An Introduction to

Buddhism

RELIGIOUS STUDIES 206, FALL 2009

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Office Hours: Tuesdays/Thursdays 12:15-1; and by appointment
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Course Description:
A study of the Buddhist tradition, emphasizing its origin and development in India as well as its historical evolution in Asia. Beginning with the legend of the Buddha and the formation of the monastic community, the course surveys doctrinal developments including the Theravâda, Mahâyâna, and Vajrayâna paths. Attention will also be devoted to meditation, ethics, lay practices, and modernization.

Course Design and Guidelines:
This course is planned as introductory and exploratory, conducted in a manner integrating lectures with regular discussions. It emphasizes readings in the sacred scriptures, historical analysis, and anthropological studies of the living tradition.

All students are encouraged to participate actively in the coursework, share in the discussion, ask questions to help make unclear topics understood, and to make use of the office hours.

Lectures will supplement the required readings, not replace them.

Reading assignments must be completed before the designated class and analyzed carefully. There are also recommended readings for many classes. Please consult me if you are interested in exploring other pertinent subjects.

The map of Asia and the papers must be handed in on time to receive full credit. The latter should follow instructions exactly, be concise, edited for clarity. Separate guidelines for each will be distributed.
Grading: 
1. Map Assignment .................... 10 
2. Mid-Term Examination I .......... 20 
3. Buddhist Art Encounter Paper .... 15 
4. Poster Assignment .................. 15 
5. Final Examination .................... 40
100 points

Required Textbooks:
Course Packet [on ERES]

All the books above have been ordered from the Holy Cross bookstore.
Bring your *Experience of Buddhism* and other texts to class, if you have a question to raise about that day’s assignment.

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Lecture Topics and Reading Assignments

### INTRODUCTION

1. 9/3: First Class: Syllabi Distributed and Course Overview
   What do we mean by “Religious Tradition?”
   Exorcising Ethnocentrisms: Orientalism and the Study of Buddhism

#### Topic 1:

*ΧΟΝΤΕΞΤ, ΛΙΦΕ, ΤΕΑΧΗΙΝΓΣ ΟΦ ΣΗΑΚΨΑΜΥΝΙ ΒΥΔΔΗΑ*

2. 9/8: Approaches to the Study of Buddhism; The Life of the Buddha:
   Context in early North India; Narrative of his Life
   Required Reading:
   *The Buddhist Religions*, 1-20; *The Experience of Buddhism*, 1-26; 42-50
   *Buddhism: The Illustrated Guide*, 10-21; 22-45
3. 9/10: Buddha as Refuge and Paradigm; Early Dharma: “Basic Buddhism”
Required Reading:

- The Buddhist Religions, 20-42; 67-72
- The Experience of Buddhism, 97-138
- Buddhism: The Illustrated Guide, 58-79

4. 9/15: The Sangha
Required Reading:

- The Buddhist Religions, 45-58; 72-74; The Experience of Buddhism, 56-90

5. 9/17: The Dhammapada: Discussion
Required Reading:

- T. Byrom, The Dhammapada

** Topic 2: ΗΙΣΤΟΡΙΧΑΛ ΑΝΔ ΓΕΟΓΡΑΠΗΙΧ ΟÇΕΡÇIEΩ **

6. 9/22: The Three Refuges in Early Buddhist India (500 BCE-200 CE)
Required Reading:

- The Buddhist Religions, 53-67; 75-84 The Experience of Buddhism, 91-96; 228-233
- Buddhism: The Illustrated Guide, 6-9

** Map ASSIGNMENT DISTRIBUTED**

7. 9/24: Buddhism’s Asian Diaspora; Themes in the Historical Study of Buddhism
Required Reading:

- The Buddhist Religions 82-86;143-146;172-180; 219-220; 234-239-245; 268-273
- The Experience of Buddhism 145-146; 221-225; 256-259; 290-292; 311-318; 335-342
- Buddhism: The Illustrated Guide, 176-195

** MAP ASSIGNMENT DUE **

** Topic 3: ΕΑΡΛΨ ΒΥΔΔΗΙΣΜ: ΧΟΡΕ ΔΟΧΤΡΙΝΕΣ ανδ ΠΡΑΧΤΙΧΕΣ **

8. 9/29: Karma, Merit-Making; Popular Narratives and Ethics
Required Reading:

- The Experience of Buddhism, 24-36; 123-128; 222-237
- Todd T. Lewis, Popular Buddhist Texts from Nepal, Preface; Chapters 3,7
- C. Kabilsingh “Buddhist Texts from a Feminist Perspective” [ERE-s]
- Buddhism: The Illustrated Guide, 107-119
9. 10/1: Vipashyanā/Vipassanā Meditation: THEORY
Required Reading:
   The Buddhist Religions, 30-31
   The Experience of Buddhism, 128-138; 217-237
   Buddhism: The Illustrated Guide, 80-89; 186-195
   “Four Objects of Mindfulness” and “Nouns” “Moment to Moment Mindfulness” [EREs]

