
Becoming The Buddha The Ritual Of Image Consecration In Thailand

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BECKER TALAN

Becoming Buddhist Tuttle Publishing
Buddhism is popularly seen as a religion stressing the truth of impermanence. How, then, to account for the long-standing veneration, in Asian Buddhist communities, of bone fragments, hair, teeth, and other bodily bits said to come from the historic Buddha? Early European and American scholars of religion, influenced by a characteristic Protestant bias against relic worship, declared such

practices to be superstitious and fraudulent, and far from the true essence of Buddhism. John Strong's book, by contrast, argues that relic veneration has played a serious and integral role in Buddhist traditions in South and Southeast Asia-and that it is in no way foreign to Buddhism. The book is structured around the life story of the Buddha, starting with traditions about relics of previous buddhas and relics from the past lives of the Buddha Sakyamuni. It then considers the death of the Buddha, the collection of his bodily relics after his cremation, and stories of their spread to different parts of

Asia. The book ends with a consideration of the legend of the future parinirvana (extinction) of the relics prior to the advent of the next Buddha, Maitreya. Throughout, the author does not hesitate to explore the many versions of these legends and to relate them to their ritual, doctrinal, artistic, and social contexts. *Experiences of Socialization and Self-Transformation in Two Australian Buddhist Centres* Columbia University Press
This book exemplifies the best sort of work being done on Chinese religions today. Christine Mollier expertly draws not only on published canonical sources but also on

manuscript and visual material, as well as worldwide modern scholarship, to give us the most sophisticated book-length study yet produced on the textual relations between the Buddhist and Taoist traditions. She pushes past the tired, vague, and rather innocent-sounding trope of 'influence' to pinpoint much more complex—and fascinating—processes of textual repackaging, hybridization, adaptation, appropriation, reframing, pirating, remodeling, and transposing. Throughout, the urgent concerns of medieval Chinese people—life, health, protection, salvation—are sensitively and elegantly evoked. Anyone interested in Chinese religions, in the ways in which religious texts are formed, and in cross-religious interactions should want to read this book.—Robert Ford Campany, University of Southern California "Since the inception of Taoism and the transplantation of Buddhism in China in the first few centuries of the common era, proponents of Taoism and Buddhism have engaged in shrill debate and sly mimesis. In the 1950s modern scholars began to insist that the two 'higher' religions of China could not be understood except in

relation to each other. With *Buddhism and Taoism Face to Face*, Christine Mollier advances the debate and effectively proposes new methods, new sources, and new conclusions. Mollier demonstrates that mutual self-fashioning in the history of religion ought best be understood through the sustained study of the concrete and practical aspects of religious life. Utilizing a dazzling array of sources—including medieval manuscripts, liturgies, canonical texts, statues, and hagiography—this eloquent intervention sets the standard for many decades to come. Her book alerts us to the existence and sophistication of a third tradition, one plying the shifting boundaries between Taoism and Buddhism."—Stephen F. Teiser, Princeton University Christine Mollier reveals in this volume previously unexplored dimensions of the interaction between Buddhism and Taoism in medieval China. While scholars of Chinese religions have long recognized the mutual influences linking the two traditions, Mollier here brings to light their intense contest for hegemony in the domains of scripture and ritual. Drawing on a far-reaching investigation of canonical texts,

together with manuscript sources from Dunhuang and the monastic libraries of Japan—many of them studied here for the first time—she demonstrates the competition and complementarity of the two great Chinese religions in their quest to address personal and collective fears of diverse ills, including sorcery, famine, and untimely death. In this context, Buddhist apocrypha and Taoist scriptures were composed through a process of mutual borrowing, yielding parallel texts, Mollier argues, that closely mirrored one another. Life-extending techniques, astrological observances, talismans, spells, and the use of effigies and icons to resolve the fundamental preoccupations of medieval society were similarly incorporated in both religions. In many cases, as a result, one and the same body of material can be found in both Buddhist and Taoist guises. Among the exorcistic, prophylactic, and therapeutic ritual methods explored here in detail are the "Heavenly Kitchens" that grant divine nutrition to their adepts, incantations that were promoted to counteract bewitchment, as well as talismans for attaining longevity and the protection of stellar deities. The destiny of

the Jiuku Tianzun, the Taoist bodhisattva whose salvific mission and iconography were modeled on Guanyin (Avalokitesvara), is examined at length. Through the case-studies set forth here, the patterns whereby medieval Buddhists and Taoists each appropriated and transformed for their own use the rites and scriptures of their rivals are revealed with unprecedented precision. Buddhism and Taoism Face to Face is abundantly illustrated with drawings and diagrams from canonical and manuscript sources, together with art and artifacts photographed by the author in the course of her field research in China.

