

DAOIST TRADITIONS

HIST 2209, ASIAN 2289,
CAPS 2209, RELST 2209
Spring 2017
TuTh 2:55-4:10
Rockefeller Hall B15

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In this course we will examine the modes of philosophical and spiritual inquiry, varieties of spiritual/bodily cultivation and practice, and religious organizations and movements in China that we know as Daoist (or “Taoist”). We will examine the ways in which Daoism was used variously to contest or legitimate imperial political power, and how the procedures and ideologies of the imperial state in turn informed Daoist theory and practice. Throughout, we will examine the ways in which standard modern western dichotomies, such as sacred/secular, spiritual/–physical, and mind/body, break down when we try to apply them to the study of Daoism. Course will focus on the period from the fourth century B.C.E. to the thirteenth century C.E.

Course Goals and Methods: Learn content (outlined above) and skills (analytic acuity, critical interpretation of textual evidence, clear communication) simultaneously through the processes of active reading and listening, articulate oral and written expression, creative brainstorming, and rigorous argument-building. (Consider: What are the differences between the types of learning that occur through reading, classroom discussion, and essay writing?)



Course Readings

All readings outside the assigned textbooks will be available by electronic reserve (**ER**), accessible through Blackboard.

Available at Uris Reserve and at The Cornell Store

- Zhuang Zhou. **Zhuangzi: The Essential Writings with Selections from Traditional Commentaries.** Trans. Brook Ziporyn. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2009.
- *The Daodejing of Laozi.* Trans. Philip J. Ivanhoe. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2002.
- **Early Daoist Scriptures.** Ed., trans., Stephen Bokenkamp, Peter Nickerson. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999. [Also available as eBook.]
- **Religions of China in Practice.** Ed., Donald S. Lopez. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996.
- Rampolla, Mary Lynn. **A Pocket Guide to Writing in History**, 8th Edition. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s Press, 2015.

Requirements

Attendance and Participation 25%

Bring reading notes and the assigned primary source readings, with key passages marked, to class. Let me know if you cannot attend class because of illness or for other pressing reasons, if possible in advance. If you do miss class, get notes.

Response Essays* and Plagiarism Tutorial 25%

Essays: 2 pages, due by 9:00am of the first class of the week (usually Tuesday), Weeks 2-10, with two weeks optional (i.e., write a total of 7 response essays). If inspired, feel free to depart from prompts, but be prepared to discuss the response essay questions in class. Essays should discuss the questions and readings to be discussed in class later in the afternoon of the day they are due, not the readings for the week before.

Short Essay* 15%

4-6 pages. Re-write and expand on a response essay of your choice. Due exactly one week after feedback posted (usually the following Friday or Saturday).

Final Essay Peer Review* 10%

Due Tuesday, May 9, 9am by email attachment to peer partner and to th289@cornell.edu.

Final Essay* 25%

8-10 pages, due date/time TBA (set by registrar). Can be an expansion of an earlier essay. Does not require outside research.



*Basic Essay Guidelines

To sharpen your argument, limit the scope of your essay by focusing on one idea, and at least begin by analyzing only one to two primary source passages.

Submit written assignments by uploading them via Blackboard Turnitin links. Late essays will be penalized 1/3 grade (e.g., A- → B+)/day. Extensions requested by email by the day before the due date (plan ahead!) and proposing a reasonable new due date will be granted, except for the final essay draft, peer feedback, and revised final essay. Do not let response essays or short essays go more than one week.

Essays should follow standard college composition conventions, including double spaced typing, a 12-point serifed font (like Times New Roman, not like **Helvetica**), and proper citations (use footnotes with Chicago-style formatting, as detailed in Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*, rather than in-text parenthetical citations). Essays should have a thesis, build an argument, and substantiate claims with evidence from the readings. If you have questions about any aspect of composition, consult Rampolla's *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*, Knight Writing Center, and me. Take advantage of office hours!

