

## SEMINAR UPDATE

August 19-21, 2016 – Jodo Shinshu Center, Berkeley, CA

### 2016 SUMMER PACIFIC SEMINAR – 21<sup>st</sup> Century: *Jodo Shinshu Buddhism Beyond Borders*

*New Keynote Speakers Announced:*

**Dr. Mark Blum (UC Berkeley) and Dr. Jessica Main (U. of British Columbia)**

*Scholars and lay practitioners engage in ground-breaking discussions.*

***Jodo Shinshu Buddhism Beyond Borders***, is the focus of the **Summer Pacific Seminar – 21st Century**, presented by the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS) and the BCA Center for Buddhist Education (CBE) on August 19 – 21, 2016 at the Jodo Shinshu Center, 2140 Durant Avenue, Berkeley, CA. Registration is \$140 for the 2-day event, including meals. BCA rate extended is \$125 until 8/7. Open to the public, no previous experience needed. Online registration and details are at [www.buddhistchurchesofamerica.org](http://www.buddhistchurchesofamerica.org). Email: [cbe@bcahq.org](mailto:cbe@bcahq.org) or phone: (510) 809-1460.

### ***Exploring the Meaning of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism as a Worldwide Religion***

Scholars and lay practitioners will engage in ground-breaking discussions, a live podcast, a book talk, and an interactive session on traditional chanting and music. The 2-day seminar will explore the meaning of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism as a worldwide religion with keynote speakers, **Dr. Mark Blum**, (University of California at Berkeley); and **Dr. Jessica L. Main** (University of British Columbia, Canada), as well as a host of other speakers and presenters. *Please note: Due to unforeseen circumstances, previously announced keynote speakers, Dr. Ugo Dotti and Dr. Elisabetta Ponu, are not able to take part in the seminar.*

**Keynote presentations:** **Dr. Mark Blum** will discuss the significance of social action as both interior and exterior forms of practice and self-examination in Pure Land and Shin Buddhism. **Dr. Jessica L. Main** will speak about religious hatred and discrimination and religious reconciliation, especially as they pertain to Jodo Shinshu in Japan and the US.

Dr. Blum is the Shinjo Ito Distinguished Chair in Japanese Studies at the UC Berkeley. He received his M.A. in Japanese Literature from UCLA and his Ph.D. in Buddhist Studies from UC Berkeley. His publications include: *The Origins and Development of Pure Land Buddhism* (2002); co-editor of *Rennyo and the Roots of Modern Japanese Buddhism* (2005) and *Cultivating Spirituality* (2011); and translation from Chinese of *The Nirvana Sutra: Volume 1* (2013). He is currently working on completing *Think Buddha, Say Buddha: a history of nenbutsu thought, practice, and culture*.

Dr. Main is the Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Programme Chair in Buddhism and Contemporary Society at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada. She completed her Ph.D. dissertation on the modern history of human rights and descent-based discrimination in Japanese True Pure Land, or Shin Buddhism, at McGill University. She has had the opportunity to work with a Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) funded project on religion and health, investigating possible contributions of Buddhism to a physician's ethic.

**Dharmarealm.com – Live!** Participants will also experience a live *Dharmarealm.com* podcast with co-hosts **Rev. Harry Bridge** and **Dr. Scott Mitchell**. *Dharmarealm.com* is a series of conversations by the co-hosts on topics about Buddhism, Jodo Shinshu, and Buddhist life in America.

**Book Talk: Buddhism Beyond Borders – Perspectives on Buddhism in the U.S** (SUNY Press), by editors **Dr. Natalie Quli** and **Dr. Scott Mitchell**. The editors will introduce how this collection of twelve articles “explores facets of North American Buddhism while taking into account the impact of globalization and increasing interconnectivity,” and how they represent a continuum of new dialogues on Buddhism in America.

**Chanting and Music Beyond Borders:** The Sunday session will explore traditional chanting interpreted through a variety of performance genres. Participants will experience the melodic *Ojoraisan*, chanted by **Rev. Kojo Kakihara** (Spokane Buddhist Temple, WA) and **Rev. Yuki Sugahara** (Buddhist Church of Florin, CA), with instrumental accompaniment by members of the **Northern California Gagaku Group**. Chanting in other formats such as heavy metal and rap will be explored as well as chanting in a classical Western choral format, such as Richard St. Clair’s “*Dharma Chant: A Buddhist Oratorio in Three Parts*,” (audio clip); and *New Gathas: Call and Response* led by Dii Lewis.

About Pacific Seminar: Continuing in the spirit of the Pacific Seminars which enlivened the Jodo Shinshu movement in the US after WWII, the IBS and the BCA Center for Buddhist Education re-initiated the Pacific Seminar – 21st Century in 2008 shortly after the Jodo Shinshu Center first opened, ushering in a new era for Jodo Shinshu Buddhist education. In addition to the two-day annual summer session, one-day Winter and Spring Pacific Seminar sessions have been hosted in Southern California and in the Northwest.