

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

BSTC2005 Buddhism in Today's World (6 Credits)

Instructor: Dr. SIK Fa Ren

Office: Rm. 4.12, The Jockey Club Tower

Email: faren@hku.hk

Time: 12:30 – 14:20 (Monday)

Meeting Venue: RHT

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

Students are required to go through the assigned readings before joining each lecture so that they can participate in the class discussion and raise their own questions with foundational ideas about each designated topic. Final assessment of this course is 100% coursework including class participation and one term paper, both components are equally important and conducive to the final result.

Class participation comprises 1 worksheet which entirely rely on input of students' individual effort. After the lectures which would be offered before the readings, students should work on one worksheet with a discussion topic that corresponds to the theme(s) of the relevant lecture. Worksheet submitted are expected to demonstrate students' informed participation, as well as comprehension and critical thinking on the related topics. Good fulfilment of this component is one of the keys leading to the success in this course, and attending each lecture is the crucial step to achieve good result for the worksheets.

In addition, students are required to write a term paper of about 2500 to 3000 words on one of topics discussed in lectures, or students may choose their own topics related to the course (in this case, make sure you discuss with the lecturer beforehand).

All students are expected to attend the e-lectures on time without being late.

100% coursework, including :

70% a term paper (2,500-3,000 words)

30% class participation (1 piece worksheet)

**Guidelines for the coursework will be provided in due course.*

Criteria for Marking the Term Paper :

1. Good and correct understanding of the Buddhist teaching and historical information given in the lectures;
2. Clear, logical and rational presentation of your ideas and thoughts;
3. Personal input with in-depth analysis;
4. Show that you have read at least three academic references (powerpoints or notes of lectures are not counted) in your paper either in your footnotes or endnotes and list them at the end.

Grade Descriptors of Faculty of Arts :

http://arts.hku.hk/grade_expectations.pdf

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 One: Course introduction (16 Jan)

Introduction of resources for the study of Buddhism

Lecture Two : Current studies of Chinese Buddhism (30 Jan)

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 Three : Buddhism in Contemporary China (6 Feb)

*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.

Welch, Holmes, "Buddhism under the Communists," in *The China Quarterly*,
Volume 6, June 1961, pp.1-14.

*Don Pittman, *Toward A modern Chinese Buddhism: Taixu's Reforms*.
Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001: 13-60.

Lecture Four : Humanistic Buddhism in the Modern World (13 Feb)

*Don Pittman, *Toward A modern Chinese Buddhism: Taixu's Reforms*.
Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001: 13-60.

Lecture Five : Contemporary Social Practices of Buddhism (20 Feb)

*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.

Lecture Six : Engaged Buddhism in the Modern World (27 Feb)

*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

Welch, Holmes (1967), *The Practice of Chinese Buddhism, 1900-1950* (Harvard University Press), pp. 357-393.

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

Reading week (6 Mar) : NO CLASS

Lecture Seven : Theoretical Basis of Buddhist Rituals (13 Mar)

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 Eight : Buddhist Practice and its Benefits (20 Mar)

*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 Nine : Buddhist Rituals I (27 Mar)

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 Ten : Buddhist Rituals II (3 Apr)

*Teiser, S. F. (1988), *The Ghost Festival in Medieval China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), pp. 168-209.

Welch, Holmes (1967), *The Practice of Chinese Buddhism, 1900-1950* (Harvard University Press), pp. 179-205.

*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.

10 Apr: General Holiday (No Class)

Lecture Eleven: Buddhism in Contemporary Hong Kong (17 Apr)

*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.

Lecture Twelve : Course Revision (24 Apr)

***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).

--- (1968), 'Filial Piety in Chinese Buddhism', *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 28, pp. 81-97.

--- (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).
- Eberhard, Wolfram (1967), *Guilt and Sin in Traditional China* (Berkeley: University of California Press).
- 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.
- Prip-Möller, Johannes (1967), *Chinese Buddhist Monasteries: Their Plan and Its Function as a Setting for Buddhist Monastic Life* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press).
- 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).
- Liebenthal, Walter (1952), 'The Immortality of the Soul in Chinese Thought', *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 8, No. 1/2, pp. 327-97.
- 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).
- Welch, Holmes (1968), *Buddhist Revival in China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press).
- (1973), *The Practice of Chinese Buddhism 1900-1950* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press).
- (Apr. - Jun., 1965), 'The Reinterpretation of Chinese Buddhism', *The China Quarterly*, 22, pp. 143-53.
- 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).

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 from 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>