

Centre of Buddhist Studies
The University of Hong Kong
Master of Buddhist Studies Course Outline 2026-2027

(Course details laid out in this course outline are only for reference. Please always refer to the latest version presented in the HKU course moodle page.)

Contents

Part I Foundation Courses	2
BSTC6079 Early Buddhism	2
BSTC6002 Mahayana Buddhism	18
Part II Elective Courses	21
BSTC6006 Counselling and pastoral practice	21
BSTC6013 Buddhism in Tibetan contexts: history and doctrines	24
BSTC6030 Special topics in Buddhist studies (2): Mahāmudrā in India and Tibet	30
BSTC6031 Special topics in Buddhist studies (3): Translating Tibetan Buddhist Art: Texts, Objects and Cultural Heritage	34
BSTC6044 History of Chinese Buddhism	40
BSTC6052 Study of important Buddhist meditation texts	66
BSTC6056 Special topics in Buddhist studies (4): Buddhism on the Silk Road	71
BSTC6057 Special topics in Buddhist studies (5): Buddhism and State in China	71
BSTC6080 Chinese Buddhist art along the Silk Road	74
BSTC7003 Dunhuang Buddhist art and culture	84
BSTC7006 Pāli I	95
BSTC7007 Pāli II	99
BSTC3044 Pāli language III	103
BSTC3045 Pāli language IV	107
BSTC7008 Sanskrit I	111
BSTC7009 Sanskrit II	116
BSTC3040 Sanskrit language III	120
BSTC3041 Sanskrit language IV	124
BSTC7010 Classical Tibetan I	129
BSTC7011 Classical Tibetan II	134
BSTC7112 Buddhist Ethics	138
BSTC7120 Buddhist psychology and mental cultivation	147
BSTC7123 The concept of emptiness in Buddhist literature	156
BSTC7125 Buddhism in Central Asia	161
BSTC7607 Buddhist liturgy and rituals	164
Part III Capstone Experience	179

Part I Foundation Courses

BSTC6079 Early Buddhism

(9 credits)

Lecturer: Dr. G.A. Somaratne

Email: soma@hku.hk

Course Description

This course offers a comprehensive exploration of Early Buddhism through the lens of Pali Suttas, providing students with insights into its foundational doctrines. We will begin by examining religious and philosophical context that shaped Buddhism, particularly the interplay between spiritualist and materialist ideologies. Key themes include the analysis of individual experience through the dynamics of khandha (aggregates), ayatana (faculties), and dhatu (elements), as well as the Three Marks of Existence: impermanence, suffering, and non-self. Additionally, the course will address the doctrines of selflessness, dependent origination, ignorance, subjective constructions, craving, Nibbana, and the Noble Eightfold Path. Further discussions will encompass the psychological, ethical, epistemological, and ontological dimensions of Early Buddhism. The course will conclude with a reflective inquiry into Buddhism's "middle position," highlighting its impact on both theory and practice within this unique religious tradition.

Course Objectives

The course aims to teach:

- The fundament doctrines of Early Buddhism
- Early Buddhism as a comparative tool to understand early Indian religions and the later doctrinal developments of Buddhism
- The Buddhist theory of Dependent Co-arising as the key to understand the Buddhist doctrinal concept and discover the Buddhist perspective on various perennial and novel problems of the individual and in the world
- The positive and forward-looking character of Early Buddhist teachings
- Basic research and writing skills.

Course Learning Outcomes

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Identify, analyze, explain, and appraise the key doctrines of Early Buddhism
- Use Early Buddhism as a comparative tool for distinguishing early Buddhist doctrines from other early Indian religions and philosophies as well as for understanding the distinctive doctrinal developments in various Buddhist traditions
- Discover the Buddhist perspective on the individual and the world
- Through understanding the realities of life and living, develop a positive, activist and compassionate attitude towards oneself and one's dealings with the world

- Improve some basic research and writing skills required of an MBS graduate.

Textbooks

- Somaratne, G. A. (2021) *The Buddha's Teaching: A Buddhistic Analysis*. Palgrave Macmillan

[Check the course Moodle page for a pdf copy]

- Karunadasa, Y. (2021) *Early Buddhist Teachings: The Middle Position in Theory and Practice*. Centre of Buddhist Studies, HKU.

[<https://www.buddhism.hku.hk/publication-post/early-buddhist-teachings/>]. Chinese translation: 早期佛教 中道觀的理論與實踐

Course Outline

Class 1: The Buddha's Dhamma

Date: 7 Sept 2026

Discussion Points:

- The distinction between Dhamma and dhamma.
- The transformative power of understanding whole of the Dhamma.
- The Dhamma as a description of our experience.

Readings:

- *The Buddha's Teaching*: Chapters 1 & 2
- *Early Buddhist Teachings*: Chapter 1 [第一章 若干初步的觀察]

Class 2: The Emergence of the Middle Doctrine

Date: 14 Sept 2026

Discussion Points:

- The comprehensive, novel, and exclusive nature of the Buddha's teachings.
- Connections between Eternalism and Self-mortification, and Annihilationism and Self-indulgence.
- How the 'Middle Doctrine' of Dependent Co-arising leads to the 'Middle Path' of the Noble Eightfold Path.

Readings:

- *The Buddha's Teaching*: Chapter 3
- *Early Buddhist Teachings*: Chapter 2 [第二章 佛教的起源]

Class 3: Dependent Arising and the Arising-Cessation Cycles

Date: 21 Sept 2026

Discussion Points:

- The unique aspects of Dependent Co-arising as a causation theory.
- Standard formulations of the arising and cessation cycles of suffering.
- The conditioned and conditioning roles of the twelve factors in Dependent Co-arising
- Exploration of the Mahānidāna-sutta formulation.

Readings:

- *The Buddha's Teaching*: Chapter 3
- *Early Buddhist Teachings*: Chapter 3 [第三章 緣起]

Class 4: Ignorance and Faith

Date: 28 Sept 2026

Discussion Points:

- Definitions and origins of ignorance.
- Transforming ignorance-cycle into knowledge-cycle.
- The role of faith as an epistemological tool in overcoming ignorance.

Readings:

- *The Buddha's Teaching*: Chapter 4

Class 5: Subjectivity Forming in Perception

Date: 5 Oct 2026

Discussion Points:

- Definition of saṅkhārā as subjectivity forming in sensory experience.
- Distinction between immediate and reflexive perceptions.
- The role of saṅkhārā (subjective configurations) in conditioning suffering.

Readings:

- *The Buddha's Teaching*: Chapter 5

Class 6: The Five Clinging-Aggregates as Momentary Sensory Experiences

Date: 12 Oct 2026

Discussion Points:

- Analyzing experience into Five Aggregates or consciousness and name-and-matter.
- Understanding how sensory experiences result in unpleasant mental feelings.

Readings:

- *The Buddha's Teaching*: Chapter 6

Class 7: Not-Self and Identity

Date: 26 Oct 2026

Discussion Points:

- The distinction between self (attā) and 'my self' (me attā).
- The Buddha's theory of 'not-self' and its implications for personal identity and suffering.

Readings:

- *The Buddha's Teaching*: Chapter 7
- *Early Buddhist Teachings*: Chapter 4 [第四章 「無我」與「推定的實我」]

Class 8: Craving for Being and Unbeing

Date: 2 Nov 2026

Discussion Points:

- The dynamics of craving for ‘being’ and ‘unbeing’ and their impact on suffering.
- How cessation of ‘being’ (bhava-nirodha) can resolve existential conflicts.

Readings:

- *The Buddha’s Teaching*: Chapters 8 & 9

Class 9: Understanding the Noble Truth of Suffering

Date: 9 Nov 2026

Discussion Points:

- Detailed analysis of the First Noble Truth in the Buddha’s teaching.
- The distinctions between felt and reckoned suffering.

Readings:

- *The Buddha’s Teaching*: Chapters 10 & 11
- *Early Buddhist Teachings*: Chapter 6 [第六章 人生的診斷]

Class 10: The Gradual Path to Enlightenment

Date: 16 Nov 2026

Discussion Points:

- The components of the Noble Eightfold Path within the threefold training.
- How right view initiates and integrates into the path.

Readings:

- *The Buddha’s Teaching*: Chapter 14
- *Early Buddhist Teachings*: Chapter 8 [第八章 道德生活的實踐]

Class 11: The Ultimate Goal: Nibbāna

Date: 23 Nov 2026

Discussion Points:

- Characteristics and epithets of Nibbāna.
- Distinctions between attaining Nibbāna with and without remainder.

Readings:

- *The Buddha’s Teaching*: Chapter 13
- *Early Buddhist Teachings*: Chapter 10 [第十章 涅槃：終極目標]

Class 12: Course Review and Discussion

Date: 30 Nov 2026

Discussion Points:

- Open discussion on the course content, clarifications, and insights.
- Preparation tips for the final examination.

Assessment

1. Class Participation (15%)

- Active participation is crucial for successful learning and contributes significantly

to your overall grade. This 15% is awarded as a whole and is based on both attendance and engagement; it is not divided into separate parts. Participation includes:

- **Attendance:** Regular and timely attendance is mandatory. Please ensure you attend all classes unless unavoidable circumstances arise. Absence from class may be excused only with valid medical proof submitted before the missed class or, in unexpected situations, as soon as possible after the missed class.
- **Engagement:** Actively engage in class discussions, ask questions for clarification, and participate in all class activities. This interaction enhances understanding and enriches the learning environment for everyone.
- You are expected to participate in all class activities and discussions. The accuracy of your answers in class activities is **not** graded; instead, your score is based on your contribution, as reflected in the effort, thoughtfulness, and quality of your work and participation.
- Failure to meet expectations in either attendance or engagement may reduce your participation grade for the entire 15%.

2. A Short Essay: A Doctrinal Analysis of a Sutta from the Pāli Canon (25%)

- **Word Limit:** 1000 words (excluding cover page, works cited, bibliography, footnotes, and endnotes) You are required to keep your essay within the range of 1000–1050 words.
- **Due Date:** 02 November 2026

Assignment Description

This assignment is designed to help you engage deeply with the teachings of the Buddha as preserved in the Suttapitaka of the Pali Canon. You are required to select a Sutta (discourse of the Buddha) or a section of a Sutta and provide a doctrinal analysis of its content. Your analysis should focus on the teachings presented in the Sutta, critically examining its doctrines, themes, and philosophical implications. You must use English translations of the Sutta and support your analysis with scholarly secondary sources.

This assignment being part of the continuous assessment aims to:

1. Encourage you to read and understand the discourses of the Buddha in translation.
2. Develop your ability to critically analyze and assess the doctrinal content of a Sutta.
3. Enhance your understanding of key Buddhist concepts and their practical applications.
4. Strengthen your skills in academic writing, research, and critical thinking.

Steps to Undertake the Assignment

1. Select a Sutta:

Choose a Sutta that interests you or aligns with your research interests. Examples include the *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta* (Setting the Wheel of Dhamma in Motion), *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* (Foundations of Mindfulness), or *Kālāma Sutta*

(Advice to the Kālāmas).

2. Read and Analyse:

Carefully read the Sutta in English translation. Identify its key teachings, themes, and doctrinal points. Consider how the teachings relate to broader Buddhist concepts such as the Four Noble Truths, the Noble Eightfold Path, dependent origination, or mindfulness.

3. Research Secondary Sources:

Use scholarly articles, commentaries, and books to deepen your understanding of the Sutta and its doctrinal significance.

4. Structure Your Analysis:

Organize your assignment into clear sections (see “What to Include” below).

5. Cite Your Sources:

Use footnotes/Endnotes and a works cited page to acknowledge all sources, including the Sutta translation and secondary literature.

6. Format:

The essay must be typed, double-spaced, using a clear, readable font (e.g. Times New Roman or Arial, 12-point size) with standard margins (1 inch / 2.54 cm on all sides). Include the reference list / bibliography at the end of the essay in the same document. Save the final version of your essay as a PDF / WORD document and submit it together with the AI tools declaration form as one single file.

What to Include in the Assignment

1. Introduction (about 150–200 words):

- Introduce the Sutta, its context, and its significance in the Pali Canon.
- State the purpose of your analysis and the key doctrinal themes you will explore.

2. Summary of the Sutta (about 200–250 words):

- Provide a concise summary of the Sutta’s content, highlighting its main teachings and structure.

3. Doctrinal Analysis (about 500–600 words):

- Analyze the Sutta’s teachings in detail. Discuss how they reflect core Buddhist doctrines.
- Explore the philosophical, ethical, or practical implications of the teachings.
- Critically engage with the text, raising questions or offering interpretations.

4. Conclusion (about 100–150 words):

- Summarize your findings and reflect on the relevance of the Sutta’s teachings for contemporary Buddhist practice or scholarship.

5. Works Cited:

Include all sources used, following a consistent citation style (e.g., APA, MLA, or Chicago) and a complete reference list / bibliography. Students are expected to engage with at least 5 scholarly sources (e.g. academic books, journal articles, or

reputable edited volumes), in addition to the primary Sutta text.

A Note:

- The word ranges above are guidelines. Your final essay must be between 1000 and 1050 words in total (excluding cover page, works cited, bibliography, footnotes, and endnotes), and you are responsible for ensuring you do not exceed 1050 words. Please clearly state the total word count at the end of your essay.

Grading Criteria

1. **Understanding of the Sutta (30%):**
 - Demonstrates a clear and accurate understanding of the Sutta's content and teachings.
2. **Doctrinal Analysis (40%):**
 - Provides a thoughtful and critical analysis of the Sutta's doctrines, supported by evidence and scholarly sources.
3. **Clarity and Structure (20%):**
 - Presents ideas logically and coherently, with a well-organized structure.
4. **Citations and References (10%):**
 - Uses proper citations and includes a complete works cited page.

Tips for Success

- Choose a Sutta that is manageable within the word limit.
- Focus on depth rather than breadth in your analysis.
- Use clear and concise language.
- Proofread your work for grammar, spelling, and formatting errors.

3. Assignment: Mind-Map on a Key Teaching of the Buddha (20%)

Purpose: To visually represent and explore a key teaching of the Buddha, demonstrating your understanding of its interconnected concepts and practical applications. This assignment is designed to encourage you to engage with primary sources (Suttas) and secondary literature, fostering a deeper understanding of the Buddha's teachings and their relevance to contemporary practice.

Due Date: 16 November 2026

Assignment Description

For this assignment, you will create a **mind-map** based on one of the Buddha's key teachings, **such as:**

- Suffering (*Dukkha*)
- Craving (*Taṇhā*)
- Consciousness (*Vīññāṇa*)
- Ignorance (*Avijjā*)
- Dependent Arising (*Paṭiccasamuppāda*)
- Right View (*Sammā Diṭṭhi*)

- Impermanence (*Anicca*)
- Not-Self (*Anattā*)

Your mind-map should visually organize the teaching's core concepts, their relationships, and their practical implications for Buddhist practice. This assignment being part of the continuous assessment aims to:

1. Encourage you to read and understand the discourses of the Buddha in translation, fostering a deeper engagement with primary sources.
2. Develop your ability to break down complex teachings into their core components and visually represent their interconnections, enhancing your analytical and creative skills.
3. Enhance your understanding of how Buddhist teachings can be applied in daily life or meditation practice.
4. Foster creativity and critical thinking in engaging with Buddhist doctrines, making the learning process more dynamic and memorable.

Steps to Create the Mind-Map

1. **Choose a Teaching:**
Select one key teaching from the list above or any other that you find particularly meaningful or relevant.
2. **Research the Teaching:**
Use primary sources (e.g., Suttas from the Pāli Canon) and secondary sources (e.g., scholarly articles, books) to deepen your understanding of the teaching.
3. **Identify Key Concepts:**
Break down the teaching into its core components. For example, if you choose *Dependent Arising*, you might include the 12 links (*nidānas*) and their interconnections.
4. **Organize the Mind-Map:**
 - Start with the central teaching in the middle of the map.
 - Branch out to subtopics, concepts, and examples.
 - Use arrows, colours, and symbols to show relationships between ideas.
5. **Include Practical Applications:**
Add a section or branch that explores how the teaching can be applied in daily life or meditation practice.
6. **Add Visual Appeal:**
Use images, icons, or diagrams to make your mind-map engaging and easy to understand.

What to Include in the Mind-Map

1. **Central Teaching:**
The main concept (e.g., *Dependent Arising*) placed at the centre of the map.
2. **Core Concepts:**

Key ideas related to the teaching (e.g., the 12 links of *Dependent Arising*).

3. **Interconnections:**

Arrows or lines to show how the concepts are related.

4. **Examples or Quotes:**

Include short quotes from Suttas or examples to illustrate the teaching.

5. **Practical Applications:**

A section that explains how the teaching can be applied in practice.

6. **Visual Elements:**

Use colours, images, or icons to make the map visually appealing.

How to Create the Mind-Map

- **Tools:**

You can use digital tools like MindMeister, Canva, Miro, Lucidchart, or XMind, or create a hand-drawn map (using coloured pens, markers, and paper for a creative, personal touch).

- **Format:**

A single-page mind-map with clear connections between the concept and its practical applications. The mind-map may be hand-drawn or created digitally. If hand-drawn, scan or photograph it as a high-quality image; if digital, export it as a high-quality image or file. In all cases, save or export the mind-map as a PDF, and combine the mind-map, the separate reference list, and the AI tools declaration form into one PDF document for submission.

Grading Criteria

1. **Depth of Understanding (30%):**

Demonstrates a clear and accurate understanding of the chosen teaching and its core concepts.

2. **Organization and Clarity (25%):**

The mind-map is logically structured and easy to follow, with clear connections between ideas.

3. **Practical Applications (20%):**

Includes thoughtful and relevant examples of how the teaching can be applied in practice.

4. **Creativity and Visual Appeal (15%):**

Uses colours, images, and design elements effectively to enhance the map's clarity and engagement.

5. **Accuracy and Sources (10%):**

Accurately represents the teaching and includes references to primary or secondary sources (if applicable). A separate reference list should be attached to your submission; it will not be counted as part of the single-page mind-map. Students are expected to engage with at least 3 sources (e.g. the primary Sutta text and two additional scholarly or reliable secondary sources).

Tips for Success

- Keep the mind-map concise and focused on the chosen teaching.
- Use clear and readable fonts for text.
- Balance text and visuals to avoid overcrowding.
- Proofread your mind-map for accuracy and clarity.

Sample Mind-Map Outline 1: Dependent Arising (*Paṭiccasamuppāda*)

1. **Central Teaching:**
 - Place *Dependent Arising* in the centre of the map.
2. **Core Concepts:**
 - Branch out to the 12 links (*nidānas*): Ignorance (*Avijjā*), Volitional Formations (*Saṅkhāra*), Consciousness (*Viññāṇa*), etc.
3. **Interconnections:**
 - Use arrows to show how each link leads to the next (e.g., *Avijjā* → *Saṅkhāra* → *Viññāṇa*).
4. **Examples or Quotes:**
 - Add short quotes from the *Mahānidāna Sutta* (DN 15) or *Paṭicca-Samuppāda-Vibhaṅga Sutta* (SN 12.2).
5. **Practical Applications:**
 - Include a branch on how understanding Dependent Arising can help break the cycle of suffering in daily life.
6. **Visual Elements:**
 - Use a circular layout to represent the cyclical nature of dependent arising. Add icons for each link (e.g., a lightbulb for *Avijjā*, a gear for *Saṅkhāra*).

Sample Mind-Map Outline 2: The Four Noble Truths (*Cattāri Ariya Saccāni*)

1. **Central Teaching:**
 - Place *The Four Noble Truths* in the centre.
2. **Core Concepts:**
 - Branch out to each truth: Suffering (*Dukkha*), Origin of Suffering (*Samudaya*), Cessation of Suffering (*Nirodha*), and the Path (*Magga*).
3. **Interconnections:**
 - Use arrows to show the relationship between the truths (e.g., *Dukkha* → *Samudaya* → *Nirodha* → *Magga*).
4. **Examples or Quotes:**
 - Add quotes from the *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta* (SN 56.11).
5. **Practical Applications:**
 - Include a branch on how practicing the Noble Eightfold Path (*Magga*) can alleviate suffering.
6. **Visual Elements:**
 - Use a tree-like structure with roots for *Dukkha* and branches for *Magga*. Add

icons for each truth (e.g., a flame for *Samudaya*, a lotus for *Nirodha*).

4. Final Written Examination (Closed Book) (40%)

Assessment Period: 7–23 December 2026

The exact date of your examination will be announced by the university in November.

Format:

The final examination will be conducted over a three-hour session. It will consist of two parts:

A. Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) (25%):

You will answer 15 MCQs that test your knowledge of key facts and concepts related to early Buddhism. These questions are designed to assess your ability to quickly and accurately recall and apply specific information from the course.

B. Essay Questions (75%):

You will answer three essay questions that require a deeper exploration of topics, demonstrating your ability to analyse, synthesize, and critically engage with the course material. The question paper contains seven essay questions for you to choose from.

Evaluation Criteria:

1. Comprehensiveness:

- MCQs: Are your answers correct, and do they demonstrate a broad understanding of the course content?
- Essays: Does each essay fully address all components of the question, providing a comprehensive analysis?

2. Depth of Understanding:

- MCQs: Do your selections reflect a thorough and accurate understanding of the doctrinal concepts?
- Essays: Are the doctrinal concepts and theories discussed in depth, with clear and accurate explanations?

3. Organization and Clarity:

- Essays: Are your essays well-organized, clear, and logically structured to guide the reader through your argumentation effectively?

4. Persuasiveness and Coherence:

- Essays: Does your writing effectively persuade the reader with a coherent and compelling argument throughout the essay?

Additional Instructions:

- Ensure you manage your time effectively during the exam to adequately address both the MCQs and essay questions.
- Familiarize yourself with a variety of early Buddhist concepts and theories to ensure preparedness for both types of questions.
- Practice clear and concise writing to enhance the clarity and persuasiveness of your essay responses.

Additional Notes:

- Ensure all written assignments are submitted by the due dates to avoid penalties.
- Familiarize yourself with the university's academic integrity policy to avoid plagiarism.
- Regular consultation hours will be available if you need further assistance with your assignments or preparation for the final exam.

Recommended Translations of the Four Major Collections (Nikāyas) of the Early Buddhist Discourses (Suttas)

- [AN] Bodhi, Bhikkhu (2012) *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Aṅguttara Nikāya*. Boston: Wisdom Publications.
- [DN] Walshe, Maurice (1995) *The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya*. London: Wisdom Publications.
- [MN] Nanamoli, Bhikkhu & Bhikkhu Bodhi (2001, 2nd edition) *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya*. Boston: Wisdom Publications.
- [SN] Bodhi, Bhikkhu (2000) *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Saṃyutta Nikāya*. Boston: Wisdom Publications.
- [Ud] Masefield, Peter (1997) *The Udāna: Translated from Pāli*. Oxford: The Pali Text Society.

Recommended Suttas from the Above Four Collections

- AN 3.100: *Loṇakapalla Sutta* or *Loṇaphala Sutta* [The Sutta distinguishes between a deterministic theory of kamma and one based on conditionality.]
- AN 3.65: *Kesaputti Sutta* or *Kālāma Sutta* [The Sutta states that one should select a doctrine to follow on the ground of important moral considerations, which are in turn based on one's own experience of what conduces to happiness and to suffering.]
- DN 1: *Brahmajāla Sutta* [The Sutta outlines the intellectual and moral achievements of the Buddha by referring to his understanding and criticism of sixty-two philosophical theories on the nature of the self and the world.]
- DN 2: *Sāmaññaphala Sutta* [The Sutta carries a brief account of the doctrines of the six non-Buddhist ascetic teachers contemporary to the Buddha, and a detailed account of the Buddha's soteriological path and attainments.]
- DN 15: *Mahānidāna Sutta* [The Sutta details the principle of Dependent Co-arising and criticizes the Brāhmanical theory of self.]
- MN 1: *Mūlapariyāya Sutta* [The Sutta contains an analysis of the cognitive processes of four types of individuals: ordinary person, one in higher training, Arahat and the Buddha.]
- MN 10: *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* [The Sutta deals with meditation, with particular emphasis on the development of Insight, and presents the Fourfold Establishing of Mindfulness as the direct path for the realization of Nibbāna.]
- MN 18: *Madhupiṇḍika Sutta* [The Sutta contains the best-detailed analysis of the

process of sense experience.]

- MN 22: *Alagaddūpama Sutta* [The Sutta states that the fundamental Buddhist attitude toward views should be the attitude of non-grasping or letting go. It identifies six types of views regarding the nature of the self and the world, all based on the belief in permanence. Human anxiety is looked upon as the reason for grasping such views.]
- MN 24: *Rathavinīta Sutta* [The Sutta states that the goal of the holy life is to be reached by way of the seven stages of purification.]
- MN 26: *Ariyapariyesana Sutta* [The Sutta is about the Buddha's quest for finding a solution to the problem of human existence.]
- MN 27: *Cūlahatthipadopama Sutta* [The Sutta presents a full account of the step-by-step training of the Buddhist monk.]
- MN 28: *Mahāhatthipadopama Sutta* [The Sutta introduces the Four Noble Truths through the five aggregates affected by clinging.]
- MN 38: *Mahātanhāsāṅkhaya Sutta* [The Sutta is about correcting a heresy which claims that this same consciousness survives death unchanged. The Buddha states that this consciousness arises and ceases under Dependent Co-arising law and that consciousness that survives death also evolves under the same law.]
- MN 47: *Vīmaṃsaka Sutta* [The Sutta is on the Buddha inviting the monks to make a thorough investigation of himself in order to find out whether or not he can be accepted as Fully Enlightened.]
- MN 57: *Kukkuravatika Sutta* [The Sutta draws the basic correlations between types of actions and the types of results they yield.]
- MN 60: *Apaṇṇaka Sutta* [The Sutta is on how the Buddha uses the belief in the possibility of rebirth as a wager or a rational or prudent (unquestionable, apaṇṇaka) means of encouraging the pursuit of moral life. It carries criticism of the materialist philosophy that denies rebirth and, therefore, morality.]
- MN 61: *Ambalaṭṭhikārāhulovāda Sutta* [The Sutta is on the value of reflection in deciding what constitutes good or bad behavior.]
- MN 63: *Cūḷamāluṅkya Sutta* [The Sutta is a statement of the pragmatic reasons for not answering metaphysical questions.]
- MN 70: *Kīṭāgiri Sutta* [The Sutta presents a sevenfold classification of Noble Persons.]
- MN 71: *Tevijjavacchagotta Sutta* [The Sutta contains a discussion in which the Buddha disclaims ever-present omniscience but claims a threefold knowledge: clairvoyance and retrocognition (that he attains when he wishes), and the knowledge of the waning of mental corruptions (which is constant).]
- MN 72: *Aggivacchagotta Sutta* [The Sutta contains a detailed analysis of the epistemological reasons for the Buddha's reluctance to provide answers to the undeclared metaphysical questions.]
- MN 73: *Mahāvacchagotta Sutta* [The Sutta confirms the existence of Arahats among the monastics and Non-returners among the laity in hundreds.]

- MN 76: *Sandaka Sutta* [The Sutta highlights the holy life advocated by the Buddha, by rejecting current four ways that negated the living of a holy life and four kinds of holy life without consolation.]
- MN 77: *Mahāsakuludāyi Sutta* [The Sutta defines the factors conducive to the attainment of Enlightenment.]
- MN 82: *Raṭṭhapāla Sutta* [The Sutta presents four profound reasons that caused the young Raṭṭhapāla to renounce the world.]
- MN 102: *Pañcattaya Sutta* [The Sutta introduces various speculative views about the future and the past and of misconceptions about Nibbāna.]
- MN 107: *Gaṇakamoggallāna Sutta* [The Sutta emphasizes the gradualness of the path to Nibbāna, and states that only some of those who receive the Buddha's instruction attain Nibbāna.]
- MN 117: *Mahācattārīsaka Sutta* [The Sutta explains how the noble right concentration is supported by the rest of the Noble Eightfold Path factors and how right view comes first in the whole of Buddhist practice.]
- MN 118: *Ānāpānasati Sutta* [The Sutta outlines sixteen steps in the practice of Mindfulness of Breathing meditation and introduces the relation of this meditation to the Fourfold Establishing of Mindfulness and the seven Awakening Factors.]
- MN 119: *Kāyagatāsati Sutta* [The Sutta explains how mindfulness of the body should be developed and cultivated and the benefits to which it leads.]
- MN 120: *Saṅkhārūpapatti Sutta* [The Sutta explains how one can be reborn following one's wish.]
- MN 126: *Bhūmiya Sutta* [The Sutta illustrates the natural fruitfulness of the Noble Eightfold Path.]
- MN 135: *Cūḷakammavibhaṅga Sutta* [The Sutta is on how one becomes an inheritor of one's own actions that account for one's fortune and misfortune.]
- MN 136: *Mahākammavibhaṅga Sutta* [The Sutta attempts to avoid the deterministic interpretation of kamma by revealing the subtle complexities in the workings of kamma that overturn simplistic dogmas and sweeping generalizations.]
- MN 137: *Salāyatana Sutta* [The Sutta presents the six internal and external sense bases and other related topics.]
- MN 140: *Dhātuvibhaṅga Sutta* [The Sutta is on the elements.]
- MN 148: *Chachakka Sutta* [The Sutta discusses the contemplation of the factors of sense experience as Not-self. It demonstrates that impermanence implies Not-self.]
- SN 12: *Nidāna Saṃyutta* [The Suttas in this section deal with every aspect of the Buddha's conception of Conditional Occurrence.]
- SN 12.15: *Kaccānagotta Sutta* [The Sutta is on the middle doctrine that sides with neither existence (eternalism) nor non-existence (annihilationism).]
- SN 22: *Khandhasaṃyutta*: [The Suttas in this section present a detailed analysis of the five aggregates with an emphasis on their subjectivity to the three characteristics of existence.]
- SN 44: *Abyākata Saṃyutta* [The Suttas here respond to why the Buddha has not

adopted any of the metaphysical tenets advocated and hotly debated by his contemporaries. The answers given show that the metaphysical tenets are rejected primarily because, at the fundamental level, they all rest upon the implicit assumption of a self. This assumption, in turn, springs from ignorance about the real nature of the five aggregates and the six sense bases. For one who has fathomed the real nature of these phenomena, all these speculative views turn out to be untenable.]

- SN 56.11: *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta* [The Sutta lays out the middle practice (the Noble Eightfold Path) that sides with neither self-indulgence nor self-mortification.]
- Ud 6.4: *Nānāditthiya Sutta* [The Sutta states that those who hold into the popular set of ten metaphysical views are blind and lacking in vision.]
- Ud 8.1-4: *Nibbānapaṭisaṃyutta Sutta* 1-4 [These Suttas describe Nibbāna from experiential modes.]

Recommended Secondary Sources

- Anālayo, Bhikkhu (2003) *Satipaṭṭhāna: The Direct Path to Realization*. Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society.
- Anālayo, Bhikkhu (2011) *A Comparative Study of the Majjhima-nikāya*. 2 vols. Taipei: Dharma Drum Publishing Corp.
- Bachelor, Stephen (2016) *After Buddhism: Rethinking the Dharma for a Secular Age*. India: Harper Element.
- Bodhi, Bhikkhu (1989) *The Discourse on the Fruits of Reclusership: The Sāmaññaphala Sutta and its Commentaries*. Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society.
- Bodhi, Bhikkhu (1992) *The Discourse on the All-Embracing Net of Views: The Brahmajāla Sutta and its Commentaries*. Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society.
- Bodhi, Bhikkhu (1995) *The Great Discourse on Causation: The Mahānidāna Sutta and its Commentaries*. Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society.
- Boisvert, Mathieu (1995) *The Five Aggregates: Understanding Theravāda Psychology and Soteriology*. Canada: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.
- Bronkhorst, Johannes (1998) *Two Traditions of Meditation in Ancient India*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Burton, David (2004) *Buddhism, Knowledge and Liberation: A Philosophical Study*. England: Ashgate Publishing Ltd.
- Choong, Mun-Keat (2000) *The Fundamental Teachings of Early Buddhism*. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz.
- Collins, Steven (1982) *Selfless Persons: Imagery and Thought in Theravāda Buddhism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Fuller, Paul (2005) *The Notion of Diṭṭhi in Theravāda Buddhism: The Point of View*. London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon.
- Gethin, R.M.L. (2001) *The Buddhist Path to Awakening (Classics in Religious Studies)*. Oxford: Oneworld Publications.

- Gethin, Rupert (1998) *The Foundations of Buddhism*. USA: Oxford University Press.
- Gokhale, B. G. (1994) *New Light on Early Buddhism*. London: Sangam Books.
- Gombrich, Richard (2006) *How Buddhism Began: The Conditioned Genesis of the Early Teachings*. New York: Routledge.
- Hamilton, Sue (1996) *Identity and Experience: the Constitution of the Human Being according to Early Buddhism*. London: Luzac Oriental.
- Hamilton, Sue (2000) *Early Buddhism: A New Approach - The I of the Beholder*. Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press.
- Harvey, Peter (1990) *An Introduction to Buddhism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Harvey, Peter (1995) *The Selfless Mind: Personality, Consciousness and Nirvana in Early Buddhism*. Richmond: Curzon Press.
- Harvey, Peter (2000) *An Introduction to Buddhist Ethics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Jayatilleke, K.N. (1980) *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Johansson, Rune E.A. (1979) *The Dynamic Psychology of Early Buddhism*. Oxford: Curzon Press.
- Kalupahana, David J. (1992) *A History of Buddhist Philosophy: Continuities and Discontinuities*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- Kalupahana, David J. (2007) *A Sourcebook of Early Buddhist Philosophy*. Dehiwala: Buddhist Cultural Centre.
- Kalupahana, David J. (2009) *Karma and Rebirth: Foundations of the Buddha's Moral Philosophy*. Dehiwala: Buddhist Cultural Centre.
- Karunadasa, Y. (2014, 2nd edition) *Early Buddhist Teachings: The Middle Position in Theory and Practice*. Hong Kong: Centre of Buddhist Studies, The University of Hong Kong.
- Karunaratne, W.S. (1988) *Theory of Causality in Early Buddhism*. Nugegoda, Sri Lanka: Indumati Karunaratne.
- Ñāṇananda, Bhikkhu (1986) *Concept and Reality in Early Buddhist Thought*. Kandy, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society.
- Payutto, Phra Prayudha (1995) *Buddhadhamma: Natural Laws and Values for Life*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Ronkin, Noa (2005) *Early Buddhist Metaphysics: The Making of a Philosophical Tradition*. London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon.
- Shulman, Eviatar (2008) "Early Meanings of Dependent-Origination." *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 36 (2): 297-317.
- Somaratne, G. A. (2022) *An Introduction to Early Buddhist Soteriology: Freedom of Mind and Freedom by Wisdom*. Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Sujato, Bhikkhu (2005) *A History of Mindfulness: How insight worsted tranquillizing in the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*. Taipei: The Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation.

- Webster, David (2005) *The Philosophy of Desire in the Buddhist Pali Canon*. London and New York: Routledge Curzon.

Internet Resources

- Translations of the Buddha's discourses [<http://suttacentral.net/>]
- An Entrance to the World of Buddhism [www.buddhistdoor.com]
- Buddhism and Science [www.mindandlife.org]
- Access to insight [www.accesstoinsight.org]
- Digital Dictionary of Buddhism [<http://www.buddhism-dict.net/ddb/>]
- For learning the Buddha's teaching [www.dhammadialogue.com]
- Audios [<http://bodhimonastery.org/a-systematic-study-of-the-majjhima-nikaya.html>]

A Note:

Please check the Course Moodle Page regularly for course updates, announcements, weekly lecture notes, readings materials, class activities, attendance marking, submission of assignments, quizzes, sample assignments, recordings of classes, feedback for your submitted assignments, and the final examination date and venue.

BSTC6002 Mahayana Buddhism

(9 credits)

Lecturer: Prof. K.-D. Mathes

Email: kdmathes@hku.hk

Course Description

This course aims to provide comprehensive introduction to history, doctrines and philosophical schools of early Indian Mahayana Buddhism. After surveying the history of the development of Buddhism in early India after the death of the Buddha, it concentrates on the philosophical doctrines and practices of Indian Mahayana Buddhism. The topics to be discussed include the emergence of Mahayana Buddhism, Bodhisattva ideal, Trikaya or three bodies of the Buddha, the Perfection of Wisdom (Prajnaparamita) Sutras, Pureland, and the philosophical systematizations of the Mahayana doctrines by the Mahayana Buddhist philosophers belonging to the Madhyamaka and the Yogacara schools.

Assessments

10% Class participation

25% Quiz

25% Essay

40% Final Exam

Course Objectives

1. Gain an informed and objective historical perspective of the doctrinal development

of the early Mahāyāna tradition — necessary for a proper comprehension and appreciation of the subsequent development of later Mahāyāna doctrines

2. Demonstrate the ability to critically examine the fundamental doctrines of Indian Mahāyāna.
3. Critically appraise traditional and modern scholars’ accounts on doctrinal and historical issues related to Buddhism in general and Mahāyāna in particular.
4. Apply their knowledge of the ethical and spiritual teachings of Mahāyāna—such as compassion, wisdom, the perfection practices (*pāramitā*), etc—in their living, and thereby adding a spiritual dimension of their individual existences.

Lecture Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>
23/1	General Introduction: The Buddha and His Teaching from a Mahāyāna Perspective Focus: Śākyamuni as transcendent and immanent Buddha; the three <i>kāyas</i> and Mahāyāna re-readings of “the Buddha and his teaching.”
30/1	The Four Reliances; The Three Dharmacakras Focus: Scriptural authority and hermeneutics (“rely on meaning, not words”); historical and philosophical interpretations of the three turnings of the Dharma wheel.
6/2	Lunar New Year
13/2	Theories on the Emergence of Mahāyāna; Bodhicitta and the Bodhisattva Path Focus: Major theories on the rise of Mahāyāna; <i>bodhicitta</i> as the hallmark of the bodhisattva path; <i>bhūmis</i> and <i>pāramitās</i> .
20/2	Mahāyāna Buddhist Ethics Focus: The bodhisattva’s paradox of purity and engagement; vegetarianism; the claim to transcend ordinary moral norms.
27/2	Prajñāpāramitā and Nāgārjuna’s Madhyamaka Interpretation Focus: Emptiness and non-duality in Prajñāpāramitā; Nāgārjuna’s deconstruction of essentialist views.
6/3	The Yogācāra Interpretation of Prajñāpāramitā: The Three-Nature Theory Focus: Substantial vs nominal existence; “mind-only” and the three-nature theory.
13/3	Reading Week
20/3	Quiz; Self-Awareness and Fundamental Transformation in Yogācāra Focus: Phenomenology of consciousness; two modes of self-awareness;

- transformation of the mind-stream into Buddhahood.
- 27/3 Public Holiday
- 3/4 Candrakīrti's Life, Work, and Legacy
Focus: *Madhyamakāvatāra*; Candrakīrti's critique of Yogācāra and his Madhyamaka hermeneutics.
- 10/4 Dharmakīrti's Logic School; Kamalaśīla's Yogācāra–Madhyamaka Synthesis
Focus: Indian Buddhist debate and epistemology; direct and inferential cognition; Kamalaśīla's *Bhāvanākrama* and gradual meditation.
- 17/4 Can We All Become Buddhas? The Concept of *Tathāgatagarbha*
Focus: Buddha-nature sūtras; the *Ratnagoṭravibhāga*; selected Tibetan interpretations of buddha-nature.
- 24/4 The Samye Debate: Gradual vs Sudden Enlightenment
Focus: Kamalaśīla and Moheyan; gradual vs sudden enlightenment and their impact on Tibetan scholasticism.
- 2/5 Submission of Essay

Reading List

D'Amato, Mario: *Maitreya's Distinguishing the Middle from the Extremes. Along with Vasubandhu's Commentary*. New York: The American Institute for Buddhist Studies. 2012.

