

RELI 206

Buddhism: The Noble Path

READ THIS OUTLINE! It will be assumed that its contents have been communicated to students, and ignorance of information contained in it will not be considered an excuse for failure to meet the course requirements.

Course co-ordinator: Michael Radich 463 9477, HU 216,
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Where and when:

Lectures: HU 119

Thursday 10:00 a.m.-11:50 noon

Tutorials: Times and Seminar Room TBA.

Course Dates

Commencement: March 5th 2009

Mid trimester break: April 13th – 26th 2009

End of teaching: June 5th 2009

University Examination Period: June 8th – July 1st 2009

Mid year break: July 2nd – 12th 2009

Religious Studies is at Hunter. The programme administrator, Aliko Kalliabetsos, is in HU 318 (ext 5299), aliki.kalliabetsos@vuw.ac.nz. **Notices regarding the course or any information on changes will be posted on the department notice board outside her office. Notices will also be communicated to students via emails sent from Blackboard. Students who do not use their assigned student.vuw.ac.nz email addresses should ensure that ITS has an up-to-date email address, and that they check this address regularly.**

Office Hours: The main office is open **Monday - Friday, 9.30 – 12:00 noon and 2:30 - 3.30 p.m.** You can arrange to meet with Michael Radich in his office by appointment, and he will also answer all emails promptly.

Course outline

1 The course aims:

The course aims to teach students to think, argue and write about the Buddhism in a critical, creative and theoretically informed manner. The course uses a mixture of lectures and small-group discussions to make connections between theory and lived religious experience. The course also aims to improve students' skills in critical thinking, creative thinking and communication.

This course is designed as an integral combination of lectures, readings, tutorials, and assigned work. These components are complementary with one another, not redundant; and ALL components of the course are necessary for students to do well. It is thus recommended in the strongest possible terms that students do the reading, attend all lectures and tutorials, and keep up with the required work for the course.

2 The main learning objectives for this course are threefold:

- a. to impart knowledge about some ways that the body has featured in religious practice and ideas, and in theoretical discourse about and around the study of religion in the academy;

- b. to teach the study of religion as a critical discipline; that is, to examine the political, economic, social, historical, conceptual and cultural dimensions of religious activity;
- c. to help the students develop their research and writing skills, their ability to make and defend arguments, and their critical awareness.

3 Rationale for assessment: The assessment of this course relates directly to these objectives.

- i. **The mandatory reading assignments** are to be short (two pages maximum) written responses to required readings, lectures, and the question posed in relation to them. They ensure that students read and think about the required readings *prior to* lecture and tutorial discussion. They also provide continuous feedback to students on their level of understanding and their development of the analytical skills required in the essays, including critical and creative thinking and communication skills. Application of ideas from theoretical readings to empirical, historical or doctrinal case studies is encouraged in this work.
- ii. **The essays** allow students to apply their analytical skills to information retrieved through library research on a set topic. Essays develop the skills of critical thinking, reading, analysis and organizing material necessary for continued study. The development of an original thesis is an important opportunity for them to exercise creative thinking in a manner appropriate to the academic context. Essays also demonstrate the students' level of proficiency in finding, understanding, and using sources, and gives students the opportunity to develop a more in-depth knowledge of an area covered in the lectures and weekly readings.
- iii. **The test** allows students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the material presented in the course, and allows students the opportunity to reflect on their learning process throughout the term.

Students who do not understand the grades they have been assigned or are concerned about their progress are encouraged to meet with the marker for a discussion.

4 This course is delivered through a combination of lectures and tutorials.

The **lecture programme** follows below. Lectures may be varied from time to time. As much notice as possible will be given when changes occur and, if necessary a revised programme will be issued at lectures.

Lectures are an essential part of the course, and your attendance is encouraged in the strongest possible terms. **Lectures do not merely repeat the content of the readings**; rather, the course is designed as an integrated combination of complementary lectures, readings and tutorials, and *all* components are necessary for students to do well.

Tutorials deal with topics which complement the lecture programme. They provide an opportunity to discuss aspects of the course in a small group and develop the ability to contribute to discussions. This is an important part of the apparatus the course uses to develop students' skills in critical thinking and communication.

Rationale: why do we require the mandatory reading assignments? Over the course of the trimester, we require students to submit a total of four written responses to the readings. These responses are **submitted to the tutor in tutorial**. These responses should not exceed **two pages** in length and need only address the required readings. They will be marked according to the criteria below and returned to students as soon as practicable, to allow students the opportunity to use and build on the feedback they receive in subsequent work.

These written responses are designed to accomplish the following four objectives, each of which is vital to successful completion of the course:

- They give students a regular, small-scale (low-risk) opportunity to practice good academic writing, and receive feedback on their writing to help them improve.
- They ensure students are keeping up with the required readings and enable teaching staff to monitor student progress.
- They provide students the opportunity to develop critical reading skills (i.e. a focus on the material most pertinent to the question).
- They develop students' skills in critical analysis and communication.

Assessment for mandatory reading assignments

The marker will assign each reading assignment a mark out of ten. A mark below 5/10 indicates that the work is unsatisfactory, i.e. that the student shows no sign of actually having read the work set; or has failed to comprehend adequately; or has failed to answer the set question. Marks from 5/10 to 10/10 are assigned according to the relative merit of the answers. The ideal response, which will receive full marks, shows ample evidence of having read and clearly understood the assigned material; is clearly written; and gives an original, well-thought-out response to the readings and the question.

NOTE: These mandatory reading assignments are a great chance to boost your grades! In no other section of the course (essays and test) is it likely that even the best students will receive perfect marks. Thus, if you just do the readings; write a careful, thoughtful response; and hand it in on time, you will usually raise your final grade.

The marks for each assignment will be added up and averaged to calculate the 10% of the overall grade delegated for reading assignments. Missing assignments will receive a 0/10. Assignments one week late will be docked 1/10; assignments two weeks late will be docked 2/10. Assignments more than two weeks late will be accepted only with medical documentation, and will otherwise receive zero. Students are reminded that even when their work becomes unacceptably late and will not receive a mark, they must still compete four reading assignments to complete the course.

The mandatory requirements for this course are submission of all required work for assessment (reading assignments, essays, test), attaining 50% or more for course assessment, and attendance at 80% of tutorials.

5 Assessment requirements. The course is internally assessed by means of two essays, four reading assignments, and one class test, **all mandatory**, as follows:

- **two essays, 2,000 words in length, each worth 30%** of the final grade.

Essay 1 due THURSDAY APRIL 9 2009, 5 p.m.

Essay 2 due FRIDAY MAY 22 2009, 5 p.m.

Essays are to be submitted to the assignment box outside the Religious Studies office (HU 318). Please make sure you sign the sheet to document that you submitted your assignment, and when. Essays are also to be submitted electronically, via Blackboard, in part so that student work can be checked for plagiarism via TurnItIn.

- **four mandatory reading assignments**; short (two pages *maximum*) written assignments to be submitted **at the beginning of lecture in the week of the topic chosen**, collectively worth **15%** of the final grade.
 - **a class test lasting two hours in class time on Wednesday June 3**, worth **25%** of the final grade. A preparation guide for the test will be distributed at lecture a week beforehand, on Wednesday May 27.
- 6 Required text:** There is no set textbook. The *RELI 327 Course Reader* should be obtained from the Student Notes shop at a cost of approximately \$35.

7 Academic integrity and plagiarism

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. "someone else's work" means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or staff
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the Internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organization or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it, on the University's website:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

IN THIS COURSE, WE WILL USE THE SOFTWARE "Turnitin" TO CHECK ALL STUDENT WORK FOR PLAGIARISM.

Student work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine <<http://www.turnitin.com>>. Turnitin is an online plagiarism prevention tool which identifies material that may have been copied from other sources including the Internet, books, journals, periodicals or the work of other students. Turnitin is used to assist academic staff in detecting misreferencing, misquotation, and the inclusion of unattributed material, which may be forms of cheating or plagiarism. At the discretion of the head of School, handwritten work may be copy typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin. You are strongly advised to check with your tutor or the course coordinator if you are uncertain about how to use and cite material from other sources. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted materials on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions will not be made available to any other party.

- 8 Workload (recommendation of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences):** For 200-level 22 points one trimester courses, the working party on workloads and assessments recommends 15 hours per week. An average student should spend 12 hours per week for preparation, reading and writing in addition to attendance at lectures and tutorials.

200 – level	1 trimester	22 points	15 hours
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- 9 Aegrotat regulations apply** to internally assessed courses. Students who cannot submit or complete the course requirements due to illness or some other impairment may apply for an aegrotat pass. Applications may be submitted concerning tests or for other assessment items which are due at most three weeks before the day on which lectures cease for the course, and for which no alternative item of assessment could reasonably be substituted or extension time granted. (refer to aegrotat provisions in section 4.5 of the Assessment statute.

10 General University Statutes and Policies

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the Victoria University Calendar or go to the Academic Policy and Student Policy sections on:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy>

This website also provides information for students in a number of areas including Academic Grievances, Student and Staff conduct, Meeting the needs of students with impairments, and student support/VUWSA student advocates.

11 Student Support

Staff at Victoria want students to have positive learning experiences at the University. Each faculty has a designated staff member who can either help you directly if your academic progress is causing you concern, or quickly put you in contact with someone who can. In the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences the support contacts are **Dr Stuart Brock, Murphy Building, room 312**. Assistance for specific groups is also available from the Kaiwawao Māori, Manaaki Pihipihinga or Victoria International.

Manaaki Pihipihinga Programme

This programme offers:

- Academic mentoring for all Māori & Pacific students at all levels of undergraduate study for the faculties of Commerce & Administration and Humanities & Social Sciences. Contact Manaaki-Pihipihinga-Programme@vuw.ac.nz or phone 463 6015 to register for Humanities & Social Science mentoring and 463 8977 to register for mentoring for Commerce and Administration courses
- Postgraduate support network for the above faculties, which links students into all of the post grad activities and workshops on campus and networking opportunities
- Pacific Support Coordinator who can assist Pacific students with transitional issues, disseminate useful information and provide any assistance needed to help students achieve. Contact; Pacific-Support-Coord@vuw.ac.nz or phone 463 5842.

Manaaki Pihipihinga is located at: 14 Kelburn Parade, back court yard, Room 109 D (for Humanities mentoring & some first year Commerce mentoring) or Room 210 level 2 west wing railway station Pipitea (commerce mentoring space). Māori Studies mentoring is done at the marae.

Student Services

In addition, the Student Services Group (email: student-services@vuw.ac.nz) is available to provide a variety of support and services. Find out more at:

www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/

VUWSA employs Education Coordinators who deal with academic problems and provide support, advice and advocacy services, as well as organising class representatives and faculty delegates. The Education Office (tel. 463-6983 or 463-6984, email at education@vuwsa.org.nz) is located on the ground floor, Student Union Building.

- 12 Class representatives:** Class representatives are elected in the first week or two of the term. They are supported by the VUW Students' Association, and have a variety of roles, including assistance with grievances and student feedback to staff and VUWSA. Contact details for your class rep will be listed on the Religious Studies notice board.
- 13 Student Learning Support Services:** A range of workshops, drop-ins and other assistance is provided by SLSS, covering such things as study techniques, essay writing, exam preparation and note taking skills. They are at Level 0 Kirk, facing Hunter Courtyard tel: 463 5999.
- 14 Supplementary Materials:** A website of materials related to RELI 206 is being maintained in Blackboard. You can find it by visiting <http://blackboard@vuw.ac.nz>. Your user name is the one issued to you by Student Computing Services. Your password is your Student ID Number. If in doubt, please contact the Student Computing Services Help Desk, 463-6666 (extension 6666 from VUW phones) or by email scs-help@vuw.ac.nz
- 15 Evaluation:** This course will be evaluated by UTDC.

Lectures and Readings

The **lectures** (MYLT 220, Wednesdays 1:00-3:00 p.m.) constitute the core of the course. The readings supplement the lectures, but are *not* a substitute for them (nor vice versa). As lecture material is crucial for both the class test and the essays, it is important that students *both* attend all lectures *and* do all readings.

This course will be divided into three parts, the three parts not being entirely equal in terms of time spent.

I. The first section will aim to introduce the most basic elements (the "Three Jewels") of Buddhism: Buddha, Dharma ("Law", or the teachings) and Sa g ha ("Community", or the monastic order).

II. In the second section, which will comprise the bulk of the course, we will engage in a series of case studies, in which we will look at specific elements of Buddhist doctrine and practice as they are found in the major cultural contexts where Buddhism found an enduring place. In each of these weeks, we will also take our example from a different Buddhist civilization: India, Java, Tibet, Japan and China. In each week, we will look at a different facet or facets of Buddhism, including philosophy, ritual, art, devotionism, meditation, pilgrimage, and writing. Each lecture will begin by sketching the historical conditions under which Buddhism spread and flourished into the civilization from which the week's case study is drawn, before discussing the case study materials in detail.

III. In the third and final section of the course, we will look at two case studies that reveal some of the issues that have faced Buddhism in the modern world, before stepping back in the final lecture to look over the overall sweep of the course and identify some general themes.

NOTE ON READINGS:

This course is designed so that readings supplement lectures, not so that lectures summarise readings or render them redundant. This means that you must **both do the readings and come to lectures**. It will be very difficult for you to get the most out of the course, or do as well as you can on assessments, if you do not fulfil these **both** of these two basic requirements.

Required readings to accompany lectures will all be made available in Student Notes.

Optional readings are given for two reasons. First, I give one or two extra items for those who are keen and want to delve a little further into a topic. Such items appear at the top of each optional reading list, and those marked with an asterisk are especially recommended and are included in your Student Notes. Second, I also list important items on a given topic for those who might wish to pursue that topic for an essay. The items in these lists should provide good starting points for essay research, though they are not the only such starting point, and cannot be regarded as *all* that is necessary for a good essay.

For optional additional background, I strongly recommend that you also buy and/or read

Gethin, Rupert. *The Foundations of Buddhism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Optional readings from this book are peppered through the early part of the course, and the entirety of the book is very worthwhile. Some copies are also available in the main university

library, and other copies are available (for in-library use) in the Religious Studies library (Hunter 3fl.).

Other **optional** additional general books you might like to read for background (all by scholars excellent in their own ways; all available in the university library; I have provided library call numbers for your convenience):

Harvey, Peter. *An Introduction to Buddhism: Teachings, History and Practices*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990. BQ4022 H342 I.

Robinson, Richard H. *Buddhism: A Historical Introduction*. Belmont: Dickenson Pub. Co., 1970), BQ4012 R663 B; (Encino, CA: Dickenson Pub. Co., 1977. BQ4012 R663 B 2ed; Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1982. BQ4012 R663 B 3ed.

Williams, Paul. *Mahāyāna Buddhism: The Doctrinal Foundations*. London: Routledge, 1989. BQ7405 W726 M.

Lopez, Donald S. *The Story of Buddhism: A Concise Guide to Its History and Teachings*, San Francisco: Harper, 2001. BQ4012 L864 S.

Gombrich, Richard. *The World of Buddhism: Buddhist Monks and Nuns in Society and Culture*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1984. BQ4012 W927.

Reat, Noble Ross. *Buddhism: A History*. Berkeley, CA: Asian Humanities Press, 1994. BQ266 R288 B.

Strong, John S. *The Experience of Buddhism: Sources and Interpretations*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1995. BQ122 E96; Australia: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, 2002. BQ122 E96 2ed.

Corless, Roger J. *The Vision of Buddhism: The Space Under the Tree*. New York: Paragon House, 1989. BQ4012 C799 V.

A more interpretative approach than some of the other books on this list, so take it all with a grain of salt, and try to distinguish what is actually Buddhism, and what is Corless.

Rahula, Walpola. *What the Buddha Taught*. New York: Grove Press, 1974. BQ4022 R148 W 1974.

Somewhat pietistic and rationalising, and a little dated (in terms of the scholarly field of Buddhist Studies) in its approach to Buddhism as a whole. But Rahula was a superbly erudite monk, and this book is still an extremely clear presentation of the basic teachings as understood by an old and important branch of the tradition.

