



Religion 211: Religions of the Eastern World
Spring 2014
Campbell Hall A4, Mon & Thurs 11:30am-12:50pm

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Course Description

This course presents an introductory survey of several major Asian religious cultures: Brahmanism/Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Daoism. It emphasizes the close reading, analysis, and discussion of selected primary texts that have played, and continue to play, a prominent role in the history of these traditions. Lectures explore the internal diversity of these religious cultures and their historical and contemporary interplay and expressions in different Asian contexts.

Course Requirements

i) Participation and Attendance (20%)

Please read closely and reflect on all readings assigned for the day before coming to class, and be prepared to participate actively in classroom discussion. Attendance is mandatory. More than two unexcused absences will result in a 5% reduction per absence in your final grade. Excused absences require a note from Office of the Dean of Students. It is not necessary to email me about

absences or “self-report” your absence via <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/>. Your absence will be counted as unexcused unless accompanied by a note.

ii) Quizzes (60%)

There will be three quizzes throughout the semester. Shorter, unannounced pop quizzes over daily readings may also be given from time to time.

iii) Final Paper (20%)

Students will write a final 4-5 page paper for this course, due May 9 at 5pm. We will discuss further guidelines and strategies for this project in class.

To submit: please upload your paper as an attachment in .doc, .docx, .rtf, or .pdf format to the “assignments” folder in Sakai whereupon it will be screened for originality by TurnItIn. Note that you should not need to visit the TurnItIn site and create an account for this purpose, although you may receive an email asking you to do so. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Please prepare all written assignments in 12-pt Times New Roman font and double-spaced US Letter page format.

Course Policies

i) Academic Integrity

Familiarize yourself with Rutgers policies and materials concerning academic integrity and plagiarism at the following sites:

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu>

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/resources>

Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses. Any student found to have committed or aided the offence of plagiarism will be subject to penalties in accordance with the policies of the University.

ii) Use of electronic equipment

Please turn off all mobile phones, computers, and other electronic devices before class. Points will be deducted from your participation grade if you are found to be using any electronic device during class. If you must use a computer, tablet, or e-reader for electronic readings, please sit in the first two rows of the classroom. Recording devices are not permitted.

iii) Blogging, Twitter, Tumblr, Facebook, etc. and posting course-related content online or in public forums

You may not reproduce or transmit lecture notes, audio, video, or any course-related content online or in any other public forum. Blogging, tweeting, or posting about this class in any public forum requires the prior approval of Dr. Lammerts. Failure to obtain prior approval may constitute a violation of academic integrity as well as copyright policies.

iv) Grading System

A=100-90, B+=89-87, B=86-80, C+=79-77, C=76-70, D=69-65, F=64 and below. Incompletes, i.e., “T” grades, will not be given under normal circumstances.

v) Office hours and appointments

Please send Dr. Lammerts an email if you intend to come to office hours, or if you would like to schedule an appointment to meet at another time.

Required Texts

Barbara Stoler Miller, trans. *The Bhagavad Gita: Krishna's Council in a Time of War* (New York: Bantam Classics, 1986).

Brian W. Van Norden, ed. and trans. *The Essential Mengzi* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2009).

These are available for purchase in the bookstore and on 2-hour reserve in Alexander library.

Additional readings are, or will shortly be, available in PDF format on Sakai > Resources > Readings. Please note that further supplementary texts may be assigned during the semester or presented in-class for discussion.

Course Outline and Readings

Jan 23. Introduction

Jan 27. Vedic Ritual and Immortality

Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, trans., *The Rig Veda* (New York: Penguin, 1981):

"The Hymn of Man" (pp. 29-32), "I Pray to Agni" (p. 99), "This Restless Soma" (p. 121)

"We Have Drunk the Soma" (p. 134-136), "Varuṇa" (pp. 217-218), "Sleeping Spell," "Against Rival Wives," "For a Safe Pregnancy and Birth," "The Dove of Death" (pp. 288-291, 296-297)

Jan 30. Dharma, Class, and Legal Cosmology

Partick Olivelle, trans., *The Law Code of Manu* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004):

"Prologue" and "Creation" (pp. 13-15), "Occupations of the Social Classes," "Excellence of the Brahmin," "Treatise of Manu" (pp. 19-20), "Grievous Sins Causing Loss of Caste" (pp. 172-173)

"Rules of Action for Vaiśyas and Śūdras" (pp. 178-179), "The Four Classes," "Mixed Classes: First Discourse," "Cāṇḍālas and Śvapacas" (pp. 180-181, p. 183), "Sin and Rebirth" (pp. 214-216)

Feb 3. Bhagavad-gītā (BhG) I

Miller, *The Bhagavad Gita*, Teachings 1-6

Feb 6. BhG II

Miller, *The Bhagavad Gita*, Teachings 1-6

Feb 10. BhG III

Miller, *The Bhagavad Gita*, Teachings 7-12

Feb 13. BhG IV

Miller, *The Bhagavad Gita*, Teachings 13-18

Extra Credit 1: Attend lecture by Jessica Vantine Birkenholtz, University of Illinois, "The Swasthani Goddess Tradition in Nepal."

Feb 13, 5:00 PM, Alexander Library, Pane Room.

To receive extra credit (equivalent to +3 points on Quiz #1) you must hand in a one-page synopsis of Prof. Birkenholtz' lecture in class on Feb 17.

