

Undergraduate Courses offered by Centre of Buddhist Studies
(OPEN TO ALL FACULTIES)

BSTC2005 Buddhism in Today's World (6 Credits)

Instructor: Dr. SIK Fa Ren

B.A, M.Phil (CUHK), PhD (Lancaster University)

Offering semester: 1st semester

Course Outline

Buddhism was founded by Buddha Sakyamuni more than 2500 years ago. Since then, it has spread to various places and has become one of the major religions in the contemporary world. Buddhism has undergone a long historical development, and its practices have experienced magnificent changes. This course is designed to explore, from various perspectives, the development of Buddhism in the contemporary period. It will first give an overview of the major Buddhist doctrines and then review its history in a concise manner. Then it will look into a number of aspects of Buddhism, including institutional developments, lay Buddhism, ritual practices, and social relationships in various areas of today's world. Recent developments of Chinese Buddhism, which is closely concerned with human life in this world, as well as how Buddhism has transformed itself to suit the needs of the modern world, will also be explored.

Aim and Objective

The course aims at introducing the basic beliefs and practices of Buddhism to its students. Its objective is to, by critically evaluating reading materials during lectures, enable students to understand how Buddhism has constantly reinvigorated its institutional and doctrinal traditions in order to better respond to the social, political, and scientific progress of the human world.

Assessment ratio

100% coursework

Content	Ratio
Quiz 1 (October 10 th)	30%
Quiz 2 (November 28 th)	30%
Term paper	40%

Further notes:

1. Teaching will be delivered in face-to-face mode; students are required to go through the assigned readings before joining each lecture so that they can participate in class discussion and raise their own question.
2. The quiz is in multiple-choice format. **Please DO NOT miss it**, as no make-up quiz will be arranged.
3. Term paper (2500-3000 words) on one of the topics discussed in lectures, or you may choose your own topics related to the course (in this case, make sure you discuss with the lecturer beforehand). To write this paper, you must consult at least three different academic publications (lecture PowerPoints or notes are not counted).
4. Use any citation style you are familiar with but be consistent and provide page numbers. Your essay must be single line spacing with a font size of 12 and should be submitted through 'turnitin' on the Moodle by the deadline. The acceptable maximum AI and similarity rate is 10%, excluding footnotes / endnotes and reference list / bibliography. Substantial marks will be deducted if AI and similarity rate is over 10%.
5. The grading principles are as follows: B-range grades are for basically good writing, including, clear structure, logical and rational presentation of your ideas and thoughts; generally correct understanding of Buddhist teachings, readability in language, acceptable technical matters (e.g. a title page, reference, and other conventions). The A-range grades are for writing that is excellent in all the above aspects.
6. There will be penalty for late submissions: 1) submission within the first 7 days after the deadline will result in a deduction of one sub-grade (e.g. A-> A-); 2) after the 8th day following the deadline, the deduction will be a full grade (e.g. A-> B); 3) any submission made two weeks after the deadline will only receive a passing grade.
7. Faculty Grade Expectations: http://arts.hku.hk/grade_expectations.pdf
8. Academic Honesty: Plagiarism is a serious academic offence. The University upholds the principle that plagiarism in any form is unacceptable and any student found plagiarizing is liable to disciplinary action in addition to failing the assessment concerned. Please read the following webpage on "plagiarism" for details: <http://arts.hku.hk/current-students/undergraduate/assessment/plagiarism>

Course schedule with bibliography

Lecture 1: Course introduction

Introduction of resources for the study of Buddhism

Lecture 2: Current studies of Chinese Buddhism

Readings:

- Alexander, Bobby C. (1997), "Ritual and Current Studies of Ritual: overview".
In Stephen D. Glazier (ed.): *Anthropology of Religion: A Hand Book*,
(London: Greenwood Press), pp.139-160.
- McRae, John R. (May, 1995), 'Buddhism', *Journal of Asian Studies*, 54 (2), pp.
354-371.

Lecture 3: Buddhism in Contemporary China

- *Chandler, Stuart (2006), 'Buddhism in China and Taiwan: The dimensions of Contemporary Chinese Buddhism' in Berkwitz, Stephen C. (ed.), *Buddhism in World Cultures: Comparative Perspectives* (Santa Barbara (US): ABC-CLIO), pp.169-194.
- *Don Pittman, *Toward A modern Chinese Buddhism: Taixu's Reforms*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001: 13-60.
- Tao Jiang, "A Buddhist Scheme for Engaging Modern Science: The Case of Taixu." *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 29, no. 4 (2002): 533–552

Lecture 4: Humanistic Buddhism in the Modern World

- *Don Pittman, *Toward A modern Chinese Buddhism: Taixu's Reforms*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001: 13-60.
- Donald S. Lopez Jr., eds., *A Modern Buddhist Bible: Essential Readings from East and West*. (Beacon Press, 2002), xxxix.
- Tarocco, Francesca, *The Cultural Practices of Modern Chinese Buddhism: Attuning the Dharma*. (London a.o.: Routledge, 2007).

