

University of Wisconsin-Madison
 Department of History
 HISTORY 203
 HISTORY OF BUDDHIST COUNTRIES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA
 Spring 1992
 Rm. 228 Education Tuesday & Thursday 2:30-3:45
Thongchai Winichakul

Southeast Asia is comprised of basically two regions: the mainland which includes Burma, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam; and the island world which includes the Philippines, Indonesia, Brunei, Singapore and Malaysia, although the last one is on the southern tip of the peninsula, not an island. The distinction is made not only by geography, but also to a great extent by their historical and cultural differences.

Except Vietnam, the mainland countries are distinctive not only to the region but to the world in that including Sri Lanka they are the homeland of Theravada Buddhism. Most people in the West who know Asia via China and Japan will encounter the Mahayana Buddhism which is now practiced in Vietnam as well. But to the rest of mainland Southeast Asia, over 120,000,000 people today, they have known, practiced, and historically lived under the influence of Theravada Buddhism for almost a thousand years. With the modernization and secularization in those countries taken place less than 150 years ago, the influence of religious tradition is still very high even among the so-called socialist countries like Laos and Cambodia. The *raison d'etre* of this course is that it is perhaps impossible to know those countries and people without recognizing the role of Theravada Buddhism.

Amidst the courses on Chinese and Japanese or Tibetan Buddhism, this course introduces another Buddhism. It is not the aim of this course, however, to study the Theravada's tenet or philosophy in depth. As a history course, the theme will be the role of religion in the politics and cultures of those countries in history: the ideas and influence of Theravada Buddhism in shaping political and social institutions, the role of the monastic order in relation to the state and peasant, and the effects of and on the religion as the countries have gone through colonialism and modern industrialization since the mid-nineteenth century. The focus on Thailand and Burma is not arbitrary, since they are major force of the region's history and religious development, and they provide us with so many examples to understand the entire region.

As an introduction to the culture students may not be familiar with, the course will explore major topics instead of a chronology. No previous knowledge is required; nor is the ability to memorize all the dates and unfamiliar terms and names. What is required is attention, enthusiasm, and patience to learn about unfamiliar culture, plus imagination.

Description of course content:

Early history of Theravada Buddhism in Southeast Asia; cosmology, ideas of Karma and basic tenets; the relationship between Buddhism, Hinduism and animism; Buddhist political and social institutions; the monastic order (sangha) and the states; the politics of the religious reforms; Buddhist moral economy; the challenge from the West and the nineteenth century transition; the Buddhist movements in the struggle for independence; Buddhism and the monastic order in the modern states. Focus on Thailand and Burma.

Class: Two 75-min. lectures a week on Tuesday and Thursday 2:30-3:45 p.m. at 228 Education. Questions are welcome any time in or at the end of the class.

Office Hours: Rm. 5211 Humanities ph. 263-8931
Tuesday 4:00-5:00 Friday 9:30-11:30 and by appointment

Exams:

1. Two take-home exams: one in week 7, the other in week 13. 30% each. The question will be handed out at least a week in advance. Each answer should be about 3-4 pages long and must not exceed 5 pages (double spacing, 1" top, bottom, and right margins and 1.5" left margin on a letter size paper with normal font size-10 or 12 cpi.)
2. Final exam (see the Time-table) 40%

What is expected from students is not the ability to copy, or paraphrase the lecture or reading materials, but one's understanding, in her/his own words, of the topics, his/her ability to communicate in writing, the basic research skill like library search for relevant materials, and the ability to explain a question either by analysis or description. Originality, creativity and imagination will be bonus, but not requirement.

