

Streams of Tradition: Buddhism, East to West

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Introduction

It is the purpose of this text to provide the reader with an orientation to central features of the various streams of Buddhist tradition and to clarify the distinctive teachings that unite the entire tradition as Buddhist. There has been change and continuity throughout its history, as well as diversity in unity among the traditions.

Our discussion will survey major issues and principles of Buddhism in the various cultures and nations which it penetrated, highlighting its change and continuity through as it adapted to the life of the many peoples of Asia, while maintaining its identity as Buddhism. In every land a host of adepts and scholars interpreted the Gautama's teachings (@536 BCE.-483 BCE) following the tendencies of their own personalities and religious search within the context of their respective cultures. They created the diversity of teaching and practice we can observe even in our contemporary situation. In the short space available to us, we can only touch on major aspects of the teachings that are distinctive of Buddhism and take note of their popular beliefs and practices.

Buddhism is a living religion. It is the major religious tradition in South and South-east Asian cultures, North Asia and the Far East. In our contemporary world Buddhist teachers stress the relevance of Buddhism for modern people within our technocratic, secular culture.

Hopefully, this survey will provide the reader with an understanding of the major strands of tradition and an appreciation of the comprehensive view of life offered in Buddhism.

Chapter One: Life and Times of Siddhartha Gautama, Founder of Buddhism

Nothing in history begins without precedent or in a vacuum. Buddhism is no exception. It arose on the background of the Upanishadic tradition in Indian religion. Upanishadic philosophy was itself a reaction to the Vedic-Brahmanic religious system of ancient India which revolved around priestly, sacrificial beliefs and practices. The Upanishadic sages, while holding to the authority of the Vedas, embarked on independent spiritual quests in an effort to experience union with ultimate reality called Brahman within their own psyches, termed atman. It was what we might generally call a mystical teaching.

The independence which the sages of the *Upanishads* had shown toward the Vedic ritual and religion was not without its influence on the development of other emerging schools of thought. These schools, which included Buddhism and its contemporary movement Jainism, were distinguished by the fact that they totally rejected the Vedic tradition and produced their own teachings and literature.

In this discussion the focus of our attention is on Buddhism which became an influential source of spiritual inspiration throughout all Asia. Jainism is distinguished for its extreme ascetic teaching, its peculiar view of karma and its way to salvation. Although the patterns of the two religions are quite similar, Buddhism has been by far the most widespread and enduring in its influence beyond India.

In each case a member of the warrior-noble class rejected a life of pleasure and social prestige in order to seek a way of salvation. Salvation meant liberation from the sufferings inherent in human involvement in the stream of births and deaths. This stream, known as *samsara*, is the realm of finitude where one experiences the effects of one's past karmic deeds.

Karma refers to the good or bad deeds a person has committed in past lives. Present life is the fruit of such past karma, while the actions we perform in this life create karma for the future and succeeding lives. The form and character of one's future life depends on the quality of one's karma. The teaching presupposes a belief in transmigration, repeated births and deaths, through many lives until salvation is won. There is perfect justice since the punishment always fits the crime and retribution will always be achieved.

In Buddhism, however, the concept of karma not only took into account the past, but all the causes and conditions that entwine themselves in our lives. It is not a fatalistic attitude, since each new existence and the choices we make are believed to offer an opportunity to establish a positive future. Karma is experienced as an awareness of our personal responsibility to life and is not to be regarded as a metaphysical system for judging the lives and actions of other beings.

It is clear that Buddhism and Jainism very largely accepted the Indian analysis of human existence as one of suffering brought about through ignorance, delusion and passion. However, the means, which were employed to gain release, took varying forms in the respective teachings so that they soon came to be marked off clearly from Hinduism and from each other. It should be noted that the concept of karma is one of the most widely accepted beliefs throughout Asia and to some extent in Western tradition.

While Jainism continues in India as a sub-caste and the Buddha has been accepted in Hinduism as the tenth incarnation of Vishnu, Buddhism essentially died out there for various reasons such as the invasions of Islam and resurgent Hinduism. Nevertheless, Buddhism eventually became the major religion of the Southeast and North Asian lands.

We will begin our exploration with a summary of the life of Gautama Buddha-and the major points of his teaching as an illustration of a creative movement within ancient Indian religion.

The life of the Buddha (536 B.C. - 483 B.C.) is shrouded in age-old myths and legends, of the sort that generally attach themselves to the great religious founders and heroes of history. However, the study of Buddha's life in a scientific way has rapidly gained ground in the modern period. Western interest began largely in the nineteenth century when increased communications and relations with Buddhist countries brought it to the attention of scholars.

While we cannot go into detail sifting fact from fancy, it is generally safe to say that even though it is possible to reach a firm historical understanding of the Buddha's life, there is no continuous life given in the scriptures. The biographies that do exist were put together by later writers who wove historical and legendary events together. For our present purposes, we shall summarize the basic outline of Gautama's career and the teachings he set forth.

The Buddha's given name was *Siddhartha* (which means "desire accomplished") and his family or clan name was *Gautama*. The frequent title *Sakyamuni*, means sage of the "Sakyas," because he is believed to have descended from a noble family of the *Sakya* tribe of northeast India. The Sakyas were more likely local tribes who were included in the greater kingdom of Magadha which had recently formed. The term "*rajah*" used of Buddha's father may mean only a tribal chief. In an early dialogue attributed to the Buddha he simply said:

The ascetic Gotama has gone forth from a rich family. Of great wealth, of great possessions.¹

In this passage there is no mention of royal lineage such as appears in later accounts.

The birth of Buddha, under whatever conditions it may have occurred, is generally placed by scholars in 563 B.C. at a town called Lumbini which is located in the region of Nepal. The traditional story relates a mythic tale that his mother Maya miraculously gave birth from her right side as the result of a dream of being impregnated by a great white elephant. The new-born child was capable of walking seven steps in all directions and declaring that he was the most honored one in the world. Soon thereafter his mother died. However, nothing certain is known of Gautama's childhood.

In order for the traditions to lay the basis for his later renunciation of ordinary social life and search for enlightenment, they contain frequent descriptions of his luxurious life in the palace and his father's determined attempts to shield him from the miseries of life. According to the legend, Suddhodana, his father, had been told by a seer that his son would be either be a universal ruler or a Buddha. In order to prevent him from becoming a Buddha, the father tried to isolate him from the world. At the age of sixteen his father reputedly presented him with a host of dancing girls; he also married at this time. From this marriage he had a son Rahula (a name that means "impediment") who later became a disciple. From the age of sixteen to age twenty-nine, the tradition depicts the young Gautama as living a life of utter luxury and ease.

At the age of twenty-nine, Gautama was suddenly shaken out of his worldly complacency by the sight of people suffering from old age, sickness and death. This aroused within him a desire to renounce and abandon the world. On seeing a serene mendicant, he resolved to become a monk. While the tradition gives an extended story of his experience, there are indications that Gautama arrived at his decision through reflection on the nature of life without the exceptional story of his dramatic encounters with individuals suffering these ills. It is clear that he was a reflective person; that he had given thought to the problem of sickness and death. He knew within himself instinctively that he would experience these conditions. Contemplating human destiny, his youthful joy departed. One need not be a future king to arrive at this conclusion. There arose in him a profound desire to transcend such conditions and find a state of spiritual peace and contentment. Once having made this resolve he never turned back. When he eventually discovered the path, he compassionately taught it to others.

According to tradition, after Gautama left home to begin the search for emancipation, he studied for a period of six years under several teachers. He was unable, however, to attain an assurance of the truth, under any of them, though he mastered the doctrines and methods of each teacher.

Joining together with a group of five companions in a common search, he engaged in rigorous ascetic discipline. However, even under these austerities, he failed to attain liberation. Finally, he struck out on his own, rejecting extreme practices and leaving his companions behind. They condemned Gautama and swore to shun him, because he appeared to give up serious striving. Nevertheless, through deep determination and meditation under a

Banyan tree for a period of forty-nine days, Gautama attained Enlightenment. He awoke from his delusions and experienced freedom from ego bondage. His experience was captured in a poem which purported to be his first words after Enlightenment:

Through worldly round of many
births
Ran my course, but did not find,
Seeking the builder of the house;
Painful is birth again and again.
House-builder! I behold thee now,
Again a house thou shalt not build;
All thy rafters are broken now
The ridge-pole also is destroyed;
My mind, its elements dissolved
The end of cravings has been attained.²

Though gaining insight into the true nature of existence, he at first hesitated to declare this message to others because it was too subtle. Through the urgings of the gods, he finally devoted himself to teaching others to reach the same goal.

He first sought out his former companions who had vowed never to associate with him again. He found them at the city of Benares. Struck by his winsomeness and spiritual bearing they immediately became his disciples. On this occasion he outlined for them the distinctive features of Buddhist teaching, which represent the essence of what he had gained by his enlightenment. These initial teachings are contained in text *The First Turning of the Wheel (of Dharma)* or the first sermon of the Buddha. The principles set forth in this text form the core of what is presently known as Theravada Buddhism and have been recognized and accepted by all traditions. The winning over of the five disciples and the proclamation of his teaching marked the inauguration of Buddha's mission to share the teachings with others.

The process of gaining Enlightenment took Gautama six years. At the age of thirty-five, *Siddhartha Gautama*, now the Buddha or Awakened One, began his lengthy teaching career of forty-five years. During this time he traversed Northern India with his band of disciples, discussing his teachings and practices freely with laypeople, religious leaders and officials of all kinds. He passed away at the age of eighty in 483 BCE.

Chapter Two The Teaching of the Buddha: Two Streams of Tradition

A. The Theravada Tradition: The Way of the Elders

The teachings of Sakyamuni Buddha were passed down through oral tradition and only centuries later committed to writing. Initially there were various groups, making up what are known as the thirteen sects of early Buddhism. From these groups the Theravada tradition or Way of the Elders and the Mahayana tradition or the Greater Vehicle carried forward Gautama's teaching and developed it further. The Theravada tradition is primarily the mode of Buddhism of South Asia in the countries of Burma, Thailand, Sri Lanka and Cambodia. The Mahayana tradition moved to the Northwest of India and eventually to China and East Asia, Korea and Japan, and into Tibet.

According to Buddhist tradition the content of Buddha's Enlightenment experience is enshrined in the First Teaching entitled: "*The Turning of the Wheel of the Law (Dharma)*" delivered to his five companions in the Deer Park near Benares (presently at Sarnath). It is titled Here Buddha outlined the principles of the Four Noble Truths, the Eightfold Noble Path and the Middle Path between the extremes of hedonism and asceticism, as the essential way to emancipation and attainment of Nirvana.

These teachings give in capsule form the Buddha's diagnosis of the human problem and the means of its cure. Briefly stated the Four Noble Truths are:

- a) All life is suffering.
- b) The cause of suffering is craving (lust, greed, thirst, desire).
- c) Suffering can be removed through the cessation of craving.
- d) The cessation of craving is attained through the practice of the-Eightfold Noble Path which involves:
 - Right Views
 - Right Intent
 - Right Speech
 - Right Conduct
 - Right Means of Livelihood
 - Right Endeavor
 - Right Mindfulness
 - Right Meditation

The Four Noble Truths find differing responses among Western peoples nurtured in the Judaeo-Christian perspectives on life. Many Western people view the Buddhist outlook on life and its solution to problems as pessimistic and negative. However, the assertion of suffering, as life's fundamental reality,

may be more realistic than it is negative. The Buddha tried to "tell it like it is." And show us life as it really is. He, therefore, pointed clearly to the root of all human dilemmas.

The notion that all life is suffering, when viewed from a broad perspective, refers to the physical, mental and spiritual limitations and obstacles that frustrate people in their struggles for personal fulfillment. Everything good, worthwhile or pleasurable involves a degree of pain or dissatisfaction. Buddha expressed an important truth about the experience of living; the fact of suffering is indisputable, though our response to it may vary according to our understanding.

Buddha's view that craving is the source of suffering can be seen as a realistic rather than negative appraisal of human life. Egoistic desires, lust, greed and grasping, as well as the attachment, involvements and actions they produce, are the causes of much human misery to which history and personal experience can attest.

In a succinct way the optimism of Buddhism appears in the belief that we can solve the problems of existence through the abolition of craving and its concomitants. We should note that translators have often used the term *desire* to translate the word for *craving* in the original language. Consequently, Western people have discounted Buddhism arguing that desire is indispensable for life and that a life totally without desire would be undesirable. We should observe that the principle of no desire, taken in absolute form, refers to the highest state of spiritual development--the ultimate state known as Nirvana—a term which means the total cessation of desire. This state is inconceivable.

In the context of ordinary living, the craving to which the Buddha refers is more on the order of lust or thirst. It is these desires or drives that reflect an addiction, which is also sometimes referred to in Buddhism as "blind passion," that may drive a person to act even against his/her own best interests.

The method for gaining control of one's cravings is the practice of the Eightfold Noble Path. The various facets of this path are guidelines. It is not a case that one size fits all. Rather, in the course of Buddhist history it has been widely recognized that individuals vary in their levels of attainment. The ideal urges people to achieve greater control over their cravings at whatever level of life or spiritual development they may find themselves. It is not a perfectionist teaching.

We cannot go into an analysis of each facet of the Eightfold Noble Path, but it should be noted that it embraces the whole scope of religious or contemplative life. Some interpreters emphasize mainly the ethical aspect although this is only a part of the path.

However, ethical action forms a secondary element leading to the achievement of the experience of Nirvana and full liberation from the state of finitude. It can be seen that the Buddha aimed at more than ethics, but ethics is the cornerstone of all true spiritual endeavor. Like the teachers of the *Upanishads*, the Buddha presented a complete system of moral and mental discipline. It was a total way of life.

The path to enlightenment, based on the Eightfold Noble Path has traditionally been divided into three parts: *Sila*, precepts; *Samadhi*, concentration-meditation; and *Prajna*, wisdom. The aspect of *Sila* refers to the specifically moral, ethical and social requirements of Buddhism. For lay people five precepts were demanded. A lay person must refrain from killing, stealing, unchastity, lying and drunkenness. For the monk, the precepts increased to ten. In addition to the five for lay people, the novice monk had to avoid eating at improper times, engaging in frivolous activities such as dancing and music, the use of perfumes and adornments, sleeping on high beds and handling money. Also there were a collection of some 250 rules for men and 348 for women that formed the basis of monastic life. The code was recited every two weeks. The whole system of regulations covering all aspects of monastic life is called *Vinaya* or discipline and includes many hundreds of regulations, legislated, as required during the course of the development of the Order even after Buddha's death.

Samadhi or concentration is the heart of the Buddhist discipline and the gateway to Enlightenment. As the Buddha pioneered the way to Nirvana in the cross-legged Lotus posture, this position became central for Buddhist meditation. *Samadhi* has two major aspects. On the one hand, there is the practice of calming and on the other, insight. The former is a process of withdrawal of the senses and the mind from their attachment to worldly objects and involvement with the phenomenal world. This is the precondition to developing the mental alertness required for insight.

The process of concentration is subdivided into various stages of dhyana or meditation. In early Buddhism there were four stages of dhyana which had various spiritual characteristics involving deep joy and pleasure. In the fourth dhyana the monk, transcending both pain and pleasure, possesses complete mindfulness and tranquility. These levels were further elaborated in later times, reaching as many as eight or nine levels.

The achievement of the final aspect of Wisdom or *Prajna* in Buddhist discipline signifies that the devotee has totally transcended every finite attachment and form of bondage. In this life he/she manifests a freedom of the spirit and an ability to move through the world without defilement. In the ultimate sense, it is the realization of indescribable Nirvana when all passions and karmic causes have been dissipated, and one is totally free from the stream of births and deaths.

It is interesting to note that the Buddha's awareness of transiency and inevitability in life and that life, in and of itself, appears to be empty of all meaning, shows some correlation with what is commonly called the philosophy of existentialism. On the inexorability of death and transiency the *Dhammapada* states:

Not in the sky, not in the midst of the Sea, not if we enter into the cleft of the mountains, is..there known a spot in the whole world where death could not overcome (the mortal).³

This point is brought home graphically in the Buddhist parable of the mustard seed.⁴ In this story a woman, in deep despair at the death of her young son, asked the Buddha what she could do to bring him back. He advised her to acquire a mustard seed from the home in which no one had ever died. This task would furnish medicine for her to restore her son. She began her search but soon realized the truth: There is no house that has not known death, that death comes inevitably to *all*. Realizing that such loss is an inevitable part of life, she was able to accept her child's death.

For the Buddha, death signified that all things are impermanent and subject to decay. Flux and change are at the heart of reality. His last word was:

Decay is inherent in all component things!
Work out your salvation with diligence. ⁵

The awareness of change in all things brings at first a sense of despair as is reflected in the initial experience of Gautama himself. If all is change and flux, then life is meaningless. The idea of transmigration intensifies this meaninglessness, because it implies a continual process of repeating life within the sphere of change. The anxiety created by meaninglessness is aggravated by blind passion (craving) as beings try to grasp things and hold on to them in order to have some sense of permanence, while ignoring that everything we desire passes away. In this act of clinging to things, the Buddha perceived that the root of suffering was the attribution of importance to things which are ultimately unimportant. The spirit of acquisition is the root of misery. Thus he said:

Let no man ever look for what is pleasant or what is unpleasant.
Not to see what is pleasant is pain, and it is pain to see what
is unpleasant.

Let, therefore, no man love anything; loss of the beloved is,
evil. Those who love nothing, and hate nothing, have no fetters.⁶

As a buttress for the argument for non-attachment to the things of the world, Buddha employed the argument of cause and effect to show that everything is fundamentally non-substantial, having no abiding or permanent essence. This argument corresponds to some extent to the modern existentialist viewpoint that existence precedes essence.

For the Buddha, as with existentialists, there is no ideal world of essences with which one must identify or experience to have pleasure and meaning. Rather, existence is conditioned by the insight of a dynamic reality in which only the law of change is without change. Philosophically, the Buddha realized that everything exists interdependently and nothing exists in its own right or in isolation from everything else.

While the initial impact of the awareness of transience is the despair and anxiety resulting from a sense of meaninglessness, there is hope in the very fact of change and the operation of the law of cause and effect as interpreted by Buddha. He sought to turn the law of cause and effect to the service of transcendence from the stream of finitude. He observed that if a cause is reduced, its effect will be reduced; when the cause is annihilated, its effect will be eliminated.

The spiritual experience of Gautama led him from the awareness of the emptiness and meaninglessness of existence, resulting from his confrontation with transiency, suffering and perception of the non-substantiality of all things, to the realization that this emptiness could be transcended. As with the existentialists, it is through the perception of change, death and transiency, that the truth is mediated. Transiency, like death, throws new light on existence; revealing its true nature. Hence, the revelation of meaninglessness also becomes the basis of hope.

In the realization of hope, Buddha perceived that a person must make a strong resolve and undergo a specific discipline leading to the attainment of Nirvana. This became the foundation of a monastic system. The modern existentialist philosophers did not set forth such a specific discipline, but stresses the decisiveness of the present moment for the achievement of genuine or authentic existence.

There are differences which appear in the attainment of the goal of liberation or transcendence, but the attitude which created Buddhist thought and modern existentialism share some similarities. This, in part, may help to explain the attraction which Buddhism has for our present age. The insight which has significance for all ages is that meaning is found, not *in* the exterior world apart from the self. Rather, it is found through the cultivation of the highest potentiality of the self when the self is seen in its truest light, as finite being wholly responsible for one's own destiny.

As an independent spiritual tradition in India, Buddhism diverged from Hinduism (traditional Indian thought) in several major areas, though both aim at the common goal of emancipation. Consonant with Indian tradition, Buddha accepted the general world view and interpretation of existence current in the Upanishadic tradition. He looked upon existence as a series of transmigrations or in Buddhist terms *rebirths*. Life is suffering within the confines of *samsara*. The law of cause and effect in the moral realm -- karma -- is the arbiter of destiny, and the ultimate goal is that of release into an ineffable and indefinable experience called Nirvana.

Buddha accepted, with qualification, the Indian principle of meditation and concentration as the central means for breaking through the veil of delusion and gaining liberation. It is also clear that the development of Buddhism as a religious system depended on Indian reverence for the sage. This also led to the attempt to preserve his words, and the creation of a distinctive and independent religious tradition.

Although Buddhism is characteristically Indian, several important differences mark the new spiritual path which Gautama set forth. He made changes or gave new emphasis to several basic concepts in the Indian analysis of existence. While Indian sages recognize the suffering inherent in existence, they did not place primary emphasis on it as Buddha did in making it the first of the Four Noble Truths. Further, in exploring the source of suffering in ignorance and delusion, a distinctive difference in philosophical perspective appeared.

For the Hindu, suffering results from the failure of people to see their fundamental identity with the ultimate Brahman, their true Selves. The Buddha claimed that the problem arises because men fail to recognize that no object or being is substantial in itself; it is all flux and change. Both points of view speak of *maya*, or delusion, but they give a different sense to it.

The Buddha rejected the Indian idea of the soul as a fixed, permanent entity traveling through cycles of births. Rather, he declared that beings have no souls. This is perhaps the most subtle and difficult aspect of the Buddha's teaching. He viewed an individual as a temporary configuration of elements (*skandhas*), five in number, which are brought together through the force of previous karma to constitute the person as he now is. This belief was an outcome of the Buddha's general theory of the world in which change is the essence. There was no room for an immutable, unchangeable substance.

The concept non-soul (Pali, *anatta*; Skt. *anatman*) in Buddhism may not appear so strange until you contemplate the process of transmigration. The riddle becomes sharper. How can there be transmigration when there is no permanent soul/self or essence to migrate?

This problem has never been completely solved in Buddhist tradition. Buddhist thinkers generally have maintained that while there is no soul passed along from birth to birth, karma itself is continually manifested in the form of new beings, who bear the burden of that karma, good and bad. One may consider that the second person has no essential relation to the first and, hence, is not responsible for his misdeeds. This, however, is looking at the question backwards and is influenced by the idea of a soul as identified with a person.

In Buddhist thought there is no person or being until karma (causes and conditions) creates it. Consequently, there is no one suffering without justification from another's karma. The person is merely the working out of the karma itself with the prior person or being as the precondition for the subsequent being. There is temporal sequence, but not metaphysical identity.

Although there are differences of opinion on such metaphysical issues as the nature of the soul and transmigration, we must observe clearly that, unlike Hindu philosophers, the Buddha refused to speculate on ultimate questions. This is sometimes referred to as "The Silence of the Buddha". The Buddha's point of view is related in a famous parable where he pointed out that a man shot by a poisoned arrow would die before he could answer all questions about

the origin and nature of the arrow and the poison. The important thing is not discussing the case but pulling out the arrow. Consequently, the Buddha would not define Nirvana, discuss the question of the soul, the question as to whether the Universe is eternal or not, created or uncreated, or a myriad other issues which he described as questions "tending not to edification".

In the sphere of religious practice the Buddha maintained the principle of "the Middle Path" because he saw that neither extreme asceticism nor extreme hedonism or pursuit of pleasure would bring the necessary enlightenment. Here, the Buddha showed himself to be an astute psychologist. He realized that too stringent deprivation of the normal needs for living would give rise to the *very* desires it was aimed to root out. Further, he realized that if enlightenment and true insight was the goal, the mind must be adequately nourished to pursue its object. Therefore, he attempted to work out regulations based on actual need and not merely to create artificial standards of piety and rigor.

The development of the Buddha's monastic order also had implications for society. Since he stressed the characteristics of impermanence and suffering in life, religious discipline acquired a sense of urgency. It should not be delayed. You should begin immediately to seek a way out as soon as you are aware of the problem.

By leaving home, giving up social obligations and devoting his effort to attaining enlightenment, the Buddha was not unique. He was only following the accepted pattern of his time reflected in the *Upanishads*. In the course of time the evolution of the Buddhism led to greater emphasis on monastic life and the necessity to leave home in order to attain complete enlightenment whenever a persona became aware of the transiency and vanity of life. Thus the Buddha's leaving home was portrayed in high relief to dramatize the resolve required. It drew a sharp contrast was drawn between family and social obligations and the requirements for true emancipation.

Hindus, however, placed more stress on the fulfillment of social obligations as a prelude and basis for the search for emancipation. There were four stages of life through an individual passed: youth-student, householder, retired person and renunciant. The renunciation of the world came after fulfilling one's social obligations, unlike Buddhism where a person could leave home whenever he felt it necessary.

Some scholars suggest that this feature of Buddhism contributed to its eventual disappearance in India because the monasteries were shut off from society and never extended deep roots into the Indian family except through the acceptance of offerings and general support from lay Buddhists. As Buddhism became more exclusively monastic, Hinduism developed a more comprehensive integration of social and religious ideals in the four stages of life and the caste system.

It is also interesting to note that although the Buddha did not outwardly reject the system of caste, it was not recognized within the order. For Buddha, character and moral achievement would bring a person to enlightenment, not

merely one's birth and social status. According to his teaching, a true Brahmin was one who did the things that built moral character, regardless of his birth. Thus, the Buddhist community had elements of democracy and equality within it which may have been an attraction to many peoples. There have been movements in India in modern times which attempted to revive Buddhism on the basis of its rejection of the caste system.

In the area of popular religion the Buddha followed the lead suggested in the *Upanishads* that emancipation depended on one's own efforts and not on the beneficence of the gods. While the Buddha did not reject the existence of the gods nor their relation to ordinary life, they had no relevance to the quest for enlightenment. The Buddha's outlook was important for reducing superstition since he held that essentially the gods were essentially no better off than human beings. They were now experiencing the fruits of their good karma which would eventually be exhausted. Human beings, in their turn, might be born in the heaven of a deity and achieve that status themselves. Thus there was an implicit equality between gods and men. Gods also need salvation. Devotion to the Buddha would naturally take precedence over worship of deities in achievement of enlightenment.

The spiritual impetus provided by Gautama's personality continued after his death. There appeared factions and groupings of different viewpoints that were to continue developing over the years. One of the interesting developments which comes to play an increasingly important part in the formation of Buddhism is the role of the Buddha's personality in the evolution of the teaching.

There are now two major divisions of Buddhism the *Theravada* or *Hinayana* and the *Mahayana*. The term *Hinayana* is a pejorative term used in ancient *Mahayana* literature. It means small, narrow vehicle, while *Mahayana* means larger, spacious vehicle. The terms are polemical and *Hinayana* is not used in modern parlance when describing Southern or *Theravada* Buddhism. It is generally said that the *Theravada* Buddhism of Southeast Asia has followed the Buddha's words literally. They appear to represent the conservative element. The *Mahayana*, on the other hand, is said to have taken its lead from the Buddha's personality, particularly for his activity in reaching out to share the teaching. In both traditions the Buddha is characterized as having the qualities of wisdom and compassion. These qualities are among the infinite virtues which the practitioner strives to acquire.

Because of the divergent perspectives between these two segments of Buddhists, wide differences appear in areas where they are dominant. What is important to remember is that in both streams of tradition there is a strong desire to remain faithful to the Buddha as he is remembered in the minds of the disciples. On the basis of what we can discern in the development of these two modes of teaching, we are justified in saying that the Buddha was a great human being who inspired hope and resolve in those who met him. He had unusual wisdom and compassion which made an indelible impression that has remained in the tradition. We can recognize in him a beacon light of humanity

from whom we may all learn something for the betterment of our own lives and the world.

B. The Mahayana Tradition; The Greater Vehicle

Theravada Buddhism which dominates South Asia maintains that it transmits the original teachings of Gautama Buddha which we have outlined above. During the earliest period, the divisions in the Buddhist Order exhibit little doctrinal differentiation. Later there were several councils which focused primarily on differences in monastic discipline.

However, as time went on, it is clear that doctrinal differences became very important. Between the time of King Asoka (*ca.* 304 BCE- 260 BCE) in Magadha, and King Kanishka of the Kushana, (in recent studies 78 CE-128 CE). Mahayana (Larger Vehicle) Buddhism developed in the region of northwest India. Whatever the doctrinal differences were in the earlier period, here we find a fundamental shift in philosophical and religious orientation.

Although the roots of Mahayana Buddhism are found in the pre-Christian era, it does not become fully visible historically until the second century CE. Mahayana thought combines religious elements and philosophical reflection. Some scholars suggest that devotion to Buddha's relics in stupas may have inspired such developments.

From the religious-mythological standpoint, the concept of Buddha evolved from an ordinary human being to a quasi-divine being. Perhaps inspired by Hindu mythology, the principle of Buddha was conceived as a cosmic reality, manifesting itself in a succession of Buddhas before Gautama and in the infinity of cosmic worlds. Together with the Buddha Sakyamuni, there appears a host of great bodhisattvas such as the Bodhisattva of Compassion (Skt. *Avalokitesvara*; Ch. *Kuan-yin*, J. *Kannon*) who are active in helping beings gain salvation. There are depictions of the glorious lands of the Buddhas such as the Western Pure Land of Amitabha (Ch. *O'mi-to-fo*, J. *Amida*). An infinity of Buddhas and Buddha-lands penetrate every region of the cosmos in all the ten directions in the macro world, as well in the infinitesimal micro world. All reality is seen pervaded and embraced by the compassion of cosmic Buddhahood.

