

Spring, 2008

Pitzer College

Zen Buddhism

RLST/ASST 106

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Course Purpose and Topics:

In this course we will examine the teachings and history of Zen Buddhism, with attention to both its Buddhist context and its historical tradition in China, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam, and North America. We will give attention to the historical and social context in which such expression develops, and how context shapes religious content? How do these movements, which often begin as iconoclastic reform movements within a large religious institution, themselves become substantial, wealthy, and influential orthodox institutions? What is religious meaning for monks and nuns who hold that there is nothing to know? What relationship does our 20th century understanding of Zen have to world history?

Course Requirements:

You are responsible for the learning process in this class. To accomplish this you will be expected to complete the assigned readings before coming to class, to contribute active, informed, and constructive discussion, and to attend class regularly. You will be encouraged to think through the sometimes difficult material with your fellow students and the instructor in open and exploratory discussions, and this class discussion will be a major part of the course. You will think through the central issues of the course in two written assignments. The first will be 3-5 pages in length on one concept from the early Zen tradition discussed in relation to Buddhist teachings. A second will be based on regular meditation practice as a field research component, according to a schedule to be discussed in class, which you will link to course readings in a short response paper (1-2 pages). All students will also complete a final take-home examination with essay discussions of questions selected from a list to be handed out during the last week of class. Graduate students are also asked to write a 25-40 page research paper instead of the meditation paper.

Your grade will be determined as follows: attendance, preparation, and daily discussion, 30%; first paper, 20%; meditation response paper, 15%; take-home final examination, 35%. (Graduate Students: discussion 25%, first paper 15%, final 30%, paper 30%)

Note: Students with learning or physical disabilities will be given reasonable accommodations. If you need to request accommodations or other assistance, contact the Academic Support Services Office, extension 73553. Students who do not give their sources for ideas and information not their own or common knowledge are practicing plagiarism; they will be given one chance to rewrite the paper and correct the problem, and if it is not corrected they will not receive credit for the assignment.

Required Textbooks: (all readings are available at Honnold library reserve and for purchase at Huntley bookstore, except course readings packet—see below)

Dresser, Marianne, ed., Buddhist Women on the Edge, North Atlantic Books, 1996.

Lin-chi I-hsuan, The Zen Teaching of Master Lin-chi, Columbia U.P.

The Platform Sutra, trans. & intro. by Phillip Yampolsky, Columbia Univ. Press 1967.

Parker, Joseph, Zen Buddhist Landscape Arts of Early Muromachi Japan, State University of New York Press.

T'aeo, A Buddha from Korea, trans. J.C. Cleary, Shambala.

Victoria, Brian, Zen at War, 2nd ed., Rowman and Littlefield.

Xeroxed Course Reader—available at King's Copies (on Foothill just west of corner of Mountain; 625-2002) and Honnold Library reserve desk; some readings available on web at Honnold Library website—see course reserve readings (course code is jparker106 (lower case letters only)).

Reading and Assignment Schedule:

(Readings in textbooks are marked with an asterisk (*); all others are from the course packet of articles.)

Week 1 Jan. 23	Course Introduction: What is Zen? Readings: Buswell, 217-23. D.T. Suzuki, <u>Zen and Japanese Culture</u> , 21-37.
Week 2 Jan. 30	Knowing Asia and the Politics of Knowledge Readings: Said, "Introduction," <u>Orientalism</u> , Sharf "The Zen of Japanese Nationalism," 1-43.
Week 3 Feb. 6	The Buddhist Doctrinal Context. Readings: <u>Perfection of Wisdom</u> , 9-14. <u>Heart Sutra</u> (handout). <u>Vimalakirti</u> , p. 20-23 & 73-77.
Week 4 Feb. 13	Early Chinese Zen Buddhism: Teachings and Politics. Readings: *T'aeo, "Buddhist Spectrum," 3-26. *Victoria, <u>Zen at War</u> , 2 nd ed., 192-210, 225-27 (section not in first edition pages) *Yampolsky, p. 1-5, 23-40, 45-95.
Week 5 Feb. 20	Early Chinese Zen Buddhism (cont.). Readings: *Yampolsky, p. 111-121, 125-53, 155-163.