Required Textbooks:

Ishii, Yoneo. *Sangha, State and Society: Thai Buddhism in History*
Smith, Bardwell. *Religion and Legitimation of Power in Thailand Laos and Burma*
Spiro, Melford. *Buddhism and Society: A Great Tradition and its Burmese Vicissitudes*

Optional Textbooks:

Aung-Thwin, Michael. *Pagan: the Origin of Modern Burma*
Jackson, Peter A. *Buddhism, Legitimation and Conflict: Urban Thai Buddhism*
Keyes, Charles F. *Thailand : Buddhist Kingdom as a Modern Nation-state*
Than Tun. *Essays on the History of Buddhism in Burma*

Basic books on the general history of the countries in mainland Southeast Asia

Hall, D.G.E. *History of South East Asia*
Harvey, G.E. *History of Burma*
Cady, John F. *A History of Modern Burma*
Trager, Frank N. *Burma from Kingdom to Republic*
Steinberg, David I. *Burma: A Socialist Nation of Southeast Asia*
Wyatt, David K. *Thailand: A Short History*
Keyes, Charles F. (see above)
Terwiel, B.J. *A History of Modern Thailand*
Chandler, David P. *A History of Cambodia*
Stuart-Fox, Martin. *Contemporary Laos: Studies on Politics and Society of the Lao People's Democratic Republic*
Levy, Paul. *Histoire du Laos*

Note on the List of Readings:

1. The books below with the * mark are required readings in each week. The ones with other mark are recommended.
2. The titles of many books will be in a shorten form after the first references. The number at the end of each item is page number.

WEEK 1 (Jan 21) Introduction
 Aims and objective of the course; business; assignments; expectation.
 A general outline of history.
Reading: No.

EARLY HISTORY

WEEK 2 (Jan 28) A general outline of history (cont.)
 Early history (states and settlements); early religions before Theravada and introduction of Theravada to Southeast Asia [video: Spirits of Asia]

Reading: * Coedes, George. The Making of Southeast Asia. 10-87
 * Than tun. Essays on the History and Buddhism of Burma. 3-58

IDEAS

WEEK 3 (Feb 4) History of Theravada; basic ideas; Nivarna, Karma, merit; Theravada Buddhism, Hinduism, Animism; localization of Buddhism in Southeast Asia; the role of Hinduism and animism

Reading: * Spiro. Buddhism and Society. chap. 2, 4, 6 (31-65, 92-161)
 - Spiro, Melford. Burmese Supernaturalism
 - Aung-Thwin. Pagan. chap. 2 (30-47)
 [See also readings in Week 8]

WEEK 4 (Feb 11) Cosmology and social order [slides: cosmology]

Reading: * Reynolds, Frank E. Three Worlds According to King Ruang: A Thai Buddhist Cosmology. for a brief and quick understanding see introduction pp. 5-37. The entire book is a translation of the thirteenth century Thai text.
 * Heine-Geldern, Robert. Conceptions of State and Kingship in Southeast Asia
 * Reynolds, Craig J. "Buddhist Cosmography in Thai History, With Special Reference to Nineteenth Century Culture Change," Journal of Asian Studies. 35:2, Feb. 1976
 - Reynolds, Frank E. "Ritual and Social Hierarchy: An Aspect of Traditional Religion in Buddhist Laos," In Smith, Bardwell. Religion and Legitimation. 166-174.

SANGHA AND STATE

WEEK 5 (Feb 18) The *sangha*

Reading: * Ishii. Sangha, State and Society. chap 1 (3-33)
 * Spiro. Buddhism and Society. chap. 12-13, 17 (279-320, 396-424)
 - Tambiah, S.J. The Buddhist Saints of the Forest and the Cult of Amulets. chap. 5 (53-77)
 - Wijayaratna, Mohan. Buddhist Monastic Life.
 - Aung-Thwin. Pagan. passim.

