

WILLIAMS COLLEGE
Religion 257
TIBETAN BUDDHISM

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Requirements

Full attendance/ participation in class (up to 40%), two essays (60%; Keep a hard copy of any essay you submit). I also expect you to be prepared, ready to raise questions about the material, answer questions and discuss the issues involved. You may be put on the spot. Attendance will be taken and you are allowed a maximum of two absences. After that, your grade will be seriously affected or you may even be asked to leave the class. Sport engagements do not constitute acceptable excuses. Finally, check regularly your e-mail, as I may modify the readings and raise new questions. The honor code applies fully to this class.

Required Books: Kapstein, *The Tibetans*. Dalai Lama, *The Path to Enlightenment*. Dreyfus, *The Sound of Two Hands Clapping*. Mumford, *Himalayan Dialogue*. Lhalungpa, *The Life of Milarepa*. Gutschow, *Being a Buddhist Nun*. Chagme, *A Spacious Path to Freedom*.

Plus reading packet available at the Class of '37 House, 51 Park Street (Behind Paresky).

Outline of Class Topics and Readings

A) The Origins and outlines of Tibetan Buddhism

Class 1 What is Tibet?

Kapstein, *The Tibetans*, 1-63; Gyatso, "Down with the Demoness"
(xerox).

Class 2 "Hinayana" or Basic Buddhism

Rahula, *What the Buddha Taught*, 92-94 (xerox); Dalai Lama, *The Path to Enlightenment*, Chap. 1, 4, 6, 8, 9.

Class 3 Mahayana and the bodhisattva ideal

Hurwitz, transl., *Scripture of the Lotus Blossom*, 1-5, 286-288 (xerox); -
Dalai Lama, *The Path to Enlightenment*, Chap. 10-11 (xerox).

Class 4 Vajrayana: a brief outline

Farrow & Menon, trans., *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra*, 3-4 (xerox); Dalai Lama, *The Path to Enlightenment*, Chap. 12; Cozort, "Sadhana: Means of Achievement for Deity Yoga" in *Tibetan Literature*, 331-343 (xerox).

Class 5 The empire, its tribal structures, and the early development of Buddhism

Kapstein, *The Tibetans*, 63-83; Schaeffer & al., "Padmasambhava and Yeshe Tsogyal" in *Sources of Tibetan Tradition*, 323-325 (xerox); Yeshe Tshogyal, *The Lotus Born*, 62-64 (xerox); Korman, "A Tribal History" in *Religions of Tibet*, 77-83 (xerox).

B) The formation of schools and the role of lamas**Class 6** Collapse, dark age and renaissance

Kapstein, *The Tibetans*, 77-101; Karmay, "Ordinance of Lha La-ma Yeshe od" (xerox); Schaeffer & al., "The Origins of the Shangpa Kagyu Tradition" & "Atisha and the Kadampa Order" in *Sources of Tibetan Tradition*, 230-234, 176-186 (xerox).

Class 7 Atisha and the centrality of Mahayana ethics

Dalai Lama, *The Path to Enlightenment*, Chap. 1, 2, 5; "Eight Verses on Mind Training" with its Commentary In *Mind Training*, 275-291 (xerox); Dalai Lama, *A Flash of Lightning in the Dark of the Night*, 100-108 (xerox); Schaeffer & al., "Atisha and the Kadampa Order" in *Sources of Tibetan Tradition*, 176-186 (xerox).

Class 8 The role of the guru

Dalai Lama, *The Path to Enlightenment*, Chap.3; Lhalungpa, *The Life of Milarepa*, Colophon, Chap. Part I, Part II, Chap. 1-3, 5-6, and 7 (first twenty pages, i.e., p.108-127 of my edition) and Chap. 9 up to Milarepa's passing away (p. 173 of my edition).

Class 9 The treasures of the Nying-ma tradition

Tulku Thondup, *Hidden Teachings of Tibet*, 45-93 (xerox); Samuel, *Civilized Shamans*, 270-289 (xerox); Dreyfus, "Proto-nationalism in Tibet," 205-209 (xerox).

Class 10 The accretive nature of Buddhism

Mumford, *Himalayan Dialogue*, Introduction, p.2-5 & Chap.2, 3, 4;

Korman, "Gesar of Ling" & Nalanda, "A Smoke Purification Song" in *Religions of Tibet*, 39-48 & 401-405 (xerox).