Lecture Programme and Readings

Lecture 1 Thurs Mar 5

First hour: **Introduction to the course**

PART ONE: BASICS: THE THREE JEWELS

Central to Buddhism are the so-called “Three Jewels” (*triratna*) of the Buddha, the Dharma and the Saṅgha. One very common expression of Buddhist faith, for example, is the well-known triple formula of “taking refuge” (*śaranagamana*), in which one declares, “I go to the Buddha for refuge; I go to the Dharma for refuge; I go to the Saṅgha for refuge” (Skt. *buddha śarana gacchāmi, dharma śarana gacchāmi, saṅgha śarana gacchāmi*). This formula is used in some traditions as the core of conversion ceremonies, whereby its recitation marks the moment at which one becomes a Buddhist; it is also common in liturgical contexts as a kind of prayer by which practitioners and adherents reaffirm their adherence to the religion.

In this first part of the course we will explore the origins of Buddhism by examining the place of each of these triple pillars in the earliest form of the religion.

Lecture 1 (cont.)

Second hour: **Buddha: Historical personage and figure of legend**

The Buddha, or *buddha* (the state of being “awakened”) is primary to Buddhism. This week we explore some of the meanings of Buddha, with particular reference to various accounts of the life of an historical person we call “the Buddha”. We will look at this life from two different viewpoints: the historical, evidentially based version sought by modern scholarship; and the largely legendary account that has been at the centre of most traditional Buddhist piety and art.

Lecture 2 Thurs Mar 12

First hour: **Dharma: The Four Noble Truths, “No-self”, Karma**

The Buddha's teachings are known as “the Dharma”. This week we will explore some of the central teachings of the Buddha as they are preserved in the earliest layers of Buddhist texts, focusing our discussion around the key concept of “no-self”, or the inexistence of the “person” (*ātman, pudgala*). In exploring this concept, we will also touch on other concepts like the Four Noble Truths, impermanence, the five aggregates (*skandhas*), and causes and conditions.

Second hour: **Saṅgha: The community of monks and nuns**

A key part of Buddhism in all pre-modern contexts was the community of monks and nuns, or *saṅgha* (a term that in modern times, especially in the West, has altered in meaning to often refer to the community of all Buddhists, including laypeople). The *saṅgha* served at least three major functions. (1) It provided a context and system of practice and learning towards the goal of spiritual betterment and, ideally, ultimate liberation for its members. (2) It preserved the Dharma. This was an especially vital role in the oral (non-literate) culture of early Buddhism, but remained a significant function of the *saṅgha* for the remainder of Buddhist history. (3) It fulfilled important religious functions for the laity, including teaching, the provision of ritual services,

generating "merit" for lay donors by acting as spiritually powerful recipients for their donations in the "economy of *dāna* and merit", and representing and modelling religious ideals.

PART TWO: MAJOR HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Lecture 3 Thurs Mar 19

First hour: **Buddha and Dharma reconfigured: The Mahāyāna, as seen in Pure Land Buddhism**

Starting around the turn of the Common Era, some strands of Buddhism underwent a related series of profound transformations in doctrine, literary production, iconography, cultic practice, philosophy and so on. Many of the results of this transformation were united by common understandings of key questions such as the nature of Buddhahood, prospects for and paths to liberation, and the structure of the cosmos; these rich varieties of Buddhism were united under the umbrella of the term "Mahāyāna" or "Greater Vehicle". We will examine some of the ways the Dharma, or Buddhist doctrine, changed in Mahāyāna Buddhism, focusing particularly on the emergence of the tradition eventually known in East Asia, where it was extremely influential, as "Pure Land" (Ch. *Jingtu*, Jpn. *Jōdo* 淨土).

Second hour: **Tantric Buddhism**

By the eighth century of the Common Era at the latest, a relatively stable and recognisable new constellation of religious forms had emerged across Indian religions in general, including in Buddhism. This complex constellation of religious forms regularly included such elements as the harnessing for religious purposes of aspects of human being and life commonly taken as impure, problematic or bad (emotions, sex, anger, violence, defiling substances); the return to central place in religious practice of ritual, often with magical overtones; a new range of deities, often of demonic aspect; offerings to these deities, often through fire; practices in which practitioners identified with and *became* the deity, and in many cases so harnessed the formidable powers of the deity to both salvific and worldly ends; the incorporation in ritual practice of highly elaborate visualisation meditations; the restriction of many key practices and the powers they harnessed to closed lineages of initiates (esotericism); and the use of special ritual hand gestures (*mudrā*), recitations or incantations (*mantra*, *dhāra ṅ*, *vidyā* etc.), diagrammatic representations of realms of ultimate truth (*ma a la*), special rituals of consecration and "empowerment" (*abhi eka*, "sprinkling"); and so on. The constellation of these forms was ultimately known to history as "Tantra". Tantric Buddhism spread rapidly across Asia, and ultimately became a dominant strand in the Buddhism of Tibet; an important set of schools in the Buddhism of Japan; and a significant thread incorporated in the general practice of much Chinese Buddhism. Tantric Buddhism raises interesting questions about the underlying nature and continuity of Buddhism through history; its adaptability and amenability to change; and its relations to other, non-Buddhist religious developments.

Lecture 4 Thurs Mar 26

First hour: **Buddhism reaches China: the "sinification" of Buddhism**

Some inklings of Buddhism may have first reached China sometime in the first or early second century of the Common Era. Certainly, the first Buddhist texts were translated into Chinese in

the second century, and from then began a process, many centuries long, of the transmission and translation of successive waves of Buddhist literature, which only came to an end in the Song dynasty (around the tenth and eleventh centuries). This may have been the largest single transfer of ideas from one major zone of Eurasian civilization to another in all of premodern history. From the sixth and seventh centuries, Chinese Buddhist scholars and thinkers began to elaborate significant bodies of Buddhist doctrine and ideas of their own, and this process eventually led to the emergence of whole new "schools" of Buddhism particular to China, which then spread across the rest of East Asia. These schools included Chan/Zen, Pure Land, Tiantai/Tendai, and Huayan/Kegon. One major problem that has much exercised modern scholars is that of the extent to which Buddhism changed in the course of this major transfer across languages and civilizations, and the extent to which the forms of Buddhism that emerged are characteristically "Chinese" and therefore tell us something about the fundamental nature of Chinese values, thought and religiosity. This is the problem of the "sinification" (making Chinese) of Buddhism. We will explore this problem as an instance of a more general class of interesting questions about how Buddhism has changed as it has spread across a wide range of different cultures in Asia. (We will encounter this same problem in a different form once again towards the end of the course, when we consider how Buddhism has changed as it has moved to the West.)

Second hour: **Classical Chan (Jpn. Zen, 禪)**

Sometime in the seventh century, small groups of practitioners in China emerged who focused particularly on the practice of meditation, and in the eighth century one of these groups gained court patronage and became a significant player on the national scene. This was the beginning of what was to be known to history as the "Chan" school(s) of Buddhism (Ch. Chan, Jpn. Zen, 禪, from Skt. *dhyāna*, Pāli *jhāna*, "meditation, absorption, trance"). In the ninth century a copious and unusual literature began to grow around this school, and many of the most famous (and semi-legendary) figures in this tradition lived in this era. By the Song dynasty, Chan was perhaps *the* dominant strand of Buddhism in China, and had reached out beyond the monastery walls to become a major component of the intellectual and spiritual life of the literati elite (*shi* 士). It was transferred to Japan by two major figures, and subsequently also became a major component of Japanese Buddhism.

Chan is of interest in part because it has often been regarded by modern scholars as perhaps the single most significant and representative product of the process of the "sinification" of Buddhism, that is, as the most "Chinese" form of Buddhism. It has also been claimed for the tradition by some scholars and advocates (two groups who are not always mutually distinct!) that it represents the most "authentic" form of Buddhism to survive into the modern era, that is, that Chan represented a kind of "Buddhist Reformation" that returned to the original spirit of the earliest teachings of Śākyamuni. It is further especially significant because of a set of historical happenstances that have made it perhaps the most dominant form of Buddhism at play in the transfer of Buddhism to the West, so that modern versions of Japanese Zen have had a very large part in the formation of Western stereotypes about Buddhism as a whole. Finally, the Chan literature we will look at is simply good fun!

