

HREL 44402: Mahāyāna Sūtra Literature

Autumn Quarter 2006
Wednesday 15:00-17:50
Swift Hall 403

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Office Hours M/Tu 9:30–10:30
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Course description: In the early centuries of the Common Era (ca. 100 BCE–700 CE), the Buddhist traditions saw a tremendous surge in scriptural production and a new focus on textuality. Much of this new literature centered around the notion that one might aspire to the position of a cosmic world-teacher (*buddha*), rather than “merely” an enlightened saint. Gradually, as this new orientation spawned novel forms of religious thought and praxis, a self-conscious movement began to take shape, which eventually came to be known as the Mahāyāna or “Universal Vehicle.” In this course, we will explore the development of these traditions through close reading of several of its major scriptures (*sūtra*-s).

PQ: HREL 35100/SALC 48306 or other background in Indian Buddhism preferred.

Course requirements:

- 1) Close, careful reading of the assigned works,
- 2) Regular attendance and attentive and/or active participation,
- 3) A presentation on one of the sūtras (or clusters of sūtras) assigned,
- 4) Either one final paper (20–25pp) or two shorter papers (10–15pp).

SCHEDULE OF CLASS MEETINGS:

Week One (27 September 2006): Introduction/Orientation

Week Two (4 October 2006): State of the Art and Methods of Analysis

Readings: Skilling, “Mahāyāna and Bodhisattva: An Essay Towards Historical Understanding”
Schopen, “Mahāyāna in Indian Inscriptions”
Nattier, *A Few Good Men*, pp. 3–197
Recommended: Gombrich, “Organized Bodhisattvas”
Silk, “What, if Anything, is Mahāyāna Buddhism?”

Week Three (11 October 2006): Enquiry of Ugra (*Ugraparipṛcchā*)

Readings: Nattier, *A Few Good Men*, pp. 201–321

Week Four (18 October 2006): Mystical Revelations

Readings: Harrison, *Samādhi of Direct Encounter*, pp. 3–205
Harrison, “Mediums and Messages”
Recommended: Harrison, *The Pratyutpanna Samādhi Sūtra* (Chinese of Lokakṣema)

Week Five (25 October 2006): Pairs of Sūtras

Readings: “On Raṭṭhapāla” (The *Raṭṭhapāla Sutta*)
Ensink, *The Question of Rāṣṭrapāla*, pp. 1–59
“The Greater Discourse on the Destruction of Craving” (*Mahātāṇhasankhaya Sutta*)
Reat, *The Śālistambha Sūtra* (entire)
Recommended: “The Great Passing” (*Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*)
Yamamoto, *The Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*

Week Six (1 November 2006): Devotionalism

Readings: Gomez, *The Land of Bliss*, pp. 3–111

Schopen, “Sukhāvātī as a Generalized Religious Goal in Sanskrit Mahāyāna”

Week Seven (8 November 2006): The Perfections of Wisdom and Liberative Art

Readings: Müller, *The Diamond Sūtra*, Larger and Smaller *Heart Sūtras*

Conze, *The Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines*, chs. I–IV, VII–IX, XI–XII, XIX–XX, XXII, XXV, XXX–XXXII

Beyer, “Notes on the Vision Quest in Early Mahāyāna”

Tatz, *The Skill in Means (Upāyakauśalya) Sūtra*

Recommended: Deleanu, “Preliminary Study on Meditation and the Beginnings of Mahāyāna”

Schopen, “The Manuscript of the *Vajracchedikā* Found at Gilgit”

Week Eight (15 November 2006): Polemicism and Transcendental Visions

Readings: Hurvitz, *The Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma (The Lotus Sutra)*

Pye, “The Lotus Sūtra and the Essence of the Mahāyāna”

Week Nine (22 November 2006): The Third Turning of the Wheel

Readings: Powers, *The Saṃdhinirmocana Sūtra* (entire)

Suzuki, *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, pp. 22–70, 85–90, 190–225.

Week Ten (29 November 2006): Summing It All Up

Readings: Thurman, trans., *The Holy Teaching of Vimalakīrti* (entire)

****Final Paper due Wednesday 6 December 2006 in Swift 201 by 3:00PM****

Course Reading Bibliography (n.b. newer editions may be available and/or used)

Skilling, Peter. "Mahāyāna and Bodhisattva: An Essay Towards Historical Understanding." In *Phothisatava Barami Kap Sangkhom Thai Nai Sahatsawat Mai [Bodhisattvaparami and Thai Society in the New Millennium]*, edited by Pakorn Limpanusorn, and Chalermpon Iampakdee, 139–56. Bangkok: Chinese Studies Center, Institute of East Asia, Thammasat University, 2004.

Schopen, Gregory. “Mahāyāna in Indian Inscriptions,” *Indo-Iranian Journal* 21 (1979), pp. 1–19.

