

Course name: Traditional Culture and Ecology
Language of instruction: English
Contact hours: 12 hours
Course meeting times:
Course meeting place:
Professors: Dr. XIA CHEN
Contact Information: 13552224458; chenxia-zxs@cass.org.cn

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The question that faces China and other parts of the world today is not only how to develop environmental science, policies, laws, economics, and technologies, but also how to foster a broad-based ecological spirit and culture among people. This course surveys how different religious beliefs, philosophical understandings and ritual practices are inherently connected with ecological practices in China. It offers textual interpretations of this connection. Course materials are drawn from contemporary scholarly studies of religion and ecology with an emphasis on religions and folk belief systems in China. Students are expected to explore ways and means to include relevant native ecological practices and worldviews in the ongoing global public discourse concerning environmental ethics and the sustainability of nature, culture, and biodiversity. Throughout the semester the class examines both conceptual and material realities of tradition and modernity in relation to religious beliefs and ecological practices.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Understand the interrelationships between traditional Chinese culture and ecology as well as develop the ability to analyze how Chinese culture approach human-earth relations.
2. Explore the implications of religious sites and ethnic groups' territories in contemporary China in their dealing with environmental challenge.
3. Engage China's religious, cultural and ethical imagination to help foster a broad-based ecological spirit.

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

This course will combine lectures, discussions.

ASSESSMENT

An essay ("paper") of a maximum of 4 pages (15000 characters). to analyze how one Chinese tradition is related to ecology. Students can choose one tradition we learned during this term and explore its ecological relevance, or choose two or three Chinese cultures to compare with a Western tradition they are familiar with.

The student will be required to hand this assignment in on the teacher's digital work environment on the Moodle website three weeks after the end of the course.

COURSE INSTRUCTOR

Dr. Xia Chen is a research fellow at the Institute of Philosophy, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), Beijing, China. a member of the national committee of CPPCC (National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference). She received her PhD in Religious Studies from Sichuan University. After graduation, she taught at Sichuan University for 10 years. Then she conducted a post-doctoral research in Chinese philosophy at CASS and moved to this research academy in 2003. During these years, she has been a visiting scholar at Harvard-Yenching Institute, and SOAS of the University of London, Fulbright Visiting Scholar at Brown University. Her specialty is Chinese Philosophy, Religions in China, concentrating on Daoism. She is the co-chief editor of *Principles in the Study of Religions*. This book is used widely as a text book for students in their studies of theories and methods in the Study of Religions. Her book *Studies of Daoist Moral Tracts* is a book focusing on Daoist ethics and moralities from Song dynasty (960-1279) till Qing (1636-1911). Her new book *Introduction to Daoist Philosophy* approaches Daoist thoughts through metaphysics, political philosophy, moral philosophy, epistemology, religious philosophy. She has contributed one hundred academic papers to many journals. In recent years, she pays attention to ecology, and is the chief editor and contributor of *Studies of Daoist Ecological Thoughts*. Besides doing research, she also spends some translating books from Chinese to English and from English to Chinese. She is one of the translators for books like *Daoism and Traditional Chinese Culture* (Chinese to English). From English to Chinese, she helped in *translating Martin Luther's Theological Thoughts, Man's Religions* and *Daoism and Ecology*.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Week 1 Orientation Week

T Introduction to class

Week 2 Approaching Religion and Ecology in China

Introduction to solutions for the ecological crisis facing the human community and the planet itself.

Required Readings:

White, Lynn. 1967. "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis",
Science Vole. 155, No. 3767 (March 1967), pp. 1203-1207.

Series Forward for Religions of the World and Ecology by Mary Evelyn
Tucker and John Grim, 2001, xiii-xxx1

Documentary: *Journey of the Universe: the Epic Story of Cosmic, Earth,
and Human Transformation*. 2011

Week 3 The Early Chinese Worldview, Fengshui and Ecology

How can *fengshui* help people to build an environmental friendly
architecture?

Required Readings:

Thompson, Laurence, 1996, Chinese Religion: An Introduction 4th edition,
Pp.1-35, Dickenson Publishing Company, Belmont, California.

Stephan D.R. Feuchtwang, 2003, Anthropological Analysis of Chinese Geomancy, pp.1-14, 96-111,172-199, Vithagna, Vientiane, Laos.

Week 4 Confucianism and Ecology

Early Confucianism and the world seen as a part of a changing, dynamic, and unfolding universe.

Required readings:

Wm. Theodore De Bary and Irene Bloom, 1999, *Sources of Chinese Tradition* (from Earliest Times to 1600, p.41-63, p.683-684, p.844-847, 330-339, New York: Columbia University Press.

Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Berthrong, (Eds), 1998, *Confucianism and Ecology: The Interrelation of Heaven, Earth, and Humans*, pp.xxxv-xlv, Pp.3-21, pp.23-34, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Du Weiming, 1996, *Beyond the Enlightenment Mentality: A Confucian Perspective on Ethics, Migration, and Global Stewardship*, pp. 58-75, *International Migration Review*, Vol. 30, No. 1, Special Issue: Ethics, Migration, and Global Stewardship (spring).

Audio Documentary: Sinologists' talking about Confucianism.

Week 5 Buddhism and Ecology

Buddhism and traditional Chinese culture. Buddhism's teaching of the interrelatedness of all life-forms is critical to the recovery of human reciprocity with nature.

Required Readings:

Ch'en, Kenneth K. S., 1968, *Buddhism-the Light of Asia*, pp.134-170, New York: Barron's Educational Series, INC.

Evelyn Tucker and Duncan Ryuken Williams, (Eds), 1997, *Buddhism and Ecology: The Interconnection of Dharma and Deeds*, pp.xxxv-xlii, pp.3-18, Pp.71-85, pp.291-311, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Week 6

Tuesday 4/1

Traditional Chinese medicine and Ecology

History of traditional Chinese medicine and a taste of *qigong* practice

Required readings:

Leon Hammer: Summer 2010, *Ecology in Chinese Medicine*. *Chinese Medicine Times* (5)2, pp.1-7, pp.1-7.

John A. Grim, 2001, *Indigenous Traditions and Ecology: the Interbeing of Cosmology and Community*, pp.xxxiii-lvii, pp.3-23, Cambridge, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Week 7

Daoism and Ecology

Daoist Philosophy and its connection to ecology.

Required readings:

D. C. Lau tr., 1982, *Tao Te Ching*, pp.57-143, Hong Kong: Chinese University Press

Franciscus Verellen, Taoism, *the Journal of Asian Studies*, (54)2, Pp.322-346.

Chen Xia, Martin Schönfeld, A Daoist Response to Climate Change, *Journal of Global Ethics* (7) , 2011, pp.195-203.

N.J. Girardot, James Miller, Liu Xiaogan, 2001, *Daoism and Ecology: Ways within a Cosmic Landscape*, pp.xxxvii-lxiv, 3-21, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Audio Documentary: Sinologists' talking about Daoism.

Week 8

Religion and Ecology in China's Past and the Contemporary Era

Summary of the 4,000-year-long collision of humans and nature till the industrial revolution in China in the 1950s. In 1980s new opportunities for re-generation and innovation of religion in China

Required readings:

Mark Elvin, 2004, *the Retreat of the Elephants: An Environmental History Of China*, pp.321-368. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Judith Shapiro, 2001, *Mao's War Against Nature: Politics and the Environment in Revolutionary China*, pp 67-94. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Yoshiko Ashiwa and David L. Wank, 2009, *Making Religion, Making the State the Politics of Religion in Modern China*, p.1-21,211-240. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

READINGS

Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Berthrong, (Eds), *Confucianism and Ecology: The Interrelation of Heaven, Earth, and Humans* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1998),

Evelyn Tucker and Duncan Ryuken Williams, (Eds), *Buddhism and ecology: The Interconnection of Dharma and Deeds*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1997),

N.J. Girardot, James Miller, Liu Xiaogan, *Daoism and Ecology: Ways within a Cosmic Landscape* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001).

John A. Grim, *Indigenous Traditions and Ecology: The Interbeing of Cosmology and Community.* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001)

Dieter T. Hessel, Rosemary Radford Ruether, (Eds), *Christianity and Ecology: Seeking the Well-Being of Earth and Humans*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000)

Richard C. Foltz, Frederick M. Denny and Azizan Baharuddin, (Eds). *Islam and Ecology: A Bestowed Trust.* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003)

Thompson, Laurence, *Chinese Religion: An Introduction 4th edition.* Thompson Wadsworth, 1996.

Paper, Jordan and Laurence Thompson, *the Chinese Way in Religion 2nd edition*, (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth 1998)

Benjamin Schwartz, *the World of Thought in Ancient China*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985)

Xiao Xiaoming, *China's Ethnic Minorities*, (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 2003)

Thomas S. Mullaney, *Coming to Terms with the Nation_Ethnic Classification in Modern China*, (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California press, 2011)

Mark Elvin, *The Retreat of the Elephants: An Environmental History of China*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004)

Judith Shapiro, *Mao's War against Nature: Politics and the Environment in Revolutionary China*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001)

Wm. Theodore De Bary and Irene Bloom, *Sources of Chinese Tradition (from Earliest Times to 1600)*, (Columbia University Press, New York: 1999)

Yuet Chau Adam, Adam Yuet Chau, *Religion in Contemporary China- Revitalization and Innovation_* Routledge, 2008.

Economy, Elizabeth C. *The River Runs Black: The Environmental Challenge to China's Future.* New York: Cornell University Press, 2004.