PART THREE: THE WIDE WORLD OF BUDDHIST PRACTICE

Lecture 5 Thus Apr 2

First hour: **Early Buddhist meditation**

Buddhism is generally known for meditation practice. It is indeed true that meditation practice seems to have been quite central to early Buddhism, and that various kinds of meditation have also been central to many other historical forms of Buddhism. However, as we will see, Buddhist practice certainly does not stop at meditation. It is also the case that our stereotypical images of Buddhist meditation, and the forms of Buddhist meditation commonly practiced in the West, only represent at most a small fraction of the total range of meditation practices Buddhism has known historically.

As with anything in early Buddhism (think back to the teachings, and the life of the Buddha, earlier in the course), it is very difficult for us to know exactly what the original form(s) of Buddhist meditation might have been like. In this lecture, we will talk about two probably representative practices, and the important problem of figuring out which, if either, is "original" or "genuine".

Second hour: **Mahāyāna and Tantric meditation**

Lecture 6 Thurs Apr 9

First hour: **The generation of merit (*pu ya*)**

A major component of Buddhist practice throughout most of Buddhist history has been a wide range of practices aimed at generating religious "merit" (*pu ya*), that is, especially good and powerful *karma* that will lead to better prospects for the practitioner within the world, and especially to better rebirth. Such practices have been common to both Buddhist monastics and laity, but they have perhaps comprised a greater portion of lay practice, because of the understanding that they required less time and spiritual qualifications; because of their frequent connection with giving (*dāna*), which requires that the practitioner hold property that they can give; and because of the frequent understanding that work towards a better rebirth (including rebirth in circumstances in which one can "leave home" and become a monastic) is about as high as the laity can aim in their spiritual prospects. The problem of the extent to which merit-practice tends to be "lay" practice is tied up with another problem of the domain within which it is held to be efficacious. To some extent, practice to generate merit can be understood as taking place within an economy of spiritual goods largely distinct from the domain of spiritual goods that lead to ultimate salvation, and these two domains have respectively been usefully designated "*dhammatic*" and "*kammatic*" Buddhism. However, we must be wary of thinking simplistically that the two domains are entirely separate; practice to generate merit is also often undertaken as part of a path of practice towards ultimate salvation.

Merit-practice raises interesting questions about Buddhism as a whole. It gives the lie to a simplistic understanding of Buddhism as an entirely "other-worldly" religion, that is, a religion directed towards the attainment of goals that only pertain to a transcendent ideal removed from this world; merit practice is largely directed towards the attainment of worldly benefits

(remembering that even future incarnations, which are one of the main respects in which the benefits of such practice are realised, still take place within the fold of the ordinary world). It is also of interest because it is held possible to "transfer" merit, that is, to cause the benefits of such practice to apply to sentient beings other than the practitioner. This is held to be particularly possible for beings of higher spiritual status, such as monastics and *bodhisattvas*, and this is part of the reason that merit-practice is not restricted only to the laity. The notion of merit-transfer creates interesting problems for the Buddhist doctrine of *karma*, which we would ordinarily think of as holding that only the actions of an individual being can affect that being's spiritual prospects and destiny. The mechanism by which merit transfer is supposed to operate is one of the most interesting and difficult problems in the study of Buddhism.

Second hour: **The power of the word: *Mantra, dhara ī* and chanting**

At least from early in the Common Era, but certainly on a wide scale from and after the "Tantric turn" in Buddhism, various kinds of special language have been held to have remarkable powers: both worldly (apotropaic, ritual etc.) and salvific. In this lecture, we will look at the power of certain formulae, such as *mantra* and *dhāra ī*. We will also look at practices of repeated chanting in Buddhism, which begin with the collective chanting of texts for their preservation and as ritual content in early Buddhism, but develop into whole systems of special practice in later contexts connected with Pure Land and *Lotus Scripture* schools, especially prevalent in East Asia.

Thursday April 9 5 p.m.: FIRST ESSAY DUE

MID-SEMESTER BREAK
April 10-26

Lecture 7 Thurs Apr 30

First hour: **Buddhist ritual: The "Gate of Sweet Dew" in medieval China and contemporary Los Angeles**

Until recently, relatively little attention was paid to Buddhist ritual in Western scholarship, though recent work has begun to correct this oversight. This week, we will take advantage of some of the fruits of their labors and examine one type of Buddhist ritual, the ritual of "feeding the hungry ghosts" (Ch. *fang yankou, ganlu men* etc.). We will read and talk about such rituals as they were practiced in medieval China, and consider arguments that they were a part of the "Sinification" of Buddhism (that is, its adaptation to Chinese cultural norms). We will also look at the same rituals as they have been recently transplanted to a community of Zen practitioners in North America, and in this context, too, we will consider the ways that the ritual forms we find may once more reveal the adaptation of Buddhism to the norms of a new and different culture.

Second hour: **Pilgrimage to and worship of *stūpas* and relics**

Very old texts relate that after the Buddha's death, his bodily relics were enshrined in special monuments called *stūpas*. The worship of relics in *stūpas*, and of other *stūpa*-like monuments called *caityas*, is witnessed very early in the textual and archaeological record, and may indeed be one of the oldest aspects of Buddhism we know. It is also universal throughout the Buddhist world. Once we move away from a text-centred approach to Buddhism, therefore, relic and *stūpa* worship are strong candidates for one kind of "essential" aspect of Buddhism.

The worship of the relics of the Buddha poses various problems. From early on in the tradition, it seems clear that relics were regarded as one of an increasing number of veritable *bodies* of the Buddha, in which he was genuinely and powerfully present in the world even after the physical death of the "historical Buddha" Śākyamuni. This raises interesting problems for our understanding of what a Buddha is. These problems in turn are a specific instance of a more general and interesting problem in the study of religion – the problem of sacred objects, which force us to ask how the sacred can be present in any material object whatsoever.

Lecture 8 Thurs May 7

First hour: Bodily implications of Buddhist liberation

In the last lecture, we saw that the relics of the Buddha were understood, at least in part, as veritable bodies of the Buddha. This dimension of relic worship is part of a much larger aspect of Buddhist doctrine and practice, whereby liberation is understood to bring with it various radical transformations of the body of the liberated being. In this lecture, we will explore some of these ideas, including bodily dimensions of one of the oldest known and most seminal models of liberatory meditation practice, and a later, very influential model of multiple types of bodies that are supposed to be possessed by all Buddhas, to various ends.

Second hour: Buddhist philosophy in medieval India: The Yogācāra view that "all is only representations"

For centuries, one of the hallmark religious activities of learned Buddhist scholar-monks was the pursuit of abstruse and subtle philosophical argumentation from the premises of the teachings. They engaged in such argumentation against rival schools both within and outside the Buddhist fold, and in the process, they produced some of the most sophisticated philosophy the world has known. Although it might strike us at first as counterintuitive, this philosophical activity was arguably also an important dimension of Buddhist *practice*. It is important to ask what these Buddhist thinkers thought they were *doing* by engaging in this philosophical activity (in some cases, surely spending their whole lives on it!), as well as to ask what they thought. This question helps us see that while Buddhist philosophy does address many questions also recognisable as philosophical questions within the framework of Western and modern philosophy, it often differs in the fundamental aim philosophy is directed towards, in that philosophical activity is in Buddhism often understood as a religious practice directed towards the goal of salvation.

In this lecture, we will discuss one instance of Buddhist philosophy, the school of Yogācāra or "The Practitioners of Yoga" – a school that holds that all that exists is *vijñapti*, representations" or "contents of consciousness".

Lecture 9 Thurs May 14

First hour: Women and the feminine in Buddhism

One of the most significant hallmarks of Buddhism in the modern and Western world is that it has been altered in various ways (in its institutions, its understandings of the prospects of various beings for enlightenment, etc.) under the influence of feminist ideas, and ideals of gender equality. This development has made the question of the status of women and the feminine in the pre-modern traditions a topic of much controversy, and a topic difficult of study. In this lecture, we will examine some significant dimensions of the status of women and the divine in the pre-modern traditions, including the status of women as practitioners; the status of women (and a streak of misogyny) in systems and ideals of practice for male adherents (especially monastics); and the status of specifically feminised images of divine power. We will consider the complicated interrelations between these different dimensions of Buddhist womanhood and femininity, and we will also consider the way the study of these questions is complicated by, and has influenced, developments in the status and understanding of Buddhist womanhood and femininity in the modern and Western world.