Damien, Keown: *Buddhist Ethics*. Hong Kong: Centre of Buddhist Studies, HKU. 2022

Dunne, John D.: "Buddhist Styles of Mindfulness: A Heuristic Approach." In *Handbook of Mindfulness and Self-Regulation*. Edited by Brian D. Ostafin, Michael D. Robinson, and Brian P. Meier, 251–70. New York: Springer, 2015.

Kellner, Birgit: "Where Did Kamalaśīla Compose His Works, and Does It Even Matter? Reflections on the Activities of Indian Scholars in Imperial Tibet." *Asiatische Studien – Études Asiatiques* 77.1 (2023), 245-275.

Lopez, Donald S. (ed.): *Buddhist Hermeneutics*. Hawaii, Univ. of Hawaii Press, 1996.

Mathes, K.-D.: *Blending the Sūtras with the Tantras*. PIATS. Leiden: Brill, 2006, 201-227.

Mathes, K.-D.: *A Direct Path to the Buddha Within: Gö Lotsāwa's Mahāmudrā Interpretation of the Ratnagoṭravibhāga*. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2008.

Mathes, K.-D.: The Noble Mahāyāna Sūtra "The Questions of Rāṣṭrapāla" (*Rāṣṭrapālapariṣchāsūtra*). Translating the Words of the Buddha, 2021.

(<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh62.html>)

Mathes, K.-D.: “Buddha-nature (Tathāgatagarbha).” The Encyclopedia of Philosophy of Religion. Stewart Goetz and Charles Taliaferro (Editors-in-Chief). John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 2023. DOI: 10.1002/9781119009924.eopr0062

Mathes, K.-D.: “Tathāgatagarbha Influences in the Three Nature (trisvabhāva) Theory of the Maitreya Works.” In Journal of Tibetology 20 (2020), 222-44.

Mathes, K.-D. and Kemp, Casey (eds.): *Buddha Nature across Asia*. WSTB 103. Vienna, 2022

Powers, John: *Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism*. Bolder: Snowlion, 2007

Samuel, Geoffrey: *Introducing Tibetan Buddhism*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2012

Silk, Jonathan A.: *Buddhist Cosmic Unity: An Edition, Translation and Study of the Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta*. Hamburg Buddhist Studies 4. Hamburg: Hamburg University Press, 2015.

Walser, J.: *Nāgārjuna in Context: Mahāyāna Buddhism and Early Indian Culture*, 2008.
Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche: *Progressive Stages of Meditation on Emptiness*. Oxford: Longchen Foundation, 1994

Westerhoff, Jan: *Nāgārjuna's Madhyamaka: Philosophical Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009

Westerhoff, Jan: *The Golden Age of Indian Buddhist Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018

Williams, Paul: *Mahāyāna Buddhism: The Doctrinal Foundations*. London: Routledge, 2009.

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Part II Elective Courses

BSTC6006 Counselling and pastoral practice
(6 credits)

Lecturer: Ven. Dr. Sik Hin Yan

Email: buddhistspiritualcare@gmail.com

Course Description

This course aims at providing students with basic knowledge and understanding of the

application of Buddhist theory and practices to counselling, in particular in a health care setting, and personal transformation in the provision of chaplaincy services. With the Four Noble Truths as the groundwork for Buddhist counselling, the course also covers an introduction of various techniques in meditation practices; basic skills in communication; issues on death and dying; and insights into caring for the dying and their carers. The course comprises lectures, discussions, role-plays, reflective exercises and Buddhist practices. In order to acquire an experiential and an intellectual understanding of the subject, students are expected to actively participate in class as well as contemplation practices at home.

Course Schedule

Lecture 1	Jan 24	What is Counselling / Uniqueness of Buddhist Counselling
Lecture 2	Jan 31	Cause and Conditions / Suffering, its Causes, Cessation, the Path to End it
	Feb 7	[Chinese New Year - No class]
Lecture 3	Feb 14	Mindfulness: Concentration Practices
Lecture 4	Feb 21	Mindfulness: Contemplation Practices I on Daily Activities
Lecture 5	Feb 28	Mindfulness: Contemplation Practices II on Emptiness
Lecture 6	Mar 7	Mindfulness: Contemplation Practices III on Compassion
Lecture 7	Mar 14	Communication I - Basic Skills
Lecture 8	Mar 21	Communication II - Reflective Skills showing Empathy
	Mar 28	[Easter - No class]
Lecture 9	Apr 4	Reflections on Death and Dying I
Lecture 10	Apr 11	Reflections on Death and Dying II
Lecture 11	Apr 18	Mindful Grieving and Bereavement
Lecture 12	Apr 25	Group Presentations I
	May 2	Group Presentations II - TBC

Assessments

1. 30% Class Participation
2. 35% Logs of Contemplation Practices
3. 35% Essay

Class Participation

Most classes consist of a lecture, experiential exercises, role-plays and discussions. In order to acquire an experiential as well as intellectual understanding of the subject, students are encouraged to make their own reflections and participate as fully as possible in these activities. The emphasis of class participation is not on performance, but rather on the willingness to learn and contribute at a level that is appropriate for the individual as well as the class.

Course Bibliography

1. Albom, M. (1997). *Tuesdays with Morrie*. New York: Doubleday.
<https://youtu.be/E463tZdAGn4>
2. Giles, C.A. and Miller, W.B. (eds.) (2012). *The Arts of Contemplative Care: Pioneering Voices in Buddhist Chaplaincy and Pastoral Work*. Boston: Wisdom Publication.
3. Halifax, J. (2008). *Being with Dying: Cultivating Compassion and Fearlessness in the Presence of Death*. Boston: Shambhala.
4. Halpern, S.P. (2004). *The Etiquette of Illness*. New York: Bloomsbury.
5. Kabat-Zinn, J. (2013). *Full Catastrophe Living*. New York: Bantam Books.
6. Kalanithi, P. (2016). *When Breath Becomes Air*. New York: Random House.
7. McLaren, K. (2013). *The Art of Empathy: A Complete Guide to Life's Most Essential Skill*. Colorado: Sounds True.
8. Rinpoche, S. (1993). *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*. San Francisco: Harper San Francisco.
9. Thich, N. H. (2014). *No Mud, No Lotus*. California: Parallax Press.
10. Thich, N. H. (1995). *Living Buddha, Living Christ*. London: Rider.
11. Thich, N. H. (2003). *No Death, No Fear*. New York: Riverhead.
12. Thich, N. H. (2001). *Anger: Wisdom for Cooling the Flames*. New York: Riverhead.
13. Thich, N. H. (1992). *The Diamond that Cuts Through Illusion*. California: Parallax Press.

Further reading for Counselling and Communication

1. Bor, R., Gill, S., Miller, R. and Evans, A. (2009). *Counselling in Health Care Settings*. Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan.
2. Clinebell, H. (2011). *Basic Types of Pastoral Care and Counselling: Resources for the Ministry of Healing and Growth*. 3rd ed. Nashville: Abingdon Press.
3. Any other books on counselling 101.

Further reading for the Uniqueness of Buddhist Counselling

1. Brazier, C. (2003). *Buddhist Psychology: Liberate Your Mind, Embrace Life*. London: Constable & Robinson.
2. de Silva, P. (2014). *An Introduction to Buddhist Psychology and Counselling*. 5th ed. London: Palgrave MacMillan.
3. Nyanatusita himi, Bhikkhu (ed.)(2013). *The Bodhisattva Ideal: Essays on the Emergence of Mahayana*. Kandy: Buddhist Publication.

N.B. Supplementary readings will also be delivered in class.

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BSTC6013 Buddhism in Tibetan contexts: history and doctrines
(6 credits)

Below is the course outline in 2025-26 for reference. For the latest version, please refer to the course moodle.

Lecturer: Prof. Georgios T. Halkias

Email: halkias@hku.hk

Course Description

In this course we will explore some of the main historical, doctrinal and sociological developments of Buddhism in Tibetan contexts. Lectures will cover the following topics: the historical agents and events leading to the transmission of Buddhism to Tibet; the formation and teachings of various Buddhist schools including their doctrinal differences and manifold socio-political spheres of influence; Tibetan sacred art and symbolism; tantric techniques, mysticism and religious experience.

Lectures

- **Lecture 1: Buddhism in India and the Development of Mahāyāna traditions**

Reading: JP (pp. 31-79 & pp. 101-130); GS (pp. 44-64).

- **Lecture 2: The early dissemination of Indian Buddhism in Tibet (c.7th- 9th centuries CE)**

Reading: JP (pp. 137-154); GH (pp. 35-63); GS (pp. 1-14 & pp. 31-32); MK (pp. 1-26); GT (pp. 1-15).

- **Lecture 3: The later dissemination of Indian Buddhism in Tibet (c.10th- 13th centuries CE)**

Reading: JP (pp.155-158); GS (pp.32-33); MK (pp. 84-126); GT (pp. 16-28).

- **Lecture 4: Tibetan Schools: lineages & major doctrines, Part I.**

Reading: JP (pp. 355-432); GT (pp. 47-50 & pp.70-87).

- **Lecture 5: Tibetan Schools: lineages & major doctrines, Part II.**

Reading: JP (pp. 433-498); MK (pp. 127-174); GT (pp. 26-27; pp. 34-37; pp. 40-43, & pp. 65-67).

- **Lecture 6: Lamas and other religious practitioners**

Reading: GS (pp.129-164); GT (pp. 29-48).

- **Lecture 7: Death, dying, and liberation in the Tibetan Buddhist traditions**

Reading: JP: (pp. 325-354); GS: (p. 170).

- **Lecture 8: The School of the Bön: A Heterodox Buddhist system?**

Reading: JP (pp. 497-514); GS (pp. 220-234); GT (pp. 213-248).

- **Lecture 9: Tibetan Buddhist art and expressions of the sacred, devotion, and faith**

Reading: JP: (pp. 233-248).

- **Lecture 10: The union of Sūtra and Tantra: esoteric practices and theory of Vajrayāna Buddhism**

Reading: JP: (pp. 249-324); GS: (pp. 65-87); MK: (pp. 225-231); GT: (pp. 50-67).

- **Lecture 11: Meditation Traditions in Tibetan Contexts**

Reading: Halkias (2019). Buddhist Meditation in Tibet: Exoteric and Esoteric Orientations, *The Oxford Handbook of Meditation*.

- **Lecture 12: In-class Group Presentations**

No Reading

Course Expectations

Students enrolling in this course are expected to attend all lectures, complete the weekly readings prior to each lecture, and complete the following four assignments:

1. In-class group oral presentation of first topic (10 minutes long)
2. In-class mid-term quiz (20 minutes long)
3. Essay Outline with bibliography
4. Written essay on a second topic (3000 – 3500 words)

Course Assessment

**** Taking attendance via the HKU App is mandatory for every MBS student in all MBS courses. Please be reminded to take attendance for every lecture. More than 4 unexcused absences will result in failing the course.**

Assessment for this course will be carried according to the following three criteria:

Assignment 1: In-class group oral presentation (25%)

You are asked to present in-class on a chosen topic with the aim of sharing your knowledge to a generally educated audience (your classmates). A short Q/A session will follow your presentation during which time you will take on questions pertaining to your topic. During the in-class presentation you ought to use a power point presentation and optionally any other aiding materials (i.e., audio-visual, handouts, etc.).

All members of the group ought to participate equally in the preparation of the presentation and take active roles in its delivery.

1.1. Evaluation Criteria

Timely. Your presentation should not be longer than 10 minutes.

Delivery of precise and clear information.

Depth of information. Your presentation should not be superficial, i.e., something copied from Wikipedia and related websites.

Objective and accurate. Your presentation should contain accurate information from reliable sources and presented in an unbiased way.

Original and engaging. Your presentation is given for your fellow classmates so it should be engaging!

1.2. Topic Selection

You can use this opportunity to select one of the given topics to deepen your knowledge on a specific subject in Tibetan Buddhism. You may also present on a topic not in the list with the prior approval of the instructor.

1.3. Deadline

Students planning to receive grade for this assignment ought to submit by **May 2, 2026**

1. Names and student IDs of proposed group members (3-4);
2. A brief description of presentation topic;
3. A bibliography of a minimum of 4 academic sources used in the presentation (websites do not count).

*** Late and incomplete submissions will be penalized by grade reduction.*

Assignment 2: Mid-Term Quiz (25%)

The in-class quiz, closed book, will take place in the middle of the term and will be based on our required readings and lectures up to this point. Students are expected to complete it in 20 minutes. **Quiz date: March 21, 2026**

Assignment 3: Essay Outline with Bibliography (15%)

You are expected to submit an outline of your essay topic **by e-mail** (word document) that includes:

Your name and student ID.

Essay title.

A short introduction/abstract (200-250 words) describing the topic of your paper stating clearly WHAT are you going to do, HOW are you going to do it (read x number of sources), and WHY do you think this is important as a topic.

Tentative section headings showing clearly what will be discussed in each section.

An **annotated bibliography** of *at least 5 sources* in English excluding non-academic publications and websites. Each source listed should contain a brief description explaining its relevance to your topic. If you don't know what an annotated bibliography looks like, see:

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/common_writing_assignments/annotated_bibliographies/annotated_bibliography_samples.html

Bear in mind that the essay outline is a blueprint of the final paper. It is not set in stone. In the event you are asked to, or decide, to write on a research topic different from the one presented in your outline you would need to submit a new research outline with bibliography.

* Your documents should be saved by your full name, for example: *John Lee.doc*

2.1. Evaluation Criteria

For full points your outline should be carefully planned and include:

- a. Full Title
- b. Abstract (200-250 words)
- c. Tentative chapter headings
- d. Annotated bibliography of 5 English **academic sources** properly cited in the essay

2.2. Type of Essay Paper

You can submit either: 1. research paper; 2. argument paper; or 3. exploratory paper. Regardless of the kind of paper you decide to write you should follow the

same essay guidelines provided for this course.

2.3. Topic Selection

You can use this opportunity to learn on a specific subject in Tibetan Buddhism and present on a topic of your interest. You can read through the *Lectures Outline*, *References for Essays*, and *Essay Topics and Guidelines* for suggestions in choosing a topic and/or consult with your instructor. All proposed topics will be subject to the final approval of the instructor.

2.4. Bibliography

Your bibliography could include, as applicable, sources from the following:

1. The *Textbook* (JP) and the *Reference Sources* (GH) (GS) (GT) (MK) assigned for this course.
2. Articles and/or chapters from *Optional Readings*.
3. Other sources held at HKU Main Library including: academic books, encyclopedias, chapters in edited volumes, and/or journal articles. For suggested bibliography see also *References for Essays*. There should be **a fair balance** between sources written by Tibetan scholars and lamas, and sources published by academic scholars.

2.5. Deadline

Students planning to receive grade or pass for this assignment ought to submit by

April 11, 2025:

1. Full title of their essay;
2. An abstract/introduction (200-250 words);
3. Tentative chapter headings;
4. An annotated bibliography of **5 pertinent academic sources** (* minimum).

*** Late and incomplete submissions will be penalized by grade reduction*

Assignment 4: Essay (3000-3500 words) (35%)

This assignment carries the most weight in this course and you ought to spend considerable time reading from various sources to come with a good final and edited product. The word limit **does not** include footnotes and bibliography, but it does include appendices.

3.1. Evaluation Criteria

a). Clear Structure and Organization. The information presented should be organized in a logical and clear manner. Your paper should have an introduction, a main body with headings, sections, a conclusion/summary, and a list of references cited in your essay.

- b). Background Reading, Understanding of Sources and Arguments. It is expected that your essays show familiarity with the lectures and readings assigned during the course and with the main publications on your chosen topic.
- c). Style of Scholarly Writing. This means that one is careful with the choice of words and one does not reproduce colloquial or conversational modes of expression and jargon. The use of thesaurus is encouraged.
- e). In-text use of citations and quotations. Recognize for the contribution of other writers is expected through accurate quotations (judiciously selected and sparingly used). Follow the conventions in the *Essay Topics and Guidelines*.
- f). Carefully edited (accurate spelling and usage of English punctuation and grammar).

3.2. Bibliography

A minimum of 7-10 bibliographical sources **in English** cited in the essay (not just listed in the reference sections) ought to reflect some of the reading material assigned in this course and additional readings pertinent to your topic. This is proven through appropriate citations in your essay from the *Textbook*, *Reading References*, *Optional Readings*, and other sources from the Main Library. Non-academic sources, i.e., internet websites, lecture notes, magazines and partisan publications **do not count** towards the minimum sources. For suggested bibliography see also *References for Essays*.

3.3. Citations

Use **ONLY** in-text citations. See *BSTC6013 - Guidelines for Essays*. Note when you quote entire passages or sentences from sources you ought to use quotation marks.

3.4. Deadline

To receive full grade for this assignment you ought to submit an electronic copy of your paper uploaded through the Turnitin link available in Moodle by **May 11, 2025**.* Your documents should be saved by your full name, for example: *John Lee.doc* All late and incomplete submissions will be penalized by grade reduction.

Before submitting your final papers take the following into account:

1. All papers need to be revised carefully for English spelling, grammar and syntax.
2. All papers need to include diacritics (i.e., Mahāyāna) for Sanskrit terms, italics for foreign terms and titles of works.
3. All papers must use in-text citations and bibliographical references consistently and professionally indicating page numbers for citations when appropriate and quotation marks when passages or sentence are taken from other sources.
4. All papers ought to include **90% English sources** cited in the essay. An outstanding paper will have a fair balance between academic articles and books cited in the essay and for the most part works published by academic scholars.
5. All papers must include the information stated in the course syllabus and submitted by

the deadline.

6. If AI was used then you need to specify the kind of use (i.e., grammar checking, brainstorming, paraphrasing). **Note: AI should NOT be used to copy-paste text/content as this amounts to plagiarism.** In the event there are credible signs (stylistic anomalies, AI lexical patterns, inconsistency with student's past work, etc.) that AI was used to generate the contents of the essay; the student will be asked to take a comprehensive oral examination consistent with the essay contents and its bibliographical sources.

Reading Material

Textbook

(JP) Powers, John. 2007. *Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism*, Revised Edition. New York: Snow Lion Publications.

Secondary Reference Books *

(GS) Samuel, Geoffrey. 2012. *Introducing Tibetan Buddhism*. New York: Routledge.

(MK) Kapstein, Matthew. 2006. *The Tibetans*. MA: Blackwell Publishers.

(GT) Tucci, Giuseppe. 1980. *The Religions of Tibet*. Translated by G. Samuel. London, Boston and Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

(GH) Halkias, Georgios. 2013. *Luminous Bliss: A Religious History of Pure land Literature in Tibet*. University of Hawaii Press.

* Weekly readings from the *Textbook*, *Reference Sources* and *Optional Readings* will be made available by the Instructor on Moodle. A comprehensive thematic list of sources will be uploaded on Moodle.

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BSTC6030

Special Topic in Buddhist studies (2): Mahāmudrā in India and Tibet

Lecturer: Prof. K.-D. Mathes

Email: kdmathes@hku.hk

Course Description

This course introduces students to the key elements of Mahāmudrā from the perspective of contemplative philosophy. Beginning with its Indian tantric Buddhist roots and their unique methods for directly accessing mind's true nature—characterized by universal compassion, great bliss, and emptiness—Mahāmudrā developed into one of the principal meditation

traditions of Tibetan Buddhism. After a historical survey of Mahāmudrā and its Tibetan reception, we examine how this dynamic, living practice came to be integrated with the Madhyamaka philosophy of not becoming mentally engaged (amanasikāra) and non-abiding (apratiṣṭhāṇa), which seeks to radically transcend any conceptual assessment of true reality. To support its practice, Mahāmudrā eventually has been introduced in Tibet through a distinctive form of śamatha that trains in remaining undistracted from non-dual luminosity, together with nonconceptual modes of vipaśyanā. Topics include the Mahāmudrā of the Indian Siddhas, Essence-, Tantra-, and Sūtra-Mahāmudrā, and later Kagyu contemplative traditions.

Assessments

Class Participation	20%
2 quizzes	2 x 20%
Final Essay (2,500 – 3,000 words)	40%

Course Objectives

1. Analyze primary Mahāmudrā sources within their historical and philosophical contexts
2. Explain the relationship between Mahāmudrā and Amanasikāra-Madhyamaka
3. Evaluate the soteriological implications of key contemplative practices such as śamatha and vipaśyanā
4. Apply relevant Mahāmudrā and Madhyamaka perspectives to contemporary discussions in Buddhist philosophy

Lecture Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>
5/9	General Introduction: General Introduction: The Buddha and His Teaching Focus: The Four Noble Truths; The Four Reliances; The Three Dharmacakras, Dependent Arising and Emptiness
12/9	General Introduction: Essence-Mahāmudrā and the Threefold Classification Focus: Historical emergence and doctrinal contours of Sūtra-, Tantra-, and Essence-Mahāmudrā in Indian and Tibetan sources.
19/9	Saraha's Spontaneous Songs: The Dohākoṣa with the Commentaries by Advayavajra and Mokṣākaragupta Focus: Saraha's dohā-songs and their scholastic reception, with attention to Advayavajra's and Mokṣākaragupta's systematizing strategies.

- 26/9 General Holiday
- 3/10 The Tantric Nāgārjuna; The Great Seal (Mahāmudrā) in the Succession of the Four Seals
Focus: Nāgārjuna’s tantric corpus and the position of Mahāmudrā within the schema of the four seals in Highest Yoga Tantra
- 10/10 Nāgārjuna’s Commentary on Bodhicitta; the Siddha Śavaripa
Focus: Mahāmudrā-relevant strands in Nāgārjuna’s Bodhicittavivaraṇa and their reinterpretation in Śavaripa’s siddha teachings.
- 17/10 Reading Week
- 24/10 Maitrīpa: A Fine Blend of Mahāmudrā and Madhyamaka
Focus: Maitrīpa’s synthesis of tantric Mahāmudrā with Madhyamaka analysis, especially his treatment of non-conceptual wisdom.
- 31/10 The Short Lineage: Tīlopa and Nāropa – Mahāmudrā and the Six Dharmas of Nāropa
Focus: The “short” Mahāmudrā transmission from Tīlopa to Nāropa and its integration with the completion-stage Six Dharmas.
- 7/11 The Tibetan Reception: Marpa, Milarepa, and Gampopa
Focus: Translation, transmission, and early Tibetan reinterpretation of Mahāmudrā across Marpa, Milarepa, and Gampopa’s formative Kagyu syntheses.
- 14/11 Kagyu Mahāmudrā in the Light of the Samye Debate
Focus: Later Kagyu self-presentation of Mahāmudrā vis-à-vis the “sudden–gradual” polemics surrounding the Samye debate and the figure of Hwa shang.
- 21/11 Rangtong–Shentong and Mahāmudrā
Focus: Interfaces between Mahāmudrā, Tathāgatagarbha, and Shentong, especially in Jonang and Shentong-leaning Kagyu presentations.
- 28/11 Mahāmudrā Manuals and Pedagogy
Focus: Later Mahāmudrā practice manuals and curricula, from preliminaries through śamatha–vipaśyanā and pointing-out, including their relation to the Six Dharmas.

Reading List

Callahan, Elizabeth M., trans.

Moonbeams of Mahāmudrā. By Dakpo Tashi Namgyal (dwags po bkra shis rnam rgyal). With *Dispelling the Darkness of Ignorance* by Wangchuk Dorje (dbang phyug rdo rje), the Ninth Karmapa. Tsadra Foundation Series. Boulder, CO: Snow Lion Publications, 2019.

Dakpo Tashi Namgyal

Clarifying the Natural State. Translated from the Tibetan by Erik Pema Kunsang. Rangjung Yeshe Books. Boudhnath, Hong Kong & Esby, 2001

Jackson, David

“Sa skya Paṇḍita the ‘Polemicist’: Ancient Debates and Modern Interpretations.” *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 13 (2), 1990, 17-116.

Jackson, David

Enlightenment by a Single Means. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1994.

Jackson, Roger R.

Saraha: Poet of Blissful Awareness. In the series *Lives of the Masters*. Boulder: Shambhala Publications 2024.

Jackson, Roger R. & Mathes, Klaus-Dieter

Mahāmudrā in India and Tibet. Ed. by Jackson & Mathes. Leiden: Brill, 2019

Mathes, Klaus-Dieter:

Maitrīpa: India’s Yogi of Nondual Bliss. In the series *Lives of the Masters*. Boulder: Shambhala Publications 2021.

Mathes, Klaus-Dieter:

“The Śrī-Śabarapādastotraratna of Vanaratna”. In: *Bauddhasāhityastabakāvalī: Essays and Studies on Buddhist Sanskrit Literature Dedicated to Claus Vogel by Colleagues, Students, and Friends*. Ed. by Dragomir Dimitrov, Michael Hahn, und Roland Steiner (*Indica et Tibetica* 36), 245-267. Marburg, 2008.

Mathes, Klaus-Dieter & Szántó, Péter-Dániel:

Saraha’s Spontaneous Songs with the Commentaries by Sahajavajra and Mokṣākaragupta. Studies in Indian and Tibetan Buddhism. Boston, Wisdom Publications, 2024

Rhoton, Jared D. 2002

A Clear Differentiation of the Three Codes: Essential Distinctions among the Individual Liberation, Great Vehicle, and Tantric Systems. SUNY Series in Buddhist Studies. New York: SUNY

Roberts, Peter Alan 2014

The Mind of Mahāmudrā. Advice from the Kagyü Masters (Tibetan Classics). Boston: Wisdom Publications

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**BSTC6031 Special topics in Buddhist studies (3):
Translating Tibetan Buddhist Art: Texts, Objects and Cultural Heritage**

Lecturer: Prof. YAO Shuang

Email: yaos123@hku.hk

Course Description

This course explores Tibetan Buddhist art as a form of cross-cultural translation, tracing how images, rituals, and texts moved between Indian, Tibetan, Tangut, Mongol, and Chinese contexts and were reshaped in new media, idioms, and institutional settings. Rather than offering a survey of symbolism or artistic styles, it treats murals, thangkas, sculptures, monastic architecture, ritual objects, and canonical texts as connected sites where this translation took place. Case studies span the imperial Tubo period to the Qing court, drawing on key monuments, monastic visual programs, thangkas, canonical treatises on image-making, and imperial collections. Particular attention is given to how Tibetan Buddhist art has been made, named, and classified within its own historical and cultural contexts, and to the methodological problems modern scholarship faces in curating and "translating" it for contemporary audiences.

Objectives

1. Read Tibetan Buddhist art as cross-cultural translation, through objects and texts together.
2. Question how this art has been categorized, dated, and displayed, both traditionally and in modern scholarship.
3. Use art-historical analysis to interpret specific works and the religious life they give form to.

Assessment

100% coursework

- **Attendance and Class Participation (20%):** Regular attendance and active, informed contribution to discussion.
- **Presentation (40%):** A focused presentation on one specific historical artwork or cultural site, including critical reflection on the existing scholarship relevant to the topic. Students submit a recorded video of their individual presentation, no longer than 10 minutes, by the end of the final lecture (25 November).
- **Final Paper, no more than 3,000 words (40%):** A developed written treatment of the same artwork or site, analyzing it within its historical, cultural, and religious contexts and engaging critically with the relevant scholarship. Submission Deadline: 11 December.

General Reading

- Tucci, Giuseppe. *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*. 3 vols. Rome: La Libreria dello Stato, 1949.

- Su Bai 宿白. *Zangchuan fojiao siyuan kaogu* 藏传佛教寺院考古 [Archaeology of Tibetan Buddhist Monasteries]. Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1996.
- Heller, Amy. *Tibetan Art: Tracing the Development of Spiritual Ideals and Art in Tibet, 600–2000 A.D.* Milan: Jaca Book, 1999.
- Rhie, Marilyn M., and Robert A. F. Thurman. *Wisdom and Compassion: The Sacred Art of Tibet*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, in association with Tibet House and the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, 1991.
- Pal, Pratapaditya, et al. *Himalayas: An Aesthetic Adventure*. Chicago: Art Institute of Chicago, 2003.
- Henss, Michael. *The Cultural Monuments of Tibet: The Central Regions*. Munich: Prestel, 2014.
- Larsen, Knud, ed. *Wall Painting in Tibet: History, Technique, Survivals, Environment*. Langhus: Tronfjell Publications, 2023.
- Debreczeny, Karl, and Elena Pakhoutova. *Himalayan Art in 108 Objects*. New York: Rubin Museum of Art, in association with Scala Arts Publishers, 2023.
- Luczanits, Christian, and Louise Tythacott, eds. *Tibetan Monastery Collections and Museums: Traditional Practices and Contemporary Issues*. Vajra Academic Series, vol. VI. Kathmandu: Vajra Books, 2024.
- Xie Jisheng 谢继胜, Xiong Wenbin 熊文彬, Luo Wenhua 罗文华, and Liao Yang 廖旻. *Zangchuan fojiao yishu fazhan shi* 藏传佛教艺术发展史 [A History of the Development of Tibetan Buddhist Art]. 2 vols. Shanghai: Shanghai shuhua chubanshe, 2010.
- Xie Jisheng 谢继胜 and Wang Ruilei 王瑞雷, eds. *Qi zhi shisan shiji Han-Zang yu duo minzu wenming guanxi shi* 七至十三世纪汉藏与多民族文明关系史 [A History of Sino-Tibetan and Multiethnic Civilizational Relations, 7th–13th Centuries]. 2 vols. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2024.

Digital Resources

- Himalayan Art Resources: <https://www.himalayanart.org>
- Rubin Museum of Art: <https://rubinmuseum.org> (including the collection search, Project Himalayan Art and online publications)
- Western Himalaya Archive Vienna (WHAV): <https://whav.univie.ac.at/>
- Prof. Christian Luczanits's site documentation: luczanits.net
- Treasury of Lives: treasuryoflives.org

Lecture Schedule (11 lectures in total)

Week 1 (Sep. 3) Why Translate Tibetan Buddhist Art? A Critical Review of Modern Scholarship

Suggested Readings:

- Lo Bue, Erberto. "Giuseppe Tucci and Historical Studies on Tibetan Art." *The Tibet Journal* 32, no. 1 (2007): 53–64.

- Klimburg-Salter, Deborah. "Review: Some Thoughts on Style in Tibetan Art." *The Tibet Journal* 25, no. 4 (2000): 83–90.
- Kapstein, Matthew. "Weaving the World: The Ritual Art of the *Paṭa* in Pāla Buddhism and Its Legacy in Tibet." *History of Religions* 34, no. 3 (1995): 241–62.***
- Lopez, Donald S., Jr. "The Art." In *Prisoners of Shangri-La: Tibetan Buddhism and the West*, 134–55. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998.

Week 2 (Sep. 10) The Dawn of Buddhist Art in Tibet: Temples, Rock Carvings, and the Origin of Thangkas

Suggested Readings:

- Sørensen, Per K., and Guntram Hazod, in cooperation with Tsering Gyalbo. *Thundering Falcon: An Inquiry into the History and Cult of Khra-'brug, Tibet's First Buddhist Temple*. Beiträge zur Kultur- und Geistesgeschichte Asiens 49. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2005.
- Heller, Amy. "Jokhang Temple, Lhasa: Tibet's Most Sacred Temple." Project Himalayan Art. New York: Rubin Museum of Art, 2023.***
<https://rubinmuseum.org/projecthimalayanart/essays/jokhang-temple-lhasa/>.
- Warner, Cameron David. "Jowo Shakyamuni of the Rasa Trulnang Tsuklakhang (Jokhang Temple): The Most Famous Religious Object in Tibet." Project Himalayan Art. New York: Rubin Museum of Art, 2023.***
<https://rubinmuseum.org/projecthimalayanart/essays/jowo-shakyamuni-of-the-rasa-trulnang-tsuklakhang-jokhang-temple/>.
- Heller, Amy. "Imperial Carvings of Vairochana: Ancient Tibetan Buddhist Rock Carvings of Vairochana — Portraits of Tibetan Sovereigns and Their Courtiers." Project Himalayan Art. New York: Rubin Museum of Art, 2023.***
<https://rubinmuseum.org/projecthimalayanart/essays/imperial-carvings-of-vairochana/>.
- Xie Jisheng 谢继胜. "Han-Zang bianjing Dari Rulai ba da pusa moya zaixiang" 汉藏边境大日如来八大菩萨摩崖造像 [Rock Carvings of Vairocana and the Eight Great Bodhisattvas on the Sino-Tibetan Frontier]. In *Qi zhi shisan shiji Han-Zang yu duo minzu wenming guanxi shi* 七至十三世纪汉藏与多民族文明关系史 [A History of Sino-Tibetan and Multiethnic Civilizational Relations, 7th–13th Centuries], edited by Xie Jisheng 谢继胜 and Wang Ruilei 王瑞雷, chap. 2. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2024.
- Xie Jisheng 谢继胜. "Fan chuang de yanbian yu guazhou de xingcheng — Tangka yu Song Liao Jin Xia shiqi guazhou huihua xingzhi de tantao" 幡幢的演变与挂轴的形成——唐卡与宋辽金夏时期挂轴绘画形制的探讨 [The Evolution of Banners and the Formation of the Hanging Scroll: A Study of the Thangka and Hanging-Scroll Painting Formats in the Song, Liao, Jin, and Xixia Periods]. *Meishu daguan* 美术大观, no. 6 (2023): 93–103.

Week 3 (Sep. 17) The Revival in Central Tibet and Its Tangut Echoes: Grathang Monastery, Grolma lhakhang and Yulin Cave 3

Suggested Readings:

- Heller, Amy. "The Paintings of Gra Thang: History and Iconography of an 11th Century Tibetan Temple." *The Tibet Journal* 27, no. 1/2 (2002): 37–70.***
- Von Schroeder, Ulrich. "Clay Sculptures at Snye thang Monastery." In *Buddhist Sculptures in Tibet*, 2 vols., 860–69. Hong Kong: Visual Dharma Publications, 2001.***
- Wei Wen 魏文. "Nietang Zhuomalakang yanjiu santi: Han-Zang fengge zaoxiang, Han shi mugou diantang he Zangwen chuangjian shiliao congkao" 聶塘卓瑪拉康研究三題：漢藏風格造像、漢式木構殿堂和藏文創建史料叢考 [Three Studies on Nyethang Drolma Lhakhang: Sino-Tibetan Style Sculptures, Han-Style Timber Architecture, and Tibetan Foundation Sources]. *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan* 故宮博物院院刊, no. 12 (2023): 63–86.
- Pakhoutova, Elena, and Jia Weiwei. "Cave 3 at Yulin Cave Temples: Tangut Patrons' Embrace of Buddhist Sacred Sites and Cosmopolitan Teachings." Project Himalayan Art. New York: Rubin Museum of Art, 2023.***
<https://rubinmuseum.org/projecthimalayanart/essays/cave-3-at-yulin-cave-temples/>.
- Jia Weiwei 賈維維. *Yulin ku di san ku tuxiang yu wenben yanjiu* 榆林窟第三窟圖像與文本研究 [Iconography and Texts of Yulin Cave 3]. Hangzhou: Zhejiang daxue chubanshe, 2020.

Week 4 (Sep. 24) Shalu Monastery: Picturing the Cannons onto the Walls

Suggested Readings:

- Richardson, Sarah A. "Mural Painting at Zhalu Monastery: Mongol Patronage, Nepalese Artists, and Murals as a Public Marketing Strategy for Sacred Books." Project Himalayan Art. New York: Rubin Museum of Art, 2023.***
<https://rubinmuseum.org/projecthimalayanart/essays/mural-painting-at-zhalu-monastery/>.
- Lo Bue, Erberto. "Chinese Artistic Influence in Tibet from the 11th to the 15th Century." In *Facets of Tibetan Religious Tradition and Contacts with Neighbouring Cultural Areas*, edited by Alfredo Cadonna and Ester Bianchi, [page range]. *Orientalia Venetiana* 12. Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 2002.
- Zhaga 扎呷, and Tenzin Tashi 當增扎西, eds. *Yuandai Xialu si Han-Zang yishu* 元代夏魯寺漢藏藝術 [Sino-Tibetan Art of Shalu Monastery in the Yuan Dynasty]. Beijing: Zhongguo Zangxue chubanshe, 2024.

Week 5 Holiday

Week 6 (Oct. 8) The Art of 'Phags pa: The White Stupa, Anige, and Their Texts

Suggested Readings:

- Campbell, Aurelia. "Consecrating the Imperial City: Tibetan Stupas in Yuan Dadu." *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies* 51 (2022): 207–43.***
- Franke, Herbert. "Consecration of the 'White Stūpa' in 1279." *Asia Major*, 3rd ser., 7, no. 1 (1994): 155–83.

- Jing, Anning. "The Portraits of Khubilai Khan and Chabi by Anige (1245–1306), a Nepali Artist at the Yuan Court." *Artibus Asiae* 54, no. 1/2 (1994): 40–86.***
- Debreczeny, Karl, ed. *Faith and Empire: Art and Politics in Tibetan Buddhism*. New York: Rubin Museum of Art, 2019. Introduction. ***
- Xie Jisheng 谢继胜, Wei Wen 魏文, and Jia Weiwei 贾维维, eds. *Beijing Zangchuan fojiao yishu (Yuan): Beijing Zangchuan fojiao wenwu yicun yanjiu* 北京藏传佛教艺术 (元): 北京藏传佛教文物遗存研究 [Tibetan Buddhist Art of Beijing (Yuan Dynasty): A Study of the Surviving Tibetan Buddhist Material Heritage in Beijing]. Beijing: Beijing renmin chubanshe, 2018.

Week 7 Reading Week

Week 8 (Oct. 22) Inventing the Textile Thangka: The Great Prayer Festival

Suggested Readings:

- Tanaka, Yuko. "A Note on the History, Materials and Techniques of Tibetan Appliqué Thangkas." In *Tibetan Studies: Proceedings of the 6th Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies, Fagernes 1992*, edited by Per Kvaerne, 2 vols., 2:873–76. Oslo: Institute for Comparative Research in Human Culture, 1994.
- Czaja, Olaf. "The Maitreya Prayer Festival at Bkra shis lhun po: A Historical and Art Historical Study." *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 41 (2018): 55–116.***
- Xie Guangdian 谢光典. "Si shi Gama ba Ruobei Duoqi Yuan mo xibei chaosheng xunli huodong kaoshu — yi qi Zangwen zhuanji shiliao wei zhongxin" 四世噶玛巴若贝多吉元末西北朝圣巡礼活动考述—以其藏文传记史料为中心 [A Study of the Fourth Karmapa Rolpé Dorjé's Late-Yuan Pilgrimage Tour through the Northwest, Based on His Tibetan Biographical Sources]. *Zhongguo bianjiang shidi yanjiu* 中国边疆史地研究 (September 2021): 181–88.

