

International Studies 390

Special Topics: Political Buddhism in Comparative Context

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Spring 2016

Mondays & Wednesdays, 0830-1000

Classroom: Maathai 304

Office: Maathai 310



THE COURSE

The great scholar Max Weber once described Buddhism as a “specifically non-political, and anti-political religion of a social class.” This perception continues among many Westerners, who see Buddhism as inherently peaceful and not tainted by politics. Despite a western tendency to view Buddhism through a simplistic, even romantic lens, the reality in Buddhist countries is that the faith is intensely political, simultaneously supporting war and peace, resisting corruption and deepening it, and avoiding politics while also jumping directly in.

The above images represent divergent visions of Buddhism and politics. On the left is military training session in Burma, where monks are part of state efforts to displace the country’s Muslim minorities. On the right, we see Burmese monks turning their alms bowls upside down in a peaceful, symbolic protest against the military. These contrasting images are found within a single country, and indeed, divergent views of politics and Buddhism are found throughout the Buddhist world. As Tambiah notes, Buddhism simultaneously represents a “world renouncer” and a “world conqueror”.

This course seeks to unravel the Janus-faced nature of Political Buddhism. It provides a multidisciplinary glimpse into the ways that Buddhism manifests itself politically around the world. Part One looks to the faith—the beliefs, scripture and organization of Buddhism. Part Two looks to the rise of Buddhist politics in the post-colonial world. Part Three, the heart of the course, looks at key themes in Political Buddhism, such as democracy, war, gender, and other political issues.

This course is more about the intersections between faith and politics more than it is about the faith in and of itself. Students are expected to overcome images of Buddhism as monolithic and as necessarily peaceful, even if it does contain a great wealth of peaceful, non-violent teachings. Buddhism is a living religion, one struggling with the same social issues facing all world faiths.

POLICIES

First: I place great emphasis on constructive participation. The classroom is a place to share ideas and to challenge each other, but always respectfully: listen to classmates; communicate effectively regarding assignments; arrive on time; avoid gender, racial, or religious insensitivities; and complete the readings. So challenge—vigorously—but never offend. The best participation tends to come in the form of insightful questions. Quantity is not always the same thing as quality.

Second: Teacher-student communication. I am always available via email, but if you have a general question, other students may want to hear the answer, so ask it in class to gain the participation mark that you deserve. For assignments, email is no substitute for face to face chats. So come and talk to me. In the event of an illness or personal emergency, you must contact me before a given deadline. Late assignments will be deducted 5% per day, including weekends, beginning at the end of class.

Third: I expect professionalism in all assignments. Avoid casual internet sources (i.e. wiki), avoid contractions (a'ite?), include page numbers, and present a clear argument. Essays must include a clear, formal research question. Students should consult with the instructor regarding the research question, argument, and organization of major written assignments.

Fourth: The course an online presence via Brightspace. Here, you will find course news, the syllabus (which may be updated), a course calendar, and links to useful pages. Under the 'Content' tab, you will find links to readings as well as lecture notes.

Fifth: All written assignments must be submitted to the instructor in hard and electronic copies, as well as submitted to Turnitin via Brightspace. I actually do not like turnitin, but plagiarism is a serious academic offense and I hope turnitin can be seen as an educational tool, helping students understand the different between citation, paraphrasing, and plagiarism.

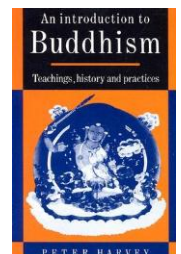
GRADING

Soka grading is organized in terms of letter grades: A, B+, C-, etc, as well as a 0-4 grade point average. This is how the percentage points in this course will translate into these scales:

90-100	A+	4.0	65-69	B-	2.7
85-89	A	4.0	60-64	C+	2.3
80-84	A-	3.7	55-59	C	2.0
75-79	B+	3.3	50-55	C-	1.7
70-74	B	3.0	>50	F	1.0

READINGS

There is one textbook for the class, Peter Harvey's *An Introduction to Buddhism: Teaching, History, and Practices* (Cambridge University Press, any edition). This book will be used early in the course, so please order it immediately. I have purchased a few extra used copies, and you can buy them for \$10 (while supplies last).



