Religious Studies 471
Confucian Thought and Practice

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Spring 2014
Tues. 7-10 p.m.
Treleaven 101
Office hours: MWF 3:10-4, T 2-4
and by appointment

This seminar will explore the philosophical and cultural history of the Confucian tradition in China, from its inception to the present day. Readings will include both primary texts and secondary studies, covering the Five Classics and the sayings of Confucius and Mencius, the Neo-Confucians of the Sung and Ming dynasties, and the "New Confucians" of the twentieth century. Among the general questions to be considered are: In what senses can Confucianism be considered a religious tradition? How is Confucianism in China related to the tension between tradition and modernity? Which aspects of the tradition are culture-bound and which are universally applicable? The last few weeks will focus on the question of position of women in Confucianism, both in theory and in practice.

READING

- Raymond Dawson, trans., The Analects
- Irene Bloom, trans., Mencius
- Wm. Theodore de Bary and Irene Bloom, eds., Sources of Chinese Tradition, 2nd ed., vol. 1
- Robin R. Wang, Images of Women in Chinese Thought and Culture
- Barry C. Keenan, Neo-Confucian Self-Cultivation
- Moodle readings

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

1. Participation (25% of grade). The seminar format requires regular attendance, completion of reading assignments, and active participation in discussion by all members, every week. Necessary absences must be cleared in advance with the instructor; unexcused absences will result in a grade penalty.

2. Three shorter papers (15% each), 4-6 pages each. For the first one (on one of the Five Classics) you will also give an oral presentation. You must follow the Paper format guide, and should also refer to the Paper criteria.

3. Research paper (30%), 10-12 pages plus bibliography, using at least three sources outside of assigned readings and following the Paper format guide and Paper criteria. Due Monday, May 5.
SEMINAR SCHEDULE

1 Jan 14  Introduction, overview

  Film: "A Confucian Life in America" (Tu Wei-ming)

2 Jan 21  The Five Scriptures (Wujing 五經)

  Reading
  - Yao, An Introduction to Confucianism: ch. 1 (Moodle)
  - Wang, Images of Women in Chinese Thought and Culture: chs. 2-5, 8
  
  Course Reserve:
  - Michael Nylan, The Five "Confucian" Classics: chs. 2-6 (read the chapter on the Classic you are assigned)
  - Read the one you are assigned and skim the rest:
    1. Richard Wilhelm, I Ching [Yijing]: 3-15 (first two hexagrams), 262-272 (Discussion of Trigrams), 280-355 (Great Treatise)
    5. James Legge, Ch’un ts’ew [Chunqiu]: skim

Friday, Jan. 24: Paper 1 due

3 Jan 28  Confucius (Kongzi 孔子) and the Analects
          (Lunyu 論語)

  Learning the cultural tradition (wen 文) and reviving the Way (dao) of the Sages;
  Being humane (ren 仁), ritually proper (li 礼), and appropriate (yi 義)

  Reading:
  - Dawson, The Analects (complete)
4 Feb 4  **Mencius (Mengzi 孟子)**  
Heaven and human nature (**renxing** 人性)

Reading:
- Bloom, *Mencius*: Introduction; sections 1A; 1B; 2A; 3A3-4; 4A; 4B12-14, 28, 32; 5A5-6; 5B:9; 6A; 6B:2; 7A; 7B
- Wang, *Images*: ch. 13

5 Feb 11  **Xunzi 荀子**  
*The Daxue* 大學 (*Great Learning*)  
*The Zhongyong* 中庸 (*"The Mean")

Reading:
- de Bary and Bloom, *Sources*: 159-183, 329-339  
- Xunzi: additional excerpts from ch. 23 ([Moodle](#))  
- Wang, *Images*: ch. 15

6 Feb 18  **Reflections on the Classical tradition**

Reading ([Moodle](#)):
- Thomas Berry, "Individualism and Holism in Chinese Tradition: The Religious Cultural Context"
- Tu Wei-ming, "The Creative Tension Between *Jen* [Ren] and *Li*"
- Philip J. Ivanhoe, "The 'Golden Rule' in the *Analects*"
- Yong Huang, "Filial Piety: Why an Upright Son Does Not Disclose His Father Stealing a Sheep"
- David Hall and Roger Ames, *Thinking Through Confucius*: 11-25, 131-138