Mahayana interpretation of the nature of Buddha also contrasted with that of the Theravada tradition. Though mythic and legendary elements appear in the Theravada tradition, the Buddha is described as the pioneer, simply the example for others to follow. Scriptural accounts of his activities and relations with his disciples are soberly realistic. The contrast in the conception of the Buddha here is similar to that found in the difference between the Jesus of the Synoptic Gospels (*Matthew, Mark, Luke*) who is a human being inspired by God, and the Jesus of the *Gospel of John* who is God incarnate.

While scholars are uncertain of the circumstances, there were objections to this new development and we can find evidences of conflict within the Mahayana Sutras. These sutras generally consider the Theravadins, which the Mahayanist refers to disparagingly as “Hinayana” or smaller, lesser vehicle, as followers of the elementary teaching of the Buddha.⁷ The concept of the Buddha is discussed in the Mahayana tradition in a doctrine called the three bodies of the Buddha (*Trikaya*). According to this comprehensive theology, the Buddha is viewed from three aspects. First, there is the Buddha as he appeared in history in the person of Gautama Buddha, Sakyamuni (the sage of the Sakya clan). This is called the Manifested or Transformed Buddha. Secondly, there is the Recompensed Buddha, which represents the Buddhas appearing in the Mahayana texts such as the Pure Land Sutras which depict Amitabha who resides in his Buddha land, enjoying the fruits of his enlightenment. The foundation of these concepts is given in the third aspect which is the Truth Body of the Buddha. The Truth Body is undefinable, inconceivable absolute reality. It is the Absolute out of which the Buddha assumes many forms to bring beings to salvation. The Absolute is characterized by the qualities of compassion and wisdom.

In line with the transformation of the concept of the Buddha in the Mahayana tradition, the religious ideals of the Theravada and the Mahayana diverged. While we cannot go into the fine details of these concepts, we may note that the ideal of the Theravada tradition, is called *arhat*, the Worthy One or “One who has done all that has to be done” to gain enlightenment. He has followed faithfully the model of Sakyamuni. Essentially salvation is individualistic. At this stage of development it was understood that your karma is yours alone, and you can only strive for your enlightenment by your own efforts as the Buddha did. The *Dhammapada*, a famous early Buddhist text states:

By one's self the evil is done, by one's self one suffers; by one's self evil is left undone; by one's self one is purified. The pure and the impure stand and fall by themselves; no one can purify another.⁸

Theravada is a way, then, of self cultivation and individualistic salvation. In contrast the Mahayana tradition stresses the religious ideal of the *bodhisattva*. The bodhisattva is an individual much like the arhat. He begins his study and practice of Buddhism for the same reason -- to attain his own liberation from the wheel of births and deaths. As he progresses through the stages of discipline and deepens his spiritual insight, he develops a compassionate concern for all beings. When he finally reaches the stage of perfection which enables him to enter Nirvana, he refuses out of compassion for all beings, and returns to lead them to salvation. He vows not to leave samsara himself until all beings enter Nirvana with him.

This perspective opened up an understanding of religion where all beings are interdependent. In relation to the do-it-yourself for yourself emphasis of

the Theravada, the Mahayana realized that beings need the aid of the buddhas and bodhisattvas as well as good friends and teachers. It has a broader social ideal implicit in it whereby we all work together for our mutual benefit.

Because of the interdependence of beings, each needing the other to gain salvation, the older individualism was regarded as narrow and set aside.

It is the recognition of a power through and with others. The concept of the Buddha's Other-Power in Pure Land teaching reflects this understanding in the belief that Bodhisattva Dharmakara has vowed to save all beings through sharing the merit he has generated over aeons in becoming Amitabha, or Amida Buddha. Amitabha means Infinite Light; an alternative name Amitayus which appears in tradition means Eternal or Infinite Life. In China and Japan the names were shortened to O'mi-to and Amida, embracing both aspects of his nature.

An important aspect of the expression of compassion in Mahayana Buddhism is that wisdom is always motivated by compassion. This takes form in an educational theory which recognizes individual differences in encountering and understanding the teaching. Accordingly, the Buddha and the bodhisattvas always teach on a level that the hearer can understand. Through compassionate means (Skt. *upaya*; J. *hoben*) the Buddha leads people to deeper and deeper understanding until they become enlightened. From the Mahayana standpoint, the Theravada teaching is an elementary teaching for people initially concerned for their own spiritual destinies and believing that they can attain Nirvana for themselves by their own efforts. As a missionary faith, Mahayana Buddhism has been very practical in adapting to the various cultures in which it spread and integrating with the daily life of the people.

On the philosophic side, Mahayana Buddhism diverged from the Theravada in developing an absolute idealistic metaphysics. It passed through perhaps three stages, assisted by numerous teachers, though the history is difficult to trace. The first stage is represented by the great philosopher Nagarjuna (100 CE - 200 CE). He advocated the method of logical negation to attain truth. Through logical analysis he showed that nothing has its own independent substance or self-existence. Rather, everything depends on something else for its provisional existence. Consequently, it is Void or Empty (*sunyata*). Nagarjuna divided truth into two aspects, the relative truth of empirical experience and the highest truth, which is experienced after one is purified of belief in, and attachments to, the self-existence of things and has realized their relativity.

His approach to elucidating the Void began with analysis of logic and language through which he showed that the human mind and its thought do not encompass reality, but are actually self-contradictory. He analyzed the concepts of causation and motion to show that they are really inconceivable and contradictory. He pointed out the fact that we define things by their opposites, and are trapped in duality. When it is shown that one side is involved in contradiction, the opposite side is also in contradiction. Philosophically, the problem is to solve what is meant by identity and

difference. When the mind is aware of the distortion of reason and logic, it is open to becoming aware of the highest truth that transcends reason and logic.

This analysis of reality also developed a theory of relativity. Nagarjuna's teaching is called the Middle Path school in metaphysics in contrast to the emphasis on rejecting extremes of discipline in the earlier Theravada Middle Path idea. Nagarjuna propounded the four possibilities of existence and the eight negations in philosophy which are patterned after the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path of Buddha.

This negative approach was counteracted in the second stage, found in the fourth C.E. teachings of Asanga and Vasubandhu. Their school came to be called the "Mind Only" school, and is more psychological in its analysis of experience. Their viewpoint was that everything exists as an activity of mind, and that the universe as we perceive it, due to our karma, is the expression of a Repository Consciousness (*Alaya Vijnana*), something on the order of a sub-consciousness. This underlying consciousness is the basis of other forms of consciousness involved in human experience.

The character of this substrate of reality was later interpreted as the "Buddha Nature." In contrast to the teaching of Nagarjuna which uses a logical approach through analyzing the process of reasoning, the Mind Only school had a subjective or psychological approach through the analysis of consciousness

The third stage is that found in Asvaghosha's *Awakening of Faith* and the *Garland Sutra (Avatamsaka Sutra)*. This approach compares to the understanding of *Brahman* and *Atman* in the Indian Hindu Advaita-Vedanta tradition where all aspects of reality are a manifestation of the all-embracing Buddha-mind. Asvaghosha's principle is the One is all and the All is One; that everything has Buddha-nature.

As result of its religious and philosophic development, Mahayana Buddhism created elaborate systems of symbolism, mythologies, mind-expanding views of the cosmos and myriads of texts depicting the supernal realities and truth of Mahayana. Whereas Theravada has a somber, sober view of reality, Mahayana sees the glory shining through all aspects of nature and human experience. It is a visionary tradition where meditations produce wondrous insights into other worlds of spiritual reality and liberation. Though it attributes its thought to Gautama Buddha and his enlightenment, it is really motivated and energized through the devotion of countless nameless monks whose compassion for the masses inspired them to offer a grand hope for the enlightenment of even the lowliest creature.

The religious and philosophical aspects of Mahayana tradition were further elaborated in China. Fundamentally, all three strands of Mahayana philosophy had great influence in China, Tibet and the Far East. In general the religious ideal of self-cultivation appears most strongly in Zen and Tibetan estoreric tradition, while the Pure Land teaching stresses reliance on Other-Power, particularly that of Amitabha or Amida Buddha.

The following chapters will focus on the spread of Buddhism in China, Korea, Japan and Tibet. In every area where Buddhism has gone it has developed characteristics resulting from its adaptation to the native temperament of the people. The process has usually involved several stages of introduction, assimilation and the manifestation of a native Buddhism expressing more fully the character-of that people.

Chapter Three Chinese Buddhist Tradition: Harmony with Reality

Buddhism entered China perhaps as early as the first century BCE through the first century CE. It was carried by monks and merchants who made their way along trade routes from India through Central Asia to China. There is a legend of the Han Emperor Ming (58-75 CE) who, inspired by a dream, sent envoys to seek out Buddhism. The earliest historical evidence is a rescript of one Hsiang-k'ai to Emperor Huan (147-167 CE) admonishing the Emperor for his hypocrisy of worshipping Huang-lao and Buddha without reforming his life.⁹

After Buddhism entered China, for over several centuries many Buddhist texts were translated and commentaries written. Though at first confused with Taoism, Buddhist teaching gradually became more accurately understood and absorbed into Chinese culture.

Buddhism brought to China an Indian view of reality and life which both contradicted the Chinese understanding but also amplified it. The Chinese were more realistic and empirical in their approach to life. However, Buddhism contradicted Chinese interpretations of the world by viewing the common world of experience as a product of minds deluded by the passions. It was a delusory world. Truth was to be found in a world of transcendent experience beyond this world. Enlightenment would reveal the emptiness of things, devoid of substantiality and intrinsic value. Everything was contingent, based on the principle of the interdependence of things and lack of a self-existing nature.

The monastic life required to achieve enlightenment also went against Chinese values based in family life and participation in society. The individualism of Buddhism contradicted the fulfillment of filial piety and communal obligations, highly prized in China.

Buddhism, however, augmented the Chinese view of life with the teachings of karma, transmigration and a wealth of symbols and myths. The morality supported by karma, adding the dimension of retribution through transmigration and various hells, harmonized with Confucian ethic, though Confucianism had little concern with religious beliefs and needs of ordinary people for healing, prosperity, success or assurance about the afterlife. Taoist religion and philosophy also native to China, mainly focused on this-worldly concerns. Where Chinese traditions focused on this life, Buddhism claimed to fulfill life here and give hope to people concerning their future life after death.

In the course of several centuries Buddhism gradually integrated itself into Chinese life. The different views of life, Indian and Chinese interacted at various levels in Chinese society and gave rise to several significant traditions or schools such as the *Ch'an* (J. *Zen* from Skt. *Dhyana*, meditation) and Pure Land (Ch. *Ching-t'u*; J. *Jodo*). While the Pure Land was more otherworldly in focus, the *Ch'an* advocated acceptance of this world and achieving enlightenment now, rather than in a distant Pure Land.

While Buddhism was in some ways at odds with Chinese society, it had a great attraction for people, high and low, educated and uneducated. Its philosophy drew more intellectuals and scholars, while its mythology, magical elements and brilliant metaphors stirred the imaginations of ordinary people. Along with religious Taoism, Buddhism offered means to gain health, wealth and spiritual security in this world or to overcome misfortune. Buddhist philosophy and monasticism reinforced interest in Taoist philosophy for those who suffered in the downfall of kingdoms or social upheavals and sought for personal spiritual freedom and emancipation from worldly burdens.

Although Buddhism was gradually absorbed into Chinese culture, there were criticisms of its beliefs and practices by Taoist and Confucian exponents. Buddhist teachers maintained that there was no essential conflict between the three traditions of Taoism, Confucianism and Buddhism. They argued that the Chinese teachings focused on life in this world, while Buddhism offered hope for the hereafter. Buddhism's stress on the principle of interdependence lessened egoism and supported social life. It emphasized the similarities between the Chinese teachings and Buddhism, viewing the Buddhist concept of the Absolute as comparable to the Taoist teachings of non-being and being; the distinction of *samsara* (the world of births and deaths) and *nirvana* paralleled the world of action and non-action in Taoism. The arhat, a Buddhist sage figure resembled the Taoist immortals, while the five precepts of Buddhism matched the five virtues of Confucianism. Though monastic life contradicted the Chinese ideal of family, Buddhists argued that the monks fulfilled filial piety by caring for the destinies of departed loved ones. Despite opposition and occasional persecutions, Buddhism spread among the masses encouraging the people with a profound vision of compassion and spiritual emancipation.

Buddhists responded to the criticisms by engaging in social welfare work, establishing pawn shops known as "inexhaustible" treasuries. Monks provided medicine for the poor and aided the sick and starving. They constructed hostels, roads, wells, bridges, and planted trees. In cities the temples provided open spaces for recreation.

From the start, in addition to Indian monks who came to China, Buddhism attracted some of China's best minds. We should note just a few of the earliest. Tao-an (312-385) studied metaphysics and meditation. His interests extended to problems of translation, cataloguing sutras and rules of discipline. Hui-yuan (344-416) was noted for his discussions on karma and the indestructibility of the soul. He argued for the independence of the Buddhist Order, maintaining that monks should not bow before kings. The monk Tao-sheng (360-434) advanced theories which eventually became hallmarks of Chinese Buddhism, such as the doctrines of instantaneous enlightenment and universal Buddha nature. Seng-chao (374-414) was an outstanding interpreter of the philosophy of Nagarjuna which he had learned as a disciple of the famous Indian missionary Kumarajiva (in Chang-an, 401-413). Hsuan-tsang (596-664) achieved eminence as a pilgrim to India, translator and commentator. Chi-tsang (549-623) systematized the philosophical Middle Path (*Madhyamika*) teaching of Nagarjuna and earned the reputation of being one of the most virtuous monks.

Buddhist teachings flowed unsystematically into China from India. As a result, their diverse tendencies gave rise to a variety of schools and interpretations. The history of the formation of Buddhist schools divides into two periods. The initial period was known as the age of the "Six Schools and Seven Branches." During the second stage, the encouragement and support of

Buddhist scholarship by the Sui and Tang emperors led to the formation of more distinct and well-defined systems of Buddhist teaching which had enduring significance. This age marks the zenith of Buddhist intellectual leadership, influencing Chinese culture deeply and reflecting the gradual assimilation of Buddhism to the Chinese mind.

We cannot go into great detail on these trends, but the first scholarly movement in the "Six Schools and Seven Branches" exhibited the two basic interests of early Chinese Buddhism in meditation and *prajna*, or wisdom. Influenced by the contemporary ascendancy of Neo-Taoism, there was a concern for the nature of ultimate reality and its relation to things.

The later major schools of Chinese Buddhism developed during the Tang age (616-906) in an endeavor to interpret Buddhism on its own terms. Ten schools emerged of which five had distinct Indian character and were limited in their overall influence on the Chinese mentality. More consonant with Chinese spirit were the T'ien-t'ai, Hua-yen, Ch'an, and Ching t'u schools, which have had wide influence in Japan as well as China. The Mantra or Cheng-yen (Shingon) school, which developed more fully in Tibet, did not become fully systematized in China but was absorbed into the traditions of other schools.

The transformation of Indian Buddhism into Chinese Buddhism appeared as early as Seng-chao, the famous Madhyamika teacher and Fa-tsang (643-712) who expounded a complex philosophical system based on the *Wreath or Garland Sutra (Avatamsaka [Hua-yen] Sutra)*. Seng-chao asserted: "Reality is wherever there is contact with things."¹⁰ In Fa-tsang's famous parable of the golden lion presented before Empress Wu (684-705) we have a striking illustration of the ability of Buddhist teachers to render abstruse doctrines intelligible through analogies from the everyday world.

Their views contrasted with the Indian emphasis on the delusive character of the world motivating withdrawal. Chinese Buddhists were critical of the Indian tradition for attempting to abolish the spiritual domination of the world over man by doing away with the world. For the Chinese, wisdom was not divorced from the things of the world but rather wisdom revealed their true nature. Chinese Buddhism became world-affirming.

According to Fa-tsang, the ultimate teaching of Buddhism was the principle of the mutual interpenetration (identity) of all things as a result of their being manifestations of the one, all-embracing Buddha-mind. Things in the world had a degree of reality as expressions of the absolute Buddha-mind within things. The teaching combined logical and psychological insight, making it one of the most influential philosophies in Chinese and Japanese Buddhism. It not only synthesized major philosophical currents in Mahayana thought, but its universal vision and ideal of mutuality within the whole inspired mystical endeavor and contained socio-political implications.

The face of Chinese Buddhism began to show itself in the formation of the T'ien-t'ai school, whose name was taken from the mountain in South China where the founder Chih-i (531-597) resided. His character, depth of learning,

and intellectual power have been unparalleled in Chinese Buddhist history. The central texts for this school was the *Lotus Sutra (Fa-hua-ching)*. Its teaching combined the central Mahayana doctrines of universal Buddha nature, mutual interpenetration of all things, and the theory of instantaneous enlightenment into a unified system.

Chih-i created a system of teaching which gave a place to each of the many teachings that had flowed into China, claiming to be the direct teaching of the Buddha. He developed a comprehensive historical-doctrinal organization of Buddhist texts and teachings which came to be known as the theory of "Five Periods and Eight Doctrines." Within the framework of Buddha's lifetime Chih-i determined the order of Buddhist texts and teachings, ranging from the most elementary in Hinayana Buddhism to the final Mahayana teaching in the *Lotus* and the *Nirvana Sutras*.

Chih-i's theory represented growth in the depth and breadth of Buddhist insight on the nature of Enlightenment. The criteria for evaluating doctrines reflected pedagogical and mystical insight, implying a theory of religious development. In its systematic and scholarly approach, it sought for unity and coherence in Buddhism. Its wholistic philosophy, expressed in the teaching of the realization of "three thousand things in one moment (or instant) of thought," proclaimed, like the Hua-yen philosophy, that everything is the essence of every other thing from the standpoint of ultimate reality. Consequently, this philosophy also asserted the importance and reality of the things of this world as embodiments of the universal Buddha-nature.

Ch'an (Zen) Buddhism appeared as the culmination of several trends within Chinese Buddhism. Combining Buddhism and Taoist iconoclasm, it opposed the scholasticism and lifeless formalism of Tang Buddhism. Through the discipline of meditation, it strove to realize personally the principles of universal Buddha-nature and instantaneous enlightenment within oneself. It fused the Taoist love of Nature with the Buddhist attainment of egolessness and non-duality. Seeking the qualities of naturalness and spontaneity it achieved the complete assimilation of Buddhism within the Chinese spirit.

The term *Ch'an*, or *Zen* in Japanese, is the word *Dhyana*, meaning "meditation" in Sanskrit. Because meditation was from the beginning the heart of Buddhism, Ch'an claimed to be the most essential aspect of Buddhist life. Originally meditation involved the practices of regulated sitting, breathing exercises and mental exercises designed to still the passions and bring discursive thought to a halt. Under the influence of Taoism, meditation aimed at instantaneous enlightenment. Going beyond the negative effort to abolish passions and stop thought, Chinese Ch'an Buddhists aspired to realize their identity with the absolute reality expressed through the world of Nature. The experience of oneness both revealed the uniqueness of things and also the oneness of all things in Buddha-nature.

As a specific tradition in Chinese Buddhism, Ch'an had a long history. Though shrouded in conflicting legends there appeared numerous schools claiming to transmit the true doctrine and practice of Ch'an. The main

divisions were the Northern school, derived from the monk Shen-hsiu (605-706) who is described as maintaining a gradualist approach to enlightenment, while the Southern school, stemming from Hui-neng (638-713), who emphasized instantaneous enlightenment. In the contest between these two factions the Southern school became the main stream of tradition for present schools. The basic text for this tradition was the *Platform Sutra* attributed to Hui-neng.

The spiritual revolution urged by Ch'an rejected emphasis on external religious activities such as building temples, giving alms and offerings, or mechanically reciting sutras. True merit in Ch'an meant "inwardly [to] see the Buddha nature; outwardly, practice reverence." The rejection of externality and formality was carried further by the monk I-hsuan (d. 867), founder of the *Lin-chi* (J. *Rinzai* school). He declared that the essence of Buddhism was simply the natural way of life, stating: "Seekers of the Way!. In Buddhism no effort is necessary. All one has to do is to do nothing except to move his bowels, urinate, put on his clothing, eat his meals, and lie down if he is tired."¹¹ I-hsuan's radical rejection of externalities inspired his famous demand:

Kill the Buddha if you happen to meet him. Kill a patriarch or arhat if you happen to meet him. Kill your parents or relatives if you happen to meet them. Only then can you be free, not bound by material things, and absolutely free and at ease.¹²

An alternative school of Ch'an is the Ts'ao-tung (J. *Soto*), formed by the monk Liang-chieh (807-869). The major difference between these two schools, united in aim and philosophy, was the method undertaken to attain enlightenment. The *Lin-chi* employed a method whereby the disciple was catapulted into enlightenment through pondering a riddle (*kung-an*, *koan*) and subjection to physical shock by means of a shout or blow causing the individual to release his grip on reason. The Ts'ao-tung school was more tranquil and emphasized quiet meditation under the direction of master which would lead to the realization of one's Buddha-nature

Several principles characterize the Ch'an spiritual perspective:

The first principle, that "the highest truth or first principle is inexpressible," indicates that Ch'an strives for an experience of reality beyond words and is not satisfied with merely conceptual knowledge.

The second principle, is "spiritual cultivation cannot be cultivated." This a paradoxical assertion emphasizing the fact that religious endeavors which may begin on the conscious level must eventually be made second nature and part of the instinctive, spontaneous reactions of our personalities.

The third principle, is that "in the last resort nothing is gained." This refers to the fact that the world is not abolished, nor are we transferred to another realm by the fact of enlightenment. The true existence of this world is affirmed in all its depth. However, our understanding is transformed.

The fourth principle states: "There is not much in Buddhist teaching." This is not to be taken as an expression of doubt or unbelief. Rather, it is a declaration that concepts, doctrines, and words are inferior to the experience of enlightenment itself.

The whole attempt of Buddhist discipline, generally, is to actualize in experience what is learned in concept. Related to these principle also is the claim that Ch'an Buddhism is a transmission beyond scriptures. There are, of course, scriptures and important texts, but the experience to which Ch'an aspires is not gained from books but through persons.

The fifth principle declares that "in carrying water and chopping wood: therein lies the wonderful Tao." It is a vivid comment on the texture of religious existence. Ch'annists have developed their specific forms of education and monastic life. Nevertheless, the sentiment exists that enlightenment is not itself confined to definite practices but may come instantly in the course of carrying out the most menial tasks. As the world is the world, and Buddha-nature is universal, one may realize it anywhere.

Ch'an stresses one's inner and ultimate identity in deep interpersonal relation with others. Artificialities are to be swept away. The emphasis on the validity of daily life as the sphere of ultimate reality and meaning also supports the individual in his quest for self-understanding.

The final major tradition of Chinese Buddhism which we must consider is the Pure Land tradition (ch. *Ching-t'u*; jpn. *Jodo*). This teaching attracted the masses of ordinary people through its offer of a simple way to salvation through reciting the name of *Amitabha* (Skt.) Buddha (ch. *O-mi-to-fo*; jpn. *Amida*). The practice of reciting the name is termed *nembutsu* (jpn.). The merit of the practice of recitation with sincere faith in its efficacy enables the individual to be born in the Pure Land, where he is assured of his/her eventual achievement of Nirvana or realization of Buddhahood.

The Pure Land, according to Buddhist, mythology was created by *Amitabha* Buddha as the result of his Vows to save all beings and the infinite merit he acquired through aeons of practice. In the Chinese mind it represented a glorious heaven beyond the travail of this world and easily accessible by the recitation of the Buddha's name in faith. The more proficient monks meditated on vivid pictures of the Pure Land and experienced visions of their reality.

In order to stimulate faith in the Pure Land, there also were texts depicting the alternative destiny of birth in one of many hells for those who ignored or despised that faith. These teachings coincided with belief in heavens and the quest of immortality which had developed in religious Taoist tradition.

Pure Land teachers believed Buddha Sakyamuni taught the doctrine in three central texts, the *Larger Pure Land Sutra* (*Wu-liang-shou-ching*), the *Shorter Pure Land Sutra* (*O-mi-to-ching*), and the *Contemplation Sutra* (*Kuan-wu-liang-shou-ching*). These texts eventually reached China, where they gave rise to monastic forms of meditation, as well as the popular practice of reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha, though the *Contemplation Sutra* is thought to have been created in Central Asia or China.

The popular line of development offering the practice of recitation came through T'an-luan (476-542) and a series of successors, the most famous and influential being Shan-tao (613-681) who systematized the doctrine. In addition, the teaching became a subsidiary aspect to the more philosophical schools such as Ch'an or T'ien-t'ai.

The first major figure in the popular Chinese tradition was T'an-luan from the area of Wu-t'ai-shan in North China. Living in an environment infiltrated with magical religion, T'an-luan engaged upon a search for the elixir of immortality following a long illness. Having obtained texts containing formulas from a Taoist master in the south of China, he returned home. On the way, legend relates, he met the Indian monk Bodhiruci who convinced him that true everlasting life was attained through Pure Land teaching. Casting aside his Taoist texts, he became a teacher of Pure Land doctrine.

T'an-luan promoted Pure Land teaching by joining it to the theory of the decline of Buddhism (*mappo*, last age in the disappearance of the dharma). According to this theory, which became basic to Pure Land doctrine in China and Japan, the purity of the Buddhist Order, doctrine, and discipline and the ability to achieve enlightenment decreased as the inspiration of Buddha receded into the historical past. Finally, the last age of the decline and disappearance of Buddhism arrived when no Buddha was present and extremes of egoism, passion, stupidity, anger, pride, and doubt dominated human life. During this age, men did not practice or attain Buddhist ideals, though the doctrine was taught.

Consequently, T'an-luan held that ordinary mortals could achieve salvation in the degenerate last age through the recitation of Amitabha's Name. Rather than depending on one's own power (self-power), mortals had to rely on the saving power of Amitabha deposited in his name. This method of salvation was designated the "easy" way in contrast to the "difficult" ways of meditation and austerities of earlier Buddhism.

The teaching was later systematically organized by Shan-tao, who made the practice of recitation of Buddha's name the central Buddhist discipline. Analyzing the doctrine into the method of meditation, attitudes, and conditions of practice, he developed a comprehensive interpretation of religious life. Through his writings he defended Pure Land doctrine against proponents of the more traditional modes of Buddhist discipline and set the stage for its later flourishing in Japan.

The evolution of Pure Land teaching coincided with the Chinese tendency to affirm life in this world, despite its other-worldly emphasis. It opened the doors of salvation to the lowliest common man and reduced the path to salvation to its simplest method. Through vocal recitation, and without arduous or strict regimentation, individuals could achieve salvation, while fulfilling their family and social obligations.

Chen-yen (jpn. Shingon), esoteric Buddhism, known also as Vajrayana, Mantrayana, or Tantric Buddhism, was introduced to China from India during the T'ang dynasty by several monks: Subhakarasiṃha, Vajrabodhi and Amoghavajra. It is based on several Sutras such as the *Great Sun Buddha Sutra* (Skt. *Vairocana Sutra*), *Diamond Peak Sutra* and the *Susiddhi Sutra*, a text on symbolic hand gestures (*mudras*). From China it was transmitted to Tibet as the major form of Buddhism there and also to Japan through the monks Kukai, founder of the Shingon Sect in Japan and Saicho, founder of the Tendai (T'ien-t'ai) sect.

Its basic teaching is to enable the practitioner through practices of body, mouth and mind to attain union with the great cosmic Buddha, Mahavairocana (jpn. Dainichi nyorai), The Great Sun Buddha, who is manifest as the universe, the grand totality of reality. Through meditation on *mandalas*, sacred diagrams of the universe, into which one enters through a dramatic ritual with anointing like coronation. There are also *mudras*, symbolic hand gestures, and recitation of *mantras*, sacred, powerful words. Employing these practices, one achieves union in this very body and life with Buddha (*J. sokushinjobutsu*, becoming Buddha in this very body). Through this comprehensive and complex mystical path the devotee receives the *vajra*, a symbolic implement which represents spiritual empowerment and the aspiration to become enlightened in order to save all beings.

Buddhism reached the peak of its influence in the Sui and T'ang periods, where it blossomed with great intellectual and spiritual creativity witnessed in these various schools. After the T'ang period, Buddhism experienced several persecutions, the most severe and damaging being the persecution of 845. Also Confucianism had begun to revive and spread during the T'ang age, eventually displacing Buddhist intellectual leadership. A synthesis of Buddhism and Confucianism gave rise to Neo-Confucianism as the leading philosophical influence. In contrast to the other-worldly and mystical tendencies of Buddhism, the Confucianists stressed practical efforts in the world. Ch'an emphasis on practice and discipline with its anti-intellectualism limited efforts to educate monks, thereby contributing to the waning intellectual influence of Buddhism. In modern times reformist monks such as T'ai Hsu (1889-1947) advocated the education of monks and endeavored to revive scholarly traditions.