For detailed information on how I evaluate essays and how expect you to give feedback peers' essays, see "Peer Review Guidelines" on Blackboard.

Preparation

Use the response essay questions on the syllabus to guide your reading and note-taking, and generate and take notes on your own questions as well.

For your own reference, maintain a chronology of all of the primary source texts, with notes on authorship and key points of historical context. I like to use tables in Word for this purpose.

As you read, mark useful and interesting passages, and look up words, names, and ideas with which you are unfamiliar. Bring questions to class, but if you have time and interest, you can find more thorough explanations for many ideas, figures, lineages, and movements in the following reference works:

- *The Encyclopedia of Taoism*, Two Volumes. Ed., Pregadio, Fabrizio. London: Routledge, 2008. [Available at Uris Reserve.]
- *Daoism Handbook*, Two Volumes. Ed., Kohn, Livia. Leiden: Brill, 2000. [Available at Kroch Reference.]

Besides keeping physical reference works at hand, you can access electronic dictionaries and encyclopedias through the internet. The *Gale Virtual Reference Library*, which you can find by searching under “Databases” on the Cornell University Library Gateway page (<http://www.library.cornell.edu/>), links a number of good reference works. Be careful of Wikipedia; many articles are based on out-of-date or erroneous scholarship. — When you find disagreements and contradictions between secondary sources, make a note of it and bring it up in class for discussion. The major goals of this course include learning to critically analyze debates in the field, and to find the most reliable scholarship.



Code of Conduct

All classroom behavior should be characterized by civility, attentiveness, and respect toward classmates and instructor. This includes not using electronic devices during class time, even computers for note-taking. If you think you qualify for an exception to the computers rule, see me.

Perform all coursework with integrity. Plagiarism or cheating will result in hearings, a report to the dean’s office, and an F. You are responsible for knowing what plagiarism is and how to avoid it, but we will discuss it in class. If you have any questions, ask me. For more information, see <http://cuinfo.cornell.edu/aic.cfm>.



Communications

Blackboard: I will post important information on Blackboard (<http://blackboard.cornell.edu>). If you are not automatically enrolled in the site through registration, contact me to enroll you.

Email: You will receive course announcements by email through Blackboard and therefore through your Cornell email account. Be sure to check your Cornell email regularly.

Week 1. Introduction: What is “Daoism”?

January 26

→ Take Cornell’s ten-minute plagiarism exercise

<http://plagiarism.arts.cornell.edu/tutorial/index.cfm> and email the results to me. Be sure to carefully review any questions that confuse you. Due January 31, or within one week of adding the course to your schedule.

- *Pocket Guide to Writing in History*, Chapter 6.

**UNIT I. EARLY TEXTS AND PRACTICES**

Scholars differ as to whether the early texts and practices that we will examine in Unit I should be properly categorized as “Daoist.” As we explore these texts, we will consider what the English-language category “Daoist” might illuminate or obscure in the early period, and the ways in which contemporary Warring States and Han era actors demarcated their own ideas and practices from others’.

Regarding key terms: In the coming weeks, note how translators’ English-language renderings of key concepts differ. Come to class ready to discuss how early texts used key terms, and the ways in which they disagreed with each other. Keep in mind that the original writers of these texts were often arguing with each other, for example about the true nature of *dao* or of *de*.

Week 2. Destabilization of Convention

Jan 31, Febr 2

Key Terms: *dao* (Tao, Way), *de* (Virtuosity, Virtue), *ziran*, *wuwei*

→ Response Essay:

- 1) What conventional modes of knowing, speaking, being, or acting do the *Zhuangzi* and the *Daodejing* refute? Do they disagree about what is objectionable in convention?
- 2) In what ways are the styles of writing of the *Zhuangzi* and the *Daodejing* suited to the messages they are conveying?

Note: If interested, see Blackboard for lists of other scholarly translations of *Zhuangzi* and *Daodejing*.

