Foundations and Transformations of Buddhism: An Overview
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Introduction

These materials are designed to serve as background materials on what Buddhism is, how it developed and spread, and how Buddhist traditions differ. The reading has been adapted from Chapter 11 of Asian Philosophies, Fourth Edition, by John M. Koller (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 2002.)

Instructors and students can use these materials as background reading for courses on Buddhism, Asian Religions, Asian History, Asian Civilization, and Asian Literature featuring Buddhist themes, among others.

The reading also provides useful background and supplementary information for the following ExEAS teaching units:

- Buddhism in the Classic Chinese Novel Journey to the West
- Buddhism and Japanese Aesthetics
- Buddhist Art in East Asia
- Dialogue and Transformation: Buddhism in Asian Philosophy
- Ox-herding: Stages of Zen Practice

Contents [with hyperlinks to separate pages]

Buddhism in India: Beginnings and Spread

India at the Time of the Buddha

Central Teachings: The Noble Fourfold Truth and the Noble Eightfold Path

Mahayana and Theraveda Buddhism

Buddhism in China

Buddhism in Korea and Japan

Additional Online Resources

BuddhaNet John, is this one worth including???
http://www.buddhanet.net/

Buddhism Digital Library & Museum, a joint project of National Taiwan University and Chung-Hwa Institute of Buddhist Studies (Taiwan)
Digital Dictionary of Buddhism by Charles Muller (Tokyo Gakuen University) John, is this one worth including?  http://www.acmuller.net/ddb/index.html

Korean Buddhism Information Page by Charles Muller (Tokyo Gakuen University) John, is this one worth including?  http://www.hm.tyg.jp/~acmuller/Buddhism-Korean.html


Teaching Buddhism by the Religious Studies faculty at McGill University  www.teach-buddhism.mcgill.ca/


Further Reading


A highly readable history of Western encounters with Buddhism.


Contains an excellent early history of Korean Buddhism.


This text was the standard history of Chinese Buddhism for many years.  The same author’s *The Chinese Transformation of Buddhism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1973), was the standard explanation of the transformations that Buddhism underwent in China.  Both are now somewhat out of date.
De Bary, William Theodore et al.:  

See these volumes for excellent brief introductions to various Buddhist developments in different Asian cultures as well as valuable translations from important primary texts.  


Explains the early development of Buddhism in India and Sri Lanka.  


A lucid account of the development of Chan thought and practice from its Indian origins to its flowering in the great masters, Huineng, Mazu, and Linji.  


Focuses on the first five centuries of Indian Buddhism.  


An excellent historical introduction to Buddhism. The first half deals with the history of early Buddhism from a philosophical perspective. The second half deals with the development of the Mahayana in India, with special attention to Nagarjuna, Vasubandhu, and Dignaga.  


This text provides a good introduction to the philosophies of India and China. Much of the text featured here has been adapted from Chapter 11.  


Presents ground-breaking interpretations of the development of Chan Buddhism.

A well-organized digest of important information about almost every facet of Buddhism. Has a good, brief bibliography.


A well-informed and highly readable history of Buddhism. Contains a good bibliography on Buddhist history.


The best book available on Korean Buddhism.


This text is probably the best introduction to the development of Mahayana thought.