

Buddhist East Asia Project

Dr. Robert H. Scott, University of North Georgia

Buddhist Philosophy of Religion Module

** 8 classes in an upper level*

*Philosophy of Religion seminar**





Module Outline:

1. Introduction to Buddhism and Identifying Basic concepts of Buddhism in Buddhist texts
 - ❑ 3 classes
2. Buddhism and religious language
 - ❑ 2 classes
3. Religious experience and theodicy
 - ❑ 3 classes

1. Introduction to Buddhist Philosophy of Religion

Class 1: Basic concepts and historical reception


- Read and discuss Introduction to *Birth of Orientalism* and Chpt 1 of *Chan Buddhism*
- Gregory, *Inquiry into the Origin of Humanity*

Class 2: More on basic concepts

- Read and identify basic concepts in *Heart Sutra* and *Cakkavatti-Sihanada Sutta*; emphasis on *karma*
- "The Environment is You," by Thich Nhat Hanh and "Responsive Virtuosity," by Peter Hershock

Class 3: Buddha Nature and East Asian Buddhism

- Selection from Sallie King, *Buddha Nature*



2. Buddhism and Religious Language

Class 4: Logic, Contradiction, and Meaning

- Selections from *Vimalakirti Sutra*
- M. Siderits and J. Westerhoff, "Contradiction in Buddhist Argument"
- T. Kasulis, "Forms of Assimilation"

Class 5: *goan'an* technique

- Look at some examples of *goan'an*
- "Language and Thinking: Subjectivity and Zen Huatou Meditation" by Jin Park
- R. Buswell, "Moguja's Secrets on Cultivating the Mind" and look at some examples - *The Blue Cliff Record*

3. Buddhist Religious Experience and Theodicy

Class 6: Monastic experience

- Read R. Buswell, “Zen Monasticism and the Context of Belief” – emphasis on semantic, somatic, and aesthetic aspects of experience

Class 7: Buddhist Theodicy

- Read T. Kasulis, “Kukai: The Man Who Wanted to Understand Everything”
 - 3 intimate practices (auditory, visual, bodily gesture)
 - Relational conception of persons and God / Holographic paradigm

Class 8: Focus on Issues in Comparative Philosophy of Religion

- “Is the Mind One or Two? To Mr. C., Who Has Recently Converted to Catholicism,” by Kim Iryop
- T. Kasulis, “Rethinking the Religious”