Violence and Non-Violence in Religious Traditions of South Asia (REL 282)

Fall 2014  
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OFFICE: Pierce Hall 203  
OFFICE HOURS: MW 4:30–5:30 or by appointment  
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REQUIREMENTS

1. Attend class regularly. If you are unable to attend a class, please tell me in advance, in person or via email. Attendance is a crucial part of your class participation grade, and more than two unexcused absences will put that grade in jeopardy.

2. Listen actively and speak thoughtfully. Be prepared to discuss the assignments in depth. Keep in mind Wittgenstein’s aphorism, “Even to have expressed a false thought boldly and clearly is already to have gained a great deal.” To this end, students will be asked to introduce the readings for each class.

3. Make regular postings on Moodle, responding to the assignments as well as to the postings of other students. I expect you to post 250+ words each week, in one post or more, though you can skip two weeks during the semester. Your postings should demonstrate a thoughtful and rigorous engagement with the material. Creativity is encouraged, rambling is not. Although you are welcome to focus on a particular article or passage within a week’s assignment, you should try to contextualize that material within the rest of the week’s readings. Postings for each week should be submitted by Saturday at midnight of that week. In short, postings made during a particular week should be posted in the folder for that week. At the end of the semester, you will be expected to print out all of your posts and submit them to me along with your final paper.

4. Write a 10-page research paper. You must have your topics approved by me, in person, by November 26th. During the last week of the semester, you will present your research as a work in progress. Final papers are due on December 18th.

5. If you have any questions about an assignment or need help or an extension, please let me know. Just send me an email or stop by during my office hours. I will do my best to be accessible, and I’m happy to make special arrangements to meet.

In summary, your grade will be determined by the quality of your participation in class (35%), your postings on Moodle (30%), and your research paper (35%).
REQUIRED READING

• Books are available at Grécourt Bookshop in the Campus Center.
• All other readings will be found in the source book or will given to you as handouts.
Source books are available at Paradise Copies, 21 Conz Street, (413) 585–0414.
WEEK 1 (9/8, 9/10)
i. INTRODUCTION
• various maps of South Asia
• additional maps of India at http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/india.html

ii. RELIGIOUS VIOLENCE AND COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE: SOME CONSIDERATIONS
  “Playing War,” 1–17 (handout)
  “Prisoners’ Dilemmas,” 17–21 (handout)
• Hage, Ghassam. “‘Comes a Time We are all Enthusiasm’: Understanding Palestinian
  Suicide Bombers in Times of Exigophobia.” *Public Culture* 15.1 (2003): 65–89. (handout)
  “Manchester,” 113–126 (handout)

WEEK 2 (9/15/, 9/17)
i. HIMŚĀ AND AHIMŚĀ: BRAHMANICAL CONSIDERATIONS
• Clooney, Francis. In *Just War in Comparative Perspective*. Edited by Paul Robinson.
  “Pain but not Harm: Some Classical Resources Toward a Hindu Just War Theory,”
  109–125 (handout)
• Biardeau, Madeleine. In *Violence/Non-Violence: Some Hindu Perspectives*. Edited by Denis
  “Ancient Brahminism, or Impossible non-Violence,” 85–104 (handout)
• Malamoud, Charles. In *Violence/Non-Violence: Some Hindu Perspectives*. Edited by Denis
  “Remarks on Dissuasion in Ancient India,” 209–218 (handout)

ii. HIMŚĀ AND AHIMŚĀ: THE MAHĀBHĀRATA
  “Violence in the Mahābhārata,” 252–276 (handout)
  “Dharma in the Mahābhārata,” 277–303 (handout)
WEEK 3 (9/22, 9/24)
i. VIOLENCE AND THE BUDDHIST PATH:
   THE PERFECTION OF GIVING AND THE GIFT OF ONE'S BODY—INSTRUCTIONS
• Gethin, Rupert. In Religion and Violence in South Asia: Theory and Practice. Edited by
  “Buddhist Monks, Buddhist Kings, Buddhist Violence: On the early Buddhist
  Attitudes to Violence,” 62–82
• Hajime, Nakamura. In The Encyclopedia of Religion. Editor in chief, Mircea Eliade. Edited
  “Bodhisattva Path,” 265–269
• Rinpoche, Pabongka. Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand: A Concise Discourse on the
  Stages of the Path to Enlightenment. Edited in the Tibetan by Trijang Rinpoche. Translated
  “Generosity,” 628–632
• Taye, Jamgon Kongrul Lodro. Buddhist Ethics. Translated and edited by the International
  Translation Committee founded by the V. V. Kalu Rinpoche. Ithaca: Snow Lion
  Excerpt from “The Commitments of Awakening Mind,” 201, 187–188, and
  footnotes!
• Rinpoche, Patrul. The Words of My Perfect Teacher. Translated by the Padmakara
  “Transcendent Generosity,” 234–238
  Excerpt from “Establishing, Spreading and Perpetuating the Teaching,” 134–137