Lecture 5: Contemporary Social Practices of Buddhism

- *Chandler, Stuart (2004), *Establishing A Pure Land on Earth: The Foguang Buddhist Perspective on Modernization and Globalization* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press), pp. 43-77.
- Huang, C. Julia (2003), "The Buddhist Tzu-Chi Foundation of Taiwan" in Christopher Queen, ed., *Action Dharma: New Studies in Engaged Buddhism*. (Routledge: Curzon), pp.136-153.
- Douglas M. Gildow, "The First Conception of Modernist Chinese Buddhism," *T'oung Pao* 110 (2024): 185–236.
- David L. McMahan, *The Making of Buddhist Modernism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); Douglas M. Gildow, "Buddhism and the Social Order: Liang Qichao (1873–1929) and Modernist Buddhism," *Journal of Chinese Buddhist Studies* 36 (2023): 105–161

Lecture 6: Engaged Buddhism in the Modern World and Quiz 1

- *Christopher Queen (1996), "Introduction: The Shapes and Sources of Engaged Buddhism" in *Engaged Buddhism: Buddhist Liberation*

Movements in Asia. (New York: State University of New York Press):1-44.

*David Schak and Hsin-Huang Michael Hsiao (2005), Taiwan's Socially Engaged Buddhist Groups (<http://chinaperspectives.revues.org/2803>) Development of Lay Buddhism

Jones, C. Brewer (1999), *Buddhism in Taiwan. Religion and the State 1660-1990* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press), pp.178-219.

Yuan, Yuan, "Chinese Buddhist Nuns in the Twentieth Century: A Case Study in Wuhan," *Journal of Global Buddhism* 10 (2009): 375-412

Lecture 7: Theoretical Basis of Buddhist Rituals

Tambiah, Stanley J. (1985), "A Performative Approach to Ritual", in *Culture, Thought, and Social Action: An Anthropological Perspective* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press), pp.123-166.

*Walsh, Michael J., 'The Economics of Salvation: Toward a Theory of Exchange in Chinese Buddhism', *Journal of the American Academy of Religion Advance*, 2007, pp. 353-382.

Xueyu, 'Merit Transfer and Life after Death in Buddhism', *Ching Feng*, New Series 4.1, 2003, pp. 29-50.

Lecture 8: Buddhist Practice and its Benefits

*Reader, Ian and Tanabe, George J. (1998), *Practically Religious: Worldly Benefits and the Common Religion of Japan* (Honolulu University of Hawai'i Press), pp.37-68.

Wilson, Bryan and Dobbelaere, Karel (1994), *A Time to Chant: Soka Gakkai Buddhists in Britain* (Oxford: Clarendon), pp. 195-215.

Walsh, Michael J. (2007), 'The Economics of Salvation: Toward a Theory of Exchange in Chinese Buddhism', *Journal of the American Academy of Religion Advance*, pp. 353-382.

Lecture 9: Buddhist Rituals I

Stevenson, Daniel B., 'Text, Image, and Transformation in the History of Shuilu fahui, the Buddhist Rite for Deliverance of Creatures of Water and Land', in Marsha Weidner (ed.), *Cultural Intersections in Later Chinese Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2001), pp.30-70.

- *Yo, Hsiang-Chou. (2001), "Chinese Buddhist Confessional Rituals: Their Origin and Spiritual Implications" in Kalupahana, David J. edited. 2001. *Buddhist thought and ritual* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass), pp.173-187.

Lecture 10: Buddhist Rituals II

- *Teiser, S. F. (1988), *The Ghost Festival in Medieval China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), pp. 168-209.
- *Stevenson, Daniel B., 'Text, Image, and Transformation in the History of Shuilu fahui, the Buddhist Rite for Deliverance of Creatures of Water and Land', in Marsha Weidner (ed.), *Cultural Intersections in Later Chinese Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2001), pp.30-70.

Lecture 11: Buddhism in Contemporary Hong Kong and Course Revision and Breaking the Boundary and Quiz 2

- *Kwong, Chungwah, *The Public Role of Religion in Post-Colonial Hong Kong: An Historical Overview of Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, and Christianity* (Asian Thought and Culture, 53; New York: Peter Lang, 2002), pp.64-69.

