

ASIAN 223 Buddhist Literature

Winter quarter, 2020

Instructor: Collett Cox

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Office hours: Monday 12:30-1:20, Tuesday 12:30-1:10, or by appointment.

Canvas web site: <https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1353060>

The Canvas course web site will contain the syllabus, recommended readings, reading questions, reading quizzes, lecture outlines, midterm study questions, short paper tips and topics, and take-home final exam.

Nature of the course: The course will explore early Indian Buddhist literature through selected excerpts chosen from biographies, poetry, narratives, meditation manuals, doctrinal treatises, historical accounts, and scholastic texts. We will begin with the background for the life of the Buddha and the emergence of Buddhist teaching, and then we will trace the development of Buddhist teaching and its further elaboration through various types of texts and practices in the early centuries of the common era. In addition to the characteristics of different textual genres, attention will also be given to the themes of textual composition, authorship, audience, transmission, context, and function. Readings include both translations from primary texts and background material, which will situate the topic in historical and cultural context.

Objectives: Through this course, students will

- gain general familiarity with major examples of early Indian Buddhist literature
- explore the Buddhist practices and teachings that this literature describes
- recognize the differences among genres of literary texts in terms of their authorship, audience, structure, function, and context of use
- investigate the various perspectives from which literary works can be interpreted

Requirements for the course: The course is a cooperative undertaking, and thus it assumes active involvement with the assigned readings and participation in class discussion. Please feel free to raise questions throughout the lectures. Requirements also include reading quizzes through Canvas, facilitating class discussion, one midterm exam, one short analytical paper (4-5 page limit) for which topics will be suggested, and a take-home final examination submitted online through Canvas **MONDAY, MARCH 16, 2020, NO LATER THAN 5:00 PM.**

Grading will be as follows (according to a 4.0 scale).

- 10% Class participation
- 10% Facilitating/leading class discussion
- 15% Canvas reading quizzes
- 20% Midterm
- 20% Short analytical paper
- 25% Take-home final exam

LATE POLICY for final exam: There is a penalty of a 10% grade reduction for each day of late submission of the take-home final exam. Standard exceptions for major medical situations apply; such situations should be discussed with the instructor.

Class Participation: Students are expected to attend all classes and are responsible for carrying out the assigned readings prior to the dates indicated on the syllabus or in accordance with any changes that I announce in class and/or on the course web site. **(Please check the course web site regularly!)** All students are encouraged to ask questions at any time, but specific students will be expected to facilitate

the class discussion of the primary text materials to which they have been assigned.

Facilitating/Leading Class Discussion: During my introduction for each topic, I encourage questions and discussion. In order to facilitate the airing of student views and interpretations, I will also designate certain students to be particularly responsible for each set of assigned readings, including both secondary and primary sources. These students should expect to be asked to share their views on the readings and should come to class prepared to raise topics and questions for further discussion. I will also ask students to take the lead in the discussion of certain primary text materials. (This should not be seen as a “formal presentation” but rather as an exercise in stimulating questions from and discussion among your classmates.) It may be useful for the students assigned to a set of readings to discuss, prior to their assigned classes, topics and questions (and possible responses) for further class discussion.

Canvas Discussions: https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1353060/discussion_topics

Since our time in class is limited, Canvas Discussions can serve as an additional forum for the discussion of issues and questions that relate to the course. I will post questions related to major topics, and students may respond and add their own questions or observations. Although participation in Canvas discussions is **not** required, I encourage all students to use this resource.

Canvas reading quizzes: Prior to the class discussion of each major section of readings, students will be expected to complete a Canvas quiz on the required readings for that section. (**Canvas reading quizzes must be completed prior to 1:15 pm on the due dates that are listed on the syllabus.**)

Readings:

The following required texts are available for purchase from the University Bookstore:

Gethin, Rupert. *The Foundations of Buddhism*, Oxford U Press.

Conze, Edward. *Buddhist Scriptures*, Penguin.

Required readings indicated by CP are contained in a coursepack entitled ASIAN 223 available at Ram’s Copy Center, 4144 University Way NE, (Tel: 206-632-6630).

The syllabus also includes “Recommended readings” indicated by CWS that are available on the “course web site.” These readings are not required for the course or Canvas reading quizzes but may be referred to in lectures and will be useful for those interested in a particular topic.

