

**KING'S COLLEGE LONDON**  
**DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

ACADEMIC YEAR 2015–16

MODULE SYLLABUS

**6AAT3901 Theravada Buddhism – draft September 2015**

**1. Basic Information**

Module Level:	6
Credit Value:	15 credits
Lecturer:	Prof. Kate Crosby <a href="mailto:Henrietta.Crosby@kcl.ac.uk">Henrietta.Crosby@kcl.ac.uk</a>
Office hours:	Term 2 Thurs 2.15-3 and Fri 4.10-4.30. Office: VWB3.03 <i>Each week I will be walking over to my office for my office hour so please accompany me to discuss any to brief enquiries.</i>
Semester:	Spring
Day, Time and Room:	<b>Fridays 2-4pm STRAND S-2.23</b> (also a trip, and an extra Wed at end – see Module Plan)
Dates:	Teaching begins: 22 January 29 January 5 February 12 February 19 February <i>trip</i>  <i>Reading week: no class</i> 4 March 11 March 18 March Wednesday 23 March 1 April ( <i>Easter week</i> )  <b>Please note the trip on 19 February.</b> <b>Note:</b> No lecture or office hours in Reading Week. Coursework essay due <b>BEFORE 4:00PM Monday 7th March 2016.</b>

## **2. Outline of Module Educational Aims, Learning Outcomes and Content**

### **(a) Educational aims of the module**

- To provide students with an overview of the main features of Theravada Buddhism, both historical and modern as well as more in-depth understanding of the chief sources of religious authority, including texts, key practices and doctrines.
- To give students an opportunity to engage in debates concerning individual choice versus societal role, the way in which religion engages with and response to political developments and institutions and the history of different aspects and traditions.

### **(b) Learning outcomes of the module**

#### ***Generic skills***

By the end of the course the successful student should be able to:

- engage competently with primary and secondary sources.
- summarise, evaluate and present ideas.
- research, plan and deliver presentations and essays to specified deadlines.
- appreciate non-western cultures and worldviews.

#### ***Course specific skills***

- Students should gain an informed understanding of the history, institutions, doctrines, practices of Theravada Buddhism throughout Theravada in mainland Southeast Asia and Sri Lanka, and in the West.
- Students will be able to identify the main practices and institutions of Theravada Buddhism.
- Student will be able to recognise the main ways in which Theravada Buddhism become localised in the regions to which it has spread.
- Students will be able to explain the how Theravada Buddhism has interacted with political developments.
- Students will be able to analyse how Theravada Buddhism has responded to modern developments such as expectations of gender equality, globalisation, modernity, the cold war, environmental challenge, etc.
- Students will be able to demonstrate an awareness of the methodological approaches used in the study of Theravada and themes pursued within those different approaches.

### **(c) Content: description and teaching plan**

This module is Theravada Buddhism. It is the main form of Buddhism of mainland Southeast Asia, i.e. Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, the Khmer region of Vietnam and the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh, as well as Sri Lanka. It has now spread around the world and is a notable part of the British religious landscape. In broad terms, the course takes as its framework the three 'refuges' in the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha, that define the faith of a Buddhist, and explores their meaning in Theravāda contexts alongside related issues. The

last four sessions of the course look more specifically at the roles of Theravada in the modern period.

Teaching sessions will be organised by a weekly lecture. You are asked to prepare for lectures by reading at least one of the designated readings for the lecture (readings will be indicated on KEATS).