- **ER [Electronic Reserve]:** Daniel Overmyer and Joseph Adler, “Chinese Religion: An Overview,” *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Lindsay Jones, vol. 3, 2nd ed., (Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005), 1580-1589.
[Overview of Chinese religion and its early history, background for Weeks 2-4 (read through the end of “Early Historical Period”).]
- *Zhuangzi*: “Introduction,” Inner Chapters 1-2, pp. vii-xviii, 3-21.
- *Daodejing*: “Introduction,” Book One, pp. xv-xxxii, 1-37.
Note: As you read, mark any passages to do with the ideal person, the ideal ruler, or the ideal state, for returning to in Weeks 3-4.

Week 3. One “Culminate” Life

Febr 7, 9

Key Terms: *qi*, *jing*, *de* (inner power, virtue, virtuosity)

→ Response Essay: 1) What sort of person is the author advocating as an ideal? In what ways does this ideal appear to diverge from mainstream views of the time? 2) How are the methods of self-cultivation related to the goals? 3) What are the points of disagreement between sources on goals and methods of cultivation?

- **Religions of China in Practice:** Harold Roth, “The Inner Cultivation Tradition in Early Daoism,” 123-138.
[We will come back to the *Huainanzi* selections in a later week.]
- **Zhuangzi:** Inner Chapters 3-7, pp. 21-54.

Week 4. Daodejing’s Ideal Person, Society, and Ruler

Febr 14, 16

→ Response Essay: 1) What is the ideal person, society, or ruler in the *Daodejing*? 2) In what ways did Han Feizi (=Han Fei Tzu) draw on the *Daodejing* (see Commentary) to inform or buttress his approach to rulership (as outlined in “The Tao of the Sovereign”)?

- **Daodejing:** Book Two, pp. 41-84, and any passages relevant to self-cultivation that you marked in Book One. Continue to mark passages related to ideal rulers and states.
- **ER:** Han Feizi, “The Tao of the Sovereign,” “Commentaries on Lao Tzū’s Teachings,” *The Complete Works of Han Fei Tzū: A Classic of Chinese Legalism*, W.K. Liao, trans., (London: Arthur Probsthain, 1939), 30-35, 169-206.
 - Han Feizi was a prince of the state of Han, who advised the King of Qin during the course of his conquest of the “Central States.”
 - Note that Liao uses the Wade Giles Romanization system. See “Guide to East Asian Languages” on Blackboard for comparisons to pinyin.
 - Han Feizi’s “two handles” of rulership are reward and punishment.

Week 5. Huang-Lao and Empire

Febr 23

→ Response Essay: Based on primary source passages, discuss one idea of bureaucratic empire incorporated into Han visions of the person and of self-cultivation. What is bureaucratic and/or imperial about it? What are the implications of this idea for self-cultivation?

- **ER:** “The Beginnings of Empire”: Overmyer and Adler, “Chinese Religion: An Overview,” *Encyclopedia of Religion*, 1589-1594. **ER**
- **ER:** “Syncretic Visions of State, Society, and Cosmos,” *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, Vol. 1: *From Earliest Times to 1600*, eds. William Theodore de Bary and Irene Bloom, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 235-282.
- **Religions of China in Practice:** Roth, “The Inner Cultivation Tradition in Early Daoism,” 138-148.

Week 6. Occultists, Adepts, and Transcendence

Febr 28, March 2

This week we examine sources from across several centuries, beginning with Company's analysis of writings on adepts from *Zhuangzi* to Ge Hong (283-343 C.E.). We will explore Ge Hong in greater depth in Week 10.

→Response Essay: Discuss the ways in which one or two of the figures or practices portrayed in the primary sources is both socially marginal and socially integral. Try to discuss phenomena not already covered in the Company reading.