Reading and Assignment Schedule (continued):

- Week 6 Whose Zen? Part 1, Gender and Sexuality.
Feb. 27 Readings: Gross, Buddhism After Patriarchy, 17-27.
 Levering, "Ch'an and Gender," p. 137-56.
 Baker, "Being Different," 312-6.
- Feb. 27 Central Concepts Paper Due.**
- Week 7 T'ang Dynasty Chinese Zen: The Classic Period.
Mar. 5 Readings: *Lin-chi, p. 3-32, 47-66, 82-87 & 104-110.
- Week 8 Zen in the World Part 1, Institutional Bases and Lifestyle.
Mar. 12 Readings: Colcutt, Five Mountains, 138-45, 165-70, 236-45, 249-55, 275-89.
 *Victoria, Zen at War, 2nd ed., 210-225 (section not in 1st ed.)
- Have a Great Spring Break.**
- Week 9 Sung Dynasty Zen: Gender Contradictions.
Mar. 26 Readings: Yu, "Ta-hui," 211-235.
 Levering, "Lin-chi (Rinzai) Ch'an and Gender, 137-56.
 Levering, "Miao-tao and Ta-hui," 188-219.
 Hsieh, "Images of Women," 148-87.
- Week 10 Zen in the World Part 2, Zen and National Politics.
Apr. 2 Readings: *Buddha From Korea/T'aego, 26-77, 79-81, 92-96, 118-22, 165-8.
- Week 11 Zen and Japanese Elite Culture.
Apr. 9 Readings: *Parker, Intro., Ch. 2 (part), 3 & 5, p. 1-21, 51-62, 109-33, 155-83.
- Apr. 9 Experiential Exercise Response Paper Due.**
- Week 12 Zen and Vietnamese Popular Culture.
Apr. 16 Readings: Cleary, "Buddhism and Popular Religion in Vietnam," p. 93-118.
- Week 13 Zen in the World, Part 3, Zen and Modernity.
Apr. 25 Readings: *Victoria, Zen at War, Preface, 2nd ed. Preface, 95-116, 147-57, 182-91.
- Week 14 Whose Zen?—Part 2, Race and Gender.
Apr. 30 Readings: *Buddhist Women on the Edge, p. xi-xvii, 13-18, 19-38, 81-104,
 287-92.
- Week 15 Socially Engaged Zen Buddhism & Course Conclusion.
May 7 Readings: BASE, 1-22.
 *Buddhist Women on the Edge, p. 159-62.
- Film: Awakening Bell.
- Wed, May 7 Senior Take-home Final Examinations Due In Class.**
- Wed., May 14, 2 pm Take-home Final Examinations Due.**
- Wed., May 14, 2 pm Graduate Student Papers Due.**

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Course Packet Readings

- Buswell, Robert, The Zen Monastic Experience, Princeton UP, 1992, 217-23.
- D.T. Suzuki, Zen and Japanese Culture, 21-37.
- Said, Edward, "Introduction," Orientalism, Vintage, 1978.
- Sharf, Robert "The Zen of Japanese Nationalism," History of Religions, 33.1 (Aug., 1993): 1-43;
rev. pub. in Curators of the Buddha, ed. Donald Lopez, Univ. Chicago Pr., 107-60.
- The Perfection of Wisdom, tr. E. Conze, Four Seasons Foundation, 1973, 9-14.
- The Holy Teaching of Vimalakirti, tr. R. Thurman, Penn. State U.P., 1976, Introduction, Inconceivable Skill in Liberative Technique, Dharma Door of Non-duality, p. 1-9, 20-23, 73-7.
- Gross, Rita, Buddhism After Patriarchy, SUNY Pr., 1993, 17-27.
- Levering, Miriam, "Lin-chi (Rinzai) Ch'an and Gender: The Rhetoric of Equality and the Rhetoric of Heroism," in José Ignacio Cabezón, ed., Buddhism, Sexuality, and Gender, SUNY, 1992, 137-56.
- Baker, Rev. Chas. Koren, "'Being Different': Zen and Gay Love," in Queer Dharma: Voices of Gay Buddhists, ed. Winston Leyland, Gay Sunshine Press, 1998, 312-6.
- Collcutt, Martin, Five Mountains: The Monastic Institution in Medieval Japan, Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard Univ., 1981, 138-45, 165-70, 236-45, 249-55, 275-89.
- Yü, Chün-fang, "Ta-hui Tsung-kao and *Kung-an* Ch'an," Journal of Chinese Philosophy 6 (1979): 211-35.
- Levering, Miriam, "Miao-tao and Her Teacher Ta-hui," in Buddhism in the Sung, ed. Peter Gregory and Daniel Getz, Jr., Studies in East Asian Buddhism, University of Hawaii Press, 1999, 188-219.
- Hsieh, Ding-hwa, "Images of Women in Ch'an Buddhist Literature of the Sung Period," in Buddhism in the Sung, ed. Peter Gregory and Daniel Getz, Jr., Studies in East Asian Buddhism, University of Hawaii Press, 1999, 148-187.
- Cleary, J.C., "Buddhism and Popular Religion in Medieval Vietnam," Journal of the American Academy of Religion, LIX/1 (Spr. 1991): 93-118.
- Buddhist Peace Fellowship, "A Handbook for the Creation of the Buddhist Alliance for Social Engagement (BASE)," Feb., 1996, 1-22.