

SYLLABUS

History 463: Special Topics in South Asian History

FALL 1994

BUDDHISM AND ASIAN HISTORY

Instructor: Prof. André Wink (office 4133; office hours 12:15-13:15 TR)

Time: 3:00-5:30 R

Location: 2637 Humanities (and History Department Seminar Rooms)

Number of credits: 3

Requirements: attendance, weekly readings, one or several presentations, and one term paper (15 pages double-spaced)

Purchase from University Bookstore:

M. Weber, *The Religion of India* (New York & London, 1967, etc.)

J. M. Kitagawa & M. D. Cummings, *Buddhism and Asian History* (London, 1989)

R. Gombrich, *Theravada Buddhism: A Social History from Ancient Benares to Modern Colombo* (New York & London, 1991)

G. Coedès, *The Indianized States of Southeast Asia* (Honolulu, 1971)

Topic of the course:

Around the middle of the first millennium B. C., two so-called 'heterodox salvation religions' arose in North India: Buddhism and Jainism. They were called 'heterodox' because they denied the authority of the brahman priesthood (in fact of any priesthood) and hence the Vedic high tradition which is the touchstone of Hindu orthodoxy. And they were called 'salvation religions' because they promised, to a select number of professional monks, salvation from rebirth (rather than sin), which in Indian terms means religious salvation--again, without the mediation of the priesthood.

As many have noted, it is remarkable that of these two heterodox salvation religions, Buddhism gradually disappeared from its homeland (or at least lost its distinguishing features there), while it expanded successfully abroad, surviving in effect to this day as the 'state religion' in the 'mission territories' of Sri Lanka and mainland Southeast Asia. By contrast, Jainism survived in the Indian subcontinent itself as the religion and culture of a significant minority--which is however often claimed to be a 'Hindu' sect--, while it had almost no impact anywhere abroad.

When one turns to the literature on Buddhism and Jainism, one finds occasional hints of why this should be so, but nowhere are these questions systematically addressed in all their aspects. If they are addressed at all, it is usually in the form of simplistic theories, e. g. to the effect that Buddhism disappeared from those parts of India and Southeast Asia which were overrun by

Muslim armies in the medieval period and hence became subject to Islamic rule, after which mass conversion occurred due to political pressure, while the religion survived in areas which did not come under direct Muslim rule: the Himalayas, Sri Lanka, mainland Southeast Asia (but not Indonesia).

In order to address these problems more effectively, this course will first introduce the participants to some of the questions that historians and sociologists of religion, in particular Max Weber, have asked about Buddhism in order to situate it among other world religions and, especially, in order to locate it (next to Jainism) in a social and economic context. An attempt will then be made to identify the characteristics of ancient Indian Buddhism and the various transformations it underwent during Asoka. It will be seen that Buddhism in ancient India to a large extent remained embedded in the cosmopolitan context of long-distance trade and itinerant monkhood, but never became a peasant religion with broad, socially inclusive, underpinnings. In this sense, the idea that India was ever 'a Buddhist country' should perhaps be abandoned. In fact, we may well argue that by the time that the Muslim conquerors arrived in North India, in the eleventh to thirteenth centuries, Buddhism, while no longer a religion merely of a floating population of itinerant monks, had become institutionalized in monasteries, which, supported by royal endowments of land and otherwise, tended to become large academically oriented centers with permanent residents, vulnerable to outside attack, but aloof from the rural masses (which merely adopted random cultic elements of the religion). What happened, then, during the Islamic conquest, is that the academic (and soteriological/ philosophical) tradition of Buddhism was uprooted in India itself, and then replaced, outside the orbit of Muslim rule, by a variety of regional forms of Buddhism which, in conjunction again with kingship (especially in the early modern period), took on the aspect of a communal religion as well, and which were, apart from perpetuating the high tradition (but adding little to it), above all peasant religions--trade and money matters being left in these areas to foreign communities of Muslims or expatriate Chinese.

It will be argued that Jainism, since it was much more concerned with maintaining the internal cohesion of its lay community than ancient Indian Buddhism, was in a position not merely to survive in South Asia, but could support a diaspora trading community, essentially similar to that of the Muslims or Chinese in Cambodia, Thailand, and elsewhere.

September 1: **Introduction**

September 8: **Buddhism in Max Weber's historical sociology of religion**

Required readings: M. Weber, *The Religion of India* (New York & London, 1967), pp. 192-290.

Discussion: W. Schluchter (ed.), *Max Webers Studie über Hinduismus und Buddhismus: Interpretation und Kritik* (Suhrkamp, 1984).

September 15: **Buddhism and Jainism**

Required readings: P. S. Jaini, 'The Disappearance of Buddhism and the Survival of Jainism: A Study in Contrast', in: A. K. Narain (ed.), *Studies in History of Buddhism* (Delhi, 1980), pp. 81-91.

