

HRHS 1515

Buddhist Traditions of South Asia

Fall 2016

Course times: Fridays, 09:40AM-12:30PM

Location: JSC 130 (IBS)

Course Level: Introductory (Units: 3.0)

Instructor: Bruno Galasek, bgalasek@gmail.com

Course Description

This first part of the yearlong introductory course of Buddhist traditions in Asia constitutes a survey of Buddhist traditions in South Asia (in the wider geographical sense) with a focus on the origin of Buddhism and the development of Buddhist schools in India. Also, developments in adjacent regions in which Buddhism took roots will briefly be introduced (Southeast Asia, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Central Asia, and Tibet). The introductory survey will cover three core areas of each of the Buddhist traditions: 1. Buddhist **doctrine** and key-concepts (karma, rebirth, No-Self, etc.); 2. **history** (e.g. of the Buddhist schools, local developments; general context of the history of Asian civilizations); 3. **texts** (Scriptural Canons).

Learning Outcomes:

- Acquiring a solid knowledge-foundation of “original” Indian Buddhism and the main Buddhist traditions that originated in India and their developments in adjacent regions through the course readings and active class participation
- The ability to describe major Buddhist traditions, differentiate them on the basis of their similarities and differences (continuities and discontinuities), and present and discuss basic Buddhist doctrinal content and ideas against the background of their historical developments
- To become familiar with some primary texts (in English translation) of the vast Buddhist literature and with some important Buddhist terminology in Sanskrit and Pāli
- To gain an introductory overview of the current state of research of Buddhist Studies in the described areas.

Course format: Lecture/Seminar

Required textbooks:

- Mitchell, Donald W., and Sarah Jacoby. 2014. *Buddhism: Introducing the Buddhist Experience*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Gethin, Rupert. 1998. *The Foundations of Buddhism*. Oxford [u.a.]: Oxford University Press. [= Gethin]

Primary sources (in English translation):

- Gethin, Rupert. 2008. *Sayings of the Buddha: A Selection of Suttas from the Pali Nikāyas*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Any additional reading material will be made available to the course-participants either electronically or as hard-copies during the semester.

Grading & Course Requirements

Course Requirements

1. Weekly Reading assignments and class participation; as a minimum requirement, please read through the chapters of the textbooks (primarily Mitchell & Jacoby; Gethin) for each week and note questions and/or topics for discussion. Your questions, comments, and discussion topics contribute to the quality of the class and your learning experience.
2. Classroom attendance. You have a lot of obligations during term, but please keep in mind that missing more than two classes can affect your grade.
3. Papers. A longer end-of-term research paper and a short essay on an experiential encounter with a South Asian form of Buddhism.
4. Students may be asked to prepare one short in-class presentation on topics of their choice.

Grading (tentative; may be subject to change)

- 50% Term paper
- 15% Attendance
- 15% Short presentation in class
- 20% Reflection paper

Term Paper: Due December 18, 2015

For your **term paper**, choose any topic within Buddhist studies that is relevant to this course's topic: Buddhist Traditions of South Asia. You are free to explore and research an aspect of Buddhism of your liking/interest in the fields of Buddhist history, doctrine, ritual, meditation practice, or institutional history through the secondary, scholarly literature or in a primary source (Pāli, Sanskrit, Tibetan, etc.), if you read a relevant language. Details: 12-15 pages; include a bibliography; papers must adhere to Turabian style citation (see Hacker, Diana, and Nancy Sommers. 2015. *A Pocket Style manual*. Boston: Bedford/St Martin's). **Topics of the proposed paper are to be submitted for approval after reading week either by e-mail or in person.**

Reflection Paper: Due 11/4/2016

The **reflection paper** (2-4 pages) is meant as a short reflective essay that captures your personal experience of a Buddhist ritual, short retreat, temple visit, interview with a Buddhist priest, etc. If you practice a certain Buddhist tradition, chose a tradition different from your own. A list of possible institutions to visit will be provided at the beginning of class (if you would like to visit a different site, please check in with the instructor first). In your essay, reflect on differences (of the tradition you are familiar with, or of what we have studied in class) and on the idea of an "essence" of Buddhism in all Buddhist traditions. You may also wish to dwell a little on the question of how the *buddhadharma* that you have

learnt from the course readings relates to the lived reality of the practitioners, the institution or organization you plan to visit. Ideally, the first page or so of your essay presents what in anthropology is called a 'participant observation,' if what you plan is visiting a Buddhist ritual, ceremony, meditation session in a temple, etc. (Clifford Geertz's "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture". In: *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*. New York: Basic Books, 1973. 3-30, may give you some inspiration).