**(d) Module Plan: Lecture Topics**

22 January Week 1 S-2.23	Introduction and overview: Theravāda Buddhism; maps - spread of Buddhism; identification of Theravāda countries/regions; Key Theravada practices Reading: Crosby 2014 Introduction and Chapter 5	KC
29 January Week 2 S-2.23	Life of the Buddha. The developing status of the Buddha in Theravāda. Buddha worship. <i>Film</i> : The birth of a Buddha Reading: Crosby 2014 chapters 1 and 2; Holt forthcoming	KC
5 Feb Week 3 S-2.23	Access to the Dhamma: overview of textual sources; the preservation and transmission of the Dhamma; Reading: Crosby 2014 chapters 3 and 4	KC
12 Feb Week 4 S-2.23	Ordination and the role of the Sangha in society; life-cycle rituals; Reading: Crosby 2014 chapters 8 and 9; Holt forthcoming	KC
19 Feb Week 5  LBV	<i>Trip to Sri Lankan temple with Upananda Thera and Kuan Guang</i> <i>Get to Turnham Green Tube station on District Line by 1.45 to arrive at the temple by 2pm.</i> Topics: The role of the Buddhist temple Temple Function and Layout Transmission of Buddhism to UK Differences between Theravada and East Asian Mahayana Monasticism <a href="http://www.londonbuddhistvihara.org/">http://www.londonbuddhistvihara.org/</a>  <a href="https://www.google.co.uk/maps/dir//london+buddhist+vihara/@51.4969041,-0.3263137,12z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m8!4m7!1m0!1m5!1m1!1s0x48760e6dafda372b:0x9e47ca235685f60b!2m2!1d-0.2562742!2d51.496925">https://www.google.co.uk/maps/dir//london+buddhist+vihara/@51.4969041,-0.3263137,12z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m8!4m7!1m0!1m5!1m1!1s0x48760e6dafda372b:0x9e47ca235685f60b!2m2!1d-0.2562742!2d51.496925</a>	DU/ KG
26 Feb	<i>Reading week – no class</i>	

4 Mar Week 6	Meditation 1 Guest Lecturer Dr Ilena Antonova on Meditation and Neuroscience <i>Background reading to be confirmed</i>	KC
11 March Week 7	<i>Essay Deadline is Monday of this week</i> Meditation 2 and contrasting means of progress: e.g. possession, mediums Reading: Crosby 2014 chapter 6	KC
18 March Week 8	Buddhism and politics in South Asia and Southeast Asia; interactions with state, warfare, violence, identity <i>(Student Presentations)</i> Background Reading: Crosby 2014 chapter 12	KC
Wed 23 Mar 1-3pm S3.31	Theravada Buddhism and global Buddhist networks in the early modern – modern periods through three case studies: Anagarika Dharmapala and the Mahabodhi Society (Sri Lanka), Shin Ukkatṭha (Burma), and Ven. Dhammaloka (Ireland/Burma), Kapilavaḍḍho (William Purfurst) and George Blake. Guest speaker: Ashin Janaka on Shin Ukkatṭha <i>(Student Presentations)</i>	KC
Fri 1 April	Continuation of session 9. Any leftover topics, further <i>Student Presentations</i> Guest speaker: Andrew Skilton on Kapilavaḍḍho and George Blake. Background Reading: <i>Honour Thy Fathers</i> by Terry Shine and ‘Elective affinities: the reconstruction of a forgotten episode in the shared history of Thai and British Buddhism – Kapilavaḍḍho and Wat Paknam’, in <i>Pioneer western Buddhists and Asian networks 1860 – 1960</i> . eds. B. Bocking, L. Cox and A. Turner, special issue of <i>Contemporary Buddhism</i> , May 2013.	KC

#### Note on Readings:

- For readings and additional sources, see Section 6.
- You will find recommended and additional readings for each week on KEATS.

### 3. Summative Assessment (Study Abroad Students should see Section 4 below)

#### (a) Nature of assessment

There are three compulsory elements of summative assessment:

- 1 x 2500-word coursework essay, the title to be chosen from the list provided at the end of this module syllabus (worth 30% of the overall module mark). Do not formulate your own essay title.
- 1 x 2-hour unseen written examination, in which two questions must be answered from a

choice of about eight (worth 60% of the overall module mark).

- 1 x oral presentation, the ten minutes presentation (worth 10% of the overall module mark)

#### **(b) Essay deadline, revision class and examination period**

- The deadline for the submission of the coursework essay is **BEFORE 4:00PM Monday 7th March 2016.**

Feedback will be available on KEATS no later than Tuesday 29 March 2016. Feedback tutorials will be offered in Semester 2 in order to provide guidance on improving your work.

