HRPH 4556, Topics in Buddhist Thought: Epistemology and Language
Spring 2012: Wednesday mornings, 9:40 to 12:30, IBS/JSC Room 130.

Instructor: Richard K. Payne
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see also: http://rkpayne.shin-ibs.edu/Richard_K._Payne/Courses.html

COURSE DESCRIPTION: language itself was one of the central issues in the religio-philosophic tradition of India from the earliest records right into the present. Closely connected to the philosophy of language are epistemological concerns, especially as those were central to the Indic understandings of progress on the path to awakening. Closely related, then, both epistemology and philosophy of language were important themes in the development of Buddhist thought in India, and these were carried into East Asian Buddhist thought as well. Although these aspects of East Asian Buddhist thought have not been extensively studied, they were important and formative. This class will survey the basics of both epistemology and philosophy of language across the Indic religio-philosophic tradition, and explore its impact on the formation of Buddhism in East Asia, particularly Japan.

REQUIRED TEXTS:
Ganeri, Jonardon, Philosophy in Classical India, Routledge
McCrea, Lawrence and Parimal Patil, Buddhist Philosophy of Language in India, Columbia University Press
additional readings: items available via course Moodle site

RECOMMENDED FOR STUDENTS NEEDING ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON INDIAN RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHIC THOUGHT:
Richard King: Indian Philosophy: An Introduction to Hindu and Buddhist Thought, Georgetown University Press
Mohanty: Classical Indian Philosophy, Rowman & Littlefield
Sue Hamilton: Indian Philosophy, A Very Short Introduction, Oxford
Johannes Bronkhost: Buddhist Teachings in India, Wisdom Publications

RECOMMENDED TEXTS, FOR THE AMBITIOUS AMONG YOU:

COURSE WILL BE MIXED FORMAT, most class sessions held as indicated above, however, as the instructor will be unavailable for two weeks of the semester, students will be expected to maintain readings and responses online via the Moodle website.
Grade will be based on
a) weekly reading responses, about 200 words per reading assignment. These are to be done in before the next course meetings and posted on the course Moodle site. And
b) on a 2,000 + word term paper. This MUST use Turabian or Chicago Manual of Style humanities format. Ask if you don’t understand what this means. Ask about anything…

Calendar:
1) 30 January - 5 February
   α. Steinkellner: note the caveat regarding East Asia
   β. Ganeri, Introduction and Chapter 1. The motive and method of rational inquiry
   γ. Ganeri, "Colonization"

2) 6 February - 12 February
   α. Ganeri, ch. 2: Rationality, emptiness and the objective view
   β. Robinson: "Nagarjuna's logic" on Moodle for download
   γ. Tucci: "Buddhist logic before Dignaga" on Moodle for download

3) 13 February - 19 February
   α. Ganeri, Ch. 3: The rational basis of metaphysics
   β. Tripati: "Indian metaphysics"
   γ. McCrea & Patil, *Buddhist Philosophy of Language in India*, Introduction

4) 20 February - 26 February
   α. Ganeri, Ch. 4: "Reduction, exclusion and rational reconstruction"
   β. Hayes: "Doctrinalism"
   γ. McCrea & Patil, *Buddhist Philosophy of Language in India*, Translation

5) 27 February - 4 March
   α. Ganeri, Ch. 5: "Rationality, harmony and perspective"
   β. 01. Ritual Language

6) 5 March - 11 March
   α. Ganeri, Ch. 6: "Reason in equilibrium"
   β. 02. Meaning and Mantra

7) 12 March - 18 March
   α. Rambelli 1 (Prof. Rambelli, UCSB, has kindly agreed to allow us to use his Buddhist Semiotics course materials, think nice things about him, okay?)
   β. 03. Awakening and Language I
8) 19 March - 25 March
   a. Rambelli 2
   b. 04. Awakening and Language II

9) 26 March - 1 April: Spring break: no class

10) 2 April - 8 April
    a. Rambelli 3
    b. 05. Dharani in the Lotus Sutra

11) 9 April - 15 April
    a. Rambelli 4
    b. 06. Aksaracakra

12) 16 April - 22 April
    a. Rambelli 5
    b. 07. Komyo Goma

13) 23 April - 29 April
    a. Rambelli 6
    b. 08. Authority of the Buddha

14) 30 April - 6 May
    a. Rambelli 7
    b. 09. Language Conducive

15) 7 May - 13 May
    a. Rambelli 8

16) 14 May - 20 May: papers due