Course Schedule

First day of instruction: Friday, 9/9/2016, 9:40

Part 1: Early Buddhism: The Buddha and his Dhamma

Week 1: Orientation & Introduction; Film: *Bones of the Buddha*, by Steven Clarke (UK, 2013) followed by short discussion.

Week 2: The life of the Buddha – History, legend, and the nature of a Buddha

Required Reading: Gethin, ch. 1; The Sutra of the Noble Quest (*Ariyapariyesanasutta* MN 26) = Bodhi (1995), pp. 253-269 or

<http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.026.than.html>

Further Reading: Cousins (1996); Snodgrass (2009); Lopez (1995a)

Week 3: Rewind: Context: (1) The historical and religious environment of Siddhartha Gautama; (2) How do we know what we know about 'Early Buddhism'?

Required reading: Gethin, ch. 2; The Fruits of the Ascetic Life (*Sāmaññaphala-sutta*) = Gethin (2008), pp. 5-37.

Further Reading: Beckwith (2015), pp. 4-16; Collins (1982), part I, ch. 1.

Week 4: The Teaching of the Buddha – Dhamma I.

(1) Introduction and general features of the Buddha's teachings

(2) The "Four Truths of the Noble Ones" (*catvāri āryasatyāni*) and the Eightfold Path of Noble Ones (*āryāṣṭāṅgamarga*)

Required Reading: Gethin, ch. 3; The first "Turning of the Wheel of Dhamma" (*Dhammacakkappavattanasutta*, SN V 420-24; tr. P. Harvey:

<http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/sn/sn56/sn56.011.harv.html>); see also

Frauwallner (2010), pp. 13-20.

Further Reading: Gombrich (2009), chs. 2, 9.

Week 5: The Teaching of the Buddha – Dhamma II.

(3) Karma

(4) Dependent Origination (*pratīyasamutpāda*)

(5) Meditation

Required Reading: (3) *Cūḷakammavibhaṅgasutta* = Gethin (2008), pp. 195-205; (4) The sūtra of the Young Rice Plant (*Śālistambhasūtra*) = Frauwallner (2010), pp. 52-61 +

Introduction to the ch., pp. 30-32; (5) Gethin, ch. 7; Harvey, pp. 328-332; *Kandarakasutta* (MN 51) = Frauwallner (2010), pp. 16-20.

Further Reading: Bronkhorst (1986)

Week 6: The Saṅgha: Buddhism institutionalized

(1) The Monastic Order of monks and nuns

(2) The monastic code of conduct (Vinaya)

Required Reading: Gethin, ch. 4; an overview of the divisions of the Pāli *Vinaya* will be given in class together with examples from the *Pātimokkha* and the *Khandhaka* sections.

Further Reading: Bechert & Gombrich (1984)

Week 7: Early Developments: Abhidharma and some Śrāvakayāna-schools I

(1) Lists (*mātrikas*) and the theory of *dharma*s; the Theravādins

(2) Interlude: Buddhist cosmology

Required Reading: (1) The *Saṅgītisutta* (DN 33) = Walshe (1995), pp. 479-511; (2) Harvey, pp. 32-36; Gethin, pp. 112-126;

Further Reading: Williams (2000), ch. 4; Bronkhorst (2009), ch. 2.

Oct 24th-30th: Reading Week – No class

Week 8: – ***Submission of your proposed topic for the term paper due*** –

Developments in Buddhism: Abhidharma and some Śrāvakayāna-schools II

(3) The doctrine of No Self; The Sarvāstivādins/Vaibhāṣikas, the Sautrāntikas

(4) The Pudgalavādins; the Mahāsāṃghikas

Required Reading: (3) Gethin, ch. 6; *Nakulapitar (Sutta)* = Gethin (2008), 216-220 (= SN III 1-5); *Anattalakkhanasutta* = (SN III 66); *Alagaddūpamasutta* (MN 22; MN I 130-142)

<http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/sn/sn22/sn22.059.nymo.html>; Vasubandhu's *Pañcaskandhaka* = Anacker (1984), ch. IV: A Discussion of the five Aggregates.

(4) Williams (2000), pp. 124-130.

Further Reading: Siderits (2007), ch. 3; Williams (2000), entire ch. 4; Lamotte (1988), ch. 6.