PART FOUR: BUDDHISM IN THE MODERN WORLD AND IN THE WEST

Over the last 200 years, Buddhism has been caught up in two major forces for change. First, it has encountered modernity, in many forms and locations, right across the globe (including in its Asian homelands). Second, with the coming of various waves of globalisation of culture of all kinds, Buddhism has spread beyond Asia and into almost all parts of the world, including, very significantly for Buddhist history as a whole and for our purposes in this course, into the West.

It is no easy task to disentangle the dynamics of modernisation and the dynamics of Westernisation in recent Buddhist history. First, many of the most significant waves of Buddhist expansion into the West derive from modernist reform movements of various kinds in their Asian homelands, so that the Buddhisms the West has received have often been modernised in some form or degree before they leave Asia. Second, many of the features that scholars have identified as characterising Westernised Buddhism are also found in Asia, where they may, however, be in part due to the influence of feedback effects from Buddhism in the West, with which Asian Buddhism is now in contact through Buddhist mission movements, through the widespread travel of Buddhists of all kinds, through various media, and through the many Buddhist ecumenical movements that also characterise Buddhism in the modern world. Finally, in the background to this problem also lies the difficult more general problem of distinguishing the modern from the Western in the rise and formation of modernity in general.

The study of Buddhism in the modern world is important for several reasons.

First, it is part of the even larger story of the vicissitudes and transformations of religions in the modern world, where one very significant feature of modernity is precisely the major shifts in the status of religions that it has precipitated or stemmed from. The study of the Buddhist instances of this more general dynamic can thus contribute to our larger understanding of modern religions and the history of religions.

Second, it is now very difficult to escape the transformational effects of modernisation and Westernisation on our understanding of Buddhism, from any perspective. We will see in this part of the course that modernisation and/or Westernisation have profoundly influenced almost any form of Buddhism we find around us in the world today; but also that they may have radically altered our general perceptions about Buddhism and what it is, in a way that the academic study of Buddhism has not escaped, but rather, in which academic Buddhist studies is also deeply implicated. This means that it is also arguably impossible to properly understand Buddhism

before the modern era without a keen awareness of the ways modern developments and ideas may interfere to shape our understanding in the modern mould.

Third, the transformations Buddhism has undergone in the modern era, far-reaching and radical as they may be, are merely the most recent chapter in an even longer history of cross-cultural transformation and historical development that Buddhism has undergone in the 2500 years of its existence. Modern Buddhism thus provides us with one of our most significant opportunities to examine the difficult but significant questions: What, if anything, is central to Buddhism, and endures through all its changes? What are the processes by which it has changed in response to the very diverse circumstances in which it has found itself historically, and what have been their implications for the identity of Buddhism itself? --- and finally: Does Buddhism have anything unique to contribute to our understanding of the world and our place in it today?

Lecture 9 (cont.)

Second hour: **Buddhism and the modernizing nationalist state: "Zen at War"**

After several centuries of virtual isolation from the outside world under the Tokugawa Bakufu (1600-1867), Japan was forced open, beginning in the 1850s, by the menace of imperialist aggression from the West. Under the Meiji Emperor (r. 1868-1912), the country underwent an astonishing period of modernizing transformation, and many aspects of Japanese Buddhism were radically reformulated in the process. This week we will examine one dimension of the Buddhist response to these modernizing forces under the Meiji and beyond – the sometimes troubled relationship between Buddhist thinkers and teachers, the new Japanese nationalist ideology, and Japan's military expansionism in East Asia. These materials raise troubling questions about the relationship between Buddhism and politics (which are echoed in other places and at other times through Buddhist history) and between Buddhism and nationalism in the modern world. They also undermine the stereotype of Buddhism as the "peaceful religion", "the only religion in whose name war was never fought" etc.

Lecture 10 Thurs May 21

First hour: **Rationalizing Buddhism: Sinhalese Buddhism, Colonel Henry Steel Olcott, and Theosophy**

Contemporaneous with the Meiji Era in Japan was a period of ferment of new religious ideas in the West. These new ideas included such trends as the spiritualist movement, the Christian Science of Mary Baker Eddy, and Theosophy, which in their various ways attempted to reconcile phenomena and realms of experience usually conceived of as "religious" with a modern or scientific episteme.

In one of the quirkiest and more fascinating episodes in Buddhist history, the founders of the Theosophical Society (Adyar), Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Henry Steel Olcott, went to Ceylon (modern Sri Lanka). Their ostensible aim was to study Buddhism. This week we will examine some of the outcome of the encounter between Sinhala Buddhism and Colonel Olcott, and consider what we can learn from it about the more general problem of how Buddhism and modernism confront one another.

Second hour: **Debates over the nature of Buddhism in the West**

Since roughly the 1970s, the study of Buddhism in "the West", and more recently in other parts of the world outside Asia, has grown up as a new sub-discipline in Buddhist studies. One of the major tasks these scholars have set themselves is to identify features that Buddhism has acquired

in the West that differentiate it from Buddhism in Asia, and to theorise by this means about the historical change Buddhism is undergoing in this latest of its great journeys. In this lecture, we will examine some of the more influential theories of the Westernisation of Buddhism.

Friday May 22 5 p.m.: SECOND ESSAY DUE

Lecture 11 Thurs May 28

First hour: **Zen in the West: The cases of the Sanbōkyōdan and Bernie Glassman Rōshi**

Second hour: **Conclusion to the course and summarising remarks**

Session 12 Thurs Jun 4

In-class final test Duration 1 hr 50 minutes

Tutorial Programme

Students are reminded that attendance at at 80% of tutorials (at least four out of six, being slightly lenient) is mandatory. Tutorials will take place during the following weeks of the course. Mark your diaries!

[Week 1 beginning March 2 No tutorial]

Week 2 beginning March 9

[Week 3 beginning March 16 No tutorial]

Week 4 beginning March 23

[Week 5 beginning March 30 No tutorial]

Week 6 beginning April 6

Mid trimester break 10th April – 26 April
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[Week 7 beginning April 27 No tutorial]

Week 8 beginning May 4

Week 9 beginning May 11

[Week 10 beginning May 18 No Tutorial]

Week 11 beginning May 25

[Week 1 beginning June 1 No Tutorial]

Reading Assignments

It is **mandatory** to complete at least four reading assignments of two pages maximum each.

The aims of these assignments are: (1) to encourage students to engage carefully with the readings; (2) to encourage students to practice academic writing, on a small scale. To further the second aim, feedback will be given on how to improve, where appropriate. An excellent reading assignment will show evidence of having carefully read and understood the assigned readings; show evidence of *critical* engagement with the reading (don't just summarise!); and be structured as a clear *argument* of the student's own point of view on the question.

Students who wish to improve their grade and get more practice may do more than four assignments; the reading assignment component of their final grade will be calculated on the basis of their best four pieces of work. Reading assignments are due in lecture in the week for which the topic is assigned. Late reading assignments will have marks deducted. Only answer **one** question per assignment. It is perfectly fine to write two assignments in the same week (two pages each).

Topics for weeek beginning

March 2 **No topics**

March 9 1) "What do you see as the main functions of the Buddhist Sa g ha?"
2) "What is meant by the Buddhist doctrine of not-self (no-self)?"

March 16 1) "What are the most striking differences between Mahāyāna Buddhist ideas and earlier Buddhist ideas?"
2) "What are the most striking differences between Mahāyāna Buddhism and Tantric Buddhism?"
3) "What are the most striking differences between early Buddhism and Mahāyāna Buddhism?"

March 23 1) "What are the most striking differences between Chan/Zen Buddhism and the kinds of Buddhism we have studied in earlier weeks of this course?"
2) "What are the most striking changes Buddhism seems to have undergone as it was transferred into China?"

March 30 1) "What are the major differences between (specific kinds of) early Buddhist meditation and (specific kinds of) Mahāyāna meditation?"
2) "What are the major differences between (specific kinds of) early Buddhist meditation and (specific kinds of) Tantric meditation?"