- **ER and eBook:** Robert Ford Company, "Adepts and Society," *To Live as Long as Heaven and Earth: A Translation and Study of Ge Hong's Traditions of Divine Transcendents*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 85-97.
<http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=223922>
- **ER:** TJ Hinrichs, "A Late Han Adept," *Chinese Medicine and Healing: An Illustrated History*, TJ Hinrichs and Linda L. Barnes, eds., (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2013), 53-55.
- **Religions of China in Practice**, pp. 149-165, 446-470:
 - Paul W. Kroll, "Body Gods and Inner Vision: The Scripture of the Yellow Court";
 - Alan J. Berkowitz, "Record of Occultists"; and
 - Paul W. Kroll, "An Early Poem of Mystical Excursion,".



UNIT II. TIANSHIDAO (CELESTIAL MASTERS)

The Celestial Masters, along with Quanzhen ("Complete Perfection," see under Week 14), is one of two major institutional divisions of Daoism today. In the early centuries of their emergence and development, how did Celestial Masters leaders distinguish their own ideas and practices from others? What in received traditions inspired them, and over time in what ways did they modify and adapt other traditions?

Week 7. Celestial Masters in Historical Context

March 7, 9

→Response Essay: What positions do Kleeman's primary source texts take in relation to the Celestial Masters? Are they sympathetic, and if so how so? Are they hostile, and if so toward what? In what ways do those positions affect the ways in which Kleeman reads the texts?

Bonus: Are there issues of text position that Kleeman ignores, and if so what are they? Would you read any of these passages differently?

- **ER:** Terry F. Kleeman, "The Founding of the Celestial Master Church: External Evidence," *Celestial Masters: History and Ritual in Early Daoist Communities*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016), 21-62.

What types of evidence does Kleeman examine in this chapter, and what makes it "external"?

cont.

- **Early Daoist Scriptures:**
“General Introduction,” “The *Xiang'er* Commentary to the *Laozi*,” 1-6, 29-77.

Special Event: March 9: Class visit by Master Zhang Yuanming

- Read about Master Zhang at <http://qigongmaster.com/master-zhang/>

Week 8. Celestial Masters in Practice

March 14, 16

→ Response Essay: 1) Compare 1-3 passages from the *Xiang'er* Commentary to corresponding passages in Ivanhoe’s translation of the *Daodejing*. In what ways did the *Xiang'er* adapt the *Daodejing* to the circumstances and goals of the Celestial Master’s movement? 2) Does the *Xiang'er* Commentary support the practices described in “The Great Petition”? If so, how so?

- **Early Daoist Scriptures:**
 - “The *Xiang'er* Commentary to the *Laozi*,” 78-148.
Skim and then read translation selectively to answer response essay question.
 - Peter Nickerson, “The Great Petition for Sepulchral Plaints,” 230-274.

Week 9. Celestial Masters Regroup

March 21, 23

→ Response Essay: In what ways does “Commands and Admonitions” distinguish “Families of the Great Dao” from other groups?

- **ER:** “The Period of Disunion”: Overmyer and Adler, “Chinese Religion: An Overview,” *Encyclopedia of Religion*, 1594-1598.
- **Early Daoist Scriptures:** “Commands and Admonitions for Families of the Great Dao,” 149-185.



UNIT III. LATER MOVEMENTS AND LINEAGES

Week 10: External Alchemy: Ge Hong and Taiqing (Great Clarity)

March 28, 30

→ Response Essay: What did Ge Hong consider to be the epitome of practice? (Besides praise and denigration, what were Ge Hong’s strategies for distinguishing good from bad practices?)

- **ER:** “Ge Hong’s Autobiography,” in *Chinese Civilization: A Sourcebook*, 2nd. edition., ed., Patricia Ebrey, (New York: The Free Press, 1993), 91-96.

Note: On page 95, upper right, “Daoist school” translates *daojia*; “Confucian school” translates *rujia*, the same terms employed by Sima Tan in his essay on the “Six Schools.”

- **Religions of China in Practice:** Livia Kohn, “Laozi: Ancient Philosopher, Master of Immortality, and God,” 52-63.

cont.