ii. THE BUDDHIST PATH OF THE BUDDHISATTVA:
   THE PERFECTION OF GIVING AND THE GIFT OF ONE'S BODY—EXEMPLA
• Khorocher, Peter, trans. Once the Buddha was a Monkey: Araya Sura's Jatakamala. Chicago:
  “The Tigress,” 5–9
  “Maitribala,” 47–57
  “The Elephant,” 213–220
• Frye, Stanley, trans. The Sutra of the Wise and the Foolish (Mdo bdzans blun): or, The
  Ocean of Narratives (Üliger-ün dalai). Dharamsala, India: Library of Tibetan Works &
  Archives, 1981.
  “King Chandraprabha Gives his Head,” 105–114
  “The Gift,” 1–19
• The New Yorker, 2 August 2003.
  The Mail: The Giving Man, 8
WEEK 4 (9/29, 10/1)
i. THE BUDDHIST PATH OF THE BODHISATTVA:
   THE PERFECTION OF SKILLFUL MEANS AND THE EXPEDIENCY OF MURDER
     “Can Killing a Living Being Ever Be an Act of Compassion? The Analysis of the
     Act of Killing the Abhidhamma and Pali Commentaries,” 167–202
     Excerpt from “Ethics in the Mahāyāna,” 150–164
   • Kent, Daniel W. In Buddhist Warfare. Edited by Michael K. Jerryson and Mark
     “Onward Buddhist Soldiers: Preaching to the Sri Lankan Army,” 157–177

ii. THE BUDDHIST PATH OF THE BODHISATTVA? A NONVIOLENT PROTEST?
   • Malcolm Browne’s photo of the self-immolation of Thích Quang Duc
     “In Search of the Enemy of Man,” 106–108
     “An Angry Buddhist Burns Himself Alive,” 24–25
   • The Nation, 29 June 1963.
     “Same Old Diem,” 538
   • Cao, Ngoc Phuong. 1993. Learning True Love: How I Learned and Practiced Social
     “Foreword” (by Thich Nhat Hanh), ix–x
     “Sister Mai,” 96–108
   • King, Sally. “They Who Burned Themselves for Peace: Quaker and Buddhist Self-

WEEK 5 (10/6, 10/8)
i. GANDHI AND SATYAGRAHA
   • Dalton, Dennis, ed. Mahatma Gandhi: Selected Political Writings. Indianapolis and
     “Introduction,” 3–25
     “Democracy and Nonviolence,” 148–151
     Excerpt, 56–61

ii. SATYAGRAHA RECONSIDERED: TIBETAN BUDDHISM, RELIGION, AND POLITICS
   • background readings
   • Rinpoche, Samdhong. In Selected Writings and Speeches: A Collection of Selected Writings
     and Speeches on Buddhism and Tibetan Culture by Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche. Sarnath,
     “Satyagraha (Truth-Insistence),” 296–312
   • Alomes, Anna. Power in Philosophy: Two Arguments for Nonviolence Today. Ph.D.
     dissertation from the University of Tasmania, 1998.
     “Interview with The Most Venerable Professor Samdhong Rinpoche,” 307–318
“Interview with His Holiness Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama,” 301–306
“Transcription of Testimony by Tibetan Nun,” 337–338

WEEK 6 (10/13, 10/15)
i. AUTUMN RECESS—NO CLASS

ii. JAINISM: AHIMŚĀ AND THE ETHICS OF FASTING
  “Ahimsā and the Jain Religion,” 9–15 (handout)
  “The Jaina Path of Nonresistant Death,” 99–109 (handout)

WEEK 7 (10/20, 10/22)
i. SELF IMMOLATION: SATI—ETHICS? RELIGION? POLITICS?
  “Introduction,” 3–14
  “Perfection and Devotion: Sati Tradition in Rajasthan,” 79–91
  “Epilogue,” 227–228
OPTIONAL:
  “Sati as Profit Versus Sati as a Spectacle: The Public Debate on Roop Kanwar’s Death,” 131–149
ii. SELF IMMOLATION: TIBET IS BURNING!—ETHICS? RELIGION? POLITICS?
• “Tibet is Burning!” http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o0K4avALs5Y
• “Raw Footage: Tibetan Nun, 35yr old Palden Choetso's Self-Immolation - Smuggled Out of Tibet” http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=q8NuhMc7TvY

Warning: These videos contain graphic images.