10. TBA, Evening: Vipashyanā/Vipassanā: an Experiment in Mindfulness

11. 10/8: Buddhism in Society: Stūpas, Rituals, and Festivals
Required Reading:
   The Buddhist Religions, 72-74
   The Experience of Buddhism, 48-52; 241-244
   T. Lewis, “Contributions to the Study of Popular Buddhism [ERE-s]

Note: 10/13: Columbus Day break, no class

12. 10/15: Topics in Early Buddhism; Review of Texts

13. 10/20: IN-CLASS Mid-Term Examination

   Topic 4:
   ΜΑΗΨΝΑ ΒΥΔΔΗΙΣΜ: ΙΝΔΙΑΝ ΟΡΙΓΙΝΣ

14. 10/22: Schism among Indian Schools; Popular Mahāyāna Philosophies:
   Cosmic Buddhahood, the Lotus Sutra, Celestial Bodhisattvas
Required Reading:
   The Buddhist Religions, 84-102
   The Experience of Buddhism, 147-151; 168-169; 188-197; 287-313
   Buddhism: The Illustrated Guide, 132-149; 196-211

15. 10/27: Elite Mahāyāna Philosophies I: Shunyatā and Two-Truths Doctrine;
   Required Reading:
   The Buddhist Religion, 103-128; 99-116
   The Experience of Buddhism, 151-174
16. 10/29: Elite Mahāyāna Philosophies II: Buddha Nature Theory; Yogācāra School; Visualization Meditation
Required Reading:
- *The Buddhist Religion*, 111-113; 190-196;
- *The Experience of Buddhism*, 178-187; “Mahāyāna Meditation” [ERE-s]

17. 11/3: Human Bodhisattva Ideal: The Bodhicaryāvatāra ⭐⭐ Discussion
Required Reading:
- Crosby and Skilton, *The Bodhicaryāvatāra* (all of translation; skim commentary

**Topic 5:**

ΜΑΗΨΒΥΔΔΗΙΣΜ ιν τηε ΗΙΜΑΛΑΨΑΣ ανδ ΕΑΣΤ ΑΣΙΑ

18. 11/5: Buddhism in Later China, Korea, and Japan; Tendai and Nichiren
Required Reading:
- *The Buddhist Religions*, 180-215; 231-236; 240-249; 254-255
- *The Experience of Buddhism*, 290-300; 306-310; 320-325
- *Buddhism: The Illustrated Guide*, 150-161

19. 11/10: Pure Land Buddhism
Required Reading:
- *The Buddhist Religions*, 196-198; 252-257; 249-260; 117-139; 271-296
- *The Experience of Buddhism*, 197-205; 301-305; 300-302

20. 11/12: Modern Japanese Buddhism: Zen; Soka Gakkai
Film "JAPAN: Land of the Disappearing Buddha"
Required Reading:
- *The Buddhist Religions*, 260-267
- *The Experience of Buddhism*, 318-319; 326-331
- Robert Kennedy, *Zen Spirit, Christian Spirit*

21. 11/17: Vajrayāna Buddhism: Tantric Doctrines and Soteriologies
Required Reading:
- *The Buddhist Religions*, 128-137; 271-296
- *The Experience of Buddhism*, 188-220; 251-286
- *Buddhism: The Illustrated Guide*, 162-173

22. 11/19: Vajrayāna Buddhism in an Indic Society: Nepal
Required Reading:
- Todd T. Lewis, *Popular Buddhist Texts from Nepal*, Preface; Chapters 1, 4, 5, 6
23. 11/24: Vajrayāna Buddhism in Tibetan Society
Required Reading:
The Buddhist Religions, 268-291
The Experience of Buddhism, 256-289

Topic 6:
ΒΥΔΔΗΙΣΜ ιν τηε ΜΟΔΕΡΝ ανδ ΠΟΣΤΧΟΛΟΝΙΑΛ ΕΡΑΣ

24. 12/1: Trauma of Modernity: Colonialism & Westernization → Reform & Revival
Required Reading:
The Buddhist Religions, 141-142; 215-218; 238-239;
The Experience of Buddhism, 253-255;
Buddhism: The Illustrated Guide, 212-235

25. 12/3: Sri Lankan, Thai, and Burmese Buddhism: History and Modern Practice
Required Reading:
The Buddhist Religions, 146-171
The Experience of Buddhism, 222-227; 233-246; 225-226
John Ross Carter, "There are Buddhists Living in Sri Lanka Today" [ERE-s]
"The Dynamics of Buddhist Life [Northeast Thailand]" [ERE-s]

26. 12/8: Buddhism in America; The Future of Buddhism
Required Reading:
The Buddhist Religion, 292-311
Gary Snyder, “Buddhism and the Possibilities of Planetary Culture” [ERE-s]
S. Sivaraksha, “Buddhism in a World of Change” [ERE-s]

READING PERIOD: Review Session

EXAM PERIOD: Comprehensive Final