

HRHS 1515

Buddhist Traditions of South Asia

Fall 2013, Tuesdays 2:10 – 5:00

Instructor: Charlie Pokorny

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IBS/JSC

Syllabus revised July 29th, 2013

Office hours: by appointment

OVERVIEW OF THE COURSE

This course introduces the Buddhist traditions as they originated in India and developed in South and Southeast Asia. It is the first half of a yearlong introductory survey of the entire Buddhist tradition.

Course format: Seminar/lecture.

Student Outcomes

- Students will develop knowledge about the major forms of Buddhism that arose in India, including Theravāda, Sarvāstivāda, Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna, including an outline of their historical development, as well as aspects of their contemporary cultural instantiations.
- Students will be able to describe some of the key doctrines and practices associated with each of these traditions.
- Students will become familiar with some of the important texts of these Buddhist traditions including their content, structure and significance.

Required Texts:

- Paul Williams, Anthony Tribe, Alexander Wynne, *Buddhist Thought: A Complete Introduction to the Indian Tradition*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2012). ISBN: 978-0415571791 [Referred to below as “Williams, Buddhist Thought.”]
- John Strong, *The Experience of Buddhism*, 3rd ed. (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2008). ISBN: 978-0495094869 [Referred to below as “Strong, The Experience of Buddhism.”]
- Donald Lopez, ed., *Buddhism in Practice*, Abridged edition (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007). ISBN: 978-0691129686 [Please note–this text is abbreviated as “BIP” below, readings only found in the earlier 1995 edition will be available online through Moodle.]
- Please note that additional required and optional reading assignments will be available online through Moodle.

GRADING OVERVIEW

Course Requirements:

1. Weekly required reading assignments.
2. Classroom attendance. Please check in with me when you will be unable to attend a class meeting. If you must miss more than two classes, it can affect your grade – please check in with me about how you can make up for this.
3. Class participation. Please come to class prepared to make comments, raise questions and engage in discussion on the readings and lecture materials. I strongly encourage you to participate in class discussions. Asking questions can deepen learning opportunities for all of us. Questions and comments enrich and enliven the class for everyone.
4. Paper: three options (*choose one*): Term Paper, Temple Experience, or Book Reviews. In all cases, the paper will be on a topic related to the content of the course (please consult with the instructor to discuss a proposed topic).

Grading

- Classroom attendance and participation: 50%
- Paper: 50%

PAPER REQUIREMENT: GUIDELINES and OPTIONS

All papers should follow these guidelines:

- Please use 12 pt. font, Times New Roman, double-spaced, 1” margins, .5” indent for each new paragraph.
- **Papers must include reference works:** a minimum of five for the term paper option and two for the temple experience and book reviews options. Follow the *Turabian* citation style. Include a bibliography. These should be primary (original or in translation) or secondary (scholarly research) source materials (encyclopedia articles are tertiary sources and should not be counted as reference works, but can be included in bibliographies).
- All students must receive approval for their paper proposal by the end of reading week.
- Final papers are due the last week of class.
- Please email your papers in Word Doc format if possible to korin108@gmail.com. I will email them back to with comments (if you would rather turn in a hard copy, please check in with me first).

There are *three options* for the final paper.

Please choose ONE of the following: 1. Term Paper, 2. Temple Experience, or 3. Book Reviews.

1. Term Paper

12–15 pages (no cover page)

The paper should explore in depth a topic relevant to the course. Please choose a topic that concerns you deeply. The paper should include a clear thesis statement (the basic proposition you are putting forth), and support the thesis with relevant examples and arguments. It is important for your paper to be organized. The following format is suggested:

- a) Introductory paragraphs (identifiable and concise thesis statement, overview of supporting arguments or points),
- b) Body (supporting points, arguments, discussion of examples, citations, etc.),
- c) Conclusion (restatement of thesis, summary of main points).

Your topic is up to you, but please email or speak with Charlie for approval of your topic by end of reading week.

2. Temple Experience

12–15 pages (no cover page)

This paper is based on a visit to a temple in a tradition of South Asian Buddhism (including Theravada and Tibetan Buddhism), taking part in services and/or performing an interview with clergy and/or attendees. The paper should clearly identify the lineage and its history, important doctrinal issues for that lineage, and clearly connect to material presented in the class. The remainder of the paper’s focus is up to you; for example, ministerial candidates may wish to focus on issues of chaplaincy, while those interested in ethnographic methods may wish to present a more sociologically informed paper. What continuities and discontinuities do you see between the Buddhism we studied in the class and the Buddhism at this temple? What issues are being faced by temples in the West? Please obtain permission from the temple to attend and report on the experience prior to visiting the temple, and please check with Charlie for the suitability of the site prior to the visit. If you are a practicing Buddhist, the temple experience should focus on a different tradition of Buddhism.