Tips for the Course:

1. Needless to say, success in this course depends upon attendance at all class meetings.
2. Do the reading for each topic and consult the reading questions provided on the course web site. **BRING THE ASSIGNED COURSEPACK READINGS TO EACH CLASS MEETING.** (Also, be sure to complete the Canvas reading quizzes as assigned!)
3. The readings include both background or secondary readings (e.g., Gethin, recommended readings) and primary text readings (e.g., the majority of the readings in Conze and in the coursepack). The primary text selections require critical or close reading. **Plan to read these primary text selections more than once!** (For the method of “critical or close” reading, please follow the suggestions provided in “Reading ‘Critically,’” “Preparing a Close Reading,” and “My Close Reading Tips” assigned for the first class.)
4. Take advantage of recommended readings in the case of questions and topics that interest you.
5. Prepare for and participate actively in class discussion.
6. You are encouraged to come to me with any problems concerning the course or its subject matter at any point during the term. The material may seem difficult simply because it is new to you. Do not hesitate to clarify problems as soon as they arise. Please, please take advantage of my office hours to go over questions or problems you might be having!

Fair Use and Academic Conduct: The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code)

governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted materials. Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specified conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be “used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research.” If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of “fair use,” that user may be liable for copyright infringement.

The presentation of another's words and ideas as one's own is a serious offense; violations will be dealt with according to the University of Washington Student Conduct code, which stipulates sanctions up to and including expulsion. See

<https://depts.washington.edu/grading/pdf/AcademicResponsibility.pdf>

<https://www.washington.edu/cssc/for-students/student-code-of-conduct/>

<http://www.washington.edu/admin/rules/policies/WAC/478-121TOC.html>

Accommodations: If you would like to request academic accommodations, please contact Disability Resources for Students (<http://depts.washington.edu/uwdrs/> 206-543-8924). If you have a letter from that office, please present the letter to me as soon as possible so that we can discuss the accommodations you might need for the course. You may also request accommodations to observe religious holidays or traditions online through the Office of the Registrar (only during the first two weeks of a quarter).

Washington state law requires that UW develop a policy for accommodation of student absences or significant hardship due to reasons of faith or conscience, or for organized religious activities. The UW’s policy, including more information about how to request an accommodation, is available at [Religious Accommodations Policy](#). Accommodations must be requested within the first two weeks of this course using the [Religious Accommodations Request form](#) available on this site.

Assignment Due Dates

Canvas reading quizzes: #1 Tuesday (1/21), #2 Tuesday (1/28), #3 Tuesday (2/4), #4 Tuesday (2/11), #5 Tuesday (2/25), #6 Tuesday (3/10).

Midterm: Tuesday (2/18).

Short paper: Thursday (3/5).

Take-home final exam: Monday (3/16), 5:00 pm, through online Canvas Course Web Site.

(Tentative) Schedule

Key for readings:

P = primary text translations

S = secondary or background readings

CP = coursepack for required readings

CWS = course web site for recommended readings

Week 1

1/7 Introduction: Review of syllabus; “religious” literature—genres and issues; early Buddhism: historical background (Indus Valley, Vedas)

S-CP Gummer, Natalie. “Reading ‘Critically’ and Preparing a Close Reading”

S-CP Matz, Robert. “My Close Reading Tips.”

Recommended:

“This is Your Brain on Jane Austen: The Neuroscience of Reading Great Literature”

<http://www.openculture.com/2015/07/this-is-your-brain-on-jane-austen-the-neuroscience-of-reading-great-literature.html>

Module 1: Background

1/9 Historical background: Vedas (continued), Upaniṣads

S Gethin, *The Foundations of Buddhism*, pp. 7-13.

P-CP Franklin Edgerton, *Beginnings of Indian Philosophy, Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* pp.140-141, 152-169.

Recommended:

CWS King, Richard. "Orientalism and the Discovery of 'Buddhism.'" pp. 143-160.

Week 2

1/14 Historical background; Upaniṣads (continued); the śramaṇa movement (*sūtra* style: *dialogue, simile, repetition*)

S Gethin, *The Foundations of Buddhism*, pp. 7-16.

P-CP Gethin, Rupert. *Sayings of the Buddha*, "The Fruits of the Ascetic Life" *Sāmaññaphalasutta*, pp. 5-18.