- **ER:** Robert Ford Campany, “Alchemy and the Scriptures of Grand Purity,” *To Live as Long as Heaven and Earth*, **31-47**.
- **ER and eBook:** Fabrizio Pregadio, “Scripture of the Nine Elixirs,” *Great Clarity: Daoism and Alchemy in Early Medieval China*, (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2006), 159-187.
<http://site.ebrary.com/id/10130874>

☰ SPRING BREAK ☷

Week 11. Interiorization: Shangqing (Supreme Clarity)

April 11, 13

What was new in Shangqing production of literature and images? What roles did visualization play in Shangqing practice?

→ Final Essays: Topics due Tuesday, April 11, 9am.

- **Early Daoist Scriptures:** “The Upper Scripture of Purple Texts Inscribed by the Spirits,” 275-306, [307-366].
- **Religions of China in Practice:**
Stephen Bokenkamp, “Declarations of the Perfected”;
Paul W. Kroll, “Seduction Songs of One of the Perfected”;
Stephen Bokenkamp, “Answering a Summons,” 166-202.
- **ER:** Shih-shan Susan Huang, “Daoist Imagery of Body and Cosmos,” *Journal of Daoist Studies* 3 (2010):57-90.

Week 12. Communitarian Syntheses: Lingbao (Numinous Treasure)

April 18, 20

What were Lingbao writers’ visions of community, and approaches to communal salvation?

→ Final Essays: Annotated bibliography due Tuesday, April 18, 9am.

- **Early Daoist Scriptures:** “The Wondrous Scripture of the Upper Chapters on Limitless Salvation,” 373-438.
- **Religions of China in Practice**, 268-277, 347-359:
 - Stephen Bokenkamp, “The Purification Ritual of the Luminous Perfected”; and
 - Peter Nickerson, “Abridged Codes of Master Lu for the Daoist Community.”

Week 13: Imperial Patronage: Huizong and the Divine Empyrean

April 25, 27

Huizong (1082-1135, r. 1101-1125), is one of many emperors through imperial history who gave patronage to Daoists. Huizong brought the Northern Song dynasty's (960-1126) famously state-centralizing and institution-building policies to a peak in many arenas, including in his approach to establishing a Daoist movement as orthodox. What was Huizong's approach to seeking out, defining, and institutionalizing the Divine Empyrean?

→ Final Essays: Thesis and argument outline due Tuesday, April 25, 9am.

- **ER:** "The Consolidation of Empire: Seventh to Fourteenth Centuries": Overmyer and Adler, "Chinese Religion: An Overview," *Encyclopedia of Religion*, **1598-1607**.
- **ER:** Patricia Buckley Ebrey, "Accepting Divine Revelations, 1110-1119," *Emperor Huizong*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014), 343-371.
- **ER:** Chao Shin-yi, "Huizong and the Divine Empyrean Palace Temple Network," *Emperor Huizong and Late Northern Song China: The Politics of Culture and the Culture of Politics*, Patricia B. Ebrey and Maggie Bickford, eds., Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 324-360.

Week 14. Internal Alchemy: Quanzhen (Complete Perfection)

May 2, 4

As noted above, the Celestial Masters and Quanzhen are the two major divisions of Daoism today. Of all the Daoist movements we have studied this semester, why might Quanzhen be especially appealing to modern Americans?

→ Final Essays: Drafts due Tuesday, May 2, 9am, to both your peer partner and to th289@cornell.edu.

- **ER and eBook:** Louis Komjathy, "Orientations," "Daily Practice," "Alchemical Transformation," *The Way of Complete Perfection: A Quanzhen Daoist Anthology*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2013), 1-27, 99-167.
<http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=3408744>
- **Internet:** Explore the web site of The Daoist Foundation, co-founded by Louis Komjathy: <http://daoistfoundation.org>.

Week 15. Final Essay Workshopping

May 9

→ Final Essays: Feedback due Tuesday, May 9, 9am, to both your peer partner and to th289@cornell.edu.