3. Two Book Reviews

12–15 pages (no cover page)

This paper involves reviewing two books in detail, devoting approximately 6 – 7 pages to each review. The books should deal with a subject pertinent to South Asian Buddhism and generally, should be scholarly publications. Please consult with Charlie about the books you would like to review. Ideally, the two books will complement each other. The review should:

- a) Summarize the book’s content
- b) Offer a critical evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses (What was most helpful, striking or valuable? What was unclear? Where was the argument strong or weak? What kinds of inquiry did the work open?)
- c) Make connections to what we have learned in class (through lectures, discussion and class readings)

SYLLABUS

Week 1 – September 3rd

Introduction, Course Overview, Presuppositions

Optional Reading:

Gregory Schopen, “Archeology and Protestant Presuppositions in the Study of Indian Buddhism,” in *Bones, Stones and Buddhist Monks: Collected Papers on the Archeology, Epigraphy and Texts of Monastic Buddhism in India* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1999), 1–22.

Part I. Buddha, Dharma, Saṃgha

Week 2 – Septemeber 10th

The Buddha

Required Reading:

Williams, *Buddhist Thought*: Chapter 1, “The doctrinal position of the Buddha in context,” 1–29.

Strong, *The Experience of Buddhism*: Chapter 1, “The Life Story of the Buddha and Its Ramifications” Introduction (pages 1–3), and review pages 3–55, reading sections of interest.

BIP, Chapter 32: Donald Swearer, “Bimba’s Lament,” 419–430.

Optional Reading:

Donald S. Lopez, Jr., “Buddha” in *Critical Terms for the Study of Buddhism* ed. Donald S. Lopez (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), 13–36.

BIP, Chapter 2: Donald Swearer, “Consecrating the Buddha,” 50–58.

Week 3 – September 17th

The Dharma – Foundational Teachings of Buddhism

Required Reading:

Williams, *Buddhist Thought*: from Chapter 2, “Mainstream Buddhism: the basic thought of the Buddha,” 30–63.

Strong, *The Experience of Buddhism*: from Chapter 3, “The Dharma: Some Perspectives of Mainstream Buddhism”: 97–128 and 138–144.

Optional Reading:

David J. Kalupahana, “Epistemology,” “Causality,” “The Three Characteristics of Existence,” and “Karma and Rebirth,” [Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5] in *Buddhist Philosophy: A Historical Analysis* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1976), 16–55.

Week 4 – September 24th

Buddhist Practice

Required Reading:

Paul Griffiths, “Indian Buddhist Meditation,” in *Buddhist Spirituality: Indian, South Asia, Tibetan and Early Chinese* ed. Takeuchi Yoshinori (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1995), 34–66.

Strong, *The Experience of Buddhism*: from Chapter 3 “The Dharma: Some Perspectives of Mainstream Buddhism,” 128–138.

BIP, Chapter 12: Donald Swearer, “The Way to Meditation,” 157–165.

BIP, Chapter 18: Charles Hallisey, “The Advice to Layman Tuṇḍila,” 220–231.

Optional Reading:

Carl Bielefeldt, “Practice,” 229–244 in *Critical Terms for the Study of Buddhism* ed. Donald S. Lopez (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), 13–36.

BIP, Chapter 21: Todd T. Lewis, “The Story of the Horning Blowing,” 246–254.

BIP, Chapter 28: Gregory Schopen, “Deaths, Funerals and the Division of Property in a Monastic Code,” 357–386.

Week 5 – October 1st

The Saṅgha

Required Reading:

Kōgen Mizuno, “The Saṅgha” in *Essentials of Buddhism: Basic Terminology and Concepts of Buddhist Philosophy and Practice*, trans. Gaynor Sekimori (Tokyo: Kōsei Publishing Co., 1997), 89–94.

Strong, *The Experience of Buddhism*: Chapter 2, “The Experience of the Saṅgha,” 56–96 (review for stories of interest, and be sure to read at least one piece from each section, i.e., 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, and 2.5).

Alan Sponberg, “Attitudes toward Women and the Feminine in Early Buddhism,” in *Buddhism, Sexuality and Gender* ed. Jose Igancio Cabezon (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), 3–36.

Optional Reading:

Gregory Schopen, “Art, Beauty, and the Business of Running a Buddhist Monastery in Early Northwest India,” in *Buddhist Monks and Business Matters: Still More Papers on Monastic Buddhism in India* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004), 19–44.