1/16 Historical background; the śramaṇa movement (continued)

Week 3

Module 2: Life of the Buddha

1/21 Life of the Buddha (*biography/hagiography: literature as a historical source*)

Canvas reading quiz #1

S Gethin, *The Foundations of Buddhism*, pp. 16-34.

P Conze, Edward. *Buddhist Scriptures*, Aśvaghōṣa's "Life of the Buddha" *Buddhacarita*, pp. 19-24, 34-49, 58-66.

Recommended:

Buddha (manga) Tzuka Osamu

<https://thisisvignesh.wordpress.com/2015/06/13/buddha-by-osama-tezuka/>

CWS Walters, Jonathan S. "Stūpa, Story, and Empire: Constructions of the Buddha Biography in Early Post-Aśokan India," pp. 160-164.

CWS Flores, Ralph. "A Prince Transformed: the *Nikāyas*, the *Nidāṇdkathā*,

1/23 Life of the Buddha (continued); the Buddha's enlightenment

P Conze. *Buddhist Scriptures*, Aśvaghōṣa's "Life of the Buddha" *Buddhacarita*, pp. 49-56.

P-CP Lopez *Ariyapariyesanāsutta*, pp. 105-115.

P-CP Gethin. *Sayings of the Buddha*, "The Fruits of the Ascetic Life" *Sāmaññaphalasutta*, pp. 18-36.

Recommended:

CWS Walters, Jonathan. "Suttas as History: Four Approaches to the "Sermon on the Noble Quest (Ariyapariyesanāsutta)," pp. 247-284.

Week 4

Module 3: Early Indian Buddhist Teaching

1/28 The Buddha's enlightenment (continued); the Buddha's teaching—4 Noble Truths; (*sūtra* style: *exposition of the teaching, doctrinal arguments*)

Canvas reading quiz #2

S Gethin. *The Foundations of Buddhism*, pp. 59-84.

P-CP Warren, *Buddhism in Translations*, “Questions That Do Not Tend to Edification,” pp. 117–128.

P-CP Gethin. *Sayings of the Buddha*, “Turning the Wheel of Truth,” S V (420-424), pp. 243-246.

P-CP Warren, H.C. *Buddhism in Translations*, “The Three Characteristics,” (forward).

Recommended:

CWS Flores, Ralph. “Passing on: the *Nikāyas*,” pp. 67-79.

1/30 The Buddha’s teaching: 1st Noble Truth

S Gethin. *The Foundations of Buddhism*, pp. 133-149.

P Conze. *Buddhist Scriptures*, “Questions of King Milinda” *Milindapañha*, pp. 145-149.

P-CP Harvey, *Buddhist Philosophy*, “Philosophy of Mind and the Person,” pp. 265-271.

Week 5

2/4 The Buddha’s teaching: 1st Noble Truth (continued); 2nd Noble Truth

Canvas reading quiz #3

S Gethin. *The Foundations of Buddhism*, pp. 149-162.

P Conze. *Buddhist Scriptures*, “Questions of King Milinda” *Milindapañha*, pp. 149-151.

P-CP Gethin. *Sayings of the Buddha*, “Chapter on Causes” *Nidānavagga* S II (2-4), pp. 210-213.

P-CP Warren. *Buddhism in Translations*, pp. 215-221; 238-241.

Recommended:

P-CP Warren. *Buddhism in Translations*, pp. 242-252.

2/6 The Buddha’s teaching: 2nd Noble Truth (continued)

Week 6

2/11 The Buddha’s teaching and practice: 3rd-4th Noble Truths

Canvas reading quiz #4

S Gethin. *The Foundations of Buddhism*, pp. 163-201.

P Conze. *Buddhist Scriptures*, “Questions of King Milinda” *Milindapañha*, pp. 151-162.

P Conze. *Buddhist Scriptures*, Buddhaghosa’s “Path of Purification” *Visuddhimagga*, pp. 103-116.

P-CP Gethin. *Sayings of the Buddha*, “Establishing Mindfulness” *Satipaṭṭhānasutta*, pp. 141-151.

2/13 The Buddha’s teaching and practice: 3rd-4th Noble Truths (continued); Buddhist view of the cosmos

Advanced meditative states:

P-CP Strong, *The Experience of Buddhism*, “How to Walk on Water and Fly through the Air, Trance of Cessation,” pp. 134-138.

Cosmos:

S Gethin. *The Foundations of Buddhism*, pp. 112-132.