Part 2: The Mahāyāna

Week 9: The Beginnings of the Mahāyāna in India

Required Reading: Gethin, pp. 56-59 and 224-234; Williams (2009), pp. 1-33.

Further Reading: Skilling (2013); Silk (2002); Harrison (1995).

Week 10: Everything is Emptiness:

(1) The *Prajñāpāramitā* literature;

(2) Bodhisattvas

(3) Early Mahāyāna Sūtras

Required Reading: Gethin, 234-37; Conze (1975), pp. 83-96 and 209-213.

Further Reading: (2) Har Dayal (1999); (3) Williams (2009), pp. 27-47.

11/24/2016-11/25/2016: Thanksgiving holiday – No class

Week 11: Brief Overview of Mahāyāna-philosophy (*Reflection of Site Visit Paper Due*)

- (1) Yogācāra
- (2) Madhyamaka
- (3) Tathāgatagarbha or 'Buddha Nature'

Required Reading: (1)-(3) Gethin, ch. 4, pp. 237-253; (1) Vasubandhu's *Viṃśatikā* = Anacker (1984), ch. 6; (2) Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* = Siderits&Katsura (2013), chs. 1, 15; (3) the 'Lion's Roar of Queen Śrīmālā' (*Śrīmālādevīsīṃhanādasūtra*) = we will mainly be looking at the passage in which the *tathāgatagarbha* is identified with the *dharmakāya*: Williams (2009), 116-117 (= Wayman & Wayman (1971), pp. 98-99).

Week 12: Buddhas and Bodhisattvas

- (1) Dhāraṇīs
- (2) The Mahāyāna-Buddhist pantheon
- (3) The *Sukhāvativyūhasūtra*
- (4) The Bodhisattva Path

Required Reading: (General overview:) Gethin, ch. 4, pp. 224-231; (3) Gómez (1996), his translation of the Smaller *Sukhāvativyūhasūtra*; (4) Śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatāra* (= Śāntideva, and the Padmakara Translation Group. 2006), at least chs. 1, 3, 4 (I highly recommend reading the entire *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, for it most beautifully captures in a nutshell the entire Mahāyāna and is a joy to read!)

Further Reading: Williams (2009) ch. 10.

**Part 3: Vajrayāna/Mantrayāna
- Term Paper Due -**

Week 13: (12/16/2016) Tantra in India and Beyond

- (1) Introduction to Buddhist Tantra and *tantras*: deities, mantras, maṇḍalas, and visualization.
- (2) The Mahāsiddhas

Required Reading: (1) Williams (2000), ch. 7; Gethin, pp. 266-273; (2) Jackson (2004), Introduction and Tilopa's Treasury of Couplets; Robinson (1979): Tilopa.

Further Reading: Snellgrove (2002), chs. III.1-6 (=pp. 117-160) and III.11-12 (= pp. 189-213) and III.15 (= pp. 278-294).

Bibliography

In addition to the required textbooks listed above (Gethin), which will form the basis of our class discussions, there exists a vast amount of introductory as well as specialized buddhological secondary literature. Students are invited to consult the books listed below – or others – as additional reading or for their term paper preparation. This is by no means an exhaustive list but a selection of the most pertinent secondary literature on the different topics covered during the course. I have given references to these in the syllabus under Further Readings.