• Mishra, Pankaj. The Guardian, December 8, 2011.
  “Tibetan’s Old Way of Life is Slow Dying: Not Even Self-Immolation will Change That,” 1–3
  “Interview: Robert Barnett on Why Tibetans are Setting Themselves on Fire,” 1–3
  “Harrowing images and last message from Tibet of first lama to self-immolate,” 1–5
  “Tibetan Activist Who Self-Immolated Leaves Letter Behind,” 1–2
• Press release from the Central Tibetan Administration. March 26, 2012.
  http://tibet.net/2012/03/26/at-least-seven-reasons-why-beijing-is-responsible-for-the-self-immolations-in-tibet/
  “At Least Seven Reasons Why Beijing is Responsible for the Self-Immolations in Tibet,” 1–2
  “Viewpoint: Are Tibet burnings plot or policy failure?” 1–3
  “Why Violence in Tibet Is Getting Worse”
  http://www.culanth.org/?q=node/536
  “Social Suffering and Embodied Political Crisis,” 1–4
  http://culanth.org/?q=node/517
  “Online Debates Among Tibetans in Exile,” 1–3
  “Beacons of Resistance, Not Desperate Act,” 1–4
  http://culanth.org/?q=node/522
  http://culanth.org/?q=node/538
  http://culanth.org/?q=node/542
  “The Afterlife of Images,” 1–4 (Warning: The text links to graphic images.)
WEEK 8 (10/27, 10/29)
i. REFLECTIONS ON COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE: THE PARTITION OF INDIA

  “Nineteen Forty-Seven: Memories and Meanings,” 190–200

  “Doing God’s Work,” 39–45

  “Introduction,” xi–xxvii (skim or skip the summaries of the stories, xxi–xxvi)

ii. VIOLENCE AND GENDER: RATIONALES AND STEREOTYPES

  “Muslims and Hindus, Men and Women: Communal Stereotypes and the Partition of India,” 58–81

  “Surat, Savarkar and Draupadi: Legitimising Rape as a Political Weapon,” 29–57

WEEK 9 (11/3, 11/5)
i. REFLECTIONS ON COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE: POST-COLONIAL INDIA

  “The Riot,” 25–51

  miscellaneous poems, 15–17, 41–55, 66–68


ii. A LEGACY OF VIOLENCE

  “A New Hindu Identity,” 143–169
  “The Muslim Fundamentalist Identity,” 170–185
  “Conclusion: Religious Conflict in the Modern World,” 186–197

  “Take Me Home,” 1–4
WEEK 10 (11/10, 11/12)
i. MOHAMMED ATTA AND 9/11: TERRORISTS, SAINT-SOLDIERS, MARTYRS
   • Lincoln, Bruce. (http://martycenter.uchicago.edu/webforum/122002/commentary.shtml)
   • Juergensmeyer, Mark. (http://martycenter.uchicago.edu/webforum/122002/response_juergensmeyer.shtml)

ii. TAMILS AND EELAM: VIOLENCE AND TRANSFORMATION
     “Interviews with High School Students in Eastern Sri Lanka,” 366–380
     “Agent or Victim? The Sri Lankan Woman Militant in the Interregnum,” 199–220

WEEK 11 (11/17, 11/19)
i. SIKHS AND KHALISTAN: TERRORISTS, SAINT-SOLDIERS, MARTYRS
     Chapter 2: The Fragrance of Jasmine, 26–49
     Chapter 8: Playing the Game of Love, 185–212
     Chapter 11: Looking into Dragons, 262–275

ii. MAKING SENSE OF VIOLENCE? SURVIVORS AND SURVIVING
     “Our Work to Cry: Your Work to Listen,” 345–398
     “An Elephant Crackup?” 1–14

WEEK 12 (11/24, 11/26)
i. SUICIDE BOMBING—WOMEN AND CHILDREN FIRST?
     “Suicide Terrorism,” 39–64
     “Horror at Suicide Terrorism,” 65–92
     “Epilogue,” 93–96

**Note:** Class will begin at 12:30 pm to make sufficient time for the screening.

ii. THANKSGIVING RECESS—NO CLASS

**WEEK 13** (12/1, 12/3)

i. THE PLEASURES OF VIOLENCE

  - Introduction, 1–19 (handout)
  - Chapter Four: *Fun* and Violence, 111–136 (handout)
  - Epilogue, 183–187 (handout)
  - Calendar of Events, 189–190 (handout)
  - Glossary, 191–194 (handout)

ii. STRATEGIZING VIOLENCE


**WEEK 14** (12/8, 12/10)

i. PRESENTATIONS

ii. PRESENTATIONS