Week 9 (Oct. 29) The Rise of the Tibetan Painting Schools

Suggested Readings:

- Jackson, David P. *A History of Tibetan Painting: The Great Tibetan Painters and Their Traditions*. Beiträge zur Kultur- und Geistesgeschichte Asiens 15. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1996 (familiarize with the table of contents; key chapter: "Early References to Tibetan Painters and Styles").***
- Jackson, David P. *A Revolutionary Artist of Tibet: Khyentse Chenmo of Gongkar*. New York: Rubin Museum of Art; Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2016.
- Jackson, David P. *Patron and Painter: Situ Panchen and the Revival of the Encampment Style*. New York: Rubin Museum of Art; Chicago: Serindia, 2009.
- Jackson, David P., Christian Luczanits, and Kristen Muldowney Roberts. *Painting Traditions of the Drigung Kagyu School*. New York: Rubin Museum of Art; Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2015.

Week 10 (Nov. 5) Text and Image: The Iconographic Program of Phun tshogs gling Monastery

Suggested Readings:

- Quintman, Andrew. "Putting the Buddha to Work: Śākyamuni in the Service of Tibetan Monastic Identity." *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 40 (2017): 111–56. ***
- Quintman, Andrew, and Kurtis R. Schaeffer. "The Life of the Buddha at Rtag brtan Phun tshogs gling Monastery in Text, Image, and Institution: A Preliminary Overview." *Zangxue xuekan* 藏学学刊 [Journal of Tibetology] 13 (2016): 32–73.
- Linrothe, Rob. "'Utterly False, Utterly Undeniable': Visual Strategies in the Akanistha Shrine Murals of Takden Phuntsokling Monastery." *Archives of Asian Art* 67, no. 2 (2017): 143–87.
- Yan Xue 闫雪. "Xizang Gandan Pengcuolinsi dajingtang 'Rulaizang shijing' bihua yanjiu" 西藏甘丹彭措林寺大经堂《如来藏十经》壁画研究 [On the Murals Illustrating the "Ten Tathāgatagarbha Sūtras" in the *gTsug lag khang* of dGa' ldan phun tshogs gling Monastery, Tibet]. *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan* 故宫博物院院刊, no. 12 (2020): 48–58.
- Yan Xue 闫雪. "Xizang Gandan Pengcuolinsi dajingtang 'Liaoyi jing' bihua yanjiu: jianlun bihua de tica yu fengge" 西藏甘丹彭措林寺大经堂《了义经》壁画研究——兼论壁画的题材与风格 [A Further Study of the Murals in the *gTsug lag khang* of dGa' ldan phun tshogs gling Monastery: With a Discussion of Their Iconography and Style]. *Zangxue xuekan* 藏学学刊 [Journal of Tibetology] 25 (2021): 216–53.

Week 11 (Nov. 12) Buddhist Art at the Qing Court: The Dalai Lama's Gifts and Qianlong's Sacred Space — Sanctums, Temples, and Collections in the Forbidden City

Suggested Readings:

- Berger, Patricia. *Empire of Emptiness: Buddhist Art and Political Authority in Qing China*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003.
- Chou, Wen-shing. "The Qianlong Emperor as Manjushri-Chakravartin: Tibetan Buddhism at the Qing Court." Project Himalayan Art. New York: Rubin Museum of Art, 2023. <https://rubinmuseum.org/projecthimalayanart/essays/the-qianlong-emperor-as-manjushri-chakravartin/>.***
- Luo Wenhua 罗文华. "Qinggong zijin lima zaoxiang kaoshu" 清宫紫金珞玛造像考述 [A Study of Zijin Lima Statues in the Qing Palace]. *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan* 故宫博物院院刊, no. 6 (2004): 49–63.
- Luo Wenhua 罗文华. "Jizu yu li fo: Zijincheng Yangxindian yi qu de Fotang yu Qing di de xinyang" 祭祖与礼佛：紫禁城养心殿一区的佛堂与清帝的信仰 [Ancestral Worship and Buddhist Devotion: The Buddhist Shrines of the Yangxindian Compound in the Forbidden City and the Religious Beliefs of the Qing Emperors]. *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan* 故宫博物院院刊, no. 1 (2022): 89–103. ***
- Wen Ming 文明, and Luo Wenhua 罗文华. "Xianruo guan gongcang cacha Fo zhengli yanjiu — jian ji yu Zhu Fo pusa shengxiang zan zhi bijiao" 咸若馆供藏擦擦佛整理研

究——兼及与《诸佛菩萨圣像赞》之比较 [A Study of the *Tsa tsa* Buddhas Preserved at the Xianruo Guan, with a Comparison to the *Zhu Fo pusa shengxiang zan*]. *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan* 故宫博物院院刊, no. 5 (2009): 26–55.

- Zhang Yajing 张雅静. "Fojiao yu huangquan de ronghe — liang zhong shengrong qini zi Fo guaping kan shixi" 佛教与皇权的融合——两种圣容漆泥子佛挂屏龕试析 [The Fusion of Buddhism and Imperial Authority: A Preliminary Analysis of Two Types of Lacquer-Clay Buddha Hanging-Shrine Niches Bearing Sacred Likenesses]. *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan* 故宫博物院院刊, no. 4 (2022): 35–50.

Week 12 (Nov. 19) A Cosmopolitan Artist from Yunnan: The Tenth Karmapa

- Karl Debreczeny ed., *The Black Hat Eccentric: Artistic Visions of the Tenth Karmapa*, New York: Rubin Museum of Art, 2012. Introduction ***
- Debreczeny, Karl, and Gray Tuttle, eds. *The Tenth Karmapa and Tibet's Turbulent Seventeenth Century*. Chicago: Serindia Publications, 2016.

Week 13 (Nov. 26) Tibetan Literary Sources and the Making of Buddhist Art

Suggested Readings:

- Lo Bue, Erberto. "Tibetan Literature on Art." In *Tibetan Literature: Studies in Genre*, edited by José Ignacio Cabezón and Roger R. Jackson, 470–84. Studies in Indo-Tibetan Buddhism. Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion, 1996. ***
- Willemen, Charles. "The Buddhist *Pratimālakṣaṇa*: 'Defining the Image.'" *Pacific World*, 3rd ser., no. 5 (2003): 151–68.
- Cüppers, Christoph, Leonard van der Kuijp, and Ulrich Pagel, eds. *Handbook of Tibetan Iconometry: A Guide to the Arts of the 17th Century*. Brill's Tibetan Studies Library 16/4. Leiden: Brill, 2012.
- Akester, Matthew. *Jamyang Khyentsé Wangpo's Guide to Central Tibet*. Chicago: Serindia Publications, 2016.
- Yael Bentor, *Consecration of Images & Stūpas in Indo-Tibetan Tantric Buddhism*, Leiden: Brill, 1996.

BSTC6044 History of Chinese Buddhism

(6 credits)

Below is the course outline in 2025-26 for reference. For the latest version, please refer to the course moodle.

Lecturer: Dr. Guang Xing

Email: guangxin@hku.hk

Course Description

This course examines the major events and thoughts in the history of Chinese Buddhism with

a particular emphasis on the establishment of Chinese Buddhist Schools. A major aim is to show how Buddhism has been gradually and successfully incorporated into and became one of the three pillars of Chinese thought and culture. The important Chinese Buddhist events and masters will also be examined against their historical background to show their contribution to the development of Chinese Buddhism.

Objectives

Students are expected to get familiar with the basic historical events, major schools of thoughts and important personages together with their contribution to development of Chinese Buddhism.

Examination and Requirements

Students are required to read the relevant material at least one paper before the lecture so that they can participate in discussion. The final examination is based on one quiz, one essay, one presentation and lecture participation

- (i) 20% Midterm Quiz (After reading week).
- (ii) 30% Group Presentation, each group consists of 5-6 members, each member has **three** minutes and for instance a group of five has 15 minutes.
- (iii) 40% long essay with 3,000 words (deadline for its submission is 1 December). (3000 including notes but excluding bibliography)
- (iv) 10% Class participation

Note: The word count for final essay include notes (either footnotes, endnotes or in text citations), but exclude bibliography. Please add your **email address** when you submit your essay in electronic format.

Learning Activities: Q and A sessions, seminars, workshops.

Course Outline (tentative):

Lecture One

Topic: A Survey of Chinese Buddhism

Reading: Zurcher, *Buddhist Conquest of China*: pp.1-17.

Wright, Arthur F. 1957. "Buddhism and Chinese Culture: Phases of Interaction" *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 17, No.1, 17-42.

中村元著，《中國佛教發展史》(上)，第一章：佛教東傳中國與其傳衍經過。

Lecture Two

Topic: Introduction of Buddhism into China (include Dharmaraksa)

Reading: Ch'en, pp.21-53; Zurcher, pp.18-80.

潘桂明，董群，麻天祥，《歷史卷》，第一章：兩漢三國佛教，第二章：西晉佛教。

中村元著，《中國佛教發展史》(上)，第二章：佛教在漢魏西晉三朝的發展。

賴永海《中國佛教通史》01 東漢三國兩晉。

Lecture Three

Topic: Buddhism under Eastern Jin (Great Masters: Fo Tucheng, Daoan, Kumajiva and Huiyuan)

Reading: Ch'en, pp.57-120; 94-103; Zürcher, pp.81-320.

潘桂明, 董群, 麻天祥, 《歷史卷》, 第三章: 東晉十六國佛教。

中村元著, 《中國佛教發展史》(上), 第三章: 佛教在華北胡族國家建立的經過, 第四章: 佛教於江南漢族國家的發展。

Lecture Four

Topic: Buddhism under Southern and Northern dynasty (I) Historical

Reading: Ch'en, pp.121-183; Zürcher, pp.204-239.

潘桂明, 董群, 麻天祥, 《歷史卷》, 第四章: 南北朝佛教。

賴永海《中國佛教通史》第 02 冊南北朝

中村元著, 《中國佛教發展史》(上), 第五章: 華北異民族統治下的佛教。

Lecture Five

Topic: Buddhism under Southern and Northern dynasties (II) Thought

Reading: Ch'en, pp.184-212; Zürcher, pp.81-159.

潘桂明, 《宗派卷》: 第二章: 南北朝的師說學派.

賴永海《中國佛教通史》第 03 冊南北朝學派

Lecture Six

Topic: Buddhism under Sui and Tang: Historical

Reading: Ch'en, pp.213-296.

潘桂明, 董群, 麻天祥, 《歷史卷》, 第五章: 隋唐佛教。

賴永海《中國佛教通史》第 05 冊隋唐史

中村元著, 《中國佛教發展史》(上), 第六章: 隋唐的統一, 第七章: 中國佛教的形成, 第八章: 隋唐的中國佛教。

Lecture Seven

Topic: Buddhism under Sui and Tang: Schools (I) Tiantai, Sanlun and Sanjie

Reading: Ch'en, pp.297-325.

Takakusu, *The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy*, Chapters IX: The Tendai (Tiantai) School, VII: The Sanron (Sanlun) School,

潘桂明, 《宗派卷》: 第三章: 止觀並重的天臺宗, 第四章: 重思辯的三論宗, 第四章: 普信普敬的三階教

賴永海《中國佛教通史》06 天台三論唯識

Lecture Eight

Topic: Buddhism under Sui and Tang: Schools (II) Yogacara, Huayan, Vinaya and

Tantrayana

Reading: Ch'en, pp.325- 364.

Takakusu, *The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy*, Chapters VI: The Hosso (Fa-xiang) School, VIII: The Kegon (Huayan) School, X: The Shingon (Zhenyen) School.

潘桂明,《宗派卷》:第六章:嚴肅戒律的律宗,第七章:萬法唯識的法相唯識宗,第八章:圓融無礙的華嚴宗,第九章:融會雜糅的密宗

賴永海《中國佛教通史》07 華嚴、禪、淨土、律、密宗。

Lecture Nine

Topic: Buddhism under Sui and Tang: Schools (III) Chan and Pure Land

Reading: Takakusu, *The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy*, Chapters XI: The Zen (Chan) School, XII: The Jodo (Jingtu) School.

潘桂明,《宗派卷》:第十章:自信自力的禪宗,第十一章:他力往生的淨土宗.

賴永海《中國佛教通史》07 華嚴、禪、淨土、律、密宗

Lecture Ten

Topic: Buddhism under Song: The syncretism of Chinese Buddhism

Reading: Ch'en, pp.389-408.

潘桂明,董群,麻天祥,《歷史卷》,第六章:五代佛教,第七章:宋代佛教,

賴永海,《中國佛教通史》09 宋代佛教禪淨律

中村元著,《中國佛教發展史》(中),第一章:唐宋交替之際的佛教,第二章:佛教的復興,第一章:禪宗的隆盛與護法活動。

Lecture Eleven

Topic: Buddhism after Song: The syncretism of Chinese Buddhism

Reading: Ch'en, pp.409-433.

潘桂明,董群,麻天祥,《歷史卷》,第八章:遼金元佛教,第九章:明清佛教,中村元著,《中國佛教發展史》(中),第六章:庶民的佛教

賴永海《中國佛教通史》第 11, 12, 13 冊。

Lecture Twelve

Topic: Buddhism in Modern China

Reading: Ch'en, pp.455-470.

潘桂明,董群,麻天祥,《歷史卷》,第十一章,楊仁山與近世佛教,第十二章寺僧的入世轉向與居士佛教的勃興。

賴永海《中國佛教通史》第 14 冊,清代居士佛教與民國佛教,第 15 冊,民國佛教。

Pittman, Don A. *Towards a Modern Chinese Buddhism: Taixu's Reforms*. Honolulu: The University of Hawaii Press. 2001.

Suggested topics for essay

IMPORTANT: Please use the **Essay Format** and **Chicago Manual Style** (author date

format is preferred) when you write your essay and this information is found at Moodle as it includes the following information: (1) the course title, (2) topic of the essay, (3) your name and dates, (4) your email address. Please send your essay through email, No hardcopy is needed.

Please remember, in writing essays it is the quality, NOT the quantity matters. When you choose a topic please choose a smaller one so that you can have in-depth discussion. You may choose a topic from the list below or have your topics provided it relates to our course.

Criteria for marking essay:

1. Good and correct understanding of the materials, particularly the ideas and thought, presented in the lectures of this courses are essential,
 2. Clear, logical, rational presentation and discussion of your ideas and thoughts. Those essays with arguments supported by evidence from either the Buddhist scriptures and scholarly works shall merit A grade.
 3. Demonstrate that you have read at least ten relevant papers and book chapters in your essay either in your footnotes or endnotes and list them at the end of your essay. These ten papers and book chapters can be found from the reading list in Moodles or from the reference list at the end of each lecture. **Internet sources** may not be acceptable as most of them are not academic. So please visit the **recommended internet websites** in our reading list below for materials and academic papers.
-
1. Discuss the characteristics of Chinese Buddhism during the first phase (from the Eastern Han to the end of the Western Jin)
 2. Discuss the conflict caused by “The Scripture of Laozi’s Conversion of the Barbarians” (老子化胡).
 3. Foreign monks and their contributions to Chinese Buddhism during the first period.
 4. Assess Daoan’s contribution to Chinese Buddhism.
 5. Discuss Huiyuan’s contribution to Chinese Buddhism.
 6. Discuss the social conflict of “Monks should not pay respect to kings.”
 7. Examine the causes for the rapid development of Buddhism in Southern and Northern dynasties.
 8. Discuss Jizang’s contribution to Sanlun School.
 9. Discuss Zhiyi’s role and contribution to Tiantai School.
 10. Discuss Huineng’s contribution to Chan Buddhism and examine why his southern branch became so influential?
 11. Discuss Fazang and Huayan thought.
 12. Examine Xuanzang’s contribution to Chinese Buddhism.
 13. Discuss Tanluan’s contribution to Pure Land School.
 14. Zhanran contributed to the revival of Tiantai School in Tang dynasty, Discuss.
 15. Discuss why authentic Buddhists considered Sanjie or Three Stages School a heretic.

16. Discuss Kuiji's contribution to Faxian or Yogacara School in China.
17. Discuss briefly the three tantric masters' contribution to Tantrayana School in China.
18. Discuss the syncretism of Buddhism during Song dynasty.
19. Buddhism declined after Tang dynasty. Discuss the causes.
20. Examine the causes of the conflict between Buddhism and Daoism in the history of Chinese Buddhism.
21. Discuss the conflict between Buddhism and Confucianism with a focus on filial piety.
22. Examine the causes of ONE of the four persecutions of Buddhism in Chinese history.
23. Examine the roles played by the translators in Chinese Buddhism.
24. Examine the Buddhist solution to the Confucian criticism of Buddhist monks being unfilial.
25. Discuss Master Taixu's contribution to modern Chinese Buddhism.
26. Is "Humanistic Buddhism" (人間佛教) a new creation of Master Taixu? Discuss.
27. Examine the revival of Chinese Buddhism at modern age.

Reading List

- Brooks, [Jessup, J.](#) and [Kiely, Jan.](#) 2016. *Recovering Buddhism in Modern China*. New York: Colombia University Press. [The Ebook is available from HKU](#)
- Ch'en, K. S. Kenneth, [Buddhism in China, A Historical Survey](#). Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972. (Original 1964) This book details the historical development of Buddhism in China from its introduction in the Han dynasty through the period of the most creative maturity in the Tang dynasty and its decline and survival to the present. You can purchase this book from the University bookstore. (You can find this book in HKU main library ([294.392 C51](#) 3 copies) as well as in the Centre's Special Collection (SC) [BQ626 .C486 1972](#)) [The Ebook is available from HKU](#)
- Guang Xing. 2022. *Filial Piety in Chinese Buddhism*. London and New York: Peter Lang. [The Ebook is available from HKU](#).
- Silk, Jonatha. ed. 2013. *Buddhism in China: Collected Papers of Erik Zürcher*. Leiden: Brill.
- Tsukamoto Zenryu, 1985. [A History of Early Chinese Buddhism: from its introduction to the death of Hui-yuan](#). Translated from the Japanese by Leon Hurvitz. Volumes 1 & 2. Tokyo: Kodansha. [294.30951 T8](#)
- Yu, Chungfang. 2020. [Chinese Buddhism: A Thematic History](#). Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press. [The Ebook is available from HKU](#)
- Zurher, Erik, *The Buddhist Conquest of China: The Spread and Adaptation of Buddhism in Early Medieval China*. Leiden: E. J. Brill. 2007 (Original 1959) This is an excellent book in which the author mainly examines Buddhism in China before Huiyuan in the fifth century. (University Library (UL) [294.392 Z96](#)) [The Ebook is available from HKU](#) (Chinese translation: 佛教征服國, 李四龍等譯, 江蘇人民出版社 2003) [294.392 Z96 v.1](#).
- 湯用彤, 1997.《漢魏兩晉南北朝佛教史》北京, 北京大學出版社。武漢大學出版社 2008。
- There are six copies of this text available. [\[中\] BQ636 .T36 2006](#) EBook also available
- 潘桂明, 董群, 麻天祥, 《歷史卷》, 潘桂明, 《宗派卷》, 賴永海主編, 《中國佛教百科全書》第三歷史卷, 上海古籍出版社, 2000. [\[中\] BQ626 .Z47 2000](#)

賴永海主編，《中國佛教通史》全十五冊，南京市，江蘇人民出版社，2010 年。[中]
BQ626.Z467 2010

杜繼文主編，《佛教史》的中國佛教史部分，北京，中國社會科學院，1993。[中] BQ266.F6
2006

Read the following chapters:

第二章，第五節，佛教向中國內地的傳播與初傳期的中國佛教

第四章，佛教的黃金時代（下）（西元 4—6 世紀）（全部）

第五章，第二節 隋唐五代佛教的昌盛與創造

第六章，三、唐代佛教；四、五代十國佛教

第九章，佛教的消長變化和多元化發展（上）（西元 11 世紀—）（全部）

Recommended Reading

Ch'en, K. S. Kenneth, 1973. *The Chinese Transformation of Buddhism*. Princeton, N.J. :
Princeton University Press. 294.392 C51 c EBook available in HKU Library.

Benn. James A. 2015. *Tea in China: a religious and cultural history*. Honolulu: University
of Hawai'i Press. 394.150951 B46

Wright, Arthur F. 1959. *Buddhism in Chinese history*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University
Press. 294.320951 This is a very short but concise history of Buddhism in China.

Wright, Arthur F. 1957. "Buddhism and Chinese Culture: Phases of Interaction" *The Journal
of Asian Studies*, Vol. 17, No.1, 17-42.

Theodore De Bary and Irene Bloom with the collaboration of Wing-tsit Chan, (eds). 1999.
Sources of Chinese tradition. Vol. 1 & 2. New York: Columbia University Press. 951
D286 s

Journal of Chinese Philosophy, Editor Chung-Ying CHENG, published by the University of
Hawaii, is a good Source for English articles related to Chinese Buddhism. HKU has
both electronic and printed versions of the journal. Please make use of it.

湯用彤，1982.《隋唐佛教史稿》北京：中華書局，1982。

呂 澂，1993.《中國佛教思想概論》台灣，天華出版公司印行。(The original title is《中
國佛教思想源流》)

孫昌武，2010.《中國佛教文化史》五冊，北京：中華書局，2010。

潘桂明，2009.《中國佛教思想史稿》三卷六冊，南京：江蘇人民出版社，。

任繼愈主編，1998.《中國佛教史》I, II, III, 北京，中國社會科學出版社。(從漢代到南
北朝)

References and Internet Resources

If you find the link is broken, please use google reach to find it as the link always changes.

1) Dictionaries

A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms. Free for download. Edited by William Edward
Soothill and Lewis Hodous. All the entries are in classical Chinese and the explanation is in
English. You can download the entire dictionary from the following website for your private
use: PDF: <http://buddhistinformatics.ddbc.edu.tw/glossaries/files/soothill-hodous.ddbc.pdf>

Digital Dictionary of Buddhism, eds., Charles Muller. Free for online checkup. This is an internet based dictionary similar to *Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, by Soothill and Hodous, but has much more entries. If you know the Chinese Buddhist technical terms, but do not know how to translate it into English, please visit Muller's DDB website address: <http://www.acmuller.net/ddb/> Users can access the search function with the user ID of "guest" (case-sensitive, no quotes), leaving the password area blank allowing 10 searches in a 24 hour period. To search Sanskrit and other terms containing diacritics, type in the term in simple ascii.

The Soka Gakkai Dictionary of Buddhism. Free for online checkup. <http://www.sgilibrary.org/dict.html> This is the online version of *The Soka Gakkai Dictionary of Buddhism* that was published in 2002. There are more than 2700 entries, including cross references. The dictionary does not aim to cover the entire Buddhist lexicon. Rather, it is meant as a guide for readers of Nichiren's works.

Chinese Japanese Korean and Vietnamese English Dictionary (CJKV-English Dictionary). Free for online checkup. A Dictionary-Database of CJKV Characters and Compounds Related to East Asian Cultural, Political, and Intellectual History. <http://www.buddhism-dict.net/dealt/> Users can access the search function with the user ID of "guest" (case-sensitive, no quotes), leaving the password area blank allowing 20 searches in a 24 hour period. To search Sanskrit and other terms containing diacritics, type in the term in simple ascii.

The Korean Buddhist Canon: A Descriptive Catalogue. Free for download. [compiled by] **Lewis R. Lancaster in collaboration with Sung-bae Park**, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979. This is a catalogue of Mahayana Buddhist Sutras in Sanskrit together with Tibetan and Chinese translation. It also lists the translators and date of Chinese translation. If you know the title of a sutra in Chinese, but you don't know how to translate it into Sanskrit, then you can find it in this catalogue. A Hardcopy can be found in HKU Library [XR 016.294382 L2](#) The electronic version can be found at: http://www.acmuller.net/descriptive_catalogue/. You can download the entire web version.

Dictionary of Pali Proper Names. Free for online checkup. Extremely useful for the study of Early Buddhism. http://www.palikanon.com/english/pali_names/dic_idx.html

Pali English dictionary. **Free online search**. This is the only largest Pali English Dictionary so far. <http://dsal.uchicago.edu/dictionaries/pali/>

《佛光大辭典》線上查詢 **Free for online search** for Chinese Buddhist Terms explained in traditional Chinese <http://sql.fgs.org.tw/webfbd/>

《仏教学辞典》*Bukkyōgaku jiten*. Taya Raishun 多屋頼俊 et al. 新版 (New Edition). Kyoto: Hōzōkan 法藏館, 1995.

《佛教漢梵大辭典》*Bukkyō kan-bon dai jiten* (Buddhist Chinese-Sanskrit Dictionary). Hirakawa Akira 平川彰. Tokyo: Reiyūkai 霊友会, 1997. [\[R\] BQ130 .B85 1997](#) used in library only.

《中国仏教史辞典》*Chūgoku bukkyōshi jiten*. Kamata Shigeo 鎌田茂雄. Tokyo: Tokyodo shuppan 東京堂出版, 1981. [\[R\] BQ610 .C48](#) used in library only.

A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China, edited by Charles Hucker. Stanford University Press, 1985. [R 354.51001 H88](#) Used only in HKU library

Historical Dictionary of Medieval China, Edited by Victor Cunrui Xiong. UK: The Scarecrow Press, Inc. 2009.

Neiming 《內明》. **Free**. A Buddhist Journal dedicated for the spread of the Buddhist teaching. You can download it free from <http://www.mfbm.hk/mfbm/NeiMing/indexh.htm>

2) Encyclopaedias

Encyclopaedia of Buddhism, eds., Robert E. Buswell, Jr., Ed New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2003. 2 vols. This encyclopedia describes the Buddhist world view, basic teachings and practices of Buddhism, as well as its different schools and sects. This *Encyclopedia* needs subscription, so use it through [HKU Electronic Recourses](#).

Encyclopaedia of Religion. Lindsay Jones, Ed. 2nd ed. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005. 15 vols. This *Encyclopedia* needs subscription, so use it through [HKU Electronic Recourses](#).

Routledge Encyclopaedia of philosophy [electronic resource]. Edward Craig, ed. London: Routledge. Contains over 2,000 state-of-the-art articles, covering a broad range of topics in the philosophical canon, as well as philosophy from all continents and all periods. Includes fast and flexible searching capability, over 25,000 cross-reference hyperlinks and other features. This *Encyclopedia* needs subscription, so use it through [HKU Electronic Recourses](#).

Encyclopedia of religion and ethics. edited by James Hastings, with the assistance of John A. Selbie and other scholars. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1908-21. 12 Vols. [R 203 E56 e](#)

Encyclopedia Britannica Online. This *Encyclopædia* needs subscription, so use it through [HKU Electronic Recourses](#). <http://search.eb.com/>

Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy. Free, it contains a large number of papers in Buddhist and Confucian studies. <http://plato.stanford.edu/>

The Internet Encyclopaedia of Philosophy. Free. It contains a large number of papers in Buddhist and Confucian studies. <http://www.iep.utm.edu/>

RoutledgeCurzon Encyclopedia of Confucianism, 2 volumes, edited by Yao, Xinzhong. London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003. Main Library: [R 181.11203 R86 Y25 V.1&2](#), SC: [BL1840 .R68 2003 v.1&2](#)

Encyclopedia of Chinese Philosophy, edited by Antonio S. Cua. London: Routledge, 2003. Serving as a gateway to Chinese thought, this resource introduces the significant historical periods of Chinese philosophy ancient and modern. All the major schools of thought are covered and their proponents, followers and critics discussed. Main Library: [R 181.1103 E5](#) (SC) [B126 .E496 2003](#)

3) Academic Journals

a) Buddhist Studies

Journal of Chinese Buddhist Studies. Free. This Journal is dedicated to the historical study of Chinese Buddhism in the premodern and modern periods. It seeks to promote the academic study, and teaching, of all aspects of Buddhist thought, practice, social, and institutional life in China, including historical interactions with Buddhist developments in South, East, and Central Asia. The *JCBS* publishes annually, and meets in conjunction with the American Academy of Religion. <http://chinesebuddhiststudies.org/index.html>

Journal of the International Association for Buddhist Studies. This is the largest and best journal for Buddhist Studies and it covers all areas of Buddhist Studies. You can access and download papers older than five years, free. <http://archiv.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/ojs/index.php/jiabs/index%22>

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](#)

Buddhist Studies Review. Published twice a year by the UK Association for Buddhist Studies, started from 1984. Both printed and electronic versions are available from HKU Library, the electronic version is gradually uploaded to the web. Now the Journal is free for download from 1983-2005. <http://www.ukabs.org.uk/ukabs/resources/journal-archives/buddhist-studies-review-vols-1-22/>

You can also get it from HKUL Catalogue: [294.3 B927 S9](#)

Pacific World Journal of the Institute of Buddhist Studies. **Free** Pacific World is an annual journal in English devoted to the dissemination of historical, textual, critical and interpretive articles on Buddhism generally and Shinshu Buddhism particularly to both academic and lay readerships. The journal is distributed free of charge. <http://www.shin-ibs.edu/academics/pwj/index.php>

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>

Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies. HKU Library. Published twice a year, Wilmington, NC : International Association of Buddhist Studies, 1978-S 294.305 I6 A8

Contemporary Buddhism. HKU Library. Published twice a year by Routledge. There is a digital version from HKU Electronic Recourses. S 294.3 C761 B.

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

Buddhist-Christian Studies. HKU Library. Published once a year **Publisher**: University of Hawai'i Press started 1981.

Journal of Song Yuan Studies is an annual publication devoted to promoting scholarship in all disciplines related to Middle Period China, with an especial focus on the Song, Liao, Jin, Xia, and Yuan dynasties.

b) Chinese Philosophy and Religions

Journal of Chinese Philosophy. Published by Wiley Online Library. HKU Electronic Recourses. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com.eproxy2.lib.hku.hk/journal/10.1111/%28ISSN%291540-6253/issues>

Journal of Chinese Religion. Published by The Society for the Study of Chinese Religions (SSCR). HKU Electronic Recourses. Journal Web: <http://www.maneyonline.com.eproxy1.lib.hku.hk/toc/jcr/> The Web for SSCR: <http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=k7027&tabgroupid=icb.tabgroup43181>

Dao: A Journal of Comparative Philosophy. Published by Springer Science + Business

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Accesstoinsight. Free. This is a website entirely dedicated to the teaching of Theravada Buddhism including the Pali Canon, Theravada text archive and sources. Most of the Pali texts are translated into English for free distribution. Website address: www.accesstoinsight.org/

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Buddhasasana. Free. You can find many full text articles on Buddhism in English, but not all of them are academic so you have to be selective. The website address is: <http://www.saigon.com/~anson/ebud/ebidx.htm>

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張華，《楊文會與中國近代佛教思想轉型》北京市，宗教文化出版社，2004。[中] [BQ998.A36 Z43 2004](#)

呂勝強〈印順導師對於中國佛教復興之懸念探微——以義學為主〉《福嚴會訊》第 26 期（2010.04）

汲喆 田水晶 王啟元 編《二十世紀中國佛教的兩次復興》復旦大學出版社，2016。

周齊，〈中國近代佛教復興之再審視——再看楊仁山再看近代佛教之復興〉，李四龍，《佛學與國學》北京：九州出版社，2009 年。

BSTC6052 Study of important Buddhist meditation texts

(6 credits)

Lecturer: Ven. Sik Hin Hung

Email: hinhung@hku.hk

Course Description

Meditation is an integral part of the study and practice of Buddhism. This course will read and study important Buddhist texts related to the practice of meditation from various traditions. Passages will be selected from texts such as: the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta*, *Visuddhimagga*, *Sandhinirmochana-sūtra* (Sutra of the Explanation of the Profound Secrets, 解深密經), *The Treatise on the Two Entrances and Four Practices* 《菩提達磨略辨大乘入道四行》, and *The Three Statements that Strike the Essential Points* by Garab Dorje. Students will also be introduced to the actual practice of mediation.

Objectives

- (1) To introduce some of the important Buddhist meditation texts from various Buddhist traditions.
- (2) To enable students to see the differences and similarity of these meditation methods.
- (3) To help students to read and study Buddhist texts on their own.

Assessments

100% coursework[#] with the following breakdowns:

Ratio	Content
40%	Book report/Commentary: 3000-3500 words (excluding bibliography). Based on a book or a text or one section of one of the texts taught in class or an essay on one of the meditation methods or modern applications of Buddhist meditation taught in the class. Due on: 4th December 2026 (Fri) 12 pm Noon
30%	15% Quiz 1 during Lecture 7 (20th October 2026) 15% Quiz 2 during Lecture 11 (17th November 2026).
30%	Meditation Logs: Students will keep a continuous meditation log for at least four (4) weeks during any period of the course, documenting their daily meditation practice. Breathing meditation will be introduced in class. Students will submit their meditation logs together with a final reflection of around 1000 words on their meditation practice. (Please submit everything in a single upload to Moodle.) Due on: 20th October 2026 (Tue) 12 pm Noon

Submission

Book report/Commentary

- Upload a soft copy through Moodle **AND**
- Hand in a hard copy at Venerable Hin Hung's mailbox (next to the CBS conference room on the 4th Floor of the Jockey Club Tower, Centennial Campus)

On Cover Page:

- Name
- University Number
- Assignment title
- Word Count

Late Submission (after 10 pm on due date based on Moodle record) & Plagiarism

- Within first 7 days after the deadline, one sub-grade will be deducted (e.g. A→A-)
- From the 8th day after the deadline and thereafter, one grade will be deducted (e.g. A→B)

In addition, the course grading criteria take into account the details given in the following two university documents:

Faculty Grade Expectations: http://arts.hku.hk/grade_expectations.pdf

Plagiarism: 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>

Assessment Guideline

- 30% - accuracy of the understanding of text/book
- 25% - depth of knowledge (including references)
- 25% - originality/personal insight
- 20% - quality of writing and presentation

Guidelines for Commentary

The commentary should have:

1. An explanation of the overall background and importance of the text.
If you choose only a section of a text to comment on, you should also explain why you chose that particular section.
2. Divide the text that you work on into sections with appropriate headings.
3. Elaborate on the teachings, meanings of keywords and concepts of the text.
4. Your own learning and experience while doing this assignment, but it should be brief.
5. Conclusion
6. Bibliography/list of references

Guidelines for the book report

- Choose a book related to Buddhist meditation
- Introduce the book: In this section you can provide a general overview for each chapter.
- Review the book

Style of scholarly writing:

Proper use of citations and quotations is expected. All contributions of other writers should be noted through accurate quotations (judiciously selected and sparingly used). The final submission should be carefully edited for accurate spelling and competent usage of English punctuation, syntax and grammar.

Lecture Schedule (tentative):

Class and Date	Topic	Content and discussion
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(Last updated: August 12, 2026)

1 1 st September 2026	The Buddha's Experiment: <i>Dvedhavitakka Sutta - Two Sorts of Thinking</i>	Why meditation is an integral part of Buddhist teachings and practice? What is its relationship with the path of purification and the elimination of suffering?
2 8 th September 2026	<i>Samyutta Nikaya XII.65</i> <i>Nagara-sutta</i> The City of Ultimate Peace	The Buddha's Enlightenment Experience
3 15 th September 2026	The fundamentals of Buddhist meditation, <i>the Satipṭṭhāna Sutta, the Anapanasati Sutta: Mindfulness of Breathing</i>	Why the practice of the four foundations of mindfulness is “the only way” to purification and overcoming sorrow and suffering?
4 22 nd September 2026	An analytic investigation to <i>the Satipṭṭhāna Sutta</i>	Why the practice of the four foundations of mindfulness is “the only way” for purification and overcoming sorrow and suffering?
5 29 th September 2026	<i>Visuddhimagga, the Path of Purification</i> 《清淨道論》	Study of the Description of Concentration—Loving-kindness/Six Recollections
6 6 th October 2026	<i>Visuddhimagga, the Path of Purification</i> 《清淨道論》	Study of the Description of Concentration—Loving-kindness/Six Recollections
13 th October 2026	Reading Week	
7 20 th October 2026 In class Quiz 1	<i>Sūtra of the Explanation of the Profound Secrets</i> 《解深密經》	Chapter on Analyzing Yoga
8 27 th October 2026	<i>Sūtra of the Explanation of the Profound Secrets</i> 《解深密經》	Chapter on Analyzing Yoga
9 3 rd November 2026	Bodhidharma: <i>The Treatise on the Two Entrances and Four Practices</i> 《菩提達磨略辨大乘入道四行》	The entrance of principle (理入) and the entrance of practice (行入)
10 10 th November 2026	The Sixth Patriarch <i>Platform Sutra</i> 《六祖壇經》	Selected readings
11 17 th November 2026	The Sixth Patriarch <i>Platform Sutra</i> 《六祖壇經》	Selected readings
12 24 th November 2026 In class Quiz 2	<i>Tsig-sum nêdêk, The Three Statements that Strike the Essential Points,</i> 《大圓滿椎擊三要訣》	<i>The Three Statements that Strike the Essential Points</i> by Garab Dorje

Reading List

- Analayo; Satipatthana, *The direct path to realization*; Sri Lanka, Buddhist Publication

Society, 2003.

- Bhikkhu Nanamoli, *Satipatthana Sutta, The Foundations of Mindfulness*; Majjhima Nikaya 10; London, Wisdom Publications, 1995.
- Broughton, Jeffrey L.; *The Bodhidharma Anthology*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1999.
- Buddhaghosa Bhadantacariya, tran. Bhikkhu Nanamoli, *The Path of Purification* (Visuddhimagga), Singapore, Singapore Buddhist Meditation Centre, 2001.
- Cleary, Thomas, tran., *Buddhist Yoga, A comprehensive course*; Boston & London, Shambhala, 1995.
- Empty Cloud, *The Autobiography of the Chinese Zen Master Xu Yun*, translated by Charles Luk, Revised and Edited by Richard Hunn. Huineng, Buddhist Text Translation Society, tran.
- Huineng, tran., McRae, John R; *The Sixth Patriarch's Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra*, California, Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai and Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 2000.
- Kabat-Zinn, Jon, *Full catastrophe living: Using the wisdom of your body and mind to face stress, pain, and illness*: Random House, 2009.
- Kabat-Zinn, Jon, *Wherever you go, there you are: Mindfulness meditation in everyday life*: Hyperion, 1994.
- Keenan, John, *Scripture on the Explication of the Underlying Meaning*, Berkeley: Numata Center, 2000.
- Negi, L. T., *Cognitively-Based Compassion Training Manual*, Emory. Accessed March 13, 2019. <https://tibet.emory.edu/>.
- Nyanaponika Thera, *The Heart of Buddhist Meditation*. Kandy, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society, 1996.
- Ozawa-de Silva, B., Dodson-Lavelle, B., Raison, C.L., and Negi, L.T.. *Compassion and Ethics: Scientific and Practical Approaches to the Cultivation of compassion as a Foundation for Ethical Subjectivity and Well-Being*. Journal of Healthcare, Science & the Humanities, 2011.
- Pace, T.W.W., Negi L.T., Adame, D.D., Cole, S.P., Sivilli, T.I., Brown, T.D., Issa, M.J., & Raison, C.L., *Effect of compassion meditation on neuroendocrine, innate immune and behavioural responses to psychosocial stress*. Psychoneuroendocrinology, 2008.
- Powers, John, *Wisdom of Buddha: The Samdhinirmochana Sutra*, Berkeley: Dharma Publishing, 1995.
- Raghu, Babu T., *Bodhidharma Retold: A Journey from Sailum to Shaolin*. Motilal Bannarsidass, 2017.

