

UH 202 • Classics and Eastern Culture

Spring 2004 • Jonathan G. Berry • R 6:00–8:45 pm Temple Tutwiler

Course Description and Objectives

The purpose of this course is to expose you to the history, philosophy, and religions of India, China, and Japan. This is an overwhelming task, no doubt, but by focusing on the major historical religions and philosophies of these cultures, it is possible to gain significant insight into the Eastern worldview.

The ultimate goal is developing the ability to read and comprehend Keiji Nishitani's classic text *Religion and Nothingness*. This is one of the most challenging texts in either Eastern or Western thought. It bridges the gap between the two cultural worlds—preparing you to work with any theoretical or religious text successfully.

A unique contribution this class will make to your education is that it will help you consider how philosophy can become physical. By studying Bruce Lee's classic book, *Tao of Jeet Kune Do* and taking a fieldtrip to the Academy of Okinawan Martial Arts, you will come to understand how philosophy can be physical.

Instructor Information

Jonathan G. Berry

Department address and telephone:

The University of Alabama Press

20 Research Drive

Tuscaloosa, AL 35401

205-348-1565

Personal address, telephone, and email:

901 Hargrove Rd., Apt. 9-A

Tuscaloosa, AL 35401

205-239-7016

berryua@bellsouth.net

Office Hours are by appointment. Do not hesitate to call me at home.

Texts for this Course

Required texts:

Brannigan, Michael C. *The Pulse of Wisdom: The Philosophies of India, China, and Japan*. Stamford, Conn.: Wadsworth, 2000.

Krishnamurti, *Think on These Things*. New York, Harper and Row, 1964.

Lee, Bruce. *Tao of Jeet Kune Do*. Santa Clarita, CA: Ohara Publications, 1975.

Nishitani, Keiji. *Religion and Nothingness*. Trans. Jan Van Bragt. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982.

(Note: These books can be purchased at the Alabama Bookstore on University Blvd. I expect you to have your own copies.)

Additional sources that will prove helpful:

Chan, Wing-tsit, ed. and comp. *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963.

Radhakrishnan, Sarvepalli, and Charles A. Moore, eds. *A Source Book in Indian Philosophy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957.

Tsunetomo, Yamamoto. *Hagakure: The Book of the Samurai*. Translated by William Scott Wilson. New York: Kodansha International, 1979.

Requirements

Attendance: Your presence in this course is expected and required. Participation is important; if you do not attend, you cannot participate. Be in class, and be on time.

Participation and prepared handouts: Participation entails being in class and being prepared for the day's discussion.

Written work: You are to keep an academic-response journal, which is to be typed, double-spaced. I may make specific assignments for you to write about in your journal, otherwise you should record your thoughts about the reading material and the class lectures/discussions. You should have approximately 15 entries that are at least a page in length by the semester's end. I will do random checks, so bring your journal pages to class each week. I may take them home with me, or just "eyeball" them in class. You will turn them in with your final paper at the end of the semester.

You will also write a formal paper that will be a response to or a grappling with some aspect of Nishitani's book, *Religion and Nothingness*. It is to be 12 to 15 pages in length. I will need to approve your thesis paragraph before you begin hard work on it.

Grading Policy

The course grade will be divided as follows:

Daily participation/attendance	25%
Academic-Response Journal	35%
Formal paper	40%

Course Outline

January	8 Course orientation: introduction to Eastern thought	April	8 Nishitani: "Nihilism and <i>nyat</i> "
	15 Krishnamurti: chapters 1-7		15 Nishitani: "The Standpoint of <i>nyat</i> "
	22 Krishnamurti: chapters 8-17		22 Catch up/review day
	29 Krishnamurti: chapters 18-27		29 Nothing-but-fun night!!
February	5 Catch up/review day	May	6 <u>Formal paper due (12-15 pages) and Academic-Response Journals are also due!!</u>
	12 Lee: pages 7-41		
	19 Lee: pages 42-123		
	26 Lee: pages 124-208		
March	4 Catch up/review/dojo day		
	11 Nishitani: "What is Religion?"		
	18 Nishitani: "The Personal and Impersonal in Religion"		
	25 No class—Happy Spring Break!!!		

If at any time you have questions about the material on this syllabus, do not hesitate to contact me! (Note: The instructor reserves the right to modify this syllabus in order to better meet the class' needs. Some adjustments may be made in order to meet special individual needs.)