

RELG 221 BUDDHIST MEDITATION IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

MIND, MATTER, AND MEDITATION: BUDDHIST CONTEMPLATIVE PRACTICES ACROSS TIME AND SPACE

Professor Daniel M. Stuart

Class Meetings: Tuesday/Thursday, 11:40–12:55, Humanities Classroom Building 103

Office: Rutledge 331

Office Hours: By appointment

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Course Overview

What is the mind? What is the body? What is freedom? This course will explore the ways in which Buddhist contemplative traditions in South, Southeast and East Asia have confronted these questions. Emphasis will be on the historical evolution, doctrinal foundations, and monastic and lay regimens associated with Buddhist meditation practices. We will also explore a number of modern meditation traditions, and the question of how traditional models of practice are transformed in a modern context. We will make use of a wide variety of primary and secondary readings as well as visual materials (including films) to attempt to place the historical practices in their cultural, institutional and soteriological contexts.

Grading Breakdown:

- *Attendance* (30%)— This includes regular attendance and participation in class discussions.
- *Two 500–600 word papers* (20%)
- *Two quizzes* (20%)
- *Final exam* (30%)

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- articulate fundamental ideals of Buddhist thought from the standpoint of three major strands of Buddhism
- identify a range of contemplative practices that serve as foundational to all Buddhist traditions
- explain how these practices develop historically in different cultural contexts in India, Tibet, China, Southeast Asia, and America
- analyze the way that Buddhist ideologies and regimes of practice work with the mind and body to produce certain types of religious experiences

Course Policies

Participation — Participation forms an important part of the course. Meaningful contributions to class discussions and other in-class activities enhance everyone's learning experience. Students should feel free to discuss the quality of their class participation with the instructor at any point during the semester.

Attendance—Prompt and regular attendance is crucial for success in the course. Attendance will be taken at the start of each class. Attendance is mandatory, and if you miss more than three class sessions, you will lose 5% of your attendance grade for every additional class missed. If you miss more than ten classes, you will automatically fail the class. If you are absent for an excusable reason, be sure to present the needed documentation to the instructor immediately upon your return (e.g., if you are absent for a legitimate medical reason, bring a doctor's note as soon as you come back to class).

Grading Scale 100-90 A; 89-87 B+; 86-80 B; 79-77 C+; 76-70 C; 69-67 D+; 66-60 D; below 60 F

Electronic Devices: cellphone, smartphones, and other non-academic electronic devices are **NOT** permitted in class. If you use any such device during class time, you will be asked to leave and be counted as absent.

Required Course Materials:

- Gethin, Rupert. *The Foundations of Buddhism* (OUP 1998).
- Additional PDF readings will be uploaded to Blackboard

Films:

I ♥ Huckabees (2004)

Fearless (1993)

Never Let Me Go (2010)

Crazy Wisdom: The Life and Times of Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche (2011)

Important Dates:

Quiz #1: 9/18

Paper #1 due: 9/27

Quiz #2: 10/30

Paper #2 due: 11/15

Final Exam: 12/11 (due at 3:00 pm)

Schedule of Weekly Readings and Assignments

8/23 (R): *Introduction and General Discussion: India and Asia, Meditation Practice, Philosophical Discourse, the Buddha*

Week 1: The Foundations of Buddhism

8/28 (T): The Buddha

Gethin, pp. 1-34

Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi 1995, pp. 253-268.

R. Gimello Handout: "The Date of the Historical Buddha"

8/30 (R): Scripture, Language, and Philosophy

Gethin, pp. 35-84

Week 2: The Foundations of Buddhism cont.

9/4 (T): Cosmos and Community

Gethin, pp. 85-132

Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi 1995, pp. 677-691

9/6 (R): No Self and the Path of Practice

Gethin, pp. 133-201

Week 3: Early Buddhist Contemplative Practice

9/11 (T): Being Human

Film: I ♥ Huckabees (2004)

9/13 (R): Early Contemplative Practices cont.

Walshe 1995, pp. 67-109; pp. 159-170; pp. 175-180

Mindfulness Outline

Week 4: Early Buddhist Contemplative Practice cont.