**Friday, Feb. 21: Paper 2 due**

7 Feb 25  **Han 漢 through Tang 唐 dynasties**  
Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒  
*The Yijing* 易經 (*Scripture of Change*)  
*The Xiaojing* 孝經 (*Scripture of Filiality*)  
Confucian texts by or about women  
Han Yü 韓愈

Reading:

<< Spring Break >>
8 Mar 18

**Neo-Confucianism: Northern Song 宋**

Zhou Dunyi 周敦頤: Daoism and the Yijing

Shao Yong 邵雍: numerology and the Sage

Zhang Zai 張載: ethics based on qi 氣

Cheng Hao 程顥 and Cheng Yi 程頤: metaphysics of li 理 and qi 氣

Reading:
- Keenan, *Neo-Confucian Self-Cultivation*: xxi-72
- *Sources*: 587-590, 596-604, 609-612, 625-629, 641-643, 667-697
- Wang, *Images*: 316-320, chs. 49, 52

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9 Mar 25

**Neo-Confucianism: Southern Song 宋**

Zhu Xi 朱熹: architect of the Daoxue 道學 synthesis

Lu Jiuyuan 陸九淵

Reading:
- Joseph A. Adler, *Reconstructing the Confucian Dao*: Intro, ch. 1 (Moodle)
- de Bary and Bloom, *Sources*: 697-725, 729-734, 742-748, 837-840
- Zhu Xi, "Discussion of Humanity" and "First Letter to the Gentlemen of Hunan on Equilibrium and Harmony" (Moodle)

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Friday, March 28: Paper 3 due

10 Apr 1

**Ming 明, Qing 清, and 20th century**

Wang Yang-ming 王陽明

Kang Youwei 康有為

"New Confucians"

Early 20th-century critiques

Reading:
- Tu Weiming, Later history of Confucianism (Moodle)
- Keenan, *Neo-Confucian Self-Cultivation*, 75-112
- *Sources*, vol. 1: 841-851
- de Bary and Lufrano, *Sources*, vol. 2 (Moodle):
  41-46, 260-273, 351-356, 545-564, 574-583
11 Apr 8  Women in/and Confucianism (1)

Reading (Moodle):
- Chan Sin Yee, "The Confucian Conception of Gender in the Twenty-First Century"
- Robin Wang, "Dong Zhongshu's Transformation of Yin-Yang Theory and Contesting of Gender Identity"
- Bettine Birge, "Chu Hsi [Zhu Xi] and Women's Education"
- Jian Zang, "Women and the Transmission of Confucian Culture in Song China"

12 Apr 15  Women in/and Confucianism (2)

Reading (Moodle):
- Henry Rosemont, Jr., "Classical Confucian and Contemporary Feminist Perspectives on the Self: Some Parallels, and Their Implications"
- Vivian-Lee Nyitray, "The Real Trouble with Confucianism"
- Chenyang Li, "Can Confucianism Come to Terms with Feminism?"
- Chenyang Li, "The Confucian Concept of Jen [Ren] and the Feminist Ethics of Care"

13 Apr 22  Concluding perspectives

Reading (Moodle):
- Tu, "The Ecological Turn in New Confucian Humanism"
- Adler, "Confucianism as Religion / Religious Tradition / Neither: Still Hazy After All These Years"
- Yao, *An Introduction to Confucianism*: 38-47 (A religious tradition?), 273-286 (Confucianism and its modern relevance)
- Daniel A. Bell, *China's New Confucianism*: Intro, ch. 1
- Magda Hornemann and Hans Petersen, "CHINA: Will fashion for Confucius retard religious freedom?" (Forum 18, 6/21/07)

14 Apr 29  Film: Kongzi / Confucius (2010, starring Chow Yun Fat)
At my house

Final papers due: Monday, May 5, 4:30 p.m., in my office