- Anacker, Stefan. 1984. *Seven works of Vasubandhu, the Buddhist psychological doctor*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Bareau, André, Sara Boin-Webb (tr.), and Andrew Skilton (ed.) 2013. *The Buddhist schools of the Small Vehicle*. [First published in French as *Les Sectes Bouddhiques du Petit Véhicule* by EFEO, Paris, 1955]
- Bechert, Heinz, and Richard Gombrich. 1984. *The world of Buddhism: Buddhist monks and nuns in society and culture*. Thames & Hudson: London.
- Bronkhorst, Johannes. 1986. *The two traditions of meditation in ancient India*. Stuttgart: Steiner-Verlag-Wiesbaden-GmbH.
- ㊦. 2009. *Buddhist teaching in India*. Boston: Wisdom Publications.
- Collins, Steven. 1982. *Selfless persons: imagery and thought in Theravāda Buddhism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Conze, Edward. 1953. *Buddhist texts through the ages*. Oxford: Cassirer.
- ㊦. 1975. *The perfection of wisdom in eight thousand lines and its verse summary*. Bolinas Cal: Four Seasons Foundation.
- ㊦. 1983. *Buddhist thought in India: 3 phases of Buddhist philosophy*. London [u.a.]: Allen and Unwin. (1st ed., 1962)
- Cousins, L.S. 1996. "The Dating of the Historical Buddha: A review article". In: *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 6, 1 (1996), pp. 57 – 63. [Reprinted in: Williams, Paul. 2005. *Buddhism: Critical Concepts in Religious Studies*, vol I. Routledge.]
- Dayal, Har. 1999. *The Bodhisattva doctrine in Buddhist Sanskrit literature*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers. [1st ed., 1931, London: K. Paul, Trenck, Trubner & Co., Ltd.]
- Frauwallner, Erich, and Lodrö Sangpo (tr.). 2010. *The philosophy of Buddhism = Die Philosophie des Buddhismus*. New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers. [1st ed., 1956]
- Gombrich, Richard F. 2009. *What the Buddha thought*. London [u.a.]: Equinox Publ.
- Gómez, Luis O. 1996. *Sukhāvātī-Vyūha-Sūtra: the paradise of the Buddha of measureless light: Sanskrit and Chinese versions of the Sukhāvātīvyūha sutras*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Harrison, Paul. 1995. "Searching for the origins of the Mahayana: What are we looking for?" *The Eastern Buddhist*, New Series 27 (1), pp. 48–69. [Repr. in Williams, Paul. 2005. *Buddhism: Critical Concepts in Religious Studies*, vol. 3.]
- Harvey, Peter. 2013. *An introduction to Buddhism: teachings, history and practices*. Second revised edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (1st ed., 1990) [in the following = Harvey]
- Jackson, Roger R. 2004. *Tantric treasures: three collections of mystical verse from Buddhist India*. New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lamotte, Etienne. 1988. *History of Indian Buddhism: from the origins to the Śaka era*. Translated from the French by Sara Webb-Boin under the supervision of Jean Dantinne. Louvain-la-Neuve: Université catholique de Louvain, Institut orientaliste. [Original French Edition: *Histoire du Bouddhisme Indien, des origines à l'ère Śaka*, Bibliothèque du Muséon, Louvain, 1958; Reprint 1967; 2nd reprint P.I.O.L. - Louvain-la-Neuve, 1976].
- Lopez, Donald S. 1995a. *Curators of the Buddha: the study of Buddhism under colonialism*. Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press.
- ㊦. 1995b. *Buddhism in practice*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- ㊦. 2004. *Buddhist scriptures*. London: Penguin.

- Ñāṇamoli, Bhikkhu, and Bhikkhu Bodhi. 1995. *The middle length discourses of the Buddha: a translation of the Majjhima Nikaya*. Boston: Wisdom Publications.
- Robinson, James B. 1979. *Buddha's lions (= Caturaśīti-siddha-pravṛtti): The lives of the eighty-four siddhas*. Berkeley, CA: Dharma Publishing.
- Reat, Noble Ross. 1994. *Buddhism: a history*. Berkeley, Calif: Asian Humanities Press.
- Śāntideva, and the Padmakara Translation Group. 2006. *The way of the Bodhisattva: a translation of the Bodhicharyāvatāra*. Boston: Shambhala (1st ed., 1997)
- Siderits, Mark. 2007. *Buddhism as philosophy: an introduction*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Silk, Jonathan A. 2002. "What, If Anything, Is Mahāyāna Buddhism? Problems of Definitions and Classifications". *Numen*. 49 (4): 355-405. [Reprinted in: Williams, Paul (ed.) 2005. *Buddhism: Critical Concepts in Religious Studies*. Vol. 3, The Origins and Nature of Mahāyāna Buddhism: Some Mahāyāna Religious Topics. London: Routledge, pp. 368-404.
- Snellgrove, David L. 2002. *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism: Indian Buddhists and their Tibetan successors*. Boston: Shambhala.
- Snodgrass, Judith. 2009. "Discourse, Authority, Demand: The Politics of Early English Publications on Buddhism". In: *TransBuddhism: transmission, translation, transformation*. Ed. by Bhushan, Nalini, Jay L. Garfield, and Abraham Zablocki. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2009, pp. 21-42.
- Walshe, Maurice O'C. 1995. *The long discourses of the Buddha: a translation of the Dīgha Nikāya*. Boston: Wisdom Publications.
- Williams, Paul, and Anthoxny Tribe. 2000. *Buddhist thought: a complete introduction to the Indian tradition*. London [u.a.]: Routledge.
- Williams, Paul. 2009. *Mahāyāna Buddhism: the doctrinal foundations*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge. (1st ed., 1989)