April 6 1) "What problems does the doctrine of merit and merit-transference raise for the doctrine of *karma*?"
2) "What are the special powers of *mantra*? Are they consistent with/Do they contradict other Buddhist ideas you have learnt about?"

Mid trimester break 10th April – 26 April

April 27 1) "What are the main features of the Buddhist ritual described in your readings? Are they consistent with/Do they contradict other Buddhist ideas you have learnt about?"

2) "Why do Buddhists go in pilgrimages and worship relics? Are these practices consistent with/Do these practices contradict other Buddhist ideas you have learnt about?"

May 4

1) "How does it change your idea of enlightenment, if at all, to learn about the effects it might have on a Buddha's body/bodies?"

2) "What do you think is the religious purpose of the ideas propounded in Yogācāra Buddhist philosophy?"

May 11

Consider ONE of the following statements:

1) "Buddhism is the only non-patriarchal religion."

2) "Buddhism is the only non-violent religion."

May 18

1) "What does the case of Henry Steel Olcott suggest to us about the fate of Buddhism in the modern world?"

2) "What are the major changes that Buddhism is undergoing as it is transferred to the West? How does this compare with the changes Buddhism underwent as it entered China (see Week 4)?"

May 25

"How does the story of the Sambōkyōdan undermine theories about the 'Westernisation' of Buddhism?"

Essays

Each student is required to submit **two** essays:

Essay 1 due THURSDAY APRIL 9 2009, 5 p.m.

Essay 2 due FRIDAY MAY 22 2009, 5 p.m.

Each essay is to be approx. **2,000 words** in length, and **each is worth 30%** of the final grade.

WARNING: Plagiarism is a serious offence, and will be treated as such in this course. ALL STUDENTS should ensure they have read and understood the **plagiarism warning** on p. **Error! Bookmark not defined.** of this Course Outline. **THE PLAGIARISM DETECTION SOFTWARE "TURN IT IN" WILL BE USED IN THIS COURSE TO CHECK FOR PLAGIARISM.**

Submission of essays and assignments: ELECTRONIC AND PAPER COPIES

Essays and assignments must be placed in the locked assignment box located near the programme administrator's office, Hunter 318, and students must date and sign the essay register to indicate an essay has been submitted. **No responsibility will be taken for assignments for which there is no record.** Students should keep a copy of all their work until it is returned.

Essays **must also be submitted electronically** via Blackboard, in part so that student work can be checked for plagiarism via TurnItIn. Essays not submitted electronically by 5 p.m. on the due date will be treated as late, and penalised accordingly, just as essays not received in paper copy.

Penalties for late essays / assignments:

- 2 percent per 24 hours will be deducted for late essays.
- essays submitted more than two weeks late will not be accepted for assessment unless prior written arrangement has been made with the lecturer.

Essays submitted late due to medical reasons must be given to the programme administrator accompanied by a doctor's certificate.

Guidelines for essay writing

Each essay should consist of a thoughtful investigation of the topic of your choice. Essay topics may be chosen from the list below, or the student may define a focus for the essay and articulate an appropriate essay question or thesis. **If you want to work on your own topic, your choice of topic must be approved by the lecturer before you begin writing.** Students are also encouraged to discuss essay topics with the lecturer even if they do choose from the list below.

The required readings may be used as sources for the essays, but **you must consult other sources.** Credit will be given for your research in finding good, appropriate sources. Source suggestions can be sought from the lecturer, and students are urged to consult the Course bibliography, posted on Blackboard. See below also (after suggested essay topics) for suggestions for how to look for research materials.

Essay topics

Possible essay topics and ideas are provided below. Other topics may be chosen, but must have approval from your tutor or lecturer prior to submission. Essays should ideally include consideration of some primary sources (texts, iconography, field trips, self-accounts of adherents to a tradition, interviews with religious specialists, ritual, etc.). Secondary sources (scholarly views on the topic or the text/ritual/icon, etc.) should be consulted and discussed in the essay, but the emphasis should be on your own analysis and interpretation of your source.

How has the encounter with Buddhist facts challenged the definitions of religion deployed in the Western/modern study of religions?

How is the Buddha or Buddhahood portrayed through narrative?

In addressing this question, you should select a particular text or set of texts (including visual “texts”) within which to study the problem. Examples might include the *Lotus Sūtra*, some *Jātaka* tales, the *Lalitavastara*, the *Buddhacarita*, or the friezes of Borobudur. You might like to consider such subsidiary questions as the particular effects of narrative presentation on the understanding of Buddhahood.

What was the relationship between the powers of church and state in traditional Tibetan society?

How is the Buddha or Buddhahood portrayed through narrative?

In addressing this question, you should select a particular text or set of texts (including visual “texts”) within which to study the problem. Examples might include the *Lotus Sūtra*, some *Jātaka* tales, the *Lalitavastara*, the *Buddhacarita*, or the friezes of Borobudur. You might like to consider such subsidiary questions as the particular effects of narrative presentation on the understanding of Buddhahood.

In what ways were some pre-modern Buddhist monastics political? What difficulties are there in the doctrines and strictures of the tradition for such monastics? How might such political monastics have justified themselves?

How might we use the Christian concept of “grace” to think about Pure Land Buddhism? What are the limitations, if any, of application of this concept to the Pure Land case?

Discuss one aspect of the place of women, or the divine conceived as feminine, in Buddhist traditions.

Is there a contradiction between the central Buddhist idea of impermanence (*anitya*, Ch. *wuchang* 無常, Jpn. *mujō*) and the clear Buddhist concern with preserving texts, monuments (*stūpas*), and institutional structures?

Explore one dimension of the relationship between Buddhist doctrine and Buddhist practice. Make sure you treat specific examples of each, and do not attempt to treat *all* Buddhist doctrine and practice.

Is Buddhism a “religion”?

Identify one aspect of Mahāyāna doctrine that seems to be new in Buddhist history. How did or might Mahāyāna texts have justified these “new” ideas?

What is enlightenment, according to the story of Śākyamuni Buddha’s own enlightenment? In addressing this question, you should be aware of possible differences in understanding between the presentation of the Buddha’s enlightenment in different sources. You may confine your analysis to one presentation in particular, or you might like to compare representations given in more than one source.

How have Buddhism and modern nationalism interacted in one Asian country (Japan, Tibet, Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand, China), or the diaspora of one Asian country?

Analyse one contemporary Buddhist movement or group in the West in the terms of at least one theory of the Westernisation of Buddhism. Do not forget to at least consider the possibility that your case study might require critique of the theory, and not just its mechanical "application".

Discuss one example of the commodification of Buddhist ideas, objects, or practices, and its implications for the Buddhism concerned.

Play devil's advocate. We have seen authors who critique some Western Buddhism as in some respects opposed to traditional Buddhist ideas and values, for example, in the celebration of self, or certain entanglements with economic realities. Choose ONE such dimension of modern or Western Buddhism, and ask: Is this really new in Buddhist history? What precedents can be found for it? How might it be justified in the terms of solid Buddhist doctrine?

Consider some dimension of the relationship between Buddhism and science, preferably using the texts of real-life Buddhist thinkers (or apologists) who have attempted to work that relationship out.

THE FOLLOWING TOPIC IS PERHAPS ESPECIALLY CHALLENGING (AND REWARDING): Analyse the use of sacred Buddhist scripture in *Hōichi the Earless* (Part 3 of Kobayashi Masaki's masterpiece *Kwaidan*; in the Main Library AV Suite at Call No. = Vis 1970). It will help you to know that the text used by the priest is the *Heart Sutra*. Please try to take into account Buddhist ideas about the power of sacred language, especially in Tantric contexts; you might also like to consider the Vedic idea of the "truth act". Possibly useful secondary literature to start with:

Lopez, Donald S., *Elaborations on Emptiness: Uses of the Heart Sūtra* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996). BQ1967 L864 E.

Hakeda, Yoshito S., *Kūkai: Major Works, Translated, with an Account of His Life and a Study of His Thought* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974). CB5 R311 87.

Thompson, George, "On Truth-Acts in Vedic", *Indo-Iranian Journal*, 41, 2 (1998), 125-153.

