

Important Lessons from Unit 2 Application Exercises

A. Vinaya stories, though for the most part not directly attributable to the Buddha, do reflect the daily personal and social challenges faced by monks in large, often wealthy, monasteries of the “Middle Period.”

Sources: *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya & Avadāna Shataka*

B. Mahāyāna sūtras, though probably inspired by ascetics, were greatly expanded by mainstream monks who were critical of mainstream monastic practices and narrow focus on Abhidharma study.

Sources: *[Sūtra on] Right View, Prajñā Pāramitā Sūtra*

C. Monks in some mainstream monasteries developed practices promoting the bodhisattva ideal of Mahāyāna sūtras. (BUT Theravāda monks firmly rejected such sūtras and the viewpoints they promote.)

Sources: *Bodhi Cārya Avatāra* chapters on the “thought of awakening”

Content Objectives for Unit 3: Lay Buddhists & Bhikshus in East Asia (5st CE - 20th CE)

By the end of this unit you should be able to describe, for an interested peer unfamiliar with these topics:

1. growth of Mahāyāna (vs. “mainstream”) traditions in China during same period of Mahāyāna’s assimilation into Indian mainstream.
2. key dates & events in Chinese history, more precisely recorded due to distinct cultural priorities and distance from land of origin.
3. the unique roles of women & laypeople in Unit 3 sources, suggesting similar roles in earlier historical periods.

& one thing to look for in **observation reports**:

“To what extent do practices in historical sources resemble & differ from those observed in local communities representing the same traditions?”

Overview of Readings

1. Primary Sources:

“Tales of the Lotus Sutra” (RDR, 84-87, 89-93 + 87-89, 93-96)

“Pure Land Worship and Meditation in China”

(RDR, 97-100, 104-7 + 101-3)

“The Zen Master Hakuin: Selected Writings”

(RDR, 109-11, 116, 119-22 + 113-15, 117-18)

2. *Explorer’s Guide* (locate **terms marked with an *** on the pages below):

Buddha’s last words, main schools & Mahāyāna sutras: p. 8-9, 11, 60

nirvana & shunayata: p.19-21

words & faith: p. 25-27

Mahāyāna expansion into East Asia: p. 37, 39-44, 47-48, 51

3. "Essential Elements of Religious Life" (sections II & VI)

STUDY GUIDE KEY (abbreviated):

RED = study questions for each section of the assigned source

*****All section page numbers are those of the original sources reprinted in RDR*****

underlined & GREEN = terms to study for the TRA

terms marked with an **asterisk (*)** = info from EGBT for both TRA & ApEx-s

numbers & terms **NOT underlined** = ASSIGNED only for ApEx-s (not TRA)

Devotion to the Lotus Sutra* in Early Medieval **China***

(RDR, 84-87, 89-93 + 87-89, 93-96) [+ EGBT, 8-9, 11, 25-27, 37, 39-43, 60]

Traditions, Sources & Time Periods (p.427-30):

Hongzan Fahua Zhuan Tales of Miraculous Retribution Tang* period = Changan era
Sui dynasty Confucians* & Daoists* “Dharma Preachers” chapter (of Lotus Sūtra*)

Key Ideas & Deities (p.427-30):

(stimulus &) numinal response = spiritual “manifestation” (ganying) cultic focus/activity

virtues karmic retribution Guanyin* Samantabhadra

Rituals, Objects & Activities (remaining pages):

uninterrupted/constant recitation special robe & seat sūtra case

purified altar scripture copyist ritual purity

Devotion to the Lotus Sutra* in Early Medieval China*

(RDR, 84-87, 89-93 + 87-89, 93-96) [+ EGBT, 8-9, 11, 25-27, 37, 39-43, 60]

(a) According to the story, what miraculous signs followed from what kinds of devotional practice by of chancellor Xiao Jing & Ma Heng? (p.430-32, 451)

elder sister = empress Xiao sandalwood stūpa sharīra beads daughter tomb

(b) In what ways did the practitioners described in these stories offer their bodies in their practice, and what miraculous signs resulted? (p.432-36 & 440-41, 442-43)

immolation “Medicine King” chapter Medicine King Monastery
boulevard of Jingzhou skull lips & tongue famine blue lotus flower

(c) What dreams & visions occurred in response to what practices? (p.436-44 & 445-48)

Vimalakīrti Sūtra “Medicine Herbs” chapter monk Jingjian Indra
divine youths Korean Kingdom Kim Kuayi King Yama Lord of Mount Tai

(d) In what ways & by whom are disrespectful officials humbled? (p.443-44 & 449-50)

district manager Zhu leprous ulcers governor Wanfu vajra guardians golden letters

Pure Land* Worship & Meditation During the Tang* & Song* Dynasties

(RDR, 97-100, 104-7 + 101-3) [+ EGBT, 43-44, 47-48]

Traditions, Sources & Time Periods (p.359-65 + 366-68):

Nianfo Famen *Two Teachings for Resolving Doubts*
Dharma Gate of Contemplation *Sukhāvātī Sūtras*

Jodo Shin school (=Shinshu) Shanxi movement Song dynasty
Pure Land (*sukhāvātī*) Tientai (=Tendai) Chan (=Zen)