Despite the difficulties Buddhism encountered in its 2500 long history, its influence in Chinese society and culture has been extensive. It can be discerned in language, arts, literature, and philosophy, beliefs about afterlife, and festivals. Buddhism remained popular because it became largely

associated with the performance of funerals and memorial services as a consequence of the promise of a glorious destiny promoted by the Pure Land cult. It provided a means to fulfill the demands of filial piety. Many Buddhist deities could be implored for aid in avoiding disaster and recovery from disease or misfortune.

With the confrontation of China and the West, Confucians and Buddhists alike have had to struggle to discover ways to cope with the cultural crisis. In addition, Buddhists also have had to deal with skeptical and reform-minded officials who wished to seize their institutions and transform them to schools or museums. The crisis, however, served to awaken interest in Buddhism among laypeople as well as clerics who sponsored publications, lectures, and societies for the study of Buddhism. They were also moved by a desire to unite Chinese society based on Buddhist ideals as a means of meeting the modern challenge. In recent years various movements of Chinese Buddhists have worked to demonstrate the relevance of Buddhism, religiously and socially, and performed a positive role among the people in caring for their spiritual needs.

Chapter Four Korean Buddhism: The Way of Synthesis¹³

The Korean Peninsula connects China to Japan. Though it has been the bridge over which migration, religion and culture have crossed from the Asian mainland to Japan, it has not been adequately studied until recent years.

Korea comes into clear historical view in the first century C. E. with the establishment of the Koguryo kingdom, followed by Paekche (3rd century) and Silla (4th century). Along with the political developments, Buddhism was introduced together with Chinese culture, including Confucianism and Taoism. According to ancient record, a Buddhist monk, Shun-tao brought scriptures and images from China to Koguryo in 372. It was believed that Buddhism could protect the nation from various dangers and promote the unification of the people through moral guidance. Buddhism also accommodated native shamanism.

Another monk, Malananda, came to Paekche in 384. However, it was not until 527 that Buddhism became the state religion in Silla after some resistance. Silla conquered the other kingdoms, thereby creating a unified nation. During the Silla period the major strands of tradition from China were established. These included the *San-lun*, Three Treatise school, *Fa-Hsiang*, Dharma Trait school or *Yogacara*, Pure Land, *Ch'an* (k. *Son*, j. *Zen*), *Hua-yen* (k. *Hwa-om*, j. *Kegon*), and Esoteric. These schools provided the basic content of early Korean Buddhist teaching. However, Korean teachers strove to meld them together unto a unity in accord with the trend of national unification. The emerging Korean Buddhism supported the aspiration to unity through the Mahayana synthetic-syncretic philosophy of oneness based in *Hwa-om* teaching (skt. *Avatamsaka*, ch. *Hua-yen*, jpn.. *Kegon*), and receiving government patronage.

Hwang-nyong-sa was a major temple during the Silla period. Among its participants were the famous monks Won-gwang (531- 630 A.D.), Cha-jang (608- 686 A.D.), Won-hyo (617- 686 A.D.), and Ui-sang (620- 660 A.D.). The *Avatamsaka* and *Lotus Sutras* were major texts studied, while Pure Land teaching spread among the people. *Son* (c. *ch'an* j. *zen*) Buddhism was introduced from China, dividing into nine schools called the *Nine Mountains of Son*.)

The unified Silla kingdom governed from 668-935, when it was replaced by the Koryo dynasty (935-1392). While Buddhism remained the national religion and retained its intellectual dominance, there were efforts at reform.

During the Koryo period, a notable event took place in Buddhism inspired by the invasion of Korea by the Khitans, a nomadic tartar people settled in the region of Manchuria. King Hyonjong (1009-1031) had the entire Buddhist canon carved in wood blocks as a magical talisman to protect Korea from the invaders. It appeared successful when the Khitans voluntarily departed. On completion of the project there were over 80,000 blocks. It should be noted that later when the Mongols invaded in 1231, they destroyed the blocks. Eventually a new set was carved from 1236-1251. The second version also contained some 80,000 blocks and 1512 texts. It is presently preserved in the Haein monastery. This canon was the basis for the Japanese *Taisho Daizokyo canon*, published from 1922-1934.

In time the Koryo kingdom gave way to the Choson-Yi dynasty (1392-1910) which was dominated by Neo-Confucian teaching, then the major intellectual influence of the Ming dynasty (1368-1644). Confucianists were traditionally opposed to Buddhism since early times in China. With their rise to power many restrictions were placed on Buddhism, resulting in the destruction of temples and the exclusion of monks from the capital. Nevertheless, the common people retained their faith in Buddhism which gained greater respect when monks defended the country during the invasion by Hideyoshi from Japan in the 16th century.

The Japanese gained control of Korea in 1910 and annexed it as part of Japan. Buddhism was supported by the Japanese authorities in line with the

prominence of Buddhism in Japan, but the marriage of hitherto celibate clergy was encouraged, following the Japanese pattern. Korean Buddhism was divided over this issue. When Korea attained its independence in 1945, the *son-zen* Chogye celibate order gained in prestige and revived Korean Buddhism. As a result of renewed interest in Buddhism numerous temples have opened and there are many active programs for people to study and meditate, even drawing seekers from the West.

Buddhism permeates the society and culture, providing a view of life and human destiny. Out of a population of some 48 million people, Buddhists comprise about 11 million, though as many as half the total population may be Buddhist without formal association.

As this brief survey indicates, Mahayana Buddhism achieved a firm footing in Korea, contributing not only spiritual teaching and practice, but also various aspects of arts and culture. Buddhism also spread from Korea to Japan early in the 6th century, though the official date is 552. Its promise of national spiritual protection and prosperity greatly attracted Japanese leaders.

In the course of Buddhist history in Korea there were a number of eminent monks who shaped the tradition. Among these are Cha-jang of Silla (636-675), Ui-sang (625-702), Won-hyo (617-686). In the Koryo period there was Ui-ch'on (1055- 1101 A.D.) and Chinul (1158-1210). In the Choson era there was Hyu-jong (1520-1604), Song-ch'ong (1631-1700) and under modern Japanese rule there was Han-yongun (1879-1944).

Cha-jang was noted for establishing a strong monastic order after studying in China. He emphasized the study of Sutras, examinations for monks, a centralized ordination system and a government office to oversee the Buddhist order. He helped to make Buddhism the national religion.

Ui-sang also traveled to China studying the *Avatamsaka* philosophy which he introduced to Korea and aided in establishing the intellectual foundation of Korean Buddhism. He also founded numerous temples.

The fundamental principle of the *Avatamsaka* teaching is that all is one and one is all. Everything exists within the Buddha-mind or the One-Mind and, therefore, mutually interpenetrate each other in their essence. This essence is void-empty or inconceivable, revealing the ultimate identity of all things. The *Avatamsaka-Hwa-om* totalistic philosophy of mutual interpenetration and oneness undergirded the efforts to resolve differences between the varying traditions within Buddhism and to establish the overall unity of Korean Buddhism.

Won-hyo is perhaps the most famous of all Korean monks. He wrote over 240 books, aiming to overcome sectarian rivalry, particularly between *son*-meditation and *kyo*- intellectual, scholarly approaches, through his method of harmonizing differences. He also employed the important Chinese distinction of *ti*, essence, and *yung*, function. Everything is the expression of the One-Mind, while each thing manifests the function of the One-Mind. Hence, all differences of thought are simply complementary as expressions of the One-Mind. Won-hyo's interpretation of Buddhism was given the name *tong bulgyo* or

“interpenetrated Buddhism,” and it had extensive influence on Korean Buddhism thereafter.

Won-hyo is also famous as a proponent of Pure Land teaching which he harmonized with meditation practice. The devotional practice of reciting the Buddha’s name by the masses complemented meditation practice by monks.

While Won-hyo became a great scholar, he eventually abandoned the religious life and is said to have married a princess who gave birth to a son. He maintained that by living in society as a lay person he could better serve the people. Teachers such as Won-hyo made Buddhism a religion of the people. Particularly he promoted Pure Land teaching which attracted many people. Because Won-hyo had extensive influence on Korean Buddhism, he is regarded historically as Korea’s pre-eminent Buddhist teacher.

Ui-chon in the 11th century introduced the Chinese T’ien-t’ai (k. *chon-tae*) teaching to Korea. He brought back 4000 volumes collected during his study in China. However, he also stressed the unity behind the diversity of Buddhism. He also focused on the unity of meditation and teaching or scholarly textual studies.

Chinul is noted as a *Son-meditation* teacher who established a major temple which became the base for the Chogye sect. The many schools of *son-meditation* were united by the monk Tae-go (1301-1382). It has remained the center of *Son* Buddhism. In the struggle between the meditation and textual-teaching approach to enlightenment, Chinul attempted to overcome the exclusiveness of the *Son-Zen* proponents, while giving priority to *Son* practice. His argument was based on the *ti-yung* distinction. Like Won-hyo earlier, he maintained that the *ti*-essence is manifested in the world through the various spiritual activities (*yung*) such as meditation and teaching. Accordingly, he advocated study of texts and teaching as necessary and useful for the practice of meditation. He promoted the method of *hwadu* discipline. *Hwadu* means “head of speech” and focuses on the key term in a *kongans* (jpn. Koan). Through the observation or study of *hwadu* the practitioner is led beyond the word to realize his/her own Enlightenment which is beyond words. However, inevitably that realization must be manifest in teaching and words. While words are secondary to the fundamental essence of enlightenment, they are nevertheless necessary. He stated: “The mind and mouth of the Buddha and patriarchs should not be at odds...”

Hyu-jong applied the principles of interpenetrated Buddhism (*tong bulgyo*) to reconcile differences between Confucianism and Buddhism, as well as the meditation and teaching distinction in Buddhism. He also advocated reciting esoteric Buddhist *mantras* and Pure Land practice of reciting Amitabha’s name as aspects of gradual cultivation and a necessary accompaniment with *son* discipline leading to sudden enlightenment. All teachings were viewed as complementary and essentially harmonious in both philosophical expression and in social relations. Hyu-jong employed this theory to argue against the suppression of Buddhism in the Choson period.

Song-ch’ong followed Hyu-jong in combining Pure Land and meditation

practice. However, he also stressed Pure Land practice as a way for people with deep karmic bondage that keeps them in the world of births and death. *Son* practice was considered too difficult for the ordinary person to be assured of gaining salvation. Therefore, the Pure Land path was more practical than *Son* for the pursuit of enlightenment.

Han-Yongun, was a reformist, modernizing priest under Japanese rule. As a result of contact with Japanese scholars and study in Japan, Han sought a complete transformation of Korean Buddhism, including, education and marriage of clergy. He also maintained that Buddhism must be socially aware to contribute to the modern world. He declared:

“...While people of old kept their minds unmoving, those of today only keep their bodies so. If one cares only for a tranquil dwelling-place, this merely amounts to a rejection of the world; and if one only keeps one’s body still, one is merely self-complacent. Buddhism is a teaching meant for the world, a religion devoted to the liberation of sentient beings!...”¹⁴

While Han-Yongun’s efforts bore little fruit because of its perceived conformity with Japanese goals, his thought later influenced the reform movement of Won Buddhism of Pak-Chongbin (So-Tae’san) which focused on the family, lay people, equality of women, social service and harmonization of the religious and the secular.

The Japanese favored married clergy and eventually ordered the abolition of the rules of celibacy, creating a conflict within Korean Buddhism. A new Chogye order combined both the meditation and textual approaches to Buddhism until the end of Japanese rule. Later the South Korean authorities favored the celibate monks. However, ensuing conflict led to the recognition of two orders, Chogye and Tae’go. In recent years the Chogye has grown, while the Tae’go has declined. Chogye is the dominant stream, combining meditation and teaching, Pure Land practice, and *Vinaya*-discipline.

Through the lengthy succession of capable and dedicated monks Korean Buddhism has remained a vital element in Korean culture. In the contemporary period it is vigorous through the propagation of meditation practice which is attracting western participants. It is also evident in the development of new movements such as *Won* Buddhism which promotes reform in Korean Buddhism and a universal Buddhist practice rooted in the feature of syncretism and synthesis in Korean Buddhism. This perspective harmonizes all difference and conflicts as manifestations of the Buddha’s Body of Truth (*Dharmakaya*).

We would conclude our survey of Korean Buddhism by noting that *son-zen* form of Buddhism is the major tradition, but it is also appealing more to lay people and in a sense coming down out of the mountains into the life of the lay people. There are more opportunities and organizations for lay people to practice or study Buddhism. Old antagonisms between Confucianists and Buddhists have been transcended, though Confucian morality is dominant in society. Modernization is proceeding throughout the whole country and

Buddhism has not escaped. Buddhism has become more internationalized with participation of western Buddhists and Korean *Zen* Buddhism has gained influence, comparable to the Japanese *Zen*, through the efforts of such teachers as Seung-sahn. Consequently, modernization will continue in response to the issues and needs of followers on a worldwide basis.

Chapter Five The Flowering of Buddhism in Japan

In the postwar period Japanese Buddhism emerged as a focus of attention for scholars of religion and the general public, because many youth have come to appreciate the culture and its spirituality as a result of their participation in the military or in educational programs. Despite defeat in World War II, western people have been fascinated by Japanese culture and its religious underpinnings which motivated the Japanese to maintain their political and cultural independence throughout their history and to offer a stunning challenge to modern Western colonialism in Asia.

Buddhism has a long and distinguished history in Japan, because it was an important culture-bearer, introducing the highly developed civilization of China to Japan by way of Korea or directly from China. Early on Buddhist monks from Korea brought religion, architecture, ceramics and metal arts, writing, knowledge of political organization and the socio-political teachings of Confucianism in addition to specific Buddhist teachings and practices. Adopting and assimilating elements of Chinese religion and culture enabled Japan to fashion its own distinctive culture which has attracted the admiration of the world since its opening to the West in the 19th century. Japan's aesthetic, industrial and spiritual contributions to modern life worldwide are inestimable. One of the major foundations for these developments is Buddhism.

Initially simply being a foreign religion introduced to Japan, Buddhism gradually transformed its foreignness to become a pervasive element of the Japanese way of life. Japanese attitudes toward Buddhism differed markedly from the Chinese who already possessed a highly developed cultural system when Buddhism arrived. The advanced culture of China and the established teachings of Confucianism and Taoism made the acceptance of Buddhism in China more difficult. In Japan Buddhism was generally viewed as part of

Chinese civilization and its acceptance was seen as the mark of a progressive nation. Buddhism was thereby able to take deep root in Japan and evolve into a major cultural influence, despite some initial opposition by conservative native leaders. It later became highly organized and divided into sects which were frequently involved in competition for political and social power.

Important for understanding Buddhist history in Japan is the Japanese self-understanding that they are a sacred people in a sacred land, having been created by the kami or “gods”. This perception is expressed in the native religion which, under the influence of Buddhism, came to be known as *Shinto*, the Way of the Gods in contrast to the Way of the Buddha (*Butsudo*). The more internationalist faction among ancient Japanese leadership overcame native opposition by recommending it as useful for enhancing the nation’s spiritual position in the cosmos and resolving internecine struggles for dominance among the many tribes which weakened Japan in the face of encroaching continental Chinese influence. After its establishment, Buddhism became intimately entwined in the political affairs of the country, blending with indigenous folk religious beliefs and magical practices.

Japanese Buddhism has many facets which are interdependent and interrelated. Buddhism was supported by the government on the clan and national levels. It provided a context for individual spiritual development in the search for enlightenment in the many monasteries that came to dot the country. Monks often in quest of their own enlightenment practiced the rigorous Buddhist discipline and studied doctrine, while often functioning as teachers and leaders in religious rituals for the welfare of the country in national Buddhist institutions. Buddhism virtually became the state religion. Further, through the activities of political leaders and monks Buddhism gradually spread among the people who supported its development with offerings and labor often forced. Popular Buddhism provided consolation to the masses which became a source of support for the Order and the basis for the formation of distinct Buddhist sects in later times. Buddhist rituals and chanting of sacred texts added to the resource for dealing with disasters and tragedies.

As we have seen in previous chapters, the basic teachings of Buddhism had been established in India and China. There have, however, been distinctive Japanese developments in Buddhist social-cultural relations as well as in spiritual and doctrinal spheres. Buddhist monasteries became repositories for the arts and learning, while the exploitation and political manipulation of the religion by the ruling classes, as well as the collaboration of monks, throughout its history encouraged a passivity and otherworldly outlook among rank and file Buddhists, centering on the ancestor cult.

According to the account recorded in the *Nihon Shoki* (*Chronicles of Japan*), an early historical record, Buddhism officially entered Japan during the reign of Emperor Kimmei in 552 C.E., though it may actually have been as early as 538. On this occasion the King of Kudara (Paekche) in Korea presented the court with Buddhist images and texts, declaring that Buddhism

had been accepted by such leading countries such as China and would benefit the Japanese people. Though Buddhism had earlier infiltrated Japan, carried by Chinese and Korean immigrants, its spread was greatly facilitated by the recognition of its political utility for promoting national interests.

Prince Shotoku (573-621) was the first major figure to appear in the formation of national Buddhism. He implemented the aims of the internationalists by establishing a strong central authority under Empress Suiko (592-628). Because the Prince was deeply devoted to the teachings of Buddhism and recognized its spiritual role in the development of a unified nation, he is credited in history with the promulgation of a Seventeen-Point Constitution which had harmony as its ideal. This document advocated reverence for the three treasures of Buddhism by all the people as the basis of social concord. In addition, the Prince was thought to have composed commentaries on three major Mahayana Sutras which reflected his critical and independent thought as he transformed Buddhism from an other-worldly religion to one promoting social harmony in this world. His emphasis on Buddhism as a religion of laypeople greatly influenced later generations. The Prince also encouraged Buddhism by inviting visiting priests to lecture, cultivating Buddhist scholarship and commissioning the construction of numerous temples and works of art. He also organized the government in a system of ranks.

After Prince Shotoku, the trend to political centralization, including greater control over Buddhism continued with the Taika reform in 645 which aimed to strengthen the monarchy by centralizing political power, modeling on the Tang dynasty in China. This was followed by the promulgation of the Taiho code in 701 which instituted a set of administrative and penal statutes based on Chinese Confucianism along with the Chinese civil service examination system. However reforms were circumvented since the path to political preferment remained through aristocratic and clan connections.

Private temples were prohibited, and monks had to be licensed. In addition, they could not work among the people. A more positive approach to the Buddhist Order appeared, however, in the provincial temple system set up during the Nara period (710-794) in 741 by Emperor Shomu who devoted himself to the prosperity of Buddhism.

Symbolic of his efforts was the construction of the great Buddha of Todaiji (consecrated in 752). The Buddha selected for representation was the great Sun Buddha (skt, Mahavairocana Buddha; jpn, Dainichi Nyorai). This Buddha symbolized the philosophy of the *Garland Sutra* (Japanese, *Kegon*) which taught that the essence of each thing contained the essence of every other thing. All reality was one, interdependent and mutually permeating. Hence, the universe manifested the Buddha mind combined in a grand harmony.

The symbolism of the image and its many surrounding Buddhas carried a political message of the interdependence and oneness of the Japanese people

and the Imperial house. Emperor Shomu believed that the proper recitation of various nation-protecting Sutras would bring prosperity and security to the nation. While knowledge of the principles of Buddhist teaching and symbolism by the leadership contributed to the unity of the nation, the use of Buddhist texts and institutions as a means for ritual and magical pacification promised spiritual security to the society. According to the "nation-protecting" Sutras, the divine heavenly kings protected any country that supported and propagated Buddhism, by sponsoring efforts to teach, copy or recite Buddhist texts. Eventually a whole system of provincial temples equipped with Sutras, monks, and nuns was constructed with Todaiji in the city of Nara as the head temple for the purpose of benefiting the nation through spiritual protection.

For the ordinary person, Buddhism offered a panoply of beliefs and practices to secure health, wealth, and spiritual security or good future rebirth. Among the most well-known Buddhist divinities are Jizo and Kannon. Jizo (skt. Kshitigarbha, ch. Ti-tsang) assisted people in the afterlife and helped them to avoid going to hell. Merging with beliefs of folk religion, he was also regarded as a savior of those in trouble, particularly women in childbirth and children. Images of him are frequent along roads, as well as in temple compounds.

Kannon Bodhisattva (skt. Avalokitesvara, ch. Kuan-yin), commonly known as the Goddess of Mercy, was also widely revered. Tradition held that even Prince Shotoku was an ardent devotee. Emperors sponsored lectures and ceremonies on the *Kannon Sutra* and promoted the popularity of the cult. According to this text, Kannon symbolized the depth of Buddha's compassion. She promised to save people from all forms of calamities and to grant them all kinds of blessings in life. Both Bodhisattvas remain popular even to this day.

Initially Miroku Bodhisattva (skt. Maitreya, ch. Mi-lo), believed to be the future Buddha in Buddhist eschatology, was a very popular object of worship introduced from Korea. Belief in Miroku brought birth into Tusita heaven, a paradise within the Realm of Desire in Buddhist Cosmology. Miroku resides here awaiting his birth into this world as the next Buddha. Gradually this cult was replaced with that of Amida Buddha who resides in his Western Pure Land and comes to welcome believers upon their death. As we shall see, the teaching of Amida became a major influence, spreading among all classes of people in Japan during the later Heian period (794-1185), spurred by the belief in the onset of the last age in the decline and disappearance of the teaching (*mappo*) in 1052.

Together with the beliefs in great Buddhist divinities there were numerous practices designed to gain desired benefits or ward off evils. Most popular and easiest was the recitation of magical phrases such as *Namu Amida-Butsu* (Hail Amida Buddha) or *Namu-Myoho-Renge-Kyo* (Hail Lotus of the Wonderful Law). Shingon teaching became very influential because of potent magical *dharani* spells and incantations of Indian origin which it offered for every possible contingency. Kukai-Kobo Daishi became the object of devotion in a popular, independent healing cult, referred to as O-Daishi-san, alongside the Shingon Sect. There were also mystic ceremonies such as the *goma* fire ritual,

which is believed to burn away impurity and remove curses of enemies and demons. The ceremony was much used in the Heian period. Omamoris or amulets were, and are, also used widely today for a variety of purposes.

During the period when the manifold Chinese and practices spread into Japan with Buddhism, religious Taoism also came, though not in an institutional form. Whereas the teachings of Confucianism were first regarded as the required learning for rulers and politicians, religious Taoism offered various methods for advancing one's life in this world and attaining longevity or good fortune. In addition to religious Taoism, *yin-yang* magic and divination, astrology, geomancy, and calendrical computations were combined with Buddhism. Taoist belief in sage-hermits contributed also to the formation of the Shugendo movement of Buddho-Shinto mountain ascetics. The practitioners of Shugendo functioned among the people as exorcists and shamans.

Ceremonies for the dead were also a prominent aspect of Japanese Buddhism. Not only was there the fear of dead spirits which emerged in the Heian period, but there was also reverencing of the dead in filial piety. Masses for the dead helped to assure the good destiny of the departed. A calendar of memorials provided the dead with periodic assistance until they faded from living memory to become part of the general host of ancestors.

An important annual festival was the *Urabon-e* or commonly *Obon* festival (skt. *Avalambana*, *Ullambana*), based on the story of Buddha's disciple Mokuren (Sanskrit Maudgalyayana) who saw that his mother had become a hungry ghost. Thereupon began the rite of offering food for one's parents and ancestors. Related to the *Urabon-e* but of different origin was the Segaki ceremony of feeding the hungry ghosts. This ceremony is still regularly performed. Other ceremonies connected with the dead occurred at the spring and autumn equinox and were called *Higan-e*.

Ancestors are venerated through Buddhist memorial services and entertainments. Most important are visits to the grave which, despite the decline in religious adherence among modern people, are still commonly carried out even by those of no specific religious commitment.

Elements of popular religion have penetrated all sects to secure support from the masses. The Shugendo movement of mountain ascetics was very instrumental in carrying these beliefs and ceremonies to the people, particularly in the Tokugawa period when the traditional sects had largely been deprived of their spiritual influence among the people. Considerable criticism has been directed to Buddhism in modern times because of its predominant association with magic and death.

Buddhism became powerful in Japan because it met the needs of people on all levels of life. It transmitted major symbols of spiritual power in Indian tradition, while also teaching Chinese Confucian morality and aspects of religious Taoism, focusing on its utility in this life. It also stressed its importance for concerns of the afterlife, claiming that it cared for both affairs this world and the other world.

Though the beliefs and practices that affect everyday life and benefit the otherworld were the most widespread and popular aspects of Buddhism, there was a tradition of Buddhist teaching and philosophy which made Buddhism an enduring spiritual and cultural force, inspiring the arts, literature and significant creative religious thought.

During the ancient Nara period (710-794) Buddhist quasi-academic schools introduced basic Chinese Buddhist scholarship. They included the Kosha, a school representing the early Buddhism with its analysis of consciousness; the Kegon with its holistic metaphysical perspective; Hosso which was a form of psychological idealism that developed out of the Kosha school; and the Ritsu, school of precepts and ordination. In addition there were the Sanron or Three Treatise School based on texts representing the philosophy of the teacher Nagarjuna and the Jojitsu school an early form of Mahayana Buddhism and associated with Sanron. These schools, as opposed to strict sectarian distinctions, held little concern for the ordinary person. They were academic subjects which monks could study for their own development. While some individual monks such as Dosho (629-700) and Gyogi Bosatsu (670-749) engaged in social welfare and religious work among the people, the various official schools were more concerned with promoting their influence through the manipulation of spiritual powers and catering to the demands of the aristocracy who supported them.

The Buddhist institutions of Nara began to degenerate through increasing involvement in political affairs. In an effort to free the imperial court from intrigues and domination by the clergy, Emperor Kammu (737-806) planned to relocate the capital. He eventually transferred the capital to what is now Kyoto and opened the Heian period of "peace and tranquility" in 794.

The monks, Saicho (767-822), founder of the Tendai (c. T'ien-t'ai) sect in Japan, and Kukai (774-835), founder of the Shingon sect (skt. *mantra*, ch. *chen-yen*), assisted in this process by going to China to study Buddhism and bring back the most up to date teaching and resources available there. Kukai went to the capital Chang-an where he studied with the famous Chen-yen monk Hui-kuo (746-805), becoming his successor. Saicho proceeded to Mount T'ien-t'ai where the teaching of Chih-I was undergoing a revival and while awaiting to return to Japan, he met a Chen yen teacher who instructed him and initiated him into that teaching.

The establishment of the Tendai and Shingon sects was in some measure an attempt to reform and reestablish the true principles of Buddhism in Japan. The reforming aspect was particularly strong in Saicho (later given the imperial title Dengyo Daishi or Great-teacher who transmitted Dharma) who asked the court for permission to set up his own Tendai ordination platform on Mount Hiei away from Nara. He maintained that Tendai Buddhism would provide monks who would be true national treasures and would protect the nation spiritually. The court granted approval soon after his death in 822.

However, with the transfer of the capital from Nara to Kyoto, Mount Hiei, where Saicho had established his monastery, became the center of spiritual learning, combining all forms of current religious studies, Tendai, focused on the *Lotus Sutra*; meditation practice (Tendai style Zen [meditation]); Pure Land teaching and practice; Shingon esoterism. Saicho's religious view was more assimilative and syncretic. The importance and evolution of the monastery led to its continual involvement with national politics, especially through the institution of retired Emperors who became monks and exerted power from the monastery. As its own economic and political power grew, warrior monks fought in the interests of their Order.

Kukai, (later given the imperial title Kobo Daishi or Great Teacher who Disseminates Dharma) did not strongly oppose the temples of Nara, as did Saicho, and soon attained high rank in the official organization, becoming the Abbot of the Toji temple in Kyoto. Here he performed the rite of *kanjo* (a form of ordination), as well as ceremonies for the pacification of the nation. Supported by the court, Kukai and his Order attained wide influence. Even Emperors received instruction in Buddhism under the tutelage of Shingon monks. Shingon rites were widely used by the court as a means of averting or overcoming disasters. Its elegant pageantry and elaborate ritualism appealed to the religious and aesthetic sensibilities of the court nobles.

Though Heian Buddhism began auspiciously with a freshness and the ideal of creating national treasures to serve the country's spiritual welfare, eventually it too competed for privilege and power. The fortunes of the nobility in the capital of Kyoto also declined along with political and economic changes in the distant provinces. The warrior clans whose task was to defend the interests of the absentee nobility in the provinces began their own quest for power. The turbulence of the ensuing Kamakura period (1185-1332) stimulated a flowering of Buddhist movements, critical of the established system of Buddhism and appealing to all levels of Japanese society.

Against the background of the emerging political struggles and religious turmoil which engulfed the traditional spiritual institutions of Mount Hiei and Mount Koya, as well as the earlier Nara temples, a number of sects emerged during the Kamakura age which differed in their views of the relation of Buddhism and society and its function in providing spiritual protection for the state. They also directed their teaching more to the individual who sought spiritual emancipation in the midst of the social turmoil of the time.