Leong, Herry. 2001. *Ritual Implements, Tools & Objects of Chinese Buddhism* (Yuan Kuang Buddhist Publications: Taiwan).

*Recommended Readings

Further Reading

- Alexander, Jeffrey C. and Colomy, Paul (1985), 'Toward Neofunctionalism', *Sociological Theory* 3, pp. 11-23.
- Bell, Catherine (May, 1988), 'Ritualization of Texts and Textualization of Ritual in the Codification of Taoist Liturgy', *History of Religions*, 27 (4), pp. 366-92.
- (Jan., 1989), 'Ritual, Changes, and Changing Rituals', *Worship*, 63, pp.31-41.
- (1992), *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press).
- (1997), *Ritual Perspectives and Dimensions* (New York: Oxford university Press).
- Berkwitz, Stephen C. (ed.) (2006), *Buddhism in World Cultures: Comparative Perspectives* (Santa Barbara (US): ABC-CLIO).
- Brook, Timothy (1993), *Praying for Power: Buddhism and the Formation of Gentry Society in Late-Ming China* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press).
- Cave, Roderick (1998), *Chinese Paper Offerings* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press).

- Chen, Kenneth K. S. (1964), *Buddhism in China, a historical survey* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press).
- (1973), *The Chinese Transformation of Buddhism* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press).
- Chen, Pi-yen (2002), 'The Contemporary Practice of the Chinese Buddhist Daily Service: Two Case Studies of the Traditional in the Post-traditional World', *Ethnomusicology*, 46, pp.226-50.
- Davis, Edward L. (2001), *Society and the supernatural in Song China* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press).
- Durkheim, Emile (1915), *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life: A Study in Religious Sociology* (London: G. Allen & Unwin).
- Ebrey, Patricia (Apr., 1990), 'Cremation in Sung China', *The American Historical Review*, 95 (2), pp. 406-28.
- Gates, Hill (Jul., 1987), 'Money for the Gods', *Modern China*, Vol. 13, No. 3, Symposium on Hegemony and Chinese Folk Ideologies, Part II, pp. 259-77.
- Ghose, Lynken (2007), 'Karma and the Possibility of Purification: An Ethical and Psychological Analysis of the Doctrine of Karma in Buddhism', *Journal of Religious Ethics*, 35 (2), pp. 259-90.
- Gregory, Peter N. and Daniel A. Getz, (ed.) (1999), *Buddhism in the Sung* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press).
- Holt, John C. (Jun. 1981), 'Assisting the Dead by Venerating the Living: Merit Transfer in the Early Buddhist Tradition', *Numen*, Vol. 28, Fasc. 1, pp. 1-28.
- Huang Chi-chiang (July, 1998), "Consecrating the Buddha: Legend, Lore, and History of the Imperial Relic-Veneration Ritual in the T'ang Dynasty" in *Chung-Hwa Buddhist Journal* vol.11, pp.483-533.
- Jones, Charles B. (2003), "Foundations of Ethics and Practice in Chinese Pure Land Buddhism" in *Journal of Buddhist Ethics* v.10.
- Kwong, Chungwah (2002), *The Public Role of Religion in Post-Colonial Hong Kong: An Historical Overview of Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, and Christianity* (Asian Thought and Culture, 53; New York: Peter Lang).
- Makransky, John (2000), 'Buddhist Views on Ritual Practice: Mahāyāna Buddhist Ritual and Ethical Activity in the World', *Buddhist-Christian Studies*, vol. 20, pp. 54-59.
- Overmyer, Daniel L. (June 1990), 'Buddhism in the Trenches: Attitudes Toward Popular Religion in Chinese Scriptures Found at Tun-Huang', *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, vol. 50, pp. 197-222.
- Reader, Ian and Tanabe, George J. (1998), *Practically Religious: Worldly Benefits and the Common Religion of Japan* (Honolulu University of Hawai'i Press).
- Reader, Ian (2005), *Making Pilgrimages: Meaning and Practice in Shikoku* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press).
- Sadakata, Akira (1997), *Buddhist Cosmology: Philosophy and Origins* (Tokyo: Kosei).

