HH3033 Buddhism: A Social and Intellectual History

Academic Year: 2024-2025, S2

AU: 3 AU

Course Type: Seminar

Lecturer: Dr. Alasdair Chi alasdair.chi@ntu.edu.sg

Location and Timeslot: TR+94, SS2-01-15 **(South Spine)**, Thursdays 1130-1420

Learning Outcomes

Upon the successful completion of this course, you would be able to:

- Compare and contrast conceptions of Buddhism across a wide range of Asian historical contexts.
- Utilize methods in the study of religion to understand historical patterns of development across Indian, Chinese, and Southeast Asian contexts.
- Distinguish between Buddhism as a set of doctrinal principles and culturally specific historical adaptations of these ideas.
- Convincingly argue for or against narratives concerning the development of Buddhism and its adoption in cultural contexts across Asia.

Course Aims and Content

Is Buddhism a philosophy? Is it a religion? Is it a set of rituals? This course will give you the tools to evaluate these and other questions you have about Buddhism. This course will cover Buddhist social and intellectual history, beginning with the emergence of the cult of the Buddha and the earliest monasteries in South Asia, then discuss medieval transitions in East and South East Asia, and end with a set of discussions on how to think about modern, post-modern and global "Buddhisms".

The course will engage the Buddhist experience from a wide range of thematic and cultural perspectives. Themes will include Buddhism and the family, the experience of meditation, death ritual, Buddhism and war, the body as an object of desire and repulsion, Buddhist medicine, and the structure of monastic life. Cultural contexts will include India, China, Japan, Cambodia, and Thailand and others.

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Seminars

This class is taught in seminar form, with one 3-hour session per week where students will be expected to participate in guided class discussions. Students should ensure they have completed the required weekly lecture reading as this forms the basis of the tutorial discussion. These tutorial readings will usually be made available via NTULearn, or links provided through the portal.

Office Hours

I am a part-time lecturer but will be free after class most times and will be on campus on Friday as well. Just send me an email and we can plan a time around our schedules as I may be seeing multiple students. Give me one day to respond.

Student Assessment

The assessment for this course comprises of the following elements:

- **Participation (In-Class):** 20%, Continuous
- **Midterm Essay (and Primary Source Assignment):** 25%, Week 7
- **Research Essay proposal:** 15%, Week 12-13
- **Research Essay:** 40% After Week 13

Class Participation (20%): In-class group discussion will be an important means by which you will learn from your peers and build important skills, including constructing convincing arguments; analysing primary and secondary sources; and verbal communication. As such, your contribution to the discussion in class will be assessed. It is not enough to merely turn up to class; rather, you will be assessed on the extent to which you participate in and contribute to the class discussion.

Midterm Primary Source Assignment and Essay Questions (25%): The midterm essay has two components: Primary Source Analysis and Short Essay Questions. This essay will be due in Week 7.

- **Primary source analysis** is a key skill that is required for historical research. In this short essay, you will practice analyzing the ideas about Southeast Asia-China Interactions expressed in historical primary sources. You are required to choose **ONE** primary source from the list of primary sources provided. Evaluate your chosen primary source to address its representation of Buddhism and explain its historical context.
- You will also be tasked to answer **TWO** out of three **preset essay questions**. The essay-format test will examine your understanding of the arguments of the assigned readings and the major themes of the course. The test will also assess your ability to critically analyse connections between different case studies and to compare and contrast various approaches to the study of Southeast Asia-China Interactions.

Research Essay Proposal (15%): Developing a research question is a key skill required for historical research. As such, in your major essay, you will be required to develop your own research project and write your own essay question. This assignment will prepare you for your major essay assignment by giving you the chance to receive feedback on your project. The assignment has two sections:

<u>Section A: Research proposal (300 words)</u>
You will write a proposal for the research essay containing the following elements:

1. Statement of the essay question (this is not the same as an essay topic or subject area and needs to take the form of a *question*).
2. Summary of background research conducted to date, noting: i) the key issues in the secondary source literature; ii) the available primary sources for the topic.
3. The theoretical approach or approaches you will take in the essay.

<u>Section B: Annotated bibliography (500 words, not counting citations)</u>
This section takes the form of an annotated bibliography, that is, a list of sources with an annotation following each source explaining why the source is relevant to your essay. The purpose of the annotated bibliography is to help you prioritize your time by reading the most relevant sources and to demonstrate the extent of your research thus far. The annotated bibliography should include **10** sources, at least **2** of which should be primary sources. An annotation of 50 words should be included following each referenced source.

This annotation should not only state what the source is about but also explain why it is relevant to your research. The sources should be properly referenced in the Chicago style outlined in the course style guide. 3-10% will be deducted for incorrect referencing style. The citations themselves do not count towards the word limit of 500 words.

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You are expected to have read all of the sources referenced (at least in part). It will be quite obvious from the annotations if you haven't read much of the sources you include. You will be presenting this proposal in Week 12 and submitting it and the annotated bibliography in Week 13

Research Essay (40%): For your final research paper (3000 words), you will a develop a critical, evaluative way of using the primary source text in the context of established scholarship on your chosen topic. You will present a clear research question and hypothesis, review the scholarly literature on the topic, collect and synthesize the data, and state a clear conclusion.

The essay question you have developed should appear at the beginning of the first page of the essay. Please use the Chicago referencing style (outlined in the Course Style Guide.) 3-10% will be deducted for incorrect referencing style. This will be due after Week 13.

Bibliography and Citation Style

All citations are to be rendered in footnotes and accompanied with a complete bibliography rendered in the Chicago 16th or 17th Manual of Style. Poor citations will be marked down according to rubrics. Familiarise yourself with the difference between a footnote citation and bibliographic entry.

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Plagiarism

Good academic work depends on honesty and ethical behaviour. The quality of your work as a student relies on adhering to the principles of academic integrity and to the NTU Honour Code, a set of values shared by the whole university community. Truth, Trust and Justice are at the core of NTU's shared values. As a student, it is important that you recognize your responsibilities in understanding and applying the principles of academic integrity in all the work you do at NTU. Not knowing what is involved in maintaining academic integrity does not excuse academic dishonesty.

You need to actively equip yourself with strategies to avoid all forms of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, academic fraud, collusion and cheating. If you are uncertain of the definitions of any of these terms, you should go to the academic integrity website for more information. Consult your instructor(s) if you need any clarification about the requirements of academic integrity in the course.

GAI Usage

Use of General Artificial Intelligence (GAI) is permitted in the following situations: 1) Assist in generating key ideas only; 2) Assist in refining syntax and grammar for correct language submission only. The final write-up MUST be the student's own work.

Students must preserve a digital paper trail showing the way the GAI assistant was used. This should be a Word document specifying the particular GAI assistant used and include the prompts given to the GAI assistant and the GAI output, or outputs if several are generated. Use of GAI assistance is not permitted in the development or generation of this assignment or project.

On the Digital Paper Trail

Students are required, besides submitting the final work in the NTULearn facility, to also submit the paper trail as a Word document or documents, in a second and separate assignment section for this purpose under NTULearn. For assignments where the submission is non-digital, the students can create a photo journal or a blog to document the journey and submit the pdf of this instead.

This digital paper trail must be maintained for later reference, at least until the end of the Academic Year following the semester in which the relevant assignment is submitted. This is to preserve the potential evidence in case there is a later complaint or suspicion relating to academic integrity violations

regarding that submission, or for further investigation by the school or other schools or the university when other academic integrity matters are raised regarding the same student, and it is deemed desirable to cross-check conduct in earlier courses.

The student must sign and submit with the assignment/project write-up a declaration regarding such use. In addition, the student must provide footnote or in-text references in the submission indicating any text paraphrase or significant fact or idea that originated with the GAI assistant.

See example below:

Reference list entry example (with a shareable link generated by the AI tool)

OpenAI. (2023). ChatGPT (Aug 7 version) [Large language model].

https://chat.openai.com/share/46ce4720-19bd-4c21-84f0-7a69ec4af03d

Reading List

Texts subject to changes.

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- Abe, Ryuichi. *The Weaving of Mantra: Kūkai and the Construction of Esoteric Buddhist Discourse*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Clarke, Shayne (2014). *Family Matters in Indian Buddhist Monasticisms*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Copp, Paul (2014). *The Body Incantatory: Spells and the Ritual Imagination in Medieval Chinese Buddhism*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Davis, Erik W. (2016). *Deathpower: Buddhism's Ritual Imagination in Cambodia*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Gethin, Rupert (1998). *The Foundations of Buddhism*. New York: Oxford University Press
- Gifford, Julie A. (2011). *Buddhist Practice and Visual Culture: The Visual Rhetoric of Borobudur*. London: Routledge Press.
- Gomez, Luis (1996). *The Land of Bliss: The Paradise of the Buddha of Measureless Light*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Hakeda, Yoshio (1972). *Kūkai: Major Works*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Harrison, Paul (ed.) (2018). *Setting Out on the Great Way: Essays on Early Mahayana Buddhism*. Sheffield: Equinox.
- LaFleur, William R. (1986). *The Karma of Words: Buddhism and the Literary Arts in Medieval Japan*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- McDaniel, Justin (2008). *Gathering Leaves and Lifting Words: Histories of Buddhist Monastic Education in Laos and Thailand*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- McKinney, Meredith (2013). *Essays in Idleness and Hōjōki*. London: Penguin.
- Olivelle, Patrick (2011). *Ascetics and Brahmins: Studies in Ideologies and Institutions*. London: Anthem Press.
- Osto, Douglas (2019). "Altered States and the Origins of the Mahāyāna."
- Patton, Thomas N. (2018). *The Buddha's Wizards: Magic, Protection and Healing in Burmese Buddhism*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Samuel, Geoffrey. (2009). *The Origins of Tantra and Yoga: Indian Religions to the Thirteenth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Strong, John S. (2015). *Buddhisms: An Introduction*. London: Bloomsbury Press.
- Takakusu, Junjiro. (1896). *A Record of the Buddhist Religion as Practiced in India and the Malay Archipelago (A.D. 671-695)*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- White, David, ed. (2000). *Tantra in Practice*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Timetable for HH2008 Feasting and Fasting: Food and Drink in History

Week / Session	Topics / Themes	Readings	Activities / Deadlines
1	Course Introduction and Overview	Olivelle (selections); Strong, Chapters 2-3	
2	Classic Scholarly Conceptions of Early Indian Buddhism: Conceptual Foundations and the Structure of the Early Monastic Community	Gethin, Chaps. 1-5 Strong, Chapters 4-5 Aśvaghoṣa's *Buddhacarita*, selections	
3	Challenging Classic Scholarly Conceptions of the Early Monastic Community	Clarke; Strong, Chapter 6 *Vinaya*, selections	
4	The Mahāyāna and Early Medieval Indian Buddhism: The Development of a Buddhist Paradise	Harrison (selections); Osto; Strong, Chapter 8 Gomez, 3-22	
5	Tantra and Late Medieval Indian Buddhism	Davidson (selections)	
6	Buddhism on the Periphery of Chinese Culture: Early Chinese Philosophical and Social Adaptations of an Indian Religion	Zürcher, Chapters 1-3 Chinese Sutras, Selections	
7	Buddhism Moves to Center Stage in China: Material and Ritual Cultural Adaptations of Indian Buddhism	Welter, selections	Midterm Assignment Due
8	Buddhist Influence on State and Cosmology in Early Medieval Japan	Abe, Chapters 1, 3, 5, 8 Hakeda (Kukai)	
9	Medieval Japanese Buddhist Literature	LaFleur, Chapters 1-5 McKinney, Essays in Idleness	
10	Monastic Education in Laos and Thailand	McDaniel	
11	Magic, Protection and Healing in Burmese Buddhism	Patton	

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12	Buddhist Death Ritual in Contemporary Cambodia	Allison (2008); Feagans et al. (2010); O'Donnell (2017)	Research Essay Outline Presentations
13	Global Buddhist Modernities	Nowak (2014); Mak (2021); Lee and Hun (2021)	Research Essay Outline Research Essay Due *after* this week

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Declaration on Academic Honesty*

Academic year and semester: AY2024-2025 Semester 1

What is academic dishonesty?

All members of the NTU community are responsible for upholding the values of academic integrity in all academic undertakings (including, but not limited to, written and oral assignments, presentations, course work, quizzes and exams). Students should not cheat, plagiarise, or attempt to pass off another's work as their own. This includes, but is not limited to, the writing or ideas of another person, without acknowledging or appropriately crediting the source from which the writing or ideas are taken. NTU takes a serious view of any form of academic dishonesty. Plagiarism, cheating, and any other forms of academic dishonesty are considered serious offences for which penalties will be imposed.

Declaration

By signing this form, you declare that you have read and understood NTU's Policy on Student Code of Conduct and that all graded and non-graded assignments you have turned in are your/your group's own work and will not involve any plagiarism or collusion. Reliance on other people's work, when allowed, will be appropriately referenced. You are responsible for knowing the appropriate form of referencing used for this course. Quotation marks will be used around materials written verbatim from other sources; citations will clearly indicate paraphrasing of other sources. You will not submit any work for this course that was (in whole or part) graded work for another course, or will be.

You must print, sign, and return the lower section of this form to the Lecturer by Week Two. No participation credit will be given until this is returned.

*Adapted from 'Academic Honesty Declaration' for HS7003.

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Declaration on Academic Honesty

Course code: HH3033

Name (as registered):

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Matriculation number:

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Signature & date

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