Class 11 Bön and popular religion

Kvaerne, *The Bon Religion of Tibet* (xerox); Diemberger, "Mountain-

Deities, Ancestral Bones and Sacred Weapons" (xerox); Kapstein,

The Tibetans, 205-215; Ramble, "How Buddhist are Buddhist

Communities" (xerox).

First Essay: The formation of Tibetan Buddhism

C) Understanding Tantra: Dzokchen and Mahamudra

Class 12 The tantric view

Dreyfus, *The Sound of Two Hands Clapping*, 238-241; Zangpo, *Sacred Ground*, 32-50 (xerox); Schaeffer & al., "Machik Lapdrön on Severance and Devotion" in *Sources of Tibetan Tradition*, 243-247 (xerox); Kapstein, *The Tibetans*, 164-168.

Class 13 Being or Becoming the Deity?

Zangpo, *Sacred Ground*, 50-73 (xerox); Thrangu, *Pointing to the Dharmakaya*, 14-30 (xerox); Chagme, *A Spacious Path to Freedom*, 39-61.

Class 14 Quiescence and insight in tantric practice

Chagme, *A Spacious Path to Freedom*, 62-102.

Class 15 Dzogchen, Mahamudra

Chagme, *A Spacious Path to Freedom*, 102-190.

Class 16 Death in Tibetan Buddhism

Kapstein, *Tibetan Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction*, 99-105; Schaeffer & al., "The Dissolution of the Human Body and Mind" & "A Prayer for Protection from Fear in the Bardo" in *Sources of Tibetan Tradition*, 446-452 (xerox).

C) Monasticism in Tibet

Class 17 The political role of schools and the rise of reincarnated lamas

Kapstein, *The Tibetans*, 101-126; Stearns, "A Quest for the Path and Result" in *Religions of Tibet*, 188-199; van der Kujip, "The Dalai-Lamas and the Origins of the Reincarnate Lamas," 19-29 (xerox); Dreyfus, "Proto-nationalism in Tibet," 209-216 (xerox).
Suggested: Wylie, "Reincarnation: a Political Innovation" (xerox).

Class 18 Who are the Dalai-Lamas?

Kapstein, *The Tibetans*, 119-121, 127-155; van der Kujip, "The Dalai-Lamas and the Origins of the Reincarnate Lamas," 15-19 (xerox).

Class 19 Can the lama fully tame the gods?

Dreyfus, "From Protective Deities to International Stardom" & "The Shukden Affair: Origins of a Controversy" (xerox); Mumford, *Himalayan Dialogue*, Chap.6.

Class 20 Monastic life in Pre-modern Tibet

Kapstein, *The Tibetans*, 175-194; Dreyfus, *The Sound of Two Hands Clapping*, 32-78; Goldstein, "A Study of the IDab Dob" (xerox).
See also: <http://www.thlib.org/places/monasteries/drepung/>

Class 21 The intellectual culture of the monastic elites

Dreyfus, *The Sound of Two Hands Clapping*, 79-97, 111-120, 164-182, 195-197, 211-221, 224-266, 329-333; Kyongla, *My Life and Lives*, 144-174 (xerox).

Class 22 Women and the monastic life

Sponberg, "Attitudes Towards Women in Early Buddhism" (xerox); Gutschow, *Being a Buddhist nun*, 1-18, 45-92, 116-120, 168-197.

Class 23 Gender dualities, folk religion and tantric practice.

Kapstein, *The Tibetans*, 199-204, 237-243;
Gutschow, *Being a Buddhist nun*, 197-235;
Huber, "Why Can't Women Climb Crystal Mountain?" (xerox).

Class 24 Women in tantra: objects or agents?

Jacoby, *Love and Liberation*, 188-248, 315-324 (xerox).

Class 25 Buddhism in contemporary Tibet

Kapstein, *The Tibetans*, 168-174, 269-300; Goldstein, "The Revival of Monastic Life in Drepung," 23-31 & Germano, "The Re-membering of the Dismembered Body of Tibet" in *Buddhism in Contemporary Tibet* (xerox).

Final Essay