A major thread of Buddhist teaching in the Kamakura age was the Pure Land teaching which had permeated all classes of ancient and medieval society. Prior to the appearance of the independent Pure Land sect, there were a number of compassionate teachers who laid the foundation for the popular spread of this teaching. Among these were such people as Kuya (903-972), known as the "Saint of the Marketplace". He traveled the countryside, proclaiming the recitation of Amida Buddha's name and engaging in social uplift projects. Ryogen (912-985) advocated Pure Land devotion on Mount Hiei

and inspired his famous disciple Genshin (942-1017). Genshin taught Pure Land meditation and authored the famous *Treatise on the Essentials of Rebirth (in the Pure Land)* [*Ojoyoshu*]. This manual gained wide influence throughout Japanese Buddhism, through its depiction of the terrors of hell and the bliss of the Pure Land. Ryonin (1072-1132) initiated the Nembutsu of Mutuality (*Yuzu Nembutsushu*) which taught that each person's Nembutsu contributes to the salvation of all other people in reciprocal mutuality. It was based in Tendai philosophy.

Honen (1133-1212) is considered the founder of the independent Pure Land sect (*Jodoshu*), and a pioneer of the movements characterizing the Kamakura era. For Honen the simple recitation of the name of the Buddha with sincere faith provided the merit for birth in the Pure Land. Honen had six or seven major disciples who all promoted Pure Land teaching. It was the only certain practice for the last age in the decline of the Dharma (*mappo*) for monks, nuns and the laity alike. Honen expounded his view in his famous *Treatise on the Nembutsu of the Select Primal Vow* (*Senchakuhongannembutsushu*, abbreviated *Senchakushu*).

The most famous of Honen's disciples was Shinran (1173-1262) who is credited as the founder of The True Sect (Teaching) of the Pure Land (*Jodo Shinshu*).¹⁵ Shinran became famous for his teaching of "faith alone" in Amida as the basis for birth in the Pure Land. His teaching is spelled out in the *Kyogyoshinsho* (*Anthology on Teaching, Practice, Faith and Realization*). For him, the moment of trust in Amida or faith and the act of reciting the name were both given by Amida Buddha as a result of his Vow to save all beings. Religion becomes the way of gratitude rather than seeking benefits or salvation merely for oneself. Shinran is also noted for providing a religious basis for the marriage of monks and setting aside the monastic precepts and discipline. Since Amida saves one as he/she is, there is no need in faith to negate ordinary life in society.

Finally there was Ippen (1239-1289), the wandering monk, a second generation disciple of Honen who is the founder of the Time sect (*Ji-shu-shu*; *shu* here is not sect, but group). This sect at one time was a very popular movement in medieval Japan, characterized by its joyous nembutsu dance. Ippen advocated reciting the nembutsu at six specific times during the day and emphasized that one should regard each moment of life as his last while reciting the sacred name. He is famous for his itinerant life style, requiring poverty, celibacy and chastity. Relying on the absolute Other Power of Amida, he did not require faith as the basis for birth in the Pure Land. He had everyone sign a register and receive a plaque, whether a conscious believer or not; It is Amida who assures the person's entry into paradise.

Each of these Pure Land sects, though differing in points of doctrine and later organization, were generally other-worldly in character and offered the bliss of the Pure Land to individuals through sincere faith and recitation of the name *Namu Amida Butsu* (also known as *nembutsu* which means to think on or call the name of the Buddha). By this means the ordinary person could

escape from the suffering of this world and the endless cycles of births and deaths to enjoy bliss in the Pure Land.

On the other hand, the Zen tradition which had developed from the teaching of Bodhidharma in China was brought to Japan through Eisai (1146-1215). Eisai introduced the *Rinzai (Lin-chi) Zen (Ch'an) ko-an* tradition from China. This method of Zen aimed at achieving enlightenment by employing paradoxical, riddle-like stories to break through the human addiction and attachment to logical thought and words. He maintained in his treatise *Kozengokokuron (Treatise on Spiritually Protecting the Nation through Prospering Zen)* that the nation could be spiritually protected only through promoting the true practice of Zen.

Dogen (1200-1253), Eisai's disciple, after a period of study in China, introduced the Chinese Soto (Tsaio-tung) Zen sect into Japan. Dogen did not use the *ko-an* method because all life was a *ko-an*. He was the most philosophical among the Kamakura teachers as can be seen in his *Treasury Eye of the True Dharma (Shobogenzo)*. In his view simply sitting is itself the enlightenment of the Buddha when done with faith. His motto was *shikan-taza* or "Zazen Only". He asserted also that Buddhism was superior to the state. According to his view, human laws were merely based on precedents and ancient laws whose origins were uncertain. However, Buddhism had a clear transmission from the beginning. Thus the state was not absolute. Claiming extraterritoriality for the monk who did his duty by performing his discipline, Dogen refused to associate with the government and established his temple in a distant province.

Perhaps the most important expression of the relation between the nation and Buddhism in the Kamakura era was the teaching of the Buddhist prophet Nichiren (1222-1282). According to his basic work *Risshoankokuron (Treatise on the Attainment of Peace in the Country through the Establishment of the True (Buddhist) Teaching)*, the security of the nation depended on strict adherence to the *Lotus Sutra* as interpreted by Nichiren.

Insisting on the supremacy of the *Lotus Sutra* over all other teachings of Buddhism in accord with Tendai teaching, Nichiren demanded that the government establish it as the national religion to the exclusion of all other forms of Buddhism. His apparent intolerance was the result of his conviction that the many natural disasters and political upheavals which Japan had experienced at that time had been prophesied by the Buddha as punishment for not adhering to the truth. Very soon, he taught, the final punishment would come with the invasion of the Mongols. He pointed to the prosperity of Pure Land teaching, Zen Buddhism, the use of Shingon practices, and the fame of *Ritsu (Vinaya discipline)* priests as evidence that the people had ignored and were blind to the truth in the *Lotus Sutra* originally declared by Chih-I in China and Saicho in Japan. According to Nichiren, even later traditional Tendai teachers had strayed from the truth by adopting Pure Land and Shingon practices into their own system.

Although Nichiren employed traditional concepts of the relation of state and Buddhism, he held strongly to the primacy of Buddhism over the state in contrast to the traditional political subservience of Buddhism. He claimed that he was the pillar of Japan, the ship of Japan. His outspokenness and uncompromising attitude brought him persecution and banishment.

A facet of Kamakura Buddhism was also the effort by some monks to purify Buddhism and reestablish the system of monastic discipline. Representative of this trend is Koben (Myoe Shonin 1173-1232) in Nara. Myoe aspired to the ideal of Sakyamuni Buddha and planned to make a pilgrimage to India which he was never able to fulfill. His object of devotion was Miroku, the future Buddha, while in his studies he combined esoteric Buddhism, the Kegon philosophy and strict maintenance of discipline. Becoming a highly respected scholar, Myoe was also very devout and noted for his many spiritual dreams. Concerned for the spiritual welfare of the ordinary person, perhaps influenced by Honen, Myoe advocated a form of devotion for ordinary people, focusing on a mandala (sacred diagram) of the three treasures, Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. The invocation of the three treasures aimed at arousing the aspiration to become Buddha (*bodhi*-mind). Later he developed the *Komyo Shingon*, a mantra of light to be recited, together with spiritual purification, for the sake of the afterlife as well as benefits in this world.

Myoe was acquainted with Honen and at first respected him highly. When he read Honen's treatise *Senchakushu*, he was enraged and wrote a text *Treatise on Destroying Error (Zaijarin)* to refute Honen's teaching. A major criticism was that Honen denied the essential Buddhist teaching of the necessity of the aspiration to become Buddha as the basis of enlightenment.

It is to be noted that the founders and movements were generally little known in their own time. Under the leadership of gifted successors they developed into mass movements, becoming the major denominations we see today.

The period of civil wars and strife following the fall of the Kamakura Shogunate in 1334 until the establishment of the Tokugawa regime in 1615 frequently involved Buddhist Orders as they carried on sectarian rivalries or attempted to protect their own interests. As Sansom points out: "Although most of the numerous sects of Buddhism in Japan were tolerant to the point of indifference in matters of doctrine, they were very jealous of their rights, and would fight hard on a point of privilege."¹⁶

The various dictators engaged in armed struggles to reduce the political and military threats of the powerful Buddhist institutions. While Ashikaga Takauji (Shogun, 1338-1358) had to retrench before the militant reaction of the forces of Mount Hiei, Oda Nobunaga (1534-1582) was eventually able to subdue them and the hosts of the *Ikko* (Single-minded sect of Pure Land devotees). He even encouraged the propagation of Christianity to counter the influence of the Buddhists. Hideyoshi (1536-1598) pursued the monks of Kumano and Mount Koya. As the monks turned from warlike activities to works of piety, Hideyoshi began to restrain the Christians, ordering

missionaries to leave the country in 1587. Oppression of Christians mounted under Hideyoshi and reached its peak with the martyrdom of twenty-six persons at Nagasaki in 1597. The persecutions and martyrdoms of Christians increased under the Tokugawas, and reached a climax in the Shimabara revolt which precipitated the policy of total isolation from foreign relations for the next 250 years.

The importance of the Christian persecutions lies in their relationship to the political control of the Buddhist Orders during the Tokugawa era. As a measure in the abolition of Christianity, Buddhist clergy began to function as police. In 1640 an investigating agency was formed in Edo and extended throughout the country. In order to seek out Christians, citizens were made to trample the cross, and local Buddhist temples were required to register all persons in their district on such matters as their personal history and activities. The Buddhist religion declined in spirit because of the earlier attacks on its institutions and its reduction to a mere political tool in the Tokugawa effort to achieve total social stability and harmony.

The dominant ideologies of the Tokugawa age were Neo-Confucianism and a renascent Shintoism, both of which were critical and negative to Buddhism. Buddhist institutions continued to function, and members of the government associated with it through their families as a matter of custom. However, it exerted little control or influence over the intellectual outlook or personal conduct of the national leaders.

Buddhist scholars regard the change brought about in Buddhism, resulting from the activities of Nobunaga, Hideyoshi, and the later Tokugawas, as a turning point in Buddhist history. During this period Buddhism completely capitulated to secular authority. The establishment of the parish system (*danka seido*), irrespective of doctrinal convictions, as well as the imposed clerical control, effectively cut Buddhism off spiritually from the people.

Despite the fact that Buddhism had permeated daily life or that scholarship had developed within the monastic communities, the real vitality of Buddhism was lost when compared with its impact in the Heian and Kamakura periods. The position of Buddhism in the feudal period resembled only externally its role in the earlier period when the state was institutionalized. The important difference was that rulers in the earlier ages believed in Buddhist spiritual experience, and, revering the three treasures (Buddha, Dharma, Sangha), prayed for the welfare of the nation. In the later period the Edo warriors, dominated by Neo-Confucianism, regarded Buddhism simply as a useful instrument of social control.

When the Tokugawa regime ended with the restoration of Imperial rule under Emperor Meiji (reigning 1868-1912), Buddhism was rudely awakened by the shout of "Expel Buddha, cut down Sakyamuni." The renascent Shinto sentiment held by some leaders of government quickly overthrew the trappings of state support of Buddhism, and some proponents of the new nationalism

claimed it was merely a foreign religion. The attack failed because of the deep faith of the ordinary people in Buddhism which had given them hope for their meager existences. However many temples and work of art of Japan's Buddhist heritage were lost as a result of the plundering of temples.

Buddhist leaders initially joined with Shintoists in assisting the government to promote the new nationalism. They linked themselves to the political absolutism of the Meiji regime as a way to demonstrate the importance of Buddhism in the new Japan. Government officials welcomed the assistance of Buddhist clergy, since they had traditionally the closest relation to the people. Later the Buddhists withdrew from actively promoting nationalism and advocated religious freedom in order to gain its own autonomy. Nevertheless, Buddhism supported modern nationalism, stressing its Japanese character and utility to the nation as it became a world power.

Confronting the many challenges to Buddhism that came with the opening of Japan to the West, there were a number of reform and social movements such as the New Buddhist Movement (Shin [neo] Bukkyo Undo) which sought the revitalization of Buddhism through social reform. Such teachers as Kiyozawa Manshi (1863-1903) reinterpreted doctrines in a modern way. In addition, Western methods in the study of religion were introduced, giving rise to critical scholarship and higher standards of education for clergy.

However, Buddhism was faced with threats of a spreading Christianity and relentless modernization. These issues culminated and intensified with the defeat of Japan's war effort in World War II which Buddhists supported as loyal Japanese.

In the post-World War II period with complete religious freedom the Buddhist sects have had to deal with a host of so-called New Religions, such as the neo-Buddhist Soka Gakkai and Risshokoseikai, which challenged the dominance of the older traditional sects in addition to renewed Christian propagation. Also in recent years there arose a second wave of New New religions which includes the notorious Buddhist Aum Shinri Kyo, famous for its destructive violence and murders. The name means "The Supreme Truth of Creation and Destruction," and raises the specter that religion may be used as a cover for nihilism and violence. These developments have raised the question of the meaning of religious faith and the relevance of the traditional sects in a rapidly changing, religiously competitive and more highly sophisticated, complex, industrial society.

In the modern era a gap has frequently existed between more educated and critical intellectual priests and ordinary persons in relation to the magical and pragmatic features of Buddhism. Despite calls for reformation and modernization within Buddhism, the great source of support and strength in the Orders still derives from the magical and pragmatic faith which, for lack of a better alternative, supports individuals in dealing with the problems and anxieties of modern life. The traditional sects have, however, been able to hold their own because of their deep roots in the life of the people through the family and highly developed scholarly traditions, modern educational institutions and

efforts in propagation and publication. There is hope for the future as Buddhist teachers and leaders become active in interfaith and intercultural movements which strengthen the internationalization and universalism of Buddhism.

Chapter Six Vajrayana: Esoteric Buddhism of Tibet

Tibet has always fascinated Western people. Imaginations have been stimulated by the vision of the mythical land of Shambala in Tibetan tradition, perhaps located at the North Pole, where everyone is enlightened and happy. When it becomes visible, unenlightened people try to conquer it. After a great conflict, the world will become like Shambala. It was popularized in the West as Shangri-La in the 1936 novel *Lost Horizon* by James Hilton and then in a musical in 1973. Portrayed as an exotic mystical realm of spiritual endeavor in contemplation and a search for wisdom, Shangri-La represents the

aspiration for paradise or utopia.¹⁷ However, in more recent times our attention has been drawn to the plight of the Tibetan people by Communist China's invasion of Tibet in 1959. Since that time the Chinese government has been trying to suppress and supplant Tibetan culture and religion which they consider superstitious, medieval, and oppressive. They have undertaken to replace the Tibetan population with Han Chinese and thereby change the demographics and culture of the region. However, the Dalai Lama, as spiritual and political leader of the Tibetan people, has worked for decades in a non-violent manner to gather support for their independence and self-determination.

We cannot go into detail on the history of Tibet or Tibetan Buddhism. However, the history of Tibetan Buddhism can be viewed on two levels. There is the level of recorded history, the outer history of the society and religion. There is also a spiritual or inner history in the evolution of the spiritual ideals expressed in its teachings and practices. Externally Tibet developed into a theocratic state, rule by elite Orders of monks, replete with its intrigues and struggles. Spiritually Tibetan Buddhism evolved into a highly complex synthesis of scholarship, piety and mysticism.

Robert Thurman, a leading scholarly exponent of Tibetan Buddhism in the West, has written eloquently about the *Inner Revolution*, depicting the development of Tibetan Buddhism in the light of our professed ideals of life, liberty and the pursuit of real happiness. Although his presentation may appear to conflict with the observable course of Tibetan history, he traces the formation of the Tibetan spiritual ideal and its relevance for our contemporary world. He writes: "The tradition of nonviolence, optimism, concern for the individual and unconditional compassion that developed in Tibet is the culmination of a slow inner revolution, a cool one, hard to see, that began 2,500 years ago with the Buddha's insight about the end of suffering."¹⁸ In this perspective, merely tracing external history does not do justice to the real history of Tibet.

What Thurman sees in the formation of Tibet is an effort to establish an ideal environment where every person has the opportunity to become a fully enlightened being. That is, that all people can become Buddhas. This is a fantastic claim in view of the way we think of nations existing today. He sees in the history of Tibet an attempt to replace ruling elites based on military power with the nurture of the individual who becomes free from negative emotion and obsessive self concern.¹⁹ Although the history of Tibet is marked by an uneasy tension between militaristic social organization and society based on meditative realization and monasteries, the military versus monastics, he traces a process of unilateral disarmament which made it politically weaker in the face of external enemies but spiritually strong in the belief that when a person becomes enlightened the whole society benefits. He indicates that by the 17th century Tibet had developed its "modern" form which he calls inner or spiritual modernity.²⁰

The West, at relatively the same period, had merged the sacred within the secular, while in Tibet, the secular was transformed into the sacred. Thus, there is a contrast of outer, secular modernity and inner, spiritual modernity. Tibet's inner modernity prospered for almost 300 years, while other nations undertook the conquest of the external world, eventually encroaching on Tibet.

According to Thurman, the idea of inner modernity traces back to Gautama Buddha himself in the establishment of the Buddhist Order as a context for spiritual education, with social and cultural implications. It was an alternative society where Gautama accepted all kinds of people within his Order. Through spiritual education people could gain selflessness and freedom from alienated ego-addiction.

The attainment of Enlightenment required strong efforts to overcome habitual ways of thinking and ignorance. This monastic movement spread over Asia and may even have influenced the West in ancient times. Ancient kings supported Buddhism and became more humane leaders, even if they did not give up worldly power completely. Asoka (262 B.C.E.) is a prime example.²¹

We modern people, in Thurman's view, have a constricted view of fundamental principles. For instance, we constantly hear that we are interdependent in the global economy. This is very true, but we only limit that understanding to global economic matters and sometimes ecological issues. Rather, we should see that all society and life is interdependent and as long as we ignore the plight of the poor and suffering in society, our own lives are endangered. Our present social policies aim at preserving the wealth of the wealthy, while begrudging those ground under by our competitive, materialist, technological economic system. The gap between the rich and the poor is growing worldwide.

Consequently, according to Thurman, Tibet is worthy of closer study because it was a grand laboratory for the development of a way of life based on spiritual principles. Its isolation in the high altitudes of the Himalayas certainly favored such developments. The spread of Tibetan Buddhism beyond its borders now offers a challenge in our contemporary period to modern people to revise their understanding of life and the primary values we should pursue.

This is not an argument to idealize the Tibetans as a naturally superior spiritual people. Rather, in the limited context of their history, it demonstrates the power of spiritual values to transform society, moving the Tibetans from warlike tribes to a peaceful and peace-loving nation, combining spiritual and political leadership in the Dalai Lama.

Tibetan Buddhism itself represents a synthesis of the major streams of Buddhism to that time. The Theravada tradition is represented in Monastic Buddhism and the effort to attain egolessness. It supplied the basis of discipline. The second stream is the Mahayana which Thurman calls "Messianic" or Bodhisattva Buddhism where one attains Buddhahood and a realm where that Buddha resides. Here Buddhas and Bodhisattvas together strive to inspire all beings to attain Buddhahood. It offered the spiritual ideal of self-giving. Finally there is "Millennial" or "Apocalyptic" Buddhism which is

represented in the esoteric Tantric Buddhism called Vajrayana. According to its followers, it is the highest product of Buddhist teaching. The idea of "Apocalyptic" suggests a breakthrough of our "habitual self-centeredness." In the sexual imagery associated with this tradition it is experienced like an orgasm where one loses oneself completely in union with the other.²² It is described as "people absorbed in activity--runners racing, musicians performing, artists creating, mothers giving milk--all of them have a taste of millennial consciousness, a momentary blissful freedom from dissatisfaction, self concern and pain."²³

Historically Buddhism entered Tibet by way of India and China where it merged with the native Bon religion to form a complex religion strongly linked to the political organization. Establishing itself as a military power, Tibet became a force to be reckoned with in the region. In 642 C.E. King Songtsen Gampo (618-650) furthered national interests through marriage alliances. He married a daughter of the King of Nepal who was a Buddhist. As a result of military prowess he later took a Chinese princess, Wen-ch'eng as his wife. She was also a Buddhist and brought her faith and images with her. The King thereby became a supporter of Buddhism through the influence of his wives.

As an effort in cultural development Songtsen Gampo is noted for sending students to India such as Thonmi Sambhota, who learned Sanskrit and contributed to the introduction of Buddhism. He assisted the development of an alphabet and grammar for the Tibetan language based on Indian Brahmi and Gupta scripts, thereby enabling the translation of Sanskrit texts to Tibetan.²⁴

While there were conflicts occasionally with the native religion, Buddhism continued to prosper under later Kings. In order to establish Buddhism firmly, King Trisong Detsen (740-798) invited the scholars Santaraksita (arrived @ 760) and Padmasambhava (arrived in Tibet late 8th C.) from India.

Santaraksita was considered one of the greatest Buddhist scholars of his time, teaching at Vikramasila monastery in India. Met by opposition in Tibet from government ministers and natural disasters, he suggested that the King invite Padmasambhava who could resolve the conflict with the native religion and leave Tibet. Padmasambhava is credited with defeating the demons of the native religion who opposed Buddhism through powerful prayers and exorcism, thereby effectively converting Tibet to Buddhism. He urged the return of Santaraksita. Together they built the first monastery in Tibet, known as Samye (completed 791) and ordained the first Tibetan monks. The King also sponsored the translation of texts.

Padmasambhava is particularly revered in Tibet for his achievements as the founder of Tibetan Buddhism. He is also regarded as the founder of the Nyingma sect or School of the Ancients. According to Nyingma tradition, Padmasambhava transmitted a synthesis of all major forms of Buddhism, namely: Hinayana or Theravada type monastic rules, Mahayana Sutras and

philosophies, and Tantric methods of meditation. These then became the basis of Tibetan Buddhism.²⁵ This transmission is known as the textual (*Kama*) transmission. In addition, in Nyingma tradition Padmasambhava transmitted the *Terma* or hidden forms of teaching which would be revealed in times of crisis and need by *Tertons* who are Bodhisattvas reborn for the purpose of revealing the required dharma. The significance of the latter form of teaching is the openness to the future it implies.²⁶

During Trisong Detsen's reign there was a debate over which he presided. This debate determined the direction and character of Tibetan Buddhism. For a period of two years (792-794) the Indian monk Kamalasila and the Chinese Zen monk Ho-shang debated the nature of enlightenment. It was a contest between the gradual path to enlightenment and the sudden. Kamalasila advocated the gradual path of India, while Ho-shang the sudden, instantaneous path of Chinese Ch'an (Zen). At the conclusion the king supported Kamalasila and established the gradualist interpretation of Buddhism as the state religion.²⁷

The third King who is noted for his lavish support of Buddhism was Tri Rapalchen (reign 815-836). He invited teachers from India and sponsored numerous translations, while revising earlier ones. Tri Rapalchen's disproportionate donations to the Order and devotion to religion aroused opposition leading to his assassination by Lang Darma, his elder brother and a follower of the Bon native religion.

The tyranny of Lang Darma's effort to expunge Buddhism from Tibet brought about his own assassination. As a consequence, the nation entered a period of political chaos with the end of the Tibetan Empire and its fragmentation into many competing principalities and resultant loss of support for Buddhism. Many Buddhist temples and works of art were destroyed, but Buddhism remained alive in western Tibet.

In the later 10th century a Buddhist King who received ordination by the name of Yeshe O attempted to revive Buddhism and inaugurated the second major period in the development of Tibetan Buddhism. Students were once again sent to India and the translation of Sanskrit *Sutras*, *Tantras* and commentaries resumed.

In the course of history a literary and philosophical language was developed and texts scrutinized for accuracy in translation. By the 13th century a canon of scriptures was published in two divisions, comprising hundreds of texts. The Kangyur includes some 100 Sutra texts, while the Tangyur contains some 200 texts including commentaries and a variety of traditional texts on many subjects. In all there are 317 volumes and 4,567 works.²⁸ A dictionary was also produced. Of major importance was the arrival in Tibet of the great teacher Atisha (982-1054) of Nalanda University in India. He founded the Kadampa ("bound by the ordinances", later Gelukpa) sect, the first school in Tibet, uniting both scholarly Mahayana Sutra teaching and Tantra practice. He also instituted major reforms by enforcing celibacy and prohibiting intoxicants and sex as a means of mystical experience. His contribution to

making Buddhism the dominant religion of Tibet, which it remains to today, is very significant.²⁹

Another major figure in the development of Tibetan Buddhism is Marpa (1012-1097), the first Tibetan in the lineage of Naropa. He is noted as the first in the Kagyu sect lineage in Tibet, a translator and most significantly as the teacher of Milarepa (1040-1123). Though he lived as a layperson with a wife and children, he is regarded as a Buddha, viewing the world as a Pure Land.³⁰

Milarepa is regarded as a towering figure in Tibetan Buddhism. His biography dramatizes his transformation from a person seeking vengeance to an enlightened teacher. According to Reginald Ray, it “shows how any ordinary person can aspire to the highest goal. It is perhaps for this reason that the life of Milarepa, told in the first person, is one of the best-loved and best-known of all sacred biographies of Tibet.”³¹

Milarepa sought revenge against his uncle and aunt who had cheated his family out of their wealth and reduced them to slavery. Learning black magic, he was able to kill 35 people at a wedding feast for the uncle’s son. Though his mother rejoiced at the victory, Milarepa reflected on his karma and sought the Dharma to purify himself. He was directed to Marpa who put him through many tests before giving the teaching. Observing Milarepa’s desperate persistence despite the extreme challenges, Marpa gave him the teaching, which eventually led him to become one of Tibet’s greatest spiritual teachers and cultural figures. While a master in the Kagyu lineage, his influence extends to the whole culture through his biography and his songs.

Another important figure who influenced the course of Tibetan Buddhism is Sakya Pandita (1182-1251) and a leader in the Sakya sect. His role consisted in converting the Mongol Khan (ruler) Godan and establishing a patron-priest relationship with the Mongols, thereby avoiding the invasion of Tibet. Sakya sect leaders became teachers of the Mongols, while Sakya lamas became the political overseers of Tibet. Eventually, the religion of Tibet was adopted by Kublai Khan in 1247 and as a result, there were close relations between Tibet and Mongolia which continued until the Mongol power declined and they lost interest in Tibet.

An outcome of this development was the establishment of the political and spiritual authority of the office of Dalai Lama and its peculiar form of succession. The name Dalai Lama is Mongolian and means “Ocean of Wisdom.” He is believed to be the incarnation of the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara (t. *Chenrezig*), the Bodhisattva of Compassion. In the 15th century the Gelukpa sect succeeded the Sakyas as rulers of Tibet and the Altan Khan (Golden Ruler) bestowed the title Dalai Lama in 1578 when he met Sonam Gyatso. This title was applied to his successors and predecessors, while the Lama gave the title King of Dharma, Divine Purity” to the Khan.³² The relation of the Khans and the Gelukpa sect grew, resulting in the assumption of political power in Tibet by the fifth Dalai Lama (1617-1682) as the first ruler of a unified Tibet. His center was at the Potala in Lhasa.

The institution of the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama began with the death of Sonam Gyatso who converted the Mongols to the Gelukpa sect.³³ It was believed that Sonam Gyatso made a promise to return after his death. After the death of a Dalai Lama leading lamas hold a search for the rebirth of the preceding Lama. The determination of the successor often depended on a prediction given by the current Dalai Lama where he might be reborn and recognition of objects belonging to the prior Lama by the candidate. Since the candidate would be small child, perhaps about 2 years old, his education would be in the hands of a regency belonging to the Gelukpa school. The character, abilities and political situation of the later Dalai Lamas varied and reveal problems in the method of selection. The 5th, 7th, 13th and the present 14th Dalai Lama are among the most competent and effective.

In the 18th century the Manchu rulers in China created the office of Pan-chen Lama as the embodiment of Amitabha Buddha and a competitor to the Dalai Lama. Panchen Lama's title is a combination of *pan-dita* or scholar and *chen-po* meaning great. He is believed to be the incarnation of Amitabha Buddha and ranks second in authority to the Dalai Lama with his center at Tashilumpo monastery which also belongs to the Gelukpa school.

This rivalry was cultivated by the Chinese and the British. With the Communists, as the Nationalists before them, the Pan-chen Lama was exiled to China and regarded as the head of all Tibet. The last Pan-chen Lama died several years ago.

Among the lamas generally there are two types: the carnate and the incarnate. The incarnate lamas are those believed to be incarnations of previous teachers, sharing the sufferings of beings in the world and working to bring them salvation. They may be known as *Tulkus* or *Rinpoche* (as many as 300). Under these lamas are monks who have taken the religious life voluntarily.