- Reynolds, John; *The Golden Letters: the Tibetan Teachings of Garab Dorje*, First Dzogchen Master, New York, Snow Lion, 1996.
- Segal, ZV, JMG Williams, and JD Teasdale, *Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy for depression: A new approach to relapse prevention*. New York: Guilford, 2002.

BSTC6056 Special topics in Buddhist studies (4): Buddhism on the Silk Road
(6 credits)

Below is the course description for reference. For the latest course outlines, please refer to the course moodle.

Lecturer: Prof. Alexey Maslov

Email: To be provided

Course Description

This course will cover Buddhism's philosophical, social, economic, and cultural facets along the Silk Road. We will explore how this religion spread cross Asia via trade routes, focusing on cultural exchange, monastic life, art (like cave paintings), key figures, and the development of diverse schools in Central Asia, China and Russia, often examining material culture alongside texts to understand its deep impact on societies along these networks. Special attention will be paid to the transformation of Buddhism in different parts of Central and Inner Asia. We'll be exploring the historical, theoretical, and conceptual roots of how Buddhism evolved on the Silk Road.

In this course, we will examine several key aspects: First, the spread of Buddhism along the Silk Road, starting from India and China, through Central Asia, to modern Russia and as far as Europe. Second, we will discuss the ways in which Buddhism was transformed and combined with local traditions. Third, we will focus on traditional and modern, modified Buddhist thoughts, in particular Mahayana Buddhism, discussing concepts, approaches, and symbolism.

Rather than using only written texts, the course will also focus on material culture, which provides evidence about Buddhism's spread.

We will focus on several important topics like the relationship between Buddhism and trade, ideological shifts in the iconography of the Buddha and Buddhist art, along the Silk Road, doctrinal divergence, and royal and lay patronage, encounters with Islam and Christianity, Buddhism and political power, etc.

Also, we'll cover the outcomes of Buddhism's interaction with Central Asia, Russia, and the Middle East. We'll also cover state Buddhist policy, state control, and how they interact. This will encompass interactions with local traditions, encompassing Christianity, Islam, regional belief systems, and the rise of syncretic approaches, as well as aesthetic expressions.

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BSTC6057 Special topics in Buddhist studies (5): Buddhism and State in China
(6 credits)

Lecturer: Prof. Ma Zhouyang

Email: mzy2026@hku.hk

Course Description

One of the defining features of Buddhism in China is its enduring relationship with the state. From its introduction during the Han dynasty to the present day, Buddhism has remained closely intertwined with political authority, imperial institutions, and state governance. Understanding this relationship is therefore essential to the study of Chinese Buddhism. This course examines the evolving interactions between Buddhism and the state through a chronological survey, beginning with the Han dynasty, when Buddhism first entered China, and concluding with contemporary issues surrounding Buddhism in the People's Republic of China.

While major historical events and influential figures provide the chronological framework of the course, students are encouraged to look beyond political narratives and consider the broader structural forces that shaped the history of Buddhism in China. These include state institutions, social and cultural contexts, competing religious and intellectual traditions, and changing configurations of political power. Throughout the course, students will be invited to connect historical developments with contemporary issues and to reflect on the future of Buddhism and other religious communities in China—and more broadly, on the relationship between religion and the state in an increasingly uncertain global political landscape.

Assessment Methods

Assessment: 100% coursework

Assessment method	Type of assessment (e.g. description of assignment)	Weighting (%)
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1. Attendance and participation	Weekly attendance will be registered from Week 3 (end of add-drop period) onwards. Students are also required to participate in discussions, etc.	15%
2. Two quizzes	Students will take two quizzes through the semester on core concepts and content covered in the previous sessions. The first is at week 5 and the second is at week 10. Each is worth 15%.	30%
3. Group presentation	In small groups, students will conduct a study of a topic related to Buddhism and state in China, such as studying the development of a particular institution, a series of interconnected political events, a Buddhist text concerning the state-religion relationship, etc. They will then present their findings collectively to the class.	20%
4. Reflective essay	Students will write a 1000–3000-word reflective essay on their study. Each member in a presentation group must address a different aspect.	35%

Weekly Lecture Schedule

Week 1 (Jan. 18): Introduction

This session introduces the course and provides an overview of its contents. It emphasizes the importance of studying Buddhism in the Chinese context not only as a doctrinal and social phenomenon but also as a political and institutional one that was deeply intertwined with the development of Chinese political history.

Readings:

Charles Orzech, *Politics and Transcendent Wisdom* (Pennsylvania State University 1998), Introduction & Part I.

Week 2 (Jan. 25): Han

This session examines the Han period, when Buddhism was first introduced to China. It investigates how this introduction was connected to court politics and the political institutions of the Han dynasty. It also explores how the earliest narratives concerning Buddhism's arrival in China were shaped by their political context.

Readings:

Erik Zürcher, *The Buddhist Conquest of China* (Brill, 2007), 18–57.

Week 3 (Feb. 1): Early Medieval Period

This session covers the early medieval period, when Buddhism began to flourish in China. Particular attention is paid to the relationships between charismatic Buddhist figures and secular rulers, the incorporation of Buddhist institutions into the state's bureaucratic system, and the emerging tensions between the monastic community and the state.

Readings:

Zürcher, *The Buddhist Conquest of China*, 57–61, 81–86, chap. 5.

Week 4 (Feb. 15): Tang I

Beginning with the major developments of the Sui dynasty, this session traces the early Tang period through the reign of Empress Wu. It examines the close relationship between Buddhism and the imperial court during this formative period and concludes with Empress Wu's death, which marked a shift toward a more moderate but generally favorable state policy toward Buddhism in the mid-Tang.

Readings:

Stanley Weinstein, *Buddhism Under the T'ang* (Cambridge, 1982), Part I.

Week 5 (Feb. 22): Tang II

This session examines the maturation of Tang state Buddhism following the introduction of esoteric Buddhism from India. It also discusses the late Tang persecution of Buddhism, the subsequent revival of state patronage, and how these developments contributed to the broader Tang–Song transition.

Readings:

Weinstein, *Buddhism Under the T'ang*, Part II.

Week 6 (Mar. 1): The Five Dynasties and the Song

This session explores the continued patronage of Buddhism during the Five Dynasties and the early Song, with particular attention to new institutional developments and the growing tensions between literati and monastics. It further examines how Buddhism gradually retreated from the center of state politics and court life during the Song dynasty.

Readings:

Peter N. Gregory and Daniel A. Getz Jr., eds., *Buddhism in the Sung* (University of Hawaii

Press, 2002), chaps. 1–2.

Week 7 (Mar. 15): The Conquest Dynasties

This session turns to the conquest dynasties that coexisted with the Song. It examines how regimes such as the Liao and the Xia distinguished themselves from the Song by preserving and further developing the Tang legacy of state Buddhism, thereby laying important foundations for later imperial models of Buddhist-state relations.

Readings:

Kirill Solonin, “Buddhism in the Liao and Jin Dynasties.”

Ruth W. Dunnell, *The Great State of White and High: Buddhism and State Formation in Eleventh-Century Xia* (University of Hawai'i Press, 1996), Introduction & chap. 1.

Week 8 (Mar. 22): The Mongol and Yuan Empires

This session examines the Mongol conversion to Buddhism, the Buddhist–Daoist debates at the imperial court, and the state's appropriation of Buddhism during the Mongol and Yuan periods. Particular emphasis is placed on the role of Tibetan Buddhist monks and the establishment of important institutions such as the Bureau of Buddhist and Tibetan Affairs. The early Ming, seen mostly as continuing the Yuan dynamics, is also discussed.

Readings:

Ann Heirman and Stephan Peter Bumbacher, eds., *The Spread of Buddhism* (Brill, 2007), 379–395.

Herbert Franke, “Tan-Pa, a Tibetan Lama at the court of the Great Khans.”

Luciano Petech, *Central Tibet and the Mongols* (Rome, 1990), 33–43.

Week 9 (Apr. 12): Qing

Treating the Qing as the culmination of the relationship between Buddhism and the state in premodern China, this session examines how this Inner Asian empire actively promoted and appropriated Buddhism as a means of integrating its diverse populations under the authority of a universal emperor.

Readings:

Ann Heirman and Stephan Peter Bumbacher, eds., *The Spread of Buddhism* (Brill, 2007), 395–420.

Patricia Berger, *Empire of Emptiness* (University of Hawaii Press, 2003), Introduction & chap. 1.

Week 10 (Apr. 19): The Republic and the PRC

The final session moves into the modern period and explores the collapse of the premodern Buddhist-state paradigm. It examines the role of Buddhism in the formation of the modern Chinese nation during the Republican period and concludes by discussing contemporary issues in the People's Republic of China, including the tensions between Buddhism as a religious tradition and the state's officially atheist ideology.

Readings:

Gray Tuttle, *Tibetan Buddhists in the Making of Modern China* (Columbia, 2005), chap. 6.
David Wank, Ji Zhe, and Yoshiko Ashiwa, eds., *Metamorphosis of Buddhism in China's New Era* (Bloomsbury, 2025), chap. 9.

Week 11 (Apr. 26): Student presentations and conclusion

This session is devoted to student presentations of final projects. It also provides an opportunity to synthesize and reflect on the course content, encouraging further inquiry and future research directions.

Reference Books

1. Erik Zürcher, *The Buddhist Conquest of China* (Brill, 2007).
2. Stanley Weinstein, *Buddhism Under the T'ang* (Cambridge, 1982).
3. Jacques Gernet, *Buddhism in Chinese Society* (Columbia, 1995).
4. Charles Orzech, *Politics and Transcendent Wisdom* (Pennsylvania State University 1998).
5. Albert Welter, *Monks, Rulers, and Literati* (Oxford, 2006).
6. Peter N. Gregory and Daniel A. Getz Jr., eds., *Buddhism in the Sung* (University of Hawaii Press, 2002).
7. Ann Heirman and Stephan Peter Bumbacher, eds., *The Spread of Buddhism* (Brill, 2007).
8. Ruth W. Dunnell, *The Great State of White and High: Buddhism and State Formation in Eleventh-Century Xia* (University of Hawai'i Press, 1996).
9. Luciano Petech, *Central Tibet and the Mongols* (Rome, 1990).
10. Patricia Berger, *Empire of Emptiness* (University of Hawaii Press, 2003).
11. Gray Tuttle, *Tibetan Buddhists in the Making of Modern China* (Columbia, 2005).

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BSTC6080
Chinese Buddhist art along the Silk Road
(6 credits)

Lecturer: Dr. C.H. Tsui

Email: chunghui@hku.hk

This course aims to introduce Buddhist art and architecture along the Silk Road from a historical and cultural heritage perspective. The transmission of Buddhism and Buddhist art from India, Central Asia to China (and from those sites to other area of East and Southeast Asia) constitutes one of the most significant cultural exchanges that took place along the Silk Road. The course focuses on the interpretation of iconography in Buddhist art and material culture. It examines the major Buddhist caves along the Silk Road, with special attention given to the interaction between Buddhist images, doctrines, and texts. Apart from Asian Buddhist art, this course also explores the traditions of Chinese Buddhist art and its interaction with Western culture.

Assessment

1. Mid-term Quiz : 30 % (to be conducted on Oct.23)
2. Long essay with 3,000 words : 40 % (deadline for submission: Nov.29)
3. Presentation : 20% (on Nov.27)
4. Class Participation : 10 % (attendance + participation with interaction discussion with Q & A in-class)

Course Outline (tentative)

1. (Sep.4) Introduction (Buddhism, origin and formation of Buddhist art, Silk Road)
2. (Sep. 11) Early Buddhist Art and Architecture in India (Stupa)
3. (Sep.18) Early Buddhist Caves in India
4. (Sep.25) Gupta Buddhist art and the Silk Road
5. (Oct. 2) The Spread of Buddhist Art from Central Asia to Xinjiang
6. (Oct.9) Early Buddhist art in China during the Wei-Jin period
(Oct. 16) Reading Week (no class in this week)
7. (Oct.23) Early Buddhist caves in Gansu and Northern China (with Mid-term Quiz)
8. (Oct.30) Art of Pure Land and Bodhisattva path
9. (Nov.6) The Southern Silk Road and transmission of Buddhist art in Southwest China (Sichuan & Yunnan)
10. (Nov.13) Buddhist art and cultural heritage sites in Korea & Japan
11. (Nov.20) Buddhist art and cultural heritage sites in South & Southeast Asia
12. (Nov.27) Presentation

Recommended Readings

1. Introduction (Buddhism, origin and formation of Buddhist art, Silk Road)

Readings:

Hirakawa, Akira, and Paul Groner. [*A History of Indian Buddhism : From Śākyamuni to Early Mahāyāna*](#). Asian Studies at Hawaii ; No. 36. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990.

Coomaraswamy, Ananda. "[The Indian Origin of the Buddha Image](#)." *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 46 (1926): 165-70.

Bussagli, Mario., and C. Sivaramamurti. [*5000 Years of the Art of India*](#). New York: H. N. Abrams, 1971, pp. 7-57.

2. Early Buddhist Art and Architecture in India (Stupa)

Readings:

Huntington, Susan L., and Huntington, John C. [*The Art of Ancient India : Buddhist, Hindu, Jain*](#). 1st Indian ed. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, pp.103-134.

Karetzky, Patricia Eichenbaum. [*Early Buddhist Narrative Art : Illustrations of the Life of the Buddha from Central Asia to China, Korea and Japan*](#). Lanham: University Press of America, 2000.

Hallade, Madeleine., and Hans Hinz. [*The Gandhara Style and the Evolution of Buddhist Art*](#). London: Thames & Hudson, 1968.

Nehru, Lolita. [*Origins of the Gandhāran Style : A Study of Contributory Influences*](#). Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989.

3. Early Buddhist Caves in India

Readings:

Brancaccio, Pia. *Living Rock: Buddhist, Hindu and Jain Cave Temples in the Western Deccan*. Mumbai: Marg Publications, 2013.

Chauley, G. C. *Early Buddhist Art in India : 300 B.C. to 300 A.D.* New Delhi: Sundeep Prakashan, 1998.

Dehejia, Vidya. *Early Buddhist Rock Temples: A Chronological Study*. London: Thames & Hudson, 1972

Huntington, Susan L., and Huntington, John C. [*The Art of Ancient India : Buddhist, Hindu, Jain*](#). 1st Indian ed. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, pp.103-134.

Fisher, Robert E. [*Buddhist Art and Architecture*](#). World of Art. New York: Thames and Hudson, 1993, pp. 29-85.

Karetzky, Patricia Eichenbaum. [*Early Buddhist Narrative Art : Illustrations of the Life of the*](#)

[Buddha from Central Asia to China, Korea and Japan](#). Lanham: University Press of America, 2000.

Chakraborty, Utpal. *Bibliography on Indian Buddhist Art and Archaeology : General and Classified under Geographical Sites*. New Delhi: D. K. Printworld, 2006.

4. Gupta Buddhist art and the Silk Road

Readings:

Bussagli, Mario., and C. Sivaramamurti. [5000 Years of the Art of India](#). New York: H. N. Abrams, 1971, Chapter 5-8.

KANG, HEEJUNG , The Spread of Sarnath-Style Buddha Images in Southeast Asia and Shandong, China, by the Sea Route , KEMANUSIAAN Vol. 20, No. 2, (2013), 39–60.

Leidy, Denise Patry. [The Art of Buddhism : An Introduction to Its History & Meaning](#). 1st ed. Boston: Shambhala : Distributed in the United States by Random House, 2008, Chapter 2-3.

5. The Northern Silk Road & Spread of Buddhist Art from Central Asia to Xinjiang

Readings:

Wood, Frances. [The Silk Road : Two Thousand Years in the Heart of Asia](#). Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002, Chapter 1-5.

Zwalf, W. [Buddhism--art and Faith](#). New York: Macmillan, 1985, pp. 40-90.

Ghose, Rajeshwari., and National Centre for the Performing Arts. [Kizil on the Silk Road : Crossroads of Commerce & Meeting of Minds](#). Mumbai: Marg Publications on Behalf of National Centre for the Performing Arts, 2008.

Tucker, Jonathan., and Antonia. Tozer. [The Silk Road : Art and History](#). London: Philip Wilson, 2003, Chapter 1-10.

霍旭初., 祁小山, 新疆维吾尔自治区对外文化交流协会. 絲綢之路・新疆佛教藝術第1版. 乌鲁木齐市: 新疆大学出版社, 2006.

6. Early Buddhist art in China during the Wei-Jin period

Readings:

Watt, James C. Y., Prudence Oliver. Harper, and Metropolitan Museum of Art. "Art and History in China from the Third to the Eighth Century", in [China : Dawn of a Golden Age, 200-750 AD](#). New York : New Haven: Metropolitan Museum of Art ; Yale University Press, 2004.

Leidy, Denise Patry. [The Art of Buddhism : An Introduction to Its History & Meaning](#). 1st ed. Boston: Shambhala : Distributed in the United States by Random House, 2008, Chapter 3.

Hung, Wu. "[Buddhist elements in early Chinese art \(2nd and 3rd centuries AD\)](#)." *Artibus Asiae* 47, no. 3/4 (1986): 263-352.

"Stone Sculptures of the Northern Wei Dynasty." *Arts of Asia* 25:5 (1995):134.

宿白《中国石窟寺研究》，北京：文物出版社，1996 年

7. Early Buddhist Caves in Gansu and Northern China

Readings:

Juliano, Annette L., and Judith A. Lerner. "Buddhist Art in Northwest China" in [*Monks and Merchants : Silk Road Treasures from Northwest China Gansu and Ningxia Provinces, Fourth-seventh Century*](#). New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2001.

Baker, Janet. "Buddhist Sites of Gansu" in [*The Flowering of a Foreign Faith : New Studies in Chinese Buddhist Art*](#). New Delhi: Marg Publication, 1998.

8. Art of Pure Land and Bodhisattva path

Readings:

Cūṭivongs, Nandana., and Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts. [*The Iconography of Avalokiteśvara in Mainland South East Asia*](#). New Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts : Aryan Books International, 2002.

Guang, Xing. "Avalokiteśvara in China." *The Indian International Journal of Buddhist Studies* 12 (2011): 1-22.

Holt, John. *Buddha in the Crown : Avalokiteśvara in the Buddhist Traditions of Sri Lanka*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991, Chapter 3-5.

Yü, Chün-fang. [*Kuan-yin : The Chinese Transformation of Avalokiteśvara*](#). IASWR Series. New York: Columbia University Press, 2001, Chapter 6.

9. The Southern Silk Road and Buddhist sites in Southwest China (Sichuan & Yunnan)

Readings:

Howard, Angela Falco. [*Summit of Treasures : Buddhist Cave Art of Dazu, China*](#). 1st ed. Bangkok : Trumbull, Conn.: Orchid Press ; Weatherhill, 2001.

Howard, A. F. "[The Dhāraṇī Pillar of Kunming, Yunnan. A Legacy of Esoteric Buddhism and Burial Rites of the Bai People in the Kingdom of Dali \(937-1253\)](#)." *Artibus Asiae* 57, no. 1/2 (1997): 33-72.

Suchan, Thomas. [*The Eternally Flourishing Stronghold: An Iconographic Study of the Buddhist Sculpture of the Fowan and Related Sites at Beishan, Dazu, Ca. 892--1155*](#), 2003, Doctor of Philosophy, Ohio State University, History of Art.

10. Buddhist art and cultural heritage sites in Korea & Japan

Readings (Korea) :

Kim, Chewŏn, and Kim, Li-na. "Tradition and Transformation in Korean Buddhist Sculpture" in [*Arts of Korea*](#). 1st ed. Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1974, pp.251-294.

Portal, Jane., and British Museum. [*Korea : Art and Archaeology*](#). London: Published for The Trustees of the British Museum by British Museum Press, 2000, pp. 42-107.

Leidy, Denise Patry. [*The Art of Buddhism : An Introduction to Its History & Meaning*](#). 1st ed. Boston: Shambhala : Distributed in the United States by Random House, 2008, Chapter 5.

Buddhist art and cultural heritage sites in Japan

Readings (Japan):

Mason, Penelope E., and Donald Dinwiddie. [*History of Japanese Art*](#). 2nd ed. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2005, pp.33-146.

Washizuka, Hiromitsu., Youngbok Park, U-bang. Kang, Riben Yan Jiu Hui, and Korea Society. [*Transmitting the Forms of Divinity : Early Buddhist Art from Korea and Japan*](#). New York: Japan Society : Distributed by Harry N. Abrams, 2003, pp.18-139.

Hayashi, Ryōichi. [*The Silk Road and the Shoso-in*](#). 1st English ed. The Heibonsha Survey of Japanese Art ; v. 6. New York: Weatherhill, 1975.

Zwalf, W. "Japan" in [*Buddhism--art and Faith*](#). New York: Macmillan, 1985, pp.243-290.

Fisher, Robert E. [*Buddhist Art and Architecture*](#). World of Art. New York: Thames and Hudson, 1993, Chapter 3.

11. Buddhist art and cultural heritage sites in South & Southeast Asia

Readings:

Rawson, Philip S. [*The Art of Southeast Asia : Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand, Laos, Burma, Java*](#), Bali. World of Art. London: Thames and Hudson, 1993.

Fisher, Robert E. [*Buddhist Art and Architecture*](#). World of Art. New York: Thames and Hudson, 1993.

Vogel, Jean Philippe. *Buddhist Art in India, Ceylon and Java*. New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corp., 1977.

12. Presentation

Required Readings

Dehejia, Vidya. [*Indian Art*](#). Art & Ideas. London: Phaidon Press, 1997, pp.103-134.

Fisher, Robert E. [*Buddhist Art and Architecture*](#). World of Art. New York: Thames and

Hudson, 1993.

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Gray, Basil. [*Buddhist Cave Paintings at Tun-huang*](#). London: Faber and Faber, 1959.

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Tucker, Jonathan., and Antonia. Tozer. [*The Silk Road : Art and History*](#). London: Philip Wilson, 2003, Chapter 1-10.

Watt, James C. Y., Prudence Oliver. Harper, and Metropolitan Museum of Art. "Buddhist Art in China" in [*China : Dawn of a Golden Age, 200-750 AD*](#). New York : New Haven: Metropolitan Museum of Art ; Yale University Press, 2004.

Watt, James C. Y., Prudence Oliver. Harper, and Metropolitan Museum of Art. "Art and History in China from the Third to the Eighth Century" in [*China : Dawn of a Golden Age, 200-750 AD*](#). New York : New Haven: Metropolitan Museum of Art ; Yale University Press, 2004.

Whitfield, Roderick, Susan Agnew, Neville Conner, Lois Jian, Whitfield, Susan, Agnew, Neville, Conner, Lois, and Jian, Wu. [*Cave Temples of Dunhuang : Art and History on the Silk Road*](#). London: British Library, 2000.

Zwalf, W. "The Buddha Image" in *Buddhism--art and Faith*. New York: Macmillan, 1985.

宿白. 中国佛教石窟寺遗迹: 3 至 8 世纪中国佛教考古学. 北京: 文物出版社, 2010 年.

宫治昭《解读佛像: 丝绸之路上的佛教美术》, 北京: 北京大学出版社, 2025 年

Suggested Readings

Baker, Janet. [*The Flowering of a Foreign Faith : New Studies in Chinese Buddhist Art*](#). New Delhi: Marg Publication, 1998.

Ch'en, Kenneth K. S. [*Buddhism in China A Historical Survey*](#). 2nd Print. ed. Princeton Paperbacks : Religion. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1973.

Chicarelli, Charles F. [*Buddhist art: an illustrated introduction*](#), Chiang Mai, Thailand : Silkworm Books, 2004.

Davidson, Joseph LeRoy. [*The Lotus Sutra in Chinese Art : A Study in Buddhist Art to the*](#)

[Year 1000](#). Yale Studies in the History of Art / Yale University. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954.

Dehejia, Vidya. [Indian Art](#). Art & Ideas. London: Phaidon Press, 1997.

Fujita, Hiroki. [Tibetan Buddhist Art](#). Tokyo: Hakusuisha, 1984.

Ghose, Rajeshwari., and National Centre for the Performing Arts. [Kizil on the Silk Road : Crossroads of Commerce & Meeting of Minds](#). Mumbai: Marg Publications on Behalf of National Centre for the Performing Arts, 2008.

Hallade, Madeleine., and Hans Hinz. [The Gandhara Style and the Evolution of Buddhist Art](#). London: Thames & Hudson, 1968.

Hayashi, Ryōichi. [The Silk Road and the Shoso-in](#). 1st English ed. The Heibonsha Survey of Japanese Art ; v. 6. New York: Weatherhill, 1975.

Huntington, Susan L., and Huntington, John C. [The Art of Ancient India : Buddhist, Hindu, Jain](#). 1st Indian ed. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2014.

Ji, Xianlin 季羨林, [大唐西域記今譯](#) [*Great Tang Records on the Western Regions*], 西安 : 陝西人民出版社 : 陝西省新華書店發行, 2007.

Juliano, Annette L., and Judith A. Lerner. “Buddhist Art in Northwest China” in [Monks and Merchants : Silk Road Treasures from Northwest China Gansu and Ningxia Provinces, Fourth-seventh Century](#). New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2001.

Karetzky, Patricia Eichenbaum. [Chinese Religious Art](#). Lanham: Lexington Books, 2014.

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Kim, Li-na. [Buddhist Sculpture of Korea](#). Korean Culture Series (Elizabeth, N.J.) ; 8. Elizabeth, N.J. ; Seoul: Hollym, 2007.

Li, Yumin 李玉珉. [中國佛教美術史](#). 增訂二版，臺北市：三民書局, 2022.

Liu, Hsin-ju. [The Silk Road : Overland Trade and Cultural Interactions in Eurasia](#). Essays on Global and Comparative History. Washington, D.C.: American Historical Association, 1998.

Li, Yuqun. 李裕群. Buddhist Caves in China 中国石窟寺. Beijing: Kexue chubanshe 北京: 科学出版社, 2022.

Ma, Shichang 馬世長, [中國佛教石窟考古文集](#) [*Essays on the Buddhist cave temples of China*], 中國佛教石窟考古文集, 新竹市 : 覺風佛教藝術文化基金會, 2001.

Mason, Penelope E., and Donald Dinwiddie. [History of Japanese Art](#). 2nd ed. Upper Saddle

River, N.J.: Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2005, pp.33-146.

McArthur, Meher. [*Reading Buddhist Art : An Illustrated Guide to Buddhist Signs and Symbols*](#). London: Thames & Hudson, 2002.

McNair, Amy. [*Donors of Longmen Faith, Politics, and Patronage in Medieval Chinese Buddhist Sculpture*](#). Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007.

Nagasawa, Kazutoshi 長沢和俊, [*法顕伝 : 訳註・解説 : 北宋本・南宋本・高麗大蔵経本・石山寺本四種影印とその比較研究*](#), 東京: 雄山閣, 1996

Nehru, Lolita. [*Origins of the Gandhāran Style : A Study of Contributory Influences*](#). Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989.

Okazaki, Jōji. [*Pure Land Buddhist Painting*](#). Japanese Arts Library ; 4. Tokyo: Kodansha, 1977.

Quintanilla, Sonya Rhie. [*History of Early Stone Sculpture at Mathura, Ca. 150 BCE-100 CE*](#). Studies in Asian Art and Archaeology ; v. 25. Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2007.

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Raza, M. Hanif. *Glorious Gandhara: Buddha's story in stone*. Islamabad, Pakistan: Colorpix, 1995.

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Rowland, Benjamin, and Asia House Gallery. [*The Evolution of the Buddha Image*](#). New York: Society, 1963.

Seckel, Dietrich. [*Buddhist Art of East Asia*](#). East Asian Research Aids & Translations ; v. 2. Bellingham: Western Washington University, 1989.

Sponberg, Alan., Helen Hardacre, and Princeton University. [*Maitreya, the Future Buddha*](#) edited by Alan Sponberg, Helen Hardacre. Cambridge [Cambridgeshire]: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Tonkō Bunbutsu Kenkyūjo (ed.) *Tonkō Bakukōkutsu 敦煌莫高窟* V.1-5. Tōkyō : Heibonsha, 1980.

Whitfield, Roderick. [*Dunhuang. Caves of the Singing Sands : Buddhist Art from the Silk Road*](#). London: Textile & Art Publications, 1995, volume 1-2.

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Whitfield, Susan., Frances Wood, British Library, and Preservation of Material From Cave 17. [*Dunhuang and Turfan : Contents and Conservation of Ancient Documents from Central Asia*](#). British Library Studies in Conservation Science ; 1. London: British Library, 1996.

Washizuka, Hiromitsu., Youngbok Park, U-bang. Kang, Riben Yan Jiu Hui, and Korea Society. [*Transmitting the Forms of Divinity : Early Buddhist Art from Korea and Japan*](#). New York: Japan Society : Distributed by Harry N. Abrams, 2003, pp.18-139.

Wong, Dorothy C. [*Chinese Steles Pre-Buddhist and Buddhist Use of a Symbolic Form*](#). Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004.

Wood, Frances. [*The Silk Road : Two Thousand Years in the Heart of Asia*](#). Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002, Chapter 5.

Wriggins, Sally Hovey. [*Xuanzang : A Buddhist Pilgrim on the Silk Road*](#). Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1996.

Yu Ying-shih, "Han Foreign Relations" in [*The Cambridge History of China. Vol. 1, The Ch'in and Han Empires, 221 B.C.-A.D. 220*](#). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986, pp.377-462.

Zhao, Puchu 趙樸初, and Zhou, Shaoliang 周紹良. [*梵宮 : 中國佛教建築藝術*](#) [*Fan Gong : Zhong Guo Fo Jiao Jian Zhu Yi Shu*]. 1st ed. 上海: 上海辭書出版社, 2006.

Zürcher, E., "The Buddhist conquest of China : the spread and adaptation of Buddhism in early medieval China" in [*Buddhism in China : Collected Papers of Erik Zürcher*](#). Sinica Leidensia ; v. 112. Leiden: Brill, 2013.

Zwalf, W., and British Museum. [*A Catalogue of the Gandhara Sculpture in the British Museum*](#). London: British Museum Press, 1996.

Suggested Readings (Chinese)

费泳. 汉唐佛教造像艺术史; 增订本, 第 1 版. ed. 武汉市:湖北美術出版社, 2017.

樊锦诗, and 敦煌研究院. 榆林窟艺术. 第 1 版. ed. 丝绸之路与敦煌文化. 南京市: 江苏美术出版社, 2014.

何山. 西域文化與敦煌藝術 [electronic Resource]. 第 1 版. 長沙市: 湖南美術出版社, 1990.

胡同庆. 敦煌佛教石窟艺术图像解析. 第 1 版. 北京市 : 文物出版社, 2019.

李崇峰. 中印佛教石窟寺比較研究 : 以塔廟窟為中心. 初版. ed. 新竹市: 財團

法人覺風佛教藝術文化基金會, 2002.

李崇峰. 佛教考古: 从印度到中国. 第 1 版. ed. 上海: 上海古籍出版社, 2014.

李裕群. 山野佛光: 中國石窟寺藝術. 成都: 四川人民出版社, 2004.

孫英剛, 何平. 圖說犍陀羅文明. 初版. 香港: 天地圖書有限公司, 2020.

王惠民. 敦煌佛教与石窟营建. 第 1 版. 敦煌讲座书系. 兰州市: 甘肃教育出版社, 2013.

赵声良. 敦煌石窟艺术简史. 第 1 版. 北京: 中国青年出版社 ed. 2015.

Internet Resources

※ *Asia Society, Art of Gandhara*

<http://sites.asiasociety.org/gandhara/>

※ *Database for Buddhist Cave Temples in China 中國石窟數據庫*

<http://dsr.nii.ac.jp/china-caves/>

※ *Digital Silk Road Project*

<http://dsr.nii.ac.jp/index.html.en>

<http://dsr.nii.ac.jp/rarebook/04/index.html.en>

※ *IDP International Dunhuang Project* http://idp.bl.uk/database/database_search.a4d

※ *The Huntington Digital Library*

<https://hdl.huntington.org/>

(Very useful Buddhist art database for studying Buddhist art and iconography.)

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BSTC7003 Dunhuang Buddhist art and culture

(6 credits)

Lecturer: Dr. C.H. Tsui

Email: chunghui@hku.hk

Course Description

This course is a theme-based study of Buddhist art and cultural relics preserved in the Dunhuang cave temples. It uses visual, textual and historical perspectives to examine the development of Buddhist art in Dunhuang. The course covers a range of topics including the early narrative art, the Maitreya culture, the illustration of the Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa Sūtra and

the Lotus Sūtra, the images of Pure Land Buddhism, the belief in Avalokiteśvara and the Bodhisattva path, the early Esoteric element in Dunhuang, the Dunhuang art in the Tubo period, the Mañjuśrī and Mount Wutai, the manuscript culture of Dunhuang Library Cave, and other related topics. The course also explores the cultural interactions between India, Central Asia, Western Regions, and Central Plains of China in relation to the development of Dunhuang art and culture. It aims to introduce the unique value of Dunhuang Buddhist art and culture as a time capsule of the Silk Road history that was influenced by Buddhism.

Aim :

1. To explore the significance of Dunhuang art & culture, how important role it played in history
2. To understand what are the Buddhist doctrines and symbolic meanings through art and architecture of Dunhuang
3. To study Buddhism through Dunhuang art from historical, iconographical and doctrinal perspectives
4. To identify and distinguish various murals / representations *Jingbian* from different sutras

Learning outcome :

1. To learn the development of Buddhist art and culture in Dunhuang, how it had cultural interaction with Central Asia and the other world
2. To understand how Buddhist iconography and iconology convey the formless dharma through visual art in Dunhuang
3. To learn how to utilize the materials from Dunhuang to study and fill the gap of history of Buddhism
4. To acquire basic knowledge of some Mahāyāna sutras
5. To inspire students' creative idea from ancient Dunhuang art in daily life

Assessment

1. Mid-term short quiz: 30 % (to be conducted on Mar.15)
2. Long essay with 3,000 words: 40 % (deadline for submission: Apr. 28)
3. Presentation: 20% (on Apr. 26)
4. Class Participation: 10 % (attendance + participation in interactive discussion with Q & A in class)

Course Outline (tentative)

1. [Jan.18] Introduction of Dunhuang: an overview of the history of Dunhuang in the context of its preservation of Chinese art and culture
2. [Jan.25] Narrative art: Jataka and Life stories of the Buddha
3. [Feb.1] The development of Maitreya cult as reflected in Dunhuang grottoes
4. [Feb.15] The illustration of Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa Sūtra
5. [Feb.22] Amitābha and representation of Pure Land

6. [Mar.1] Lotus Sūtra, Guanyin image and Bodhisattva path
[Mar.8] Reading Week
7. [Mar.15] Development of Esoteric Buddhist art in Dunhuang (with Mid-term quiz)
8. [Mar. 22] Dunhuang Library Cave 17; Diamond Sutra
9. [Apr.12] Mañjuśrī cult and Mount Wutai
10. [Apr.19] Tubo period & Dunhuang art
11. [Apr.26] Presentation

【Recommended Readings】

1. Introduction of Dunhuang: an overview of the history of Dunhuang in the context of its preservation of Chinese art and culture

Readings:

Fan Jinshi, Willow Weilan Hai. *Dunhuang: Buddhist art at the gateway of the Silk Road*. New York: Dunhuang Academy and China Institute Gallery, 2013. Call #: 704. 9489430951 D91 F

Tuan, Wen-chieh., Chung Tan, and Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts. [*Dunhuang Art : Through the Eyes of Duan Wenjie*](#). New Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts, 1994, pp.14-43

Whitfield, Roderick., Susan. Agnew, Whitfield, Susan, Agnew, Neville, Getty Conservation Institute, and J. Paul Getty Museum. [*Cave Temples of Mogao : Art and History on the Silk Road*](#). Conservation and Cultural Heritage. Los Angeles: Getty Conservation Institute and the J. Paul Getty Museum, 2000.

Rong, Xinjiang., and Imre. Galambos. *Eighteen Lectures on Dunhuang*. Leiden,: Brill, 2013.

趙聲良.敦煌石窟美術史.十六國北朝 第1版.北京市: 高等教育出版社, 2014.

沙武田, 敦煌石窟研究導論 第1版. 蘭州: 甘肅文化出版社, 2024

劉進寶. 敦煌學通論. 第1版. 蘭州市: 甘肅教育出版社, 2002.

2. Narrative art: Jataka and Life stories of the Buddha

Readings:

Bell, Alexander Peter. *Didactic narration: Jataka iconography in Dunhuang with a catalogue of jataka representations in China*. Vol. 69. LIT Verlag Münster, 2000.

Dehejia, Vidya. "[On Modes of Visual Narration in Early Buddhist Art](#)." *The Art Bulletin* (New York, N.Y.) 72, no. 3 (1990): 374-92.

東山健吾 李梅(譯) 趙聲良(審校).“敦煌石窟本生故事畫的形式——以睽子本生圖為中心.”敦煌研究, no. 2 (2011): 1-11.

3. The development of Maitreya cult as reflected in Dunhuang grottoes

Readings:

Lee, Yu-Min. *The [Maitreya Cult and Its Art in Early China](#)*. Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms International, 1986.

Yaldiz, Marianne. "[Maitreya in Literature and in the Art of Xinjiang](#)." *Marg* 59, no. 3 (2008): 12.

郭俊葉.“敦煌執扇彌勒菩薩圖像考。”敦煌研究, no.2 (2021): 72–84.

馬德.“從彌勒下生信仰看佛教的社會化——以敦煌石窟唐代彌勒大像相關歷史資訊為中心。”天水師範學院學報 Vol.40, no.1(2020): 61–67.

宮治昭. 涅槃和弥勒的图像学：从印度到中亚 *Iconology of Parinirvana and Maitreya : from India to Central Asia*. 第 1 版. 北京：文物出版社, 2009.

4. The illustration of Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa Sūtra

Readings:

Bunker, Emma C. "[Early Chinese Representations of Vimalakīrti](#)." *Artibus Asiae* 30, no. 1 (1968): 28-52.

