EASTERN PHILOSOPHY -- HOMEWORK QUESTIONS: FIRST SERIES -- Fall 2005

Doing homework faithfully is meant to be a discipline. Homework questions are also the basis for discussion in the following class.

(1) Homework answers should be brief essays -- no less than 1/2 page; no more than one page. Each homework assignment asks you to answer three essay questions. The first essay question will be from the Tao Te Ching or the I Ching. The second and the third essay questions will be, at the start, from To Come to Life More Fully. Later the 2nd and 3rd questions will be from The World of Zen. Still later, the 2nd and 3rd essay questions will be from Zen Therapy.

(2) For essays on the Tao Te Ching, choose one of the chapters (poems) and read it in a meditative fashion. Then write a brief essay in response to the chapter. For essays on the I Ching, record the wisdom (or WURT) question you asked. Record the hexagram or hexagrams you received as a result of throwing the coins. Write a brief essay on what you made of the answer that the I Ching provided to your question.

(3) Suppose a real life situation arises for you -- one relevant to your study of this material. You may write about this as a “Wild Card” entry in place of one of the questions asked. Label as such and show how you are using eastern philosophy in relation to the situation. (You still must answer 2 of the 3 assigned questions.)

(4) The homework answers will be collected at the end of each class. Each day’s homework is worth 3/4 of a point. Over the semester, you can earn 15 points -- one and a half letter grades! -- just by faithfully doing your daily work. ASSIGNMENTS HANDED IN LATE WILL GAIN NO CREDIT; the only exception is when you were not in class because of an excused absence.

(5) Please Title each set of homework questions as below: e.g. Assignment A (for Wed. Feb. 6th). Please TYPE, PROOFREAD AND STAPLE pages of your homework together!

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Assignment 1: Given Tues. August 30th for Thurs. Sept. 1st:
Read one chapter from the Tao Te Ching (TTC) and read pages 1-46 of To Come to Life More Fully (CTL) and answer the three questions below:

1. Read one chapter of the Tao Te Ching as a poem. Write a brief essay on what this reading means to you. Read the chapter in a symbolic fashion, remembering that the TTC often uses paradox in its teaching.

On To Come to Life More Fully:

2. How are East and Wet contrasted through an analysis of Ideal-Defect-Remedy? How can East and West be seen as a yin and yang (see pp. 35-36 and 51 on yin and yang)? What does this have to tell you of our own “taken-for-granted”? 3. Compare and contrast Lao Tzu and K’ung Tzu (Confucius). How can Lao Tzu and K’ung Tzu be seen as a yin and yang? Explain why we need the teaching of simplification (Lao Tzu) and the teaching of reanimating the social structures (K’ung Tzu).

Assignment 2: Given Thurs. Sept. 1st for Tues. Sept. 6th:
Read one chapter from the Tao Te Ching (TTC) and read pages 47-90 of To Come to Life More Fully (CTL) and answer the three questions below:

1. Read one chapter of the Tao Te Ching as a poem. Write a brief essay on what this reading means to you. Read the chapter in a symbolic fashion, remembering that the TTC often uses paradox in its teaching.

On To Come to Life More Fully:

2. Write an essay explaining how complementary two (true yin and yang) can be distorted and show up as separate and stuck. Show how to reverse this. Use an example of a relationship in your own life to illustrate this.

3. Write an essay on how yin and yang can be expanded into the 5 phases. Then show how the 12 officials give even more texture to the five phases.

Assignment 3: Given Tues. Sept. 6th for Thurs. Sept. 8th:
Read one chapter from the Tao Te Ching (TTC) and read pages 91-121 of To Come to Life More Fully (CTL) and answer the three questions below:

1. Read one chapter of the Tao Te Ching as a poem. Write a brief essay on what this reading means to you. Read the chapter in a symbolic fashion, remembering that the TTC often uses paradox in its teaching.

On To Come to Life More Fully:

2. The Tao (the WAY) refers to the Great Mystery. Explain this notion to a group of high school seniors in an honors program. From the description you have read in CTL and from the reading you are doing in TTC, how is the notion of Tao like and how unlike the Western notion of God?
3. Suppose we shift from anthropocentrism to ecocentrism, taking the Earth as our teacher in all the domains. How will this change completely the way we look at education and business? Be specific and remember how all enterprises will be looking to the Earth as teacher. (Go beyond your initial thoughts here.)

Assignment 4: Given Thurs. Sept. 8th for Tues. Sept. 13th:

Use the I Ching and read pages 123-152 of To Come to Life More Fully (CTL) and answer the three questions below:

1. From the I Ching, ask and record the wisdom (or WURT) question you asked. Record the hexagram or hexagrams you received as a result of throwing the coins. [The number(s) are sufficient.] Write a brief essay on what you made of the answer that the I Ching provided to your question. Think symbolically and not just literally.

On To Come to Life More Fully:

2. Compare and contrast the classical epoch, the modern epoch and the emerging ecological epoch. Are there any values to be carried over from the classical epoch and the modern epoch? What pluses need to be carried forward and what limitations need to be left behind? Discuss.
3. Explain the nature of institutions and show how institutions might be revitalized through a different sense of order, a different sense of power and a different sense of task.


Read one chapter from the Tao Te Ching (TTC) and read pages 155-191 of To Come to Life More Fully (CTL) and answer the three questions below:

1. Read one chapter of the Tao Te Ching as a poem. Write a brief essay on what this reading means to you. Read the chapter in a symbolic fashion, remembering that the TTC often uses paradox in its teaching.