The reincarnation of spiritual figures is based on the principle of karma and rebirth common to all traditions of Buddhism. Here the concept is made very concrete in determining leadership, though everyone in a broad sense is a reincarnation of previous beings. In the case of spiritually developed lamas and teachers, they are believed, as Bodhisattvas, to have the ability to see past lives and choose their next life.³⁴

The principle of re-incarnation of great Bodhisattvas and Buddhas or sainted masters of the past has removed the aristocratic domination of Tibetan Buddhism. The search for the successor can lead to a peasant hut, though perhaps some politics may also be involved. Still any lowly child, with the right karma and memory of past life, can qualify. Sometimes there has been more than one candidate. In any case, it is a concrete expression of the continuous presence of enlightenment within the world.

A major feature of Tibetan Buddhism is the development of four major sects or divisions, the *Nyingma*, *Kagyü*, *Sakya* and *Geluk*. In more recent times a non-sectarian movement developed termed *Ri-me* which means no side or non-partisan. While each has some points of distinction and differences in

method and terminology, they are generally bound together in a basic unity. According to John Powers' study,³⁵ they maintain a lineage from the Buddha and masters in India. They all stress the attitude of renunciation, a common rule of discipline drawn from the Sarvastivadin Buddhist tradition of India, a common canon of sacred texts and pursuit of enlightenment combining Sutras ascribed to the Buddha and varying texts and traditions of Tantra which is regarded as the highest or ultimate path to enlightenment. Philosophically they draw on the Middle Path (*Madhyamika*) Prasangika tradition teaching of logical negation of Nagarjuna (2nd c. C.E.) of India. They all hold in common the centrality of mind and its nature as clear light and emptiness as the basis of practice and realization. Essentially Buddhism is the training of the mind.

Tibetan teachers generally view the development of Buddha's as three turnings of the wheel of dharma going from Hinayana or lesser vehicle, the Mahayana, greater vehicle, and Vajrayana, Tibetan Buddhism itself. These differing forms of teaching are viewed as *upaya* or tactful devices of the Buddha in accord with the varying spiritual capacities of people. Each aspect of teaching has a particular focus or emphasis, namely, the Hinayana is a path of personal salvation from suffering; the Mahayana encourages compassion for others, while seeking their salvation. The Vajrayana seeks speedy enlightenment or Buddhahood in order to save all beings.

In brief the Nyingma sect, also known as "the Ancient School or Old Translation School, claims to be the oldest school based on a mythic lineage from Samanthabhadra, a primordial Buddha. Historically it claims Vajrasattva (55 C.E.) in India and Vimalamitra and Padmasambhava in Tibet as the sources of its teaching. Padmasambhava is regarded as the actual founder³⁶ and the most influential in converting Tibet. It is based on the early translations made under King Songtsen Gampo during the initial spread of Buddhism. The lamas are married and not monks.

Nyingma is noted for the idea of hidden teaching (*terma*) or treasures which can be revealed in times of need and the *tertens* or Bodhisattvas who are able to discover them when they are needed. This has enabled the tradition to be flexible and innovative in the maintenance of tradition. Another distinctive feature is the practice of *dzogchen* ("great perfection") on the highest level of Tantra which transcends the gradualist path and ordinary knowing. With *dzogchen* after a period of preparation, the adept spontaneously and effortlessly realizes the unity of appearances and emptiness. It is the awareness of immediacy of the pure mind of emptiness or enlightenment that pervades all reality beyond visualizations or discursive thought. The practice of *dzogchen* enables the practitioner to achieve Buddhahood and help all others through perceiving the nature of mind in all experiences.

The Kagyu sect means "teaching lineage" denoting teachings that have been transmitted through a line of masters from Tilopa (988-1069) in India and then to Naropa (1016-1100), the abbot of Nalanda. His disciple Marpa

mentioned above brought the teaching to Tibet. Milarepa was the most famous representative of this sect.

Among its various teachings, the Kagyu stress the Mahamudra or “great seal.” They regard this teaching as the direct experience of the essence of Buddhism in a fashion similar to dzogchen in the Nyingma sect. Through its own methods of discipline, it aims at awareness of the true nature of mind by following a process described as: basis, path and fruit. In this process the mind becomes focused and stabilized, making possible the realization of the nature of mind. It is the recognition that all perceptions are of the nature of dreams, illusory and empty, going beyond conceptuality.

Another meditation practice is called Cho or “cutting off” and aims at the conquest of one’s attachment to ego. The practice includes visualizations, rituals and prayers, while overcoming demons which hinder one’s liberation. The goal is the realization of the emptiness of phenomena, while cultivating mental purity and an attitude of self-sacrifice for the sake of others.

The Sakyas, though tracing their lineage back to a monk Virupa in India, the first Sakya monastery was established 1073 in Tibet. It is particularly known for its traditions of scholarship, holding that Tantra practice must be based on a deep knowledge of the texts. There have been many centers of scholarship among its monasteries.

Sakya Pandita, whom we noted above in connection with the conversion of the Mongols, is considered one of the most important persons in Sakya history with many legends surrounding his birth and life. His name Sakya Pandita means “scholar of the Sakyas” and he reputedly has authored numerous works dealing with “philosophy, music, grammar poetics and epistemology.”³⁷ However, he gained notoriety through his political activity, linking the status of the Sakya sect to that of the Mongols, as well as the formation of the Tibetan theocracy.

Sakya is noted also for the meditative practice of Lamdre which means “path and fruit” or “path including its fruit,” said to be developed by Virupa in India as the basis of the tradition. The path and fruit are simultaneous realizations. The exact nature of this practice is little understood because it is regarded as very secret and profound, being passed on only in oral tradition. As in other schools the practices aim at the realization of the illusory character of all distinctions in ordinary perception and that everything is a manifestation of mind. The realization of this awareness is Buddhahood.

The Gelukpa sect originated with the famous reformer and teacher Tsong Khapa (1357-1419). He became a scholar at an early age, studying in various traditions such as the Kadampa, Kagyu and Naropa, while engaging in various methods of meditation. He wrote numerous treatises, being inspired by the teaching of Atisha, mentioned above, and also a reformer.

The name of the sect means “system of virtue” and stresses the maintenance of strict Vinaya or monastic discipline, as well as scholarship and tantric practice. Intellectual development, analytical reasoning and debate

are encouraged. The tradition of monasticism and scholarship has continued to the present time.

The association of the Gelukpa sect and the third Dalai Lama, who was also the grandson of Altan Khan, the leader of the Mongols, led to its involvement in Tibetan politics. The fifth Dalai Lama, considered one of the greatest Tibetan rulers, was also of the Gelukpa school which thereafter took charge of training future Dalai Lamas.

The Rime movement is considered not as a sect but a perspective or orientation³⁸ with its roots in the Nyingma and Kagyu traditions. There are numerous teachers who contributed to the formation of this approach which never became a highly organized, independent sect. Essentially, the movement emerged as a counter to the isolation of the various sects from each other, each believing in the total sufficiency of their particular teaching. While observing the differences between the respective sects, it advocates understanding other sects and attempts to focus their underlying unity in aiming at the same realization and goal. A leading contemporary exponent of this point of view is Ringu Tulku who maintains that while it was historically possible in earlier ages to remain isolated in one's own tradition, modern times require that Buddhists, and perhaps all people, appreciate traditions other than their own, even though they have their roots in their own tradition.³⁹

A highly distinctive feature of the various Tibetan sects is tantric practice. Tantra itself means "loom" or "to weave." It suggests the interweaving and interdependence of all aspects of reality and experience. An esoteric teaching its practice developed within Hindu religious tradition, as well as in Buddhism. Tantric practices are reserved for adepts who have undergone rigorous training prescribed and monitored by one's guru-lama.

The practices include the use of complex rituals, comprised of spells, chants, gestures, symbols of various kinds and cosmic representations. Prominent among these elements are *mudra*, hand symbols or gestures, *mantra*, spells or invocations, together with *mandalas*, sacred cosmic diagrams often in the form of a circle.

Tantra employs mantras for transforming the universe. A mantra is a magical, sacred word or phrase, possessing great spiritual power. The term Mantrayana (Mantra vehicle) is often used to highlight the use of spells and chants in the ritual and yogic meditations. Mantras assist the experience of uniting with or becoming a deity and then reducing the visualization to emptiness. This effort reveals that all reality is mind-produced and empty. The most famous mantra is the *Om Mani Padme Hum*. The two middle terms means jewel and lotus and suggest that the truth is in the heart of the teaching.

There are hand-symbols and actions that represent aspects of spiritual reality. These are mudras. The position of the hands in Buddha images display various mudra and define the meaning of the respective image. The *vajra* implement which is often held in the hand of an icon is a symbol for the state of enlightened conscious. The term vajra means "diamond" and suggests the

firmness and determination with which one approaches the discipline, as well as signifying the nature of the wisdom attained. This symbol has also given its name to the teaching, Vajrayana.

Mandalas are sacred diagrams of spiritual reality and may be temporary constructions, ritually produced, using many types of materials such as sand in various colors. They may also be given artistic representation as wall hangings. The mandalas are important for initiation and meditation, appearing in the form of a palace. Each element bears spiritual meaning. One of the most prominent is the Kalachakra mandala which includes 722 deities, beneficent or wrathful, representing aspects of reality and consciousness.⁴⁰

As we have noted, there are hosts of deities, buddhas and bodhisattvas making up the Tibetan pantheon in the mandalas. However, the most important for the tradition is the Bodhisattva of Compassion (S. Avalokiteshvara), known in East Asia as Kuan-yin in China and Kannon in Japan, and in Tibet as Chenrezig. His mantra is *Om Mani Padme Hum*, the Jewel in the Lotus which is believed to contain the essence of Buddhism and is written on prayer wheels or carved in stone. As the representation of the quality of compassion he became the archetypal model for human emulation and is said to be embodied in the lives of significant people who have benefited Tibet such as King Songtsen Gampo and above all the Dalai Lama himself.

The counterpart of Chenrezig (Avalokitesvara) as the expression of female compassion is the beloved savior-goddess Tara. As the Kings are seen as embodiments of Chenrezig, so their wives are incarnations of Tara.⁴¹ Each Bodhisattva responds to the prayers of believers. Tara appears in various colors and forms, green, white and red and she has qualities of generosity, and bountifulness.⁴² Other important figures are the Bodhisattvas Manjusri who embodies wisdom and Vajrapani who symbolizes enlightenment.

Tantric practice aims at the overcoming all inhibitions and mental discriminations predicated on discriminating good and evil, pleasant and distasteful. In effect, it tries to realize in experience the non-duality taught intellectually in Mahayana Buddhism and Madhyamika philosophy. It is most notorious for advocating use of sexuality as a basis for the experience of the bliss of enlightenment. It should be understood that the intention of this practice and imagery is not simply to engage in sexual activity for the purpose of sexual activity. It is to place sex in the service of spiritual realization.

The power of human desire is directed to the experience of spiritual bliss, based on the principle of non-duality. Highest yogic Tantra aims at employing the power hidden within human desire to realize Buddhahood as the path to save all beings. Images often portray the copulation of a Bodhisattva and his consort in the position known as *yab-yum*. Yab represents the male principle of compassion, while yum is the female aspect of wisdom. However, it is a question whether this practice is literally enacted in meditation or is employed as a metaphor.

Because of its sexual imagery and practices, it was viewed as corrupt, immoral and unBuddhist when it was first encountered by western people. However, the goal is the visualization of an alternative spiritual reality to one's egoistic self through concentrated meditation practice and guidance of the teacher. Assimilating to that reality, one may develop the qualities of compassion and wisdom that are the ideals of Buddhism.

An important outcome of this belief system is the exaltation of the guru or teacher (*lama*) who is believed to embody the wisdom and compassion of the Buddhas. It encourages guru-worship or adulation. As example we read:

Mentor like a gem embodied, diamond
bolt,
Live compassion from the great bliss
element
You bestow in the fraction of a second
The supreme exaltation of the three
bodies-
I bow to the lotus of your foot!⁴³

Another important aspect of Tibetan Buddhism is the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* which is famous for its detailed narrative of what happens on the death of an individual and giving instruction on how to make a positive transition into the next life. Tibetan Buddhism holds in common with other Buddhist traditions the emphasis on impermanence signified in human life by illness and death. However, Tibetan Buddhism offers more detail on the process of dying and its ensuing results. Not a pessimistic volume, it outlines the way a person, even after death in the "Between" period before being reborn can achieve enlightenment and ultimate liberation. Hence, its full title as translated by Dr. Robert Thurman is the "Great Book of Natural Liberation through Understanding in the Between." (*Bardo Thodol*).⁴⁴

The text is believed to have been composed by the great teacher Padmasambhava (late 8th C.), the founder of the Nyingma school. They believe he wrote it as a hidden text (*terma*, see above p. 8) to be revealed when needed at a later time and revealed by the tertön Karma Lingpa in the 14th century. Though a text originating in the Nyingma school, it is a religious classic employed by all schools and influential beyond Tibet.

Essentially the book offers instruction to the departed from this life to assist them on reaching enlightenment as they process through the Between which covers a period of 49 days after the death of the person. If one employs the text before dying to prepare for one's death, as well as following its prescriptions after death, one can reach ultimate enlightenment and avoid unfortunate rebirths in the traditional Buddhist six paths of gods, humans, angry spirits, beasts, hungry ghosts, and hells. It is based on the assumptions of karma and transmigration in Buddhism.

The Between involves experiences of encounters with Yama the king of the dead, a series of judgments, and depending on one's karma, encounters with fearsome deities. What is distinctive in the Tibetan teaching is the possibility that a well-prepared individual can determine her destiny in the Between by influencing the process through being conscious of the alternatives as a result of training in this life under the guidance of a master who is himself an adept in the tantric teaching. It presents the hopeful assumption that through spiritual discipline one may control one's own destiny every step of the way, even beyond physical death in this world.

Further the teaching is based on the belief in the power of the mind to shape reality. It is our minds that direct our actions and shape our world. We are always trying to conform our world in our own interests and desires. Tibetan Buddhism, as well as Esoteric Buddhism-Shingon Buddhism in Japan, places special emphasis in knowing one's own mind, one's true nature. As the mind becomes enlightened in this life and beyond, the goal of Buddhahood can be achieved more speedily together with saving all beings.

The teaching is subtle, since it views all the world, here and now and in the future, as a projection of mind. However, because of our fundamental ignorance of our true nature, the world appears objective to us, inspiring our passions, fear and suffering. The terrors of afterlife, as well as its joys, are also viewed as objective realities until we grasp that they are really projections of our mental predispositions, influenced by our passions and actions. It is the purpose of the teaching to arouse this awareness and recognize that the "objective" terrors are simply produced by our own ignorant mind. It is like a dream situation in which the dream seems real until we wake up, realizing it was only a dream.

The text also presupposes freedom over against the determinism seemingly implied in the notion of karma. Also, if there were no impermanence and change there could be no freedom. A fixed reality rules out freedom. Hence, Buddhism stresses the freedom of the will within a context of contingencies and conditions that permit awareness of alternatives and choice. The *Book of the Dead* focuses attention on these possibilities, despite the confusion and terrors that the individual faces in the afterlife without having adequate preparation.

Not only does the individual struggle on her own, but she can be aided by loved ones and friends through their offerings, prayers and services. It is natural also that the more preparation she has before the event of death, the more successful she may be in the process.

In death, unbelieving people are terrified by the delusions their karma give rise to, eventually fleeing to a womb and taking rebirth. The devotee, on the other hand, on death goes into samadhi trance, retains his consciousness and is liberated from rebirth so that he can choose a rebirth suitable to his Bodhisattva progress.

The *Wheel of Life and Death* is a graphic representation of the process of death and birth based on the 12 link chain of dependent co-origination (dependent origination, *see above section on early Buddhism*). In the form of a wheel various states of life and after-life are held in the mouth of a great dragon-like figure representing Time. At the center are the forces of ignorance, desire and hatred that drive the wheel.

Tibetan Buddhism as perhaps the latest development in the history of Buddhism, has gathered up into itself many of the methods and teachings of Buddhist tradition. It also has features that are distinctive, though elements may be found in other Buddhist traditions. It has attracted many western people, particularly among the intellectual community, because it encourages scholarly study, as well as religious cultivation. Numerous Tibetan-sponsored publishers produce a wide variety of literatures. The major national Buddhist magazine in the U.S. is *Tricycle*, a quarterly which offers a diversity of articles on Buddhism in America, though it is based in Tibetan tradition. More recently the *Buddha Dharma* magazine has appeared, very similar to the *Tricycle*. The movies, *Seven Years in Tibet* and *Kundun*, as well as such actors as Richard Gere and Uma Thurman whose name refers to Shakti, the female consort of Shiva, an Indian God, illustrate the gradual penetration of Western Culture by Buddhism. Uma Thurman's father, Robert Thurman, is the leading western teacher of Tibetan tradition and a close friend of the Dalai Lama. As the future unfolds, undoubtedly Tibetan Buddhism may lose its original geographical designation and become a part of the growing American or Western Buddhism, transmitting its important insights to our culture and religious environment.

Page 2
P 2
line 4

.....The question can be asked, in which direction did the stories and influence flow ? Each story reflects the basic motif of IT'S respective tradition,.....

Page 7
P 2
line 3

...rather BEEN committed.....

Page 12
P 2
line 3

Rubruck (misspelled)

Page 19
P 3
line 7

knowledge of Buddhism greatly increased. (delete repeated 'increased')

Page 20
P 2
line 7

They sought less to understand and study THAN to judge and convert,.....

Page 22
P 1
line 2

from THIS variety of studies focused.....

line 7

....concept of nothingness (void or emptiness) was really THE reflection of a growing concern over the rise of western nihilism, which was a result of the turbulent TIMES of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

line 14

...about themselves. They attributed their own 'SELF-ORIENTED' preoccupations to Asia;.....

Page 27
P 2
line 7

RhyS (correct spelling)

Page 28
P 1
line 5

1823- 1900.....editing the SERIES (delete letter o)

Page 29
P 4
line 2

..occult teachings CLAIMING to be the truth of the universe REVEALED to Madam Blatvatsky.

Page 37
P 2
line 5

.....470 million (delete s) people (by his reckoning) ; At the end of the 19th century that was one third of humanity.

Page 38
P 2
line 4
came TO the attention.....

Page 40
P 2
line 5

....which all dharma interpenetrateS with all other dharma;

Pages 43& 44 already edited.

Page 56
P 1
line 3

were. Perhaps in Thorough's contemplations of life and nature we see a forecast of American Buddhism as it unfolds before us today.

Page 61
P 1
line 7
immigration (spelling)

Chapter Seven Buddhism Flows From East to West.

The Ancient Period

There is an ancient “prophecy” in Japan that depicts Buddhism moving East from India, through Central Asia, China, Korea and finally Japan. From Japan, Buddhism will reach the world. This “prophecy” confers a divine destiny on Japan to be the bearer of Buddhism to the world. However, there are earlier Ashokan pillar edicts located in present Afghanistan around Kandahar which indicate the presence of Buddhist missionaries perhaps sent by King Asoka (3rd cent B.C.E).⁴⁵

Asoka is also said to have sent missions to South Asian countries such as Sri Lanka and areas now known as Myanmar (Burma), Thailand (Siam) and Cambodia and as far as Greece. Though there is little evidence of Buddhism in Greek records, whatever those missions may have been, they seem to have made no lasting impression. It is notable that in the wake of Alexander’s invasions, Buddhism became the religion of the Graeco-Bactrian kingdoms. Most notable is the powerful King Menander (155-130 B.C.E.) who is said to have been converted as the result of a dialogue with the monk Nagasena. This alleged dialogue is recorded in the *Questions of King Milinda (Menander)*⁴⁶.

Menander ruled in the region of Kabul in Afghanistan and the Punjab in Northwest India. Apart from any specific missions to transmit Buddhism, it was probably carried by monks, merchants and travelers westward over the Silk route to Greece and western countries.⁴⁷

In the Christian Era there are few evidences of Buddhism in Western sources. Suggestive is the fact that the New Testament story of the Prodigal Son (*Luke* 15: 12-32) is very similar to the story in the *Lotus Sutra*, Chapter Four. The question can be asked in which direction did the stories and influence flow? Each story reflects the basic motif of the respective tradition, grace in the Christian context and nurture toward Enlightenment in the Buddhist context. In *I Corinthians* 13: 3, in the famous chapter on love, the Apostle Paul declares “I may give my body to be burnt (or in some texts: “even seek glory by self-sacrifice”) but if I have no love, I am none the better” [*The New English Bible*]. In early Christianity there is no indication of anyone who either burnt themselves or offered themselves in conspicuous self-sacrifice.

However, also in the *Lotus Sutra, Chapter Twenty-Three*, there is the story of the Bodhisattva Medicine King who offered his body as a sacrifice to the Buddha by burning his own body. It is possible that these legends could have been carried by travelers over trade routes and became known to Christian preachers, if not directly from the texts themselves. The power of the image of sacrifice was revived in modern times during the Vietnam War when Buddhist monks immolated themselves for the sake of peace.

Among later Christian writers, Clement of Alexandria (late 2nd Century), confusing Brahmin and Buddhist holy men, mentions: "Some, too, of the Indians obey the precepts of Buddha (*Boutta*); whom, on account of his extraordinary sanctity, they have raised to divine honours. ..." (*Stromata* I.) He also makes mention of the "Samanaeans among the Bactrians." The term Samanaean which means "wanderer" is said to be derived from *sramana*, the Buddhist title for a monk. However, it is uncertain.⁴⁸ whether this term applies specifically to Buddhist monks or some other type of religionist in India. Also it is not clear that descriptions of "Buddhists" are referring to the same group of people.⁴⁹

In the third century, Mani (216-277), a Persian and founder of Manicheism, a form of Gnosticism⁵⁰, placed himself in the line of Zoroaster, Buddha and Jesus in bringing God's revelation to the people of Mesopotamia. He may have encountered a form of Buddhism in Bactria in his travels, but he always called himself an "Apostle of Jesus Christ." His dualistic teaching influenced the theologian and church father, Augustine (A.D. 354-430).⁵¹

Though there are similarities and differences between Buddhism and Gnosticism, Buddhist scholars such as Edward Conze have observed possible connections of Buddhism and Gnosticism focusing on the principle of wisdom which was central in Mahayana Buddhism and Gnosticism, as well as aspects of "mind", "awareness" and "consciousness."

The Gnostic emphasis on wisdom as the basis of salvation and ignorance as the cause of suffering may have been influenced by Buddhist sources such as the *Perfection of Wisdom* texts which appear from the second century in Central Asia. Some also find their similarity by pointing to their apparent negative perspective on the human condition. There are also similarities between the Fire Sermon preached by the Buddha, in which all the senses are aflame with the fire of passion and the emphasis on the fire of desire, taught by Jesus, in the *Gospel of Thomas* which has a background of Gnosticism.

It has also been noted that while Buddhism and Gnosticism are similar in depicting various levels of spiritual realization, Buddhism differs from Gnosticism, which consigns some people to eternal perdition, while Buddhism holds that ultimately all beings attain Enlightenment.⁵²

Jerome (331-420), translator of the Latin Vulgate edition of the Bible, noted a tradition of the group known as gymnosophists,⁵³ perhaps again

confusing Indian religionists with Buddhists, who claimed their founder, Buddha, was born from the side of his virgin mother.

The legend of Josaphat and Barlaam reflects aspects of the life of Gautama. This story became very popular in medieval Europe, resulting in their elevation to sainthood in Western Christianity. The history of the legend is traced by Andrew D. White in his famous *History of the Warfare of Science and Theology*.⁵⁴

According to a legend of converts to Christianity in India, Josaphat was the son of a king who persecuted Christians. Since it was prophesied that the son would convert to Christianity, his father restricted him to the palace. However, the prince met a hermit Barlaam who converted him. The father tried to dissuade him but eventually became a Christian himself. Eventually Josaphat gave up his throne and joined his teacher Barlaam in the desert. When miracles took place at their graves in India, they became regarded as saints and the story spread widely through the writing of John of Damascus (676-d. 754-787). Enshrined in the cathedral in Toledo, Spain, Josaphat's feast day is November 27.

According to scholars, the story reflects Buddhist legend since the name Josaphat is derived from the term Bodhsattva. The life of Buddha with the prophecy of his future as the Buddha, his confinement to the palace, meeting a serene monk, renouncing his throne, and his lifelong dedication were transformed to that of a Christian saint and model.⁵⁵

Medieval Period

In the early Medieval period Nestorian Missionaries arrived in Chang-an during the Tang dynasty in 635. In the course of their efforts in translation and teaching, they absorbed influences from Buddhism and Taoism. One scroll known as the "Jesus Scroll" was found in a Dun-huang cave in China in the nineteenth century. Jason Barthasius has written:

The sutras fuse Buddhist, Christian and Taoist teachings together. Christian original sin is explained in the sutras to have occurred, or rather, have been committed, in "the garden of seed and fruit bearing trees." This imagery of the Garden of Eden with "seed and fruit bearing trees" has been said to allude to the Buddhist teaching of karma to remind the audience that man was responsible for the Christian fall. Another example of the blend of religious concepts is found in the presentation in the scrolls of Jesus, who rescues beings from samsara, the Buddhist cycle of rebirth.

A Nestorian stele found in Xian in 1825 combines the Christian cross, Taoist cloud symbol and a Buddhist lotus on the head of the monument. It is also suggested that the depiction of Kuan-yin as feminine was perhaps influenced

by the image of the Virgin Mary found in an ancient Nestorian pagoda, containing a manger scene which was discovered in 1998. These finds indicate the fusion of Buddhist and Christian concepts.⁵⁶

Among the most famous accounts which opened the world of Asia to Europeans Marco Polo (1254-1324) was perhaps the most famous. His detailed portrayals of the many peoples he encountered in his travels over the Silk Road, as well as his many years in the Mongol court of Kublai Khan (1215-1294), the grandson of the famous Genghis Khan, revealed the grandeur of Chinese culture to the West.

As founder of the Yuan dynasty, Kublai conquered China. The Khan initially expressed interest in Christianity as a means to civilize his people, but lacking adequate response from Rome, he turned to Buddhism and made Tibetan Buddhism the state religion.

Concerning the Mongol view of religion. Marco Polo quoted Khublai:

There are prophets who are worshipped and to whom everybody does reverence. The Christians say their god was Jesus Christ; the Saracens, Mohammed; the Jews, Moses; and the idolaters Sakamuni Borhan (that is, Sakiamuni Buddha, who was the first god of the idolaters); and I do honor and reverence all four, that is to him who is the greatest in heaven and more true, and him I pray to help me.⁵⁷

Marco Polo's work: *Description of the World* is significant, despite his limited observations of Chinese culture itself. Living many years in the Mongol court, his work inspired travelers thereafter.⁵⁸

Other visitors to the Mongol court from Europe were John of Plano of Carpini (1246) and William of Rubruck (1254).⁵⁹ While apparently contemporaries of Marco Polo, there is no indication in their accounts of their meeting. We do not learn a great deal about Buddhism directly through these visitors, though there are some hints of its presence. Their temples are called "idol temples." John's text describes religious customs of the Mongols, while Rubruck relates in more detail his interactions with Nestorians.

Rubruck, however, had a debate in Cathay (China) with the "idolaters" on issues of creation, afterlife and God. They are called "Tuins" which is derived from the Chinese *Tao-yen*⁶⁰, or "man of the Path," referring to priests. The discussion was overseen by three umpires, a Saracen (Muslim), a Christian and a Tuin-Buddhist. Though the Buddhist suggested beginning the discussion with questions of creation or afterlife, Rubruck held that it should begin with God as the source of all things and the true issue of faith. The umpires agreed. From Rubruck's point of view, he bested the 'idolaters' who appeared contradictory or vague. The term Buddha was not used nor are specific Buddhist doctrines taken up. The record of the discussion is from the perspective of Christianity and, in a sense, addressed issues that even today are raised by Christians in encounter with Buddhism.

Finally, though they did not agree, they all drank together. The Khan then questioned the Christians, indicating that he also believed in one God, but though the Christians had received scriptures, they did not follow them.

After that he began confiding to me his creed: "We Mo'al," he said, "believe that there is only one God, by whom we live and by whom we die, and for whom we have an upright heart." Then I said: "May it be so, for without His grace this cannot be." He asked what I had said; the interpreter told him. Then he added: "But as God gives us the different fingers of the hand, so he gives to men divers ways [J: several paths]. God gives you the Scriptures, and you Christians keep them not. You do not find (in them, for example) that one should find fault with another [J: abuse another], do you?" "No, my lord," I said; "but I told you from the first that I did not want to wrangle with anyone." "I do not intend to say it," he said, "for you [J: I am not referring to you]. Likewise you do not find that a man should depart from justice for money." "No, my lord," I said. "And truly I came not to these parts to obtain money; on the contrary I have refused what has been offered me." And there was a secretary present, who bore witness that I refused an *iascot* and silken cloths. "I dare not say it," he said, "for you. God gave you therefore the Scriptures, and you do not keep them; He gave us diviners, we do what they tell us, and we live in peace."

While the Khan was not a Buddhist, he expressed tolerance for all religions and followed his traditional religion. Soon after, Rubruck returned to Europe.

Francis Xavier (1501-1552), a leading Jesuit missionary and associate of Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Jesuit Order, arrived in Goa in India in 1541. Making his way to Malacca and possibly the Philippines, he determined to go to Japan, residing there from 1549-1551. He initially arrived at Kagoshima in Kyushu.