WEEK 6 (Feb 25) Political concepts: merit and power, state, kingship

- Reading: * Ishii. Sangha, State and Society. chap.2-3 (34-66)
 * Tambiah, S.J. World Conqueror and World Renouncer. chap.2-7, especially chap.7 (9-131, esp. 102-132)
 * Aung-Thwin. Pagan. chap 3 (47-68)
 - Aung-Thwin, Michael. "Divinity, Spirit and Human: Conceptions of Classical Burmese Kingship," In Centers, Symbols and Hierarchy : Essays on Classical States in Southeast Asia. ed. Lorraine Gesick. 45-86
 - Aung-Thwin. "Kingship, the sangha and Society in Pagan," In Explorations in Early Southeast Asian Statecraft. eds. Kenneth Hall and John Whitmore. 205-256
 - Sarkisyanz, E. Buddhist Background of the Burmese Revolution. chap. 5,7-10, 15 (33-36, 43-67, 93-97)
 - Hanks, Lucien M. "Merit and Power in Thai Social Order," American Anthropologist. 64 (1962), 1247-61.
 - Gesick, Lorraine. "The Rise and Fall of King Taksin: A Drama of a Buddhist Kingship," In Centers, Symbols and Hierarchies. ed. Lorraine Gesick. 87-105
 - Reynolds, Craig J. The Buddhist Monkhood in the Nineteenth Century Thailand. chap 1
 - Reynolds, Frank E. "The Holy Emerald Jewel: Buddhist Symbolism and Political Legitimation in Thailand and Laos," In ed. Bardwell Smith. Religion and Legitimation. 175-193

WEEK 7 (Mar 3) Politics of Religious Reform; perception of the past
 The cases of Pagan, Lanna and Early Bangkok
 [take-home exam #1 due]

- Reading: * Spiro. Buddhism and Society. chap.16 (378-395)
 * Swearer, Donald and Premchit, Sommai. "The Relations Between the Religious and Political Order in Northern Thailand (14th-16th c.)," in ed. Bardwell Smith. Religion and Legitimation. 20-33
 * Butt, John W. "Thai Kingship and Religious Reform," In Ibid. 34-51
 * Wyatt, David K. "The Subtle Revolution of King Rama I of Siam," In eds. Wyatt and Woodside. Moral Order and the Question of Change. 9-52
 * Mendelsohn, E. Michael Sangha and State in Burma: A Study of Monastic Sectarianism and Leadership. chap.1 (31-65)
 - Reynolds, Craig J. "Religious Historical Writing and the Legitimation of the First Bangkok Reign," in eds. David Marr and Anthony Reid. Perceptions of the Past in Southeast Asia. 90-107
 - Luce, G.H. and Pe Muang Tin. trans The Glass Palace. intro.

SPRING RECESS Mar 7-15

POPULAR BUDDHISM

WEEK 8 (Mar 17) Popular belief; the *Jataka*; perception of the past
 [slides: the Great Births *Jataka*]

- Reading:
- Spiro. Burmese Supernaturalism.
 - Anuman Rajadhon. Popular Buddhism in Siam and Other Essays on Thai Studies. 25-68, 99-168
 - Kirsch, A, Thomas. "Complexity in the Thai Religious System," Journal of Asian Studies. 36:2, 241-266
 - Tambiah, S.J. Buddhism and the Spirit Cults in Northeast Thailand. chap 13-20 (223-366)
 - Terwiel, B.J. Monks and Magic.
 - Jones, John Garrett. Tales and Teachings of the Buddha: the Jataka Stories
 - The Pali Text Society. Jataka Tales: Birth Stories of the Buddha

WEEK 9 (Mar 24) Peasant rebellions and the ideas of Utopia

- Reading:
- * Ishii. Sangha, State and Society. chap.9 (171-187)
 - * Spiro. Buddhism and Society. 171-180
 - * Keyes, Charles F. "Millennialism, Theravada Buddhism and Thai Society," Journal of Asian Studies 36:2, 283-302
 - * Turton, Andrew and Tanabe, Shigeharu eds. History and Peasant Consciousness in South East Asia. see introduction, and the articles by Tanabe, Chatthip Nartsupha, 75-134
 - Ishii, Yoneo. "A Note on Millenarian Revolts in Northeastern Siam," Journal of Southeast Studies. 6:2, 121-126
 - Tambiah. Buddhist Saints of the Forest. chap.20 (293-320)
 - Adas, Michael. "Bandits, Monks, and Pretender Kings: Pattern of Peasant Resistance and Protest in Colonial Burma, 1826-1941," In eds. Robert P. Wellner and Scott E. Guggenheim. Power and Protest in the Countryside. 75-105

