

Paul B. Watt E-mail: pwatt
209 Emison, x 4719

Rel 258 Buddhism
Fall 2009

This course is an introduction to the Buddhist tradition as it developed first in India and then spread across Asia. We will examine Buddhist thought, practices, institutions, and history as well as consider some of the issues related to the cultural transformations of Buddhism as it moved from India to China, Japan and Tibet. Special attention will be given to the close reading of selections from a wide range of Buddhist texts.

Requirements for the course include (1) preparation of assigned materials before class, class attendance, and participation in class discussions, (2) the completion of a series of short two-page essays on topics we will discuss in class, and (3) two in-class examinations and a final examination. Attendance, participation and the short essays will count for 25% of the course grade. The short essays should be typed, and no late essays will be accepted, except in cases of documented emergencies. Each exam will also make up 25% of the grade.

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS:

Kevin Trainor, ed., *Buddhism: The Illustrated Guide* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001) (pb)

Donald S. Lopez, Jr., ed., *Buddhist Scriptures* (New York: Penguin Classics, 2004) (pb)

Robert Thurman, trans., *The Holy Teachings of Vimalakirti* (University Park and London: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1987) (pb)

Burton Watson, trans., *The Lotus Sutra* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993) (pb)

John Blofeld, trans., *The Zen Teachings of Huang Po* (New York: Grove Press, 1959) (pb)

All of the books listed above can be purchased at either the University Bookstore. Readings in the outline marked with an asterisk (*) can be found on the class Moodle site.

Please be sure to bring the course outline, as well as the appropriate assigned reading, to each class session.

COURSE OUTLINE:

1. Course introduction. (8/26)

Optional: Trainor, *Buddhism*, "Introduction," pp. 6-9.

I. Early Buddhism.

2-4. The political, social contexts and intellectual contexts of the Buddha's life. (8/28-9/2)

Trainor, *Buddhism*, Part I, Chapter I: "Belief and Society," pp. 12-21.

*Ainslie Embree, ed., *Sources of Indian Tradition*, second edition (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), Vol. 1 (pb), pp. 3-39.

5-6. The life of the Buddha. (9/4-9/7)

Trainor, *Buddhism*, Part I, Chapter 2: "The Career of Siddhartha," pp. 22-41.

Lopez, *Buddhist Scriptures*, "The Noble Search," pp. 104-115.

*Edward Conze, *Buddhist Scriptures* (New York: Penguin Classics, 1959), pp. 19-33, 34-66.

7. The teachings of early Buddhism: the four noble truths, no-self and the five skandha theory. (9/9)

Trainor, *Buddhism*, Part II, Chapter 2, "The Four Noble Truths," pp. 64-67.

*Henry Clark Warren, trans., *Buddhism in Translations* (New York: Atheneum, 1972), pp. 111-152.

8. The teachings of early Buddhism: dependent origination. (9/11)

*Warren, *Buddhism in Translation*, pp. 165-70.

9. The practice of early Buddhism: morality. (9/14)

Trainor, *Buddhism*, Part 2, Chapter 3, "The Path of the Buddha," pp. 72-73.

*Conze, *Buddhist Scriptures*, pp. 69-77.

10. The practice of early Buddhism: meditation. (9/16)

Trainor, *Buddhism*, Part 2, Chapter 3, "Meditation," pp. 74-75.

Lopez, *Buddhist Scriptures*, "The Direct Path to Enlightenment," pp. 343-349.

*Conze, *Buddhist Scriptures*, pp. 98-116.

11. Wisdom and Nirvana. (9/18)

Trainor, *Buddhism*, Part 2, Chapter 3, "Wisdom," pp. 76-77 and Chapter 2, "Nirvana," pp. 68-69.

*Conze, *Buddhist Scriptures*, pp. 146-151, 155-162.

12. The early Buddhist community. (9/21)

Trainor, *Buddhism*, Part 1, Chapter 3, "A New Community," pp. 46-55, and Part 3, Chapter 2, "The Three Baskets," pp. 186-193.

Lopez, *Buddhist Scriptures*, "The Evolution of Ordination," pp. 223-229.

Lopez, *Buddhist Scriptures*, "Nuns Triumph Over Evil," pp. 445-449.

Lopez, *Buddhist Scriptures*, "A Lay Master of Meditation," pp. 442-444.

