HRPH 3242
Topics in Buddhist Traditions of East Asia:
Approaches to Kōan Study and Practice in East Asian Buddhism

Fall 2015, Mondays 2:10 – 5:00 PM
IBS/JSC
Instructor: Charlie Pokorny - korin108@gmail.com
Office hours: by appointment
Course Level: Introductory
Units: 3.0
Syllabus revised May, 2015. Some reading assignments will change.

OVERVIEW OF THE COURSE

This course will explore the Zen Kōan in Chinese, Korean and Japanese Buddhism. A kōan is typically a dialogue or saying that has been cited as exemplifying or embodying some aspect of awakening, practice or teaching. Kōans became the essential and most basic spiritual literature of the Zen tradition. They served as dynamic pivots for unfolding expositions of Zen practice. Using primary and secondary sources, we will examine the historical development of various forms of kōan literature, study, practice and teaching.

Student Outcomes:

• Students will be able to describe major approaches to kōan study and practice in China, Korea and Japan.
• Students will be able to frame these approaches in historical and doctrinal contexts.

Required Texts:


• Heine, Steven. Zen Koans. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2014. [Referred to below as “ZEN KŌANS.”]


• Please note that additional required and optional reading assignments will be available online through Moodle. Please make sure you will be able to access Moodle.

GRADING OVERVIEW

Course Requirements:

1. Weekly required reading assignments.
2. Weekly required writing assignments (these will be short and shared in class).
3. 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.

(continued)
4. 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.

5. Term paper (see below).

**Grading**

- Classroom preparation (reading and writing), attendance and participation: 50%
- Paper: 50%

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**PAPER REQUIREMENT: GUIDELINES**

All papers should follow these guidelines:

- Papers should be about 15 pages in length. Please use 12 pt. font, Times New Roman, double-spaced, 1” margins, .5” indent for each new paragraph.

- **Papers must include a minimum of five reference works.** 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).

- Papers can focus on a single approach to kōan study or practice, on a single text, author or figure from the tradition, on a single kōan, on a debate or controversy within the tradition, and so on.

- 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).
SYLLABUS

Week 1 – September 14th
Introduction, Course Overview, Major Themes and Concerns of the Course,
What is a kōan? Ways to read a kōan

I. FOUNDATIONS AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF KŌAN LITERATURE

Week 2 – September 21st
The Development of Chan: From the Sudden Approach to Encounter Dialogue

Reading:
• Heine, Steven. “Origins, Functions, and Modern Receptions of Kōans: Classic and Contemporary Perspectives.” In ZEN KŌANS, 7–35.

Optional Reading:

Week 3 – September 28th
The Development of Kōan Literature

Reading:
• Cleary, Thomas and J.C. Cleary, trans. The Blue Cliff Record. Boston & London: Shambhala, 2005. [The PDF file on Moodle contains just the 100 stories or cases. The purpose of this assignment is to provide a glimpse of a good chunk of the raw material we are studying through the reading materials and classroom discussions. Do not be too concerned about understanding the stories, but do pay attention to the various dimensions of diversity we can see in this early collection.]
Optional Reading:
- Dumoulin, Heinrich. “Five Houses of Zen.” In SITTING WITH KŌANS, 41–73.

Week 4 – October 5th
Kōans Expounding the Dharma: Some Key Doctrinal Themes

Reading:
- Heine, Steven. “Personal Transformation: Cases Reflecting Doubt, Experience, and Expression.” In ZEN KŌANS, 97–128.

Optional Reading:

Week 5 – October 12th
Kōans Expounding the Dharma: Establishing the Tradition; The Spirit of Overturning

Reading:

Optional Reading:
II. GREAT DOUBT AND PHRASE INTROSPECTION CHAN

Week 6 – October 19\textsuperscript{th}

Song Dynasty Polemics and the \textit{Huatou} Approach

Reading:

- Schlutter, Morten. “‘Before the Empty Eon’ versus ‘A Dog Has No Buddha-Nature’: Kung-an Use in the Ts’ao-tung Tradition and Ta-hui’s Kung-an Introspection Ch’an.” In \textit{THE KŌAN}: 168–199.

Optional Reading:


October 26\textsuperscript{th} - No Class, “Reading Week”

Week 7 – November 2\textsuperscript{nd}

Pure Land Kōans, Ming Dynasty Developments

Reading:


Optional Reading:

Week 8 – November 9th

Kōan Study and Practice in Korean Buddhism

Reading:


Optional Reading:


III. KŌAN STUDY AND PRACTICE IN JAPANESE ZEN

Week 9 – November 16th

Literary Zen in Japan

Reading:


Optional Reading:


Week 10 – November 23\textsuperscript{rd}

Kōans in Dōgen and Sōtō Zen

Reading:

\begin{itemize}
  \item Bodiford, William M. “Kōan Practice.” In SITTING WITH KŌANS, 91–115.
  \item Cook, Francis Dojun. “Keizan, Kōans and Succession in the Sōtō School.” In SITTING WITH KŌANS, 163–174.
  \item Foulk, Griff. “Dōgen’s Use of Rujing’s ‘Just Sit’ (shikan taza) and Other Kōans.” In Dōgen and Sōtō Zen ed. Steven Heine. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015. 23–45.
  \item Keizan Jōkin. “Ancestor Dajian Huineng.” In SITTING WITH KŌANS, 175–183.
  \item Loori, Daido. “Dōgen and Kōans.” In SITTING WITH KŌANS, 151–162.
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Optional Reading:

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Week 11 – November 30\textsuperscript{th}

Hakuin and his Successors

Reading:

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  \item Hakuin Ekaku. “The Voice of the Sound of One Hand.” In SITTING WITH KŌANS, 211–228.
  \item Mohr, Michael. “Emerging from Nonduality: Kōan Practice in the Rinzai Tradition since Hakuin.” In THE KŌAN, 244–279.
  \item Yampolsky, Phillip. “Hakuin Ekaku and the Modern Kōan System.” In SITTING WITH KŌANS, 185–189.
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Optional Reading:

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Week 12 – December 7th

Ritual Performance of Kōans

Reading:

• Cleary, Thomas. Book of Serenity. Hudson, NY: Lindisfarne Press, 1990. Cases 16 and 84. (It may also be good to review Book of Serenity Case 1 and Blue Cliff Record Case 1 from the Week 5 readings as we will be discussing the ritual use of these two cases in class.)


Optional Reading:


Week 13 – December 14th

Unfolding Kōans Anew and New Kōans in the West

Reading:


Optional Reading:


*** Papers Due by Friday December 18th ***

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

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