Key People & Ideas (p. 360-63):

nianfo (=nembutsu*) = buddhānusmṛti glorified body samādhi
mental recollection vs. vocal recitation Amitābha*

Shandao Zunshi Dharma Master Huaigan

Ritual Objects & Locales (p.364-65 + 366-67):

incense daochang (=altar, sanctuary, chapel)
Pure Land Cloisters halls for 16 contemplations

Pure Land* Worship & Meditation During the Tang* & Song* Dynasties

(RDR, 97-100, 104-7 + 101-3) [+ EGBT, 43-44, 47-48]

(a) What use of the body, words and visualization are involved in Pure Land worship? (p.372-75, 377-78, 363-64 + 365-68)

Thus Come One (=Tathāgata) = Amitābha* Avalokiteshvara

cap & robe kneeling veneration confession & repentance dedication of merit

seven-date rite intervals [of worship] visionary experiences

(b) What mindful recollection of the Buddha's name & form is prescribed in these sources, and what vow is to be taken following such recollection? (p. 375-77, 360-63 & 369-71)

10 moments of mindfulness soft vs. loud

great/one-pointed mind field, seed, rain & blossom

(c) What is to be done when the end of life approaches? (p. 376 & 378-79)

assembly golden/flower pedestal lotus blossom facing west

Zen* (= Chan*) Tradition in Late Medieval Japan*

(RDR, 109-11, 116, 119-22 + 113-15, 117-18) [+EGBT, 19-21, 26-27, 47-47, 60]

(a) What Japanese schools & teachers preceded & followed Hakuin? (p.1-5 + 12-17)

[Bodhidharma*] [Emperor Shomu*] [Koya*]
Rinzai school Tendai (=Tiantai) Dogen Soto school Sung period Masters
Shōju Rojin koan* system disciples old nun/Nichiren sect

(b) What were Hakuin's practice & reflection in childhood & youth? (p.18-19 + 116-17)

Kannon Sutra nembutsu (=nianfo) Confucianism Lotus Sūtra Master Yen-t'ou

(c) What led to Hakuin's meeting his teacher & what awakening ensued? (p. 118-19)

Mu koan Master Shōju "hole-dwelling devil" death of Nan-chüan

(d) In what ways does Hakuin's insight deepen in old age? (p.24-27 + 120-23)

Pure Land teaching silent-illumination Zen painting & calligraphy

Roundness of the Lotus Leaf Shoinji Temple @ Hara dream of sleeves & mirrors

reviewing basic terminology for the academic study of religion
“Essential Elements of Religious Life (on-line syllabus)

(a) “Beliefs & Reflection” (section II)

unstated beliefs trust

non-specialists

nature fate luck

awareness faith

(b) “Integrating The Visible Elements Religious Life” (section IV)

dimensions layers

passages to look for in these primary sources

"One night in a dream my mother came and presented me with a purple robe made of silk. When I lifted it, both sleeves seemed very heavy, and on examining them I found an old mirror, five or six inches in diameter, in each sleeve. The reflection from the mirror in my right sleeve penetrated to my heart and vital organs. My own mind, mountains and rivers, the great earth seemed serene and bottomless. The mirror in the left sleeve, however, gave off no reflection whatsoever. Its surface was like that of a new pan that had yet to be touched by flames. But suddenly I became aware that the luster of the mirror in the left sleeve was innumerable times brighter than the other. After this, when I looked at all things, it was as though I was seeing my own face. For the first time I understood the meaning of the saying, 'The Tathagata sees the Buddha nature within his eye.'"

"For three years running he kept up his practice, until one day, just as the light of dawn was beginning to break at the fifth watch, there came a loud pounding at the door of the Buddha hall, and someone called out for it to be opened. At first Kan was reluctant, thinking, "Certainly this must be a criminal. Why else would he want a door to be opened when it is already locked tight?" But the person continued to call without letting up, so Kan finally gave in. When he opened the door he saw an old man. His beard and temples were a hoary white, and in his hands he clutched a wooden staff."

"Buddhas throughout the ten directions are ever-present in this world of ours. The sound of their dharma never ceases. Their marvelous rare fragrance is all-pervading; the flavor of their dharma fills the void. Their pure radiance shines over and enfolds everything. The eternally abiding and wondrous principle [of enlightenment] fills all of space. Yet, because my six senses are internally blinded and the three activities [of body, speech, and mind] benighted, I am unable to see, hear, smell, feel, or know their presence. Because of these influences I revolve endlessly in cyclic birth and death, passing through all manner of evil destinies, for incalculable eons never to know a moment of release."

"His hair must be properly dressed, his garments in the strictest order, and his swords must be fastened at his side. With this exact and proper deportment, the true meditation stands forth with an overflowing splendor. Mounted on a sturdy horse, the warrior can ride forth to face an uncountable horde of enemies as though he were riding into a place empty of people. The valiant, undaunted expression on his face reflects his practice of the peerless, true, uninterrupted meditation sitting. Meditating in this way, the warrior can accomplish in one month what it takes the monk a year to do; in three days he can open up for himself benefits that would take the monk a hundred days."