Feb 17. The Goddess I

Anant Pai, ed. *Tales of Durga* (Mumbai: Amar Chitra Katha, 1978): 1-31

Film: Living Goddess (2008)

Feb 20. Feb 20. The Goddess II
Reading on Nepali Kumaris, TBA
Film: Living Goddess (2008)

Feb 24. Quiz #1

Feb 27. What is a Buddha?
I.B. Horner, *Chronicle of Buddhas (Buddha-vamsa)* (Lancaster: Pali Text Society, 2007): 9-25.

Mar 3. Buddha and Dhamma

- 1) I.B. Horner, *Book of the Discipline (Vinaya-piṭaka)* (Lancaster: Pali Text Society, 2007): Part 4, pp. 52-54.
- 2) Charles Willemen, *Buddhacarita: In Praise of Buddha's Acts* (Berkeley: Numata Center, 2009): 93-112.

Mar 6. Jātaka Tales

I.B. Horner and Padmanabh S. Jaini, *Apocryphal Birth Stories (Paññāsa-Jātaka)*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Pali Text Society, 2003):
“Birth Story of the Two Headed Swan” (I, 301-306), “Birth Story of Viriyapaṇḍita” (I, 307-316),
“Sīlajātaka” (II, 243-246)

Mar 10. Heavenly Mansions and Ghost Stories

I.B. Horner, N.A. Jayawickrama, and H.S. Gehman, *The Minor Anthologies of the Pali Canon: IV* (Oxford: Pali Text Society, 2005):
from *Vimānavatthu*—
“The Chaste Wife Mansion” (pp. 20-21), “Slave Woman’s Mansion” (pp. 41-43), “Frog-Deva’s Mansion” (pp. 102-103), “Almsfood-Giver’s Mansion” (pp. 130-131)
from *Petavatthu*—
“The Story of Nandā” (pp. 36-37), “The Story of Fraudulent Decisions” and “The Story of Contempt for Relics” (pp. 80-83)

Mar 13. Merit-making and the Decline and Renewal of the Dhamma I

- 1) John Strong, *The Experience of Buddhism* (Belmont: Wadsworth, 2001): 52-56.
- 2) Bonnie Pacala Brereton, *Thai Tellings of Phra Malai: Texts and Rituals Concerning a Popular Buddhist Saint* (Tempe: Arizona State University, 1995): 187-203.

Mar 17-21. Spring Recess.

Mar 24. Merit-making and the Decline and Renewal of the Dhamma II

Bonnie Pacala Brereton, *Thai Tellings of Phra Malai: Texts and Rituals Concerning a Popular Buddhist Saint* (Tempe: Arizona State University, 1995): 203-226.

Extra Credit 2: Write a two-page biography of Phra Malai. To receive extra credit (equivalent to +3 points on Quiz #2) please hand in your paper in class on Mar 31.

Mar 27. No Class (Dr Lammerts is attending a conference).

Mar 31. Karma, Protection, and Devotion in Medieval Japan

Kyoko Motomachi Nakamura, *Miraculous Stories from the Japanese Buddhist Tradition: The Nihon ryōiki of the Monk Kyōkai* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973):
I.8 (pp. 118-119), I.10 (pp. 120-121), I.28 (pp.140-141), II.5 (pp. 164-166), III.23 (pp. 252-253), III.28 (pp. 261-262)

April 3. Quiz #2

April 7. Chinese Religions and Confucianism

Van Norden, *Essential Mengzi*:

1A1 (p. 1), 1A3-1A7 (pp. 2-8), 2A2 -2A7 (pp. 15-21)

April 10. Social Thought and Virtuous Action I

Van Norden, *Essential Mengzi*:

2B8 (pp. 25-26), 2B13 (pp. 27-28), 3B8 (p. 39), 4A9 (pp. 45-46), 4A17 (p. 47), 4A27 (pp. 48-49), 4B26-4B28 (p. 52)

April 14. Social Thought and Virtuous Action II

Van Norden, *Essential Mengzi*:

5A5 (pp. 59-60), 6A1-2 (p. 69), 6A6-6A17 (pp. 71-75), 7A1 (p. 79), 7A15 (p. 80), 7A20-7A23 (p. 81), 7A33 (p. 82), 7B14 (p. 86), 7B31-7B35 (pp. 88-89)

April 17. Early Daoist Literature: *Daode Jing* and *Zhuangzi*

1) D.C. Lau, *The Tao Te Ching* (New York: Penguin, 1963):

I, II, III, IV, V, X, XVI, XVII, XIX, XXV, XXXIII, XXXVII, XLVIII, L, LI, LVII

2) Victor Mair, *Wandering on the Way: Early Taoist Tales and Parables of Chuang Tzu*

(Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994):

“Knowledge Wanders North” (pp. 210-212)

April 21. Deities, Immortals, and Alchemical Transformation

Livia Kohn, *The Taoist Experience* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993):

“The Transformations of Laozi” (pp. 71-80), “Ascension” and “‘Gold and Cinnabar’ (*Jindan*), from *Baopuzi neipian*” (pp. 303-313), “The Administration of Heaven” (pp. 343-350)

April 24. No class (Dr. Lammerts is attending a conference)

April 28. Medieval Chinese Biographies of Transcendents

Robert Ford Campany, *To Live as Long as Heaven and Earth: A Translation and Study of Ge Hong's Traditions of Divine Transcendents* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002):

“The Holy Mother of Dongling” (p. 146), “Feng Gang” (p. 148), “Li Yiqi” (pp. 228-229), “Luang Ba” (pp. 252-254), “Shen Xi” (pp. 256-258)

May 1. Review

May 5. Quiz #3

May 9. Final essay due via Sakai by 5 PM.