

**Course Code:** BUDS 5013

**Title in English:** Theory and Method in Buddhist Studies

**Title in Chinese:** 佛學研究方法

**Course Instructors:** Profs. TAM, Wai Lun 譚偉倫 and WONG Kwok, Sonia 王珏

**Day, Time and Venue:** Monday, 7:00pm-9:30pm, ELB\_206

### **Course Description**

This course introduces students to the history and the main disciplinary approaches and methods in the academic study of Buddhism. It integrates the exploration of different approaches, theories, methods, concepts, and issues in the study of Buddhism with the acquisition of graduate skills. These skills include critical thinking and writing, effective use of primary and secondary source through the library, electronic and other information sources in the study of Buddhism. Students will get acquainted with key concepts in the study of Buddhism.

The course will be divided into two parts:

(1) In the first part, Prof. Wong Kwok Sonia, an expert of hermeneutics in Biblical Studies which is a highly developed field, will give a series of six lectures on hermeneutics. Students and the instructor will then consider if and how such theories could be useful and adjusted for use in Buddhist Studies. There will be a mid-term examination at the end of part one.

(2) In the second part of the course, Prof. TAM WL will guide the class to read some representative works in the field of Chinese Buddhism to explore their approaches, methods, concepts, and issues. At the end of the course, students will be asked to design a project of their own with a clear definition of their approaches, methods, concepts, and issues in the form of a formal Graduation Paper proposal. This will help student to develop their graduation paper in the second term for the course BUDS5012 Graduation Paper 畢業論文 which is a required course for the MABS programme.

### **Learning Outcomes**

#### Knowledge Outcomes

Upon completing this module successfully, students should be able to

- (1) demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the historical development, theory, and method in the Buddhist studies.
- (2) acquire fundamental knowledge and understanding of selected approaches, methods, theories, and concepts in the study of Buddhism.
- (3) find and use books, journals, journal articles, websites and other sources of information pertaining to religious topics including those studied in this course

#### Skill Outcomes

Upon completing this module successfully, students should be able to

- (1) develop their analytical and problem-solving ability, critical intelligence, and appreciative thinking as well as key research skills and to prepare for advanced studies in Buddhist Studies.
- (2) enhance the ability to employ a variety of methods in studying and analyzing materials (philosophical, historical, hermeneutical, bibliographical and ethnographical etc.)

(3) develop research skills in Buddhist Studies, including improved competence in academic writing and presentation to advance for further academic research in Buddhist Studies.

### Attitude Outcomes

Upon completing this module successfully, students should be able to

- (1) recognize the contested and provisional nature of knowledge and understanding.
- (2) develop a reflective and empathetic attitude in understanding Buddhism.
- (3) develop sensitivity to ultimate concern and religious dimension of human life

### **Course syllabus and schedule**

#### Abbreviations

CUL= available on CUHK Library website; Bb= available on Blackboard

J&M = *Judges & Method: New Approaches in Biblical Studies*

TEIOM = *To Each Its Own Meaning: An Introduction to Biblical Criticisms & Their Applications*

BCC= *The Postmodern Bible*

#### **September 2** Introduction to Hermeneutics and Narrative Criticism (Sonia Wong)

- McKenzie, Steven L., and Stephen R. Haynes, eds. 1999. *To Each Its Own Meaning: An Introduction to Biblical Criticisms and Their Applications*, 201-29 (hereafter TEIOM). CUL.
- Yee, Gale A., ed. 2007. *Judges & Method: New Approaches in Biblical Studies*, 19–45 (hereafter J&M). CUL.

#### Recommended Reading

- Abrams, Meyer H. 1971. *The Mirror and the Lamp*, pp.3–29. Bb.
- Moore, Stephen D. 2015. "Biblical Narrative Analysis from the New Criticism to the New Narratology." in *The Oxford Handbook of Biblical Narrative*, edited by Danna Nolan Fewell, chapter 2. CUL.
- Powell, Mark Allan. 1990. *What Is Narrative Criticism?* Minneapolis: Fortress Press. CUL.

#### **September 9** Ideological Criticism (Sonia Wong)

- TEIOM, 283-306. CUL.
- J&M, 138-60. CUL.
- The Bible and Culture Collective. 1995. *The Postmodern Bible*, 272–308 (Hereafter BCC). CUL.

#### Recommended Reading

- Eagleton, Terry. 1976. *Criticism and Ideology: A Study in Marxist Literary Theory*. London: Verso. CUL.
- Pippin, Tina. 1996. "Ideology, Ideological Criticism, and the Bible." *Currents in Research: Biblical Studies* 4: 51-78. CUL.

### September 16 Feminist Criticism (Sonia Wong)

- *J&M*, 65–89. CUL.
- BCC, 225–71. CUL.
- TEIOM, 268–82. CUL.

#### Recommended Reading

- Osiek, Carolyn. 1997. "The feminist and the Bible: hermeneutical alternatives." *HTS Theologese Studies/Theological Studies* 53, no.4: 956–68. CUL.

