
Undergraduate Courses offered by Centre of Buddhist Studies in 2011-2012
ELECTIVES / INTER-FACULTY ELECTIVES
(OPEN TO ALL FACULTIES)

BSTC2009 Japanese Culture and Thought: The Buddhist Impact (6 credits)

Course Description

Buddhism was perhaps the first instance of cultural globalization particularly in Asia beginning from the 3rd century B.C. Through missionary zeal it spread far and wide beyond the shores of the Indian subcontinent touching and influencing many lives of Asian peoples.

Since its introduction in the 6th century A.C., Buddhism together with the indigenous religion of Japan called Shintoism and Confucianism of China played a pivotal role in molding ways of thinking of the Japanese people. This course introduces Japanese culture and thought mainly from the Buddhist perspectives making constant references to both common and different features in the ways of thinking between Chinese and Japanese peoples, and also to how Japanese Buddhism and culture including Zen Buddhism, tea ceremony, Japanese cuisine, and other cultural activities became a global phenomenon after the 19th century. The aim is to critically appraise the cultural diversity based on Buddhism and heighten awareness of other cultures through the understanding of Japanese culture and thought.

Offering Semester	1 st Semester
Lecturer	Prof. T. Endo
Email	tendo@hku.hk
Time	3:00 – 4:55pm, Every Friday
Class Venue	T5, Meng wah Complex
Assessment	100% coursework.

Topics covered

- 1) The beginnings of Japanese Buddhism: Their relations to the neighboring countries, China and Korea;
- 2) The nature and influence of Shintoism on Japanese culture and thought;
- 3) Prince *Shotoku*'s contribution to the spread of Buddhism in Japan;
- 4) *Nara* Buddhism; Duplication of Chinese Buddhism;
- 5) *Heian* Buddhism: Beginnings of Japanese Buddhism in spirit;
- 6) The *Mappo* (Degeneration of the True Dharma): Attitudinal changes of the Japanese to their outlook of life based on Buddhism;
- 7) *Kamakura* Buddhism: Its impact on the ways of thinking of the Japanese people;
- 8) Pure Land Schools of Buddhist Thought and their impact on Japanese culture and thought;
- 9) Zen Buddhism: A unique cultural phenomenon;
- 10) Zen and its impact on Japanese culture and thought and its influence outside Japan;

- 11) Cultural heritage: Tea ceremony, Haiku poetry, Zen gardens, Noh drama, and others;
- 12) Buddhism in modern era: Buddhist missionary work within and outside of Japan.

Recommended Readings

1. Yoshiro Tamura: *Japanese Buddhism: A Cultural History*, Tokyo: Kosei Publishing Company, 2001. [Main Library. 294.392 T15]
2. Daigan and Alicia Matsunaga: *Foundation of Japanese Buddhism*, Vols. 1 & II, Tokyo: Buddhist Books International, 1978 (Vol. I), 1984 (Vol. II) [Main Library. 294.30952 M4]
3. Robert E. Carter: *The Japanese Arts and Self-Cultivation*, New York: State University of New York Press, 2007. [Main Library. 700.952 C32]
4. H. Byron Earhart: *Japanese Religion: Unity and Diversity* (Religious Life in History Series) (4th), USA: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 2003. [Main Library. 200.952 E1]
5. Ian Reader, Esben Andreasen, and Finn Stefansson: *Japanese Religions: Past and Present*, USA; University of Hawaii Press, 1993. [Main Library. 200.952 R28]
6. D.T.Suzuki: *Zen and Japanese Culture*, USA: Princeton University Press, 1970. [Pochung CEO collection – CEO 294.3927 S96z]
7. Ian Reader: *Practically Religious: Worldly Benefits and the Common Religion of Japan*, USA: University of Hawaii Press, 1998. [Main Library. 200.952 R286p]
8. Hajime Nakamura: *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples*, USA: University of Hawai'i Press, 1964. [Main Library. 181 N1]
9. H.Paul Varley: *Japanese Culture*, Japan: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1973, 1986. [Main Library. 952 V31]
10. Ruth Benedict: *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture*, London: 1967 [Main Library. 301.2952 B46]

Audio-visual materials: selected DVD-s on Zen and Japanese Culture, pictures, etc. will also be used.

(Last updated: July 27, 2011)