HR 3017 Readings in Mahayana Texts: Triple Sutra
Tentative Syllabus

Course Description:

An introduction to selected Mahayana Buddhist texts in English translation. This semester we will read the Three Pure Land Sutras: the Larger Sukhavativyuha Sutra, the Smaller Sukhavativyuha Sutra, and the Contemplation Sutra on the Buddha of Infinite Life. The course will introduce the overall structure of each text and examine major doctrinal issues that form the foundation of the Pure Land teaching. Course format: Lecture. Evaluation method: Participation and term paper.

Instructors:
Rev. Harry Bridge
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Office hours: After class on Mondays or by appointment.

Course Requirements and Evaluation:

Students must participate in class discussions. Participation is worth 30% of the grade.

Students are also required to submit a ten to fifteen page research paper and present their topic to the class. A one page prospectus is due March 17. The presentation will be given on May 12 and is worth 10%. The paper is due on May 14, 2012, and is worth 60% of the grade.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will become familiar with the narratives contained in the Three Pure Land Sutras.
2. Students will have an overview of the textual origins and issues, such as the various versions of the sutras and identification of translators.
3. Students will also become aware of the Jodo Shinshu perspectives and interpretations of the Three Pure Land Sutras
4. Students will be exposed to alternative methods of reading and interpreting the texts, such as various forms of literary criticism.
Class Schedule:
Monday 9:40AM - 12:30PM

Week 1 – Feb. 1 – Introduction

Week 2 – Feb. 8 – Larger Sutra Part 1
Assignment:
*The Three Pure Land Sutras, Vol. II, 3-50*
Fujita, “Pure Land Buddhism in India” 3-8

Week 3 – Feb. 15 – Presidents Day – NO CLASS

Week 4 – Feb. 22 – Larger Sutra Part 2
Assignment:
*The Three Pure Land Sutras, Vol. II, 51-103*

Week 5 – Feb. 29 – Amidakyō – Vows, Pure Land, etc.
Assignment:
*The Three Pure Land Sutras, Vol. I, 3-13*

Week 6 – March 7 – Larger & Smaller Sutras – Doctrinal points, Shinshu perspective I
Meditative vs. Recitative Nembutsu, Shinran’s Special Readings (Hongan, Jojumon, etc.), shuji myo (Amidakyo), 10 nen vs. 1 nen, five true vows
Assignment:
Fujiwara, 17-47
CWS Vol. II, 23-27
Ueda & Hirota, 185-194

Week 7 – March 14 – Larger & Smaller Sutras – Doctrinal points, Shinshu perspective II
Authenticity of Larger Sutra as True Teaching, Truly Settled State in Present Life, jinen, etc.
Assignment:
CWS Vol. II, 41-47

Week 8 – March 21 – Spring Recess – NO CLASS

Week 9 – March 28 – Alternate Perspectives: What is “Pure Land Buddhism?”
Assignment:
Nattier, “The Realm of Aksobhya…”
Research Paper Prospectus due

Week 10 – April 4 – Contemplation Sutra – narrative
Assignment:
*The Three Pure Land Sutras, Vol. I, 17-63*
Week 11 – April 11 – *Contemplation Sutra* – compilation issues, other contemplation texts, etc.

**Assignment:**
- “Introduction” to *Sutra of Contemplation...* xi-xl
- Silk, “The Composition of the Guan Wuliangshoufo-Jing...” 181-220
- Fujita, “Textual Origins...” 149-163

Week 12 – April 18 – *Contemplation Sutra* - Doctrinal points, Shinshu perspective – Shan-tao, etc.
- “Bonbu or Bodhisattva?”, Visualization, Three Minds, sangan tennyu, on-ken, etc.

**Assignment:**
- Yamabe, 123-152

Week 13 – April 25 – Commentaries on the Three Pure Land Sutras
- Oso-Genso Eko, etc.

**Assignment:**
- Jodoron (Matsumoto)

Week 14 – May 2 – Three Pure Land Sutras in Art, Architecture, and Ritual

Week 15 – May 9 – Conclusion, student paper presentations

Week 16 – May 16 – student paper presentations (continued)

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**Readings**

Required Texts, available at the BCA Bookstore (sales@bcabookstore.com, (510) 809-1435; open Tuesday to Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. located at: 2140 Durant Avenue in Berkeley, CA 94704):


Other readings will be distributed in PDF format or in class

August 19, 2015
Bibliography


Yamabe, Nobuyoshi. “Practice of Visualization and the Visualization Sutra: An Examination of Mural Paintings at Toyok, Turfan.” In *Pacific World*, Third Series No. 4 (Fall 2002), 123-152.

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