Kim, Haewon. “Meaning of Non-Religious Figures in Vimalakirti Bianxiang in Dunhuang” in *[The Art of Central Asia and the Indian Subcontinent in Cross-cultural Perspective](#)*. Edited by Pande, Anupa, National Museum Institute, and International Seminar on the Art of Central Asia the Indian Sub-Continent in Cross-Cultural Perspective. New Delhi: Aryan Books International : in Association with National Museum Institute of History of Art, 2009, pp.16-22

龍紅 黃騫.“敦煌莫高窟維摩經變表現形式及藝術特色——以初唐第 220 窟為例。”民族藝術研究, no.6 (2016): 182–190.

趙燕林.“莫高窟第 220 窟維摩詰經變帝王像研究。”敦煌研究, no.6(2018): 20–31.

簡佩琦(CHIEN Peichi). “敦煌隋代石窟《維摩詰經變》研究。”敦煌學, no. 38 (August 2022): 207–50.

5. Amitābha and representation of Pure Land

Readings:

Fraser, Sarah Elizabeth. *[Performing the Visual : The Practice of Buddhist Wall Painting in China and Central Asia, 618-960](#)*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2004.

Wu, Hung. "[What Is Bianxiang? -On The Relationship Between Dunhuang Art and Dunhuang Literature](#)." *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 52, no. 1 (1992): 111-92.

Barrett, T. H. "[The origin of the term pien-wen: an alternative hypothesis](#)." *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 2, no. 2 (1992): 241-246.

郭子睿.“敦煌唐代西方淨土變功能性探析”文化學刊,no.7(2017): 235–239.

王惠民.“西方淨土變形式的形成過程與完成時間.”敦煌研究, no.3 (2013): 76–85.

王惠民,殷光明.“敦煌淨土圖像研究”,佛光山文教基金會,2003.

6. Lotus Sūtra , Guanyin image and Bodhisattva path

Readings:

Cūṭivongs, Nandana., and Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts. [The Iconography of Avalokiteśvara in Mainland South East Asia](#). New Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts : Aryan Books International, 2002.

Tanabe, Willa J. [Paintings of the Lotus Sutra](#). 1st ed. New York: Weatherhill, 1988, pp. 37-97.

Yü, Chün-fang. [Kuan-yin: The Chinese Transformation of Avalokiteśvara](#). IASWR Series. New York: Columbia University Press, 2001.

Wang, Eugene Yuejin. *Shaping the Lotus Sutra: Buddhist Visual Culture in Medieval China*. Seattle, Wash: University of Washington Press, 2005.

張元林.“從《法華經》的角度解讀莫高窟第 285 窟.”敦煌研究, no.2 (2019): 9–15.

張元林《唐至元代敦煌法華圖像研究》，北京：文物出版社，2026 年

7. Development of Esoteric Buddhist art in Dunhuang

Readings:

Kapstein, Matthew., and Sam. Van Schaik. [Esoteric Buddhism at Dunhuang : Rites and Teachings for This Life and beyond](#). Brill's Tibetan Studies Library ; v. 25. Leiden: Brill, 2010.

Wang, Michelle C. "From Dharani to Mandala: A Study of Mogao Cave 14 and Esoteric Buddhist Art of the Tang Dynasty (618—907)." *PhD diss., Harvard University* (2008): 82-101.

Wang, Michelle C. *Maṇḍalas in the Making: The Visual Culture of Esoteric Buddhism at Dunhuang*. Vol. 139. Boston: BRILL, 2018.

王惠民. 彌勒佛與藥師佛.第 1 版.上海市: 華東師範大學出版社, 2010.

赵晓星. 吐蕃统治时期敦煌密教研究. 第 1 版. 兰州市: 甘肃教育出版社, 2017.

8. Dunhuang Library Cave 17; Diamond Sutra

Readings:

Huntington, John C. "[A Note on Dunhuang Cave 17, 'The Library,' or Hong Bian's Reliquary Chamber.](#)" *Ars Orientalis* 16 (1986): 93-101.

Xinjiang Rong 榮新江 and Valerie Hansen. "[The nature of the Dunhuang library cave and the reasons for its sealing.](#)" *Cahiers D'Extrême-Asie* 11, no. 1 (1999): 247-75.

Wood, Frances, and Mark Barnard. [The Diamond Sutra : The Story of the World's Earliest Dated Printed Book.](#) London: British Library, 2010.

Goldberg, S. J. "[Court Calligraphy of the Early T'ang Dynasty.](#)" *Artibus Asiae* 49, no. 3/4 (1988): 189-237.

Tsui, C.H., 2014. Re-examining the Diamond Sūtra Manuscript SP 2 and Sacred Book Culture in the Tang Dynasty. *The Indian International Journal of Buddhist Studies*, 15, pp.229-248.

赵声良《藏经洞敦煌艺术精品（大英博物馆）》，杭州：浙江古籍出版社，2024 年

9. Mañjuśrī cult and Mount Wutai

Readings:

Wong, Dorothy C. "[A reassessment of the representation of Mt. Wutai from Dunhuang cave 61.](#)" *Archives of Asian Art* 46 (1993): 27-52.

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Readings:

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上山大峻. [敦煌佛教の研究](#). 京都市: 法蔵館, 1990.

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- 第1卷 魏書釈老志の研究
- 第2卷 北朝仏教史研究
- 第3卷 中国中世仏教史論攷
- 第4卷 中国浄土教史研究
- 第5卷 中国近世仏教史の諸問題
- 第6卷 日中仏教交渉史研究
- 第7卷 浄土宗史・美術篇、附著作目録ほか

【Study of Dunhuang & Turfan Manuscripts】

[敦煌吐魯番文獻集成](#)

A series of Dunhuang and Turpan documents from the Bibliothèque nationale de France, St. Petersburg Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of Russia, Shanghai Museum, Shanghai Library, Tianjin Art Museum, and Peking University Library. 上海古籍出版社.

[國家圖書館藏敦煌遺書](#)

Dunhuang manuscripts from National Library of China.

[英國國家圖書館藏敦煌遺書](#)

Dunhuang manuscripts from the British Library.

[法國國家圖書館藏敦煌藏文文獻](#)

Dunhuang documents in Tibetan from the Bibliothèque nationale de France.

[敦煌遺書總目索引](#)

An index of Dunhuang manuscripts in Aurel Stein and Paul Pelliot's collections, China, Japan and private collections.

[敦煌遺書總目索引新編](#)

A revised edition of 敦煌遺書總目索引.

[吐魯番文書總目](#)

Catalogs of Turpan documents in Japan, Europe and US.

[吐魯番出土文書](#)

A collection of excavated Turpan documents.

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BSTC7006 Pāli I

(6 credits)

Lecturer: Dr. Barua Dipen

Email: dipen@hku.hk

Course Description

Pāli is the language of Theravāda Buddhism commonly practiced in South and Southeast Asia. This Theravāda school of Buddhism is the only Buddhist school that has preserved a complete canon since the 3rd century B.C.E. This course is meant for those students who have no prior knowledge of the language and who wish to become familiar with Pāli expressions and idioms, and with the basic requirements to understand Pāli Buddhist texts. The main focus of the course is to introduce basic grammar together with exercises, including phonetics, parts of speech, nouns of different genders and their declensions, verbs and their conjugations, participles and their functions, syntax and classification of sentences. At the end of the course the students are expected to be able to read simple Pāli sentences and understand their religious and philosophical significance in context.

Course Content

This introductory course is designed for students who have no prior knowledge of Pāli language. The content of this course deals with Pāli grammar that includes nouns and their declensions, verbs and their conjugations, participles and their functions, secondary and primary derivatives, particles, and combinations. These are intended to serve as a primer to read the Pāli primary sources with glossary and dictionary. Examples and exercises will be done from the Pāli *suttas* which will help students understand early Buddhist teachings.

Learning Outcome

By the end of this course, students are expected to be able to understand basic Pāli grammar

such as declensions, conjugations, tenses, and other grammatical forms, and literature with an understanding of its importance for the study of Pāli Canon and Theravāda Buddhism.

Teaching and Learning Method

Lectures, class discussions and tutorials

Assessment

50% coursework and 50% examination

- Coursework (50%):
 - Class participation (10%)
 - Homework (20%) [homework grades will be based on the content for lectures 6 and 11. For these two lectures, students will be given selected passages from the Pāli canonical texts, which they must prepare at home for reading and translation in class. Please refer to the respective lecture outlines for further details]
 - Mid-term test (20%)
- The final examination (50%) will be held at the end of the semester. It is an open-textbook exam.

Lecture Schedule

Lesson	Contents
Lesson 1	(a) Introduction to the Pāli language and its alphabet • Phonological remarks • Vowels short and long • The letter classified • Pronunciation (b) Nouns: Masculine (m), Neuter (n) and Feminine (f) (c) Cases: Declension of nouns ending in- <i>a</i> (d) Verbs: Present tense (e) Example of Pāli sentences containing verbs
Lesson 2	(a) Adjectives (b) Indeclinable (c) Declension of pronouns (d) Exercises
Lesson 3	(a) Genitive case used for expressing “to have” ▪ Three grades of root strength (b) Conjugation of verbs ▪ Thematic and athematic verbs (c) Classes of verbs I and X

	(d) Usage of the instrumental, the ablative, the vocative cases (e) Ablative of reason (f) Exercises
Lesson 4	(a) Declension of nouns ending in- <i>ā</i> (f): <i>paññā</i> ‘wisdom’ (b) Declension of nouns ending in- <i>i</i> (m): <i>pati</i> ‘chief/husband’ (c) More on adverbial usages (d) Prefixes (e) Class VI and IV verbs (d) Declension of - <i>u</i> ending (m): <i>bhikkhu</i> ‘monk’ (d) Exercises
Lesson 5	(a) Declension of - <i>u</i> ending (n): <i>cakkhu</i> ‘eye’ (b) Declension of - <i>u</i> ending (f): <i>dhenu</i> ‘cow’ (c) Declension of nouns ending in- <i>i</i> (f): <i>jāti</i> ‘birth’ (d) Declension of nouns ending in- <i>i</i> (n): <i>akkhi</i> ‘eye’ (e) Declension of nouns ending in- <i>ī</i> (f): <i>nadī</i> ‘river’ (f) Causatives (g) Exercises
Lesson 6	Reading and translation of selected Pāli passages from the Pāli canonical texts, including their contexts, based on the grammatical components covered in Lectures 1 to 5.
No class	Reading Week
Lesson 7	(a) Denominatives (b) Class II verb Conjugation of <i>atthi</i> (exist/is) (c) Declension of consonant-ending nouns: <i>bhagavant</i> (m) and <i>bhavant</i> (m) (d) Possessive suffixes- <i>vant</i> and- <i>mant</i> (e) Exercises
Lesson 8	(a) Gerund (b) Possessive suffix - <i>in</i> , - <i>vin</i> - Declension of <i>rūpin</i> (c) Past Participle Passive (PPP) - Formation of PPP - PPP as adjective (d) Declension of nouns ending in- <i>an</i> : <i>attan</i> (m), <i>rājan</i> , <i>brahman</i> (m), <i>san</i> (m), <i>kamman</i> (n) (e) Declension of demonstrative pronouns: <i>ayaṃ</i> (m, f), <i>idaṃ/imaṃ</i> (n)

	(f) Declension of personal pronouns: <i>ahaṃ</i> , <i>tvaṃ</i> , <i>so</i> , <i>taṃ</i> (n), <i>sā</i> (f) (g) Exercises Mid-term Test
Lesson 9	(a) Pronominal adjectives (b) Declension of <i>sabba</i> ‘all’ as pronominal adjective (c) Class V verbs (the <i>nu</i> Class) (d) Conjugation of √ <i>śru</i> ‘hear’ (e) Class VIII verbs (the <i>tanādi gaṇa</i>) (f) Conjugation of √ <i>kr</i> ‘do’, ‘make’ (g) Examples of sentences with Class V and Class VIII verbs (h) Exercises
Lesson 10	(a) Declension of <i>-as</i> and <i>-us</i> ending noun ▪ Declension of <i>vacas</i> (n) ‘speech’ ▪ Declension of <i>manas</i> (n) ‘mind’ ▪ Declension of <i>āyus</i> (n) ‘life’, ‘life-span’ (b) Class IX verbs (c) Present Participles (PrP) (d) Relative pronouns and relative clauses (e) Exercises
Lesson 11	Reading and translation of selected Pāli passages from the Pāli canonical texts, including their contexts, based on the grammatical components covered in Lectures 7 to 10.
Lesson 12	(a) Present participles (b) Relative pronouns and relative clauses (c) Interrogative pronouns <i>kad</i> (d) Interrogation and interrogative clauses (e) The optative mode (f) Revision and discussion for final exam

Note: The content above may be adjusted based on feedback from students during the class.

Textbook

Dhammajoti, KL. *Reading Buddhist Pāli Texts: An Elementary Grammatical Guide*.
Hong Kong: The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong, 2025 (3rd edition).

Recommended Readings

Anuruddha, Kakkapalliye. *A Guide to the Study of Pali: The Language of Theravada Buddhism*. Hong Kong: Centre of Buddhism Studies, The University of Hong Kong, 2010.

- Buddhadatta, A.P. *The New Pali Course (Parts I & II)*. Sri Lanka: Buddhist Cultural Centre, 1997.
- Geiger, Wilhelm. *A Pāli Grammar*. Translated by Batakrishna Ghosh. London: The Pali Text Society, 1994.
- Nyanatiloka. *Buddhist Dictionary, Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines*. Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1988.
- Rhys Davids, T.W. and W. Stede (eds). *Pali-English Dictionary*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited, 1993.
- Warder, A.K. *Introduction to Pali*. London: The Pali Text Society, 2001.

Pāli Dictionaries (online)

- Rhys Davids, T.W. and W. Stede (eds). *Pali-English Dictionary*. Available on Digital Dictionaries of South Asia. Updated in Mar 2021.
<https://dsal.srv04.uchicago.edu/dictionaries/pali/>
- Rhys Davids, T.W. and W. Stede (eds). *Pali-English Dictionary*. London: The Pali Text Society: <https://ancient-buddhist-texts.net/Reference/PTS/Pali-English-Dictionary.pdf>

BSTC7007 Pāli II (6 credits)

Lecturer: Dr. Barua Dipen

Email: dipen@hku.hk

Course Description

The main focus of the course is to introduce more practical knowledge of Pāli that enables students to read easy Pāli passages both prose and verse extracted directly from the Pāli texts. It also introduces remaining grammatical components not included in Pāli I such as basic grammar together with exercises, including phonetics, parts of speech, nouns of different genders and their declensions, verbs and their conjugations, participles and their functions, syntax and classification of sentences. At the end of the course the students are expected to be able to read simple Pāli sentences and understand their religious and philosophical significance in context.

Course Content

This course is designed for students who have completed the course BSTC7006 Pāli I. The main focus of Pāli II is to introduce grammar that includes past, present, future participles, numerals, syntax, compounds, conditional tense, causative and reading passages from the *Dīgha Nikāya*, the *Majjhima Nikāya*, the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, the *Āṅguttara Nikāya*, etc.

Learning Outcome

By the end of this course, students are expected to be able to

- acquire elementary reading skills in Pāli;
- practice the fundamentals of Pāli grammar, syntax and pronunciation;
- demonstrate the skills of translation and apply their knowledge to other academic disciplines to gain a better understanding;
- understand the value of the Pāli language as a gate to appreciate Theravada culture and its relation to other forms of Buddhist culture.

Teaching and Learning Method

Lectures, class discussions and tutorials

Prerequisite

BSTC7006 Pāli I or teacher's approval

Assessment

50% coursework and 50% examination

- Coursework (50%):
 - Class participation (10%)
 - Homework (20%) [homework grades will be based on the content for lectures 6 and 11. For these two lectures, students will be given selected passages from the Pāli canonical texts, which they must prepare at home for reading and translation in class. Please refer to the respective lecture outlines for further details]
 - Mid-term test (20%)
- The final examination (50%) will be held at the end of the semester. It is an open-textbook exam.

Lecture Schedule

Lesson	Contents
Lesson 1	a) Optative mode b) Optative of <i>labhati</i> ($\sqrt{labh}$ 'obtain'), <i>atthi</i> ($\sqrt{as}$ 'be'), and <i>karoti</i> ($\sqrt{kr}$ 'do') c) Examples of sentences with optative

	d) Future Passive Participles (FPP) ▪ $\sqrt{vad}$ (<i>vadati</i>); $\sqrt{dā}$ (<i>dadāti/deti</i>); $\sqrt{bhū}$ (<i>bhavati</i>); etc. e) Exercises
Lesson 2	(a) Class III verbs (b) Conjugation of $\sqrt{dā}$ ‘give’ (c) Numerals (cardinal) (d) Declensions of <i>eka</i> ‘one; <i>dve</i> ‘two’; <i>ti</i> ‘three’ (e) Exercises
Lesson 3	(a) Locative and genitive absolute (b) Imperative mood (c) Conjugation of $\sqrt{labh}$ ‘obtain’; $\sqrt{kṛ}$ ‘do’; and $\sqrt{sru}$ ‘hear’ (d) <i>attanopada</i> verb forms (e) Conjugation of future tense $\sqrt{labh}$ ‘obtain’; $\sqrt{kṛ}$ ‘do’ in the <i>attanopada</i> (f) Passive voice (pas): present and future passive verbs (g) Exercises
Lesson 4	(a) Aorists • The root-aorist • Example: $\sqrt{dā}$ ‘give’; $\sqrt{bhū}$ ‘become’; $\sqrt{as}$ ‘be’ • The a-aorist (b) Class VII verbs • Conjugation of Class VII verbs (c) Exercises
Lesson 5	Reading and translation of selected Pāli passages from the Pāli canonical texts, including their contexts, based on the grammatical components covered in Lectures 1 to 4.
Lesson 6	(a) Infinitive (b) Declension of $-ū$ ending m and f nouns • <i>Subbāññū</i> (m) ‘omniscient’ • <i>Jambū</i> (f) ‘rose-apple tree’ (c) Exercises
No Class	Reading Week

Lesson 7	(a) Suffixes and nominal derivation • Primary suffixes • Secondary suffixes (b) Some irregular declensions: <i>sakhi</i> (m) and <i>go</i> (m) (c) Nominal compounds (<i>samāsa</i>): <i>dvanda</i>, <i>tappurisa</i>, <i>avyayībhāva</i>, <i>kammadhāraya</i>, <i>digu</i> (d) Exercises	
Lesson 8	(a) Perfect tense (b) Agent nouns: √<i>ah</i> I ‘say’ • Declensions of <i>sattar</i> (m) ‘teacher’; <i>pitar</i> (m) ‘father’ and <i>mātar</i> (f) ‘mother’ (c) Periphrastic future (d) Example of Pāli sentences (e) Exercises Mid-term Test	
Lesson 9	(a) Ordinal numeral (b) Nouns and adj compounded with <i>-kṛ</i> and <i>-bhū</i> (c) Prohibitive (d) <i>Bahubbīhi-samāsa</i> (e) <i>Bahubbīhi</i> formed with <i>-kāma</i> as the last member (f) Adverbial suffix: <i>-tra</i>, <i>-thā</i>, <i>-dā</i>, <i>-dhā</i>, <i>-to</i>, <i>-so</i> (g) Exercises	
Lesson 10	Reading and translation of selected Pāli passages from the Pāli canonical texts, including their contexts, based on the grammatical components covered in Lectures 6 to 9.	
Lesson 11	(a) Past Participle Active (PPA) (b) Conditional tense • Conditional tense for √<i>bhū</i> ‘become’ (c) Exercises	
Lesson 12	2 May 2026	(a) Desiderative ▪ Desiderative adjectives and nouns (b) The Intensive ▪ Adjectives of intensive forms (c) Revision and discussion for final exam

Note: The content above may be adjusted based on the feedback from students during the class.

Textbook

Dhammajoti, K.L. *Reading Buddhist Pāli Texts: An Elementary Grammatical Guide*. Hong Kong: The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong, 2025 (3rd edition).

Recommended Readings

Anuruddha, Kakkapalliye. *A Guide to the Study of Pali: The Language of Theravada Buddhism*. Hong Kong: Centre of Buddhism Studies, The University of Hong Kong, 2010.

Buddhadatta, A.P. *The New Pali Course (Parts I & II)*. Sri Lanka: Buddhist Cultural Centre, 1997.

Geiger, Wilhelm. *A Pāli Grammar*. Translated by Batakrishna Ghosh. London: The Pali Text Society, 1994.

Nyanatiloka. *Buddhist Dictionary, Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines*. Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1988.

Rhys Davids, T.W. and W. Stede (eds). *Pali-English Dictionary*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited, 1993.

Warder, A.K. *Introduction to Pali*. London: The Pali Text Society, 2001.

Pāli Dictionaries (online)

Rhys Davids, T.W. and W. Stede (eds). *Pali-English Dictionary*. Available on Digital Dictionaries of South Asia. Updated in Mar 2021.
<https://dsal.srv04.uchicago.edu/dictionaries/pali/>

Rhys Davids, T.W. and W. Stede (eds). *Pali-English Dictionary*. London: The Pali Text Society: <https://ancient-buddhist-texts.net/Reference/PTS/Pali-English-Dictionary.pdf>

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BSTC3044 Pāli language III (6 credits)

Lecturer: Dr. Barua Dipen

Email: dipen@hku.hk

Course Description

Pāli is the language of a large body of Theravāda canonical and non-canonical Buddhist literature. Here we find a rich variety of texts that contain valuable information on the religious, social, political, literary and linguistic history of South Asia. Important

contributions are made in Pāli to philosophy and psychology through the analysis of the nature of *dhammas*, the classification of various kinds of mind and mental states, phenomenal processes and their causal relations. All of these topics can be understood through a careful study of Pāli literature. The course is devoted to the understating and translating of selected Pāli passages, as well as explaining the content of the Pāli canon and its commentaries and gradually building sufficient vocabularies for the purpose of reading the Pāli texts independently.

Course Content

This course helps students to practice translating selected texts from Pāli to English. It introduces sentences, passages, and sections chosen from a variety of Pāli canonical texts, such as the *Dīgha Nikāya*, the *Majjhima Nikāya*, the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, for students to learn grammar and practice translation skills with a focus given to analyzing Pāli passages meaningfully. Students will get the opportunity to develop their skills in understanding and translating the texts, while also acquainting themselves with the vast Pāli canonical literature.

Learning Outcome

By the end of this course, students are expected to read the Buddhist texts in Pāli with doctrinal value of early Buddhist teachings and culture. Students will also understand the nature of the Buddhist teachings within the context of the religion-philosophical system of ancient Indian thought.

Teaching and Learning Method

Lectures, class discussions and tutorials

Prerequisite

BSTC7007 Pāli II or teacher's approval

Assessment

50% coursework and 50% examination

- Coursework (50%):
 - Class participation (10%)
 - Homework (20%) [For homework grade, students will be given selected passages from the Pāli canonical or post-canonical texts, which they must prepare with full grammatical analysis at home for reading and translation in lecture 5 and 10. Please refer to the respective lecture outlines for further details]
 - Mid-term test (20%)
- The final examination (50%) will be held at the end of the semester. It is an open-book exam. Students can use lecture notes, glossary and dictionary during the exam.

Lecture Outline

Lesson	Contents
Lesson 1	• Introduction to the course • <i>Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta</i> (The Discourse on Setting the Wheel of Dhamma in Motion) [SN V 420 – 422] ◦ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis.
Lesson 2	• <i>Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta</i> (The Discourse on Setting the Wheel of Dhamma in Motion) [SN V 422– 424] ◦ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis.
Lesson 3	• <i>Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta</i> (The Discourse on the Abiding of Mindfulness) [MN I 55 – 56] ◦ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis.
Lesson 4	• <i>Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta</i> (The Discourse on Abiding of Mindfulness) [MN I 57 – 58] ◦ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis.
Lesson 5	Reading and translation of selected Pāli <i>sutta</i> /passages from the Pāli canonical or post-canonical texts, including their contexts, with full grammatical analysis.
No Class	Reading Week
Lesson 6	• <i>Nidānasamyutta</i> (Connected Discourses on Causation): Chapter 1 – <i>Buddha Vagga</i> [SN II 1–4] ◦ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis.
Lesson 7	• <i>Maggasamyutta</i> (Connected Discourses on the Path): <i>Vibhaṅga Sutta</i> [SN V 8 – 9] ◦ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis. Mid-term test
Lesson 8	• <i>Gahapati Vagga</i> (The Chapter on Householders) [AN IV 208–212] ◦ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis.

Lesson 9	• <i>Bāla Vagga</i> (The Chapter on Fools) [AN I 61] ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis.
Lesson 10	Reading and translation of selected Pāli <i>sutta</i> /passages from the Pāli canonical or post-canonical texts, including their contexts, with full grammatical analysis.
Lesson 11	• <i>Mettānisaṃsa Sutta</i> (The Discourse on Advantages of Loving-kindness) [AN V 342] ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis.
Lesson 12	• The <i>Dhammapada</i> • <i>Yamaka Vagga</i> (The Chapter on the Path of the Dhamma–Pairs) [Dhp 1–2] ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis. • Summary of the course and revision for the final exam.

Notes: Lecture notes and supplementary materials will be provided in class throughout the semester.

Textbooks

The Dīgha Nikāya Vol I-III, edited by T.W. Rhys Davids and J.E. Carpenter. London: PTS, 1889-2007.

The Majjhima Nikāya Vol I-III, edited by V. Trenckner, T.W. Rhys Davids, J. Estlin Carpenter, Robert Chalmers. London: PTS, 1888-2001.

The Saṃyutta Nikāya Vol I-IV, edited by Mrs. C.A.F. Rhys Davids, Leon Feer, and G.A. Somaratne. London: PTS, 1884-2000.

The Aṅguttara Nikāya, Vol I-V, edited by A.K. Warder, Rev. Richard Morris, E. Hardy. London: PTS, 1855-1999.

The Dhammapada, edited by Oskar von Hinüber and K.R. Norman. London: PTS, 1994-1995.

Recommended Readings

Anuruddha, Kakkapalliye. *A Guide to the Study of Pali: The Language of Theravada Buddhism*. Hong Kong: Centre of Buddhism Studies, The University of Hong Kong, 2010.

Buddhadatta, A.P. *The New Pali Course* (Parts I & II). Sri Lanka: Buddhist Cultural Centre, 1997.

Geiger, Wilhelm. *A Pāli Grammar*. Translated by Batakrishna Ghosh. Oxford: The Pali Text Society, 1994.

Dhammajoti, KL. *Reading Buddhist Pāli Texts: An Elementary Grammatical Guide*.

Hong Kong: The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong, 2025 (3rd edition).
Nyanatiloka. *Buddhist Dictionary, Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines*. Kandy:
Buddhist Publication Society, 1988.
Rhys Davids, T.W. and W. Stede (eds). *Pali-English Dictionary*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass
Publishers Private Limited, 1993.
Warder, A.K. *Introduction to Pali*. London: The Pali Text Society, 2001.

Pāli Dictionaries (online)

Rhys Davids, T.W. and W. Stede (eds). *Pali-English Dictionary*. Available on
Digital Dictionaries of South Asia. Updated in Mar 2021.
<https://dsal.srv04.uchicago.edu/dictionaries/pali/>
Rhys Davids, T.W. and W. Stede (eds). *Pali-English Dictionary*. London: The Pali Text
Society: <https://ancient-buddhist-texts.net/Reference/PTS/Pali-English-Dictionary.pdf>

BSTC3045 Pāli language IV (6 credits)

Lecturer: Dr. Barua Dipen

Email: dipen@hku.hk

Course Description

This course enables students to independently read Pali texts with the help of dictionaries. Every assigned reading will be self-contained in its relation to Buddhist teachings and their significance. The main focus of this course is to make grammatical explanations as clear as possible, while also gaining access to Pāli original sources for textual studies research using the Pāli dictionary and vocabulary. Each lesson includes a set of readings with an accompanying glossary and grammatical notes covering different nouns and their declensions, verbs and their conjugations, compounds, primary and secondary derivatives, syntax, clause and numerals.

Course Content

Building on their learnings in Pāli Language I, II, and III, this course introduces skills to analyze and understand complex grammatical structures of Pali texts, with a special focus given to reading, understanding, and translating the selected passages from the discourses in the *Dīgha Nikāya*, the *Majjhima Nikāya*, the *Udāna*, and the *Milindapañha*, together with their counterpart commentarial literature.

Learning Outcome

By the end of the course, students are expected to be able to

- read and analyze the Pāli passages grammatically and doctrinally and their importance for the study of Pāli canonical and non-canonical literature;
- consult the many scholarly sources on Buddhist concepts and philosophy;
- enhance the knowledge of technical Buddhist terms with commentarial explanation;
- interpret original Pāli sources.

Teaching and Learning Method

Lectures, class discussions and tutorials

Prerequisite

BSTC3044 Pāli language III or teacher's approval

Assessment

50% coursework and 50% examination

- Coursework (50%):
 - Class participation (10%)
 - Homework (20%) [For homework grade, students will be given selected passages from the Pāli Canon of Commentaries, which they must prepare with full grammatical analysis at home for reading and translation in lecture 6 and 11. Please refer to the respective lecture outlines for further details]
 - Mid-term test (20%)
- The final examination (50%) will be held at the end of the semester. It is an open-book exam. Students can use lecture notes, glossaries and dictionary during the exam.

Lecture Outline for Semester II

Lesson	Contents
Lesson 1	• Introduction to the course • <i>Mahānidāna Sutta (The Great Discourse on Causation)</i> [DN II 55 – 58] ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis together with their counterpart

	commentary.
Lesson 2	• <i>Mahānidāna Sutta (The Great Discourse on Causation)</i> [DN II 59–71] ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis together with their counterpart commentary.
Lesson 3	• <i>Ariyapariyesana Sutta (The Discourses on the Noble Search)</i> [MN I] ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis together with their counterpart commentary.
Lesson 4	• <i>Ariyapariyesana Sutta (The Discourses on the Noble Search)</i> [MN I] ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis together with their counterpart commentary.
Lesson 5	• <i>Ariyapariyesana Sutta (The Discourses on the Noble Search)</i> [MN I] ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis together with their counterpart commentary.
Lesson 6	• Reading and translation of selected Pāli <i>sutta</i>/passages from the Pāli Canon or Commentaries, including their contexts, with full grammatical analysis.
No Class	Reading Week
Lesson 7	• <i>Paṭisambhidāmagga (The Path of Discrimination)</i> [selected passages] ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis together with their counterpart commentary.
Lesson 8	• <i>Paṭisambhidāmagga (The Path of Discrimination)</i> [selected passages] ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis together with their counterpart commentary. Mid-term Test
Lesson 9	• <i>Netti-pakaraṇa (The Guide)</i> [selected passages] ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis together with their counterpart commentary.

Lesson 10	• <i>Netti-pakaraṇa (The Guide)</i> [selected passages] ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis together with their counterpart commentary.
Lesson 11	• Reading and translation of selected Pāli <i>sutta</i>/passages from the Pāli Canon or Commentaries, including their contexts, with full grammatical analysis.
Lesson 12	• <i>Visuddhimagga (The Path of Purification)</i> [selected passages] ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis together with their counterpart sources from other texts. • Summary of the course and revision for the final exam.

Notes: Lecture notes and supplementary materials will be provided in class throughout the semester.

Textbooks

The Dīgha Nikāya Vol I-III, edited by T.W. Rhys Davids and J.E. Carpenter. London: PTS, 1889-2007.

The Dīghanikāya-aṭṭhakathā (Sumaṅgalavilāsinī) Vol I–III, edited by T.W. Rhys Davids, J.E. Carpenter and W. Stede. London: PTS, 1968–1971.

The Majjhima Nikāya Vol I-III, edited by V. Trenckner, T.W. Rhys Davids, J. Estlin Carpenter, Robert Chalmers. London PTS, 1888-2001.

The Majjhimanikāya-aṭṭhakathā (Papañcasūdanī) Vol I – V, edited by J.H. Woods, D. Kosambi and I.B. Horner. London: PTS, 1922–1979.

The Paṭisambhidāmagga Vol I–II, edited by A.C. Taylor. London: PTS 1905–1979.

The Paṭisambhidāmagga-aṭṭhakathā (Saddhammappakāsinī) Vol I–III, edited by C.V. Joshi. London: PTS, 1933–1979.

The Netti-pakaraṇa, edited by Prof. E. Hardy. London: The Pali Text Society, 1902.

The Visuddhimagga, edited by Mrs. C.A.F. Rhys Davids. London: PTS, 1975.

Recommended Readings

Anuruddha, Kakkapalliye. *A Guide to the Study of Pali: The Language of Theravada Buddhism*. Hong Kong: Centre of Buddhism Studies, The University of Hong Kong, 2010.

Buddhadatta, A.P. *The New Pali Course* (Parts I & II). Sri Lanka: Buddhist Cultural Centre,

1997.

Geiger, Wilhelm. *A Pāli Grammar*. Translated by Batakrishna Ghosh. Oxford: The Pali Text Society, 1994.

Dhammajoti, KL. *Reading Buddhist Pāli Texts: An Elementary Grammatical Guide*. Hong Kong: The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong, 2025 (3rd edition).

Nyanatiloka. *Buddhist Dictionary, Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines*. Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1988.

Rhys Davids, T.W. and W. Stede (eds). *Pali-English Dictionary*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited, 1993.

Warder, A.K. *Introduction to Pali*. London: The Pali Text Society, 2001.

Pāli Dictionaries (online)

Rhys Davids, T.W. and W. Stede (eds). *Pali-English Dictionary*. Oxford: The Pāli Text Society. Available on Digital Dictionaries of South Asia. Updated in Feb 2017. <https://dsalsrv04.uchicago.edu/dictionaries/pali/>
Pāli Dictionary. Available on Buddhistdoor Global.

<https://www.buddhistdoor.net/dictionary/search/?k=Buddha&l=3>

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BSTC7008 Sanskrit I

(6 credits)

Lecturer: Dr. Amrita Nanda

Email: nanda@hku.hk

Course Description

Sanskrit, one of the most ancient languages known to humankind, is considered a key to understanding human civilization, particularly the rich cultural, philosophical, and religious heritage of India, whose influence on the world continues to be felt. Students of history, history of science, comparative literature, general and historical linguistics, philosophy, and religions will discover that a basic knowledge of the language greatly enriches their studies. For students who intend to specialize in different aspects of Buddhism, an ability to read and comprehend Buddhist Sanskrit texts is essential. This course provides an overview of the history of Sanskrit Buddhist literature, as well as the basic grammar and language, covering topics such as scripts, phonetics, declensions, conjugations, participles, and *sandhi*.

Course Content

This course is designed for absolute beginners. No prior knowledge of Sanskrit is

required for this course. The course begins with the alphabet and the Devanāgarī script and gradually introduces elementary Sanskrit grammar along with exercises selected from Buddhist Sanskrit texts. As the students learn and attempt the graded passages, all the grammar involved will be analyzed, and doctrines will be explained to them in a gradual build-up manner. This course mainly covers the following grammatical parts: Sanskrit alphabets, writing Devanāgarī scripts, three genders, three numbers, different nouns and their declensions, Different classes of Sanskrit verbs are their conjugations, personal pronouns, Demonstrative pronouns, Interrogative pronouns, causative verbs, gerunds, present tense, past passive participle, *parasmaipada* and *ātmanepada* verbs, and *sandhi*.

Expected Outcome

At the end of the course, students are expected to read simple Sanskrit passages and comprehend their religious and philosophical significance in context.

Teaching and Learning Method

Lectures, class discussions, and tutorials.

Assessment

Coursework 50%: This consists of three components:

- Class participation (10%), which is assessed based on regular attendance and active involvement in discussions. Active involvement includes activities such as asking questions, offering comments or insights during class, responding to questions posed by the instructor or classmates, participating in group work, and respectfully engaging in classroom dialogue.
- Mid-term Quiz 25 %, which will be conducted on Oct 24, 2026, in the classroom. Duration 1 hour (open-book).
- Weekly homework (15%), graded on accuracy and timely submission. Homework assignments will consist of short translation exercises, grammar practice, and brief reading comprehension tasks, based on material covered in class. Each assignment is expected to be approximately 1-2 pages in length. Homework will be posted weekly on Moodle and should be submitted electronically through the platform by the stated deadline.

Examination (50%): Final examination at the end of the semester. Duration: three hours (Open book).

Lecture Schedule

Lecture 1 (Sep 5, 2026)

- Introduction to the course
- Introduction to Sanskrit Language and Literature
- Introduction to the Sanskrit Alphabet

- Writing Devanāgarī Scripts

Lecture 2 (Sep 12, 2026)

- Writing complex Devanāgarī Scripts
- Three Genders of Sanskrit Nouns
- Introduction to the Eight Cases in Sanskrit

Lecture 3 (Sep 19, 2026)

- Continue Writing complex Devanāgarī Scripts
- Declension of masculine nouns ending in -a:
- Declension of neutral nouns ending in -a:
- Introduction to Adjectives
- ‘Verb to be’ (*bhavati*)
- Indeclinable particles *ca*, *vā* and *api*
 - Practising Sanskrit-English translation exercises Sep 26 no class (General Holiday)

Lecture 4 (Oct 3, 2026)

- Introduction to Sanskrit verbs:
 - Verbal prefixes
 - Three grades of strengthening verbs
 - Class I, IV, VI, and X verbs
 - Conjugation of class I verbs in the present tense.

Lecture 5 (Oct 10, 2026)

- Partial declension of Feminine nouns ending in —ā
- The indeclinable particle —*iti*, *eva*, and *sma*
- Vocabulary and practice of Sanskrit-English translation exercises
- Oct 17, no class (*Reading week*)

Lecture 6 (Oct 24, 2026)

- Mid-term Quiz
- Suffixes-tā, tva, and tas
- Vocabulary and practice of Sanskrit-English translation exercises

Lecture 7 (Oct 31, 2026)

- Introduction to Sanskrit Personal Pronouns
- Causative verbs system
- Vocabulary and practising Sanskrit-English translation exercises

Lecture 8 (Nov 7, 2026)

- Past Passive Participle formation and its functions
- Declension of masculine nouns ending in —u
- Declension of neutral nouns ending in—u
- Vocabulary and practising Sanskrit-English translation exercises

Lecture 9 (Nov 14, 2026)

- Introduction to Demonstrative Pronouns
- Introduction Interrogative Pronouns
- Declension of **masculine** nouns ending in -i
- Declension of **neutral** nouns ending in –i
- Declension of **feminine** nouns ending in –i
- Vocabulary and practising Sanskrit-English translation exercises

Lecture 10 (21, 2026)

- Parasmaipada and ātmanepada verbs
- Gerunds form
- Introduction to Sandhi rules
- Visarga Sandhi

Lecture 11 (Nov 28, 2026)

- Vowel Sandhi
- Consonant Sandhi
- Vocabulary and Sanskrit-English translation exercises
- Review for the final examination

Note: The schedule provided is approximate and flexible. Adjustments may be made based on students' learning pace and interest.