Sophisticated in its analysis, broad in its synthesis of a variety of difficult material, and original in its interpretations, it will be required reading for those interested in East Asian religions and in the history of the medieval Chinese sciences, including astrology, medicine and divination.

Zen Ritual Oxford University Press, USA
A fascinating exploration of the role that magic has played in the history of Buddhism As far back as we can see in the historical record, Buddhist monks and nuns have offered services including

healing, divination, rain making, aggressive magic, and love magic to local clients. Studying this history, scholar Sam van Schaik concludes that magic and healing have played a key role in Buddhism's flourishing, yet they have rarely been studied in academic circles or by Western practitioners. The exclusion of magical practices and powers from most discussions of Buddhism in the modern era can be seen as part of the appropriation of Buddhism by Westerners, as well as an effect of modernization movements within Asian Buddhism. However, if we are to understand the way Buddhism has worked in the past, the way it still works now in many societies, and the way it can work in the future, we need to examine these overlooked aspects of Buddhist practice. In *Buddhist Magic*, van Schaik takes a book of spells and rituals--one of the earliest that has survived--from the Silk Road site of Dunhuang as the key reference point for discussing Buddhist magic in Tibet and beyond. After situating Buddhist magic within a cross-cultural history of world magic, he discusses sources of magic in Buddhist scripture, early Buddhist rituals of protection, medicine and the spread of

Buddhism, and magic users. Including material from across the vast array of Buddhist traditions, van Schaik offers readers a fascinating, nuanced view of a topic that has too long been ignored.

Buddhism and Taoism Face to Face
Watkins Media Limited

Found in many different religious cultures, the practice of making votive offerings into fire dates back to the earliest periods of human history. Throughout the tantric world, this kind of ritual offering practice is known as the homa. With roots in Vedic and Zoroastrian rituals, the tantric homa was formed in early medieval India. Since that time tantric Buddhist practitioners transmitted it to East and Central Asia, and more recently to Europe and the Americas. Today, Hindu forms of the homa are being practiced outside of India as well. Despite this historical and cultural range, the homa retains an identifiable unity of symbolism and ritual form. *Homa Variations* is the first volume to provide a series of detailed studies of a variety of homa forms. This collection of essays provides an understanding of the history of the homa from its inception up to its use in the present. The book also covers

homa practice throughout a wide range of religious cultures, from India and Nepal to Tibet, China, and Japan. The theoretical focus of the collection is the study of ritual change over long periods of time, and across the boundaries of religious cultures. The identifiable unity of the homa allows for an almost unique opportunity to examine ritual change with such a broad perspective.

[A Feminist History, Analysis, and Reconstruction of Buddhism](#) SUNY Press

In this strikingly illustrated and authoritative volume, readers have an introduction to one of the world's greatest living faiths. 200 color photos, maps & drawings.

[Becoming Buddha](#) FPMT

Analyzes a seventh-century ritual manual that provides both a rich source of information of medieval Buddhist life and addresses the ongoing concern of how an adherent can encounter the power of a buddha.