On To Come to Life More Fully:

2. Explain the Confucian intergenerational notion of family. How does this relate to education in virtue? What would shift for you if you began to think of yourself in the midst of generations?
3. Write an essay on the shortest of the Chinese classics, The Great Learning (see pp. 186-109). In what way do we see here how the smallest (personal) domain mirrors the largest domain (the realm of mystery)?


Use the I Ching and read pages 197-230 of To Come to Life More Fully (CTL) and answer the three questions below:

1. From the I Ching, ask and record the wisdom (or WURT) question you asked. Record the hexagram or hexagrams you received as a result of throwing the coins. [The number(s) are sufficient.] Write a
brief essay on what you made of the answer that the I Ching provided to your question. Think symbolically and not just literally.

On To Come to Life More Fully:

2. After reading pp. 197-213, write an essay on the Lake analogy. Also show how becoming a healing presence has both Taoist and Confucian elements.
3. Write an essay on the Oxherding Pictures. Show how this can be a way of deepening for all of us.

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For continuation of the homework questions, as we begin to use Nancy Wilson Ross, *The World of Zen*

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**Assignment 7: Given Tues. Sept. 20th for Thurs. Sept. 22nd: (Spring Group presents):**

Read one chapter from the *Tao Te Ching* (TTC) and read pages 1-35 of *The World of Zen* (WOZ) and answer the three questions below:

1. Read one chapter of the *Tao Te Ching* as a poem. Write a brief essay on what this reading means to you. Read the chapter in a symbolic fashion, remembering that the TTC often uses paradox in its teaching.

On *The World of Zen*:

2. Read the introduction and comment thoughtfully on each of the four lines in the famous Zen statement below:
   - A special transmission outside the scriptures
   - No dependence upon words and letters;
   - Direct pointing to the soul of the human being,
   - Seeing into one's nature and attaining Buddhahood.

3. Compare Ruth Fuller Sasaki's essay (pp. 15-29) with either the essay of D.T. Suzuki (pp. 30-31) or the two essays of Sokei-an (pp. 32-35). What does doing this tell you about Zen? How is it like and unlike a "religion" in the way that the West understands religions such as Judaism or Christianity or Islam?

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**Assignment 8: Given Thurs. Sept. 22nd for Tues. Sept. 27th: (Summer Group presents):**

Use the I Ching and read pages 35-64 and 74-85 of *The World of Zen* (WOZ) and answer the three questions below:

1. From the *I Ching*, ask and record the wisdom (or WURT) question you asked. Record the hexagram or hexagrams you received as a result of throwing the coins. [The number(s) are sufficient.] Write a brief essay on what you made of the answer that the I Ching provided to your question. Think symbolically and not just literally.

On *The World of Zen*:

2. Answer EITHER
   2a. Read the essays on pp. 39-47 and answer the question: What is Satori?  OR
   2b. After reading pp. 48-64, answer the question what is a koan and how are koans used in Zen? What might be koan for you in your life?

3. After reading the Zen stories (pp. 74-85), tell me: What do you know about Zen as a way of living life? What glimmers of Zen do you find in your own life?

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**Assignment 9: Given Tues. Sept. 27th for Thurs. Sept. 29th: (Late Summer Group presents):**

Use the *Tao Te Ching* and read pages 89-180 [pp. 147-166 are pictures] in *The World of Zen* (WOZ) and answer the three questions below:
1. Read one chapter of the *Tao Te Ching* as a poem. Write a brief essay on what this reading means to you. Read the chapter in a symbolic fashion, remembering that the TTC often uses paradox in its teaching.

On *The World of Zen*:

2. After reading the relevant articles, compare the art of painting with Zen gardening. Do this in the spirit of Zen.

3. After reading the relevant articles, compare Haiku poetry with the tea ceremony. Do this in the spirit of Zen.

Assignment 10: Given Thurs. Sept. 29th for Tues. Oct. 4th: On this day we will review for the midterm exam.
Use I Ching and read pages 183-194 and 197-233 of *The World of Zen* (WOZ) and answer the three questions below:

1. From the *I Ching*, ask and record the wisdom (or WURT) question you asked. Record the hexagram or hexagrams you received as a result of throwing the coins. [The number(s) are sufficient.] Write a brief essay on what you made of the answer that the *I Ching* provided to your question. Think symbolically and not just literally.

On *The World of Zen*:

2. What do you discover about the irreverent and earthy use of humor in Zen? How does humor work on the Zen path? What modern comedians might have a flavor of Zen in their comedy? Discuss.

3. Using three of the essays on pp. 197-233, write a brief essay comparing and contrasting Zen practice with psychological therapy in the West.

Thursday Oct. 6th -- First test -- no homework due today -- Study well

Use the *I Ching* and read pages 237-262 in *The World of Zen* (WOZ) and answer the three questions below:

1. From the *I Ching*, ask and record the wisdom (or WURT) question you asked. Record the hexagram or hexagrams you received as a result of throwing the coins. [The number(s) are sufficient.] Write a brief essay on what you made of the answer that the *I Ching* provided to your question. Think symbolically and not just literally.

On *The World of Zen*:

2. Using some of the sayings from the "Who am I?" section and some of the sayings from the "Non-attachment" section, answer the following question: How is non-attachment needed if we are to discover our own true nature?

3. Using some of the sayings from the "Non-attachment" section and some of the sayings from the "Is-ness" section, answer the following question: How is non-attachment needed if we are to see the true nature of the world and all the ten thousand things?

For remaining homework assignments, click on “Eastern Philosophy” Assignment Page and print out Homework Questions Second Series.