Xavier is considered a trailblazer for Jesuit missions in Japan. His grand vision was to convert the entire Japanese nation by convincing the leaders of the truth of Christianity. However, this vision failed because he could not get to see the Emperor and many leaders were unresponsive. Through his assistant, a Japanese known as Anjiro (also Yasujiro) Xavier engaged in translation work, using the book of Matthew in the New Testament and a catechetical text.

Intiially, he used terms from Shingon Buddhism to speak about God, particularly the term *Dainichi*, since that was Anjiro's background. While there were a few converts, he later came to realize that there were significant differences between the Christian teaching and the Buddhist. On the basis of similarities between Christianity and Shingon Buddhism in ritual, the Shingon monks were friendly to the Christians.

However, as he became more knowledgeable about Buddhism, Xavier discovered that the word for God, *Dainichi* (the Great Sun Buddha) was not the creator of the universe and had immoral aspects from his point of view. He, thereupon, substituted the word *Deus* (Latin for God). As opposition grew *Deus* was pronounced by Buddhists as *Daiuso*, the Great Lie.)

Xavier apparently encountered Pure Land teaching, perhaps Jodo Shinshu, though the name of the sect is not mentioned. Nevertheless, he noted the resemblance to the Lutheran teaching of faith alone that was spreading in

Europe.⁶¹ Attempting to rebut the teaching, he commented on Amitabha's "alleged penance for the redemption of his followers.,⁶² and is reputed to have exclaimed that the "accursed Lutheran heresy has reached Japan!"

Xavier also criticized Buddhist monks for immorality, while the Buddhists retorted that Christians ate human flesh, referring to the words of institution in the liturgy of the Mass. Despite the rising conflict, numerous conversions were made reaching 1000 people in the course of his ministry in Japan. Xavier finally returned to India and never again returned to Japan. Though he had made many good Japanese friends and converts, there is no indication that he attained any great understanding of Buddhism or the culture.

The Jesuit missionary Matteo Ricci (1552-1610) is considered the founder of Catholic missions in China. Arriving in Macau in 1581, he adopted the appearance of an intellectual in the spirit of the renaissance, even dressing as a Chinese scholar. He held Chinese culture in high respect and was highly respected.⁶³

Ricci engaged in dialogue and debate with Buddhists and Taoists, rejecting the syncretism of Chinese religion and also viewing them as competing faiths. Separating Confucianism, which he admired, from Buddhism and Taoism, permitted him to cultivate Confucian scholars. He could then attack Buddhism and Daoism, and encourage a subtle iconoclasm against them among Christians.

He also encouraged the wide use of the figure of the Virgin Mary in China, because the figure of Jesus on the cross seemed too ghastly for Chinese sensibilities. The crucifix was associated by some Chinese with black magic. Consequently, Ricci had many images of Mary painted or carved which became very popular. At New Year, associated with festivities, images would be hung on doors and they could also be used in exorcism. However, the missionaries had to contend with the resemblance between Mary and Kuan-yin, the Bodhisattva of Compassion, while many thought her to be the Christian God.

Ricci also devoted himself to translation of Chinese classics into Latin, favoring the high moral stance and rationality of Confucianism. He also was an advocate of scientific research in maps, math and astronomy.

Initially the Christian clergy were confused with Buddhist priests because of similarities in dress. Because of the low social regard for Buddhism, they received permission to distinguish themselves by growing beards and adapting their dress. Also the Buddhist oriented terminology describing them was altered to make clear the difference between the religions. The Jesuit missionaries inclined toward the Confucian scholars and developed positive relations through their lectures and scientific knowledge. Ricci selected the term *Daoren* to describe himself. It means "Man of the Way." Later the terms *Sidou* (director) and *Shenfu* were used. *Shenfu* means "Spiritual Father" and is also used even now in Japan (J. *Shinpu*).⁶⁴

Neo-Confucianism was the dominant teaching among the Chinese intellectuals and leaders who looked down on Buddhism as a superstition. However, Ricci also had friends among the Buddhists with whom he debated, but he believed that Confucianism itself was consistent with Christianity in its high moral and intellectual character. He opposed the current thought in China that the three teachings, Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism were one teaching and tried to convince Buddhists of this truth. It was important to dissociate Confucianism from Buddhism and Taoism because in his view China, represented by Confucianism, had the highest civilization outside the Christian sphere.⁶⁵

As we have noted, Marco Polo and subsequent visitors commented on the monks at the Mongol-Chinese court. However, information about Buddhism reaching the West was very limited until the middle of the nineteenth century.⁶⁶

Historically Buddhism spread most successfully into Northwest India, thence into Central Asia and toward the east to China, Korea and Japan. It later penetrated into Tibet and Mongolia which we have discussed above. For Western Europe, Buddhism remained generally unknown until modern times when knowledge of Buddhism greatly increased as a result of contact with Western colonists, missionary-scholars and merchants. However, there was still confusion on the precise nature of Buddhism.

Francis Xavier simply denigrated Buddhism and the monks, while early Christian observers were unclear whether Buddhism with all its ritual and pageantry might be a corrupt form of Christianity, needing only to recover its true past. They did not deal with actual Buddhist teachings. As Droit writes: They sought less to understand and study than to judge and convert, and consequently were relatively lacking in information that might help advance an effective study of Buddhism.”⁶⁷

Modern Period

Of the numerous texts produced in this period, Droit comments:

These texts, which occasionally had been widely disseminated, tended to be apologetic in nature. They sought less to understand and study than to judge and convert, consequently were relatively lacking in information that might help advance an effective study of Buddhism.⁶⁸

The Eighteenth Century in Europe witnessed the the flowering of European culture, the age of reason, stimulating the arts, philosophy and literature. It was the Age of Enlightenment. During this period, the knowledge of Buddhism increased significantly. A process was initiated in which Buddhism, despite many misunderstandings, gradually developed into a field of knowledge, largely in the Nineteenth Century, combining the study of languages, such as Pali, Sanskrit and other relevant languages, translation of texts and interpretive works.

The understanding of Buddhism that emerged from the variety of studies focused on the issue of “nothingness,” the presumed pessimism of Buddhism, and the mélange of superstitions encountered in various Buddhist societies. Droit points out that Western concern and criticism of the Buddhist concept of nothingness (void) was really a reflection of concern for rising western nihilism as a result of the turbulent history of the late Eighteenth and developments in the Nineteenth Century. Westerners were fascinated with Buddhist “emptiness,” not for itself but because, as Droit notes: “Thinking they were talking about the Buddha, Westerners were talking about themselves. They attributed their own preoccupations to Asia; they projected upon Asia their own fears, their own confusion.”⁶⁹

As information and understanding increased, Buddha eventually came to be understood as the founder of a specific tradition of Indian religion. Scholars gradually clarified the true relation between Buddhism and Brahmanism, and the historical character of Buddha displaced early identifications with ancient races such as Ethiopians or numerous ancient mythic deities such as Shiva, Vishnu, Osiris, Hermes, Mercury, Noah, Moses, Thoth, Odin or Wotan. Buddha came to be recognized as a great philosopher through the light of scholarship, which moved from myth to history. The Buddha’s relation to Brahmanism was also clarified in the process when his teaching was recognized as a deviant from Brahman orthodoxy, rejecting the authority of the Vedas and the caste system.

Some English and French clergy living in Asia collected Buddhist texts and sent them home where scholars undertook the quite laborious work of translating them into English, French and German. The list of notable scholars is too lengthy to enumerate them all, but modern Buddhist studies is deeply indebted to these scholars for their persistent and devoted efforts. We can name only a few and point out their achievements. First there is the Roman Catholic Bishop Paul Ambroise Bigandet (1813-1894). Stationed in Burma, he wrote the groundbreaking *Life or Legend of Gaudama: the Buddha of the Burmese* (originally in French). He was sympathetic with Buddhism and observing numerous parallels with Christianity, he wrote: “In reading the particulars of the life of Buddha it is impossible not to feel reminded of many circumstances relating to our Savior’s life as sketched by the evangelists. It may be said in favor of Buddhism that no philosophic-religious system has ever

upheld to an equal degree the notions of a savior and deliverer, and the necessity of his mission for procuring the salvation of man."⁷⁰

A major figure was M. Eugene Burnouf (1801-1852), who authored numerous pioneering texts such as *An Introduction to the History of Indian Buddhism*, (1844;1876). This work was enormously influential as a thorough scholarly approach. Nevertheless, Burnouf described Nirvana as Nihilism, feeding into western Christian criticism of Buddhism. *Other significant works of Burnouf were Discourse on Sanskrit and its Literature; the Bhagavata Purana, a poetic history of Krishna (1840); and a translation of the Lotus Sutra from the Sanskrit (1852).*

Burnouf was important in the discussion of the meaning of Nirvana because of the high level of his scholarly research. He was invoked by the *Cyclopædia of Political Science, Political Economy, and the Political History of the United States by the Best American and European Writers*, edited by John Lalor, in 1881 to support the interpretation of Buddhist Nirvana as "nothingness from which man never returns because he no longer exists...." This interpretation of Nirvāna is adopted by Eugene Burnouf, the most competent judge in these questions..." Observing the seeming contradiction between the seemingly nihilistic concept of Nirvana and the devotion of the masses to the Buddha, the writer declares: "For them Nirvāna is nothingness; that is the most definite and deplorable assurance that man can give himself against every return to life under whatever form it may be."⁷¹

However Burnouf's work had significance in other directions. It was through his study that Henry David Thoreau, Ralph Waldo Emerson and others in the American Transcendental School came to know Buddhism.⁷² The thinkers of the American movement will be discussed later. (see pp. 75-78)

Among the host of Buddhist scholars in the Nineteenth Century, perhaps few would surpass the work of T. W. Rhys Davids and his wife Carolyn. This couple is noted for initiating the Pali Text Society and the translation of the Theravada Buddhist Canon which stands as a monument of scholarly achievement and is still in active use today. Rhy Davids was also a Buddhist follower and declared:

Buddhist or not Buddhist, I have examined every one of the great religious systems of the world, and in none of them have I found anything to surpass, in beauty and comprehensiveness, the Noble Eight-fold Path of the Buddha. I am content to shape my life according to that Path.⁷³

While it is not possible to discuss all the many scholars who contributed to the progress of modern knowledge and understanding of Buddhism, we should simply note a few. Among these are Max Mueller (1823-1900) who is famous for editing the *Sacred Books of the East* and early disputed that Buddhism is nihilistic; Aurel Stein (1861-1943) who investigated the famous Silk Road, Samuel Beal (1869) who translated texts and wrote about Chinese Buddhist pilgrims to India, the most famous being Hsuan-tsang's *Records of the Western World*; Charles Eliot who wrote extensively on Hinduism, Buddhism and Japanese Buddhism while in the British foreign service;

Hermann Oldenberg (1854-1920); Brian H. Hodgson (1800-1894); Carolyn Rhys-Davids (1857-1942); I. B. Horner, a woman scholar who wrote *Women under Primitive Buddhism* and made the classic translation of the *Vinaya Pitika*, from 1938-1966.⁷⁴ The Quangduc.com web page lists 89 scholars through modern history that have contributed to the knowledge and understanding of Buddhism in the West. However, even that list is incomplete.

On a more popular level, in 1880 Madame Helena Blavatsky (1831-1891), the notorious founder of the Theosophy or Divine Wisdom movement, together with Colonel Henry Steele Olcott (1832-1907), became Buddhists in Ceylon taking the five precepts in 1880 and are considered the first Westerners to do so.

Theosophy was a combination of esoteric and occult teachings purporting to be reveal the truth of the universe to Madam Blavatsky. She was a prolific writer with an extensive bibliography. However, she did not consider her teaching as simply Buddhist, but as the wisdom of the Masters who are the source of all religions.⁷⁵

However, Col. Olcott took Buddhism seriously. He produced *A Buddhist Catechism* in 1881 and together with his speeches and many other writings, as well as efforts in education, he inspired a revival of Buddhism in Sri Lanka (Ceylon). Eventually while Blavatsky and Olcott parted ways, he remains very highly revered in Sri Lanka.

Anagarika Dharmapala (1864-1933) was Olcott's most important disciple. Dharmapala founded the Mahabodhi Society in India in 1891, and spread Buddhism to New York and established the Mahavihara (Great Monastery) in London. The waves of influence spread out as ripples, opening Buddhism to the Western world.

It should be noted that Dharmapala came to Hawaii in 1893 and gave precepts to Mrs. Mary E. Foster, a Hawaiian lady, who donated land to the Honpa Hongwanji Mission for their temple, and established Foster Garden with Bodhi tree plants from India. She also became a major supporter of Dharmapala establishing the Foster-Robinson Hospital for the Poor which is still part of the Colombo General Hospital, and the Foster House in Ealing in London, England as the first Buddhist mission outside Asia. Her significance is described in eloquent terms:

Mrs. Mary Foster, it was, who fed the fuel to the flame which Anagarika Dharmapala had lighted so that it continued to leap upwards and gain in strength as it was fanned by the breezes of adversity. She also gave her moral support and her birthday, being separated by only three days from that of the man she cherished and assisted in every way in her power, is remembered with his, for without her he would never have been able to accomplish all he did.⁷⁶

Among important popular expressions of Buddhism which appeared in near the end of the Nineteenth Century, are Paul Carus' *The Gospel of Buddha* (1894) and Edwin Arnold's *The Light of Asia*; or, "*The Great*

Renunciation (Mahabinishkramana) Being the Life and Teaching of Gautama, Prince of India and Founder of Buddhism (as told in verse by an Indian Buddhist)."

Paul Carus (1852-1919) was born in Germany, son of a Reformed Church minister. He was touched by Asian influence which was growing in Europe. Eventually he moved to the United States where he pursued his spiritual search, establishing in 1887 two publications, *The Open Court* and *Monist*. These were both scholarly and popular. Carus was very active during the World Parliament of Religions in 1893 and afterward carried its ideal through his publications.

One of the important results of Carus's participation in the Parliament was the beginning of his relationship with the young D. T. Suzuki, who was introduced to him after the Parliament by the renowned, Zen teacher, Shaku Soyen. Suzuki was then a young man in his twenties, working as an editorial assistant for eleven years. This experience laid the groundwork for Suzuki's later activity as a world famous exponent of Zen Buddhism in the post World War II era, writing popular and scholarly texts in English, and particularly through the influential Buddhist journal, *Eastern Buddhist*.

Another significant work of Paul Carus was the publication of his *Gospel of Buddha*. Though the work was a popular text, it was roundly criticized by scholars, who claimed he had distorted the life of Buddha. Carus averred that he was not solving historical problems and was not a scholar, though he used scholarly resources of the time.

Nevertheless, many considered that it expressed the spirit of Buddhism. Shaku Soyen in Japan gave it to D. T. Suzuki to review. Suzuki thought it was very good and, at the behest of Soyen, translated it to Japanese. Later when Carus sought someone to assist in the translation of Lao-ti, Soyen sent Suzuki who then worked for Carus for eleven years.

The *Gospel of Buddha* depends on the work of a host of scholars and drawn from the sacred texts made available by them. The text is an effort to present the principles and spirit of Buddhism and to witness its success in its popularity and translation into many languages. It fulfilled a need to present Buddhism in a clear and understandable way. He acknowledges the sectarianism of Buddhism and Christianity and tries to provide a non-sectarian perspective. He has left aside the incredible and miraculous elements of the texts, holding only to those features of religious and philosophical importance. He attempted to refute the various criticisms of Buddhism concerning the self, its negativism or alleged pessimism and the understanding of Nirvana as nothingness. Carus writes:

Now, Buddhism is a religion which knows of no supernatural revelation, and proclaims doctrines that require no other argument than the "come and see." The Buddha bases his religion solely upon man's knowledge of the nature of things, upon provable truth. Thus, we trust that a comparison of Christianity with Buddhism will be a great help to distinguish in both religions the essential from the accidental, the eternal from the transient, the truth from the allegory in which it has found its

symbolic expression. We are anxious to press the necessity of discriminating between the symbol and its meaning, between dogma and religion, between metaphysical theories and statements of fact, between man-made formulas and eternal truth. And this is the spirit in which we offer this book to the public, cherishing the hope that it will help to develop in Christianity not less than in Buddhism the cosmic religion of truth. ...

A comparison of the many striking agreements between Christianity and Buddhism may prove fatal to sectarian conceptions of either religion, but will in the end help to mature our insight into the true significance of both.Above any Hinayana, Mahayana, and Mahasetu is the Religion of Truth.⁷⁷

The work became widely popular, used even as a textbook in Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and eventually regarded as a Buddhist classic.

Another significant text of the period which also became a popular classic, published in 1879, was Edwin Arnold's *Light of Asia*. Arnold (1832-1904) was in government service in India but was also a writer. After joining the London Daily Telegraph he penned this poem. The poem was criticized as distorting Buddhist teaching and expressing a positive attitude to a non-Christian religion. However, it circulated widely and became a classic of modern Buddhist literature.⁷⁸

Arnold indicates in his preface that he put his account in the mouth of a fictional Indian devotee in order to make Buddhism better known, since it was little known in Europe, despite the fact that it was 2400 years old and the faith of 470 millions of people (by his reckoning), or one third of humanity, by the end of the 19th century. While there were many sects and differences among the various traditions from India to Tibet, China and the Far East, they all agreed that nothing " mars the perfect purity and tenderness of this Indian teacher, who united the truest princely qualities with the intellect of a sage and the passionate devotion of a martyr." ⁷⁹

Significantly, as Buddhism became more widely known through the efforts of many missionaries, scholars and travelers from the Seventeenth Century onward, it came to the attention of philosophers in Europe through the 21 volume text *General history of Travels or the Collection of all Travel Descriptions*. Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) was sympathetic to the idea of reincarnation and the moral earnestness of the teaching. He regarded the idea of God, however, as inadequate.⁸⁰

G.W. F. Hegel gained knowledge of Buddhism also from this text, focusing on the concept of Nothingness. Unlike thinkers in Europe he realized it was not a pure nihilism or a nothing, but meant that God was indeterminate. From another source, Hegel interpreted Nirvana as "liberation from the world of becoming (*sasara (sic)*)" (*Ibid.*, pp. 460-463.)

Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716) and Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860) were also aware of Buddhism. Leibniz was enamored with Chinese Confucianism. He declared that: "Can we not say that the *Li* of the Chinese is the sovereign substance which we revere under the name of God?"⁸¹ He was taken with the Chinese classic text *I Ching* from which he developed his theory of harmony as a balanced identity of difference or harmony as "uniform diversity."⁸² With respect to Buddhism, Leibniz was more critical, accepting the stereotypes of the day. He commented that Buddha was an "accursed idol."⁸³

Nevertheless, philosophers detect similarities between Leibniz' monad theory in which each monad reflects all others and the *Hua-yan* (Skt. *Avatamsaka*, Jpn. *Kegon*) Garland or Wreath philosophy in which all dharma interpenetrate with all other dharma; each being a total world in itself. However the fundamental difference is that the Buddhist dharmas are empty and without self nature, while Leibniz' monads are substantial entities, possessing their own identity.⁸⁴

Schopenhauer was very sympathetic with Indian and Buddhist thought, being the first important German philosopher to study the Vedic and Buddhist texts. **He was attracted to Indian thought but after 1818 he learned of Buddhism**, observing various parallels with his own thought. Due to his own life experience, Schopenhauer found life in this world meaningless and marked by suffering created by the will to live which is comparable to *trshna* or thirst and passion, in Buddhism. Through asceticism and renunciation the Will to Live is overcome, resulting in spiritual peace or Nirvana which he understood as a condition in which ordinary knowledge is transcended and not a complete nothingness.⁸⁵

Other correspondences between Schopenhauer and Buddhism are noted by Edward Conze: "his belief in reincarnation, his stress on compassion as the basis of morality, his indifference to the "achievements" or "rhythm" of human history, as well as his insight into impermanence and into the reasons why Nirvana can be described only negatively, and yet it is not nothing." Though Schopenhauer considered himself a Buddhist and possessed an image, he was disinterested in the discipline of meditation. The Will to Live was to be overcome through attaining better knowledge, asceticism and renunciation. The Will to Live is an essential transcendental element of reality as the "thing in itself." However, for Buddhism *trshna* or desire-thirst is an element or force in a being.

Schopenhauer held that the way to overcome the Will to Live was through the way of asceticism, that is, self denial and the development of equanimity or state of indifference which is said to describe the fourth level of *Dhyana* (meditation). He used the term Quietude, while his approach was more aesthetic than engaging the monastic discipline of Buddhism.⁸⁶

Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche (1844-1900) was greatly influenced in his view of Buddhism by Carl Friedrich Koppen' s popular work: *The Religion of the Buddha* and H. Taine's (1865) *New Essays on Criticism and History*

(*Nouveaux Essais de critique et d'histoire*) which contained an extensive essay on Koppen whose work was considered the most complete summary Buddhist scholarship to that point.

Xxxxxxx

In P # 2 of the revised version do you want to write in the present or past tense in regards to Taines thoughts?

Read it through with that question in mind, and make your changes accordingly.

Revision P# 1

line 8

.....observes a decline in THAT cultures' Aryan character.

He views Buddhism more positively as it developed an expression of compassion in religion which emphasizes the ability to feel others' suffering. It also taught egalitarianism, or the spiritual equality of all people, as well as a highly ethical lifestyle. Buddhism also overcame the 'natural' tendency to selfishness and division of peoples into superior and inferior groups. Unfortunately, that tendency continues in Indian, and many other, societies to this day.

P#2

line 2

.....for him it is a question OF whether Buddhism transformed the barbarity of the indigenous culture for the better or led to a deterioration and loss of that it's vitality. He does view positively it's victory over barbarism in ending 'blood-sacrifice', bringing peace to the society, strengthening family dynamics, and improving the position of women. On the other hand, he also observes a growth in superstition, a decline in creativity and imagination, as well as a sense of 'powerlessness' among the people.

His views tend to reflect the western view of geographic determinism and an imperialistic perception of Asian cultures. He sees them as passive, pessimistic and negative towards life. Nevertheless, he views Buddhism as a revolution in morality in drawing strength from weakness through compassion.

Al, read the two versions side by side, and see what you think.

Taine was the first to emphasize the cultural impact that Buddhism exerted in India. He clearly saw that Buddhism reflected a transition in Indian culture. This transition was visible in both society and religion. A culture, a people, that had been primarily nomadic was embracing an agrarian and sedentary life. Energetic Aryan tribes were settling down and

mingling with 'native' peoples along the Ganges river. The Aryans had a very practical, 'this worldly' view of life. (theirs was a religion of immediate, worldly benefit). In this process he observes a decline in that culture's Aryan character. He views Buddhism more positively as it developed an expression of compassion in religion which emphasizes the ability to feel others' suffering. It also taught egalitarianism or the spiritual equality of all people, as well as a highly ethical lifestyle. Buddhism also overcame the 'natural' tendency to selfishness and division of peoples into superior and inferior groups. Unfortunately, that tendency continues in Indian culture and many other cultures to this day.

However, Taine appears ambivalent concerning the influence of Buddhism on Asian cultures. For him, it is a question of whether Buddhism transformed the barbarity of the indigenous culture for the better or led to a deterioration and loss of its vitality. He does view positively its victory over barbarism in ending 'blood-sacrifice', bringing peace to the society, strengthening family dynamics stronger and improving the position of women. On the other hand, he observes a growth in superstition, a decline in creativity and imagination, as well as a sense of 'powerlessness.'

His view reflects the western view of geographic determinism and an imperialistic perception of Asian cultures. He sees the as passive, pessimistic and negative toward life. Nevertheless, he views Buddhism as a revolution in morality in drawing strength from weakness through compassion.⁸⁷

While Taine was sympathetic to the Buddhist development, Nietzsche, though knowing little about Buddhism, was influenced by him. However Nietzsche was more qualified in his approach, seeing, in its growing popularity and its effort to eliminate suffering, a threat to Western culture. He viewed Buddhism as a form of "peaceful inactivity" in contrast to his emphasis on power, action and tragedy, seeing that its appearance confronted Europe with a choice of India or Greece, peace or conflict. While Nietzsche respected the Buddha, he opposed it as a religion for the weak with its nihilism that aimed at abolishing life and realizing nothingness. He describes Buddhism:⁸⁸

Its (Christianity) opposite: the weary nihilism that no longer attacks; its most famous form, Buddhism; a passive nihilism, a sign of weakness. The strength of the spirit may be worn out, exhausted, so that previous goals and values have become incommensurate and no longer are believed; so that the synthesis of values and goals (on which every strong culture rests) dissolves and the individual values war against each other: disintegration--and whatever refreshes, heals, calms, numbs emerges into the foreground in various disguises, religious or moral, or political, or aesthetic, etc.

However, he also affirmed it as:

"...able to face problems objectively and coolly....It does not speak of a 'struggle with sin,' but, yielding to reality, of the 'struggle with suffering.'" Sharply differentiating itself from Christianity, it puts the self-deception that lies in moral

concepts behind it; it is, in my phrase, *beyond* good and evil...He (Buddha) prescribed a life in the open, a life of travel; moderation in eating and a careful selection of foods; caution in the use of intoxicants; the same caution in arousing any of the passions that foster a bilious habit and heat the blood; finally, no *worry*, either on one's own account or on account of others. He encourages ideas that make for either quiet contentment or good cheer... *Prayer* is not included, and neither is *asceticism*. There is no categorical imperative nor any disciplines, even within the walls of a monastery.... The mental fatigue that he observes, already plainly displayed in too much 'objectivity' (that is, in the individual's loss of interest in himself, in loss of balance and of 'egoism'), he combats by strong efforts to lead even the spiritual interests back to the *ego*. In Buddha's teaching egoism is a duty....The 'one thing needful,' the question 'how can you be delivered from suffering,' regulates and determines the whole spiritual diet."⁸⁹

While Nietzsche saw Buddhism as another form of nihilism, though different from the Christian style which he deplored, he appreciated its denial of the illusion of moral values, its psychological perspective, its lucidity, its historical positivism. He regarded it as an atheistic religion, rejecting transcendence, the hereafter and advocating a hygienic approach to life.

In Europe there was a growing interest in Asian thought such as Hinduism and Buddhism spurred by the publication of Eugene Burnouf's (1801-1852) *L' Introduction a l'histoire du Buddhism indien* (1844) and Christopher Lassen's (1800-1876) *Essai sur le pali* (1826). At the same time American thinkers began to take note of Buddhism.⁹⁰

As Buddhism came to be known in more detail, there was an ambivalence among American thinkers who were put off by its seeming atheism, passivity and negativity with its rejection of an immortal soul and seeming annihilationism, while appreciating its individualism and self reliance. This probably resulted in an appreciation of Buddhism without specific commitment to it. For these aficionados it was a counterbalance to the dominant Christian tradition.

Among important American thinkers we will focus on Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882), a prominent Unitarian minister, who is considered the founder and leader of the American Transcendentalist movement, as well as his friend and associate Henry David Thoreau. However, they were not alone in their interest. Thomas A. Tweed gives a detailed analysis of numerous Victorian thinkers who wrote about Buddhism.⁹¹

Transcendentalism was a typically optimistic American viewpoint, believing in the capacity of the the human mind to acquire spiritual truth "directly without having to go through the detour of the senses, without the dictates of past authorities and institutions, and without the plodding labor of ratiocination. In this sense particularly, it was the logical--or supralogical--extension of both the Protestant reformation and American democratic individualism."⁹²

Ralph Waldo Emerson, the leader of the movement, has been described as the " quintessentially American thinker whose championing of the American

Transcendental movement and influence on Walt Whitman, Henry David Thoreau, William James, and others would alone secure him a prominent place in American cultural history.”⁹³

He was attracted to Hinduism through his independent minded aunt Mary Moody Emerson (1774-1863), though he was critical at first. She was very well-read and influential in his upbringing. She is also credited with inspiring his Transcendentalist thought by introducing him to Unitarianism and Romanticism, when he was a college student at Harvard.⁹⁴

He acquired a copy of the Hindu religious classic *Bhagavad Gita* which he mistook for a Buddhist book.⁹⁵ Noting its teaching of three paths to salvation, action, devotion and mysticism, he was most attracted to the way of ethical activity but also appreciated the perspective of the mystical *Upanishads* and the *Vedanta* teaching which expounded the oneness of all things in the universe. The Transcendent which Emerson referred to as the ‘unbounded, unbound-able empire’ is the one light ‘which beams out of a thousand stars’ and at the same time the ‘One soul which animates all men.’ He found a harmony between Indian thought and his own view.⁹⁶ However, his knowledge of Hinduism came only through books, which was true of most people of his time, never having met a Hindu person.⁹⁷

Because of the state of Asian studies at the time, Emerson and Thoreau (1817-1862) confused Hinduism and Buddhism. Thoreau borrowed Hindu texts from Emerson such as the *Laws of Manu*, the *Vishnu Purana* and the *Upanishads*, as well as the *Bhagavad Gita*. Despite his deep interest in Hinduism, Thoreau was not a Hindu, claiming “ I do not prefer one religion or philosophy to another.”⁹⁸ Nevertheless, the transcendentalists, though they employed dualistic god-talk, had in common with Hinduism that they believed each person possesses an eternal soul and is one with the Divine. They also felt akin to Hindu and Buddhist self-reliance and individualism. Further, Hinduism and Buddhism provided a counter to traditional Christianity with its emphasis on sin and salvation. In general the Transcendentalists were sympathetic to Asian thought because they tended to be anti-institutional and cosmopolitan seekers of Truth in the broad sense. They tried to rise above the narrow perspectives of their contemporary Protestantism.⁹⁹

Emerson writes of Buddhism:

In like manner, if there is anything grand and daring in human thought or virtue, any reliance on the vast, the unknown; any presentiment; any extravagance of faith, the spiritualist adopts it as most in nature. The oriental mind has always tended to this largeness. Buddhism is an expression of it. The Buddhist who thanks no man, who says, "do not flatter your benefactors," but who, in his conviction that every good deed can by no possibility escape its reward, will not deceive the benefactor by pretending that he has done more than he should, is a Transcendentalist.¹⁰⁰

Together Emerson, Thoreau and Margaret Fuller began to publish a magazine called *Dial* which was published from 1840-1844. They included translations from Asian religious texts, and in 1844 they published an anonymous translation of a portion of a Nepalese (Tibetan?) version of the *Lotus Sutra*, which generally corresponds to chapter 5 on the *Parable of the Medicinal Herbs* in the Chinese translation. It was taken from Eugene Burnouf's landmark introduction to Buddhism (see above pp. 68-69). The emphasis on non-discrimination or equality, dependent origination or interrelatedness of all things and universality attracted Westerners.

