

Instructor: Mark T. Unno, Office: SCH 334 TEL 6-4973, munno (at) uoregon.edu <http://pages.uoregon.edu/munno/>
Tues. 2:00 p.m. - 4:50 p.m., Condon 360; Office Hours: Mon 10:00-10:45 a.m.; Tues 1:00-1:45 p.m. No Canvas site.

Overview

REL 444/544 Medieval Japanese Buddhism focuses on selected strains of Japanese Buddhism during the medieval period, especially the Kamakura (1185-1333), but also traces influences on later developments including the modern period. The course weaves together the examination of religious thought and cultural developments in historical context. We begin with an overview of key Buddhist concepts for those without prior exposure and go on to examine the formative matrix of early Japanese religion. Once some of the outlines of the intellectual and cultural framework of medieval Japanese Buddhism have been brought into relief, we will proceed to examine in depth examples of significant medieval developments. In particular, we will delve into the work of three contemporary figures: Eihei Dōgen (1200-1253), Zen master and founding figure of the Sōtō sect; Myōe of the Shingon and Kegon sects, focusing on his Shingon practices; and Shinran, founding figure of Jōdo Shinshū, the largest Pure Land sect, more simply known as Shin Buddhism. We conclude with the study of some modern examples that nonetheless are grounded in classical and medieval sources, thus revealing the ongoing influence and transformations of medieval Japanese Buddhism. Themes of the course include: Buddhism as state religion; the relation between institutional practices and individual religious cultivation; ritual practices and transgression; gender roles and relations; relations between ordained and lay; religious authority and enlightenment; and two-fold truth and religious practice. The seminar format includes lecture, student presentations, and discussion. Students will have latitude to develop their own final research projects.

Requirements

1. *Attendance*: Required. Students can have one unexcused absence without penalty. Each class missed thereafter without prior permission will result in 1/2 grade penalty for the course grade.
2. *Short exams*: There will be two short, in-class exams, based on materials from the readings, lectures, and course web site.
3. *Medium papers*: There will be two medium-length papers (3-4 pages) based on topics that will be provided by the instructor.
4. *Presentation*: Students will make a presentation on the readings for one of the section meetings. The presenter should *not* summarize the reading but should use the presentation to discuss why the selected ideas/passages in question are important for understanding the reading and proceed to explain as well as raise questions about these ideas/passages. The primary purpose of these presentations is to *launch* the discussion, not to demonstrate breadth of knowledge or to lead the discussion. Each presenter will prepare a handout with 2 questions and brief, corresponding quotations from the readings. More detailed instructions will be provided on the course web site.
5. *Final paper*: Each student will hand in a final paper of 8-11 pages double-spaced (A longer final paper of 12-15 pages will be required for those who have registered for REL544.) Suggested topics will be provided. Students may choose to create their own topics in consultation with the instructor. In the case of the latter, a one-paragraph description of the topic must be submitted by **email** to the instructor at least one week prior to the due date, but an earlier consultation is recommended.
6. *Late policy on written assignments*: Three grace days total will be allotted excluding the final paper for which no extensions will be given. For the short papers, a cumulative total of three late days will be allowed without penalty. Thereafter, each late day will result in a two-point deduction from the course grade. Weekends are not counted against the grace days.
7. Be sure to bring the readings to class.

Grades

Short exam A 10%	Short exam B 10%	Short paper I 15%	Short paper II 15%
Presentation 10%	Discussion 10%	Final paper 30%	

Outcomes

In this course students will: a) acquire background knowledge relevant for the study of Medieval Japanese Buddhism, b) learn of key developments in Shin Buddhism, Shingon Buddhism, and Zen Buddhism, including primary texts in a range of genres, religious thought, and cultural and historical context, c) examine instances of contemporary transformations and outgrowths, and d) develop critical research, writing, reading, and discussion skills. Students will acquire these skills through a combination of assignments including textual readings, in-class exam, class presentations, and writing assignments.

Required Texts

1. Shinmon Aoki, *Coffinman: The Journal of a Buddhist Mortician* (Anaheim, CA: Buddhist Education Ctr, 2002).
2. Natalie Goldberg, *A Long Quiet Highway* (NY: Bantam, 1994).
3. Eihei Dōgen & Kōshō Uchiyama, *How to Cook Your Life: From the Zen Kitchen to Enlightenment* (Boston: Shambhala, 2005).
4. Mark Unno, *Shingon Refractions: Myōe and the Mantra of Light* (Boston: Wisdom Publications: 2004).
5. Taitetsu Unno, *Tannishō: A Shin Buddhist Classic* (Honolulu: Buddhist Study Center Press, 1996).
6. *Course Packet-REL 444/544 Medieval Japanese Buddhism* (Fall 2015), Copy Shop, 539 E 13th Ave, 97403.
Location: 3 blocks west of the UO Duckstore on E 13th Ave. TEL 541 485 6253

REL 444/544 Medieval Japanese Buddhism: Weekly Schedule

[All readings from Course Packet unless followed by (RT)=(Required Text)] (Focus pages marked with asterisk*)

Week I: Sept 26: Introduction-Course Overview: The Background of Buddhism; Buddhism and Japanese Religion

Peter Harvey, *An Introduction to Buddhism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 9-26.