In what ways does "ethnic Buddhism" (Nattier's "baggage" Buddhism) in the West differ from modern Buddhism in its Asian homelands? Note: you are more likely to come up with a successful essay in answer to this question if you restrict your deliberations to ONE ethnicity and/or tradition (e.g. Sri Lankan Theravāda, Tibetan Tantra, etc.).

Analyse at least one text of "self-help" Buddhism. It might be interesting to compare the ideas of such a text with traditional sources (including perhaps sources cited in the text). It might also be interesting to consider such a text as a "New Age" rather than a Buddhist phenomenon.

Explore some of the traditional wellsprings and precedents for modern Buddhist militarism and jingoistic nationalism.

Consider how the feminist challenge has worked as one dimension of the modernisation of Buddhism in the contemporary era.

One distinctive feature of modern Buddhism has been the way modern technologies of communication and travel have brought into contact and put in communication with one another parts of the Buddhist world that were mutually isolated in the pre-modern era. Consider one such interaction between different parts of the Buddhist world, and the consequences of the shifted perspective such broader contact has produced in that case.

How has "Orientalism" operated in the study or perception of Buddhism in the West?

At the time of its release, much fuss was made of *The Matrix* as a film supposedly informed by "Buddhist philosophy". Analyse some aspect of the *Matrix* trilogy in comparison with Buddhist ideas. To what extent are claims that *The Matrix* is a kind of Buddhist allegory true? At what point does this claim break down, and what other values and ideas do we see supplementing or competing with Buddhist ideas in the film(s)?

How are we to understand the role of the Sangha in Buddhism?

How does it change our understanding of Zen meditation (*zazen*) if we regard it as a ritual? OR: How does it change our view of Zen "awakening" ("enlightenment", *satori*, *kenshō* etc.) if we regard it as the product of a ritual? Useful starting point:

Bodiford, William M., *Sōtō Zen in Medieval Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1993). BQ9412.6 B667 S.

Does the structure of the Sangha and its relations with the laity corroborate or undermine assertions that (early) Buddhism is a "selfish" religion?

How are we to interpret canonical celebrations of the value of solitude to monks in light of what Vinaya texts and the historical record tell us about monastic living arrangements?

Is Pure Land Buddhism really "Buddhist"?

Is Chan/Zen radically different from other kinds of Buddhism?

How can we reconcile the emphasis on renunciation with the fact that Buddhist monasteries controlled huge tracts of land (in Sri Lanka, **or** in China, **or** in Tibet)?

Were Buddhist monastics ever "non-political"?

Does the notion of Buddha-nature contradict the notion of anatman?

Is karma the same thing as fate?

Discuss and analyse one example of the ways Buddhism is said to have changed when it entered a new culture. Consider the question: what is "cultural" in a given form of Buddhism, and what is "Buddhist"? How can we tell the difference?

Discuss the history of the order of Buddhist nuns. What happened to it and why?

Finding research materials for your essays

Encyclopaedias such as *The Encyclopedia of Religion* (New York, N.Y.: Macmillan, 1987) in the Reference Reading Room in the library can be helpful as each article also contains a bibliography, but **the research for the essay must extend beyond such sources.**

Students are *strongly* urged, for each essay, to make sure they do thorough literature searches BOTH in the library catalogue (for books) and in databases (for articles). Databases particularly recommended are ATLA Religions, ProQuest Religion and Academic Onefile, all accessible through the library website. Students unfamiliar with the use of databases may consult with the lecturer or the University Library's Reference team.

Students are also encouraged to consult with the lecturer after their first round of searches for advice on the bibliographic resources they have managed to find. It will be useful, in preparation for such consultation, if you keep notes of the search procedures you use, so the lecturer can advise not only which materials may be most relevant to your topic, which other materials may help, etc., but also on ways you might improve your search *strategy*.

The following **journals** may also have articles that you can use for your essay:

History of Religions
Japanese Journal of Religious Studies
Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion
Journal of Chinese Religions
Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion
Monumenta Nipponica
Numen
Philosophy East & West
Religion
T'oung-pao

If you have never done so, you will probably find it interesting just to go to the shelves and **browse through** one or more of these journals, to see the sorts of things researchers publish on in the field. Doing this may also give you ideas for essay topics.

How to cite books, articles and internet resources for essays in Religious Studies

What and when to cite

In order to avoid plagiarism (which is serious even when inadvertent), you **MUST** cite your sources in **ALL** cases. This means you should basically do two things:

(1) In all cases where you use the exact words of a source, however few (including short phrases, rather than whole sentences), you must use **quote marks** around all words that are not yours; and

(2) You should **footnote** your source for all **direct quotes** (see (1)), **facts, ideas, ways of approaching your problem, sources of inspiration**, etc. – in other words, you should **acknowledge your source in absolutely ALL cases** where your source is anything other than your own mind. Err on the side of fastidiousness. Where necessary, you can use the footnote to explain more exactly what you owe to the source in question ("My approach to this question is modelled on that found in . . . "; "The order of treatment in the following is derived from . . ." etc.).

In addition, it is good practice to **phrase your writing** in the body of your essay so that your **debts to your sources are clear**, where possible. Use phrases such as, "According to Viridian," "Following Scrimgeour, we might say . . ." "Worple informs us . . ." "Lockhart contends . . ." "Bagshot remarks insightfully . . ." "Binns has shown . . ." etc.

How to cite

It is mandatory to use a correct citation style in academic writing. The Programme standard in Religious Studies at VUW is the version of Chicago Style for the Humanities. The only exceptions to this Programme standard will be the correct and consistent use of an alternative, standard style **when expressly permitted by your course coordinator**.

Chicago Humanities style is defined in *The Chicago Manual of Style 15th ed. rev.* (University of Chicago Press, 2003). The full guide (a hefty volume) is available in the VUW library at Call No. Z253 C532 15ed (ask at the Reference desk). However, the following information should be sufficient for most of your basic needs.

Note that the **citation style differs for a footnote and for the bibliography** at the end of your essay. For each type of source, we have listed each example in both forms. Each example footnote contains a sample page number so you can be sure how to include the number of the page cited in your footnote.

Note also that as with all academic citation style conventions, every detail of the formatting for Chicago style is fixed. You must thus ensure you **follow the examples below in every detail**: order, punctuation, formatting (especially italics), spacing and so on.

Some of the details used in these examples have been modified, and some sources therefore do not really exist in the form given below.

For further examples of **bibliography style only**, see the list of required readings included in the Lecture Programme in **this Course Outline**. All required readings listed in this outline are given in the required format.

I, MICHAEL RADICH, HEREBY SOLEMNLY PROMISE A MORO BAR, OR EQUIVALENT ACCORDING TO PERSONAL PREFERENCE, TO ANY STUDENT WHO POINTS OUT TO ME AN ERROR IN THE CITATION FORMAT OF THIS COURSE OUTLINE.

Book – single author

Footnote:

T. N. Madan, *Non-Renunciation: Themes and Interpretations of Hindu Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 38.

Bibliography:

Madan, T. N. *Non-Renunciation: Themes and Interpretations of Hindu Culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987.

Book – two or more authors

Footnote:

Richard H. Robinson and Willard L. Johnson, *The Buddhist Religion: An Historical Introduction* (Belmont, California: Wadsworth, 1997), 113.

Bibliography:

Robinson, Richard H., and Willard L. Johnson. *The Buddhist Religion: An Historical Introduction*. Belmont, California: Wadsworth, 1997.

Chapter or article in edited multi-author volume

Footnote:

James P. McDermott, "Karma and Rebirth in Early Buddhism," in *Karma and Rebirth in Indian Classical Traditions*, ed. Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 171.

Bibliography:

McDermott, James P. "Karma and Rebirth in Early Buddhism." In *Karma and Rebirth in Indian Classical Traditions*, ed. Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, 165-192. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980.

Translated book

Footnote

Sigmund Freud, *The Future of an Illusion*, trans. by W. D. Robson-Scott (New York: H. Liveright, 1928), 28.

Bibliography

Freud, Sigmund. *The Future of an Illusion*. Translated by W. D. Robson-Scott. New York: H. Liveright, 1928.

Journal article – single author

Footnote:

Richard King, "Is 'Buddha-Nature' Buddhist? Doctrinal Tensions in the *Śrīmālā Sūtra* – An Early Tathāgatagarbha Text," *Numen* 42 (1995): 12.