The opening passage of the chapter reads:

The Tathagata is equal and not unequal towards all beings, when it is a question to convert them. 'He is, O Kasyapa, as the rays of the sun and moon, which shine alike upon the virtuous and the wicked, the high and the low;.....on all these the rays fall equally and not unequally at one and the same time....'¹⁰¹

According to Lawrence Buell:

Thoreau was the first and most lastingly influential figure among the dozen or so leading Transcendentalists to have been influenced by Asian thought in a formative way, whatever the limits of his knowledge. From youth he was strongly attracted to the image of the Hindu or Confucian or Buddhist sage who withdraws from secular affairs to a place of hermitage in a more natural setting for the sake of leading a more rigorously pure and contemplative life.¹⁰²

While the extent of Buddhist influence on Thoreau's thought is not clear, the exposure to Asian thought and Buddhism provided him with a broader view of Nature than he found in Western tradition as indicated in the chapter of the *Lotus Sutra* he published. Buell states:

To my knowledge, the biotic egalitarian side of Thoreau's later thinking cannot be neatly ascribed to his interest in Buddhism or any other Asian religious tradition. On the contrary, the evidence suggests that Thoreau saw "oriental religion" as teaching on the whole a disposition more of detachment from the world, including the natural world, than a mode of imbrication in it or belonging to it. On the other hand, the evidence also suggests that Thoreau's understanding of Oriental religion, including Buddhism (to the very limited extent that he understood it), did help to liberate him from the conventional individualistic Protestant work ethic and, beyond that, from the value that his culture placed—and still places—on the conception of the individual as primarily a social being accountable to society, rather than primarily a citizen of the cosmos or the ecosystem, accountable first and foremost to them. In that sense, what Thoreau learned from the classics of Asian wisdom *did* help to shape his proto-ecological philosophy of nature.

According to Rick Fields, Thoreau was "pre-Buddhist much in the same way that Chinese Taoists were. He forecasts an American Buddhism by the nature of his contemplation..."¹⁰³

With respect to God and Jesus, Thoreau states:

"I know that some will have hard thoughts of me, when they hear their Christ named beside my Buddha yet I am sure that I am willing they should love their Christ more than my Buddha, for the love is the main thing."¹⁰⁴

It is reported that when Thoreau died in 1862, he was asked if he had made peace with God, to which he replied that he was unaware they had quarreled.¹⁰⁵

While Buddhism was having influence among the intellectuals, as we see in the Transcendentalist movement, in the kingdom of Hawai'i Chinese and Japanese immigrants came to work on the sugar and pineapple plantations or in other industries.

The initial period of Asian immigration eventually became limited through discriminatory national and local legislation, such that first generation Asians could not become citizens, vote or own property. In the aftermath of the Second World War the restrictions were removed and immigration laws revised to permit more Asian immigrants who brought their religions. With the Vietnam war there was an influx of Vietnamese, Cambodian and other refugees from South Asia, giving rise to new communities that are largely Buddhist. However the Buddhist temples and priests from South Asia have not had the impact that we see with the arrival of Tibetan monks.

The Japanese originally migrated to the West toward the end of the the Nineteenth Century as the result of poor economic conditions in Japan, motivating them to seek their fortunes abroad. They came under contracts overseen by the Japanese government. Hence they were a more favorable position to maintain their social ties with Japan. The Chinese, mostly men, are notable for participating in the gold rush, giving the name Gold Mountain to California. They also worked on the construction of railroads.

Asian religious traditions followed the immigrant Chinese and Japanese to the new land. This included Buddhism, as well as many aspects of the folk traditions from their respective cultures, such as Confucianism and Religious Taoism from China and Shinto from Japan. The Chinese traditions were less highly structured, while the Japanese were divided among diverse Buddhist sects.

Of the various Japanese Buddhist sects which were later established, the largest and best organized were the Hongwanji branches of the Jodo Shinshu sect, commonly called Shin Buddhism in English. Shin Buddhism was most popular in the western regions of Japan where the contract immigrants mainly originated.¹⁰⁶

The first Japanese immigrants arrived in 1868, the first year of the Meiji era and are hence known as *Gannenmono*, "First year people." Formal immigration began with the sponsorship of the Japanese and Hawaiian governments. These people are referred to as *kanyaku-imin* (contract labor immigrants.)

They faced discrimination in the dominantly Christian society and compelled them to hold on to the customs, faith, and loyalties which they brought with them. Buddhist temples became social centers and the teaching a source of consolation for those undergoing the hard life of the plantations, farms or cities. Government sponsored immigration, however, allowed the formation of a more defined community. The social and religious basis for the development of Shin Buddhism in Hawai'i took shape when wives were brought from their home villages in Japan to establish families.

Bishop Yemyo (Emyo) Imamura the second Bishop (Socho or Superintendent) of the Hongwanji in Hawai'i is especially notable for his creative leadership after Hawai'i had become a territory of the United States. He made the sect a religious force in the community during a time of considerable hostility, due to labor strikes, and racist legislation. These conditions prevented first generation Asians from owning property or becoming citizens, particularly in Western states and Hawai'i. There was also legislation limiting migration. In response to these challenges, Bishop Imamura articulated his ideal of integrating Buddhism into American society clearly. According to Prof. Moriya Tomoe:

In sum, the most important characteristic of Imamura's Americanized Buddhism was his socially engaged compassion, which was to be equally enjoyed by every person, regardless of race or nationality. Those ideologies that contradicted this compassion, such as nationalism, prejudice, and war, needed to be criticized and challenged. The perspective that Imamura developed in Hawaii one hundred years ago reveals an important alternative path for modern Buddhism, one which his contemporaries in Japan failed to fully understand or appreciate.¹⁰⁷

In carrying out his ideal the Buddhist temples in Hawaii, not only Shin, but other traditions as well, developed their educational and cultural programs. They adapted their services, manifesting the flexibility that had characterized the spread of Buddhism through Asia.

The Buddhist traditions which came from China and Japan were based mainly on the Mahayana teaching which involved a sense of oneness with nature and the cosmos as we have outlined earlier in this text. On the other hand, they also involved many practices for gaining health, wealth and spiritual protection for people in everyday affairs of life. It appealed to many levels of society from the highest intellectuals to the ordinary worker. However as a discriminated minority their teachings made little appeal to members of the dominant society and remained largely unknown except to academics who studied these communities.

While immigrant Buddhists from China and Japan were establishing themselves in the western regions of the United States, a major event and turning point for Asian religions in the West came with the Parliament of World Religions in 1893 in connection with the Columbian exposition in Chicago. This exposition commemorated the 400th anniversary of Columbus' reputed

discovery of America. It also highlighted Chicago's recovery from the great fire in 1871.

The exposition itself emphasized the progress of western culture which now dominated the world. The Parliament, considered as the first major interfaith gathering in history, aimed at making clear the superiority of Western culture and Christianity over all other traditions. There were representatives of several Asian traditions including " a dozen Buddhists, eight Hindus, two Shintoists, a Jain, a Taoist, a couple Muslims, Confucians and Zoroastrians." ¹⁰⁸

The promoters of the Parliament of World Religions organized it to make this superiority clear, while also stressing brotherhood and good will among faiths. They ruled that only those people with authority in the area could speak thereby giving a major role to missionaries who were longtime residents in the various lands, rather than native speakers.

Though placed somewhat at a disadvantage, the native speakers made a strong impression by highlighting the significance of Buddhism in the modern world. In the case of Shaku Soyen, Mahayana Buddhism in Japan was presented as modern, scientific and universal. He and his associates were part of a government sponsored effort through the high level of Japanese art and religious sophistication exhibited in the Exposition, to establish Japan as a modern, civilized nation on a par with other nations. Particularly they were desirous to achieve legal equality in international relations with the abolition of extraterritoriality in treaties.

Despite, the discriminatory intentions of the organizers, there was the unintended effect of introducing the Asian religions to the West, changing western views and increasing interest in them. Buddhism was represented by several very capable exponents of Buddhism, notably Anagarika Dharmapala, a Theravada Buddhist from Sri Lanka (then-Ceylon; see above pp.31-32), and the Japanese Rinzai Zen master, Shaku Soyen (1859-1919), and Paul Carus (**see above p.33 ff.**), originally from Germany, who later assisted Shaku Soyen in bringing D. T. Suzuki as a young man to America. The Hindu teacher Vivekananda (1863-1902), an exponent and leader in the Vedantic Ramakrishna movement, made a great impression on the Parliament. Remaining in the United States for four years, he lectured widely and established small groups.

These teachers were considered sufficiently authoritative by the organizers to represent Buddhism in the assembly. Anagarika Dharmapala, whose name means the homeless, (renunciant) fighter for the Dharma, struggled against colonialism, as well as emphasized the compatibility of Buddhism and science.¹⁰⁹ He maintained that "Buddhism, Christianity, and scientific approaches to the world overlap, saying that the "Buddha inculcated the necessity of self-reliance and independent thought," and "accepted the doctrine of evolution as the only true one."¹¹⁰

As other Asians, Dharmapala understood the religious conflicts in the West within Christianity and was attempting to show that Buddhism was on the side of rational, critical or scientific thought and more intellectually suitable for modern people. ¹¹¹

Thus, the early missionaries of Buddhism to America purposely stripped Buddhism of any elements that might appear superstitious, mythological, even mystical. Dharmapala, Suzuki, and Vivekananda clearly ascertained that Americans measured truth in science, and science posed little theological threat to a Buddhist and Hindu worldview. After all, Buddhism had unique advantages for someone who rejected their faith (Christian) due to its authoritarianism and unscientific outlook.¹¹²

Though Shaku Soyen was not greatly charismatic, Dharmapala charmed his audience by his fluent English and intriguing accent and appearance. In a talk entitled “The World’s Debt to Buddhism,” he challenged Christianity by claiming the evident superiority of Buddhism:

And now, history is repeating itself. Twenty-five centuries ago India witnessed an intellectual and religious revolution which culminated in the overthrow of monotheism, priestly selfishness, and the establishment of synthetic religion, a system of life and thought which was appropriately called Dharma, philosophical religion. All that was good was collected from every source and embodied therein and all that was bad was discarded. The tendency of enlightened thought of the day all the world over is not toward theology, but philosophy and psychology. The barque of theological dualism is drifting into danger. ¹¹³

From among the Buddhist traditional texts, the *Kalama Sutta* has often been cited as the warrant for scientific thought in Buddhism. In answer to certain questions the Kalama people put to Gautama, he replied:

It is proper for you, Kalamas, to doubt, to be uncertain; uncertainty has arisen in you about what is doubtful. Come, Kalamas. Do not go upon what has been acquired by repeated hearing; nor upon tradition; nor upon rumor; nor upon what is in a scripture; nor upon surmise; nor upon an axiom; nor upon specious reasoning; nor upon a bias towards a notion that has been pondered over; nor upon another's seeming ability; nor upon the consideration, 'The monk is our teacher.' Kalamas, when you yourselves know: 'These things are bad; these things are blamable; these things are censured by the wise; undertaken and observed, these things lead to harm and ill,' abandon them.¹¹⁴

This passage has been very appealing for individuals who have doubts about their traditional faith to seek an alternative path more in harmony with their education and modern sensibilities. Nevertheless, this issue is more complex than appears.

Shaku Soyen advocated the equality and non-discrimination between religion and societies. He lectured on karma and non-violence, as well as religious tolerance. At the conclusion to his speech “Arbitration Instead of War” Shaku Soyen stated:

We must not make any distinction between race and race, between civilization and civilization, between creed and creed, and faith and faith. You must not say

"Go away," because we are not Christians. You must not say "Go away," because we are yellow people. All beings on the universe are in the bosom of truth. We are all sisters and brothers; we are sons and daughters of truth, and let us understand one another much better and be true sons and daughters of truth. Truth be praised!¹¹⁵

While the World Parliament of Religions was inspired by the Christian vision of the spread of Christendom, bringing together the multitude of faiths, " Nothing like it had ever been seen before, and few thought that Anagarika Dharmapala had overstated the case when he called the Parliament (in a letter from Calcutta) "the noblest and proudest achievement in history, and the crowning work of the nineteenth century."¹¹⁶

The organizers of the Parliament saw great benefit for the spread of the Christian Gospel as noted by the General Chairman of the Committee on Religious Congresses, John H. Barrows in his illustrated account of the meeting:

This Book will also be read in the cloisters of Japanese scholars, by the shores of the Yellow Sea, by the water courses of India and beneath the shadows of Asiatic mountains near which rose the primal habitations of man. It is believed that the Oriental reader will discover in these volumes the source and strength of that simple faith in Divine Fatherhood and Human Brotherhood, which, embodied in an Asiatic Peasant who was the Son of God and made divinely potent through Him, is clasping the globe with bands of heavenly light.¹¹⁷

However, America was introduced to the traditions and faiths of many cultures and countries, changing its attitude toward Asian religions and encouraging the propagation of Buddhism. Especially notable was the work of Paul Carus and the Open Court Publications and the efforts of the young D. T. Suzuki to interpret Mahayana Buddhism in a way comprehensible by western people. Suzuki, a disciple of Shaku Soyen was sent to the United States in 1897 to work with Paul Carus in translation and writing. He stayed until 1909, later marrying Beatrice Lane in 1911. Suzuki became the foremost exponent of Mahayana Buddhism and Zen, until his death in 1967. He can be viewed as a remarkable product coming out of the World Parliament.

As we observe Buddhism developed in the West on two levels, one, through immigration and one through its permeation of the world of scholarship, culture and intellectual inquiry. We shall now summarize the impact of Buddhism in the contemporary period.

In concluding our study of the spread of Buddhism in the West, we must point out that there are numerous excellent volumes depicting in detail the persons, movements, features and teachings of the manifold forms of Buddhism that have taken root in the West. Here we wish only to summarize the many aspects and impact of these developments.

We have outlined how Buddhism entered the West in ancient times and was barely known or regarded. Gradually over the centuries western people

encountered it as they penetrated Asia for business, travel, missionary work, scholarly study, or through colonialism. Misunderstandings of Buddhism perpetuated by missionaries and limited observations by travelers and scholars were slowly overcome with the advances made in translations of original texts, researches of scholars and recognition of the diversity of Buddhism in the various Asian societies.

The immigration of Asian peoples, such as the Japanese and Chinese workers, who established communities in North America and later in South America, led to the establishment of more permanent religious institutions. Though discriminated and restricted in early years, the barriers were dropped after World War II. The various traditions have continued to evolve and many of their members hold responsible and influential positions in society.

Most outstanding has been the Buddhist Churches of America, established in 1899, a branch of the Japanese Pure Land Shin sect, originating with Shinran in the 13th century. Severely set back by the war with Japan and the incarceration of members on the American mainland, it has now recovered and is in the process of continuing modernization, despite the loss of members. As a representative of the Shin Buddhist tradition, the teachings are gaining recognition in the academic and religious world for its depth and sophistication. In the postwar period it established a graduate school and seminary, the Institute of Buddhist Studies, in Berkeley California which has become a part of the Christian Graduate Theological Union.

Other Japanese immigrant Buddhist groups such as the Soto Zen, a derivative of the Chinese Tsao-tung tradition and brought to Japan by Dogen (1200-1253), the Jodo sect of Honen (1133-1212) and the Nichiren sect of Nichiren (1222-1282) which have fewer members and temples continue to struggle with the process of change and receive major support from the head temples. However, the pervasive interest in Buddhism in American society has encouraged such groups to participate in the wider community, often in interfaith activities.

D. T. Suzuki had been steadily promoting Zen Buddhism after his return from America in 1909. He not only wrote books, but founded the *Eastern Buddhist* journal in 1927 together with his wife, Beatrice Lane Suzuki. The journal published essays on Zen and Buddhist teaching and continues to this day as a major Buddhist English publication, through the Otani University, a school related to a branch of the Shin Buddhist tradition.

P 3

Line 9

It will integrate the best of western culture with the best of Buddhism's 'eastern' spiritual roots.

P 4

Line 8

culture-bound but autonomous and spiritually independent,..... It will be a living community,.....sensitive to THE PAST, while alive to the future.

Page 14

P 1

Line 1

American Buddhism is CURRENTLY hard to define as it is in the process of 'becoming'; and though difficult to define, it's influence is both obvious and positive.

Hopefully the study of the various streams of Buddhist tradition will help US TO REFLECT on the potentialities WITHIN Buddhism for all people, and THAT due credit WILL BE given to the contributions made by the many people throughout Buddhist history who have shaped those traditions by their SPIRITUAL commitment, STRONG efforts, and ACTIVE COMPASSION.

The Contemporary Period

Following World War II and the rising popularity of Buddhism, the immigrant forms of Buddhism, primarily Japanese, have suffered sizable loss of members through attrition of aged members and the dispersion, outmarriage of their youth and the greater mobility and acceptance of minority groups in America. Nevertheless, they are struggling to meet the new age by upgrading the education of clergy and assistance from the head temples in Japan. In spite of increased respect and acceptance of Buddhism in Western society, the ethnocentrism of the institutions, inadequate explanation of the teaching has inhibited the growth of these traditions in comparison to the upsurge of interest in Buddhism that generally pervades contemporary society.

In the postwar period, Dr. D. T. Suzuki and his writings became very popular with the rise of interest in Zen Buddhism in the society. Much of this interest was due to contact between Westerners and Buddhism during the occupation of Japan. Many later Asian scholars had studied Japanese in the course of their military service. Suzuki, having written on Zen before the war, was already well-known. He received invitations to travel in the West, giving lectures and interviews at universities and in temples. Other prominent Zen advocates were Christmas Humphreys in England and Alan Watts in America.

Robert Aitken Roshi, a leading teacher of Zen and founder of the Diamond Sangha and Buddhist Peace Fellowship in Hawaii, was first exposed to it in a concentration camp in Japan where he met R. H. Blyth who is famous for his studies of haiku poetry which is often associated with Zen. In the 60's Zen Buddhism had great influence on such writers as Jack Kerouac, Allan Ginsberg, and Gary Snyder.

Inspired by Zen a number of monastic communities have developed, such as Tassajara Zen Mountain Center near Carmel California. As the first Soto Zen monastery outside Asia, people can stay there for periods of time and engage in meditation practice and work. It is connected to the Zen Center of San Francisco and the Green Gulch monastery in Marin County outside San Francisco. These institutions were founded by the Zen master Shunryu Suzuki.

It is notable that Catholic clergy¹¹⁸ were among the first to attempt a connection between Zen practice and Christian faith. Dom Aelred Graham published *Zen Catholicism* in 1963. Rev. William Johnston, noted for his writings on mysticism authored the popular *Still Point: Reflections on Zen and Christian Mysticism* in 1970. In Japan Rev. J. K. Kadowaki wrote on Zen and the Bible in 1977. In recent years Dr. Ruben Habito, a former Jesuit priest-scholar, in 1991 opened the Maria Kannon Zen Center in Dallas. As a certified Zen teacher, he offers Zen practice for people of many backgrounds.

With increasing literature and interest, across the United States hundreds of small Buddhist centers of various traditions, largely Zen and Tibetan, popped up. Some have live-in facilities where devotees practice their Buddhist discipline, while they often work in the community. An early example was Koko-an and later the Maui Zendo in Hawaii, established by Robert Aitken Roshi. There are also monasteries such as Tassajara and Shasta Abbey which

continue to attract followers. One can find a directory of centers in *Tricycle Magazine* or *Buddhadharma Magazine*.

While Zen and Tibetan Buddhism have been by and large the most popular and well known forms of Buddhism in the West spread over the country. There have been other forms such as Nichiren Shoshu-Soka Gakkai which in the 60's gained considerable notoriety through its force efforts to convert people, in Japan and also abroad.

The Nichiren Shoshu-Soka Gakkai itself is a sect of the *Lotus Sutra*-Nichiren (1222-1282) tradition, rooted in Tendai teaching. The Soka Gakkai is a layman's organization begun by Makiguchi Tsunesaburo (1871-1944). By profession he was a school teacher. Disturbed at what he saw was the decline in Japanese morality, he initiated the Educational and Scholarly Society for the Creation of Values (Soka Kyoiku Gakkai, later shortened to Soka Gakkai. The organization was considered to be subversive by the government of the time, and Makiguchi was imprisoned where he died in 1944. After the cessation of the war, the movement he had begun was taken over by Toda Josei, who had also been imprisoned, was succeeded by the present leader Ikeda Daisaku. Under Toda and Ikeda, Soka Gakkai became a world movement both through marriage of ardent members with American G.I.s and vigorous propagation efforts.

The movement has been regarded by traditional Buddhist sects as a cult and generally rejected. However, its teaching is basic Buddhism, and like Nichiren, the original founder, has been antagonistic toward other teachings. It has been attractive, though highly criticized, through its emphasis on gaining worldly benefits from the recitation of the title of the *Lotus Sutra*, *Namu Myohorenge kyo* (I take refuge in the *Lotus Sutra*). SGI's exclusivism seems out of pattern with the general perception of Buddhism as a tolerant, flexible religion. However there is scriptural basis in Mahayana Sutras for the practice termed *shakubuku* or forceful advocacy in contrast to *shoju*, persuasive advocacy. Occasionally it was excessively applied.

In recent years, conflict of the lay movement and the parent sect led to the excommunication of the lay division from the sect and the demolition of the head temple in Fujisawa Japan which had been built under the leadership of Mr. Ikeda and with funds from lay people. Soka Gakkai has become an independent international organization which continues to evolve and engage in peace and environmental activities through its schools and centers. Soka Gakkai has managed to make a broad appeal to minority people in America and its members receive leadership experience in various areas of the movement.

Mr. Ikeda writes extensively on modern problems weaving Buddhist philosophy and modern issues together to show that Buddhism is a relevant, spiritual teaching in the resolution of contemporary problems.

While Soka Gakkai has been a very visible and active organization, there are groups within other forms of Buddhism focused on meditation and scattered in many communities. They lack any central organization but

usually have a leader and a small community which quietly practices. Information proceeds by word of mouth with occasional notices in newspapers. One such movement is Vipassana meditation based on Theravadin (Way of the elders) from South Asia. *Vipassana*, means insight or “to see things as they really are” which is the first step in the eightfold path of Gautama Buddha. Its counterpart in discipline is called *Samatha* which means tranquility. The disciplines aim to become aware of the three central principals of Buddhism: suffering-unsatisfactoriness, impermanence, non-soul and the liberation of the human spirit from its many attachments and egoism.

Mindfulness meditation, which has become associated with the teaching of Thich Nhat Hanh, the noted Vietnamese monk, focuses on being aware of the flow of one’s consciousness and sensations through paying attention to one’s breath, flow of thought and emotions. One becomes aware and accepts this flow as it is, neither acting on it, judging it or attempting to negate it. In the process, one’s body-mind becomes settled and negative forces are dispelled naturally. It is simply being present in the moment. Our egos become disentangled from the emotions, permitting a more positive dealing and involvement in life.

A notable development in the postwar period has been the increase in the number of departments of religion in major universities, including state universities, and the accompanying increase in courses and programs relating to Buddhism.

One facet of this development has been studies and conferences on Buddhism and Process Philosophy which was developed most notably by Alfred North Whitehead. Process philosophy can be seen as a trend of thought most adaptable to Buddhism, because it stresses the relationship between things rather than the static existence of substance or essences. The concepts of creativity, process and organism are also present in Asian thought. Professor Charles Hartshorne called attention to the parallels and differences, drawing the attention of such scholars as John Cobb, David Griffin and others to Asian thought. Some scholars hold that for Buddhism to be relevant to western people, it must express itself in ways which are comprehensible to ordinary people.¹¹⁹

A major outcome of academic interest in Buddhism has been the growth and development of programs for Buddhist-Christian Dialogue. The Buddhist-Christian Studies Society began with a series of international conferences in the early 1980’s and has continued to grow with the *Journal of Buddhist-Christian Studies*. The Society itself formed in 1987. It now meets annually.

A dimension of the dialogue activities has been the special group: Buddhism and Christianity in Theological Encounter, initiated by Masao Abe, A Zen scholar and John Cobb, a Christian theologian in 1984. This group met for some ten years, addressing specific theological themes. As many as 50 scholars have participated in these dynamic and productive meetings which have had much give and take. There have also been mutual exchanges between

Christian monks and Zen monks, practicing their disciplines in each others' monasteries.

A major support for the academic study of Buddhism has come from a Japanese industrialist Yehan Numata, the head of the Mitutoyo Precision Instrument Company, through the Buddhist Promotion Society, which he founded in 1965. This society initiated several programs to propagate Buddhism in the West. One of these was the formation of a text: *The Teachings of the Buddha*, a small anthology of Buddhist quotes which he intended to place in hotels along with the Gideon Bible. Together with this effort he established a program to translate the Buddhist canon into English within the century. Also he established chairs of Buddhist study in several major Universities. For these purposes, he, now his son, donates 1% of the gross profits of his business.

In the sphere of education there also have been several significant developments. In Boulder Colorado the Naropa University was founded in 1974 by Chögyam Trungpa, Rinpoche as a liberal arts college. Another school, aimed primarily at training members for propagation, is the Dharma Realm Buddhist University, established in 1976 by the Chinese master Hsuan-hua at The City of Ten Thousand Buddhas in Tallmadge, California. In 1991 Hsi Lai University was founded by the Venerable Hsing-yun of the Buddha's Light Mission. It proposes to give a rounded education in a Buddhist environment. The Soka University supported by the Soka Gakkai International and a branch of the Soka University in Japan opened in 2001 as a liberal arts University.

In addition, the Boston Research Center, founded 1993, is connected to Soka Gakkai International and carries on research on a variety of social problems, such as the environment and peace. It is located in Cambridge Massachusetts near Harvard University. In Hawaii also there is the Toda Peace Research Institute.

On the secondary level, the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii has opened the Pacific Buddhist Academy as a college preparatory high school. It builds on the foundation of the Hongwanji Mission School, opened in 1949, which provides the elementary and intermediate levels. The intention of having an educational institution connected to the Temple to provide a good education for its members had been advanced earlier by the second Bishop Yemyo Imamura (1900-1932) and has now begun to reach its full implementation. It is the only Buddhist parochial school in the West, though not parochial in its outlook.

In addition to educational institutions founded by various Buddhist traditions, numbers of individual Buddhist teachers came to the West which had become increasingly open to the message of Buddhism. Among these are Nyogen Senzaki (18??-1958), one of the earliest Zen teachers; Shunryu Suzuki (1904-1971) who came to the Sokoji Soto Zen temple in San Francisco and later

founded the San Francisco Zen Center; Taisen Deshimaru (1904-1982) was active in the U.S. and Europe.

There have been several very notable and attractive Buddhist teachers such as the Dalai Lama from Tibet. The spiritual resources of Tibet, long hidden by the mountainous barriers of the Himalayas and the secrecy of the tradition, became open to the world with the Chinese Communist takeover of Tibet in 1959 and the dramatic escape of the Dalai Lama and hosts of his followers to Dharamsala in India, now the center of the Tibetan Diaspora. The gentle charisma of the Dalai Lama has brought him the Nobel Peace prize and the admiration and respect from all religious quarters. He travels the world in the interest of peace, justice and spirituality, as well as authoring numerous popular books. Tibetan monks have spread widely through western society and in many major cities there are Tibetan Dharma centers with programs of teaching and meditation. Tibetan Buddhism has gained a considerable following, appealing to the intellectual and artistic community. Several actors have Tibetan connections such as Richard Gere and Uma Thurman. In recent years there have been major films such as "Seven Years in Tibet," "Kundun," "Travellers and Magicians," "The Little Buddha" and "The Cup." Dr. Huston Smith made the famous instructional film: "Requiem for a Faith: Tibetan Buddhism." The film was completed in 1979 and the title is ironic because a requiem mass honors the dead. Many people thought that with the invasion by the Chinese, Tibetan culture and Buddhism would cease meaningful existence. However, in the diaspora Tibetan Buddhism has never been more alive and flourishing.