### September 23 Reader-Response Criticism (Sonia Wong)

- TEIOM, 230–252. CUL.
- BCC, 20–69. CUL.

#### Recommended Reading

- Iser, Wolfgang. 1971. "Indeterminacy and the Reader's Response in Prose Fiction." In *Aspects of Narrative: Selected Papers from the English Institute*, edited by Joseph Hillis Miller, 1–45. New York: Columbia University Press. CUL.
- Iser, Wolfgang. 1972. "The Reading Process: A Phenomenological Approach." *New Literary History* 3/2, On Interpretation: I (Winter): 279–99. CUL.
- Tompkins, J. P., ed. 1980. *Reader-Response Criticism: From Formalism to Post-Structuralism*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University. CUL.

### September 30 Postcolonial Criticism (Sonia Wong)

- *J&M*, 161–82. CUL.
- Wong, Sonia Kwok. 2024. "What Is Postcolonial Studies and How Is It Applied to the Hebrew Bible / Old Testament." In *The Old Testament Hebrew Scripture in Five Minutes*, edited by Philippe Guillaume and Diane Edelman. Sheffield: Equinox, pp. 419–23. CUL.
- Wong, Sonia Kwok. 2022. "Signifying the Empire against the Empire: Doing Historical Criticism with Postcolonial Theories." In *Heilige Schriften in der Kritik: XVII. Europäischer Kongress für Theologie (5.–8. September 2021 in Zürich)*, edited by Konrad Schmid, pp. 125–42. CUL.

#### Recommended Reading

- Loomba, Ania. 2005. *Colonialism/Postcolonialism: The New Critical Idiom*. 2nd edition. London; New York: Routledge. Taylor & Francis eBooks Complete. CUL.
- Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin. *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-colonial Literatures*. 2nd edition. London and New York: Routledge, 2002. CUL.
- Sugirtharajah, R. S., ed. 2018. *The Oxford Handbook of Postcolonial Biblical Criticism*. New York: Oxford University Press. CUL.

### October 7 Psychological Criticism and Trauma Theory (Sonia Wong)

- BCC, 187-224. CUL.
- Brooks, Peter. 1987. "The Idea of a Psychoanalytic Literary Criticism." In *Discourse in Psychoanalysis and Literature*, edited by Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, pp. 1–18. CUL
- O'Connor, Kathleen M. 2010. "Reclaiming Jeremiah's Violence." In *The Aesthetics of Violence in the Prophets*, edited by Julia M. O'Brien and Chris Franke, pp. 37–49. Bb.

#### Recommend Reading

- Kille, D. A. 2001. *Psychological Biblical Criticism*. GBS. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress. CUL.

- Vandermeersch, Patrick. 2001. "Psychoanalytic Interpretations of Religious Texts. Some Basics." In *God, Biblical Stories and Psychoanalytical Understanding*, edited by Rainer Kessler and Patrick Vandermeersch, pp. 9–27. Bb.

#### October 14 In-class Mid-term Examination

##### & Introduction to Part II of the course (TAM WL)

- 吳汝鈞《佛學研究方法論》。臺北：臺灣學生書局，民國 72 (1983/ 2006)。

##### Recommend Reading

- 張曼濤 主編《佛學研究方法》。臺北：大乘文化出版社 民國 67 (1978)。頁. 343-365. CUL
- Lopez, Donald S., Jr. 唐納德·洛佩茲, ed. *Buddhist Hermeneutics*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2022 (1988, 1992), pp. 1-27 (chapters 1 and 2, by Lopez and Lamotte, respectively). CUL
- Lopez, Donald S. 2012. "Burnouf and the Birth of Buddhist Studies." *The Eastern Buddhist* 43 (1): 25-34. CUL.

#### October 21 Coming to term with Chinese Buddhism (TAM WL)

- Sharf, Robert 羅伯特·夏爾夫 *Coming to Terms with Chinese Buddhism: A Reading of the Treasure Store Treatise*. Kuroda Institute, Studies in East Asian Buddhism 14. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2002; pp. 1-27, 77-133, 263-278. CUL
- Sharf, Robert. "On Pure Land Buddhism and Chan/ Pure land Syncretism in Medieval China." in *T'oung Pao* 88.4/5(2002): 282-331. CUL
- Sharf, Robert. "Buddhist Modernism and the Rhetoric of Meditative Experience" in *Numen* 42.3 (Oct 1995): 228-283. CUL
- Sharf, Robert. "Mindfulness and Mindlessness in Early Chan." in *Philosophy East and West* 64.4 (Oct 2014): 933-964. CUL

##### Recommended reading

- Ch'en, Kenneth Kuan Sheng. *Chinese Transformation of Buddhism*. Princeton, NJ : Princeton University Press, (1973) 2015. CUL

#### October 28 Studies in Chan Buddhism (TAM WL)

- McRae, John R 马克瑞 (1947-2011) *Seeing through Zen: encounter, transformation, and genealogy in Chinese Chan Buddhism*. Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press 2004. CUL

##### Recommend Reading

- McRae, John R. *The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch'an Buddhism*. Honolulu : University of Hawaii Press, 2021 CUL
- (美)马克瑞著; 韩传强译.《北宗禅与早期禅宗的形成》上海：上海古籍出版社，2015.
- Jorgensen, John. "Early Chán Revisited: A Critical Reading of Daoxuan's Hagiographies of Bodhidharma, Huike and Their Associates" in *Chan Buddhism in Dunhuang and Beyond: A Study of Manuscripts, Texts, and Contexts in Memory of John R. McRae*. Anderl, Christoph & Wittern, Christian ed. Leiden, Netherlands ; Boston, Massachusetts : Brill, 2021. CUL.

