

INSTITUTE OF BUDDHIST STUDIES

COURSE SYLLABUS

Course: Works of Shinran III: Teaching, Practice and Realization, continued
Course Number: HR 4568
Semester: Fall 2013
Instructor: David Matsumoto
Units: 3.00

Description:

- An examination of *The True Teaching, Practice, and Realization of the Pure Land Way* (*Kyōgyōshinshō*) of Shinran (1173-1262), the major work of the founder of Jōdo Shinshū. We continue our study of the text by reading of the Chapters on Realization, True Buddha-bodies and Lands, and Transformed Buddha-bodies and Lands.
- Reading materials will be in English, with occasional reference to the original text.
- Students will be expected to have some familiarity with Pure Land Buddhism, the Jōdo Shinshū tradition and Shin Buddhist thought.

Student Learning Objectives

- Students will become familiar with all available English translations of Shinran's principal text, *The True Teaching, Practice and Realization*, and with the overall structure and content of the text.
- Students will be able to identify and discuss the primary features of Shin Buddhist doctrine, including shinjin, nembutsu, realization, Amida Buddha, birth in the Pure Land, Buddha-nature, Buddha-bodies, and expediency, based on a close examination of *The True Teaching, Practice and Realization*, and its relationship to Shinran's shorter works.
- Students will be able to discuss in broad outline the historical development of Pure Land Buddhist thought and practice, as well as Shinran's critical perspective on them.
- Students will gain an introduction to the exegetical and interpretative methods of traditional and contemporary Shin Buddhist Studies.

Class Format

- This will be seminar-style class, with weekly, in-class sessions.
- Arrangements will be made to enable students outside of the Bay Area to participate in classroom sessions in real time.
- Each week we will closely read and examine one or more of English translations of the *The True Teaching, Practice and Realization*, together with selected passages from the original Japanese work and other works by Shinran.
- Our examination will cover the text's historical and doctrinal context, structure, style of composition, place within the framework of Shinran's thought, and role in the development of Shin Buddhist thought.
- At the same time, we will occasionally compare the translations to *kanbun* and *kakikudashi* versions of the text and examine certain doctrinal terms in Japanese to

facilitate students' ability to conduct further academic study of Shinran's thought and to familiarize them with the exegetical method of *Shinshūgaku*.

- Reading assignments and materials will also be provided on a regular basis to all students through the GTU Moodle system, which can be accessed at <http://moodle.gtu.edu/>.

Time and Location

Class sessions will take place on Tuesday, 2:10 to 5:00 pm in Room 130 of the Jodo Shinshu Center.

Requirements

Students will be required to do the following:

1. Read all assigned sections of the text carefully in English translation and identify the doctrinal issues discussed in them.
2. Identify significant doctrinal terms both in English and Japanese.
3. Participate fully in class discussions.
4. Complete all writing assignments and make at least one presentation to the class during the semester.

Writing Assignments:

1. Students will be required to write a research paper of no more than ten (10) pages on a topic that is relevant to this course and approved by the instructor. The paper should reflect students' familiarity with and understanding of the *True Teaching, Practice, and Realization*. It will be due one week after the final class session.
2. Students will also be expected to record their comments and thoughts as they read the text by utilizing the Points for Consideration form that will be provided by the instructor.

Grading

Grading is based on students' class attendance, presentation(s), and participation in class discussion (50% of grade) and final papers (50% of grade).

Office Hours

Please call 510-809-1448 (office) or (510) 384-3818 (cell), or email at drmatsumoto@shin-ibs.edu to the instructor to make an appointment.

Textbooks:

1. Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha. *Collected Works of Shinran*, 2 vols. Shin Buddhism Translation Series. Kyoto: Hongwanji International Center, 1997 (the text is also available on-line at: <http://www.shinranworks.com/majorexpositions.htm>)
2. Inagaki, Hisao. *Kyōgyōshinshō: On Teaching, Practice, Faith, and Enlightenment*. Berkeley: Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 2003 (the text is also available on-line: <http://www12.canvas.ne.jp/horai/kgssa.htm>).
3. Suzuki, Daisetsu Teitaro. *The Kyōgyōshinshō*. Kyoto: Shinshu Otaniha. 1973.
4. Ryukoku Translation Center. *The Kyōgyōshinshō*. Kyoto: Ryukoku University. 1966.

Additional reading materials will be distributed in class and via Moodle by the instructor.