[Buddhist World of Southeast Asia, The](#)

Oxford University Press

Winner of the Association of Asian Studies's Southeast Conference Book Prize (2014) Does imagery help or hinder the

enlightenment experience? Does awakening involve the imagination or not? Can art ever fully represent the realization of buddahood? In this study, Pamela D. Winfield offers a fascinating comparison of two pre-modern Japanese Buddhist masters and their views on the role of imagery in the enlightenment experience. Kukai (774-835) believed that real and imagined forms were indispensable to his new esoteric Mikkyō method for "becoming a Buddha in this very body" (sokushin jobutsu), yet he also deconstructed the significance of such imagery in his poetic and doctrinal works. Conversely, Dogen (1200-1253) believed that "just sitting" in Zen meditation without any visual props or mental elaborations could lead one to realize that "this very mind is Buddha" (sokushin zebutsu), but he also privileged select Zen icons as worthy of veneration. In considering the nuanced views of both Kukai and Dogen anew, Winfield updates previous comparisons of their oeuvres and engages their texts and images together for the first time. In so doing, she liberates them from past sectarian scholarship that has pigeon-holed them into

iconographic/ritual vs. philological/philosophical categories. She also restores the historical symbiosis between religious thought and artistic expression that was lost in the nineteenth-century disciplinary distinction between religious studies and art history. Finally, Winfield breaks new methodological ground by proposing space and time as organizing principles for analyzing both meditative experience and visual/material culture. As a result, this study presents a wider and deeper vision of how Japanese Buddhists themselves understood the role of imagery before, during, and after awakening.

[Becoming Vajrasattva](#) Princeton University Press

Religious Bodies Politic examines the complex relationship between transnational religion and politics through the lens of one cosmopolitan community in Siberia: Buryats, who live in a semiautonomous republic within Russia with a large Buddhist population. Looking at religious transformation among Buryats across changing political economies, Anya Bernstein argues that under conditions of rapid social change—such as those that

accompanied the Russian Revolution, the Cold War, and the fall of the Soviet Union—Buryats have used Buddhist “body politics” to articulate their relationship not only with the Russian state, but also with the larger Buddhist world. During these periods, Bernstein shows, certain people and their bodies became key sites through which Buryats conformed to and challenged Russian political rule. She presents particular cases of these emblematic bodies—dead bodies of famous monks, temporary bodies of reincarnated lamas, ascetic and celibate bodies of Buddhist monastics, and dismembered bodies of lay disciples given as imaginary gifts to spirits—to investigate the specific ways in which religion and politics have intersected. Contributing to the growing literature on postsocialism and studies of sovereignty that focus on the body, *Religious Bodies Politic* is a fascinating illustration of how this community employed Buddhism to adapt to key moments of political change. *Practicing Buddhism in Modern Thailand* Routledge

Imagine a world without beauty, myth, celebration or ritual. It seems that to feel

fully and vibrantly alive, these experiences are essential to us. Devotional ritual speaks this language of the heart, but can be a confronting aspect of Buddhism for some people in the West. Skilfully steering us through the difficulties we may encounter, Sangharakshita leads us through the sevenfold puja, a sequence of devotional moods found in Tibetan and Indian forms of Buddhism

Theravada Traditions University of Washington Press

The goddess Guanyin began in India as the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, originally a male deity. He gradually became indigenized as a female deity in China over the span of nearly a millennium. By the Ming (1358–1644) and Qing (1644–1911) periods, Guanyin had become the most popular female deity in China. In *Becoming Guanyin*, Yuhang Li examines how lay Buddhist women in late imperial China forged a connection with the subject of their devotion, arguing that women used their own bodies to echo that of Guanyin. Li focuses on the power of material things to enable women to access religious experience and transcendence. In particular, she examines how secular

Buddhist women expressed mimetic devotion and pursued religious salvation through creative depictions of Guanyin in different media such as painting and embroidery and through bodily portrayals of the deity using jewelry and dance. These material displays expressed a worldview that differed from yet fit within the Confucian patriarchal system. Attending to the fabrication and use of “women’s things” by secular women, Li offers new insight into the relationships between worshipped and worshipper in Buddhist practice. Combining empirical research with theoretical insights from both art history and Buddhist studies, *Becoming Guanyin* is a field-changing analysis that reveals the interplay between material culture, religion, and their gendered transformations.

