

WHGC; Hilliker & Thompson
11/9/98

The marine scientist and the French teacher hold forth on Islam and Buddhism. . . stay tuned for even stranger developments

- I. At the risk of pointing out the obvious, there is considerable material in the faculty guide on both Buddhism and Islam
- II. The Buddhist readings are, for the most part, straightforward; the 'Life of the Buddha' and 'Buddhist Tradition' provide good grounds for a quiz and for an opening discussion, particularly if you choose to compare the life of Christ with that of Buddha.

quiz:

1. What are the three most important concepts of Buddhism? (fr. intro. 'Budd. Trad.'): Middle Way; Eightfold Path; Four Noble Truths
2. What are the Four Noble Truths?
3. What is the essential concept put forth in the 'Metta Sutra' (on compassion compare Mencius' child-adult analogy, Taoism 'trust the untrustworthy, 'love thy neighbor')
4. describe Buddha's journey - what elements of human life was he exposed to? What were the stages of his journey to enlightenment?

>This might be a good place to. compare the 'outer journey' (Odysseus) with the 'inner' Journey of Buddhism (or its sixties version in popular literature -Hesse, Kesey, T. Wolfe; etc.); what do they read now? compare enlightened Buddha remaining on earthly plane w/Plato's guardians who come back to the cave

- B. Have students (groups perhaps) sketch out differences and similarities in the stories of Buddha and Jesus (signs and wonders at birth; early calling; period of asceticism: wealth vs. poverty)
- C. Compare the tenants of Buddhist law (as we have it) with the Ten Commandments; compare 'speech' or communication with divinity (prayer vs. meditation) - see chart for more possibilities

- III. We don't have much basic info on Islam in our readings; the faculty guide has some nuggets (Allah, revelation, etc.), and a piece about Mohammed; The Five Principles may not be in here - is it in the video?

> Once I feel they have a grasp of some basic principles, I prefer to do a comparative study, hence the chart: this can, I think, be profitably combined with the big questions that Holly and Tim ask in the intro to the sacred in the syllabus: do divine beings exist. etc. - I prefer do ask these questions comparatively and avoid polemics, accusations of plagiarism. etc.