Nattier, Jan. *A Few Good Men: The Bodhisattva Path according to The Inquiry of Ugra (Ugraparipṛcchā)*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2005.

Gombrich, Richard. "Organized Bodhisattvas: A Blind Alley in Buddhist Historiography." In *Sūryacandrāya: Essays in Honour of Akira Yuyama on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*, edited by Paul Harrison, and Gregory Schopen, 43–56. Swisttal-Odendorf: Indica et Tibetica Verlag, 1998.

Silk, Jonathan. “What, if Anything, is Mahāyāna Buddhism?: Problems of Definitions and Classifications” *Numen* 49 (2002), pp. 76–109.

Harrison, Paul. *The Saṃādhi of Direct Encounter with the Buddhas of the Present: An Annotated English Translation of the Tibetan Version of the Pratyutpanna-Buddha-Saṃmukhāvasthita-Saṃādhi-Sūtra*. Tokyo: The International Institute for Buddhist Studies, 1990.

- Harrison, Paul. “Mediums and Messages: Reflections on the Production of Mahāyāna Sūtras,” *The Eastern Buddhist*, new series vol. 35, nos. 1-2 (2003), pp. 115-151.
- Harrison, Paul, trans. *The Pratyutpanna Samādhi Sutra translated by Lokakṣema*. BDK English Tripitaka 25-II. Berkeley: Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 1998.
- Ensink, Jacob. *The Question of Rāṣṭrapāla: Translated and Annotated*. Zwolle: J.J. Tijl, 1952.
- “On Raṭṭhapāla (*Raṭṭhapāla Sutta*)” in Bhikkhu Ñānamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi, trans., *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya*. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995, pp. 677–691.
- “The Greater Discourse on the Destruction of Craving” (*Mahātāṇhasankhaya Sutta*) in Bhikkhu Ñānamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi, trans., *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya*. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995, pp.349–361.
- Reat, N. Ross, trans. *The Śālistambha Sūtra*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1993.
- “The Great Passing” (*Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*) in Maurice Walshe, trans., *Thus Have I Heard: The Long Discourses of the Buddha*. London: Wisdom, 1987, pp. 231–277.
- Yamamoto, Kosho. *The Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra: A Complete Translation from the Classical Chinese Language in 3 Volumes*. Oyama: The Karinbunko, 1973.
- Gomez, Luis. *The Land of Bliss: Sanskrit and Chinese Versions of the Sukhāvativyūha Sūtras*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1996.
- Schopen, Gregory. “Sukhāvati as a Generalized Religious Goal in Sanskrit Mahāyāna Sūtra Literature,” *Indo-Iranian Journal* 19 (1977), 177–210.
- Müller, F. Max, trans, “The Vagrakkhedikā,” “The Larger Praṅṅā-pāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra,” and “The Smaller Praṅṅā-pāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra,” in Cowell, E.B., et al., eds., *Buddhist Mahāyāna Texts*, Part II, 1894. New York: Dover, 1969, pp. 111–144, 147–149, and 153–154.
- Conze, Edward, *The Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines*. San Francisco: Four Seasons Foundation, 1973, pp. 83–119, 135–152, 162–179, 213–229, 236–241, 249–253, 277–300.
- Beyer, Stephen. “Notes on the Vision Quest in Early Mahāyāna” in Lewis Lancaster, ed., *Prajñāpāramitā and Related Systems*. Berkeley: Berkeley Buddhist Studies Series, 1977, pp. 329–340.
- Tatz, Mark. *The Skill in Means (Upāyakauśalya) Sūtra*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1994.
- Deleanu, Florin. “Preliminary Study on Meditation and the Beginnings of Mahāyāna” in the *Annual Report of the International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology at Soka University for the Academic Year 1999*, pp. 65–113.

- Schopen, Gregory. “The Manuscript of the *Vajracchedikā* Found at Gilgit” in Luis Gomez and Jonathan Silk, eds., *Studies in the Literature of the Great Vehicle: Three Mahāyāna Buddhist Texts*. Ann Arbor: Collegiate Institute for the Study of Buddhist Literature and the Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies of the University of Michigan, 1989, pp. 89–139.
- Hurvitz, Leon. *Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1976.
- Pye, Michael, “The Lotus Sūtra and the Essence of the Mahāyāna,” in Takeuchi Yoshinori, ed., *Buddhist Spirituality I: Indian, Southeast Asian, Tibetan, Early Chinese*. 1993. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1995. pp. 171–187.
- Powers, John, trans. *The Wisdom of Buddha (Saṃdhanirmocana Sūtra)*. Berkeley: Dharma Publications, 1995.
- Suzuki, D. T., trans. *The Lankāvatāra Sūtra*. 1932. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1999, pp. 22–70, 85–90, 190–225.
- Thurman, Robert A.F., trans. *The Holy Teaching of Vimalakīrti: A Mahāyāna Scripture*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1976.

