



Course Syllabus:
HR 3300: Terms, Texts, Translations



Fall 2020

REVISED version of 30 August 2020; subject to revision

Instructor

Richard Payne <rkpayne1@mac.com>

class meetings (optional): Wednesday mornings, via Zoom, 11:10 to 12:00

Office Hours: Thursday mornings, by appointment, via Zoom

Course Description

This course is a study of the philological approach to Buddhist studies across the tradition, the ways in which texts, originate, were formed, changed over time, are translated, and studied in the present day. These issues have all been central for the understanding of Buddhism as it has moved from one society to another, and are particularly central to the interpretation of Buddhism in the present.

Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment

At the end of this course students will be able to:

| Outcome | Assessment |
|--|--|
| 1. students will explain the historical nature of Buddhist texts as found in English translation | 1. required book readings summaries |
| 2. students will understand and use the concepts of the field appropriately, including: <i>geyi</i> , stratigraphy, stemma, back translation, canon, etc. | 2. weekly reading summaries and (optional) in class presentations |
| 3. students will complete a project reflecting an understanding of translation, textual history, and demonstrate a command of resources for secondary literature | 3. book reading summaries: critical summaries, not personal response |

Course Requirements

1) required texts: read at your own pace the two required texts, and prepare 1,500 +/- word critical summaries of each, due at end of term, complement reading with additional research into other secondary sources related to the two texts, follow proper style (Turabian) for notes and bibliography; consider for example published reviews of translations (available online through GTU Library—see IBS Registrar if you need assistance with accessing GTU Library, and GTU Librarians for online resources, best is JSTOR < <https://www.jstor.org/>> which you can access via your GTU id)

2) summaries of weekly readings: approx. 200 to 300 word summaries of each week's reading, submitted by Friday of each week; each week during class Zoom meeting, one student will make an oral presentation on the reading for approx 20 minutes, while balance of time will be open for questions and discussion,

Required Readings

read the following two books at your own pace over the course of the semester:

Donald Lopez: *The "Lotus Sutra": A Biography* (Princeton)

Donald Lopez: *"The Tibetan Book of the Dead": A Biography* (Princeton)

1,000 word summaries of both will be due at the end of term

weekly readings will be available on the course Moodle page

Weekly Schedule:

COURSE CALENDAR READINGS TO BE COMPLETED PRIOR TO CLASS MEETINGS NOTED

HANDOUTS ARE FOR STUDENTS USE ONLY: DO NOT DISTRIBUTE OR POST ON WEB

- 1) 9 Sept introduction to course
reading: Schopen, "Protestant Presuppositions"
- 2) 16 Sept development of philology and modern Buddhist studies
reading: McGovern, "The Contemporary Study of Buddhism"
- 3) 23 Sept oral transmission
reading: Wynne, "The Oral Transmission of Early Buddhist Literature"
- 4) 30 Sept oral to written
reading: Veidlinger, "When a Word is Worth a Thousand Pictures"
- 5) 7 Oct "language" of the texts
reading: Nattier, "Church Language and Vernacular Language"
- 6) 14 Oct canon and canonization
reading: Collins, "On the Very Idea of the Pāli Canon"
- 7) 21 Oct apocrypha
reading: Kapstein, Purificatory Gem
- 8) 28 Oct: *Reading week/no class*
- 9) 4 Nov textual authority, scriptural authenticity
reading: Davidson, "An Introduction to Scriptural Authenticity"
- 10) 11 Nov translation and back-translation
reading: Nattier, Heart Sutra
- 11) 18 Nov Textual Studies
reading: Van Schaik, "Oral Teachings and Written Texts"
- 12) 25 Nov Thanksgiving break: no class mtg.
- 13) 2 Dec Materiality
reading: van Schaik, et al., "Uses of Implements..."

14) 9 Dec. Buddhism in Modern Media
 reading: Mitchell, "The Tranquil Meditator"

15) 16 Dec. Hermeneutics: interpretation; assignments due
 reading: Thurman, "Buddhist Hermeneutics"

Assessment

Final Course Grade

- Weekly Reading Summaries = 50% (although optional in order to accommodate asynchronous students, participation in online class discussions strongly encouraged)
- Required Reading Summaries = 50%

Assignment Rubrics

Rubric 1

| Criteria | Exceeds Expectations | Meets Expectations | Progressing | Not There Yet |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| weekly readings summaries: verbal presentations and written summaries | clear summary of essay content, organization and context | clear summary of essay content, and organization | clear summary of essay content | lacks clarity, fails to demonstrate understanding of topics raised by the reading |
| required texts reading summaries | clear summary of book's content, organization and context; uses additional secondary material, notes and bibliography according to proper form | clear summary of book's content, and organization; notes and bibliography according to proper form | clear summary of book's content; notes and bibliography according to proper form | lacks clarity, fails to demonstrate understanding of topics raised by the reading |

Final Paper Rubric

Final research papers will be evaluated on the following criteria:

| Criteria | Exceeds Expectations (A) | Meets Expectations (A-/B) | Below Expectations (C) | Problematic (D) |
|------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| Thesis/argument | Excellent. This is an ambitious, perceptive project that grapples with complex ideas. The thesis is clearly stated and contextualized in the introduction. The essay presents more than a summary of existing ideas, and is not simply repeating what the student has read or learned in class. | The project reaches high and achieves its aim. The thesis is stated clearly but perhaps with less contextualization. The author does more than summarize existing ideas, but some areas may require more depth or the essay includes stray, irrelevant ideas. | The project has conceptual problems. The thesis may be unclear or poorly stated. The essay lacks an argument but is merely a summary of existing ideas or a personal reaction to the topic (i.e., mere opinion). | The project is incoherent or is extremely problematic in any of the areas mentioned. |
| Organization | The essay is clearly and explicitly organized. The introduction lays out the structure of the essay, and essay sections include transitions and summaries of ideas. The conclusion both summarizes the essay's argument and points toward potential research vistas. | The essay is well organized, the introduction states the essays structure and intent. Some connections may still need to be made, especially in regards to transitions between sections. The conclusion summarizes the essay's argument. | The essay is poorly organized; the introduction does not state what the author is going to do; there are no transitions or summaries of ideas. | The essay is not organized in any logical fashion. |
| Evidence | The author employs appropriate and relevant primary and critical secondary sources. Evidence is both contextualized and related explicitly to the thesis or argument. | The author employs appropriate and relevant primary and critical secondary sources. Evidence is contextualized; however, there may not be enough evidence or it is not thoroughly engaged. | Evidence provided is irrelevant or culled from inappropriate or unreliable sources. What (good) evidence is supplied is not engaged, contextualized, explained or related to the thesis/argument. | Evidence is either not presented or is wholly irrelevant and unreliable. |
| Writing/style | Language is clean, precise, elegant, and jargon-free. Ideas and terms are introduced and explained appropriately. The author uses the correct citation format, and typos and other errors are at a minimum (or nonexistent). | Language is adequate and clear, and the author has used the correct citation format. Vernacular language is avoided, and typos and grammatical errors are minimal. | Language and word choice is unclear; sentences are awkward, illogical, or contradictory; punctuation, grammar, etc., are problematic. There is an over-reliance on vernacular language. Correct citation format is not used.* | The essay contains an overabundance of grammatical and stylistic errors, or inappropriate language. |

** Note: non-native English speakers are strongly encouraged to seek help from peers when writing papers to check for errors. Please see me if you have concerns.*