Support options: Students are encouraged to seek help early if they have questions or encounter difficulties. Office hours will be available each week for individual consultation with the instructor. In addition, peer study groups may be formed to facilitate collaborative learning and mutual support. Extra help or tutorial sessions can be arranged if there is sufficient demand. Please refer to the course Moodle page or contact the instructor for details about office hours, study groups, and additional support opportunities.

Textbook

Dhammajoti, Kuala Lumpur (2015), *Reading Buddhist Sanskrit Texts: An Elementary Grammatical Guide (3rd edition)*, The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong Ltd. Hong Kong. (Those who want to have a copy can directly buy from the Buddha-Dharma centre of Hong Kong: <https://buddhadharma.co/Reading-Buddhist-Sanskrit-Texts-An-Elementary->

Grammatical-Guide.

Handout: We will be selective in our use of the textbook. Therefore, handouts will be uploaded to Moodle before every class. Reading materials will be provided by the course instructor on Moodle before classes. In addition to the required readings, supplementary resources, and further readings will be made available to students who wish to deepen their understanding of the material. These may include recommended articles, digital libraries, reference websites, and extra passages for advanced practice.

Reference books

Ruppel, A.M. (2017). *The Cambridge Introduction to Sanskrit*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Speijer, J.S. (1998). *Sanskrit Syntax*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

Bucknell, R.S. (1994). *Sanskrit Manual: A quick-reference guide to the phonology and grammar of Classical Sanskrit*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

Thomas, Egenes (1994). *Introduction to Sanskrit: Part I*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

_____ (2000). *Introduction to Sanskrit: Part II*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

Whitney, Williams D. (1979). *The Roots, Verbs-forms and Primary Derivatives of the Sanskrit Language*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

_____ (2003). *Sanskrit Grammar*. New York: Dover Publications.

Goldman, Robert P., & Goldman, Sutherland, Sally J. (2011). *An Introduction to the Sanskrit Language*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

Monier, Williams (1979). *A Sanskrit English Dictionary*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

Some of these references will be available on the course Moodle. Students are not required to buy these books.

Online Resources:

For Devanagārī script writing and alphabet pronunciation practice:

<https://enjoylearningsanskrit.com/sanskrit-alphabet-tutor/>

For additional Sanskrit Grammar practice:

<https://ubcsanskrit.ca/>

Sanskrit Dictionary

1. <https://www.sanskrit-lexicon.uni-koeln.de/scans/MWScan/2020/web/webtc/indexcaller.php>
2. <http://dsal.uchicago.edu/dictionaries/apte/>

Note:

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a serious academic offence. The University upholds the principle that plagiarism in any form is unacceptable, and any student found plagiarising 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>

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BSTC7009 Sanskrit II

(6 credits)

Lecturer: Dr. Amrita Nanda

Email: nanda@hku.hk

Course Description

The main focus of the course is to guide students to read Buddhist Sanskrit passages and comprehend Sanskrit Buddhist literature. This course covers Sanskrit grammatical components together with exercises selected from Sanskrit Buddhist texts, which are not included in Readings in Sanskrit Buddhist Texts I. This course covers, parts of speech, nouns of different genders and their declensions, verbs and their conjugations, participles and their functions, compounds, different forms of past tense, future tense, locative and genitive absolutes, syntax and classification of sentences.

Prerequisite

BSTC7008 Sanskrit I or teacher's approval

Course Content

The course covers Present Participle, Future Passive Participle, Relative and Co-relatives, three forms of Past tense, Future Tense, Active and Passive voice, Imperative and Optative Moods and compounds, different nouns and their declensions, Class II, III, V, VII, VIII and IX verbs and their conjugations. All examples and exercises will be selected from Buddhist Sanskrit texts, all the grammar involved will be analyzed, and doctrines will be explained to them.

Expected Outcome

At the end of the course, students are expected to:

- Read and translate short Sanskrit passages, especially from Buddhist texts, with the aid of dictionaries
- Identify and explain key grammatical forms and structures taught in the course
- Analyze sentence constructions and recognize different verb conjugations and noun declensions
- Use Sanskrit dictionaries independently for research purposes
- Understand and interpret fundamental Buddhist doctrines as presented within Sanskrit texts

Teaching and Learning Method

Lectures, class discussions, and tutorials.

Assessment

50% coursework and 50% examination

Coursework 50%: This consists of three components:

- Class participation (10%), which is assessed based on regular attendance and active involvement in discussions. Active involvement includes activities such as asking questions, offering comments or insights during class, responding to questions posed by the instructor or classmates, participating in group work, and respectfully engaging in classroom dialogue.
- Mid-term Quiz 25 %, which will be conducted in the classroom. Duration 1 hour (open book).
- Weekly homework (15%), graded on accuracy and timely submission. Homework assignments will consist of short translation exercises, grammar practice, and brief reading comprehension tasks, based on material covered in class. Homework will be posted weekly on Moodle and should be submitted electronically through the platform by the stated deadline.

Examination (50%): Final examination at the end of the semester. Duration: three hours (Open book).

Lecture Schedule

Lecture 1 (Jan 21, 2027)

- Introduction to the possessive suffix *-in* ending nouns
- Future Passive Participles
- Introduction to Sanskrit Relatives and Correlatives

Lecture 2 (Jan 28, 2027)

- Introduction to Sanskrit Numerals
- Sanskrit Vocabularies
- Sanskrit-English transition exercises

Lecture 3 (Feb 4, 2027)

- Introduction to Possessive nouns ending in '*-mant*' and '*-vant*'
- Introduction to Future Tense
- Introduction to Sanskrit Compounds — *dvandva* and *tatpuruṣa*

Feb 11, 2027, no class (Lunar New Year)

Lecture 4 (Feb 18, 2027)

- Introduction to Sanskrit Infinitive

- Vocabularies
- Sanskrit-English transition exercises

Lecture 5 (Feb 25, 2027)

- Introduction to Sanskrit Demonstrative ‘that’
- Introduction to Sanskrit nouns ending in *-an*
- The Class II verbs
- Sanskrit-English transition exercises

Lecture 6 (Mar 4, 2027).

- Present participles
- Passive Voice
- *Karmadhāraya-samāsa* and *Avyayībhāva-samāsa*
- Reading selected Sanskrit passages

Mar 11, 2027, no class (Reading Week)

Lesson 7 (Mar 18, 2027)

- Mid-term Quiz
- Passive Voice
- Introduction to Sanskrit nouns ending in *-an*
- Class IX verbs

Lesson 8 (Mar 25, 2027)

- Sanskrit-English transition exercises
- The Imperative Mood
- Sanskrit Agent Nouns
- Conjugation of Class V verbs
- Vocabulary and Reading selected Sanskrit passages

Lesson 9 (Apr 1, 2027)

- Sanskrit-English transition exercises
- Conjugation of Class VIII verbs
- The Optative Mood
- Continuation of Sanskrit Compound — *Bahuvrīhi*

Lesson 10 (8, 2027)

- The Past Participle Active
- Conjugation of Class III verbs
- Aorist
- Sanskrit-English transition exercises

Lesson 11 (Apr 15, 2027)

- Class VII verbs
- The Perfect Tense
- Reading selected Sanskrit passages

Lesson 12 (Apr 22, 2027)

- Locative and Genitive Absolute constructions
- Reading selected Sanskrit passages

Lesson 13 (Apr 22, 2027)

- Reading selected Sanskrit passages
- Exam review

Note: The schedule provided is approximate and flexible. Adjustments may be made based on students' learning pace and interest.

Support options: Students are encouraged to seek help early if they have questions or encounter difficulties. Office hours will be available each week for individual consultation with the instructor. In addition, peer study groups may be formed to facilitate collaborative learning and mutual support. Extra help or tutorial sessions can be arranged if there is sufficient demand. Please refer to the course Moodle page or contact the instructor for details about office hours, study groups, and additional support opportunities.

Textbook

Dhammajoti, Kuala Lumpur (2015), *Reading Buddhist Sanskrit Texts: An Elementary Grammatical Guide (3rd edition)*, The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong Ltd. Hong Kong. (Those who want to have a copy can directly buy from the Buddha-Dharma centre of Hong Kong: <https://buddhadharma.co/Reading-Buddhist-Sanskrit-Texts-An-Elementary-Grammatical-Guide>.)

Handout: We will be selective in our use of the textbook. Therefore, handouts will be uploaded to Moodle before every class. Reading materials will be provided by the course instructor on Moodle before classes. In addition to the required readings, supplementary resources, and further readings will be made available to students who wish to deepen their understanding of the material. These may include recommended articles, digital libraries, reference websites, and extra passages for advanced practice.

Reference books

Ruppel, A.M. (2017). *The Cambridge Introduction to Sanskrit*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Speijer, J.S. (1998). *Sanskrit Syntax*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

Bucknell, R.S. (1994). *Sanskrit Manual: A quick-reference guide to the phonology and grammar of Classical Sanskrit*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

Thomas, Egenes (1994). *Introduction to Sanskrit: Part I. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.*

_____ (2000). *Introduction to Sanskrit: Part II. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.*

Whitney, Williams D. (1979). *The Roots, Verbs-forms and Primary Derivatives of the Sanskrit Language. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.*

_____ (2003). *Sanskrit Grammar. New York: Dover Publications.*

Goldman, Robert P., & Goldman, Sutherland, Sally J. (2011). *An Introduction to the Sanskrit Language. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.*

Monier, Williams (1979). *A Sanskrit English Dictionary. Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass Publishers.*

Some of these references will be available on the course Moodle. Students are not required to buy these books.

Online Resources

Basic Sanskrit Grammar online <http://www.learnsanskrit.org/grammar>

Online Sanskrit-English Dictionary <http://www.sanskrit-lexicon.uni-koeln.de/monier/>

Note:

Plagiarism: 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>

BSTC3040 Sanskrit language III

(6 credits)

Lecturer: Dr. Amrita Nanda

Email: nanda@hku.hk

Course Description

Sanskrit is one of the most ancient languages in the world and is studied by scholars of language and literature, religion, history and anthropology, and anyone who is interested in India's Buddhist cultural heritage. Sanskrit is the language not just of the religious literature of Hinduism and Buddhism but extends to the fields of philosophy, science, art, music, mathematics, architecture, and history, covering over three thousand years of development. Knowledge of Sanskrit grants access to an enormous body of Indian and Buddhist literature. The main focus of this course is the grammar of the language, covering parts of speech, nouns of different gender and their declensions, verbs and their conjugations, participles and their functions, syntax, and reading and translation of selected Sanskrit passages from the *Jātakamāla* and the *Mahāvastu*. Students will be able to read and comprehend simple

Sanskrit passages by the end of the course.

Prerequisite: Students enrolling in this course are expected to have completed BSTC7009 Sanskrit II or to possess an intermediate level knowledge of Sanskrit grammar and vocabulary. If you have not completed BSTC7009, but studied Sanskrit elsewhere, please write to the teacher for approval.

Course Content

This Advanced Sanskrit course mainly focuses on reading and translating selected Sanskrit passages from Buddhist texts. Passages will be selected mainly from the Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines (Aṣṭasāhasrikā prajñāpāramitā sūtra), the Bodhisattvabhūmi, and the Mahāvastu Avadāna. As the course proceeds, gradually and systematically, all grammatical features, vocabulary and the doctrines involved in the selected passages will be explained. Pedagogically, it balances the traditional practice of textual reception (reading and grammar) with language production.

The pedagogical rationale for this selection of readings is that these three texts represent three distinct genres of Buddhist Sanskrit literature. The Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra is one of the earliest Mahāyāna Buddhist texts. It forms the basis for the expansion and development of Prajñāpāramitā sūtra literature. It greatly influenced the development of Madhyāmaka and Yogācāra thought. Linguistically, it represents sūtra, or Buddhist canonical writing styles and techniques. The Bodhisattvabhūmi is a foundational treatise in Mahāyāna Buddhism detailing the training, practices, and progressive stages of a bodhisattva. Linguistically, it represents the Sanskrit Śāstra writing styles and techniques. Mahāvastu Avadāna is a canonical text of the Mahāsāṃghika Lokottaravāda school of Early Indian Buddhism. It contains a multi-life hagiography of the Buddha Shakyamuni and stories of Early Buddhist monks. The Mahāvastu is considered a primary source for the notion of a transcendent Buddha, common to all Mahāsāṃghika schools. Linguistically, it represents a hybrid of Buddhist Sanskrit.

Learning outcomes

1. Upon completing this course, students are expected to be able to read and comprehend Sanskrit texts.
2. Understand the development of Buddhist thoughts and civilization.
3. Understand the significance of Sanskrit Buddhist literature.
4. Students learn to examine and investigate Buddhist teachings from different perspectives.
5. Students will be able to chant and recite with a high degree of accuracy.

Teaching and Learning Method

Lectures and class discussions

Assessment

50% coursework and 50% examination

Coursework (50%): This consists of three components:

- (1) Class participation (10%), which is assessed based on regular attendance and active involvement in discussions.
- (2) Weekly homework (15%), graded on accuracy and timely submission.
- (3) Either a short essay based on selected passages discussed in the classroom or a

translation of a Buddhist Sanskrit text (25%), evaluated on the clarity of argument or translation accuracy, coherence, and proper use of grammar and vocabulary.

Examination (50%): Final examination at the end of the semester. (Open-book examination)

Lecture Schedule

Detailed Lecture outlines:

Lectures 1 (Sep 1, 2026)

- Introduction to the Course
- A Brief General Introduction to Sanskrit Buddhist Literature
- Reading selected passages from the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā prajñāpāramitā sūtram* with a guide to grammatical analysis and translation into English.

Lecture 2 (Sep 8, 2026)

- Continue reading and translating selected passages from the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā prajñāpāramitā sūtra with grammatical analysis*.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lecture 3 (Sep 15, 2026)

- Continue reading and translating selected passages from the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā prajñāpāramitā sūtra with grammatical analysis*.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lecture 4 (Sep 22, 2026)

- Continue reading and translating selected passages from the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā prajñāpāramitā sūtra with grammatical analysis*.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lectures 5 (Sep 29, 2026)

- Continue reading and translating selected passages from the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā prajñāpāramitā sūtra with grammatical analysis*.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lecture 6: (Oct 6, 2026)

- An introduction to the Bodhisattvabhūmi

- Reading selected passages from the Bodhisattvabhūmi with a guide to grammatical analysis and translation into English.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Oct 13 Reading week (no class)

Lecture 7: (Oct 20, 2026)

- Continue reading and translating selected passages from the Bodhisattvabhūmi with grammatical analysis.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lecture 8: (Oct 27, 2026)

- Continue reading and translating selected passages from the Bodhisattvabhūmi with grammatical analysis.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lecture 9: (Nov 3, 2026)

- Introduction to the Mahāvastu Avadāna
- Reading selected passages from the Mahāvastu Avadāna with a guide to grammatical analysis and translation into English.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lecture 10: (Nov 10, 2026)

- Continue reading and translating selected passages from the Mahāvastu Avadāna with grammatical analysis.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lecture 11: (Nov 17, 2026)

- Continue reading and translating selected passages from the Mahāvastu Avadāna with grammatical analysis.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lecture 12 (Nov 24, 2026)

- *Continue reading and translating selected passages from the Mahāvastu Avadāna with grammatical analysis.*
- *Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.*

- **Note:** This schedule is both approximate and flexible. We may deviate from it depending on the pace of students' comprehension and interest.

Reading materials will be provided by the course instructor on Moodle before classes. In addition to the required readings, supplementary resources and further readings will be made available to students who wish to deepen their understanding of the material. These may include recommended articles, digital libraries, reference websites, and extra passages for advanced practice.

Textbooks (only selected chapters)

Aṣṭasāhasrikā prajñāpāramitā (ed.) Vaidya, P. L. The Mithila Institute of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in Sanskrit Learning. 1960. (The first two chapters only).

Bodhisattvabhūmiḥ (ed.) Dutt, Nalinaksha. K. P. Jayaswal Research Institute. 1966. (Chapter 2 only).

Le Mahāvastu (ed). Par É. Senart. Paris Imprimerie Nationale. 1882 (Volume 1 only).

Reference books

Gary A. Tubb and Emery R. Boose (2007). *Scholastic Sanskrit: A Handbook for Students*. The American Institute of Buddhist Studies at Columbia University in the City of New York.

Bucknell, R.S. (1994). *Sanskrit Manual: A quick-reference guide to the phonology and grammar of Classical Sanskrit*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

Dhammajoti, Kuala Lumpur (2015). *Reading Buddhist Sanskrit Texts: An Elementary Grammatical Guide* (3rd edition). Hong Kong: The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong.

Edgerton Franklin. (1953). *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*. Vol. I & II. Indian Reprint, 2004.

Kale, Moreshwar R. (1884). *A Higher Sanskrit Grammar*. Indian Reprint 1977.

Monier, Williams (1979). *A Sanskrit English Dictionary*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

Speijer, J.S. (1998). *Sanskrit Syntax*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

Whitney, William D. (1885). *The Roots, Verb-forms and Primary Derivatives of the Sanskrit Language*. Reprinted by Motilal Banarsidass, 1973.

Online Resources

1. Digital Sanskrit Buddhist Canon

<https://www.dsbcproject.org/canon-text/browse-by-list/1>

2. GRETEL - Göttingen Register of Electronic Texts in Indian Languages

<https://gretel.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gretel.html>

BSTC3041 Sanskrit language IV
(6 credits)

Lecturer: Dr. Amrita Nanda

Email: nanda@hku.hk

Course Description

Sanskrit, being one of the most ancient languages, is studied by scholars of language, religion, literature, history, and anthropology, and anyone who is interested in Indian and Buddhist cultural heritage. It is one of the three languages in which Buddhist teachings are preserved. Indian Buddhist schools, such as Sarvāstivāda, Yogācāra, Mādhyamikā, and the various schools of Indian Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna, composed their texts in Sanskrit. Therefore, for students who intend to specialize in different aspects of Buddhism, a reading knowledge of Sanskrit is essential. Students of Buddhist philosophy and history will discover that knowledge of the Sanskrit language greatly enriches their studies. This course is designed for students who wish to read and comprehend Buddhist Sanskrit texts and employ Sanskrit Buddhist resources for their future research.

Prerequisite: BSTC3040 Sanskrit language III or teacher's approval

Course Content

This is an advanced Sanskrit course mainly focused on reading, translating and interpreting Buddhist Sanskrit commentarial literature. The course mainly concentrates on selected passages from Sthiramati's commentary on the *Triṃśikārikā of Vasubandhu* (Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣyaṃ) and the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (chapter four, Karmanirdeśa). These texts were chosen because they are foundational for understanding the major streams of Buddhist philosophical analysis in Sanskrit. Sthiramati's work offers detailed insight into Yogācāra thought, while the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya provides a comprehensive overview of Abhidharma doctrines. Studying these commentaries allows students to engage directly with the core ideas and interpretive traditions that have shaped Buddhist philosophy.

The pedagogical rationale for this selection is that both texts are doctrinally significant in Buddhist Philosophy. The Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣyaṃ is an important text for understanding Buddhist Yogācāra philosophy, and the Abhidharma-kōśabhāṣyaṃ is one of the most important texts in understanding Abhidharma philosophy. It is often described as a compendium of Buddhist philosophy; its influence is visible in the development of many Buddhist schools of thought. In terms of language production, both texts represent the Sanskrit commentarial styles of presentation.

Expected Learning Outcome

1. At the end of this course, students are expected to be able to read and comprehend classical Sanskrit Buddhist literature.
2. Students learn to examine and investigate Buddhist teachings from different perspectives.
3. Understand the development of Buddhist thoughts.
4. Students can utilize Sanskrit Buddhist sources for their future research.

Teaching and Learning Method

Lectures and class discussions

Assessment

50% coursework and 50% examination

Coursework (50%): This consists of three components:

- (1) Class participation (10%), which is assessed based on regular attendance and active involvement in discussions.
- (2) Weekly homework (15%), graded on accuracy and timely submission.
- (3) Either a short essay based on selected passages discussed in the classroom or a translation of a Buddhist Sanskrit text (25%), evaluated on the clarity of argument or translation accuracy, coherence, and proper use of grammar and vocabulary.

Examination (50%): Final examination at the end of the semester. (Open-book examination)

Detailed Lecture outlines:

Lectures 1 (Jan 19, 2027)

- Introduction to the Course
- A Brief General Introduction to *Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣyaṃ*
- Reading selected passages from the *Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣyaṃ* with a guide to grammatical analysis and translation into English.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lecture 2 (Jan 26, 2027)

- Continue reading selected passages from the *Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣyaṃ* with a guide to grammatical analysis and translation into English.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lecture 3 (Feb 2, 2027)

- Continue reading selected passages from the *Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣyaṃ* with a guide to grammatical analysis and translation into English.

- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Feb 9, 2027, no class for Lunar New Year

Lecture 4 (Feb 16, 2027)

- Continue reading selected passages from the *Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣyaṃ* with a guide to grammatical analysis and translation into English.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lecture 5 (Feb 23, 2027)

- Continue reading selected passages from the *Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣyaṃ* with a guide to grammatical analysis and translation into English.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lecture 6 (Mar 2, 2027)

- Continue reading selected passages from the *Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣyaṃ* with a guide to grammatical analysis and translation into English.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Mar 9, 2027, no class (Reading week)

Mar 16, 2027, no class (University holiday)

Lecture 7 (Mar 23, 2027)

- Reading selected passages from the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (chapter 4) with a guide to grammatical analysis and translation into English.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lecture 8 (Mar 30, 2027)

- Continue reading selected passages from the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (chapter 4) with a guide to grammatical analysis and translation into English.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lecture 9 (Apr 6, 2027)

- Continue reading selected passages from the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (chapter 4) with a guide to grammatical analysis and translation into English.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lectures 10 (Apr 13, 2027)

- Continue reading selected passages from the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (chapter 4) with a guide to grammatical analysis and translation into English.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lecture 11 (Apr 20, 2027)

- Continue reading selected passages from the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (chapter 4) with a guide to grammatical analysis and translation into English.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lecture 12 (Apr 27, 2027)

- Continue reading selected passages from the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (chapter 4) with a guide to grammatical analysis and translation into English.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Note: This schedule is both approximate and flexible. We may deviate from it depending on students' comprehension and interest.

Reading materials will be provided by the course instructor on Moodle before classes. In addition to the required readings, supplementary resources and further readings will be made available to students who wish to deepen their understanding of the material. These may include recommended articles, digital libraries, reference websites, and extra passages for advanced practice.

Textbooks (only selected chapters).

Buescher, Hartmut (2007) *Sthimamati's Trīmśikāvijñaptibhāṣya: Critical Edition of the Sanskrit Texts and its Tibetan Translation*. Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, ÖAW,

Vasubandhu: Abhidharmakosa-bhāṣya (rev. 2nd ed.) Pradhan P. Patna: K.P. Jayaswal Research Centre, 1975. (chapter four; karmanirdeśa only).

Reference books

Gary A. Tubb and Emery R. Boose (2007). *Scholastic Sanskrit: A Handbook for Students*. The American Institute of Buddhist Studies at Columbia University in the City of New York.

Bucknell, R.S. (1994). *Sanskrit Manual: A quick-reference guide to the phonology and grammar of Classical Sanskrit*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

Dhammajoti, Kuala Lumpur (2015). *Reading Buddhist Sanskrit Texts: An Elementary*

Grammatical Guide (3rd edition). Hong Kong: The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong.

Edgertonm Franklin. (1953). *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*. Vol. I & II. Indian Reprint, 2004.

Kale, Moreshwar R. (1884). *A Higher Sanskrit Grammar*. Indian Reprint 1977.

Monier, Williams (1979). *A Sanskrit English Dictionary*. Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass Publishers.

Speijer, J.S. (1998). *Sanskrit Syntax*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

Whitney, William D. (1885). *The Roots, Verb-forms and Primary Derivatives of the Sanskrit Language*. Reprinted by Motilal Banarsidass, 1973.

Online Resources

1. Digital Sanskrit Buddhist Canon

<https://www.dsbcproject.org/canon-text/browse-by-list/1>

2. GRETEL - Göttingen Register of Electronic Texts in Indian Languages

<https://gretel.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gretel.html>

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BSTC7010 Classical Tibetan I (6 credits)

Lecturer: Dr. Zhou Jiachairang

Email: lobsang@hku.hk

Course Description

Classical Tibetan is one of Asia's major literary languages and a vital medium of Tibetan Buddhism, used across a vast cultural sphere extending from the Tibetan Plateau and the Himalayan regions (Bhutan, Nepal, Sikkim, Ladakh, and northern Pakistan) to Mongolia and parts of southern Russia (Kalmykia, Tuva, and Buryatia). For centuries it has served in the transmission and interpretation of both exoteric and esoteric Buddhist teachings, preserving not only an immense corpus of translated Indian Buddhist literature but also a vast body of indigenous Tibetan scholarship and commentary. This course provides a systematic introduction to Classical Tibetan, covering its script, transliteration, grammar, syntax, particles, and core nominal and verbal constructions. No prior knowledge of the language is required to enroll in this course.

Course Learning Outcome

By the end of the course, the students will be able to read elementary Classical Tibetan, identify and analyze fundamental grammatical structures, and translate simple sentences and brief Buddhist texts into English.

Course Assessment:

Class participation: 10%

Weekly Exercise and Translation: 10%

Quiz: 30%

Final Exam: 50%

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Grade Expectations in Faculty of Arts:

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

Plagiarism: 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 outlines (Weekly lecture materials and lesson plan will be made available on Moodle)

Lesson 1	Course introduction Historical context & literary styles Tibetan alphabet (vowels and consonants) Pronunciation
Lesson 2	Writing Tibetan script Transliteration (Wylie system) Prefixes, Suffixes, and post-suffixes
Lesson 3	Superscripts and subscripts Syllable structure Transliteration practice
Lesson 4	Nouns and adjectives Genitive particle Noun phrase structure Numbers (cardinal and ordinal)

Lesson 5	Copula and its negation Word order (SOV) Compound words Demonstratives Pronouns Conjunctive particles
Lesson 6	Introduction to Verbs (Past, Present, Future, Imperative) The Agentive particles Terminative particles
Lesson 7	Transitive vs. Intransitive Adverbs
Lesson 8	La particles (Part I): Ablative Objective case Locative Dative Adverbs
Lesson 9	La particles (Part II): Time Direction Purpose functions Manner Beneficiary
Lesson 10	Conditional, Concessive, and Causal particles Interrogative particles Interrogative pronouns
Lesson 11	Gerundial particles Emphatic and possessive particles
Lesson 12	Relative pronouns

	Nominal and diminutive particles
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References

Textbook list

1. Bialek, Joanna. 2021. *A Textbook in Classical Tibetan*. London: Taylor & Francis.
2. Hodge, Stephen 2019. *An Introduction to Classical Tibetan*. Bangkok: Orchid Press.
3. Rockwell, John, Jr. 1991. *A Primer for Classical Literary Tibetan*. Vol. 1, The Grammar. Revised ed. Pinecliffe, CO: Samadhi Publishing.

I Dictionaries / Glossaries

1. Das, Sarat Chandra. 1970. *A Tibetan-English Dictionary with Sanskrit Synonyms*. Reprint. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
2. Hackett, Paul G. 2003. *A Tibetan Verb Lexicon: Verbs, Classes, and Syntactic Frames*. Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications.
3. Hopkins, Jeffrey. 2011. *Uma Institute Tibetan-Sanskrit-English Dictionary*. Charlottesville, VA: UMA Institute for Tibetan Studies.
4. Jäschke, Heinrich August. 1980. *A Tibetan-English Dictionary, with Special Reference to the Prevailing Dialects*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1881. Reprint, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1980.
5. Nagano, Yasuhiko. 1997. *A Morphological Index of Classical Tibetan*. Tokyo: Seishido.
6. Rikey, Thubten and Andrew Ruskin. 1992. *A Manual of Key Buddhist Terms: a Categorization of Buddhist Terminology with Commentary by Lotsawa Kaba Paltseg*. Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives.
7. Thubten Nyima (Alak Zenkar Rinpoche) & Dr. Gyurme Dorje. *An Encyclopaedic Tibetan-English Dictionary*. Volume 1. The Nationalities Publishing House & The School of Oriental and African Studies.
8. Tsepak Rigzin. 2008. *Tibetan English Dictionary of Buddhist terminology* (Revised and Enlarged Edition). Reprint. Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives.

II Grammar

1. Beyer, Stephen. 1992. *The Classical Tibetan Language*. NY: State University of New York Press
2. Hannah, Herbert Bruce. 1973. *A Grammar of the Tibetan Language, Literary and Colloquial*. Reprint. Delhi: Cosmo Publications.
3. Jäschke, H. A. 1989. *Tibetan Grammar*. Reprint. Delhi: Sri Sat Guru Publications.

4. Miller, Roy Andrew. 1993. *Prolegomena to the first two Tibetan Grammatical treatises*. Vienna: Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde 30.
5. Preston, Craig. *How to Read Classical Tibetan*, Vol. I and II. Boston & London: Snow Lion Publications.
6. Tournadre, Nicolas. 2003. *Manual of Standard Tibetan*. Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications.
7. Wilson, Joe B. 1992. *Translating Buddhism from Tibetan: An Introduction to the Tibetan Literary Language and the Translation of Buddhist Texts from Tibetan*. Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications.

III. Tibetan Script and Translation

1. Cabezón, José Ignacio, and Roger Jackson. 1996. *Tibetan Literature: Studies in Genre*. New York: Snow Lion Publications.
2. Halkias, Georgios T. 2004. "Tibetan Buddhism Registered: An Imperial Catalogue from the Palace Temple of 'Phang-thang." *The Eastern Buddhist* 36 (1–2): 46–105.
3. ———. 2014. "Translating the Foreign into the Local." *Translation and Global Asia*. Chinese University Press, 143–166.
4. Laufer, Berthold. 1918. "Origin of Tibetan Writing." *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 38: 34–46.
5. Raine, Roberta. 2014. "'Translation Archaeology' in Practice: Researching the History of Buddhist Translation Tibet." *Meta: Journal des traducteurs / Meta: Translators' Journal* 59 (2): 278–296.
6. Scherrer-Schaub, Cristina. 1999. "Translation, Transmission, Tradition: Suggestions from Ninth-Century Tibet." *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 27 (1–2): 67–77.
7. Van der Kuijp, Leonard. 1996. "The Tibetan Script and Derivatives." In *The World's Writing Systems*, edited by Peter T. Daniels and William Bright, 431–441. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
8. van Schaik, Sam. 2011. "A New Look at the Tibetan Invention of Writing." In *New Studies of the Old Tibetan Documents: Philology, History and Religion*, edited by Yoshiro Imaeda, Matthew T. Kapstein, and Tsuguhito Takeuchi, 45–96. Tokyo: Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa.
9. ———. 2012. "The Origin of the Headless Script (*dbu med*) in Tibet." In *New Studies of the Old Tibetan Documents: Philology, History and Religion*, edited by Yoshiro Imaeda, Matthew T. Kapstein, and Tsuguhito Takeuchi, 411–446. Tokyo: Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa.
10. Verhagen, Pieter Cornelis. 2000. *A History of Sanskrit Grammatical Literature in Tibet*. Vol. 2, *Assimilation into Indigenous Scholarship*. Leiden: Brill.
11. Wylie, Turrell. 1959. "A Standard System of Tibetan Transcription." *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 22: 261–267.

III Other Online Sources

Online Dictionaries

1. Tibetan-English-Sanskrit Dictionary: <https://dictionary.christian-steinert.de/>
2. The Tibetan and Himalayan Library: <https://ttt.thlib.org/>
3. Sambhota Dictionary Search: <https://dict.dharma-treasure.org/>

Tibetan Romanization

1. THL Wylie transliteration: <https://thlib.org/terms/#/terms/transliterate>
2. THL Tibetan Phonetics: <https://thlib.org/terms/#/terms/phonetics>

Tibetan Letters Pronunciation

1. https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=2.%09Tibetan+Consonants+and+their+Sounds+

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BSTC7011 Classical Tibetan II (6 credits)

Lecturer: Dr. Zhou Jiaccairang

Email: lobsang@hku.hk

Course Description

Building upon a foundational knowledge of Classical Tibetan, this course provides systematic instruction in advanced grammar and syntax. Topics include relative clauses, nominalization, verbal constructions, auxiliary particles, case relations, and other features characteristic of Classical Tibetan literature. Through the guided reading and translation of selected prose and verse texts, students will apply these concepts directly to primary sources and develop greater proficiency in the interpretation and translation of Classical Tibetan writings.

Prerequisite

Students must have successfully completed BSTC7010 Classical Tibetan I or obtained permission from the instructor prior to enrolment.

Course Learning Outcome

At the end of the course, the students are expected to analyze and translate selected passages, demonstrating a command of complex syntax, classical grammar, and specialized Buddhist vocabulary.

Course Assessment

10% Class participation

20% Weekly homework (exercises and translation)

20% Quiz

50% Final Examination

Grade Expectations in Faculty of Arts:

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

Plagiarism: 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 outline (Weekly lecture materials and lesson plan will be made available on Moodle)

Lesson 1	Auxiliary verbs Comparatives and superlatives
Lesson 2	Nominalization Relative clauses
Lesson 3	Analytical verb constructions Case converbs
Lesson 4	Direct speech Indirect speech
Lesson 5	Modal verbs Causative verbs
Lesson 6	Passive Possessive attributes Complex attributes
Lesson 7	Impersonal clauses Light verbs
Lesson 8	Postpositions and postpositional phrases Indefinite pronouns
Lesson 9	Idioms Double case particles
Lesson 10	Auxiliary particles Purposive particles

	Concessive auxiliary
Lesson 11	Determiners Reduplications Numerals
Lesson 12	Review of previous lessons Reading and Translation

References

Textbook list

1. Bialek, Joanna. 2021. *A Textbook in Classical Tibetan*. London: Taylor & Francis.
2. Hodge, Stephen 2019. *An Introduction to Classical Tibetan*. Bangkok: Orchid Press.
3. Rockwell, John, Jr. 1991. *A Primer for Classical Literary Tibetan*. Vol. 1, The Grammar. Revised ed. Pinecliffe, CO: Samadhi Publishing.

I Dictionaries / Glossaries

1. Das, Sarat Chandra. 1970. *A Tibetan-English Dictionary with Sanskrit Synonyms*. Reprint. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
2. Hackett, Paul G. 2003. *A Tibetan Verb Lexicon: Verbs, Classes, and Syntactic Frames*. Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications.
3. Hopkins, Jeffrey. 2011. *Uma Institute Tibetan-Sanskrit-English Dictionary*. Charlottesville, VA: UMA Institute for Tibetan Studies.
4. Jäschke, Heinrich August. 1980. *A Tibetan-English Dictionary, with Special Reference to the Prevailing Dialects*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1881. Reprint, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1980.
5. Nagano, Yasuhiko. 1997. *A Morphological Index of Classical Tibetan*. Tokyo: Seishido.
6. Rikey, Thubten and Andrew Ruskin. 1992. *A Manual of Key Buddhist Terms: a Categorization of Buddhist Terminology with Commentary by Lotsawa Kaba Paltseg*. Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives.
7. Thubten Nyima (Alak Zenkar Rinpoche) & Dr. Gyurme Dorje. *An Encyclopaedic Tibetan-English Dictionary*. Volume 1. The Nationalities Publishing House & The School of Oriental and African Studies.
8. Tsepak Rigzin. 2008. *Tibetan English Dictionary of Buddhist terminology* (Revised and Enlarged Edition). Reprint. Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives.

II Grammar

1. Beyer, Stephen. 1992. *The Classical Tibetan Language*. NY: State University of New York Press
2. Hannah, Herbert Bruce. 1973. *A Grammar of the Tibetan Language, Literary and Colloquial*. Reprint. Delhi: Cosmo Publications.

3. Jäschke, H. A. 1989. *Tibetan Grammar*. Reprint. Delhi: Sri Sat Guru Publications.
4. Miller, Roy Andrew. 1993. *Prolegomena to the first two Tibetan Grammatical treatises*. Vienna: Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde 30.
5. Preston, Craig. *How to Read Classical Tibetan*, Vol. I and II. Boston & London: Snow Lion Publications.
6. Tournadre, Nicolas. 2003. *Manual of Standard Tibetan*. Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications.
7. Wilson, Joe B. 1992. *Translating Buddhism from Tibetan: An Introduction to the Tibetan Literary Language and the Translation of Buddhist Texts from Tibetan*. Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications.

III. Tibetan Script and Translation

1. Cabezón, José Ignacio, and Roger Jackson. 1996. *Tibetan Literature: Studies in Genre*. New York: Snow Lion Publications.
2. Halkias, Georgios T. 2004. "Tibetan Buddhism Registered: An Imperial Catalogue from the Palace Temple of 'Phang-thang." *The Eastern Buddhist* 36 (1–2): 46–105.
3. ———. 2014. "Translating the Foreign into the Local." *Translation and Global Asia*. Chinese University Press, 143–166.
4. Laufer, Berthold. 1918. "Origin of Tibetan Writing." *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 38: 34–46.
5. Raine, Roberta. 2014. "'Translation Archaeology' in Practice: Researching the History of Buddhist Translation Tibet." *Meta: Journal des traducteurs / Meta: Translators' Journal* 59 (2): 278–296.
6. Scherrer-Schaub, Cristina. 1999. "Translation, Transmission, Tradition: Suggestions from Ninth-Century Tibet." *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 27 (1–2): 67–77.
7. Van der Kuijp, Leonard. 1996. "The Tibetan Script and Derivatives." In *The World's Writing Systems*, edited by Peter T. Daniels and William Bright, 431–441. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
8. van Schaik, Sam. 2011. "A New Look at the Tibetan Invention of Writing." In *New Studies of the Old Tibetan Documents: Philology, History and Religion*, edited by Yoshiro Imaeda, Matthew T. Kapstein, and Tsuguhito Takeuchi, 45–96. Tokyo: Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa.
9. ———. 2012. "The Origin of the Headless Script (*dbu med*) in Tibet." In *New Studies of the Old Tibetan Documents: Philology, History and Religion*, edited by Yoshiro Imaeda, Matthew T. Kapstein, and Tsuguhito Takeuchi, 411–446. Tokyo: Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa.
10. Verhagen, Pieter Cornelis. 2000. *A History of Sanskrit Grammatical Literature in Tibet*. Vol. 2, *Assimilation into Indigenous Scholarship*. Leiden: Brill.
11. Wylie, Turrell. 1959. "A Standard System of Tibetan Transcription." *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 22: 261–267.

III Other Online Sources

Online Dictionaries

1. Tibetan-English-Sanskrit Dictionary: <https://dictionary.christian-steinert.de/>
2. The Tibetan and Himalayan Library: <https://ttt.thlib.org/>
3. Sambhota Dictionary Search: <https://dict.dharma-treasure.org/>

Tibetan Romanization

1. THL [Wylie transliteration](https://thlib.org/terms/#/terms/transliterate): <https://thlib.org/terms/#/terms/transliterate>
2. THL Tibetan Phonetics: <https://thlib.org/terms/#/terms/phonetics>

Tibetan Letters Pronunciation

1. https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=2.%09Tibetan+Consonants+and+their+Sounds+

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BSTC7112 Buddhist Ethics

(6 credits)

Below is the course outline in 2025-26 for reference. For the latest version, please refer to the course moodle.

