



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

Introduction to Buddhism in Asia - 46143

Last update 23-10-2021

HU Credits: 4

Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)

Responsible Department: Asian Studies

Academic year: 0

Semester: 1st Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Dr. Eviatar Shulman

Coordinator Email: eviatar.shulman@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: Wed 9-10AM, After setting a specific time by email

Teaching Staff:

Prof Eviatar Shulman

Course/Module description:

The course will introduce students to the development of Buddhism in its cradle-land of India, through its passage to East- and South-East Asia and to Tibet. The main emphases will be on understanding Buddhism in its organic historical and cultural contexts, with special reference to Buddhist philosophy and religion.

Course/Module aims:

1. To provide a framework for understanding Buddhism in its specific cultural and historical contexts.
2. To understand central thought patterns of Buddhism and the challenges the posit to western religion and philosophy.
3. To examine a religion in motion through different cultural contexts.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

1. To understand the gap between a global, general phenomena and its specific instantiations.
2. To identify that each phenomena has an historical and cultural setting.
3. To penetrate the empty nature of reality.

Attendance requirements(%):

100

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: lecture

Course/Module Content:

1. Introduction to Buddhism in Asia and Beyond.
2. Life of the Buddha
3. The Central principles of Buddhist thought - the 4 noble truths.
4. The Central principles of Buddhist thought - selflessness.
5. From philosophy to morality - dependent origination and karma.
6. Buddhist meditation theory - calm and insight.
7. The Indian background for the rise of Buddhism
8. Buddhism as a religion and social reality.
9. Buddhist monkhood and the development of the order.
10. Aśoka and righteous Buddhist kingship.
11. Traditional Buddha - his previous lives.
12. Traditional Buddha - the cult of relics.

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13. *Theravāda Buddhism in Sri Lanka 1.*
 14. *Theravāda Buddhism in Sri Lanka 2.*
 15. *Driving the great vehicle – the rise of Mahāyāna.*
 16. *The main innovations of Mahāyāna,*
 17. *Mahāyāna self-understanding – The Lotus Sūtra and the Perfection of Wisdom literature.*
 18. *Mahāyāna Buddhist philosophy.*
 19. *Chinese Buddhism 1.*
 20. *Chinese Buddhism 2.*
 21. *Japanese Buddhism 1.*
 22. *Japanese Buddhism 2.*
 23. *Zen Buddhism.*
 24. *Tibetan Buddhism*

Required Reading:

A number of chapter from -

- Gethin, Rupert, (1998). *The Foundations of Buddhism.* Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Harvey, P., (2013 [1990]). *An Introduction to Buddhism: Teachings, History, and Practices, 2nd Edition.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Williams, Paul, (1989). *Mahāyāna Buddhism: The Doctrinal Foundations.* New York: Routledge.

Additional Reading Material:

- Rahula, Walpola, (1974 [1959]). *What the Buddha Taught.* New York: Grove Press, 1-50.
- Olivelle, Patrick, (1998). *The Early Upaniṣads: Annotated Text and Translation.* New York: Oxford University Press, introduction.
- Vetter, Tilmann, (1988). *The Ideas and Meditative Practices of Early Buddhism.* Leiden, New York, København, Köln: E. J. Brill.
- Shulman, E., (2010). "Mindful Wisdom: The –Sati-paṭṭhāna-sutta on Mindfulness, Memory and Liberation." *History of Religions* 49.4: 393-420.
- Strong, J. S., (2001). *The Buddha: a Short Biography.* Oxford: Oneworld, ch.2.
- Strong, John, (2004). *Relics of the Buddha.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, chs. 1,2.
- Rahula, W., (1956). *The Heritage of the Bhikkhu.*
- Tambiah, S. J., (1970). *Buddhism and the Spirit Cults in North-East Thailand.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, c. 5-7.

• Harris, I., (2005). *Cambodian Buddhism: History and Practice*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, chs. 3-4.

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• Deal, W. E., and Ruppert, B., (2015). *A Cultural History of Japanese Buddhism*. Wiley and Blackwell, chs. 1,4.

• Samuel, G., (2012). *Introducing Tibetan Buddhism*. Oxon: Routledge, chs. 1,4.

Harrison, P., (2004). "Mediums and Messages: Reflections on the Production of Mahāyāna sūtras." *The Eastern Buddhist* XXXV 1&2: 115-151.

• Nagao, Gadjin, (1991). *Mādhyamika and Yogācāra*. New York: SUNY, ch. 5, 14.

• Wright, Arthur F., (1959). *Buddhism in Chinese History*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

• Ch'en, Kenneth K. S., (1973). *Buddhism in China: A Historical Survey*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, chs. 2-4.

• Kieschnick, J., (1997). *The Eminent Monk: Buddhist Ideals in Medieval Chinese Hagiography*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, ch. 1.

• McRae, John R., (2003). *Seeing through Zen: Encounter, Transformation and Genealogy in Chinese Chan Buddhism*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

• Samuel, G., (2012). *Introducing Tibetan Buddhism*. Oxon: Routledge, chs. 1,4.

• Abeyekara, A., (2001). "The Saffron Army, Violence, Terror(ism): Buddhism, Identity and Difference in Sri Lanka. *Numen* 48:1-46.

Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 90 %

Presentation 0 %

Participation in Tutorials 10 %

Project work 0 %

Assignments 0 %

Reports 0 %

Research project 0 %

Quizzes 0 %

Other 0 %

Additional information: