RELS 232.01: Introduction to Buddhism

Alan Sponberg
University of Montana - Missoula
INTRODUCTION TO BUDDHISM

Instructor: Alan Sponberg <sponberg@selway.umt.edu>

Office: Rm. 150, Liberal Arts Bldg.
Hours: MF 10:10-11:00am
      Tue 11-12, or by apt. (ph: 243-2803)

Course Website: http://www.cas.umt.edu/religious/Medbud

Course Requirements: Attendance, reading, 2 mid-term essay-question exams (Oct. 6 and Nov. 8), and a comprehensive essay-question final exam. Note also that the nature of this course makes it very important that you attend class regularly and that you keep up with the assigned reading (60-75 pg/week), a number of which may need to be read more than once due to the unfamiliar nature the subject. Please do not take the course if you will not be able to do this.

Policy on Make-up Exams: Make-up exams will be given only for unavoidable and excusable absence (illness, etc. Cnot over-sleeping, late return from week-end trip, alien abduction, etc.), and only if you contact me prior to the scheduled time of the exam. My voice mail is available 24-hours/day at 406-243-2803. With prior approval, the usual make-up assignment for a missed exam will be a one-half hour oral exam in my office.

The final exam for this course is scheduled in the Course Schedule for Friday, Dec. 21st (8:00-10:00am). Please be understand clearly that you cannot pass the course if you are not present for the final exam, which means you must take special care to make your holiday travel plans accordingly. If you neglect to make your reservations early enough to get a flight that allows you to take the final exam, it will not be possible to schedule a make-up exam.
Books to purchase at the Bookstore (Library copies are on reserve at Mansfield Library)

- Michael Carrithers: The Buddha
- Sangharakshita: Guide to the Buddhist Path
- Vessantara: Meeting the Buddhas (We will be reading approximately one-half of this book)
- Thich Nhat Hanh: The Heart of Understanding
- Dalai Lama: Healing Anger
- Faculty Pack of Additional Readings: available from UC Bookstore (ask if none are on the shelf)
- Photocopied binder of last year’s lecture slides (optional and available after the 1st week of classes)

Optional Course on Buddhist Meditation: Students who wish to may also enroll concurrently in RS 233: Traditions of Buddhist Meditation (3 cr. hr.); note that RELS 233 is not a requirement for taking this course (RS 232), though it will definitely add to your experience and understanding of Buddhism. Note the beginning dates.

- RS 233.01: Monday  3:10-5:00  GBB L04----Begins Sept. 10
- RS 233.02: Wednesday  3:10-5:00  GBB L04----Begins Sept. 12
- RS 233.03: Thursday  3:40-5::30  GBB L04----Begins Sept. 13

RS 233 is open only to students currently or previously enrolled in this course (RS 232).

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Schedule of Readings

Readings should be completed by the date indicated.

* Asterisk indicates item is in the FacPac

1. THE BUDDHA

1  Sept. 5  *"Introduction" to Entering the Stream, ed. by Samuel Bercholz and & Sherab Chodzin Kohn
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 7</td>
<td>&quot;Life of the Buddha, &quot;Birth and Early Years&quot; &amp; &quot;Struggle for Enlightenment&quot;</td>
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<td>Sept. 10</td>
<td>Carrithers: The Buddha: Chapts. 1 &amp; 2</td>
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<td>Sept. 12</td>
<td>Carrithers: The Buddha: Chapt. 3</td>
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<td><em>/&quot;Words of the Buddha&quot;—the Dhammapada from Entering the Stream</em></td>
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<td><em>/&quot;Metta Sutta&quot; from Entering the Stream</em></td>
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<td>Sept. 14</td>
<td>Carrithers: The Buddha: Chapt. 4</td>
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<td><em>Selected Texts: &quot;Setting in Motion the Wheel of the Dharma&quot; &amp; &quot;Parable of the Piece of Cloth</em></td>
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<td><em>/&quot;Where Buddhism Begins and Why It Begins There?,&quot; &quot;The Problem of Desire,&quot; &amp; &quot;Desire for the Eternal&quot;</em></td>
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<td>Sangharakshita: Guide, AThe 'Goal' of Nirvana &amp; AEnlightenment@</td>
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<td>Sept. 17</td>
<td><em>/&quot;The Kalama Sutta&quot;</em>; (at the end of the Life of the Buddha reading assigned above for lecture 2)</td>
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<td>&quot;Carrithers: The Buddha: Chapt. 5</td>
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<td>Sept. 19</td>
<td>Video Documentary: &quot;Footprint of the Buddha&quot;</td>
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<td><em>/&quot;Moral Conduct, Concentration and Wisdom&quot; by S.N. Goenka from Entering the Stream</em></td>
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<td>Sangharakshita: Guide to the Buddhist Path, AWord of the Buddha &amp; AWrong View, Right View, and Perfect View@</td>
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<td>Sept. 21</td>
<td>Vessantara: Meeting the Buddhas, 1-23</td>
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<td>Note Glossary of Terms at end of volume</td>
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<td>Sept. 24</td>
<td>Sangharakshita: Guide to the Buddhist Path, AArchetypal Symbolism in the Biography of the Buddha@</td>
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<td>Sept. 26</td>
<td>First Exam</td>
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II. THREE HISTORICAL PHASES OF BUDDHISM

A. PHASE ONE: EARLY CONSERVATIVE BUDDHISM—Focusing on the Developmental Dimension

10 Sept. 28 Review: The Buddha, pp. 66–78
Sangharakshita: Guide, A Wheel of Life and Spiral Path, & ASix Realms—bring to class
*"The Vicious Circle of Samsara & the Path to Enlightenment (Diagram)—bring to class
11 Oct. 1  Sangharakshita: *Guide, ATwelve Links* & *ASTopping the Wheel*—bring FacPac to class

12 Oct. 3  Sangharakshita: *Guide, AThe Spiral Path*—bring PacPac to class

13 Oct. 5  Sangharakshita: *Guide, AThe Criterion of Ethics,* *AFive Precepts,* *Principle of Non-Violence* & *APrinciple of Non-Exploitation*

*”Buddhist Precepts”—Diagram*

14 Oct. 8  Sangharakshita: *Guide, AContentment,* *ALevels of Communication* & *AAwareness*

15 Oct. 10  *Goldstein & Kornfield: "Why Meditate"

*The Practice of Recollection”*

Sangharakshita: *Guide, AThe Four Brahma-viharas* & *AThe Dhyanas*”


Review *Guide,* pp. 88b-89a (2nd ed: 82b-83a) on "Who or what is reborn?"

17 Oct. 15  *”Freud and Dr. Buddha”*

*”The Greening of the Self”*

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**B. Phase Two: MAHAYANA BUDDHISM—Focusing on the Relational Dimension of Buddhahood**

18 Oct. 17  *”The Teachings of the Great Vehicle”*

*”Beginnings of Mahayana Buddhism in India”*

Vessantara:  *Meeting the Buddhas,* pp. 129-158

19 Oct. 19  Vessantara:  *Meeting the Buddhas,* pp. 159-182; 195-202

**“Flawless Purity: A Dialogue with the Laywomen Gangottara”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Oct. 24</th>
<th>Thich Nhat Hanh: <em>Heart of Understanding</em>, vii-29</th>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Oct. 26</td>
<td>Thich Nhat Hanh: <em>Heart of Understanding</em>, 31-54</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Oct. 29</td>
<td><em>“Heart Sutra &amp; Commentary”</em></td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Oct. 31</td>
<td>Vessantara: <em>Meeting the Buddhas</em>, 25-54</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Nov. 2</td>
<td><em>“Mandala of the Five Buddhas”</em> (diagram)</td>
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<td>Sangharakshita: <em>Guide, A The Symbolism of the Five Buddhas</em> &amp; <em>AFive Wisdoms</em></td>
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<td>Vessantara: <em>Meeting the Buddhas</em>, 52-53, 57-67</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Nov. 5</td>
<td>Vessantara: <em>Meeting the Buddhas</em>, pp. 69-126</td>
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**Second Exam:** Nov. 7
C. Phase Three: Zen, Pure Land & Vajrayana Buddhism—Focusing on the Technical Dimension of Buddhahood

27 Nov. 9

*"The Tantra and Vajrayana Buddhism" & "The End of Buddhism in India"

Nov. 12 Veteran’s Day Holiday—no class

28 Nov. 14 Vessantara: Meeting the Buddhas, 205-218 & 229-240

29 Nov. 16 *"Death and Dying in Tibetan Buddhism” 25pp

30 Nov. 19 *"The Twentieth Century” 29pp

*"Faces of the Dalai Lama"

Nov. 21-25 ****Thanksgiving Holiday****

31 Nov. 26 Dalai Lama: Healing Anger; "Forward" & "Introduction," pp. 1-33; Note Glossary at the end.

32 Nov. 28 Dalai Lama: Healing Anger, pp. 35-71

33 Nov. 30 Dalai Lama: Healing Anger, pp 73-105

*"Exchanging Oneself for Others"

34 Dec. 3 Dalai Lama: Healing Anger, pp. 107-144

III. Buddhism in the Modern World—A Fourth Phase???

35 Dec. 5 * "East and West: The Central Region" & "The Restless Pioneers"

36 Dec. 7 * "Sangharakshita: Adaptation"
"The Great Conversion: Dr. Ambedkar and the Buddhist Revival" by Christopher Queen

37 Dec.10  * "Satipatthana: Mindful Awareness"
            * Gary Snyder: "Buddhism & Planetary Culture"
            Review: *Johanna Macy: "The Greening of the Self* assigned for lecture 17

38 Dec. 12  * "Nhat Hanh: Engagement"
            * "The Edicts of Ashoka"

39 Dec. 14  Conclusion and Review for Final

**Final Comprehensive Exam:** Friday, Dec. 21st, 8:00am-10am  (meet in our usual classroom)