BUDDHIST ECONOMY

WEEK 10 (Mar 31) The politics of redistribution economy
The moral economy of the peasant

[Modern Thai Arts]

- Reading:
- * Scott, James C. The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia.
 - Aung-Thwin, Michael. "The Role of *sasana* Reform in Burmese History: Economic Dimension of a Religious Purification," Journal of Asian Studies. 38:4, (1979) 671-688; and the argument by Victor Lieberman in the same journal 39:4 (1980) 753-769; and then Aung-Thwin's "A Reply to Lieberman" in the same journal 40:1 (1980), 87-90; OR
 - Aung-Thwin. Pagan. chap.8-9
 - Evans, Grant. From Moral Economy to Remembered Village

TRANSITION

WEEK 11 (Apr 7) Responses to the West (1)
Siam: Kitchanukit, Thammayut, Mongkut's reform, Wachirayan, Sangha and modernization, sangha as state mechanism

- Reading: * Ishii. Sangha, State and Society. chap.8 (146-170)
 * Kirsch, A. Thomas. "Modernizing Implications of Nineteenth Century Reforms in Thai Sangha," In ed. Bardwell Smith. Religion and Legitimation. 52-65
 * Alabaster, Henry. The Modern Buddhist, Being the Views of a Siamese Minister of State on His Own and Other Religions.
 - Keyes, Charles F. "Buddhism and National Integration in Thailand," Journal of Asian Studies. 30:3, 551-568
 - Reynolds, Craig J. The Buddhist Monkhood in Nineteenth Century Thailand. chap. 3-4

WEEK 12 (Apr 14) Response to the West (2)
 Burma: Buddhist Movement for independence, the case of Sayasan [take-home exam #2 due]

- Reading: * Sarkisyanz, E. Buddhist Backgrounds of the Burmese Revolution. 110-179
 - Ferguson, John P. "The Quest for Legitimation by Burmese Monks and Kings," In ed. Bardwell Smith. Religion and Legitimation. 66-86
 - Mendelsohn, E. Michael. Sangha and State. chap 4 (173-235)
 - Smith, Donald E. Religion and Politics in Burma. chap 3

BUDDHIST NATION-STATES

WEEK 13 (Apr 21) Political crises and Buddhism; the sangha and state in recent history: Buddhist militant in defense and offense of the states.

- Reading: * Ishii. Sangha, State and Society. chap.4,6,7 (67-80,100-145)
 * Tin Muang and Muang Than. "The *sangha* and *sasana* in Socialist Burma," SOJOURN: Social Issues in Southeast Asia. 3:1 (Feb. 1988), 26-61
 - Mendelsohn, E. Michael. Sangha and State. chap.5 (236-298)
 - Smith, Donald E. Religion and Politics. chap.5,7
 - Reynolds, Frank E. "Sacral Kingship and National Development: the Case of Thailand," and "Legitimation and Rebellion," In ed. Bardwell Smith Religion and Legitimation. 100-110, 134-146.
 - Keyes, Charles F. "Political Crisis and Militant Buddhism," In Ibid. 147-164

WEEK 14 (Apr 28) Buddhist responses to modernization, capitalism and technology; diversified and stratified Buddhism
 [film: Smile-- a Day in Burma]

- Reading: * Jackson, Peter A. Buddhism Legitimation and Conflict. section 2
 - Jackson, Peter A. "The Hupphasawan Movement: Millenarian Buddhism among Thai Political Elite," SOJOURN: Social Issues in Southeast Asia. 3:2, 134-170
 - Zehner, Edwin. "Reform Symbolism of a Thai Middle-class Sect: the Growth and Appeal of the Thammakai Movement,"

- Journal of Southeast Asian Studies. 21:2, 402-426
- Taylor, J.L. "Living on the Rim: Ecology and Forest Monks in Northeast Thailand," SOJOURN. 6:1, 106-125
 - Sulak Sivaraksa. Siam in Crisis.

WEEK 15 (May 5) Buddhism in crisis, whose crisis? Final remarks