Beyond this, the class is based mostly on scholarly journal articles and book chapters, which are available electronically through the course website. Students are also required to read a book for review, which may demand purchase or Inter-Library Loan (so plan ahead!).

EVALUATION

20%	Participation	Ongoing
10%	Book Review	Ongoing
10%	Presentations	02 & 07 March
20%	Take-Home Reviews	26 February (Friday) & 11 March (Wednesday)
10%	Research Proposal	04 May (Wednesday)
30%	Research Paper	20 May (Friday)

Participation: 20% of your grade will be earned through respectful participation. This means asking insightful questions, engaging with colleagues, punctuality, attendance, being attentive, and communicating with me regarding assignments. **Evaluation ongoing**

Book Review: 10% of your grade will be earned through a 2-4 page book review, selected from the books noted in the class syllabus. Remember, a book review should be more than a summary—it should also analyze key themes or shortcomings. Books are on a first-come, first-serve basis. The reports are due on the day of the relevant class, and students are expected to present their book briefly to the class. **Evaluation Ongoing**

World Buddhism Presentations: 10% of your grade will be earned through a class presentation on **07 or 09 March**, in which students will present on some aspect of a Buddhist community so that as a class, we get a sense of how the faith varies around the world. Students presenting on Asian cases will present on Monday, 07 March, while those presenting non-Asian cases will present on Wednesday, 09 March. Have fun with this one—choose crazy topics and present in innovative ways.

Take-Home Reviews: 20% of your grade will be earned through two take-home questions. At the end of the sections on the Faith and Context, students will be provided with a choice of 3 questions, responding to one in a take-home assignment in 500 words or fewer. **Friday, 26 February and Wednesday, 11 March.**

Research Proposal: 10% of your grade will be earned through a proposal for your pending research paper. The proposal should provide, at a minimum, your research question, tentative hypothesis, some key points, and an annotated bibliography.

Research Paper: 30% of your grade will be earned through a research paper (10-12 pages) on a specific aspect of Political Buddhism of the student's choosing (in consultation with the instructor). Due on **Friday, 20 May.**



CALENDAR (📖 = In Ikeda Library 📖 = Professor Copy)

08 Feb Monday Session 01	Introduction What is Political Buddhism? About the course.
<i>Readings</i>	Dalai Lama, "Buddhism, Asian Values, & Democracy," <i>Journal of Democracy</i> 10:1 (1999); pp. 3-7. AND Chris Buckley, " China's Tensions with the Dalai Lama Spill into the Afterlife ," <i>New York Times</i> (11 March 2015).

The Faith

10 Feb Wednesday Session 02	The Basics: Scripture & Ritual <i>Sutras, Reincarnation, Karma, Enlightenment, Nirvana, Merit, The Four Noble Truths, Devotion</i>
<i>Readings</i>	Peter Harvey, <i>An Introduction to Buddhism: Teaching, History, and Practices</i> (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Chs. 2 & 3 ('Early Buddhist Teachings').

15 Feb Monday	No Classes (President's Day)
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17 Feb Wednesday Session 03	Schools and Sects <i>Theravada and Mahayana, Tantric, Chan / Zen, Pure Land, Millenarian Buddhism</i>
<i>Readings</i>	Peter Harvey, <i>An Introduction to Buddhism</i> ; Introduction; Ch. 6 ('Mahayana Holy Beings'). AND James Scott, <i>The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia</i> (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), pp. 284-293.

22 Feb Monday	Class Cancelled (Apologies)
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24 Feb Wednesday Session 04	Organization <i>Sanghas, Ordination, Monasteries, Sasana, Forest Buddhism, Bhikkhu / Bhikkhuni, State Co-Optation</i>
<i>Readings</i>	Peter Harvey, <i>An Introduction to Buddhism</i> ; Ch. 10 ('Buddhist Practice: The Sangha'). AND Heinz Bechert, "Theravada Buddhist Sangha: Some General Observations on Historical and Political Factors in its Development," <i>The Journal of Asian Studies</i> 29:4 (1970); pp. 761-778.
<i>Books</i>	Bénédicte Brac de la Perrière, Guillaume Rozenberg, & Alicia Turner, editors, <i>Champions of Buddhism: Weikza Cults in Contemporary Burma</i> (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2014).
First Take-Home Due Friday (26 February)	

Context

29 Feb Monday Session 05	Early History <i>Brahmanism, Samanas, Siddhartha Gotama, King Asoka, Sects</i>
<i>Readings</i>	Peter Harvey, <i>An Introduction to Buddhism</i> ; Chs. 1 & 4 ('The Buddha and His Indian Context' and 'Early Developments in Buddhism').

02 March Wednesday Session 06	Expansion <i>Central Asia, Silk Road, Sri Lanka, Southeast Asia, China, Japan</i>
<i>Readings</i>	Peter Harvey, <i>An Introduction to Buddhism</i> ; Ch. 7 (“The Later History & the Spread of Buddhism”).
<i>Books</i>	Johan Elverskog, <i>Buddhism and Islam on the Silk Road</i> (Philadelphia: UPenn Press, 2010). ☞

07 Mar Monday Session 07	Modern History <i>Colonialism, Anti-Colonialism, YMBA (Burma), Thai folk religion</i> <i>Presentations on the diversity of Buddhism in Contemporary Asian Societies</i>
<i>Readings</i>	Peter Harvey, <i>An Introduction to Buddhism</i> ; Ch. 12 (“The Modern History of Buddhism in Asia”). AND B.J. Terweil, “A Model for the Study of Buddhism,” <i>The Journal of Asian Studies</i> 35:3 (1976); pp. 391-403.
<i>Books</i>	James Edward Ketelaar, <i>Of Heretics and Martyrs in Meiji Japan: Buddhism and Its Persecution</i> (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993). ☞
Student Presentations: Buddhist Societies in Asia	

09 March Wednesday Session 08	Buddhism Around the World <i>Shasta Abbey, Soka Gakkai, Immigration</i> <i>Presentations on the diversity of Buddhism in Western Societies</i>
<i>Readings</i>	Peter Harvey, <i>An Introduction to Buddhism</i> ; Ch. 13 (“Buddhism Beyond Asia”).
Student Presentations: Buddhist Societies around the World	
Second Take-Home Due Friday (11 March)	

*****Fieldtrip to LA: Visit temples, University of the West (TBD)*****
*****Spring Break (14-18 March 2015)*****

Political Manifestations

21 March Monday Session 10	Political Buddhism <i>What is it? Why might some see this as a contradiction?</i> <i>Galactic Polity and the Mandala</i>
<i>Readings</i>	Joseph Kitagawa, “Buddhism and Asian Politics,” <i>Asian Survey</i> 2:5 (1962); pp. 1-11. AND Stanley Tambiah, “Buddhism & This-Worldly Activity,” <i>Modern Asian Studies</i> 7:1 (1973); pp. 1-20.
<i>Books</i>	Ian Harris, editor. <i>Buddhism, Power, and Political Order</i> (London: Routledge, 2007). David McMahan, <i>The Making of Buddhist Modernism</i> (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). John Whalen-Bridge and Pattana Kitiarsa, editors, <i>Buddhism, Modernity, and the State: Forms of Engagement</i> (New York: Palgrave, 2013).

23 March Wednesday Session 11	Buddhist Social Movements & Resistance <i>Engaged Buddhism, Monks and Protest, Self-Immolation, Saffron Revolution, Chogye Monks in Korea</i>
<i>Readings</i>	Jeffrey Bartholet, “Aflame: A Wave of Self-Immolations Sweeps Tibet,” <i>New Yorker</i> (8 July 2013). AND Stephan S. Large, “Buddhism, Socialism, and Protest in Prewar Japan: The Career of Seno’o Giro,” <i>Modern Asian Studies</i> 21:1 (1987); pp. 153-171. AND Benedict Rogers, “The Saffron Revolution: The Role of Religion in Burma’s Movement for

	Peace and Democracy,” <i>Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions</i> 9:1 (2008); pp. 115-118.
<i>Books</i>	Rory MacKenzie, <i>New Buddhist Movements in Thailand: Towards an Understanding of Wat Phra Dhammakaya and Santi Asoke</i> (London: Routledge, 2007). Christopher S. Queen and Sallie B. King, editors. <i>Engaged Buddhism: Buddhist Liberation Movements in Asia</i> (Albany: SUNY Press, 1996). ☞ ☪
<i>Film</i>	Anders Østergaard, director, <i>Burma VJ: Reporting from a Closed Country</i> (2008).

28 March Monday Session 12	Buddhist Politics: Theravada <i>Dharma Party (Thailand), Buddhist Liberal Democratic Party (Cambodia), JHU (Sri Lanka), Buddhism & Communism (Laos)</i>
<i>Readings</i>	Mahinda Deegalle, “Politics of the Jathika Hela Urumaya Monks: Buddhism and Ethnicity in Contemporary Sri Lanka,” <i>Contemporary Buddhism</i> 5:2 (2004); pp. 83-103.
<i>Books</i>	Peter A. Jackson, <i>Buddhism, Legitimation, and Conflict: The Political Functions of Urban Thai Buddhism</i> (Singapore: ISEAS, 1989). Stanley Tambiah, <i>World Conqueror and World Renouncer: A Study of Buddhism and Polity in Thailand Against a Historical Background</i> (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976). ☪

30 March Wednesday Session 13	Buddhist Politics: Mahayana <i>Mongolian Buddhist Party, Komeito Party</i>
<i>Readings</i>	Daniel A. Metraux, “Religion, Politics, and Constitutional Reform in Japan: How the Soka Gakkai and Komeito Have Thwarted Conservative Attempts to Revise the 1947 Constitution,” <i>Southeast Review of Asian Studies</i> 29 (2007); pp. 157-172. AND Levi McLaughlin, “Komeito’s Soka Gakkai Protesters and Supporters: Religious Motivations for Political Activism in Contemporary Japan,” <i>Japan Focus</i> 13:40 (12 October 2015); pp. 1-15.
<i>Books</i>	Anne Mette Fisker-Nielsen, <i>Religion and Politics in Contemporary Japan: Soka Gakkai Youth and Komeito</i> (New York: Routledge, 2012). ☪ Andre Laliberté, <i>The Politics of Buddhist Organizations in Taiwan: 1989-2003: Safeguarding the Faith, Building a Pure Land, Helping the Poor</i> (London: Routledge, 2013). Arvin Palmer, <i>Buddhist Politics: Japan’s Clean Government Party</i> (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971).

04 April Monday Session 14	War & Peace in Buddhism <i>Principles of Peace, Nichiren Buddhism in WW2 Japan</i> Students will bring & discuss statements of peace from Buddhist teachings
<i>Readings</i>	Peter Harvey, <i>An Introduction to Buddhism</i> ; Ch. 9 (‘Buddhist Practice: Ethics’). AND K.N. Jayatillake, <i>Buddhism & Peace</i> (2008); pp 2-13 (skim).
<i>Books</i>	David W. Chappell, editor, <i>Buddhist Peacework: Creating Cultures of Peace</i> (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1999). ☞ ☪ Robert Topmiller, <i>The Lotus Unleashed: The Buddhist Peace Movement in South Vietnam, 1964-66</i> (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2002). ☪ Xue Yu, <i>Buddhism, War, and Nationalism: Chinese Monks in the Struggle Against Japanese Aggression, 1931-45</i> (New York: Routledge, 2013). ☪

06 April Wednesday Session 15	Violence in Mahayana Buddhism <i>Sumatran Tantric, Tibet, Shao-Lin, Mongolia, Lu Zhisben, Sobei Warrior Monks, Shintoism, Aum Shinrikyo</i>
<i>Readings</i>	Mikael S. Adolphson, “Warrior-Monks in Japanese History,” <i>Religion Compass</i> 3:2 (2009); pp. 225-240.
<i>Books</i>	Mikael S. Adolphson, <i>The Teeth and Claws of the Buddha: Monastic Warriors and Sobei in Japanese History</i> Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007).

