



**TDN-Project No.10:**

Eskimobuddhism – modern buddhism

Are you a Eskimo Buddha?

Tutor: Pierre Babinsky, Napierville, Canada

**Aim:**

Create your own eskimobuddha artwork to transport the idea of eskimobuddhism. Assignment for one student or a team of two.

Time Period: The project should be finished in August 2010.

**Objectives:**

Find out, what it means to be a eskimobuddha, abstract the idea and form it into a design process, resulting in a way to communicate the idea to people, who don't know eskimobuddhism yet.

Come up with a original, beautiful, readable and attractive artwork for a logo, sculpture, brochure, storybook, installation and anything else you can think of.

Document your process in any media, web, print, pictures or video.

**Assessment / presentation**

Design concept, theory and philosophy  
artwork, documentation, e.g. photos, video, etc.

## **Background:**

### **Eskimo Buddhism Explained**

Eskimo Buddhism, a family of beliefs and practices, not considered to be a religion, is a protestant grass roots internet led movement believed to have begun in or around 2001 in response to a series of life changing events touching several individuals which led to the attempt to find a collective, positive, new, simplified meaning to existence.

Eskimo Buddhism embraces ethical conduct, altruistic behavior, belief in good fortune (luck), building of fortune, simple living, loyalty to fellow man, positive leadership, happiness, love, family, health, physical exercise and the cultivation of wisdom.

Eskimo Buddhism is state of mind whose representation can take many forms. The most common form being an Eskimo Buddha figurine or sculpture as seen through the eyes of individual artists.

The most common representation is a happy, smiling, sitting akimbo, plump, warmly dressed eskimo looking skyward holding a big fish under his left arm.

Its' meaning is that the world provides for fellow man by offering the means of existence represented by the large fresh fish which provides plentiful, healthy, free nourishment to the determined man or woman willing to get out and make an honest effort.

## **Significance**

The eskimo or Inuit lifestyle which is largely free of dogmatic religious trappings was ideal to represent their beliefs. Plus, the fact that the eskimo people geographically span the top of the globe from Siberia, Alaska, Canada through to Greenland (Denmark) giving them a true global appeal.

The accepted definition of Eskimo which is people who speak a different language also reflected his vision of a different uplifting message through these beliefs.

The loose association to buddhism, which was thought too strict and religion like, embodies, none the less, a largely positive contribution to his proposed intellectual and physical practices without the devotional practices, ceremonies and renunciation of worldly matters which was thought to be unrealistic in the modern world.

## **Differences Between Buddhism and Eskimo Buddhism**

The main differences between Eskimo Buddhism and traditional Buddhism is the absence of devotional practices, ceremonies and invocation of bodhisattvas which the Eskimo Buddhist considers without merit as he does not necessarily renounce other pre-existing religious practices.

Further differences include no renunciations of worldly matters, considered to be impractical in a modern society, no meditation and no requirement to adopt any particular diet.

Source: *Mysticism: experience, response, and empowerment*, Jess Byron Hollenback, Pennsylvania State University, 1996, 646 Pages, ISBN 0-271-01551-9