Buddhist Magic Columbia University Press

This ground-breaking study sets out a new understanding of transformations in the interaction between religion and political authority throughout history. Mediating the Power of Buddhas Courier Dover Publications

Buddhism: The Basics provides a thorough

and accessible introduction to a fascinating religion. Examining the historical development of Buddhism and its presence today, this guide covers: principal traditions practices and beliefs ethical guidelines and philosophy religious texts community With helpful features including a detailed map of the Buddhist world, glossary of terms and tips for further study, this is an ideal text for students and interested readers wanting to familiarise themselves with the Buddhist faith. Cathy Cantwell is an academic researcher at the Oriental Institute, University of Oxford. She specialises in Tibetan Buddhism, and has worked on eleventh century manuscripts, an eighteenth century scriptural collection, and contemporary Buddhist ritual manuals and practice. She has taught widely in UK Higher Education and is joint author of *Early Tibetan Documents on Phur pa* from Dunhuang.

Ritual and Devotion in Buddhism Oxford University Press

The wisest teachings of Buddhism say that, like all oppositions, one must move beyond gender. But as Serinity Young shows in this enlightening work, the

rhetoric of Buddhist texts, the symbolism of its iconography, and the performative import of its rituals, tell different, and often contradictory, stories. In *Courtesans and Tantric Consorts*, Serinity Young takes the reader on a journey through more than 2000 years of biographical writings, iconographic depictions, and ritual practices revealing Buddhism's deep struggles with gender. Juxtaposing empowering images of women with their textual repudiation, beginning with the Buddha himself who abandoned his wife; tantric courtesans who are considered necessary to male enlightenment with fertility rituals designed to ensure male offspring; tales of gender-bending gods and goddesses with all male heavens; Serinity Young draws on a vast range of sources to reveal the colourful, and often troubling, mosaic of beliefs that inform Buddhist views about gender and sexuality.

Narrating the Bodhisatta Path Cambridge University Press

Bringing together 15 essays by international Buddhist scholars, this book offers a distinctive portrayal of the life of Buddhism. The contributors focus on a

range of religious practices across the Buddhist world, from New York to Tibet. *Ritual in the Manjusrimulakalpa* University of Hawaii Press

Theravada Traditions offers a unique comparative approach to understanding Buddhism: it examines popular rituals of central importance in the predominantly Theravada Buddhist cultures of Laos, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Myanmar, and Cambodia. Instead of focusing on how religious ideas have impacted the ideals of government or ethical practice, author John Holt tries to ascertain how important changes, or shifts, in the trajectories of the political economies of societies have impacted the character of religious cultures. Each of the five chapters focuses on a particular rite and provides detailed historical, political, or social context: Holt shows how worship of the Phra Bang Buddha image in the annual pi mai or New Year's rites in Luang Phrabang, Laos, has changed dramatically since the 1975 communist revolution and the subsequent opening up of the country to tourism; he describes how, in the face of insurrections and a prolonged civil war, the annual asala perahara processions in Kandy, Sri Lanka, have come to reflect a

robust assertion of a Sinhala Buddhist nationalist identity; how ordination rites among Thai Buddhists reflect the manner in which Thai culture has been ever more "commodified" in the context of its dramatically developing economy; and how in tightly controlled Myanmar the kathina rite, the act of giving new robes to members of the sangha after the completion of the rain-retreat season, transformed into a season of campaigning for gift-giving and merit-making; finally, he demonstrates how, in light of the devastating losses inflicted by the Khmer Rouge, pchum ben, the annual rite of caring ritually for one's deceased kin, became the most popular and perhaps most emotionally observed of all rites in the Khmer calendar year. In short, *Theravada Traditions* illustrates how popular, public ritual performance, far from being static, clearly indexes patterns of social and political change. Broad but deep, rigorous yet accessible, this rich, innovative volume provides a provocative introduction to the practice of Theravada Buddhism and the nature of social change in contemporary Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia.

Becoming Guanyin University of Chicago Press

Buddhism Plain and Simple offers a lucid, straightforward treatise on Buddhism in general and on awareness in particular. When Buddha was asked to sum up his teaching in a single word, he said, "Awareness." The Buddha taught how to see directly into the nature of experience. His observations and insights are comprehensible, practical, and down-to-earth, and they deal exclusively with the present. The longtime teacher of Buddhism Steve Hagan presents the Buddha's uncluttered, original teachings in everyday, accessible language unencumbered by religious ritual, tradition, or belief.

