

PHIL 641: Dignāga and Dharmakīrti

Instructor: Dr. Richard P. Hayes

Office hours: Tue 12:30–2:00PM

Office: Humanities 525

Telephone: 277–8232

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518 Humanities

Or by appointment

rhayes@unm.edu

1 Course description

Indian Buddhism developed a rich scholastic tradition, the purpose of which was to provide a sound foundation for the doctrines and practices of Buddhism. Within the scholastic tradition, Tibetan doxographers recognized two broad approaches. One of the approaches was that followed by those scholastics who favored logic or systematic reasoning and so was called *nyāyānusārin*. This approach was contrasted with that followed by those who adhered to scriptural tradition, called *āgamānusārin*. Both of these approaches cut across sectarian boundaries, so one finds representatives of both approaches in most of the major schools of Indian Buddhism. Those who favored reasoning over scriptural exegesis were indebted primarily to the thought of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti. The topic of this course will be these two thinkers, excerpts of whose works will be read in Sanskrit, along with reflections on their work by several modern scholars.

This class will be a combination of graduate seminar and Sanskrit reading course. On Tuesdays we'll meet from 6:30 until 9:30pm. Normally about half that time will be devoted to discussion of secondary source readings, and half to reading Sanskrit passages connected with the course. On Thursday we'll meet from 2:00 until 3:00pm to read Sanskrit.

2 Readings

Some of the required readings for this course will be placed on ereserves. The readings can be checked out of the reserves section of the Zimmerman library or downloaded through the electronic reserve facility at ereserves.unm.edu. If you use the electronic facility, the readings are found under PHIL 438. The password is `hetu`. Alternatively, you should be able to get direct access via <http://ereserves.unm.edu/eres/coursepage.aspx?cid=5708>. A link to this persistent URL is located on WebCT. The full bibliographical information for the readings can be found in the References section at the end of this syllabus. The references section also contains other works that you might find useful as background reading for your research papers.

3 Course requirements

Since this is a small seminar, it is important that we all show up prepared for every class. The evaluation will be based on a combination of class participation, a translation project and a philosophical essay.

Translation project This will be a collaborative effort. The aim is to produce an annotated translation of publishable quality. Each week each of you will publish your individual translation efforts for the week on WebCT. These will be available for everyone in the course to see, and all of us will be expected to make comments on the various translations. From time to time we will discuss the translation in class and see whether we can arrive at a consensus on how best to translate each passage and what comments might be made in an English commentary.

Philosophical essay This may be on any topic of your choosing, provided it takes as its point of departure the philosophers we are discussing in this seminar and their modern interpreters. As the semester progresses, I expect each of you will meet with me individually to discuss your essay topic.

Participation	throughout term	20%
Philosophical essay	November 6	40%
Translation project	December 6	40%

4 Schedule of lectures and discussions

Date	Topic
Aug 21	Dignāga's principal works. Overview of <i>Pramāṇasamuccaya</i> . His views on <i>pratyakṣa</i> .
28	Dignāga's views on inference <i>anumāna</i> in <i>Hetucakra</i> and <i>Pramāṇasamuccaya</i> chapter two. Reading: "Dignāga's <i>Hetucakra</i> " (PDF file) and Matilal (1998, 88–107).
Sep 4	Dignāga's views on language in <i>Pramāṇasamuccaya</i> chapter 5. Reading: Hayes (1988a, 173–188) and Matilal (2002, 230–254).
11	Dignāga's <i>Ālambanaparīkṣā</i> Reading: Matilal (2002, 97–113) and Matilal (1986, 97–105).
18	Dharmakīrti's principal works and contributions, and an overview of issues in <i>Pramāṇa-vārttika</i> , <i>Pramāṇasiddhi</i> chapter: Proving that the Buddha is a source of truth. Reading: Jackson (1993, 109–116) and Dreyfus (1997, 443–462).
25	Reading: Tillemans (1999, 53–66 & 89–116)
Oct 2	Reading: Dunne (2004, 1–52)
9	Reading: Dunne (2004, 53–83)

- 16 Reading: Dunne (2004, 84–144)
 23 Reading: Dunne (2004, 145–192)
 30 Reading: Dunne (2004, 193–222)
 Nov 6 Reading: Dunne (2004, 223–279)
 13 Reading: Dunne (2004, 280–330)
 20 Reading: Tillemans (1999, 209–246)
 27 Reading: Tillemans (1999, 247–284)

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