Lecturer: Prof. Catherine Hardie

Email: cehardie@hku.hk

Course Description

Ethics is the foundation of the Buddhist path, and a dimension of human life which Buddhism accords critical importance. This course seeks to equip students with an understanding of the concepts and teachings that may be said to comprise a foundational Buddhist ethical repertoire. It also seeks to bring these concepts and teachings into dialogue with topical real-life ethical issues that include animals rights and the environment, gender equality, abortion, suicide and euthanasia, violence, economics, and the AI-human relationship. To this end, the course begins by exploring the nature of Buddhist ethics, the Buddhist view of good and bad, the Buddhist view of an ethically meaningful life, role of ethical training in the pursuit of Buddhist spiritual goal, and Buddhist social ethics. As we progress to specific applied topics, we explore whether Buddhism has a defined ethical stance on these issues. If not, we consider how to draw on Buddhist ethical resources to develop a position and examine how Buddhist ethical teachings can enrich our understanding of these topics. In doing so, students will gain practical insights into applying Buddhist ethical principles to navigate complex ethical dilemmas in contemporary society.

Course Objectives

1. To understand the foundational ethical teachings of Buddhism;
2. To be able to apply the highlighted Buddhist ethical doctrines in discussions of social and ethical issues confronting modern society;
3. To nurture an awareness of the relevance of Buddhism to contemporary society
4. To practice critical skills and reflective inquiry about matters of personal and public importance.

Course Learning Outcomes

1. Gain an awareness of ethical issues and act according to one's better judgement.
2. Define key concepts and ideals that feature in Buddhist discussions of ethics and critically analyse contemporary ethical issues from a Buddhist perspective.
3. Identify the major concerns and arguments in a range of ethical debates within Buddhist communities of different traditions.
4. Evaluate a range of ethical debates in a well-balanced and scholarly manner by drawing on evidence from different sources in support of arguments.
5. Produce a clearly structured and well-evidenced argument in essay form.

Required Reading

Cozort, Daniel and Shields, James Mark (eds.) 2018. *Oxford Handbook of Buddhist Ethics*. Oxford University Press (E-copy available in library) (Abbreviated below as 'OHBE')

Keown, Damien. 2022. *Buddhism and Contemporary Society*. Centre of Buddhist Studies, University of Hong Kong (Abbreviated at 'DK1') (E-copy is posted on Moodle page)

Keown, Damien. 2000. *Contemporary Buddhist Ethics*. Curzon. (E-copy is available in our library) (Abbreviated below as 'DK2')

Harvey, Peter. 2012. *An Introduction to Buddhist Ethics: Foundations, Values and Issues*, Cambridge University Press. (E-copy is available in our library) (Abbreviated below as 'PH')

Lecture Schedule

Week	Content	Reading
Week 1	Introduction to Buddhist Ethics	PH pp. 1-7, 8-11.
Week 2	Common foundations of Buddhist ethics	PH pp. 11-31, 60-122. Keown, Damien, 'Origins of Buddhist Ethics' pp. 602-610

Week 3	Mahāyāna ethics	PH pp. 123-149
Week 4	Buddhism social ethics & socially engaged Buddhism	King, Sallie B. King, 'The Ethics of Engaged Buddhism in Asia' in <i>The Oxford Handbook of Ethics</i> . 2018. Queen, Christopher, 'The Ethics of Engaged Buddhism in the West' in <i>The Oxford Handbook of Ethics</i> . 2018. DK (2022) pp. 19-31
Week 5	Buddhism and animal ethics	PH pp. 150-190 Optional: DK (2022) 'Chapter Seven: Animal' pp. 103-117
Week 6	Ecological ethics in Buddhism	DK (2022) 'Chapter Eight: Ecology' pp. 121-132 Optional: PH pp. 150-190
Week 7	Buddhism and gender equality Short response essay due	PH pp 353-409.
Week 8	Buddhist perspectives on love, marriage, and sexuality	DK (2022) 'Chapter Nine: Sex and Gender,' pp. 137-154. PH pp. 97-103
Week 9	Buddhist perspectives on suicide and euthanasia	PH, pp. 286-310
Week 10	Buddhist economic ethics	DK (2022) 'Chapter Five: Economics', pp. 69-86
Week 11	Buddhist ethics and transhumanism	Hongladarom, Soraj. 2015. "A Buddhist Perspective on Human Enhancement and Extension of Human Lifespan." <i>Prajñā Vihāra</i> 16 (1).

Week 12	Group presentations	
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Assessment: 100% coursework

Components	Ratio	Submission deadline
Class attendance and participation	15%	
Response Essay (800 words)	20%	24.10.2025
Group project	25%	28.11.2025
Longer essay (1500-2000 words)	40%	05.12.2025

Plagiarism

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>

Grading Criteria

Correct understanding of the material in the lectures is essential. Students are expected to show critical and research elements in their essays. Further information will be provided in the lectures. Grading rubrics will be provided for each assessment task.

AI Use Policy

Students may use generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT) for idea generation, writing support, or research assistance **only if such use is explicitly permitted for a specific assignment**. Any use of AI tools must be transparent and properly acknowledged in submitted work (e.g., “I used ChatGPT to help brainstorm counterarguments”). Students remain fully responsible for the content, accuracy, and academic integrity of their work. Misuse of AI, including unacknowledged or deceptive use, will be treated as academic misconduct.

Further Readings on Individual Lectures

Week 1: Introduction to Buddhist ethics

Carter, John Ross. 2005. ‘Buddhist Ethics?’ Chapter 29 of, Edited by William Schweiker. Published by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

Clayton, Barbra. 2011. “Buddhist Ethics.” In *The Oxford Handbook of World Philosophy*. Edited by Jay L. Garfield and William Edelglass, 279–294. New York: Oxford University Press.

Davis, Gordon. 2013. ‘Moral Realism and Anti-realism outside the West: A Meta-ethical turn in Buddhist Ethics’. *Comparative Philosophy*, Volume 4-2: 24-53.

Edelglass, William. 2013. ‘Buddhist Ethics and Western Moral Philosophy.’ In *A Companion to Buddhist Philosophy*, ed. Steven M. Emmanuel. West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons, 476–490.

Week 2: Common foundations of Buddhist ethics

- Kotyk, Jeffrey. 2018. 'Astrological Determinism in Indian Buddhism'. *Journal of International Association of Buddhist Studies*, 41, pp. 145-167.
- Krishan, Yuvraj. 1997. *The Doctrine of Karma: Its Origin and Development in Brāhmaṇical, Buddhist, and Jaina Traditions*, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.
- McDermott, James Paul. 2017. *Development in the early Buddhist concept of kamma/karma*. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd.
- McRae, Emily. 2018. 'The Psychology of Moral Judgement and Perception in Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Ethics.' In *The Oxford Handbook of Buddhist Ethics*, eds. Daniel Cozort and James Mark Shields. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 335–358.

Week 3: Mahāyāna ethics

- Clayton, Barbra. 2006. *Moral theory in Śāntideva's Śikṣāsamuccaya: cultivating the fruits of virtue*. London & New York : Routledge.
- Edelglass, William. 2017. 'Mindfulness and Moral Transformation: Awakening to Others in Śāntideva's Ethics.' In *The Bloomsbury Research Handbook of Indian Ethics*, ed. Shyam Ranganathan. London: Bloomsbury, 225–248.
- Garfield, Jay. 2010. 'What is it like to be a Bodhisattva? Moral Phenomenology in Śāntideva's Bodhicaryāvatāra.' *The Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 33(1–2), 333–357.
- Goodman, Charles. 2016b. "From Madhyamaka to Consequentialism," in *The Cowherds, Moonpaths: Ethics and Emptiness*, New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 141–158.
- Jones, Charles, B. 2003. 'Foundations of Ethics of Practice in Chinese Pure Land Buddhism', *Journal of Buddhist Ethics*, 10, pp. 1-20.
- Loori, John Daido. 1996. *The Heart of Being: Moral and Ethical Teachings of Zen Buddhism*. Tuttle Publishing.
- Nichtern, Ethan. 2018. *The Dharma of The Princess Bride: What the Coolest Fairy Tale of Our Time Can Teach Us About Buddhism and Relationships*. North Point Press.

Week 4: Buddhist social ethics and socially engaged Buddhism

- Bahl, Vinay. 2004. "Terminology, History and Debate: 'Caste' Formation or 'Class' Formation." In *Journal of Historical Sociology*, Vol. 17, No. 2-3, 265-318.
- Bhikkhu, Bodhi. 2016. *The Buddha's Teachings on Social and Communal Harmony: An Anthology of Discourses from the Pali Canon* (The Teachings of the Buddha), Wisdom Publications.
- Dumont, Louis. 1970. *Homo Hierarchicus: The Caste System and its Implications*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 33-64.
- Ellis, Gabriel. 2019. 'Early Buddhism and Caste.' In *Yearbook of Oriental Studies*, 72.1: 55– 71.
- Jones, Ken. 1989. *The Social Face of Buddhism: An Approach to Political and Social Activism*. Wisdom Publications.
- King, Sallie B. 1996. *Socially Engaged Buddhism*, State University Press of New York.
- King, Sallie B. 2017. "The Problems and Promise of Karma from an Engaged Buddhist Perspective." In *A Mirror Is for Reflection: Understanding Buddhist Ethics*, ed. Jake Davis. New York: Oxford University Press, 166-182.

- King, Sallie B. 2018. 'The Ethics of Engaged Buddhism in Asia' in *The Oxford Handbook of Ethics*. Kovan, Martin. 2019. 'Buddhism and Capital Punishment: A Revisitation', *Journal of Buddhist Ethics*, 26, pp. 55-91.
- Krishan, Y. 1986. 'Buddhism and the Caste System', *Journal of International Association of Buddhist Studies*, 9:1, pp. 71-83.
- Queen, Christopher et.al., 2003. *Action Dharma: New Studies in Engaged Buddhism*, London: Routledge Curzon.
- Omvedt, Gail. 2003. *Buddhism in India: Challenging Brahmanism and Caste*. New Delhi: Sage Publications.
- Silva, Kalinga Tudor. 2017. "Buddhism, Social Justice and Caste: Reflections on Buddhist Engagement with Caste in India and Sri Lanka." In *Society and Culture in South Asia*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 220-232.

Week 5: Buddhism and animal ethics

- Alsdorf, Ludwig. 2010. *The History of Vegetarianism and Cow-Veneration in India*. Translated from the German by Bal Patil. Revised by Nichola Hayton. London and New York: Routledge.
- Chapple, Christopher. 1986. 'Noninjury to Animals: Jaina and Buddhist Perspectives,' *Animal Sacrifices – religious Perspectives on the Use of Animals in Science*, ed. Tom Regan, Temple University Press, Philadelphia.
- Chapple, Christopher Key. 2018. 'Animal Ethics', *Sophia*, 57:69–83.
- Feddema, J.P. (Hans). 1995. The "Lesser" Violence of Animal sacrifice: A Somewhat Hidden and Overlooked (Ignored?) Reality in Sinhala Buddhism, *Anthropos*, Bd. 90, H. 1/3, pp. 133- 148.
- Finnigan, Bronwyn. 2017. 'Buddhism and animal ethics', *Philosophy Compass*, 12 <https://doi.org/10.1111/phc3.12424>.
- Gayley, Holly. 2017. 'The Compassionate Treatment of Animals: A Contemporary Buddhist Approach in Eastern Tibet'. *Journal of Religious Ethics*, 45.1:29–57.
- James, Simon P. 2006. 'Buddhism and the Ethics of Species Conservation'. *Environmental Values* 15: 85–97.
- Phelps, Norm. 2004. *The Great Compassion: Buddhism and Animal Rights*, Lantern Books, New York.
- Stewart, James John. 2012. 'Nourishing the Dhamma: Vegetarianism and Animal Nonviolence in Theravāda Buddhism with a special focus on Sinhala Buddhism'. PhD dissertation, University of Tasmania.
- Stewart, James John. 2015. *Vegetarianism and Animal Ethics in Contemporary Buddhism*. Routledge.
- Waley, Arthur. 1932. 'Did the Buddha die of eating pork? with a note on Buddha image,' *Melanges Chinois ed boudhiques*, Julliet, pp. 343-354.
- Wasson, G & O'Flaherty, W. D. 1982. 'The Last Meal of the Buddha', *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 102, no. 4, pp. 591–603.

Week 6: Environmental ethics in Buddhism

- Batchelor, Martine and Brown, Kerry eds. 1992. *Buddhism and Ecology*. New York, N.Y.:

Cassell.

Badiner, Allan Hunt. ed. 1990. *Dharma Gaia: A Harvest of Essays in Buddhism and Ecology*. Berkeley, Calif.: Parallax Press.

Bhikkhu, Analayo. 2019. *Mindfully Facing Climate Change*, Barre: Barre Center for Buddhist Studies.

Findly, Ellison Banks. 2002. 'Borderline Beings: Plant Possibilities in Early Buddhism', *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 122, No. 2, (ed. Joel P. Brereton. *Indic and Iranian Studies in Honor of Stanley Insler on His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*), pp. 252-263.

Harris, Ian. 1994. 'Causation and Telos: The Problem of Buddhist Environmental Ethics', *The Journal of Buddhist Ethics*, vol. 1, pp. 45-56.

Harris, Ian. 1991. "How Environmentalist Is Buddhism?" *Religion* 21:2, pp. 101-114.

Holder, John J. 2007. 'A suffering (but not irreparable) nature: environmental ethics from the perspective of early Buddhism'. *Contemporary Buddhism*, 8:2, 113-130.

Kapleau, Roshi Philip. 1981. *To Cherish All Life – A Buddhist View of Animal Slaughter and Meat Eating*, The Corporate Body of the Buddha Dharma Education Association, Taipei.

Kaza, Stephanie and Kraft, Kenneth. eds. 2000. *Dharma Rain: Sources of Buddhist Environmentalism*. Boston, Mass.: Shambhala Publications.

Payne Richard. ed. 2010. *How Much is Enough?: Buddhism, Consumerism, and the Human Environment*, Wisdom Publications.

Ruegg, Seyfort, D. 1980. 'Ahimsa and Vegetarianism in the History of Buddhism,' *Buddhist Studies in Honour of Walpola Rahula*, Gordon Fraser; Vimamsa, London and Sri Lanka.

Schmithausen, Lambert. 1997. 'The Early Buddhist Tradition and Ecological Ethics', *The Journal of Buddhist Ethics*, vol. 4, pp. 1-74.

Schmithausen, Lambert. *Buddhism and Nature*. Tokyo, 1991.

Swearer, Donald K. 2006, 'An Assessment of Buddhist Eco-Philosophy', *The Harvard theological Review*, vol. 99, no. 2, pp. 123-137.

Tucker, Mary Evelyn and Duncan Ryuken Williams (eds), 1997. *Buddhism and Ecology: The Interconnection of Dharma and Deeds*, Harvard University Press.

Week 7: Buddhism and gender equality

Bhikkhu, Analayo. 2014. "Karma and Female Birth," *Journal Buddhist Ethics* 21, 109–153.

Bhikkhu, Analayo. 2009. 'The Bahudhātuka-sutta and its Parallels on Women's Inabilities'. *Journal Buddhist Ethics* 16, pp. 136-190.

Cabezón, José Ignacio. 2017. *Sexuality in Classical South Asian Buddhism*. Wisdom Publications.

Campbell, June. 1997. *Traveller in Space: In Search of Female Identity in Tibetan Buddhism*. London: The Athlone Press.

Collett, Alice. 2014. *Women in Early Indian Buddhism: Comparative Textual Studies*, Oxford University Press, USA.

- Collett, Alice. 2021. *I Hear Her Words: An Introduction to Women in Buddhism*. Cambridge, UK: Windhorse Publications.
- Langberg, Hillary. 2021. 'Gender Equity in a Mahayana Sutra: The Gaṇḍavyūha's Enlightened Goddesses'. *The Eastern Buddhist*, I: 1, pp. 43-87.
- Shaw, Miranda. 1994. *Passionate Enlightenment: Women in Tantric Buddhism*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Shih, Heng-Ching. 1992. 'Chinese Bhiksunis in the Ch'an Tradition'. *Taida zhexue pinglun* 臺大哲學論評, 15. pp. 181-207.
- Tsomo, Karma Lekshe. 2004. *Buddhist Women and Social Justice: Ideals, Challenges, and Achievements*. State University Press of New York.
- Ueki, Masatoshi. 2001. *Gender Equality in Buddhism*, Peter Lang Inc., International Academic Publishers.

Week 8: Buddhist perspectives on love, marriage and sexuality

- Langenberg, Amy Paris. 2018. "Buddhism and Sexuality" (Chapter 27). In *Oxford Handbook of Buddhist Ethics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 567–591.
- Dhammananda, Ven. K. Sri. 2013. "A Happy Married Life: A Buddhist Perspective", by Ven. K. Sri Dhammananda. *Access to Insight* (BCBS Edition), 30 November 2013, <http://www.accesstoinight.org/lib/authors/dhammananda/marriage.html>
- Nyanasobhano, Bhikkhu (Leonard Price). 2013. "Nothing Higher to Live For: A Buddhist View of Romantic Love". *Access to Insight* (BCBS Edition), 2 November 2013, <http://www.accesstoinight.org/lib/authors/price/bl124.html>.
- Sasson, Vanessa. 2020. "A Buddhist Love Story: The Buddha and Yaśodharā." *Buddhist Studies Review* 37(1), pp. 53–72.
- Young, Serinity. 2005. *Courtesans and Tantric Consorts: Sexualities in Buddhist Narrative, Iconography, and Ritual*. London: Routledge.

Week 9: Buddhist perspectives on suicide and euthanasia

- Keown, Damien, ed. 1998. *Buddhism and Abortion*. London: Macmillan.
- Florida, Robert E. 1993. "Buddhist Approaches to Euthanasia." *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses* 22(1), 35–47.
- Keown, Damien. 1998. "Suicide, Assisted Suicide and Euthanasia: A Buddhist Perspective." *Journal of Law and Religion* 13(2), 385–405. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1051472>.
- Keown, Damien. 2018. "Euthanasia" (Chapter 29). In *Oxford Handbook of Buddhist Ethics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 611–629.
- Kovan, Martin. 2018. "Being and Its Other: Suicide in Buddhist Ethics" (Chapter 30). In *Oxford Handbook of Buddhist Ethics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 630–649.
- Florida, Robert E. 1998–1999. "A Response to Damien Keown's 'Suicide, Assisted

Suicide and Euthanasia: A Buddhist Perspective.” *Journal of Law and Religion* 13(2), 413–416.

Week 10: Buddhist economic ethics

Brox, Trine, and Elizabeth Williams-Oerberg. 2020. *Buddhism and Business: Merit, Material Wealth and Morality in the Global Market Economy*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Payutto, P. A. *Buddhist Economics: A Middle Way for the Market Place*.

Pryor, Frederic L. 1991. “A Buddhist Economic System. In Practice: The Rules of State Policy Making of the Ideal Kings Sought a 'Middle Way' between Right and Left.” *The American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 50(1), 17–32.

Rev. Pinnawala Sangasumana. 2019. “The Buddhist Perspective on Measuring Wellbeing and Happiness in Sustainable Development.” *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Development*, 243–248.

Schumacher, Ernst Friedrich. 1993. *Small is Beautiful*. London: Vintage.

Sizemore, Russell F. 1993. *Ethics, Wealth, and Salvation: A Study in Buddhist Social Ethics*. University of South Carolina Press.

Zsolnai, Laszlo, ed. 2011. *Ethical Principles and Economic Transformation: A Buddhist Approach*. Springer.

Week 11: Buddhist ethics and Transhumanism

Hongladarom, Soraj. 2020. *The Ethics of AI and Robotics: A Buddhist Viewpoint*. Lexington Books.

Hughes, James J. 2018. “Buddhism and Our Posthuman Future.” *Sophia*, October.

———. 2012. “Compassionate AI and Selfless Robots: A Buddhist Approach.” In *Robot Ethics: The Ethical and Social Implications of Robotics*, edited by Patrick Lin, Abney, and George A. Bekey, 69–83. MIT Press.

LaTorra, Michael. 2015. “What Is Buddhist Transhumanism?” *Theology and Science* 13(2): 219–29.

Hershock, Peter D. 2021. *Buddhism and Intelligent Technology: Toward a More Humane Future*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

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BSTC7120 Buddhist psychology and mental cultivation

(6 credits)

Lecturer: Dr. G.A. Somaratne

Email: soma@hku.hk

Course Description/Content

The course introduces the Buddha's positive psychological concepts and meditation theory based on early Buddhist discourses and Abhidhamma philosophy of Theravāda Buddhism. It

critically analyses those doctrines and meditation techniques that have their aim to amplify and foster in young people positive human emotions, strengths, virtues, and skills that are conducive to achieving success, well-being, and happiness in their personal, family, social and professional lives, and compares them with those of modern positive psychology. It investigates not only the positive emotions, strengths and virtues but also positive institutions such as family, democracy and free inquiry that support fostering them.

Course Objectives

1. Introduce positive psychological concepts and meditation theory as presented in the Buddha's discourses and Abhidhamma philosophy.
2. Explain Buddhist positive psychology in relation to modern positive psychology.
3. Identify positive emotions, strengths, virtues and positive institutions that support them.
4. Examine the Buddha's teaching on how the mind and mental power could be channeled for personal and social well-being
5. Read and analyze relevant early Buddhist sources in English translation.

Course Learning Outcomes

1. Ability to describe positive psychological concepts and meditation theory as presented in the Buddha's discourses and Abhidhamma philosophy.
2. Ability to explain Buddhist positive psychology in relation to modern positive psychology.
3. Ability to identify and define positive emotions, strengths, virtues and positive institutions that support them.
4. Ability to explain the Buddha's teaching on how the mind and mental power could be channeled for personal and social well-being.
5. Ability to read, understand, and present relevant early Buddhist sources in English translation.

General Themes of the Course Include:

1. Similarities and differences between Buddhist positive psychology and modern positive psychology.
2. Understanding the working of the mind and mental factors for a positive and productive life.
3. Understanding psychological roots of conflict and peace.

4. Understanding the role of positive institutions in the development of positive emotions and strengths.
5. Identifying positive persons through their behaviour.
6. Imitating the Buddha and his disciples and learning their teachings for a positive life.
7. Significance of diligence and energy for achieving life goals.
8. Practising virtues of generosity, compassion, and loving-kindness for personal and social well-being.
9. Understanding meditation subjects appropriate to different personality types.
10. Experiencing moments of higher forms of freedom and happiness through meditative appeasing.
11. Experiencing lasting freedom and happiness through meditative watching.

Course Outline

Class 1: Buddhism and Positive Psychology

- Date: 2 Sept 2026
- Overview: Introduction to core concepts in psychology and positive psychology, contrasted with the Buddha's teachings and Abhidhamma philosophy. This session explores how different cultures apply positive psychological principles, setting the stage for a deeper engagement with Buddhist psychological frameworks.

Class 2: Abhidhamma Analysis of Mind and Matter

- Date: 9 Sept 2026
- Overview: Exploration of the Abhidhamma perspective on the interrelationship between mind (mental dhammas) and matter (physical dhammas). The class examines how consciousness and mental factors (cetasikas) intertwine with physical phenomena through the frameworks of the five aggregates (khandhas), twelve bases (āyatanas), and eighteen elements (dhātus), offering a foundational understanding of human experience and behaviour.

Class 3: Consciousness and Mental Factors

- Date: 16 Sept 2026
- Overview: Detailed study of the varieties and implications of consciousness and mental factors. The session focuses on wholesome consciousness associated with beautiful mental factors, which cultivate mental wellbeing and positive traits, and unwholesome consciousness linked with detrimental mental factors, clarifying their role in psychological distress.

Class 4: Cognitive Processes

- Date: 23 Sept 2026
- Overview: In-depth discussion of cognitive processes, focusing on consciousness in the sense-door process, the mind-door process, and process-freed consciousness. The session clarifies how different types of consciousness arise in patterned sequences and interact with sensory and mental stimuli, deepening understanding of the flow and transformation of mental events.

Class 5: Rootless Consciousness

- Date: 30 Sept 2026
- Overview: Study of different types of rootless consciousness, including unwholesome resultant, wholesome resultant, and rootless functional consciousness. This session clarifies how these forms of consciousness manifest and operate without direct roots in wholesome or unwholesome intentions.

Class 6: Beautiful Mental Factors, Positive Strengths, and Positive Institutions

- Date: 7 Oct 2026
- Overview: Analysis of how beautiful mental factors support the development of positive strengths and virtues. The session also highlights the role of positive institutions—such as family, community, and society—in cultivating positive strengths at both individual and collective levels.

Class 7: Absorption Meditation and Temporary Release

- Date: 21 Oct 2026
- Overview: Examination of absorption (jhāna) meditation techniques and their role in achieving temporary release from mental defilements. The session introduces the practical application of deep concentration and tranquillity as powerful, though temporary, states of relief and clarity.

Class 8: Personality and Meditation

- Date: 28 Oct 2026
- Overview: Exploration of the interplay between personality patterns and appropriate meditation practices. This class helps students recognize how individual dispositions shape the suitability and effectiveness of different contemplative techniques.

Class 9: Insight Meditation and Irreversible Deliverance

- Date: 4 Nov 2026
- Overview: Exploration of how insight meditation, integrated with the cultivation of wisdom, leads to irreversible spiritual deliverance. The class outlines the complete Buddhist path from mundane to supramundane states, highlighting the profound shifts in perception and consciousness that mark advanced stages of realization.

Class 10: Psychological Roots of Conflict

- Date: 11 Nov 2026

- Overview: Analysis of the psychological roots of conflict through Buddhist teachings, emphasizing how Buddhist psychological insights can be applied to understand, de-escalate, and transform conflict within oneself and in relationships.

Class 11: Understanding the Suicidal Mind Through Buddhist Psychology

- Date: 18 Nov 2026

- Overview: An exploration of suicidal thinking through the lens of Buddhist psychology, mapping the inner architecture of suffering that makes suicide appears as an escape. This session reframes suicide not as a moral failure or merely a clinical symptom, but as a tragic, misdirected strategy—a violent attempt to end suffering by destroying the body, while leaving its true causes untouched.

Class 12: The Path of True Freedom: Beyond the Escape Trap

- Date: 25 Nov 2026

- Overview: A study of genuine freedom from suffering as found not in destroying a life, but in seeing through and releasing identification with the story of a fixed, suffering self. This session explores the Middle Way, practical contemplative tools, and the role of compassionate community as a path to real liberation and a profound response to existential crisis.

Course Assessment Methods

Assessment 1: Attendance and Class Activities (20%)

- **Objective:** To encourage active participation and engagement with the course material.
- **Components and Grading Criteria:**
 - **Attendance (10%):** Regular attendance is mandatory. Please ensure you attend all classes unless unavoidable circumstances arise. Absence from class may be excused only with valid medical proof submitted before the missed class or, in unexpected situations, as soon as possible after the missed class.
 - **Class Activities (10%):** Participation in discussions, class activities, and reflective exercises. You are expected to participate in all class activities and discussions. The accuracy of your answers in class activities is **not** graded; instead, your score is based on your contribution, as reflected in the effort, thoughtfulness, and quality of your work and participation.

Assessment 2: Quizzes (20%)

- **Format:**
 - All quizzes are open-book and administered in paper format.
 - Each quiz consists of 15–20 multiple-choice questions.
 - Permitted materials include printed or digital lecture notes (e.g. on personal

devices such as tablets or laptops).

- Use of AI tools, communication with others, or any unauthorized aids is strictly prohibited and will result in disqualification.
- **Dates:**
 - **Quiz 1 (10%):** 7 October 2026 (Covers classes 1-5).
 - **Quiz 2 (10%):** 25 November 2026 (Covers classes 6-11).
- **Objective:** To assess understanding of key concepts discussed in lectures.

Assessment 3: Mind-Map on Mind in Abhidhamma (25%)

- **Objective:** To create a detailed, visually engaging, and logically structured mind-map that illustrates the concept of the mind as explained in Abhidhamma psychology. This task aims to deepen your understanding of the mind's structure and functions while fostering creativity and critical thinking.
- **Due Date:** 31 October 2026

Requirements:

1. Content:

- a. Include key concepts such as:
 - **Consciousness (citta):** Different types of consciousness (e.g., wholesome, unwholesome, neutral).
 - **Mental Factors (cetasika):** Key mental factors (e.g., mindfulness, greed, hatred, delusion) and their roles.
 - **Interrelationships:** How consciousness and mental factors interact and influence each other.
 - **Additional Concepts (optional):** You may include related ideas like Karma, Dependent Arising, or the Five Aggregates if they enhance your mind-map.

2. Creativity:

- a. Use **colours, symbols, icons, and visual elements** to make the mind-map engaging and easy to understand.
- b. Consider using **hierarchical structures, branches, or radial designs** to organize information effectively.
- c. Experiment with **visual metaphors** (e.g., a tree with branches representing mental factors) to make the content more relatable.

3. Clarity:

- a. Ensure the mind-map is **easy to follow** and logically structured.
- b. Use **clear labels** for each concept and connection.
- c. Avoid overcrowding; focus on **key ideas** and their relationships.

4. Sources:

- a. Reference **at least three sources**, including:
 - Primary Sources (e.g., Dhammapada, Satipatthāna Sutta, Abhidhammattha

Saṅgaha, the Path of Purity).

- Scholarly articles, books or textbooks on Abhidhamma psychology.
- b. In addition to the reference list/bibliography, include a **small reference section** (e.g., a box or footnote) on the mind-map to cite your sources.

Guidance for Success:

1. Planning:

- a. Start by **brainstorming** the key concepts and their relationships.
- b. Create a **rough draft** on paper or digitally to organize your ideas before finalizing the mind-map.

2. Tools:

- a. Use digital tools like **MindMeister, XMind, Canva, or Lucidchart** for professional-looking mind-maps.
- b. Alternatively, hand-drawn mind-maps are acceptable if they are neat and visually appealing.

3. Visual Design Tips:

- a. Use **colour coding** to group related concepts (e.g., green for wholesome mental factors, red for unwholesome ones).
- b. Use **icons or images** to represent abstract ideas (e.g., a flame for greed, a lotus for mindfulness).
- c. Keep the **layout balanced** and avoid clutter.

4. Content Tips:

- a. Focus on **accuracy**—ensure your explanations of Abhidhamma concepts are correct.
- b. Highlight **connections** between concepts (e.g., how mindfulness influences consciousness).
- c. Use **brief phrases or keywords** rather than long sentences to keep the mind-map concise.

Grading Criteria:

1. Accuracy and Depth of Content (40%):

- a. Demonstrates a thorough understanding of Abhidhamma psychology.
- b. Includes all required concepts and explores their interrelationships.

2. Creativity and Visual Appeal (30%):

- a. Uses colours, symbols, and visual elements effectively.
- b. Presents the information in an engaging and innovative way.

3. Clarity and Logical Organization (20%):

- a. Easy to follow with a clear and logical structure.
- b. Labels and connections are well-defined.

4. Proper Referencing of Sources (10%):

- a. Students are expected to engage with at least 3 credible sources.
- b. A separate reference list/bibliography should be attached to your submission; it will not be counted as part of the single-page mind-map.

Example Mind-Map Structure Outline:

1. **Central Node:** “The Mind in Abhidhamma Psychology”
2. **Primary Branches:**
 - a. Consciousness (Citta)
 - b. Mental Factors (Cetasika)
 - c. Interrelationships
3. **Sub-Branches:**
 - a. Under Consciousness: Wholesome, Unwholesome, Neutral.
 - b. Under Mental Factors: Mindfulness, Greed, Hatred, Delusion.
 - c. Under Interrelationships: How mindfulness affects consciousness, how greed distorts perception.

Submission Guidelines:

- Students must submit a single-page mind-map with clear connections between the key concepts and their relationships.
- The mind-map may be hand-drawn or created digitally. If hand-drawn, scan or photograph it as a high-quality image; if digital, export it as a high-quality image or file.
- In all cases, save or export the mind-map as a PDF, and combine the mind-map, the separate reference list, and the AI tools declaration form into one PDF document for submission.
- Ensure the file is **clearly labelled** with your name and student ID.

Assessment 4: Reflective Writing: A Creative Exploration (35%)

- **Objective:** To reflect on a personal experience or a contemporary social issue through the lens of Buddhist positive psychology, fostering self-awareness and a deeper understanding of Buddhist principles.
- **Due Date:** 30 November 2026
- **Word Count:** 1400 ~ 1500 words

Structure Suggestions:

1. **Description:**
 - a. Outline the event or issue in detail.
 - b. Provide context and background to help the reader understand the situation.
2. **Interpretation:**
 - a. Connect the event or issue to a relevant Buddhist concept or theory (e.g., mindfulness, compassion, impermanence, sense-experience, defilements, unwholesome-citta, wholesome-citta, dependent arising).
 - b. Explain how this concept helps in understanding or addressing the situation.
3. **Outcome:**

- a. Discuss personal insights gained from the reflection.
- b. Explore how this understanding might influence your future actions, decisions, or worldview.

Guidelines:

- **Tone and Style:** Write in a conversational, reflective, and creative tone. This is not a formal essay, so feel free to use storytelling, metaphors, or personal anecdotes.
- **Focus:** Ensure the reflection is deeply personal and meaningful, showing how Buddhist psychology has shaped your perspective.
- **No References Required:** This is a reflective piece, so formal citations or references are not necessary. However, if you mention specific Buddhist concepts, ensure they are accurately explained.

Grading Criteria:

1. **Creativity in Presentation:**
 - a. Unique and engaging approach to the reflection.
 - b. Use of creative elements like storytelling, metaphors, or personal voice.
2. **Clarity and Organization:**
 - a. Clear and logical flow of ideas.
 - b. Well-structured with distinct sections (description, interpretation, outcome).
3. **Accuracy in Explaining/Interpreting the Buddhist Concept:**
 - a. Accurate and thoughtful application of Buddhist psychology to the situation.
4. **Depth of Reflection and Application of the Concept:**
 - a. Insightful and meaningful exploration of the experience or issue.
 - b. Demonstrated growth or transformation in understanding.
5. **Compliance with the Word Limit:**
 - a. Adherence to the specified word count (1400 ~ 1500 words).
6. **Compliance with the Format:**
 - a. The essay must be typed, double-spaced, using a clear, readable font (e.g. Times New Roman or Arial, 12-point size) with standard margins (1 inch / 2.54 cm on all sides).
 - b. Include the reference list / bibliography at the end of the essay in the same document (if any).
 - c. Save the final version of your essay as a PDF / WORD document and submit it together with the AI tools declaration form as one single file.

Example Prompts for Inspiration:

- Reflect on a moment of personal challenge and how the Buddhist concept of *impermanence* helped you navigate it.
- Explore a contemporary social issue (e.g., climate change, inequality) through the lens of *compassion* or *interconnectedness*.

- Share a personal experience where practicing *mindfulness* led to a significant shift in your perspective or behaviour.
- Reflect on a relationship conflict and how the concept of *right speech* or *non-attachment* helped resolve it.

Additional Notes:

- **Guidance:** Please consult the Moodle page for examples of reflective writings, mind-maps, and further guidance on essay structuring.
- **Updates:** Always check the latest updates on course related matters including lecture notes on the course Moodle page.

Recommended Readings and Online materials

1. Analayo, Bhikkhu (2006) *Satipaṭṭhāna – The Direct Path to Realization*. Selangor, Malaysia: Buddhist Wisdom Centre.
2. Bodhi, Bhikkhu (1993) *A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma*. Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society.
3. Bodhi, Bhikkhu (2000) *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Saṃyutta Nikāya*. Boston: Wisdom Publications.
4. Bodhi, Bhikkhu (2012) *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Aṅguttara Nikāya*. Boston: Wisdom Publications.
5. Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly and Csikszentmihalyi, Isabella Selega (2006) *A Life Worth Living: Contributions to Positive Psychology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
6. De Silva, Padmasiri (2014) *An Introduction to Buddhist Psychology and Counselling*. London and New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
7. Karunadasa, Y. (2010) *The Theravāda Abhidhamma*. Hong Kong: Centre of Buddhist Studies, The University of Hong Kong.
8. Karunadasa, Y. (2025) *The Buddhist Analysis of Mind*. Hong Kong: Centre of Buddhist Studies, The University of Hong Kong.
9. Seligman, Martin E. P. (2002) *Authentic Happiness: Using the New Positive Psychology to Realize Your Potential for Lasting Fulfillment*. New York: The Free Press.
10. Somaratne, G. A. (2021) *The Buddha's Teaching: A Buddhistic Analysis*. Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan.
11. Somaratne, G. A. (2022) *An Introduction to Early Buddhist Soteriology: Freedom of Mind and Freedom by Wisdom*. Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan.

A Note:

The students must access the Course Moodle Page regularly for updates and announcements, weekly lecture notes and readings materials, class activities, attendance marking, submission of assignments, grading criteria of assignments, sample assignments, and recordings of previous classes.

Below is the course outline in 2025-26 for reference. For the latest version, please refer to the course moodle.

Lecturer: Ven. Sik Hin Hung

Email: hinhung@hku.hk

Course description

Śūnyatā (often translated as emptiness) is a central concept in the Buddhist teachings. In Buddhist soteriology, it is the foundational practice for one's liberation as well as for the attainment of ultimate realization. In the early canonical texts, the concept was often used in association with the teaching of the three marks of existence, *anicca* (impermanence), *dukkha* (suffering) and *anattā* (no-self), as a practice for those on the path to arhathood. In its developed form, the Mahāyāna tradition highlights the realization of *dharma-śūnyatā* (emptiness of all phenomena) as the key to bodhisattva's cultivation of *prajñāpāramitā* (wisdom perfection).

This course will study and examine the development of the concept of *śūnyatā*, from the earliest texts, such as the *Suttanipāta* and other texts from the four main *Nikāyas*. Furthermore, it will trace its blossoming in the early Mahāyāna literature, specifically the *Prajñāpāramitā sūtras*, such as the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* (the perfection of wisdom in eight-thousand [lines]), *Hṛdaya* (Heart sutra), *Vajracchedikā* (Diamond sutra), and its maturation in *Yogācāra* texts, such as the *Sandhinirmocana Sūtra*.

In addition to the study of the teaching of the concept of *śūnyatā*, in this course, we will explore how to incorporate this doctrine into contemplative practices, according to relevant texts from different traditions.

Course objectives

To introduce the concept of emptiness as presented in various forms of Buddhist literature and its role and importance in different levels of Buddhist soteriology.

