



MY BUTT
HURTS !!!

What??

GILL

Today's Lecture

- Admin stuff
- Concluding our study of Asian Philosophies and the martial arts: “*Neko No Myojutsu*” and the “Teachings of Morihei Ueshiba”

Admin stuff: My availability during the examination period

- My official office hours come to an end this week (NOTE THE CORRECTION FROM TUESDAY'S CLASS).
- I will be available for appointment if you need to see me ... please contact me via email if you'd like an appointment (afenton2@uwo.ca).
- *Don't do this the night before you want an appointment.*
- Study group stuff: I've booked TC 404 on the 15th and 16th from 1130 to 1330. Attendance is voluntary, you don't have to come for the whole time, and I'm only there to moderate.

Admin Stuff

- Re the exam questions: You do not need to go outside of the course material (e.g. lectures and course texts) to adequately answer these questions ... what's more, you *shouldn't* go outside of the course material to answer these questions.
- Any questions about the possible exam questions?
- I have your grades-so-far up on the web site again. The online grade spreadsheet now includes the best ten out of twelve in-class quiz scores. Please check it out and let me know if you see any discrepancies.
- Re your final papers: I will try and have them graded by the final exam.

Asian Philosophies and the martial arts: *Neko No Myojutsu*

- This is a popular text (among martial artists).
- It was written in the Eighteenth Century by Issai Chozan.
- As we will see it is neither exclusively Buddhist nor Taoist in its outlook.

Asian Philosophies and the martial arts: *Neko No Myojutsu*

- Things to note:
- The cats who fail to capture the “huge rat” (p.198 of your *Course Pack*) plaguing the home of the Samurai Shoken do so despite their various, recognized, skills in the martial arts.
- Their failure primarily lies in their continued reliance on discursive consciousness to order their behavior (see p.200 of your *Course Pack*).

Asian Philosophies and the martial arts: *Neko No Myojutsu*

- The Old Cat explains it thus,
- ““As soon as there is the slightest conscious thought, however, contrivance and willfulness appear, and that separates you from the natural Way. You see yourself and others as separate entities, as opponents. If you ask me what technique I employ, the answer is *mushin* (no-mind). *Mushin* is to act in accord with nature, nothing else. The Way has no limits, so do not think of this talk of mine as the ultimate secret”” (p.200 of your *Course Pack*).

Asian Philosophies and the martial arts: *Neko No Myojutsu*

- Things to note here:
- (1) The notion of *mushin* (or no-mind) is shared between Taoists and Buddhists.
- You've encountered this term already when talking of the Zen conception of Buddha Nature (see p.243 of your *Asian Philosophies*).
- You can also see it in the *Lao Tzu* (or *Tao-te ching*) in Chapters 16, 48, 49, 50 (this chapter wasn't assigned) and 55.
- The author of this story elaborates on its meaning on page 201 of your *Course Pack*.

Asian Philosophies and the martial arts: *Neko No Myojutsu*

- (2) The metaphysics (here in this quote) is primarily Buddhist, but does fit the unity of undifferentiated Reality alluded to in the *Lao Tzu* (see Chapters 1, 28 and 32).
- (3) To act in accord with nature, or in accord with the Way, is, of course, a quintessential Taoist sentiment.
- (4) Talking of the technique is not the technique itself. The secret of the Old Cat's technique cannot be adequately expressed in words (this is, again, a quintessential Taoist and Buddhist view of ultimate truth/insight).

Asian Philosophies and the martial arts: *Neko No Myojutsu*

- Note that killing is rationalized as non-murder (non-unjust killing) by pointing to the natural spontaneity, purposelessness and nonduality of *mushin*.
- Combine two passages in the reading to understand this point:
- “That cat [who was present in the Old Cat’s neighborhood of his youth] forgot about itself, forgot about objects, and dwelled in a state of purposelessness. That cat actualized the divine martial virtue of ‘non-killing’” (p.200 of your *Course Pack*) and

Asian Philosophies and the martial arts: *Neko No Myojutsu*

- “Because there is a self, there is an enemy. If there is no self, there is no enemy. ‘Enemy’ is that which is in opposition. ... Every object with form has its opposite. When mind has no form, there is nothing to oppose it. When there is no opposition, there is nothing to fight against. This is called ‘no enemy, no self.’ When self and objects are both forgotten, there is a natural state of nonactivity, of no trouble, of oneness. ... This is not the same as being unaware; it means no calculating thought, and immediate natural response” (p.201 of your *Course Pack*).

Asian Philosophies and the martial arts: *Neko No Myojutsu*

- The basic idea here is that killing in a state of *mushin* is non-killing, and so is not murder ... there is no intent to kill another, there isn't even a thought of an-other, no distinction of self from other, so it is not an action (ordinarily construed) (thus the term 'non-killing') and, because murder is an act, it is not murder.
- The primary problem: If *mushin* can rationalize killing (without regard for the morally significant features of the relevant moral context), what *can't it* rationalize?

Asian Philosophies and the martial arts: Morihei Ueshiba

- A good book on Morihei Ueshiba is:
- Ueshiba, Morihei. *The Art of Peace*. Translated and edited by John Stevens. Published by Shambhala Publications and dated 2002.
- Contains a collection of Ueshiba's sayings and two (well written) essays by John Stevens.

Asian Philosophies and the martial arts: Morihei Ueshiba

- Morihei Ueshiba was born in Tanabe, Japan in 1883.
- He experienced a profound religious experience in 1925. He believed he was called (by Miroku Bosatsu [or the Bodhisattva Maitreya]) to be a modern prophet of peace.
- Aikido (literally the “Way of Peace” [p.18 of John Stevens’ *The Art of Peace*, published by Shambhala Publications and dated 2002]), the well known martial art created by Ueshiba, rejects a number of features historically associated with Eastern martial arts - (i) it rejects the rationalization of killing through the teachings on *mushin*, (ii) it rejects the oppositional language that informs much martial philosophy and literature, (iii) and rejects the idea that doing harm is inevitable in practicing a martial art.

Asian Philosophies and the martial arts: Morihei Ueshiba

- Some things of note in our selection from the sayings of Morihei Ueshiba:
- (1) There are clear Taoist overtones in the way that Ueshiba is pointing to the Universe's natural processes as a source of insight into how we should behave (p.204 of your *Course Pack*).
- (2) Aikido is a nonviolent martial art ... though not in the sense espoused in the *Neko No Myojutsu*. The Aikido practitioner rejects the propriety of harm done in *mushin* (p.205 of your *Course Pack*).

Asian Philosophies and the martial arts: Morihei Ueshiba

- (3) The *budo* embraced by Ueshiba commends a non-oppositional approach to life (p.205 of your *Course Pack*) ... This is not quite a full-fledged abandonment of duality.
- (4) There is, however, a clear disavowal of self-centeredness (p.205 of your *Course Pack*).