FOR FURTHER READING AND REFERENCE

Note: an important bibliographic resources is Dan Martin’s “Tibskrit Philology,” a catalog of sūtras and śāstras that has notes on relevant studies, translations, and references in modern scholarly literature; see <http://www.eecs.berkeley.edu/~keutzer/martin/TibskritUni.pdf>

TRANSLATIONS OF MAHĀYĀNA SŪTRAS

- Gwendolyn Bays, *The Lalitavistara Sūtra: The Voice of the Buddha, the Beauty of Compassion*. Berkeley: Dharma Publishing, 1983, 2 vols.
- Beal, Samuel, trans., *Romantic Legend of Śākyā Buddha*. London: Trubner & Co, 1875. (A translation from Chinese and Sanskrit of the *Abhiniṣkramaṇasūtra*).
- Bonneux, Anne M. A. *The Chinese Subāhuparipṛcchāsūtra: Schrif tuurlijke tekst over de vragen van de jongeling Subahu*, Rijksuniversiteit te gent (Belgium 1991).
- Braarvig, Jens. *Akṣayamatīnirdeśasūtra: The Tradition of Imperishability in Buddhist Thought*. 2 vols. Oslo: Solum Forlag, 1993. (Translation of sūtra is in volume 2).
- Braarvig, Jens. “The Practice of the Bodhisattvas: Negative Dialectics and Provocative Arguments: Edition of the Tibetan Text of the *Bodhisattvacaryānirdeśa* with a Translation and Introduction,” *Acta Orientalia*, vol. 55 (1994), pp. 113-160.
- Chang, Garma C. C. *A Treasury of Mahāyāna Sūtras: Selections from the Mahāratnakūṭa Sūtra*. University Park: Penn State University Press, 1983. (These are collaborative translations by a team that included quality scholars, but most seem to be based largely on the Chinese and don’t correspond well to their Sanskrit or Tibetan counterparts. Use with caution.)

- Cleary, Thomas. *The Flower Ornament Scripture: A Translation of the Avataṃsaka Sūtra*. Boulder and London: Shambhala Publications, 1984.
- Conze, Edward. *The Large Sutra on the Perfect Wisdom*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975.
- Dayal, Har. *The Bodhisattva Doctrine in Buddhist Sanskrit Literature*. 1932. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1970. (A somewhat dated, but occasionally useful survey of some themes in Mahāyāna Buddhist literature.)
- Emmerick, R. E. *The Sūtra of Golden Light: Being a Translation of the Suvarṇabhāṣottamasūtra*. London: Luzac & Co., 1970.
- The Fortunate Aeon: How the Thousand Buddhas Became Enlightened*. Berkeley: Dharma Press, 1986. (Translation of the voluminous *Bhadrakalpikasūtra*)
- Frye, Stanley. "The Sūtra Requested by the Old Woman," *Tibet Journal*, vol. 4, no. 1 (1979), pp. 28-33. (Mahallikāparipṛcchā-mahāyāna-sūtra)
- Gómez, Luis O., and Jonathan A. Silk, eds. *Studies in the Literature of the Great Vehicle: Three Mahāyāna Buddhist Texts*. Ann Arbor: Collegiate Institute for the Study of Buddhist Literature and the Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies of the University of Michigan, 1989. (pp. 1–88 contain a translation of the *Samādhirāja Sūtra*, chs. I–IV)
- Grosnick William H. "The Tathāgatagarbha Sūtra," in: Donald S. Lopez, ed., *Buddhism in Practice*, Princeton University Press (Princeton 1995), pp. 92-106.
- Honda, Megumi. "Annotated Translation of the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra*," in Denis Sinor, ed., *Studies in South, East, and Central Asia*. New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1968.
- Jamspal, Lozang, *The Range of the Bodhisattva: The Treatise of Truth Teller*, doctoral dissertation, Columbia University (New York City 1991). (Edition and translation of *Bodhisattvagocaropāyaviṣayavikurvaṇanirdeśa-nāma-mahāyānasūtra*)
- Kern, H. *Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka or The Lotus of the True Law*. 1884. New York: Dover Publications, 1963.
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- Shakya, Min Bahadur, ed., *Arya amoghpaśa hṛdaya sūtra, Introduction, Text and Translation*, Kathmandu: Nagarjuna Institute of Buddhist Studies, 1992.
- Sastri, N. Aiyaswami, ed., *Bhavaśāṅkrānti-sūtra and Nāgārjuna's Bhavaśāṅkrānti-śāstra with the Commentary of Maitreya-nātha*, Adyar: Adyar Library, 1938.
- Wayman, Alex and Hideko. *The Lion's Roar of Queen Śrīmālā: A Buddhist Scripture on the Tathāgatagarbha Theory*. 1974. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1990. (A translation of the Śrīmālādevīśiṃhanādasūtra).
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