

Buddhism in the Nepal Himalayas: Seminar

Draft as of 2/11/2019

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Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 4:30-6:30
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Course Description

This advanced seminar will explore the Buddhist traditions found in the Himalayas, covering the elite philosophical, artistic, and soteriological traditions as well as popular literatures and devotional practices. Course materials will include philosophical and ritual texts, story narratives, historical textbooks, films, and experiential practice. The central focus will be on the Mahayana and Vajrayana Buddhist traditions found there, and examine these in relation to both Hinduism and shamanism. The seminar will utilize case studies to sample religion in the southern Himalayan region, focusing on the Kathmandu Valley, Dolpo, the Langtang Valley and Marsyandi Valleys of central Nepal. Presentations by guest scholars who are leading figures in Nepal studies, and Himalayan art will be part of this course. Extracurricular class activities will be held in conjunction with the “*Dharma and Punya: Buddhist Ritual Art from Nepal*” at the Cantor Gallery and include a weekend day trip to New York.

Requirements:

Attendance at Cantor Gallery Events.

Field trip to the Rubin Museum and Karmapa monastery in Woodstock, NY.

Extracurricular lectures.

Required Textbooks:

Todd T. Lewis, *Popular Mahayana Texts from Nepal: Narratives and Rituals of Newar Buddhism*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000.

Geoff Childs, *Tibetan Diary: From Birth to Death and Beyond in a Himalayan Valley of Nepal*. Berkeley: University of California-Berkeley, 2004.

Stan Mumford, *Himalayan Dialogue*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990.

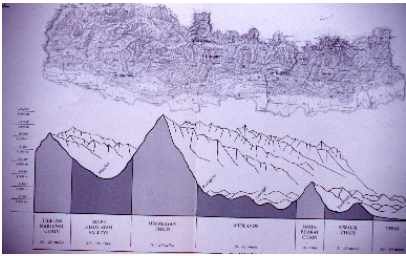
Readings on Electronic Reserves [MCR]

Grading:

Participation	15
Art Case Study Paper/presentation.....	15
Religious Practice Paper/presentation.....	15
Final term Paper	35
Oral Final.....	20

100 pts





Schedule of Seminar Sessions

8/28. Class 1: Geology, Geography, Orientalism

Required Reading:

Peter Molnar, "The Collision between India and Eurasia," [MCR]

Martin Brauen, excerpt from *Dreamworld Tibet* [MCR]

Donald Lopez, *Prisoners of Shangri-La*. [MCR]

Peter Bishop, *The Myth of Shangri-La* [MCR]

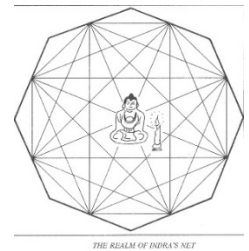
9/4. Class 2: Indic Mahayana Buddhism: Philosophy

FILM "Cycles of Interdependence"

Required Reading:

Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism. 31-80; 101-134

Gregory Schopen, "Mahayana" [MCR]



4 PM: *Exhibition Opening at the Cantor Gallery*



9/11. Class 3: Indic Mahayana Buddhism:

Popular Beliefs and Practices

Required Reading:

Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism. 31-80; 101-134

Gregory Schopen, "Mahayana" [MCR]



9/18. Class 4: Tantric Belief and Practice

The *Cakrasamvara Tantra*

Required Reading:

Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism. 81-99; 249-323

Lama Yeshe, *Introduction to Tantra*. Revised ed.

David Gray, *Cakrasamvara Tantra: First Four Chapters* [MCR]

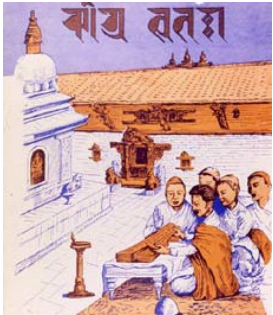
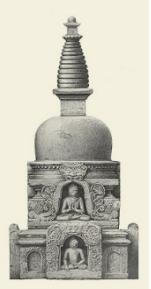
9/25. Class 5: Newar Buddhist History (Licchavi, Malla, Shah Eras)

Required Reading:

Theodore Riccardi, Jr. "Buddhism in Ancient and Medieval Nepal" [MCR]
B. Bledsoe, *Written in Stone: Inscriptions of the Kathmandu Valley's Three*

Kingdoms. [MCR]

Todd T. Lewis, *Popular Mahayana Texts from Nepal*, 1-20



10/9. Class 6: Newar Buddhism: Texts in Context

Required Reading:

Todd T. Lewis, *Popular Mahayana Texts from Nepal*, 21-118
Svayambhu Purana [MCR]

----------Fall Break----------

10/23. Class 7: Newar Buddhism: Basic Rituals

The Guru Mandala Puja; Pancopachara Puja

Guest Scholar: Prof. Naresh Bajracarya

Required Reading:

Naresh Bajracharya, "The *Guru-maṇḍala-Arcana*" [MCR]

10/30. Class 8: Newar Buddhism:

Vratas and Life-Cycle Rites

Required Reading:

John Locke, "The *Uposatha Vrata* of Amoghapasa in Nepal," [MCR]
Popular Mahayana Texts from Nepal, 119-164

Todd Lewis, "*Nepāl Jana Jīvan Kriyā Paddhati*, a Modern Newar Guide for
Vajrayāna Life-Cycle Rites," [MCR]





11/2. Special Community Program: *Stūpa* Making (*Dyah Tayegu*)

Cantor Art Gallery 5-9 PM; Ritual with Naresh Man Bajracarya



11/6. Class 9: *Samyak, Ratha Jatra-s*

Films: “*Samyak 1993*” and “*On the road with the Red God*”

Required Reading:

Todd T. Lewis, *Popular Mahayana Texts from Nepal*, 119-164

11/13. Class 10: Introduction to Highland Himalayan Traditions: Case Study, Dolpo



Required Reading:

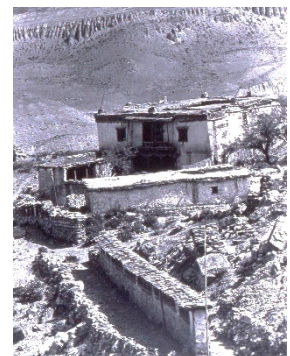
Geoff Childs, *Tibetan Diary: From Birth to Death and Beyond in a Himalayan Valley of Nepal*

11/20. Class 11: Himalayan Traditions: Case Study, Helambu

FILM “*Himalayan Herders*”

Required Reading:

Naomi Bishop, excerpt from *Himalayan Herders* [MCR]





12/3. Class 12: Highland Himalayan Traditions Case Study, Marsyandi Valley

Required Reading:
Stan Mumford, *Himalayan Dialogue*



12/10. LAST CLASS: Term Papers Presented

Exam Period: Oral Final