Robert A. F. Thurman, trans., *The Holy Teaching of Vimalakirti* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1987), 56-63, 73-77.*

Hayao KAWAI, "Japanese Mythology: Balancing the Gods," in his *Dreams, Myths and Fairy Tales in Japan* (Daimon, 1995), 67-97.*

Week II: Oct 3: Background of Japanese Buddhism-Religion and the State; Karma in Medieval Japan

Toshio Kuroda, "Shinto in the History of Japanese Religion," tr. by James Dobbins and Suzanne Gay, *Journal of Japanese Studies* 7:1 (Winter 1981), 1-21.*

Joseph Kitagawa, "Chapter 6. The Shadow and the Sun: A Glimpse of the Fujiwara and the Imperial Families in Japan," in his *On Understanding Japanese Religion* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 98-116.

William LaFleur, "Chapter 2 In and out of the Rokudo," *Karma of Words-Buddhism and the literary arts in medieval Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 26-59 (48-59*).

Week III: Oct 10: Buddhism in the Kamakura Period: Themes and Background

EXAM A IN

CLASS

Helen Craig McCullough, tr. *The Tale of the Heike* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 1-6, 17-19, 23-37.*

Robert E. Morrell, "Tendai's Jien as Buddhist Priest," *Early Kamakura Buddhism-A Minority Report*, 23-43.

Jeffrey P. Mass, "The Emergence of the Kamakura Bakufu [Military Government]" in *Medieval Japan-Essays in Institutional History*, ed. John W. Hall and Jeffrey P. Mass (Stanford: Stanford University Press), 127-156.

Kazuo Osumi, "Buddhism in the Kamakura Period," tr. by James Dobbins, in *The Cambridge History of Japan-Volume 3 Medieval Japan*, 544-563 (544-555, 560-563*).

Week IV: Oct 17: Myoe Koben: Kegon and Shingon Monk

PAPER I DUE IN CLASS

Mark Unno, *Shingon Refractions: Myōe and the Mantra of Light* (Boston: Wisdom, 2004), (1-72, 111-149*) (RT).

Lori Meeks, *Hokkeji and the Reemergence of Female Monastic Orders in Premodern Japan*, 250-300.

Week V: Oct 24: Eihei Dogen: Zen Master of the Soto School

Mark Unno, "Philosophical Terms in the Zen Buddhist Thought of Dōgen."*

Norman Waddell & Masao Abe, tr. "Shōbōgenzō Genjōkōan," by Dōgen Kigen, *The Eastern Buddhist* 5:2 (10/1972), 129-140.*

Mark Unno, "18. *Shushōgi* Paragraph 30," *Engaging Dōgen's Zen* (Boston: Wisdom), 179-184.*

Eihei Dōgen & Kōshō Uchiyama, *How to Cook Your Life: From the Zen Kitchen to Enlightenment*, trans. Tom Wright (New York: Shambhala 2005)(RT).

Steven Heine, *The Zen Poetry of Dogen* (Boston: Tuttle, 1997), 1-34.

Barbara Ruch, "The Other Side of Culture in Medieval Japan," in *The Cambridge History of Japan - Volume 3 Medieval Japan*, ed. by Kozo Yamamura (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 500-511.*

Week VI: Oct 31: Gutoku Shinran: Foolish Being of Pure Land Buddhism

EXAM B IN CLASS

Mark Unno, "The Nembutsu of No-Meaning and the Problem of Genres in the Writings and Statements of Gutoku Shinran," *The Pure Land* 10-11 (12/1994), 1-9.*

[Mark Unno, "The Nembutsu as the Path of the Sudden Teaching," unpublished paper, IASBS Conference, 1995, 1-7 \(online, course web site\).](#)

Taitetsu Unno, *Tannishō: A Shin Buddhist Classic* (Honolulu: Buddhist Study Center Press, 1987)(RT).*

Week VII: Nov 7: Bridging Pre-modern and Modern I: Coffinman

PAPER II DUE IN CLASS

Shinmon Aoki, *Coffinman: The Journal of a Buddhist Mortician* (Anaheim, CA: Buddhist Education Ctr, 2002)(RT).*

Week VIII: Nov 14: Bridging Pre-modern and Modern II: Natalie Goldberg

Natalie Goldberg, *A Long Quiet Highway* (NY: Bantam, 1994)(RT).*

Week IX: Nov 21: Film: Departures; Discussion of Paper Topics

Week X: Nov 28: Wrap Lecture and Discussion

FINAL PAPER DUE IN

CLASS

Wrap-up remarks and discussion.