Tibetan Book of the Dead University of Hawaii Press

Becoming the Buddha The Ritual of Image Consecration in Thailand Princeton University Press

The Lovelorn Ghost and the Magical Monk Windhorse Publications (UK)

Buddhist Thought and Ritual will appeal to anyone interested in acquiring an authentic grasp of Buddhism as it lives and functions in today's world. The wide

spectrum of Buddhist practice is represented here by the men and women who contributed to this volume. The focus on thought and ritual captures the organic interrelationship of these religious components and moves away from the compartmentalization characteristic of much religious scholarship. The reader discovers the central tenets of Buddhism, Anatta, Pratityasamutpada, Sunyatta, Nirvana, and others, not as free-floating curiosities, but in terms of their contemporary relevance and active participation in the formation of society and culture. Likewise, commonly practiced rituals such as the Paritta Ceremony and Mantra Recitation are analyzed in terms of their role in living Buddhism.

An Introduction SUNY Press

Healing lies at the heart of Zen in the home, as Paula Arai discovered in her pioneering research on the ritual lives of Zen Buddhist laywomen. She reveals a vital stream of religious practice that flourishes outside the bounds of formal institutions through sacred rites that women develop and transmit to one another. Everyday objects and common materials are used in inventive ways. For

example, polishing cloths, vivified by prayer and mantra recitation, become potent tools. The creation of beauty through the arts of tea ceremony, calligraphy, poetry, and flower arrangement become rites of healing. Bringing Zen Home brings a fresh perspective to Zen scholarship by uncovering a previously unrecognized but nonetheless vibrant strand of lay practice. The creativity of domestic Zen is evident in the ritual activities that women fashion, weaving tradition and innovation, to gain a sense of wholeness and balance in the midst of illness, loss, and anguish. Their rituals include chanting, ingesting elixirs and consecrated substances, and contemplative approaches that elevate cleaning, cooking, child-rearing, and caring for the sick and dying into spiritual disciplines. Creating beauty is central to domestic Zen and figures prominently in Arai's analyses. She also discovers a novel application of the concept of Buddha nature as the women honor deceased loved ones as "personal Buddhas." One of the hallmarks of the study is its longitudinal nature, spanning fourteen years of fieldwork. Arai developed a

"second-person," or relational, approach to ethnographic research prompted by recent trends in psychobiology. This allowed her to cultivate relationships of trust and mutual vulnerability over many years to inquire into not only the practices but also their ongoing and changing roles. The women in her study entrusted her with their life stories, personal reflections, and religious insights, yielding an ethnography rich in descriptive and narrative detail as well as nuanced explorations of the experiential dimensions and effects of rituals. In Bringing Zen Home, the first study of the ritual lives of Zen laywomen, Arai applies a cutting-edge ethnographic method to reveal a thriving domain of religious practice. Her work represents an important contribution on a number of fronts—to Zen studies, ritual studies, scholarship on women and religion, and the cross-cultural study of healing.

Revival: Outlines of Buddhism: A historical sketch (1934) Routledge
 Becoming Buddha compiles the invaluable teachings of contemporary Buddhist teachers who have sought to illuminate the ways of the Buddha in a manner that

is comprehensible to a wide audience. These lectures comprise easy to follow dialogues, with anecdotes from the Buddha's own life as well as the lives of ordinary people, to explain how everyone can attain Buddhahood. The message underlying these teachings is that becoming Buddha is not an unattainable ideal. Each person can be a Buddha by becoming the perfect spiritual practitioner, one who wants enlightenment for all fellow creatures. This is not achieved simply through prayers or offerings but through the practical application of Buddha's wisdom to our own lives. The book reaffirms the significance of taking responsibility for our actions and instructs us to cherish all sentient beings in this life. The friendly, empathetic tone puts the reader at ease, reducing the distance between teacher and disciple. Becoming Buddha includes a previously unrecorded lecture by the Dalai Lama, rare photographs of the other educators who speak through this book and an article by eminent Buddhist scholar Professor Robert Thurman, which locates enlightenment in a socio-historical context, establishing that it is not merely a spiritual desire but an

essential tool for survival today.