James W. Heisig and John C. Maraldo, editors, *Rude Awakenings: Zen, the Kyoto School, and the Question of Nationalism* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1995). ☞
 Michael Jerryson, *Mongolian Buddhism: The Rise and Fall of the Sangha* (Silkworm Books, 2007). ☞
 Brian Victoria, *Zen at War* (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006).

*****Event: Richard Fox on Balinese Religion (6pm, 06 April)*****

11 April Monday Session 16	Violence in Theravada Buddhism (South Asia) <i>Nepal, Sri Lanka</i>
<i>Readings</i>	Neil DeVotta, <i>Sinhalese Buddhist Nationalist Ideology: Implications for Politics and Conflict Resolution in Sri Lanka</i> (Honolulu: East-West Center Policy Briefs, 2007); pp. 1-53.
<i>Books</i>	Michael Jerryson and Mark Juergensmeyer, editors, <i>Buddhist Warfare</i> (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009). ☞ ☞ Stanley Tambiah, <i>Buddhism Betrayed? Religion, Politics, and Violence in Sri Lanka</i> (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992). ☞ ☞ Vladimir Tikhonov and Torkel Brekke, editors. <i>Buddhism and Violence: Militarism and Buddhism in Modern Asia</i> (London: Routledge, 2004). ☞
13 April Wednesday Session 17	Violence in Theravada Buddhism (Southeast Asia) <i>Patani and Military Monks, Myanmar and the Rohingya, Contemporary Sri Lanka</i>
<i>Readings</i>	Hannah Beech, "The Face of Buddhist Terror," <i>Time</i> (01 July 2013). AND Michael Jerryson, "Appropriating a Space for Violence: State Buddhism in Southern Thailand," <i>Journal of Southeast Asian Studies</i> 40:1 (2009); pp. 33-57.
<i>Books</i>	Michael Jerryson, <i>Buddhist Fury: Religion and Violence in Southern Thailand</i> (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011). ☞
18 April Monday Session 18	Orientalism & Romanticism <i>Shangri-La, Lost Horizon, Dalai Lama and Hollywood, Seven Years in Tibet, Kundun</i>
<i>Readings</i>	Michael Parenti, "Friendly Feudalism: The Tibet Myth," <i>New Political Science</i> 25:4 (2003); pp. 579-590. AND Matthew Sweet, " Steven Seagal: Top Action Hero and Tibetan Lama ," <i>The Independent</i> (14 November 1999).
<i>Books</i>	Donald S. Lopez, Jr., <i>Prisoners of Shangri-La: Tibetan Buddhism and the West</i> (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998). ☞ ☞ Judith Snodgrass, <i>Presenting Japanese Buddhism to the West: Orientalism, Occidentalism, and the Columbian Exposition</i> (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003). ☞
20 April Wednesday Session 19	Free Tibet!? <i>Reincarnation, Panchen Lama, Han settlers, Autonomy</i>
<i>Readings</i>	Michael Davis, "The Quest for Self-Rule in Tibet," <i>Journal of Democracy</i> 18:4 (2007); pp. 157-171.
<i>Books</i>	Clare Harris, <i>The Museum on the Roof of the World: Art, Politics, and the Representation of Tibet</i> (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012). ☞ Charlene E. Makley, <i>The Violence of Liberation: Gender and Tibetan Buddhist Revival in Post-Mao China</i> (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007). ☞
25 April Monday Session 20	Women in Buddhism <i>Nuns, Abortion, Bhikkhuni in Thailand</i>