- Revision class: A two-hour revision class will be held on **Friday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2016 14:00-16:00 in Strand S-2.23.**
- The examination will take place in Period 2 (May–June 2016).

#### **(c) Scope of assessment**

Coursework essay questions generally relate to some of the topics covered in the first half of the module. Exam questions normally deal with most of the remaining topics, but great care is taken to ensure that no overlap exists between the two sets of questions. Some exam questions may be formulated in such a way as to encourage analysis, in the same answer, of topics that were investigated over different weeks.

#### **(d) For what are the examiners looking?**

- In both assessed coursework essay and examination answers, successful students will need to demonstrate both an understanding of the material and a capacity to develop a well-reasoned argument that is convincingly supported by reference to suitable evidence and is presented in a structured manner using clear English. Make sure that you consult the Undergraduate Marking Criteria.
- Poor English (e.g. grammar, punctuation and spelling) will lead to loss of marks. Inadequate scholarly presentation of the assessed coursework essay (e.g. over the styles of footnotes/endnotes and bibliography) will similarly be penalized.
- Discussion of the best approaches to meeting these requirements forms part of the teaching programme in the module.

#### **(e) Essential information: How do I submit my essay?**

- **The Faculty of Arts & Humanities cover-sheet** needs to be the first page of the submitted essays; please follow this link:  
<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/trs/study/handbook/assessment/taught/submission.aspx>

- **The candidate number** (e.g. W01234) on the cover-sheet needs to be accurate and of the present academic year. Your work cannot be attributed to you on the College systems, if this information is incomplete or wrong.
- **The word limit** includes all footnotes/endnotes, but excludes the bibliography, which you should provide. There is a 5% tolerance: no penalty will be incurred for essays that are up to 5% over the word limit. Beyond that tolerance band, two marks will be deducted for every 5% of excess words until 50% is reached. After 50%, three marks will normally be deducted for each further 5% of excess words.
- **The MHRA/Harvard reference style** has been adopted for this module. Please find the *Quick Guide to Reference Styles in TRS* in the TRS Handbook online. The **presentation of your work**, including the insertion of **page numbers**, quality of **referencing** and bibliographical information and the standard of English, has a strong bearing on the mark given for it.
- **Submission BEFORE 4pm:** Your work must be submitted *via* the assessment submission section of the KEATS area for the module, by the published deadline, i.e. **before** 4pm on the relevant day.  
Work with a Turnitin time stamp of 4.00pm counts as a late submission (see next point).
- **Late submissions** will be treated as follows:  
Unless an extension has been granted by the Chair of the UG Programme Board of Examiners on the basis of a Mitigating Circumstances Form (MCF), supplied with supporting evidence, or comes to be granted retrospectively:
  - Work submitted within 24 hours after the original deadline will be marked, but the mark for this element will be capped at the pass mark of 40%.
  - Work submitted more than 24 hours after the original deadline will not be marked, and the submission will receive a mark of zero.
- **Mitigating Circumstances Forms:** MCFs can be downloaded from the Policy Zone of the College website.  
**Extensions retrospectively:** An extension may be granted retrospectively, providing the MCF with supporting documentation is submitted no later than 7 days after the missed assessment and supporting documentation has been received no later than 21 days after the missed assessment. Please note that extensions are granted by the TRS Assessment Board Chair and NOT by individual module tutors.
- **Plagiarism:** Please make sure that you understand the College rules on plagiarism. Information is available at: <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/library/help/plagiarism/index.aspx>, and you should also have been enrolled on a KEATS plagiarism module.
- **Oral presentations and plagiarism:** The College's rules on plagiarism apply to oral presentations, handouts and Powerpoint presentations just as they do to written work submitted for assessment. You must acknowledge any and all sources used in presentations and accompanying material, and must present all material in your own words except for explicitly acknowledged quotations from others.
- **Collusion** also counts as misconduct. Think twice before circulating your work to other students.