9/18 (T): Abhidharma and Meditation

Buswell 2005, pp. 1-7

Anuruddha 2000 (AS), pp. 329-366

Quiz #1

9/20 (R): Meditation and Death

Bodhi 2000 (SN), pp. 212-215; Horner 1970, pp. 116-150

Week 5: *Cessational Possibilities and New Paths*

9/25 (T): In This Very Life

Film: Fearless (1993)

9/27 (R): The Mahāyāna

Buswell 2004, pp. 492-499; Gethin, 224-252; (optional: Shaw 2009, pp. 140-158)

Paper #1 due

Week 6: *Developments in Indian Buddhist Soteriology and A Theravādin Life*

10/2 (T): The Entrance to the Path of the Bodhisattva

Śāntideva 1996, pp. 75-132 (optional: pp. vii-xxvi and)

10/4 (R): An Extraordinary Life: The Biography of Ajahn Mun (1870-1949)

Mahā Boowa 2004, pp. 3-54

Week 7: *A Modern Theravāda Buddhist Master*

10/9 (T): A Long Story

Mahā Boowa 2004, pp. 139-179 and pp. 288-316

10/11 (R): The Buddhist Conquest of China

Wright 1971 [1959], pp. 3-64

Week 8: *Culture and Practice;*

Buddhist Contemplative Practices in China: Tian-tai and Chan

10/16 (T): Tiantai Zhiyi's Stopping and Seeing

Luk 1964, pp. 109-157; optional: Shaw 2009, pp. 187-201

FALL BREAK: 10/18-19/2018

Week 9: *Dhyāna in China*

10/23 (T): Chan Masters in China

Wright 1971 [1959], pp. 65-85; Mcrae 2003, pp. xix-21

10/25 (R): 'Chan' Tradition

Yampolsky 1967, pp. 125-183; optional: Shaw 2009, pp. 201-216

Week 10: Dhyāna in China cont.

10/30 (T): Chan and the Gong-an

McRae, pp. 205-217 in Looi ed. 2002; Buswell, pp. 75-90 in Looi ed. 2005

Quiz #2

11/1 (R): Submission to the Dharma

Film: Never Let Me Go (2010)

Week 11: Buddhist Contemplative Practices in Tibet: The Tantrika's Path

11/6 (T): GENERAL ELECTION DAY (NO CLASSES)

11/8 (R): Initiation and the Guru

Buswell 2004, pp. 820-826; Dahl trans. 2008, pp. 43-50 (*The Guru and Samsāra-Nirvāṇa*); pp. 69-75 (*The Vajra Stance*); pp. 107-118 (*The Natural State*)

Week 12: Tibetan Practice and Westward Transmission

11/13 (T): Cultivating the Natural State

Dahl trans. 2008, pp. 119-128 (*Revitalization*); pp. 131-143 (*The Main Practices: Probing the Mind and Searching for its Hidden Flaw*); 175-184 (*Appendices I and II*)

11/15 (R): The Bodhisattva Path and the Myth of Freedom: Westward Transmission

Trungpa 1976, pp. 19-59

Paper #2 due

Week 13: The Bodhisattva Path and the Myth of Freedom: Westward Transmission (cont.)

11/20 (T): The Mandala in the West: Shambhala

Film: Crazy Wisdom: The Life and Times of Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche (2011)

THANKSGIVING RECESS: 11/21-25/2018

Week 14: Mainstreaming Mindfulness

11/27 (T): Mindfulness in the West

Kabat-Zinn 2005 [1990], pp. 1-14; Kabat-Zinn 2011, pp. 281-306

11/29 (R): Psychology, Therapy and Cognitive Science

Kabat-Zinn 2005 [1990], pp. 75-113

Week 15: Cowboys and Kasinas?

12/4 (T): Cowboy Dharma

Ingram 2007, pp. iv–15 (*Foreword and Warning and The Three Trainings*); pp. 67–84 (*Practical Meditatin Considerations*); pp. 346–351 (*So Who The Heck is Daniel Ingram?*); optional: pp. 16–33 (*The Three Characteristics*)

12/6 (R): Where are we now?

Ingram 2007, pp. 87–110 (*Buddhism vs. The Buddha, Content and Ultimate Reality, What Went Wrong?*); pp. 127–131 (*From Content to Insight*); 133–137 (*Concentration vs. Insight*); pp. 153–158 (*No-self vs. True Self*); pp. 329–332 (*What's "Full Enlightenment"?*)

FINAL TAKE-HOME EXAM: due Tuesday, December 11, at 3:00 pm (please submit electronically)

Bibliography

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