<i>Readings</i>	Jean Byrne, "Why I Am Not a Buddhist Feminist: A Critical Examination of 'Buddhist Feminism'," <i>Feminist Theology</i> 21:2 (2013); pp. 180-194. AND Diane Paul, "Buddhist Attitudes Towards Women's Bodies," <i>Buddhist-Christian Studies</i> 1 (1981); pp. 63-71. AND International Network of Engaged Buddhists, " A Statement to Support Establishing the Bhikkhuni Sangha in Siam (Thailand) " (13 December 2014).
<i>Books</i>	Monica Lindberg Falk, <i>Making Fields of Merit: Buddhist Female Ascetics and Gendered Orders in Thailand</i> (Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2007). Diana Y. Paul, <i>Women in Buddhism: Images of the Feminine in the Mahayana Tradition</i> (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985). 📖

27 April Wednesday Session 21	Gender in Theravada Buddhism
<i>Readings</i>	Peter A. Jackson, "Male Homosexuality and Transgenderism in the Thai Buddhist Tradition," in <i>Queer Dharma: Voices of Gay Buddhists</i> , edited by Winston Leyland (Gay Sunshine Press: 2000). AND Steve Peskind, " According to Buddhist Tradition: Gays, Lesbians, and Sexual Misconduct ," <i>Shambala Sun</i> (1998).
<i>Books</i>	Bernard Faure, <i>The Power of Denial: Buddhism, Purity, and Gender</i> (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009). 📖 Bernard Faure, <i>The Red Thread: Buddhist Approaches to Sexuality</i> (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998). 📖 📖 Alexander Soucy, <i>The Buddha Side: Gender, Power, and Buddhist Practice in Vietnam</i> (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2012). 📖

02 May Monday Session 22	Buddhist Environmentalism <i>Tree Ordination, Bodhi Trees, Pure Land</i>
<i>Readings</i>	Susan M. Darlington, "The Ordination of a Tree: The Buddhist Ecology Movement in Thailand," <i>Ethnology</i> 37:1 (1998); pp. 1-15.
<i>Books</i>	Susan Darlington, <i>The Ordination of a Tree: The Thai Buddhist Environmental Movement</i> (Albany: SUNY Press, 2012). 📖 Donald Swearer, Sommai Premchit, and Phaithoon Dokbuakaew, <i>Sacred Mountains of Northern Thailand and their Legends</i> (Bangkok: Silkworm, 2004).

04 May Wednesday Session 23	Buddhist Economics & Trade <i>Charity, debt, trade patterns, corruption, consumerism, local development, Gross National Happiness</i>
<i>Readings</i>	Simon Zadek, "The Practice of Buddhist Economics?" <i>American Journal of Economics and Sociology</i> 52:4 (1993); pp. 433-445. AND Vishal Arora, " In Buddhist Bhutan, Happiness Counts ," <i>Washington Post</i> (20 March 2010). AND Jeffrey Colin, " A Buddhist and A Capitalist ," <i>Huffington Post</i> (25 February 2013). AND Ramu Inocencio and Kocha Olarn, " Thailand's Jet-Set Monk, Luang Pu Nenkhom, Hunted on Sex Charges ," <i>CNN</i> (18 July 2013).
<i>Books</i>	Richard Payne, editor, <i>How Much Is Enough? Buddhism, Consumerism, and the Human Environment</i> (Wisdom Publications: 2010). 📖
Research Proposal Due (Friday, 11 March)	

Other Topics

Students will choose topics for the final week of instruction. Potential topics include: Buddhism and minorities, Buddhist education, Western Buddhism, Buddhism and other faiths, Buddhism and human rights, or Buddhism and animism. Students may also choose to revisit a previous theme that they would like to explore further, or may suggest a different topic.

09 May Monday Session 24	TBD
<i>Readings</i>	
<i>Books</i>	

11 May Wednesday Session 25	TBD
<i>Readings</i>	
<i>Books</i>	

Conclusions

16 May Monday Session 26	Conclusions & Review <i>Religion and Politics, The Future of Political Buddhism</i>
<i>Readings</i>	Andrew Higgins, " How Buddhism Became A Force for Political Activism ," <i>Wall Street Journal</i> (07 November 2007).

*****Research Papers Due (Friday, 20 May)*****