P-CP Strong, *The Experience of Buddhism*, “Remembering Past Lives,” “Viewing the Cosmos,” pp. 24-32, 36-42.

Week 7

2/18 First hour—**MIDTERM**

Second hour—Spread of Buddhist teaching (background)

2/20 Spread of Buddhist Teaching (continued): Aśoka

Aśoka:

P-CP “Edicts of Aśoka” (<http://www.cs.colostate.edu/%7Emalaiya/ashoka.html>)

Module 4: Practitioners: Ascetic, Monastic, Lay, and Women

Ascetic life:

P-CP Lopez “Ascetic Ideal,” pp. 262-268.

Monastic and lay life: ordination/rituals (*vinaya*) and practice

S Gethin. *The Foundations of Buddhism*, pp. 85-111.

P Conze. *Buddhist Scriptures*, “Buddhaghosa’s Path of Purification” *Visuddhimagga*,” pp. 69-73.

P-CP Strong, *The Experience of Buddhism*, “Regulation of the Sangha,” pp. 78-85.

S-CP Schopen, Gregory. “A Well Sanitized Shroud: Asceticism and Institutional Values in the Middle Period of Buddhist Monasticism,” pp. 315-319.

Recommended:

CWS Schopen, Gregory. “Deaths, Funerals, and the Division of Property in a Monastic Code,” esp. #1-4, 7.

Week 8

2/25 Monastic and lay life (continued); women in Buddhism

Canvas reading quiz #5

P Conze. *Buddhist Scriptures*, “Laymen and Monks,” pp. 93-97.

P-CP Strong, *The Experience of Buddhism*, “Acceptance of Women into the Order,” pp. 63-68.

P-CP Rhys Davids, C.A.F. and K. R. Norman, *Poems of Early Buddhist Nuns: Paṭācārā*, pp. 55-59; Khemā, pp. 66-68; Kisā-Gotamī, pp. 88-91.

2/27 Women in Buddhism (continued)

Week 9

3/3 Ethics and life ideals: *Dharmapada* (poetic style)

S Gethin. *The Foundations of Buddhism*, pp. 85-111 (review, if necessary).

P Conze. *Buddhist Scriptures*, pp. 70-73; “Verses on Dharma” *Dharmapada*, pp. 83-86.

Recommended:

CWS Flores, Ralph. “Right Figures of Speech: the *Dhammapada*,” pp. 87-93, 99-101.

3/5 Ethics and life ideals: tales of *karma* and merit *jātaka* (narrative style)

SHORT PAPER DUE

S Gethin. *The Foundations of Buddhism*, pp. 85-111 (review, if necessary).

P-CP Strong, *The Experience of Buddhism*, “The Bodhisattva Feeds a Tigress,” “The Last Past Life: Vessantara,” pp. 32-36.

P-CP Shaw, Sarah. *The Jātakas: Birth Stories of the Bodhisatta*. #1 *Apaṇṇaka jātaka*, #316 *Sasa jātaka*.

Week 10

Module 5: Early Indian Buddhist Scholasticism

3/10 Elaboration of the teaching: *abhidharma* exegesis

Canvas reading quiz #6

S Gethin. *The Foundations of Buddhism*, pp. 202-223.

P-CP Strong, *The Experience of Buddhism*, “Doctrinal Issues” pp. 138-144.

P-CP Duerlinger, Vasubandhu’s *Abhidharmakośa* “Critique of the Pudgalavādins’ Theory of Persons” (Edelglass, eds.) pp. 286-296.

(Alternative translation: P Conze. *Buddhist Scriptures*, “The Personalist Controversy,” pp. 192-197.)

P-CP Goodman, Vasubandhu’s *Abhidharmakośa* “Critique of the Soul” (Edelglass, eds.) pp. 286-296.

Recommended:

CWS Berkwitz, Stephen. “Mainstream Texts and Communities (Abhidharma),” pp. 46-67.

3/12 Elaboration of the teaching: *abhidharma* exegesis (continued)

(POSSIBLY) P-CP Lopez, *The Norton Anthology of World Religions: Buddhism*. “The Workings of the Law of Karma,” pp. 267-277.

**TAKE-HOME FINAL EXAM: DUE MONDAY, MARCH 16, 2020,
NO LATER THAN 5:00 PM**

SUBMISSION ONLINE THROUGH CANVAS