Bibliography:

King, Richard. "Is 'Buddha-Nature' Buddhist? Doctrinal Tensions in the *Śrīmālā Sūtra* – An Early Tathāgatagarbha Text." *Numen* 42 (1995): 1-20.

Journal article – two or three authors

Footnote:

Helen Hardacre and Abe Yoshiya, "Some Observations on the Sociology of Religion in Japan: Trends and Methods," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 5, no. 1 (1978): 18.

Bibliography:

Hardacre, Helen, and Abe Yoshiya. "Some Observations on the Sociology of Religion in Japan: Trends and Methods." *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 5, no. 1 (1978): 5-27.

Web site

Footnote:

Paul Kingsbury, "Inducing a Chronology of the Pali Canon,"
<http://www.ling.upenn.edu/~kingsbur/inducing.pdf> (accessed March 28, 2008).

Bibliography:

Kingsbury, Paul. "Inducing a Chronology of the Pali Canon."
<http://www.ling.upenn.edu/~kingsbur/inducing.pdf> (accessed March 28, 2008).

Reference work (e.g. encyclopaedia or dictionary)

Footnote:

Encyclopaedia Britannica, 15th ed., s.v. "Sufism."

Footnote:

Oxford English Dictionary, 2nd ed., s.v. "Apophatic."

The abbreviation "s.v." is for the Latin *sub verbo* ("under the word").

Reference works are usually not included in the bibliography.

Sacred texts

Standard citation convention is set for the sacred texts of each major tradition. You must be sure to cite sacred texts in the correct format. Unless your lecturer for a specific course states otherwise (e.g. if conformity to a more complex standard is required for courses specialising in a particular tradition), the following conventions will apply.

The Bible

In quoting the Bible, you should use in-text citation (i.e. give your source in brackets in the body of your text, rather than using a footnote). NOTE that the Bible and the Qur'an are the only exceptions to the general rule AGAINST in-text citation in this Chicago Humanities style. (You should otherwise ALWAYS use footnotes, not in-text citation.)

The Bible is cited by book, chapter and verse. For example:

. . . as it says in the Bible (1 Kgs 2:7).

Note that books of the Bible are abbreviated according to standard abbreviations. A list of abbreviations should usually be available in the edition of the Bible you are using.

Note also that the punctuation mark comes *after* the close of the parentheses. This is also the case for the full stop in a direct quote:

". . . Absolom thy brother" (1 Kgs 2:7).

When citing multiple passages, list the abbreviated title of each *new* biblical book followed by the chapter number and colon, with all verses in that chapter separated by a comma and space. A semicolon should separate references to subsequent chapters or books. Do not include the conjunction "and" or an ampersand ("&") before the last citation. List passages in canonical and numerical order. For example:

. . . as it says in the Bible (Matt 2:3; 3:4–6; 4:3, 7; Luke 3:6, 8; 12:2, 5).

It is preferable, unless you are discussing differences of translation and interpretation, to use a single version of the Bible throughout a piece of work. In this case, you can indicate that fact by a note with your first citation, and thereafter omit mention of the version:

Footnote:

Matt. 20:4-9. In this essay, all biblical quotations are from the *New Revised Standard Version* (London: HarperCollins Publishers, 1989).

Where you have to refer to more than one version of the Bible, you can indicate the different versions in footnotes, or by a set of abbreviations that you establish in a footnote early in the essay.

List the versions of the Bible you use in your bibliography. They should appear alphabetically according to title. For example:

The New Oxford Annotated Bible: The Holy Bible. Edited by Herbert G. May and Bruce M. Metzger. New York: Oxford University Press, 1973.

This item would be listed alphabetically under "New".

The Qur'an

The name of the text is best written, "Qur'an."

In quoting the Qur'an, you should use in-text citation (i.e. give your source in brackets in the body of your text, rather than using a footnote). NOTE that the Qur'an and the Bible are the only exceptions to the general rule AGAINST in-text citation in this Chicago Humanities style. (You should otherwise ALWAYS use footnotes, not in-text citation.)

When quoting the Qur'an, give the abbreviation "Q.", then cite the number of the *sura* (chapter), then the number(s) of the *ayat* (verse). For example:

"Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth...." (Q. 24:35).

"Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds; The Compassionate, the Merciful; Master of the Day of Judgment" (Q. 1:2-4).

State in the first footnote what "translation" edition is being used for the entire document. For example:

Footnote:

In this essay, all citations from the Qur'an will be taken from *An Interpretation of the Qur'an: English Translations of the Meaning (Bilingual Edition)*, trans. Majid Fakhry (New York: New York University Press, 2000).

If you use more than one source for Qur'anic text in your essay, then you need to provide a separate, footnoted reference to each citation, specifying which version that citation is from.

In your bibliography, list each "translation" edition of the Qur'an you use alphabetically under its title. For example:

Bibliography:

An Interpretation of the Qur'an: English Translations of the Meaning (Bilingual Edition). Translated by Majid Fakhry. New York: New York University Press, 2000.

This item would be listed alphabetically under "Interpretation".

Buddhist and Indian texts

For undergraduate purposes, simply cite the English translation you are using as if it is an ordinary translated book. However, note that many Indian or Buddhist texts you will cite are compilations of multiple texts into a single volume. In such cases, you must also include the name of the text in your footnote citation. The name given to the text in English by the translator will suffice; but include the name in the original language also if it is easily accessible. For example:

Footnote:

"The Buddha's Last Days" (*Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*), in *The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya*, trans. Maurice Walshe (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995), 232.

In your bibliography, list only the whole translated works to which you refer in your essay, according to the usual format. In other words, if you cite more than one *sutta* etc. from a single volume, you need not list every individual text, but just the volume. For example:

Bibliography:

Walshe, Maurice, trans. *The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya*. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995.

How to cite in the body of your essay

When you refer to one of your sources in the course of your argument, you should always give your source in a footnote, which is indicated by a superscript number attached to the appropriate part of the sentence.

Note that some other stylistic conventions use what is called "in-text citation", where references are given in parentheses at the end of the sentence; you will see this method of citation often as you read. **HOWEVER, IN-TEXT CITATION IS NOT PART OF THE CHICAGO STYLE INTRODUCED HERE** (with the sole exceptions of passages from the Bible or the Qur'an), and you should consistently use footnotes indicated by superscript numbers ONLY.

Footnote style has been given above. Note that footnote numbers should always come *after* any punctuation mark at the end of the word they attach to; thus, it is correct to write a footnote like this,¹ but wrong to write it like this². One of the advantages of superscript numbered footnoting is that it allows you to make tangential comments, as in this example.³

When you refer to the same source several times in a row, you can use "Ibid." and the page number for all subsequent notes after the first.⁴ If you are referring to the same page number in several successive notes, then "Ibid." alone is sufficient.⁵

¹ Random correct placed footnote.

² Random incorrectly placed footnote.

³ Constance Prevarication, *The Book of Tangential Comments* (Dargaville: Primrose Path Publications, 2004), 27. It is interesting to note that in this recent work, Prevarication reverses her previous hard-line stance on the literary sidetrack, and not only countenances it in principle, but herself indulges in it extensively in practice.

⁴ Ibid., 36. [This means the reference is to the same source, but with a different page number.]

⁵ Ibid. [This means page 36, exactly like the preceding footnote.]

If you cite source A, then cite one or more other sources,⁶ and then return to source A,⁷ it is best to repeat only the author's name,⁸ a shortened title, and the page number cited,⁹ rather than to repeat the full citation. See the footnotes attached to this paragraph (notes 6-9) for examples.

In other words, only use abbreviated citations where you are citing the same source more than one time. Avoid old abbreviations like *loc. cit.*, *op. cit.* and so on, which can require the reader to keep track of sources over a number of references and pages, and are thus confusing.

⁶ T. N. Madan, *Non-Renunciation: Themes and Interpretations of Hindu Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 38.

⁷ Richard H. Robinson and Willard L. Johnson, *The Buddhist Religion: An Historical Introduction* (Belmont, California: Wadsworth, 1997), 113.

⁸ Madan, *Non-Renunciation*, 38-40.

⁹ Robinson and Johnson, *The Buddhist Religion*, 115.