BIP, Chapter 8: Jonathan S. Walters, “Gotamī’s Story,” 107–132.

Part II. Abhidharma, Cosmology and Theravāda

Week 6 – October 8th

Abhidharma

Required Reading:

Williams, *Buddhist Thought*: from Chapter 2, “Mainstream Buddhism: the basic thought of the Buddha,” 63–70 and Chapter 4, “Some schools of mainstream Buddhist thought,” 83–97.

Noa Ronkin, “Abhidharma” in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, first published Mon August 16, 2010, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/abhidharma/> (accessed August 16, 2012).

Donald Swearer, “A Summary of the Seven Books of the Abhidharma,” in BIP (1995 edition), 336–342.

Optional Reading:

Kōgen Mizuno, “The Elements of Existence” and “The Defilements” in *Essentials of Buddhism: Basic Terminology and Concepts of Buddhist Philosophy and Practice*, trans. Gaynor Sekimori (Tokyo: Kōsei Publishing Co., 1997), 95–120 and 203–212.

William Waldron, “The Abhidharma Context” in *The Buddhist Unconscious: The Ālaya-vijñāna in the Context of Indian Buddhist Thought* (London & New York: Routledge Curzon, 2003), 46–87.

Week 7 – October 15th

Buddhist Cosmologies

Required Reading:

Rupert Gethin, “Cosmology and Meditation: From the *Aggañña-Sutta* to the Mahāyāna,” *History of Religions* 36, 3 (1997): 183–217. Reprinted in Paul Williams, ed., *Buddhism: Critical Concepts in Religious Studies*. Vol. 2, *The Early Buddhist Schools and Doctrinal History; Theravāda Doctrine* (London: Routledge, 2005): 102–135.

Strong, *The Experience of Buddhism*: Section 5.4 “Savior Buddhas and Pure Lands,” 197–206.

Optional Reading:

Randy Kloetzli, *Buddhist Cosmology: From Single World System to Pure Land: Science and Theology in the Images of Motion and Light* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2007):

Chapter 1: “Buddhist Philosophy and the Major Moments of Cosmology,” 1–21.

Chapter 2: “The Cakravāla or Single World System: The Monastic Guide to Brahmā’s Pure Realm,” 23–50.

Chapter 5: “The ‘Asaṅkhyeya-Cosmology’ or ‘Cosmology of Innumerable’ and the Teaching of Light,” 91–111.

October 22nd - READING WEEK – NO CLASS

Please submit your proposed topic for the final paper by October 25th.

Week 8 – October 29th

Theravāda

Required Reading:

Richard F. Gombrich, “The Buddhist Tradition in Sri Lanka” in *Theravada Buddhism* (New York: Routledge, 1988), 137–170.

Strong, *The Experience of Buddhism*: Chapter 6, “Buddhists and the Practice of Buddhism: Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia,” 221–255.

Optional Reading:

Barbara Watson Andaya, “Localising the Universal: Women, Motherhood and the Appeal of Early Theravāda Buddhism,” *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 33, no. 1 (2002): 1–30.

BIP, Chapter 22: Patrick Pranke, “On Becoming a Buddhist Wizard,” 255–270.

BIP, Chapter 24: Donald Swearer, “A Modern Sermon on Merit Making,” 293–295.

BIP, Chapter 25: Charles Hallisey, “Auspicious Things,” 296–310.

Part III. Mahāyāna Buddhism & Tantric Buddhism

Week 9 – November 5th

Development of the Mahāyāna

Required Reading:

Williams, *Buddhist Thought*: Chapter 3, “The nature and origins of Mahāyāna Buddhism,” 71–82.

Paul Harrison, “Searching for the Origins of the Mahāyāna: What Are We Looking For?” *The Eastern Buddhist* Vol. XXVIII, No. 1 (1995): 48–69.

Gregory Schopen, “The Mahāyāna and the Middle Period in Indian Buddhism: Through a Chinese Looking-glass,” *The Eastern Buddhist* Vol. XXXII, No. 2 (2000): 1–25.

Optional Reading:

Jonathan Silk, “What, If Anything, is Mahāyāna Buddhism? Problems of Definitions and Classifications,” *Numen* 49/4: 355–405. Reprinted in Paul Williams, ed., *Buddhism: Critical Concepts in Religious Studies*. Vol. 3, *The Origins and Nature of Mahāyāna Buddhism: Some Mahāyāna Religious Topics* (London: Routledge, 2005): 368–404.