13. Video ("Footprint of the Buddha") and review. (9/23)

14. First examination. (9/25)

II. Mahayana Buddhism.

15. The rise of Mahayana Buddhism. (9/28)

Trainor, *Buddhism*, Part 2, Chapter 8, "Mahayana Buddhism," pp. 132-143.

16-17. The perfection of wisdom: emptiness and the bodhisattva. (9/30 and 10/5)
[No class on October 2]

Trainor, *Buddhism*, Part 3, Chapter 3, "Mahayana Scriptures," (Perfection of Wisdom Sutras) pp. 196-197.

Lopez, *Buddhist Scriptures*, “Wisdom and Compassion,” pp. 350-360.

*”The Diamond Sutra,” trans. By Edward Conze in *Buddhist Wisdom Books* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1958) “Preface” and pp. 17-39.

18-19. The teachings of Vimalakirti: emptiness, the bodhisattva ideal and expedient means. (10/7-10/9)

Thurman, trans., *The Holy Teachings of Vimalakirti*, pp.1-63 and 73-77.

20-22. The Lotus Sutra: expedient means, faith and a reassertion of the goal. (10/12-10/16)

Trainor, *Buddhism*, Part 3, Chapter 3, “Mahayana Scriptures,” (The Lotus Sutra), pp. 198-201.

Watson, trans., *The Lotus Sutra*. (21) Translator’s Introduction and Chapter 1 (Introduction). (22) Chapter 2 (Expedient Means) and Chapter 3 (Simile and Parable). (23) Chapter 4 (Belief and Understanding) and Chapter 5 (The Parable of Medicinal Herbs).

[Fall Break, October 17-October 25]

23. Pure Land Devotionalism. (10/26)

Trainor, *Buddhism*, Part 2, Chapter 8, “Pure Lands,” pp. 144-145 and Part 3, Chapter 3, “Mahayana Scriptures,” (Pure Land Sutras), pp. 202-203.

Lopez, *Buddhist Scriptures*, “Rebirth in the Land of Bliss,” pp. 60-68.

24. The Yogacara (Yoga practitioners) or Mere Consciousness School. (10/28)

Trainor, *Buddhism*, Part 3, Chapter 3, “Mahayana Scriptures,” (Yogachara Sutras), pp. 204-205.

*Janice Willis, *On Knowing Reality* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), pp. 13-19 (“The Yogācāra School of the Mahayana”).

25-26. Tantric Buddhism and the decline of Buddhism in India. (10/30-11/2)

Trainor, *Buddhism*, Part 2, Chapter 10, “Tantra,” pp. 162-167.

27. Review. (11/4)

28. Second examination. (11/28)

III. Some Non-Indian Developments.

29. The spread of Buddhism to Southeast Asia and China. (11/9)

Trainor, *Buddhism*, Part 2, Chapter 7, "Theravada Buddhism," pp. 120-131.

30-32. Popular schools of Chinese Buddhism, especially Ch'an. (11/11-11/16)

*Wm. Theodore de Bary, ed., *The Buddhist Tradition in India, China and Japan* (New York: Vintage, 1972), "The Coming of Buddhist to China," pp. 125-138.

Trainor, *Buddhism*, Part 2, Chapter 9, "Chan and Zen—The Way of Meditation," pp. 150-153.

Blofeld, trans., *The Zen Teaching of Huang Po*, pp. 7-26 ("Introduction") and pp. 27-98.

33. The introduction and spread of Buddhism in Korea and Japan. (11/18)

*de Bary, ed., *The Buddhist Tradition in India, China and Japan*, "The Introduction of Buddhism to Japan," pp. 255-265.

34-36. Popular schools of Japanese Buddhism, especially Pure Land and Zen. (11/20-11/30)

[Thanksgiving Break, November 25-29]

Trainor, *Buddhism*, Part 2, Chapter 9, "Chan and Zen," pp. 154-161.

*de Bary, ed., *The Buddhist Tradition*, pp. 314-344, 355-373.

37-38. The introduction and spread of Buddhism in Tibet. (12/2-12/4)

*Richard H. Robinson and Willard L. Johnson, *The Buddhist Religion: A Historical Introduction*, Second Edition (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1977), "Buddhism in the Tibetan Cultural Area," pp. 185-195.

Video: "Compassion in Exile"

39-40. Review and reflection. (12/7 and 12/11) [No class on December 9]

Final examination: Thursday, December 17, 8:30-11:30