Course learning outcomes

Students will:

1. have a good understanding of the concept of emptiness as explained in the different schools of Buddhism
2. know how a good understanding of emptiness would lead to the ending of suffering and accomplishment of the Bodhisattva vow of Bodhicitta
3. be able to appreciate how the concept of emptiness and non-attachment would contribute toward psychological well-being and personal growth

Course assessment methods

1. **Attendance** (12% of overall grade)

2. **Three (3) quizzes** (48%, 16% for each quiz; quiz 1 will be held in lesson 4 (Feb 10); quiz 2 in lesson 8 (Mar 24); and quiz 3 in lesson 12 (Apr 28).
3. **Essay (40%)**
 - Deadline: May 5
 - Word Count: 2500 - 3,000 words (excluding bibliography)
 - Topic: any topic on emptiness in Buddhist literature that is covered in the course

Assessment Guideline

30% - accuracy of the understanding of the topic

25% - depth of knowledge

25% - originality / personal insight

20% - quality of writing and presentation

Submission

- Upload a soft copy through Moodle via Turnitin **AND**
- Hand in a hard copy at Venerable Hin Hung's mailbox (next to CBS conference room on the 4th Floor of the Jockey Club Tower, Centennial Campus)

On the Cover Page (*all of the following information must be stated clearly*)

- Name
- University Number (or HKID for Occasional Students)
- Essay title
- Word Count

Late Submission (after 10 pm on due date based on Moodle record)

- within first 7 days after the deadline, one sub-grade will be deducted (e.g. A -> A-);
- from the 8th day after the deadline and thereafter, one grade will be deducted (e.g. A > B).

Plagiarism: As stated in Regulation 6 of the University's Regulations Governing Students' Academic Conduct Concerning Assessment NO engagement of plagiarism is allowed. All cases will be handled following the "Protocol on Handling of Plagiarism" as stated in the Faculty of Arts webpage.

AI-generated works are not allowed for submission. Essays containing AI-generated content will not be graded

Course content and topics (tentative)

Week	Content
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Jan 20 Lesson 1	The concept of <i>śūnyatā</i> and Buddhist emancipations, and the four <i>siddhantas</i> (modes of teachings)
Jan 27 Lesson 2	Concept of <i>śūnyatā</i> in the <i>Nikaya</i> : no-self and the ending of suffering, <i>sunyata</i> and the five aggregates
Feb 3 Lesson 3	Emptiness and meditation in the <i>Nikaya</i> , and the <i>Channa Sutta</i> , a prototype of Mahayana understanding of the Dharma
Feb 10 Lesson 4 In class quiz 1	Buddhism in its purest form: the <i>Atthakavagga</i> and the <i>Parayanavagga</i> of the <i>Sutta-Nipāta</i> . and their relationship with the <i>Mahāprajñāpāramitāsāstra</i> 《大智度論》
Feb 17	Holiday – no class
Feb 24 Lesson 5	Buddhism in its purest form: the <i>Atthakavagga</i> and the <i>Parayanavagga</i> of the <i>Sutta-Nipāta</i> . and their relationship with the <i>Mahāprajñāpāramitāsāstra</i> 《大智度論》
Mar 3 Lesson 6	Concept of emptiness and <i>Prajñāpāramitā Sutra</i> : the first chapter of <i>Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra</i> and <i>Sadaprarudita</i> Bodhisattva quest for perfect wisdom
Mar 10	Reading Week
Mar 17 Lesson 7	Concept of emptiness and <i>Prajñāpāramitā Sutra</i> : The Heart Sutra, its structure, and teachings
Mar 24 Lesson 8 In class quiz 2	Concept of emptiness and <i>Prajñāpāramitā Sutra</i> : The Diamond-cutter Sūtra (<i>Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā</i>)
Mar 31 Lesson 9	<i>Kṣānti paramitā</i> and acceptance in regard to unarisen dharma (<i>anutpattikadharmakṣānti</i>)
Apr 7	Holiday – no class
April 14 Lesson 10	Nagarjuna's The Philosophy of the Middle Way: Conditioned Co-arising, elimination of conceptual proliferations (<i>prapañca</i> 戲論) and the two truths
April 21 Lesson 11	Nagarjuna's The Philosophy of the Middle Way: Conditioned Co-arising, elimination of conceptual proliferations (<i>prapañca</i> 戲論) and the two truths
April 28 Lesson 12 In class quiz 3	Mind-only and the Doctrines of the three intrinsic natures and the three no-intrinsic nature natures

Reading List

1. Choong, Mun-Keat. *The Notion of Emptiness in Early Buddhism*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1999.

2. Conze, Edward. *The short Prajnaparamita texts; translated by Edward Conze* Luzac & Co. Ltd., London, 1973.
3. Cowherds, *Moonpaths: Ethics and Emptiness*. Oxford University Press, 2016.
4. Harvey, Peter. *An Introduction to Buddhism: teachings, history, and practices*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
5. Gadjin M. Nagao, Tran. Keenan P. John. *The Foundational Standpoint of Madhyamika Philosophy*. New York: State University of New York Press, 1989.
6. Garfield, Jay. *The Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.
7. Goode, Greg. *Emptiness and Joyful Freedom*. North Atlantic Books, 2020.
8. Kalupahana, David J. *Mulamadhyamakakarika of Nagarjuna: The Philosophy of the Middle Way*, Motilal Barnasidass, 1991.
9. Sik, Hin Hung, "The Pearl of the Tripitaka, Two Vaggas in the Sutta-Nipata." In *Buddhist and Pali Studies in Honour of the Venerable Professor Kakkapalliye Anuruddha*, edited by KL; Karunadasa Khammajoti, 2009, Centre of Buddhist Studies, The University of Hong Kong, 417-28.
10. Singh, J., *An Introduction to Madhyamaka Philosophy*. Delhi : Motilal Banarsidass, 1976.
11. Siderits, M. "On the soteriological significance of emptiness." *Contemporary Buddhism*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 2003. Routledge
12. Siderits, Mark; Katsura, Shoryu. *Nagarjuna's Middle Way: Mulamadhyamakakarika*. Simon and Schuster, 2013.
13. Stcherbatsky, Th. *The Central Conception of Buddhism*. Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1991.
14. Velez De Cea, Abraham. "Emptiness in the Pali Suttas and the Question of Nagarjuna's Orthodoxy." *Philosophy East and West* 55 (4)(2005):507-528
15. Westerhoff, Jan. *Nagarjuna's Madhyamaka: A Philosophical Introduction*. Oxford University Press, 2009.
16. Yinshun, English Translation By Shi Huifeng. *An Investigation into Emptiness*. Noble Path Buddhist Education Fellowship, 2017.

Reference Material and Online Resources

1. Encyclopaedia of Buddhism, eds., Robert E. Buswell, Jr., Ed. New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2003. 982 pp. 2 vols. This encyclopedia describes the Buddhist world view, basic teachings and practices of Buddhism, as well as its different schools and sects. This Encyclopedia needs subscription, so use it through HKU Electronic Recourses.
2. Encyclopedia of Religion. Lindsay Jones, Ed. 2nd ed. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005. 10735 pp. 15 vols. This Encyclopedia needs subscription, so use it through HKU Electronic Recourses.
3. Encyclopædia Britannica Online. This Encyclopædia needs subscription, so use it through HKU Electronic Recourses.

- 4 Digital Dictionary of Buddhism, eds., Charles Muller. This is an internet based dictionary similar to Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms, by Soothill and Hodous, but has much more entries. If you know the Chinese Buddhist technical terms, but do not know how to translate it into English, please visit Muller's DDB website address: <http://www.acmuller.net/ddb/> Users can access the search function with the user ID of "guest" (case-sensitive, no quotes), leaving the password area blank allowing 20 searches in a 24 hour period. To search Sanskrit and other terms containing diacritics, type in the term in simple ascii.
- 5 A Dictionary of Buddhism, eds., Damien Keown. This Dictionary needs subscription, so use it through HKU Electronic Recourses.
- 6 Accesstoinsight. This is a website entirely dedicated to the teaching of Theravada Buddhism including the Pali Canon, Theravada text archive and sources. Most of the Pali texts are translated into English for free distribution. Website address: www.accesstoinsight.org/
- 7 Journal of Buddhist Ethics. This is a web based academic journal for free distribution. Web address: <http://www.jbe.gold.ac.uk/>
- 8 Taisho Edition of Chinese Tripitaka. 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.
- 9 Buddhist Digital Library and Museum. There is a good collection of academic articles some with full texts in both Chinese and English. It is a good place to relevant academic articles for your study. Website address: <http://buddhism.lib.ntu.edu.tw/BDLM/>
- 10 Buddhasasana. You can find many full text articles on Buddhism in English, but not all of them are academic so you have to be selective. The website address is: <http://www.saigon.com/~anson/ebud/ebidx.htm>
- 11 The Internet Sacred Text Archive. You can find the old texts of almost all major religions in the world in this site and you can also copy the full texts if you wish. For instance, you can find the Sacred Books of the East. Website address: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/index.htm>
- 12 Mahayana Buddhist Sutras in English. In this site you can find some popular Chinese Mahayana texts in English translation. Website address: <http://www4.bayarea.net/~mtlee/>
17. JSTOR The Scholarly Journal Archive. This Archive needs subscription, so use it through HKU Electronic Recourses. <http://www.jstor.org/jstor>

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BSTC7125 Buddhism in Central Asia

(6 Credits)

Lecturer: Prof. Zhouyang Ma

Email: mzy2026@hku.hk

Course Description

While Central Asia is predominantly Islamic today, it was once one of the most important regions in the Buddhist world. This course explores the lost history of Buddhism in Central Asia and examines its enduring Buddhist legacies. Organized largely along geographical and chronological lines, the course guides students from the early development of Buddhism in Gandhāra after the Buddha's Nirvāṇa to the conversion of the last Uyghur Buddhist king to Islam in the fourteenth century.

A central theme of the course is how diverse indigenous cultural traditions across Central Asia shaped distinctive local forms of Buddhism. Students will engage with Buddhist texts preserved in a variety of Central Asian languages and explore their historical, religious, and cultural significance. The course also encourages students to connect Central Asian Buddhism with their own academic interests, whether in the study of Buddhism in other regions or in specific subjects such as art history. More broadly, it invites reflection on students' own lives and their relationship with the contemporary world through the lens of Central Asian Buddhist legacies.

Assessment Methods

Assessment: 100% coursework

Assessment method	Type of assessment (e.g. description of assignment)	Weighting (%)
1. Attendance and participation	Weekly attendance will be registered from Week 3 (end of add-drop period) onwards. Students are also required to participate in discussions, etc.	15%
2. Two quizzes	Students will take two quizzes through the semester on core concepts and content covered in the previous sessions. The first is at week 5 and the second is at week 10. Each is worth 15%.	30%
3. Group presentation	In small groups, students will conduct a study of a topic related to Buddhism in Central Asia, such as studying a text in a Central Asian language, an art object, a particular Buddhist idea, etc. They will then present their findings collectively to the class.	20%
4. Reflective essay	Students will write a 1000–3000-word reflective essay on their study. Each member in a presentation group must address a different aspect.	35%

Weekly Lecture Schedule

Week 1 (Sep. 2): Introduction

This session introduces the significance of studying Central Asian Buddhism within the broader context of Buddhist studies. It outlines major perspectives and approaches to the field and provides a general overview of the history of Central Asian Buddhism.

Readings:

Christopher I. Beckwith, *Empires of the Silk Road* (Princeton University Press, 2011), Introduction.

Carmen Meinert and Henrik Sørensen, eds., *Buddhism in Central Asia I: Patronage, Legitimation, Sacred Space, and Pilgrimage* (Brill, 2020), Introduction.

Yukiyo Kasai and Henrik Sørensen, eds., *Buddhism in Central Asia II: Practices and Rituals, Visual and Material Transfer* (Brill, 2022), Introduction.

Week 2 (Sep. 9): Gandhāra

This session focuses on Buddhism in Gandhāra, highlighting its unique position in the northwestern Indic world as an intersection of Indian and Persian/Greek civilizations. Buddhist texts written in Gandhārī and their significance, as well as the distinctive Gandhāran Buddhist art style, will be introduced.

Readings:

Richard Salomon, *The Buddhist Literature of Ancient Gandhara: An Introduction with Selected Translations* (Wisdom, 2018), Part I, chap 1.

Ann Heirman and Stephan Peter Bumbacher, eds., *The Spread of Buddhism* (Brill, 2007), 49–69.

Week 3 (Sep. 16): Bactria and the Kushan Empire

This session moves north to Bactria and focuses on the Kushan Empire (c. 1st–3rd c. CE) that emerged from this region. It examines the role of this polity in sponsoring Buddhism and contributing to its development in Central Asia. Important Buddhist schools from this region and period, such as the Vaibhāṣika, will also be discussed.

Readings:

Richard Salomon, *The Buddhist Literature of Ancient Gandhara*, Part I, chap 2–3.

Heirman and Bumbacher, *The Spread of Buddhism* (Brill, 2007), 80–97.

Week 4 (Sep. 23): Tocharians, Sogdians, and Eastern Central Asia

This session shifts eastward to roughly what is today Xinjiang. Discussion centers on Buddhism among the Tocharians and their city-states, such as Kucha. Buddhist texts written in Tocharian and their significance will be introduced. In addition, the Sogdians, their role along the Silk Roads, and their diverse religious practices, including Buddhism, will be discussed.

Readings:

Heirman and Bumbacher, *The Spread of Buddhism* (Brill, 2007), 97–106.

Mariko Namba Walter, “Tokharian Buddhism in Kucha.”

Week 5 (Sep. 30): Early Chinese Contacts with Central Asian Buddhism

This session connects Central Asian Buddhism up to the 7th century with the early development of Chinese Buddhism, highlighting the transregional networks of Buddhist transmission. Themes such as early Chinese translations from Central Asian languages and by Central Asian monks will be examined. Travel records, such as those by Faxian (337–422), will also be read.

Readings:

Kenneth Chen, *Buddhism in China: A Historical Survey* (Princeton, 1964), 43–46, 81–83, 88–93.

H.A. Giles, trans., *The Travels of Fa-hsien* (Cambridge, 1923) 1–13.

Week 6 (Oct. 7): Dunhuang Buddhism I: History and Institutions

This session begins a focus on Dunhuang, one of the most important Buddhist sites in Central Asia. It introduces its history from the 7th to the 11th century, along with key institutions and practices. Material aspects, such as the production of Dunhuang Buddhist manuscripts, will also be discussed.

Readings:

Meinert and Sørensen, *Buddhism in Central Asia I*, 91–122.

Week 7 (Oct. 21): Dunhuang Buddhism II: Buddhist Writings

This second session on Dunhuang turns to locally produced Buddhist writings. Particular attention is given to distinctive traditions that developed there, such as the Sino-Tibetan

tradition associated with Facheng (Chödrup), while important translations will also be examined.

Readings:

Hao Chuanwen, *Dunhuang Manuscripts: An Introduction to Texts from the Silk Road*, trans. Stephen Teiser (Portico Publishing Company, 2020), chap. 4.
Lewis Doney, Carmen Meinert, Henrik Sørensen and Yukiyo Kasai, eds., *Buddhism in Central Asia III: Impacts of Non-Buddhist Influences, Doctrines* (Brill, 2022), 296–349.

Week 8 (Oct. 28): Uyghurs and Buddhism in Qocho

This session turns to the Uyghurs, focusing on their Buddhist culture in Qocho after the 9th century. It explores the role of Buddhism in Uyghur political, social, and religious life, highlighting the value of texts written in Uyghur. Topics such as the syncretism of Buddhism and Manichaeism will also be discussed.

Readings:

Johan Elverskog, *A History of Uyghur Buddhism* (Columbia, 2024), chaps. 1, 2, and 5.

Week 9 (Nov. 4): Buddhism among the Kitans and Jurchens

This session focuses on the Kitans and Jurchens, examining how these northern groups in China, while influenced by Chinese Buddhist traditions, developed distinct trajectories from Song Buddhism. Special attention is given to Buddhism's role in state politics, esoteric practices, and Huayan scholasticism.

Readings:

Christopher I. Beckwith, *Empires of the Silk Road* (Princeton University Press, 2011), 170–176.
Kirill Solonin, “Buddhism in the Liao and Jin Dynasties.”
Youn-mi Kim, “A Ritual Embodied in Architectural Space: The *Uṣṇīṣavijayā Dhāraṇī* and Yingxian Timber Pagoda from the Liao Empire.”

Week 10 (Nov. 11): Tangut Buddhism I: Early Phase and Chinese Influence

This session begins an exploration of the Tangut state (1038–1227) and its Buddhism, presenting it as both a successor to and developer of Dunhuang/Hexi Buddhist culture. It

covers developments up to the 1130s, with a focus on Chinese influence in shaping early Tangut Buddhism. The general history of the Tanguts and the significance of Tangut Buddhist texts are also introduced.

Readings:

Shi Jinbo, *Tangut Language and Manuscripts: An Introduction*, trans. Hansong Li (Brill, 2020), chap. 1.

Ruth W. Dunnell, *The Great State of White and High: Buddhism and State Formation in Eleventh-Century Xia* (University of Hawai'i Press, 1996), chaps. 2 and 3.

Week 11 (Nov. 18): Tangut Buddhism II: Later Phase and Tibetan Influence

The second session on the Tanguts focuses on the later phase of Buddhist development from the 1130s onward, emphasizing Tibetan influence. It highlights the introduction of tantric traditions and the emergence of indigenous writings that integrate both Chinese and Tibetan elements. Important institutions, such as the imperial preceptor, will also be discussed.

Zhouyang Ma, “An Inner Asian Revolution: The Rise of Tibetan Buddhism in the Tangut Xia State” (PhD Diss., Harvard, 2023), chap. 3.

Weirong Shen, “On the integration of Chinese, Tibetan, exoteric and esoteric Buddhism in the Tangut Kingdom.”

Week 12 (Nov 25): Student Presentations and Conclusion

This session is devoted to student presentations of final projects. It also provides an opportunity to synthesize and reflect on the course content, encouraging further inquiry and future research directions.

Reference Books

1. Carmen Meinert and Henrik Sørensen, eds., *Buddhism in Central Asia I: Patronage, Legitimation, Sacred Space, and Pilgrimage* (Brill, 2020).
2. Yukiyo Kasai and Henrik Sørensen, eds., *Buddhism in Central Asia II: Practices and Rituals, Visual and Material Transfer* (Brill, 2022).
3. Lewis Doney, Carmen Meinert, Henrik Sørensen and Yukiyo Kasai, eds., *Buddhism in Central Asia III: Impacts of Non-Buddhist Influences, Doctrines* (Brill, 2022)
4. Ann Heirman and Stephan Peter Bumbacher, eds., *The Spread of Buddhism* (Brill, 2007).
5. Christopher I. Beckwith, *Empires of the Silk Road* (Princeton University Press, 2011).
6. Richard Salomon, *The Buddhist Literature of Ancient Gandhara: An Introduction with Selected Translations* (Wisdom, 2018).

7. Hao Chuanwen, *Dunhuang Manuscripts: An Introduction to Texts from the Silk Road*, trans. Stephen Teiser (Portico Publishing Company, 2020).
8. Johan Elverskog, *A History of Uyghur Buddhism* (Columbia, 2024).
9. Shi Jinbo, *Tangut Language and Manuscripts: An Introduction*, trans. Hansong Li (Brill, 2020).
10. Ruth W. Dunnell, *The Great State of White and High: Buddhism and State Formation in Eleventh-Century Xia* (University of Hawai'i Press, 1996).
11. Kenneth Chen, *Buddhism in China: A Historical Survey* (Princeton, 1964).

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BSTC7607 Buddhist liturgy and rituals
(6 credits)

Lecturers:

Ven. Dr. Sik Fa Ren

Email: faren@hku.hk

Dr. Amrita Nanda

Email: nanda@hku.hk

Course Description

Although many claim (based on a selective reading of canonical Buddhist literature) that the Buddha's "original teaching" involved a rejection of ritual activity, from the very early period and throughout the entire Buddhist history, the Buddhist traditions have adopted indigenous rituals and practices and have devised a great variety of their own rituals. This course provides an introduction to Buddhist ritual practice in different Buddhist tradition to the students who are interested in Buddhist studies. We will begin by exploring several theories and research methods of adopting rituals in anthropology and religious studies. After having grasped the theoretical basis of ritual studies, the students will go further to study the doctrinal, mythic, and other dimensions of Buddhist practice, identify the various sources of ritual power, examine the structural patterns of various rituals, survey the different categories of ceremonies, and analyse the most important groups of rituals, especially different death rituals that are performed to assist the deceased to enable rebirth into the better realms. It will focus on how experiences of ritual site and ritual time will generate meanings that affect individual enlightenment as well as the understanding of Buddhist teaching. As a comparative approach to Buddhist rituals, this course will cover materials such as myths, texts, and video records of rituals. Rituals are studied in some detail by reading ritual texts and conducting fieldwork (or studying rituals by watching video recordings of them) to examine the actual ritual practice.

Aim and Objective

In addition to becoming acquainted with the major categories of Buddhist rituals, students would know more about the cosmology of both monastics and lay Buddhists, and know about how Buddhists express their belief through actual practice. From this learning approach, students would gain both knowledge of Buddhist doctrine and practice simultaneously.

Upon completion of the course, students should:

1. Have a full and in-depth picture of the studies of Buddhist rituals and demonstrate that they are able to interpret and analyze the ritual theories, the various dimensions of Buddhist ritual practice, research methods, and the actual practices of different Buddhist rituals in the contemporary period.
2. Be familiar with Buddhist doctrines and rituals, with particular attention given to the development of Buddhism.
3. Be able to discover and weigh different kinds of evidence (textual, historical, and ethnographic) available for the same events or rituals.
4. Be able to approach Buddhist practice as one of subjects of academic studies.
5. Be able to perform critical thinking and rational understanding.

Assessment ratio

Students are required to read the relevant papers before coming to the lecture so that they can participate in our lively discussion. The final examination is based on one essay, one presentation and lecture participation.

Presentation is arranged. Each group has about 25 minutes to give a presentation. This requires students' critical thinking on the related topics and informed participation. This is the key for the success of the course.

Also, students are going to write a term paper of about 3000 to 3500 words on one of topics discussed in lectures, or students may choose your own topic related to the course (in this case, make sure you discuss with me beforehand). Students are expected to attend all lectures on time without being late.

100% coursework, including:

- (i) 40%: a short essay with 3,000-3,500 words
- (ii) 30%: Book Presentation (each group have 30 minutes, 6 students in a group)
- (iii) 30% Quiz (20 MC questions at the class is expected to demonstrate your participation, as well as comprehension and critical thinking on the related topics.)

criteria for marking essay:

1. Good and correct understanding of the Buddhist teaching given in the lectures,
2. Clear, logical and rational presentation of your ideas and thoughts,
3. Show that you have read at least three papers in your essay either in your footnotes or endnotes and list them at the end.

Course schedule with bibliography

Week 1 (22 JAN): 1. Course introduction

2. What is Religion and ritual?

Rappaport, Roy A. (1999), Chapter 5 of *Ritual and religion in the making of humanity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

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

*----- (Jun. 1968), 'The Magical Power of Words', *Man*, vol. 3, pp. 175-208.

Week 2 (29 JAN): Current studies of Buddhism and ritual

Readings:

Harvey, Peter (1990), *An Introduction to Buddhism* (Cambridge University Press).

*Bell, Catharine (1992) *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (Oxford University Press, USA), pp. 1-89.

Fromm, Eric (1950) *Psychoanalysis and Religion* (New Haven: Yale University Press).

Pettazzoni, Raffaele (Jan. 1937), 'Confession of Sins and the Classics', *The Harvard Theological Review*, vol. 30, pp. 1-14.

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. 354-71.

Eliade, Mircea translated by Willard R. Trask (1987), *The Sacred and The Profane: The Nature of Religion* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich) pp. 20-67.

Week 3 (5 FEB) Chinese New Year Holiday

Week 4 (12 FEB) Chinese New Year Holiday

Week 5 (19 FEB): Power of Ritual & Ritual Functions

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.

*Bell, Catharine (1992) *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (Oxford University Press, USA), pp. 1-89.

*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.

*Don Pittman, *Toward A modern Chinese Buddhism: Taixu's Reforms*. Honolulu:

- University of Hawai'i Press, 2001: 13-60.
- Eliade, Mircea translated by Willard R. Trask (1987), *The Sacred and The Profane: The Nature of Religion* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich) pp. 20-67.
- Fromm, Eric (1950) *Psychoanalysis and Religion* (New Haven: Yale University Press).
- Harvey, Peter (1990), *An Introduction to Buddhism* (Cambridge University Press).
- 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.
- *McRae, John R. (May, 1995), 'Buddhism', *Journal of Asian Studies*, 54 (2), pp. 354-71.
- * Reader, Ian and Tanabe, George J. (1998), *Practically Religious: Worldly Benefits and the Common Religion of Japan* (Honolulu University of Hawai'i Press), pp.36-69.

Week 6 (26 Feb): Theoretical basis of Chinese Buddhist ritual and Case Studies (1)— Concepts of Karma and Confessional Ritual

Readings:

- James, William (1985) *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (US: Harvard University Press) pp.53-76.
- *Harvey, Peter (1990), Chapter 2 of *An Introduction to Buddhism* (Cambridge University Press), pp.33-46.
- Sadakata, Akira (1997), *Buddhist Cosmology: Philosophy and Origins* (Tokyo: Kosei).
- Naranda (1980), *The Buddha and His Teachings*, Singapore, Chapter (27); pp.43-44.
- Laumakis, Stephen J. (2008), Chapter 5 of *An introduction to Buddhist philosophy* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press).
- *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. 353-82.
- *Xueyu (2003), 'Merit Transfer and Life after Death in Buddhism', *Ching Feng*, New Series 4.1, pp. 29-50.

Week 7 (5 MAR): Theoretical basis of Chinese Buddhist ritual and Case Studies (2)— Rebirth and Death Ritual

Readings:

- * James L Watson, James L. Watson, Evelyn Sakakida Rawski (1988), *Death Ritual in Late Imperial and Modern China* (London: University of California Press) pp.109-134.
- Jing Yin (2006), "Death from the Buddhist View: Knowing the Unknown" in Chan, Cecilia Lai Wan and Chow, Amy Yin Man (ed.), *Death, Dying and Bereavement - A Hong Kong Chinese Experience* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press), pp.93-104.

Wolf, “God, Ghost, and Ancestors” (1974), in *Religion and Ritual in Chinese Society* (Stanford: Stanford University Press), pp. 104-131.

Week 8 (12 MAR): Reading Week

Week 9 (19 MAR): Theoretical basis of Chinese Buddhist ritual and Case Studies (3)—"Merit Making: Practical Benefit, ritual function": Ritual for Saving the Flaming-month Hungry Ghosts & Buddhist Rituals for Saving All Sentient Beings

Readings:

Kwong, Chun Wah. 2002. *The Public Role of Religion in Post-colonial Hong Kong : An Historical Overview of Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, and Christianity* (Peter Lang: New York).

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

Orzech, Charles (1996), “Saving the Burning-Mouth Hungry Ghost,” in Donald S. Lopez, Jr., ed. *Religions of China in Practice* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press), pp. 278-83.

*Teiser, Stephen F. (1988), *The Ghost Festival in Medieval China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), pp.168-208.

*Stevenson, Daniel B. (2001), '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), pp.30-70

Week 11 (26 MAR): Easter Holiday

Week 9 (2 APR): Buddhist Rituals and Ceremony: An introduction from the Theravāda perspectives

- Historical survey of Rituals in the Theravāda tradition.
- Functions of rituals in the Theravāda tradition.
- Types of ritual practices in the Theravāda tradition.

Readings:

Anthony J. Blasi (1985): “Ritual as a Form of the Religious Mentality” in *Sociological Analysis*, Vol. 46, No. 1 (Spring, 1985), pp. 59-71. (Oxford University Press)

Fromm, Erich (1995). *Psychoanalysis and Religion* (Yale University Press).

— 2002) *Man For Himself: An Inquiry into the Psychology of Ethics* (Routledge)

Mortimer, Ostow (2006) “Religion: A Psychoanalytic Examination of Spirituality and Religion” in *Spirit, Mind, and Brain*, pp. 53-111 (Columbia University Press).

Nanda Amrita (2024). *The Theory of the Four Stages of Liberation in Pāli Literature*. (Palgrave Macmillan Cham).

Schedneck Brooke (2023), *Living Theravada: Demystifying the People, Places, and*

Practices of a Buddhist Tradition. (Shambhala Publications)

Stephen C. Berkwitz (2001) “Emotions and Ethics in Buddhist History: The *Sinhala Thūpavamsa* and the Work of Virtue,” *Religion*, 31:2, 155-173,

Week 10 (9 APR): Rituals for Dying and Dead and Dedication of Merits in Theravada Tradition

- Rituals for dying.
- Rituals for dead.
- Doctrinal and Psychological dimensions of dedication of merits

Readings:

Chowdhury, Chipamong (2019). “The spirit of the gift: Burmese Buddhist death rituals in North America” in *Transnational Death* (eds.) Samira Saramo, Eerika Koskinen-Koivisto, and Hanna Snellman. (Finnish Literature Society Ü SKS Ü Helsinki Ü) pp. 100-117.

Holt, John Clifford (2012). “Caring for the Dead Ritually in Cambodia” *Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 1, April 2012, pp. 3–75.

Langer, Rita (2007), *Buddhist Rituals of Death and Rebirth: Contemporary Sri Lankan practice and its origins* (Routledge).

Keyes C.F. (1983). “Merit-transference in the kammic theory of popular Theravāda Buddhism” in *Karma: An anthropological inquiry*, pp.261-299.

Nanda Amrita (2025). “A Psychotherapeutic Dimension of the Buddhist Rituals: Dedication of Merits and Confession,” in Noivedha, *Pali Prokashon, Chattogram*, pp, 334-344.

Nanda Amrita (2019) “The Concept of Intermediate Existence in the Early Buddhist Theory of Rebirth”, *Asian Philosophy*, DOI: 10.1080/09552367.2019.1611999

Premasiri P.D. (2001 reprinted). “Significance of Ritual Concerning Offering to Ancestors in Theravada Buddhism” in *Buddhist Thought and Ritual* (ed.) Kalupahana David. J. New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publisher. Pp. 151-158.

Soorakkulame Pematatana (2013). “Evolution of the Theravāda Buddhist Idea of ‘Merit-transference’ to the Dead and its Role in Sri Lankan Buddhist Culture”. *Buddhist Studies Review* ISSN (print) pp. 89-112.

Suwanda H J Sugunasiri (2016). “How Sinhala Buddhists Cope with Death: Funeral Ceremony as Mother/Social Worker, Community Worker, Psychologist, Psychiatrist, and Spiritual Guide” *Sri Lanka: in the Eyes of Himself and Others*, Toronto: Village Publishing House. Pp. 201-224.

Tiwsakul A.R. and Hackley, C. (2012). “Consuming the Dead: Symbolic Exchange in Thai Hungry Ghost Festivals” in *ACR North American Advances*, pp. 771-773.

Week 12 (16 APR): Paritta Ritual in Theravāda Tradition: Historical development and Psychological Dimension of Paritta ritual,

- Definition of *Paritta*.
- Historical Development of *Paritta* Ritual.

- Psychological function of *Paritta* ritual.

Readings:

- Espada, E., Jason (2017) (eds.). *Buddhist Prayer: An Anthology*. (Thich Thien-An, Dharma Publishing).
- Francis Story (2000). *Prayer and Worship*, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society (online edition).
- Gornall, Alastair (2014). “How Many Sounds are in Pāli? Schism, Identity and Ritual in the Theravāda saṅgha” *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, November 2014, Vol. 42, No. 5 (pp. 511-550 (Springer).
- Langer, Rita (2012) “Chanting as ‘bricolage technique’: a comparison of South and Southeast Asian funeral recitation,” *Buddhist Funeral Cultures in Southeast Asia and China* (eds.) Paul Williams and Patrice Ladwig. Pp. 21-58. (Published online by Cambridge University Press).
- Mark Finn and Rubin, B. Jeferey (2014). “Psychotherapy with Buddhists” *Handbook of Psychotherapy and Religious Diversity* (eds.) Richards P.S. & Bergin, A.E. (Second Edition). (American Psychological Association). PP. 347-367.
- Perpriere Benedic Brac De La (2017). “Initiation in the Burmese Ritual Landscape”. *Journal of Ethnology and Folkloristics* 11 (1): 65–82.
- Practice and Its Origin. London and New York: Routledge.
- Saddhatissa Hemmalawa (2001 reprinted). “The Significance of Paritta and its Application in Theravāda Tradition” in *Buddhist Thought and Ritual* (ed.) Kalupahana David. J. New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publisher. Pp. 125-138.
- Silva, De Lily (1979) *Paritta: A Historical and Religious Study of The Buddhist Ceremony for Peace and Prosperity in Sri Lanka*. (A Publication of National Museums of Sri Lanka).
- (2001 reprinted). “Paritta Ceremony of Sri Lanka: Its Antiquity and Symbolism” in *Buddhist Thought and Ritual* (ed.) Kalupahana David. J. New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publisher. Pp. 139-150.
- Sprenger Guido (2012). “Invisible Blood: Ritual as Information Processing in Laos” *Asian Journal of Social Sciences* 37,6: 935–95.

Week 11 (23 APR): *Pavāraṇā* Ceremony and *Kaṭhina* ceremony in Theravāda Tradition

- The Significance of rain-retreat (*vassa*) and the *pavāraṇā* ceremony.
- The practice of confession and its psychological dimension
- The religious significance of *Kaṭhina* ceremony
- Social and Cultural Significance of *Kaṭhina* Ceremony

Readings:

- Elizabeth Todd (1985) “The Value of Confession and Forgiveness According to Jung” *Journal of Religion and Health*, Vol. 24, No. 1 pp. 39-48. (Spring).
- Fromm, Erich (1950). *Psychoanalysis and Religion*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

- Herman Tieken (2002) “The Buddhist *Pavaraṇā*: A Ceremony According to the Pali Vinaya” *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 30: 271–289. (Kluwer Academic Publishers. Printed in the Netherlands.).
- Holt, C. John (2017) “Kathina: Making Merit in Modern Myanmar”. *Theravada Traditions: Buddhist Ritual Cultures in Contemporary Southeast Asia and Sri Lanka*. (University of Hawai'i Press). Pp. 189-238.
- Nguyen H., Phuc & Khunakaro, P., Somphong (2018). “Kathina Robe In Theravāda Tradition”. *JIABU* | Vol. 11 No.2.

Week 12 (30 APR): Revision & QUIZ

Readings List:

- Dhammapala Gatare (1984). “Towards the Definition of Saddhā and Bhakti” in *Buddhist Studies in Honour of Hammalava Saddhatissa* (ed.) Dhammapala Gatare, Gombrich Richard and Norman K.R. Sri Lanka: Buddhist Research Library Trust. Pp. 77-81.
- Francis Story (2000) *Prayer and Worship*, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society (online edition).
- Fromm, Erich (1950). *Psychoanalysis and Religion*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Gombrich Richard F. (2006 2nd edition) *Theravāda Buddhism: A Social History from Ancient Benares to Modern Colombo*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Kariyawasam A.G.S. (1995). *Buddhist Ceremonies and Rituals of Sri Lanka*, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society.
- Keyes C.F. (1983). “Merit-transference in the kammic theory of popular Theravāda Buddhism” in *Karma: An anthropological inquiry*, pp.261-299.
- Langer Rita (2007). *Buddhist Rituals of Death and Rebirth: Contemporary Sri Lankan Practice and its Origin*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Lily Silva De (2001 reprinted). “Paritta Ceremony of Sri Lanka Its Antiquity and Symbolism” in *Buddhist Thought and Ritual* (ed.) Kalupahana David. J. New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publisher. Pp. 139-150.
- Premasiri P.D. (2001 reprinted). “Significance of Ritual Concerning Offering to Ancestors in Theravada Buddhism” in *Buddhist Thought and Ritual* (ed.) Kalupahana David. J. New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publisher. Pp. 151-158.
- Saddhatissa Hemmalawa (2001 reprinted). “The Significance of Paritta and its Application in Theravāda Tradition” in *Buddhist Thought and Ritual* (ed.) Kalupahana David. J. New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publisher. Pp. 125-138.
- Tiwsakul A.R. and Hackley, C. (2012). “Consuming the Dead: Symbolic Exchange in Thai Hungry Ghost Festivals” in *ACR North American Advances*, pp771-773.
- Williams.P. and Ladwig P. (2012). *Buddhist funeral cultures of Southeast Asia and*

China pp.118-141

*Recommended Readings

Further Reading

- 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.
- 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.
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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>

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(For students admitted in 2026-27)

Part III Capstone Experience (6 or 12 credits)

The capstone experience is compulsory and can be conducted in the following forms:

- (a) submission of a Dissertation (BSTC8999); or
- (b) completion of a Portfolio (BSTC8997)

Students who are planning to write (a) “Dissertation” are required to submit their proposal to a potential supervisor by November 15, 2026. The supervisor will review the proposal and confirm those students whom they are willing to supervise by providing their written approval by December 31, 2026. Students who have not secured a supervisor by this date should consider their dissertation application unsuccessful and must proceed with the (b) “Portfolio” option.

Please submit the “[Capstone Experience – Application Form](#)” by January 10, 2027. For details, please refer to the [explanatory notes on capstone experience](#).

The dissertation/portfolio shall be presented by July 31, 2027. Candidates shall submit a statement that the dissertation/portfolio represents their own work undertaken after registration as candidates for the degree.

The capstone experience courses are listed as follows:

BSTC8999. Capstone Experience: Dissertation

The purpose of the dissertation is to enable candidates to demonstrate the overall knowledge and skills they have learned from the curriculum through a guided independent research of a substantial piece of academic work. Candidates will be assessed on their capacity to define a topic for analysis and examination, to articulate a coherent scheme and logical arguments of the issues involved, to gather the necessary information, and to examine and present their ideas in a critical and satisfactory way.

The dissertation shall be 10,000-15,000 words in length. The proposal of dissertation shall be submitted to potential supervisor for confirmation of supervision by November 15 of the final academic year in which the curriculum ends and the dissertation shall be presented by July 31 of the same year. Candidates shall submit a statement that the dissertation represents their own work undertaken after registration as candidates for the degree.

Assessment: 100% coursework

BSTC8997. Capstone Experience: Portfolio

This portfolio serves as the culminating component of the Master of Buddhist Studies programme. Students will create a comprehensive portfolio that integrates their learning experiences and synthesizes the essential Buddhist teachings learnt in the programme. The portfolio will serve to showcase students’ understanding of these teachings while also exploring their practical applications in real-world contexts. Each portfolio must include a title that reflects the central theme of the student’s studies. This theme should analyze and

articulate what students have learnt throughout the programme, highlighting their specific areas of focus and insight.

The portfolio includes an essay of 5,000 to 7,000 words and a 5-minutes video-recorded presentation. The portfolio shall be presented by a deadline of the final academic year prescribed by the programme. Candidates shall submit a statement that the portfolio represents their own work undertaken after registration as candidates for the degree.

Assessment: 100% coursework