#### November 4 Critical Buddhism (TAM WL)

- Hubbard, Jamie & Swanson, Paul ed. *Pruning the Bodhi Tree: The Storm over Critical Buddhism*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997. CUL
- 《修剪菩提树: "批判佛教"的风暴》(美)杰米·霍巴德, 保罗·史万森主编; 龚隽... 等译. 第1版 上海: 上海古籍出版社 2004. CUL

#### Recommend Reading

- Jungnok Park. *How Buddhism Acquired a Soul on the Way to China*. Edited for publication by Richard Gombrich. Sheffield: Equinox Publishing, 2012.

November 11 Students' Proposal presentation (TAM WL)

November 18 Students' Proposal presentation (TAM WL)

November 25 Students' Proposal presentation (TAM WL)

December 2 Students' Proposal presentation (TAM WL)

### Course Components (Teaching modes and Learning activities)

On-site face-to-face Lectures: 100%

#### Assessment type and percentage

1. A Mid-term in-class Examination on Hermeneutics (by Sonia Wong): 40%
2. A reading summary of  $\geq$  one class reading submitted via *Blackboard* (Oct 21-Nov 4): 10%
3. A  $\leq$  10 minute in-class proposal presentation (Nov 11-25 sign up in 1<sup>st</sup> class meeting): 10%
4. A written Proposal to be handed in on or before classes end via *Blackboard*: 30%  
Proposal must be submitted via *Blackboard* with a Veriguide receipt.
5. Active in-class participation: 10%

Details regarding Mid-term examination, reading summary, and proposal will be provided in class in due course.

#### Grade Descriptor

- A Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes.
- A- Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes.
- B Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, OR high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance
- C Satisfactory performance on most learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses.
- D Barely satisfactory performance on several learning outcomes
- F Unsatisfactory performance on several learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements.

#### Feedback for evaluation

- End-of-term university course evaluation will be conducted in class.
- Students' comments and feedback on the course through e-mails or personal meeting with the instructor are always welcomed.

## Contact details for teacher(s) &TA(s)

- Prof. Sonia Kwok Wong Room 324, 3F, Leung Kau Kui Building CUHK;  
[sonia.wong@cuhk.edu.hk](mailto:sonia.wong@cuhk.edu.hk)
- Prof. TAM Wai Lun Room 219, 2F, Leung Kau Kui Building CUHK  
[wltam@cuhk.edu.hk](mailto:wltam@cuhk.edu.hk)
- The instructors are usually available to meet in their offices on Fridays between 3pm and 5pm. But you need to make an appointment with him/her at least twenty-four hours in advance. Some weeks the instructor may be fully booked, and some weeks he/she might be away from office at that time. Meetings immediately before class (or briefly after class) are also possible.

Details of course website: Blackboard

## Academic honesty and plagiarism

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>.

With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures. For group projects, all students of the same group should be asked to sign the declaration.

For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment. Assignments without the receipt will not be graded by teachers. Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.

## Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools in Teaching, Learning and Assessment

### Approach 3 – Use only with explicit acknowledgement

Students may use some AI tools in some class activities and assignments on the condition that they make explicit acknowledgement and proper citations of the input from AI tools.

### Acknowledging support from AI tools

Students are required to acknowledge all functional uses of a generative AI tool and cite it when they paraphrase, quote, or incorporate into their own work any content (whether it is text, image, data, or other format) that was created by it.

- An example of acknowledgement  
'I acknowledge the use of (name of AI tool – e.g. ChatGPT (<https://chat.openai.com/>)) to (specify the support, e.g. plan my essay, generate some ideas for the content, ask for examples of data collection instruments, get the dates of historical events, etc.).

ii. An example of citation

OpenAI. (2023). ChatGPT (Mar 20 version). <https://chat.openai.com/chat>

(Students are reminded that due to the rapid developments of generative AI tools, some citation formats may be updated regularly.)

iii. An example of including texts generated by an AI tool in their work

"The following text was generated by an AI tool / language model (ChatGPT):"

[Insert the text generated by ChatGPT here.]

iv. An example of including texts generated by an AI tool and the prompts that were used to elicit the text from the AI tool

"[The prompt], as generated by an AI language model (ChatGPT):"

[Insert the text generated by ChatGPT in response to the prompt.]

Students are reminded to learn and use the AI tools responsibly and ethically and be aware of the limitations.

Students are reminded to clarify with the course teacher and obtain permission if necessary when in doubt.