Week 10 – November 12th

Mahāyāna Philosophy: Madhyamaka and Yogācāra

Required Reading:

Williams, *Buddhist Thought*: Chapter 5, “Mahāyāna Philosophy,” 98–123.

Strong, *The Experience of Buddhism*, from Chapter 4, “The Dharma: Some Mahāyāna Perspectives,” 151–173.

BIP, Chapter 7: William Grosnick, “The Tathāgatagarbha Sutra,” 92–106.

Optional Reading:

Richard H. Jones, “Essay: Emptiness – The Philosophy of Nāgārjuna,” in *Nāgārjuna: Buddhism’s Most Important Philosopher* (New York: Jackson Square Books, 2010), 135–164.

William Waldron, “Ālaya-vijñāna in the Early Tradition,” in *The Buddhist Unconscious: The Ālaya-vijñāna in the Context of Indian Buddhist Thought* (London & New York: Routledge Curzon, 2003), 91–127.

Week 11 – November 19th

Mahāyāna Soteriology

Required Reading:

Williams, *Buddhist Thought*: Chapter 6, “The Buddha in Mahāyāna Buddhism,” 124–142.

Burton Watson trans., *The Lotus Sutra* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993):

Chapter 2, “Expedient Means,” 23–46.

Chapter 16, “The Life Span of the Thus Come One,” 224–232.

Strong, *The Experience of Buddhism*, from Chapter 4, “The Dharma: Some Mahāyāna Perspectives,” 145–151 and 173–187; from Chapter 5, “Saviors and Siddhas: The Mahāyāna Pantheon and Tantric Buddhism,” 188–197.

[*Optional reading on the next page...*]

Optional Reading:

The Lotus Sutra:

Chapter 1, "Introduction," 3–22.

Chapter 3, "Simile and Parable," 47–79.

Chapter 4, "Belief and Understanding," 80–96.

Nancy Schuster, "Changing the Female Body: Wise Women and the Bodhisattva Career in Some *Mahāratnakūtasūtras*,"

Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies 4, 1 (1981): 24–69.

BIP, Chapter 1: Paul J. Griffiths, "A Hymn of Praise to the Buddha's Good Qualities," 39–49.

Week 12 – November 26th

Tantric Buddhism

Required Reading:

Williams, *Buddhist Thought*: Chapter 7, "Mantrayana/Vajrayāna – Tantric Buddhism in India," 143–185.

Strong, *The Experience of Buddhism*: Section 5.5, "Tantric Buddhism or the Vajrayāna," 206–220.

BIP, Chapter 20: Luis Gomez, "Two Tantric Meditations: Visualizing the Deity," 236–245.

Optional Reading:

BIP, Chapter 17: Ronald M. Davidson, "Atiśa's *A Lamp for the Path to Awakening*," 208–219.

BIP, Chapter 29: Donald S. Lopez, "A Rite for Restoring the Bodhisattva and Tantric Vows," 387–396.

BIP, Chapter 31: Hubert Decleer, "Atiśa's Journey to Sumatra," 409–417.

Week 13 – December 3rd

Tibetan Buddhism

Required Reading:

Donald Mitchell, "The Tibetan Experience of Buddhism," in *Buddhism: Introducing the Buddhist Experience* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 151–77.

Strong, *The Experience of Buddhism*: Chapter 7 "Buddhists and the Practice of Buddhism: The Tibetan Cultural Area," 256–289.

BIP, Chapter 9: Donald Lopez, "A Prayer for the Long Life of the Dalai Lama," 133–138.

Optional Reading:

Ann Frechette, "Democracy and Democratization among Tibetans in Exile," *Journal of Asian Studies* 66/1 (2007): 97–127.

Anne Klein, "The Great Bliss Queen," in BIP (1995 edition), 139–50.

BIP, Chapter 5: Matthew Kapstein, "The Prayer of the Original Buddha," 80–87.

Part IV. The End of the Dharma in India

Week 14 – December 10th

The End of the Dharma in India

* Papers Due *

Please email your papers in Word Doc format if possible to korin108@gmail.com

I will email them back to with comments (if you would rather turn in a hard copy, please check in with me first)

Required Reading:

P.S. Jaini, "The Disappearance of Buddhism and the Survival of Jainism: A Study in Contrasts," in *Collected Papers on Buddhist Studies* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2001), 139–153.

BIP, Chapter 14: Jan Nattier, "A Prophecy of the Death of the Dharma," 179–186.

BIP, Chapter 16: John Newman, "Eschatology in the Wheel of Time Tantra," 202–207.