Discussion: F. R. Hamm, 'Buddhismus und Jainismus: Zwei Typen indischer Religiosität und ihr Weg in der Geschichte', *Saeculum*, 15 (1964), pp. 41-56.

September 22: **The accommodation between Buddhism and society in ancient India**

Required readings: R. Gombrich, *Theravada Buddhism: A Social History from Ancient Benares to Modern Colombo* (New York & London, 1991), pp. 1-136.

September 29: **Asoka**

Required readings: S. J. Tambiah, *World Conqueror and World Renouncer: A Study of Buddhism and Polity in Thailand against a Historical Background* (Cambridge, 1976), pp. 54-72 (Chapter 5): 'Asoka Maurya: The Paradigm'.

Discussion: H. Bechert, 'Ashokas "Schismenedikt" und der Begriff Sanghabheda', *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Süd- und Ostasiens*, V (1961), pp. 18-52; R. Lingat, *Royautés Bouddhiques* (Paris, 1989), 'Première Partie: Ashoka et la fonction royale'(pp. 16-60); R. Thapar, *Asoka and the Decline of the Mauryas* (Oxford, 1961); G. Fussman, 'Pouvoir Central et Régions dans l'Inde Ancienne: le problème de l'empire Maurya', *Annales E. S. C.*, 37, 4 (1982), pp. 621-47.

October 6: **Buddhist India**

Required readings: J. Heitzman, 'Early Buddhism, Trade and Empire', in: K. A. R. Kennedy & G. L. Possehl (eds), *Studies in the Archaeology and Palaeoanthropology of South Asia* (New Delhi, 1984), pp. 121-137.

Discussion: J. Heitzman, *The Origin and Spread of Buddhist Monastic Institutions in South Asia, 500 B. C.-300 A. D.* (Philadelphia, 1980); S. Dutt, *Buddhist monks and monasteries in India* (London, 1962); M. Njammasch, 'Buddhistische Klöster im Reich der Maitrakas von Valabhi', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* (forthcoming); H. A. Giles (tr.), *The Travels of Fa-hsien (399-414 A. D.), or Record of the Buddhistic Kingdoms* (London, 1956); S. Beal (tr.), *Si-yu-ki: Buddhist Records of the Western World*, 4 vols (Calcutta, 1957-8); G. Roerich (ed. & tr.), *Biography of Dharmasvamin* (Patna, 1959); H. D. Sankalia, *The University of Nalanda* (Delhi, 1972).

October 13: Buddhism and kingship in Sri Lanka

Required readings: R. Gombrich, *Theravada Buddhism: A Social History from Ancient Benares to Modern Colombo* (New York & London, 1991), pp. 137-171: 'Chapter 6: The Buddhist tradition in Sri Lanka'.

Discussion: H. B. M. Ilangasinha, *Buddhism in Medieval Sri Lanka* (Delhi, 1992); B. L. Smith (ed.), *Religion and Legitimation of Power in Sri Lanka* (Chambersburg, 1978); K. M. De Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka* (London, 1981); R. A. L. H. Gunawardana, *Robe and Plough: Monasticism and Economic Interest in Early Medieval Sri Lanka* (Tucson, 1979); R. Lingat, *Royautés Bouddhiques* (Paris, 1989), 'Deuxième Partie: La conception de la fonction royale à Ceylan' (pp. 61-248).

October 20: Sangha, kingship and society in medieval Southeast Asia (Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Burma)

Required readings: J. M. Kitagawa & M. D. Cummings (eds), *Buddhism and Asian History* (London, 1989), pp. 107-30 (D. K. Swearer, 'Buddhism in Southeast Asia') & pp. 309-15 (R. Gombrich, 'Buddhist Cultic Life in Southeast Asia'); G. Coedès, *The Indianized States of Southeast Asia* (Honolulu, 1971).

Discussion: B. L. Smith (ed.), *Religion and the Legitimation of Power in Thailand, Laos and Burma* (Chambersburg, 1978); S. J. Tambiah, *World Conqueror and World Renouncer: A Study of Buddhism and Polity in Thailand against a Historical Background* (Cambridge, 1976); Y. Ishii, *Sangha, State, and Society: Thai Buddhism in History* (Honolulu, 1986); B. Gosling, *Sukhothai: Its History, Culture, and Art* (Singapore, 1991); M. Aung-Thwin, *Pagan: The Origins of Modern Burma* (Honolulu, 1985); M. E. Spiro, *Buddhism and Society: A Great Tradition and its Burmese Vicissitudes* (Berkeley, Los Angeles & London, 1982); H. Kulke, *The Devarāja Cult* (Ithaca, 1978).

