a relationship with China's Confucianism and the heterogeneous religions of mutual repulsion and mutual assimilation, developing toward syncretism. In each stage of its development, religious Daoism was always closely linked with and exerted profound influence upon the politics, economy, culture, art, natural sciences, and social life.

This class is a guide to the spiritual landscape of Daoism. In it the students will encounter events in the history of Daoism, meet the sages who wrote the Daoist texts, be introduced to the various schools of Daoist thinking, and get a feel for what it means to practice Daoism today.

15% to 20% of the class time will be used to have a class discussion on the assigned reading. Several school organized field trips to religious places of worship and Daoist monasteries as a part of the class activities will provide the students with first hand experience of the living Daoist practice.

Readings

Required textbook:

Robinet, Isabelle. 1997. Taoism-Growth of a Religion. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Reserved Readings:

Kohn, Livia. 2003. *Monastic Life in Medieval Daoism*. Honolulu: University of Hawai i Press. Wong, Eva. 2000. *The of Health, Longevity, and Immortality*, Boston: Shambhala Publications.

Wong, Eva. 1997. *Taoism-A complete introduction to the history, philosophy, and practice of an ancient Chinese spiritual tradition*. Boston: Shambhala Publications.

All the above mentioned readings are available in TBC library.

Grades

The term grade consist of class attendance 10%, class involvement 10%, mid-term exam 30% and a term paper 50%. Unexcused absence is not allowed in this class. Late attendance may eventually cause grade deduction. Term paper (10-15 pages) should be submitted no later than the last day of class.

Class Advancement

Week 1 Introduction: Definitions and Controlling Concepts
Taoism-Growth of a Religion P1-25

Week 2 The Warring States Taoism-Growth of a Religion P25-42

Week 3 New Elements under Han Taoism-Growth of a Religion P42-53

Week 4 The Celestial Masters Taoism-Growth of a Religion P53-78

Week 5 Gehong and His Tradition Taoism-Growth of a Religion P78-114

Week 6 The Shangqing and Lingbao School Taoism-Growth of a Religion P114-184

Week 7 The Tang Period Taoism-Growth of a Religion P184-212

Week 8 Under Song and the Yuan: Interior Alchemy Taoism-Growth of a Religion P212-257

Week 9 The Decline of The Taoist Religion and the Rise of Secret Societies during the Period of the Ming and Qing Dynasties Hand outs

Week 10 Seven Taoist Masters

Week 11 Taoist Monastic Life Monastic Life in Medieval Daoism P87-140

Week 12 Systems of Taoism Taoism-A complete introduction P99-195

Week 13 Taoist Practices Taoism-A complete introduction P199-243