

Religion 202. Question sheet 6B: Vajrayāna readings and Mahāyāna in East Asia.

NOTE: Please answer with schematic overviews, NOT in full sentences.

Please do not type, but hand-write your answer

Text Interpretation questions to study for the exam (required)

1. How popular is *Bardo Thödol* in Tibetan Buddhism? It is said to be influenced by Bön Po. Indicate A. how the text as a whole seems to show such influence and B. passages from the part you have read that you can identify as Mahāyāna Buddhism.
2. The Lotus Sūtra is said to be one of the most important Mahāyāna Scriptures. A. Discuss in how far this is true. B. How do the Chinese schools (with their concern about the contradictions inherent in the Buddhist scriptures they received) interpret “the lost son” parable? What is the main point of the Burning House parable?

Fact and Comparison Questions to study for the exam (required)

3. Outline briefly the main characteristics of ancient religion in China, indicating parallels in Korea and Vietnam. What are our sources for these religions?

Discussion questions (optional)

1. A. What is misleading about the popular name “Tibetan Book of the Dead”? B. Why do you think its first translation had such appeal in the West? Do you personally find a similar appeal? C. How do you explain the interest of Carl Gustav Jung in this work? How do you evaluate that?
2. Discuss the parable of the daughter of the Dragon King from the Lotus Sutra. What is its relevance? How do you evaluate this against the context of the position of women Mahāyāna Buddhism?
3. Ancestral worship seems to have been widespread in Ancient East Asia and still hold appeal today. How do you explain this persistence? Can you find similar elements in your own culture?