- Stephen C. Berkwitz (ed.), *Buddhism in World Cultures: Comparative Perspectives* (Santa Barbara (US): ABC-CLIO).
- Strickmann, Michel (2002), *Chinese Magical Medicine* (Stanford: Stanford University Press).
- Teiser, Stephen F. (Aug., 1986), 'Ghosts and Ancestors in Medieval Chinese Religion: The Yü-lan-p'en Festival as Mortuary Ritual', *History of Religions*, 26 (1), pp. 47-67.
- (Dec., 1988), "Having Once Died and Returned to Life": Representations of Hell in Medieval China', *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 48 (2), pp. 433-64.
- Tong, Chee Kiong (2004), *Chinese Death Rituals in Singapore* (London; New York: RoutledgeCurzon).
- Tong, Chee Kiong and Kong, Lily (Sep., 2000), 'Religion and modernity: ritual transformations and the reconstruction of space and time', *Social & Cultural Geography*, pp. 29 - 44.
- Turner, Victor (1969), *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-structure* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co.).
- Watson, James L. and Rawski, Evelyn S. (ed.) (1988), *Death Ritual in Late Imperial and Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press).
- Weller, Robert P. (1987), *Unities and Diversities in Chinese Religion* (Seattle: University of Washington Press).
- (Feb, 1985), 'Bandits, Beggars, and Ghosts: The Failure of State Control over Religious Interpretation in Taiwan', *American Ethnologist*, vol. 12, pp. 46-61.
- Woodhead, Linda, et al. (2001), *Religions in the Modern World: Traditions and Transformations* (London: Routledge).
- Wu, Cheng-han (1988), 'Temple Fairs in Late Imperial China', Ph. D. dissertation (Princeton University).
- Yu, Chun-fang (1981), *The renewal of Buddhism in China* (New York: Columbia University Press).
- Tao Jiang, "A Buddhist Scheme for Engaging Modern Science: The Case of Taixu." *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 29, no. 4 (2002): 533–552
- Donald S. Lopez Jr., eds., *A Modern Buddhist Bible: Essential Readings from East and West*. (Beacon Press, 2002), xxxix.
- Tarocco, Francesca, *The Cultural Practices of Modern Chinese Buddhism: Attuning the Dharma*. (London a.o.: Routledge, 2007).
- Erik J. Hammerstrom (2015), *The Science of Chinese Buddhism: Early Twentieth-century Engagements* (Columbia University Press).
- Douglas M. Gildow, "The First Conception of Modernist Chinese Buddhism," *T'oung Pao* 110 (2024): 185–236.
- David L. McMahan, *The Making of Buddhist Modernism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); Douglas M. Gildow, "Buddhism and the Social Order: Liang Qichao (1873–1929) and Modernist Buddhism," *Journal of Chinese Buddhist Studies* 36 (2023): 105–161
- Yuan, Yuan, "Chinese Buddhist Nuns in the Twentieth Century: A Case Study in Wuhan," *Journal of Global Buddhism* 10 (2009): 375-412

3) E-Journals

Journal of Buddhist Ethics. Free. This is a web based academic journal for free distribution. Web address: <http://www.jbe.gold.ac.uk/>

Journal of Global Buddhism. Free. This is a web based academic journal for free distribution. <http://www.globalbuddhism.org/dig.html>

Western Buddhist Review. Free. It contains good academic papers for download. <http://www.westernbuddhistreview.com/>

Buddhist Studies Review. HKU Library. Published twice a year by the UK Association for Buddhist Studies, started form 1984. S 294.3 B927 S9

The Eastern Buddhist. HKU Library. Published twice a year by the Eastern Buddhist Society in Kyoto. Japan, started from 1965. S 294.3 E13 B9

Contemporary Buddhism. HKU Library. Published twice a year, Richmond, England: Curzon, c2000- S 294.3 C761 B

Website Recourses

JSTOR The Scholarly Journal Archive. This *Archive* needs subscription, so *use it through HKU Electronic Recourses*. <http://www.jstor.org/jstor>

NII Scholarly and Academic Information Navigator. Mostly Free. The National Institute of Informatics (Japan) has incorporated approximately 2.8 million full text articles (PDF) in NII-ELS, from 1,000 published academic journals. Currently NII has obtained permission of 271 academic societies. NII-ELS also provides full text (PDF) of Research Bulletins of Japanese universities. All of the full text articles incorporated in NII-ELS are available through CiNii along with bibliographical information on other academic papers.

Taisho Edition of Chinese Tripitaka. Free. If you can read classical Chinese and wish to refer to the original Chinese texts, please visit <http://www.cbeta.org/index.htm>. This website includes volumes 1-55 & 85 of *Taisho Edition of Chinese Tripitaka*.

Digital Sanskrit Buddhist Canon. Free for download and reading from The University of The West website: <http://www.uwest.edu/sanskritcanon/index.html>