- **Marking:** Your essays for this module will be assessed according to Model 3: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/trs/study/handbook/assessment/taught/markmodels.aspx>  
**Essays:** First and second markers will apply the Faculty's Undergraduate Marking Criteria: <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/artshums/study/handbook/sguides/assessment/ugmarkcrit.pdf>  
**Classroom presentation and participation** are assessed in line with these Marking Criteria: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/trs/modules/level6/files/TRS-Marking-Criteria-for-presentations.pdf>.

#### **4. Summative Assessment (Study Abroad Students Only)**

- If you plan to be at King's College London for the whole academic year, then you follow the same assessment regime as ordinary undergraduates: see Section 3 above. This means that you must make yourself available for an examination that may be timetabled as late as the first week in June; bear that in mind when booking your return flight.

**N.B.:** Revision class: A one hour revision class will be held, *probably* on **Friday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2016 at either 14:00 or 15:00 in Strand S-2.23**. We are awaiting confirmation from timetabling.

#### **5. Coursework essay questions**

**Choose ONE question from the following.**

**1. Discuss how the *Dhamma* is transmitted in Theravada through different genres of literature and other means, providing detailed examples.**

*You are expected to show awareness of different periods and types of text as well as other means through which Theravada Buddhists learn about the teachings of Buddhism, such as sermons and art. You should provide examples of particular texts or sermons or art in order to analyse the values that they convey. Please DO NOT focus on Jātaka. Please DO ask for some help with the material you want to focus on.*

**2. Analyse the position of images and relics in Theravada.**

*You are expected to analyse the importance of these two types of representation of the Buddha, as well as beliefs and practices concerning them, and scholarly debates on this topic.*

**3. To what extent is the Buddha regarded as a human being in Theravada?**

*You are expected to look at the different ways a Buddha is understood in Theravada, including what it takes to become a Buddha. You might want to contrast this with western, especially early western, understandings of the Buddha.*

**4. What makes a good Buddhist, according to Theravada Buddhism?**

*You are expected to look at the practices that Theravada Buddhists most highly value in their expression of their religious adherence. Include any conflicting practices/values/contested*

*ideas of what it means to practise Theravada Buddhism, perhaps conflicts with national identity. Chapter 5 of the coursebook will help, so how do you go beyond it? Read beyond, give us some case studies. Look at discussions on line and in the news. Ask me how to pursue areas of interest. Use examples from the following possible readings:*

Lewis, Todd (2014) *Buddhists: Understanding Buddhism through the Lives of Practitioners*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell. *Make sure you pick Theravada examples – ask if unsure.*  
McDaniel, Justin. (2011). *The Lovelorn Ghost & The Magical Monk. Practicing Buddhism in Northern Thailand*. New York: Columbia University Press.

## **6. Selected Bibliography**

### **• Coursebook:**

Kate Crosby's *Theravāda Buddhism: Continuity, Diversity, and Identity* (2014). This contains chapters covering all topics except for the transmission of Buddhism to the UK (week 7). It provides an overview of different Theravāda traditions across South and Southeast Asia countries, while paying attention to application of Buddhist doctrines and teachings in Buddhist practices. There is material relating to most of the topics in this book. The e-book is available from the Maughan library, as are hard copies. Each chapter suggests further reading.

### **• Asanga Tilakaratne's *Theravāda Buddhism: The View of the Elders* (2012).**

It pays attention to early teachings and how this relates to practice, particularly from a Sri Lankan perspective.

### **• Donald Swearer's *The Buddhist World of Southeast Asia* (1995).**

It provides an overview of Buddhist practices in modern context across Theravāda countries in Southeast Asia.

### **• Richard Gombrich's *Theravāda Buddhism* (1988).**

It gives an overview of Buddhist teachings and practices with a focus on Sri Lankan Buddhism.

***Further topic-specific bibliographies will be provided and discussed in the week-by-week handouts.***