October 27: Buddhism and the state in early modern Southeast Asia

Required readings: V. Lieberman, 'Local Integration and Eurasian Analogies: Structuring Southeast Asian History, c. 1350-c.1830', *Modern Asian Studies*, 27, 3 (1993), pp.475-572; A. Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1450-1680: Volume Two, Expansion and Crisis* (New Haven & London, 1993), Chapter III, 'A Religious Revolution' (pp. 132-201).

November 3: **The decline and disappearance of Buddhism in India**

Required readings: L. Joshi, *Studies in the Buddhistic Culture of India (During the 7th and 8th Centuries A. D.)* (Delhi, 1964), Chapter XII, 'Beginnings of the Decline of Buddhism in India' (pp. 379-418).

Discussion: R. C. Mitra, 'The Decline of Buddhism in India', *Visva-Bharati Annals*, VI (Santiniketan, 1954), pp. 1-164; K. L. Hazra, *Buddhism in India as described by the Chinese pilgrims* (Delhi, 1983); D. N. Maclean, *Religion and Society in Arab Sind* (Leiden & New York, 1989).

November 10: **Buddhism and Islam**

Required readings: A. H. Johns, 'From Buddhism to Islam: An Interpretation of the Javanese Literature of the Transition', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, IX (1966-67), pp. 40-50; A. Reid, 'The Islamization of Southeast Asia', in: M. A. Bakar, A. Kaur, A. Z. Ghazali (eds), *Historia: Essays in Commemoration of the 25th Anniversary of the Department of History, University of Malaya* (Kuala Lumpur, 1984), pp. 13-33.

Discussion: A. Roy, *The Islamic Syncretistic Tradition in Bengal* (Princeton, 1983); R. M. Eaton, *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier* (Berkeley, Los Angeles & London, 1993); T. Duka, 'Ignaz Goldziher's A Buddhismus hatasa az Islamra', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1904), pp. 125-41; I. Goldziher, *Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law* (Princeton, 1981); J. Newman, 'Islam in the Buddhist Kālacakra Tantra' (Paper presented to the 1989 Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Anaheim, CA, 1989); P. Hasan, 'Temple Niches and Mihrabs in Bengal', in: A. L. Dallapiccola & S. Zingel-Avé Lallemand (eds), *Islam and Indian Regions* (Stuttgart, 1993), pp. 87-94; P. Chattopadhyaya (ed.), *Tāranātha's History of Buddhism in India* (New Delhi, 1980); A. Wink, *Al-Hind: The Making of the Indo-Islamic World, Volume I* (Leiden & New York; New Delhi, 1990); *idem*, *Volume II* (forthcoming), Chapter V ('The Religious Transformation of Indo-Islamic Society').

November 17: **Buddhism and society in Tibet**

Required readings: H. Guenther, 'Buddhism in Tibet', in: J. M. Kitagawa & M. D. Cummings (eds), *Buddhism and Asian History* (New York & London, 1987), pp. 175-187; D. L. Snellgrove, 'The Schools of Tibetan Buddhism', *ibid.*, pp. 277-285.

Discussion: D. Snellgrove, *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism: Indian Buddhists and their Tibetan Successors*, 2 vols (Boston, 1987).

November 24: No seminar scheduled (Thanksgiving)

December 1: No seminar scheduled (Out of town)

December 8: An overview of the historical development of Buddhism in China, Korea, Japan, Mongolia, and Central Asia

Required readings: E. Zürcher, 'Buddhism in China', in: J. M. Kitagawa & M. D. Cummings (eds), *Buddhism and Asian History* (New York & London, 1989), pp. 139-149; R. Evans Buswell, Jr., 'Buddhism in Korea', *ibid.*, pp. 151-158; T. Noriyoshi, 'Buddhism in Japan', *ibid.*, pp. 159-173; W. Heissig, 'Buddhism in Mongolia', *ibid.*, pp. 189-191; R. E. Emmerick, 'Buddhism in Central Asia', *ibid.*, pp. 131-137.

December 15: The Buddhist Sangha in the twentieth century: Sri Lanka and Cambodia compared

Required readings: R. Gombrich, *Theravada Buddhism: A Social History from Ancient Benares to Modern Colombo* (New York & London, 1991), 'Introduction' (pp. 22-23), Chapter 7, 'Protestant Buddhism' (pp. 172-197) & Chapter 8, 'Current trends, new problems' (pp. 198-210); M. Vickery, *Cambodia, 1975-1982* (Boston, 1984), Chapter I, 'The Gentle Land' (pp. 1-26).

Discussion: R. Gombrich & G. Obeyesekere, *Buddhism Transformed: Religious Change in Sri Lanka* (Princeton, 1988); Y. Sam, *Khmer Buddhism and Politics from 1954 to 1984* (Newington, 1987).