There are numerous western scholars of Tibetan tradition, such as Robert Thurman, Uma Thurman's father, and Jeffrey Hopkins, the late Herbert Guenther, Matthew Kapstein and Janet Gyatso, as well as a host of Tibetan scholar-teachers and practitioners such as Chogyam Trumpa and Tarthan Tulku. Various sects of Tibetan Buddhism established themselves and have major Dharma centers such as Dharmadhatu and Nyingma. Tibetan teachers and their followers have engaged in publishing; Snow Lion (estab. 1980), Shambala Publications (estab. 1969), Wisdom Publications (estab. 1970's). There are two major magazines, the *Tricycle* and *Buddhadharma*. On the Internet the Google search engine list 5,670,000 entries.

Another prominent figure is Thich Nhat Hanh, a Vietnamese monk from the Zen tradition in that country. He became prominent in the resistance of the Buddhist monks to the war. Emigrating to France he has become a leader of the Mindfulness style of meditation which has a world-wide following and for his peace efforts through developing personal spirituality. He has been a significant force in the Engaged Buddhism movement. The Parallax Press connected with the Buddhist Peace Fellowship publishes Thich Nhat Hanh's many writings with a list of about 58 volumes.

A lesser known figure, but significant is Sulak Sivaraksha from Thailand. As a Buddhist activist, he advocates peace and justice and is also a

leader in Engaged Buddhism, an effort to develop positive social principles in Buddhism. Others are A. T. Ariyaratne, founder of the Sarvodaya movement in Sri Lanka, which defines itself as compassion in action, and the Ven. Cheng-yen in Taiwan who established The Tzu-Chi (Compassion) Foundation. This foundation operates world wide for medical relief and assistance in disaster. Branches are also located through the United States.

These individuals travel the world teaching and encouraging commitment to Buddhism, social justice and the welfare of all people no matter their religion, race or culture. They have many followers in the various nations who give concrete evidence of Buddhist compassion by advocating non-violence, as well as assisting people in suffering. A considerable body of literature has developed to make clear Buddhist principles in many areas of contemporary concerns, peace and war, environment, bio-medical ethics, aging, personal counseling and human relations, the list goes on.

Despite the emerging social activism and participation of Buddhism in contemporary affairs, Buddhism has long been viewed as a passive tradition and otherworldly or uninvolved. There is historical background, however, for this perception, since Buddhism has lived under the heel of oppressive despots for centuries without religious freedom. Only occasionally has Buddhism been able to express its inner implications for peace and justice. In addition, the early Western observers were interested in its ethical and practical character, viewing it as a rational, non-superstitious religion as a counterpoint to their own traditional Christian religion which was generally doctrinaire, dogmatic and itself in many ways magical. Criticized by missionaries and subject to colonial governments, those elements of Buddhism which conformed to Western interests were encouraged such as monasticism and adherence to strict discipline. The social implications of Buddhist teaching were simply overlooked.

However, in recent years, the growth of religious freedom in modern societies, broadening international relations among Buddhists, and the development of extensive, critical scholarship in all areas of Buddhist studies, has stimulated the search for Buddhist social ideals. They have emerged more clearly and have been brought into the service of the social movements marking contemporary society. Efforts have been made to show the relevance and potential Buddhist contribution to the understanding and resolution of these problems. An extensive literature has been developed to explore these concerns.

The perception of passivity and indifference has been changing as is witnessed by the work of Sulak Sivaraksa in Thailand the Dalai Lama, Thich Nhat Hanh and movements in the West. Engaged Buddhism now takes many forms from social welfare efforts to social activism, opposing war or seeking justice. The *Turning Wheel*, the publication of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, constantly challenges Buddhists of all traditions to translate the principles of Buddhism into active concern and participation in society for peace and

justice. Consequently, the Engaged Buddhism movement is developing Buddhist approaches to pressing social issues.

A major issue in contemporary Buddhism in the West is the position and role of women. It is an aspect of the Buddhist approach to society. As we understand, women the world over have been subject to the male domination in the patriarchal societies. The same has been true of Buddhism. In East Asia which has strong Confucian influence women have three forms of subordination; to father, husband, eldest son. In the Buddhist orders which have nuns (*Bhikkunis*) women have been subordinate to *Bhikkus*. In traditions which observe the *Vinaya* or rules of discipline originating in the ancient southern tradition or presently Theravada traditions. Some segments of the Mahayana tradition follow these rules.

In ancient tradition, there is the famous story of Gautama's initial refusal to allow his aunt to become a nun on the basis that it will lead to decline and corruption in the Order. Eventually he permitted it, though the women had to follow many more rules than the monks. For monks there were 248 rules, while nuns followed 348 rules. The nuns were always subordinate to the monks, even when they were more senior in years. Nevertheless, the path to enlightenment was open to all equally.

As the tradition evolved, it was believed that a woman could not become Buddha because she suffered from five obstacles. She could not become Brahma god, Indra or Sakra, the tempter Mara, a Wheel-turning king or a Buddha. These all refer to beings on the highest level of existence, which women as women cannot attain. They are subject to the principle of karma and until they can transfer from a female body to a male through karma, they cannot reach these levels. Women came to be viewed as inherently defiled. Consequently women in Buddhism experienced not only religious inferiority but also social.

In traditional immigrant temples, women are expected to do the types of work which they do at home, cooking, cleaning etc. Very few if any women reach higher levels of leadership in temples or central organizations even in such sects as the *Jodo Shinshu* where women are comparatively equal in the teaching of Shinran.

However, in recent years with the awakening of social awareness, the women's liberation movement etc., there has arisen the *Sakyadhita* organization which studies women's issues and advocates for them within and without Buddhism.

P 3

Line 9

It will integrate the best of western culture with the best of Buddhism's 'eastern' spiritual roots.

P 4

Line 8

culture-bound but autonomous and spiritually independent,..... It will be a living community,.....sensitive to THE PAST, while alive to the future.

Page 14

P 1

Line 1

American Buddhism is CURRENTLY hard to define as it is in the process of 'becoming'; and though difficult to define, it's influence is both obvious and positive.

Hopefully the study of the various streams of Buddhist tradition will help US TO REFLECT on the potentialities WITHIN Buddhism for all people, and THAT due credit WILL BE given to the contributions made by the many people throughout Buddhist history who have shaped those traditions by their SPIRITUAL commitment, STRONG efforts, and ACTIVE COMPASSION.

Epilogue On American Buddhism

Buddhists in America have been discussing the formation of an American Buddhism for many years. When we observe Buddhist history, we see that wherever Buddhism spread, it has merged with the native culture and taken new life and new forms. This happened in China, Korea, Japan and Tibet. However, when the immigrant groups came to America in the 19th century, they wanted the old forms as much as possible and have, in a sense, been tradition bound. They acculturated only to the extent necessary. But even for them, it has become a problem since later generations have lost touch with the parent culture, and as Americans also desire that their religion be harmonious with their present culture.

With religious freedom and given the diversity of American society, American Buddhism is difficult to project. It will develop naturally and not by imposed design. Ecumenical forms of Buddhism will discuss the many issues, but the many groups will adapt as seems beneficial to them.

We can say, however, that American Buddhism will not create barriers between Buddhists and the fundamental character of American and western culture. It will undoubtedly be inclusive, recognizing the diversity of the many Buddhist traditions. No one movement will claim superiority and exclusiveness over against any other. The symbol of 84,000 Dharma will be taken seriously. It will not be monolithic. It will be more a matter of style than of prescribed forms.

American Buddhism will be based in American values such as freedom, equality, the value of the person, a social awareness and pursuit of justice and peace. It will be non-discriminating and accepting of people regardless of race, gender and sexual orientation. It will be democratic, developing indigenous

leadership. It will be marked by environmental awareness and economic justice. It will integrate the best of western culture with the best of Buddhism's 'eastern' spiritual roots.

It will, perhaps, be more this-worldly, less monastic, generally non-celibate with strong roles for women in leadership positions. There will be local autonomy. However, it will be guided by long-standing Buddhist principles such as the realistic understanding of human existence, the nature of reality and the ideal of human fulfillment. It will not be culture-bound but autonomous and spiritually independent, while also personally responsible. It will be a living community, flexible and evolving, sensitive to the past, while alive to the future. The major characteristic of American Buddhism is currently hard to define as it is in the process of 'becoming,' and though difficult to define, its influence is both obvious and positive. It will be more of a task than a given product.

Hopefully, the study of the various streams of Buddhist tradition will help us to reflect on the potentialities within Buddhism for all people and that due credit will be given to the contributions made by the many people throughout Buddhist history who have shaped those traditions by their spiritual commitment, strong efforts and active compassion.

APPENDIX

Selected Passages from Buddhist Tradition

The following quotations from various Buddhist traditions are useful for giving the flavor of the teaching as it developed from Theravada to the Mahayana and Vajrayana traditions. It is only a small taste of a vast body of teaching offering inspiration and insight to followers through the centuries.

Theravada Buddhism

Buddha's First Sermon

Thus I heard. On one occasion the Blessed One was living at Benares in the Deer Park at Isipatana (the Resort of Seers). There he addressed the Bhikkhus of the group of five:--

Bhikkhus, these two extremes ought not to be cultivated by one gone forth from the house-life. What are these two? There is devotion to indulgence of pleasure in sensual desire, which is

inferior, low, vulgar, ignoble and leads to no good; and there is devotion to self-torment which is painful, ignoble, and leads to no good.

The middle way -discovered by a Perfect One avoids both these extremes: it gives vision, it gives knowledge, and it leads to peace, to direct acquaintance, to discovery, to nibbana. What is that middle way? It is simply the noble eightfold path, that is to say, right view, right intention right action, right livelihood; right effort, right mindfulness right concentration. That is the middle way discovered by a Perfect One, which gives vision, which gives knowledge and which leads to peace, to direct acquaintance, to discovery, to nibbana.

Suffering, as a noble truth, is this : Birth is suffering, ageing is suffering, sickness is suffering, death sorrow and lamentation, pain, grief and despair are suffering, -association with the loathed is suffering, dissociation from the loved is suffering, not to get what one wants is suffering--in short, suffering is the five categories of clinging objects.

The origin of suffering, as a noble truth, is this : it is the craving that produces renewal of being, accompanied by enjoyment and lust, and enjoying this and that; in other words, craving for sensual desires , craving for being, craving for non-being.

Cessation of sufferings as a noble truth, is this: It is remainderless fading and ceasing, giving up, relinquishing, letting go and rejecting, of that same craving.

The way leading to cessation of suffering, as a noble truth, is this: It is simply the noble eightfold path, that is to say, right view, right intention; right speech, right action, right livelihood; right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration.

'Suffering, as a noble truth', is this: such was the vision, the knowledge, the understanding, the finding,, the light, that arose in regard to ideas not heard by me before. 'This suffering, as a noble truth, can be diagnosed': such was the vision, the knowledge, the understanding, the finding, the light, that arose in regard to ideas not heard by one before. 'This suffering, as a noble truth, has been diagnosed': such was the vision, the knowledge, the understanding, the finding, the light, that arose in regard to ideas not heard by me before.....

Now during this utterance, there arose in the venerable Kondanna the spotless, immaculate vision of the True Idea: Whatever is inseparable from the idea of arising is all inseparable from the idea of cessation.

When the Wheel of Truth had thus been set rolling by the Blessed One the earth-gods raised the cry: 'At Benares, in the Deer Park at Isipatana, the matchless Wheel of Truth has been set rolling by the Blessed One, not to be stopped by monk or divine or god or death-angel or high divinity or anyone in the world'..... (*Dhamma-cakka-ppavattana-sutta (Turning the Wheel of the Law) Samyutta-Nikaya LVI 11*).

Metta Sutta (Lovingkindness)

...May all beings be happy and secure; may their minds be contented.

Whatever living beings there may be-feeble or strong, long (or tall), stout, or medium, short, small, or large, seen or unseen, those dwelling far or near, those who are born and those who are yet to be born-may all beings, without exception, be happy-minded!

Let not one deceive another nor despise any person whatever in any place. In anger or ill-will let not one wish any harm to another.

Just as a mother would protect her only child even at the risk of her own life, even so let one cultivate a boundless heart towards all beings.

Let one's thoughts of boundless love pervade the whole world -above, below and across-without any obstruction, without any hatred, without any enmity.

Whether one stands, walks, sits or lies down, as long as one is awake, one should maintain this mindfulness. This, they say, is the Sublime State in this life.

Not falling into wrong views, virtuous and endowed with Insight, one gives up attachment to sense-desires. Verily such a man does not return to enter a womb again. (*Suttanipata*, 1. 8)

Satipatthana (Foundations of Mindfulness)

Thus have I heard. At one time the Blessed One was living among the Kurus, at Kammasadamma a market town of the the Kuru people....

This is the only way, monks, for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, for the destruction of suffering and grief, for reaching the right path, for the end of Nibbana, namely the Four Foundations of Mindfulness.

What are the four?

Herein (in this teaching) a monk lives contemplating the body in the body, ardent, clearly comprehending and mindful having overcome, in this world, covetousness and grief he lives contemplating feeling in feelings, ardent, clearly comprehending and mindful, having overcome, in this world, covetousness and grief; he lives contemplating consciousness in consciousness, ardent, clearly comprehending and mindful, having overcome, in this world, covetousness and grief; he lives contemplating mental objects in mental objects, ardent, clearly comprehending and mindful, having overcome, in this world, covetousness and grief.

1. THE CONTEMPLATION OF THE BODY

1. Mindfulness of Breathing

And how does a monk live contemplating the body in the body?

Herein, monks, a monk having gone to the forest, to the foot of a tree or to an empty place, sits down with his legs crossed, keeps his body erect and his mindfulness alert.

Ever mindful he breathes in, and mindful he breathes out. Breathing in a long breath, he knows 'I am breathing in a long breath'; breathing out a long breath, he knows 'I am breathing out a long breath'; breathing in a short breath, he knows 'I am breathing in a short breath'; breathing out a short breath, he knows 'I am breathing out a short breath'.

'Experiencing the whole (breath-) body, I shall breathe in', thus he trains himself. 'Experiencing the whole (breath-) body, I shall breathe out', thus he trains himself. 'Calming

the activity of the (breath-) body, I shall breathe in', thus he trains himself. 'Calming the activity of the (breath) body, I shall breathe out', thus he trains himself.

Just as a skillful turner or turner's apprentice, making a long turn, knows 'I am making a long turn', or making a short turn, knows, 'I am making a short turn', just so the monk, breathing in a long breath, knows 'I am breathing in a long breath'; etc...

Satipatthana Sutta, Nyanasatta Thera, trans. In *Selected Buddhist Texts*, Vol. I (Kandy, Ceylon: Buddhist Publication Society, 1964.)

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Kalama Sutta

Thus he (Buddha) stated:

Come, Kalamas. Do not go upon what has been acquired by repeated hearing; nor upon tradition; nor upon rumour; nor upon what is in a scripture; nor upon surmise; nor upon an axiom; nor upon specious reasoning; nor upon a bias towards a notion that has been pondered over; nor upon one's seeming ability; nor upon the consideration, 'The monk is our teacher'. Kalamas, when you yourselves know: 'These things are good; these things are not blamable; these things are praised by the wise; undertaken and observed, these things lead to benefit and happiness', enter on and abide in them.

This text is known as the Buddha's Charter of Free Inquiry," translated by Soma Thera in Selected Buddhist Texts From the Pali Canon Vol I. The Wheel Selections #8. (Kandy: Ceylon Buddhist Publication Society, 1963.) p.8).

Gautama's Last Words

And the Bhagava addressed the Bhikkus saying: "Behold now, Bhikkus,I exhort you: 'Transient are all the elements of being! Strive with earnestness!'"

"*Mahanibbana Sutta*" , *Digha Nikaya* 16. (Wheel Publication 67-69. Buddhist Publication Society, Ceylon 1964.)

Mahayana Buddhism

Lotus Sutra Chapter 2. (Compassionate Means)

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The presently existing Buddhas of the ten directions, whom heavenly and human beings make offerings to, who in number are like Ganges sands, they have appeared in the world in order to bring peace and comfort to living beings, and they too preach the Law in this way. They understand the foremost truth of tranquil extinction

and therefore employ the power of expedient means,
and though they point out various different paths,
in truth they do so for the sake of the Buddha vehicle.
They understand the actions of living beings,
the thoughts that lie deep in their minds,
the deeds they have carried out in the past,
their desires, their nature, the power of their exertions,
and whether their capacities are acute or dull,
and so they employ various causes and conditions,
similes, parables, and other words and phrases,
adapting what expedient means are suitable to their preaching.
Now I too am like this;
in order to bring peace and comfort to living beings
I employ various different doctrines
to disseminate the Buddha way.
Through the power of my wisdom
I know the nature and desires of living beings
and through expedient means I preach these doctrines,
causing all living beings to attain joy and gladness.
Shariputra, you should understand
that I view things through the Buddha eye,
I see the living beings in the six paths,
how poor and distressed they are, without merit or wisdom,
how they enter the perilous road of birth and death,
their sufferings continuing with never a break,
how deeply they are attached to the five desires,
like a yak enamored of its tail,
blinding themselves with greed and infatuation,
their vision so impaired they can see nothing.
They do not seek the Buddha, with his great might,
or the Law that can end their sufferings,
but enter deeply into erroneous views,
hoping to shed suffering through greater suffering.
For the sake of these living beings
I summon up a mind of great compassion.

.....

Immediately the thought came to me
that the reason the Thus Come One has appeared
is so that he may preach the Buddha wisdom.
Burton Watson, trans. *The Lotus Sutra*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993. pp. 41-41, 44.)

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Lotus Sutra, Chapter 16. The Eternity of the Buddha

Since I attained Buddhahood
The number of kalpas that have passed
Is an immeasurable hundreds, thousands, ten thousands,
Millions, trillions asamkhyas.
Constantly I have preached the Law, teaching, converting
Countless millions of living beings,
Causing them to enter the Buddha way,

All this for immeasurable kalpas.
In order to save living beings,
As an expedient means I appear to enter nirvana
But in truth I do not pass into extinction.
I am always here preaching the Law.

I am always here.....

Burton Watson. *The Lotus Sutra*. p. 229.)

Lotus Sutra Chapter 25. In Praise of Avalokitesvara/Kuan-yin/Kannon

If living beings encounter weariness or peril,
immeasurable suffering pressing them down,
the power of the Perceiver of Sounds' wonderful wisdom
can save them from the sufferings of the world.
He is endowed with transcendental powers
and widely practices the expedient means of wisdom.
Throughout the lands in the ten directions
there is no region where he does not manifest himself.
In many different kinds of evil circumstances,
in the realms of hell, hungry spirits or beasts,
the sufferings of birth, old age, sickness and death-
all these he bit by bit wipes out.
He of the true gaze, the pure gaze,
the gaze of great and encompassing wisdom,
the gaze of pity, the gaze of compassion-
constantly we implore him, constantly look up in reverence.
His pure light, free of blemish,
is a sun of wisdom dispelling all darknesses.
He can quell the wind and fire of misfortune
and everywhere bring light to the world.
The precepts from his compassionate body shake us
like thunder,
the wonder of his pitying mind is like a great cloud.
He sends down the sweet dew, the Dharma rain,
to quench the flames of earthly desires.
When law suits bring you before the officials,
when terrified in the midst of an army,
think on the power of that Perceiver of Sounds
and hatred in all its forms will be dispelled.
Burton Watson. *The Lotus Sutra*.
p. 305.)

The Heart Sutra (*Prajna Paramita Hridaya Sutra- Great Wisdom Beyond Wisdom Heart Sutra*)

Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva, when practicing deeply the Prajna Paramita, perceived that all five skandhas in their own being are empty and was saved from all suffering.

O Shariputra, form does not differ from emptiness; emptiness does not differ from form. That which is form is emptiness; that which is emptiness form. The same is true of feelings, perceptions, formations, consciousness.

O Shariputra, all dharmas are marked with emptiness. they do not appear nor disappear, are not tainted nor pure, do not increase nor decrease. Therefore in emptiness: no form, no feelings, no perceptions, no formations, no consciousness; no eyes, no ears, no nose, no tongue, no body, no mind; no color, no sound, no smell, no taste, no touch, no object of mind; no realm of eyes...until no realm of mind-consciousness; no ignorance and also no extinction of it...until no old-age and death and also no extinction of it; no suffering, no origination, no stopping, no path, no cognition, also no attainment with nothing to attain.

A bodhisattva depends on Prajna Paramita and the mind is no hindrance. Without any hindrance no fears exist. Far apart from every perverted view one dwells in nirvana. In the three worlds all buddhas depend on Prajna Paramita and attain unsurpassed complete perfect enlightenment. Therefore, know the Prajna Paramita is the great transcendent mantra, is the great bright mantra, is the utmost mantra, is the supreme mantra which is able to relieve all suffering and is true not false; so proclaim the Prajna Paramita mantra, proclaim the mantra that says:

Gate Gate Paragate Parasamgate Bodhi Svaha

All buddhas ten directions three times
All beings bodhisattvas mahasattvas
Wisdom beyond wisdom Maha Prajna Paramita

Raja Hornstein.

<http://acc6.its.brooklyn.cuny.edu/~phalsall/texts/heart3.txt>

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The Bodhisattva Ideal

A Bodhisattva resolves: I take upon myself the burden of all suffering, I am resolved to do so, I will endure it. I do not turn or run away, do not tremble, am not terrified, not afraid, do not turn back or despond.

And why? At all costs I must bear the burdens of all beings. In that I do not follow my own inclinations. I have made the vow to save all beings. All beings I must set free. The whole world of living beings I must rescue, from the terrors of birth, of old age, of sickness, of death and rebirth, of all kinds of moral offence, of all states of woe, of the whole cycle of birth-and-death, of the jungle of false views, of the loss of wholesome dharmas, of the concomitants of ignorance, -from all these tenors I must rescue all beings.

. . I walk so that the kingdom of unsurpassed cognition is built up for all beings. My endeavors do not merely aim at my own deliverance. For with the help of the boat of the thought of all-knowledge, I must rescue all these beings from the stream of Samsara. which is so difficult to cross...

I will experience in all the states of woe, found in any world system, all the abodes of suffering. And I must not cheat all beings out of my store of merit. I am resolved to abide in each single state of woe for numberless aeons; and so I will help all beings to freedom, in all the states of woe that may be found in any world system whatsoever.

And why? Because it is surely better that I alone should be in pain than that all these beings should fall into the states of woe. There I must give myself away as a pawn through which the whole world is redeemed from the terrors of the hells, of animal birth, of the world of Yama; and with this my own body I must experience, for the sake of all beings, the whole

mass of all painful feelings. And on behalf of all beings I give surety for all beings, and in doing so I speak truthfully, am trustworthy, and do not go back on my word. I must not abandon all beings.

And why? There has arisen in me the will to win all-knowledge, with all beings for its object, that is to say, for the purpose of setting free the entire world of beings. And I have not set out for the supreme enlightenment from a desire for delights, not because I hope to experience the delights of the five sense-qualities, or because I wish to indulge in the pleasures of the senses. And I do not pursue the course of a Bodhisattva in order to achieve the array of delights that can be found in the various worlds of sense desire.

And why? Truly no delights are all these delights of the world. All this indulging in the pleasures of the senses belongs to the sphere of Mara.

[E.A. Burtt. *The Teachings of the Compassionate Buddha*. (New York: New American Library, 1955.) pp.133-135.]

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Pure Land Buddhism

These quotations became the basis for the development of the popular Pure Land tradition in East Asia based on the Vows of Amitabha Buddha. The Juseige (Weighty Vows) is a summary of the basic 48 Vow of Amitabha Buddha, the Eighteenth Vow and Fulfillment text is the central Vow for the popular tradition. .

Larger Pure Land Sutra- The Three Weighty Vows. (Juseige)

I establish the Vows unexcelled,
And reach the Highest Path, Bodhi,
Were these Vows unfulfilled,
I would never attain Enlightenment.
I will be the great provider,
Throughout innumerable kalpas,
Should I fail to save all in need,
I would never attain Enlightenment.
Upon my attaining Enlightenment,
If my Name were not heard anywhere,
In the ten quarters of the universe,
I would never attain Enlightenment.
Practicing the Holy Way -- selflessness,
Depth in right reflection and pure wisdom,
Aspiring toward the highest path,
I will be the teacher of devas and men.
My wondrous power by its great light,
Brightens the countless lands throughout,
Removes the darkness of the three defilements,
And delivers all from suffering and pain.
Opening the eyes of Wisdom,
I will end this darkness of ignorance.
Blocking all the paths of evil,
I will open the gate to Attainment.
Having attained Buddhahood untainted,
My august air shall illumine the ten quarters.
The sun and the moon being outshone,
The celestial lights shall hide in shame.

I will open the Dharma-storehouse
And bestow upon all the treasure of my virtues.
Constantly going among the masses,
I will preach the Dharma with a lion's roar.
Paying homage to all the Buddhas
I will be endowed with all virtues.
Vows and Wisdom completely realized,
I will be master of the three worlds.
As Buddha's wisdom unimpeded
Has no place its light cannot reach,
So my power of Merit and Wisdom
Shall be equal to the Honored One's.
If my vows be certainly fulfilled,
May this whole universe quake.
And may the host of devas
Rain wondrous blossoms from the sky.

"Shinshu Seitan, Jodo Shin Buddhist Teaching," BCA, 1978. SOURCE: Shin Buddhist Service Book BCA, 1994, San Francisco.

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The Eighteenth Vow

18) If, when I attain Buddhahood, sentient beings in the lands of the ten quarters who sincerely and joyfully entrust themselves to me, desire to be born in my land, and call my Name, even ten times, should not be born there, may I not attain perfect Enlightenment. Excluded, however, are those who commit the five gravest offences and abuse the right Dharma.

Fulfillment Text of the Eighteenth Vow

All Buddhas, Tathagatas, in the ten directions, as numerous as the sands of the River Ganges, together praise the inconceivable, supernal virtue of Amitayus. All sentient beings who having heard his Name, rejoice in faith, remember him even once and sincerely transfer the merit of virtuous practices to that land, aspiring to be born there, will attain birth and dwell in the Stage of Non-retrogression. But excluded are those who have committed the five gravest offenses and abused the right Dharma.

Hisao Inagaki, Trans. *The Three Pure Land Sutras*. Kyoto: Nagata Bunshodo, 1994. p. 268)

Honen (1133-1212) Selection from The Treatise on the Nembutsu of the Select Primal Vow (Senchaku Hongan Nembutsu shu)

...In the next place, if we look at it from the standpoint of difficulty and ease, the Nembutsu is easily practised, while it is very hard to practise all the other disciplines. For the above reasons thus briefly stated, we may say that the Nembutsu being so easily practised, is of universal application, while the others being hard to practise, do not suit all cases. And so Amida seemed to have made his Original Vow the rejection of the hard and the choice of the easy way, in order to enable all sentient beings, without distinction, to attain birth into the Pure Land. If the Original Vow required the making of images and the building of pagodas, then the poor and destitute could have no hope of attaining it. But the fact is that the wealthy

and noble are few in number, whereas the number of the poor and ignoble is extremely large. If the Original Vow required wisdom and great talents, there would be no hope of that birth for the foolish and ignorant at all; but the wise are few in number, while the foolish are very many. If the Original Vow required the hearing and seeing of a great many things, then people who heard and saw little could have no hope of that birth; but few are they who have heard much, and very many are they who have heard little. If the Original Vow required obedience to the commandments and the Law, then there would be no hope of that birth for those who break the commandments or have not received them; but few are they who keep the commandments and many are they who break them. The same reasoning applies to all other cases. If, then, we make the Original Vow to consist in the practice of these many forms of discipline, it follows that those who attain birth into Paradise will be few, while the many will fail. We conclude therefore, that Amida Nyorai, when He was a priest by the name of Hozo ages ago, in His compassion for all sentient beings alike, and in His effort for the salvation of all, did not vow to require the making of images or the building of pagodas conditions for birth into the Pure Land, but only one act of calling upon His sacred name.....

Joseph A. Fitzgerald, ed. *Honen the Buddhist Saint: Essential Writings and Official Biography*. Translated by Harper Havelock Coates and Ryugaku Ishizuka, (Bloomington, IN: World Wisdom Inc, 2006.) p. 66.

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Honen's Testimony on One Sheet of Paper

As Honen was drawing to the end, Seikwambo said to him, "I have for many years been indebted to you for instruction and counsel in the way of faith in the *Nembutsu*. But now will you not write me something in your own hand that you think will be good for me, that I may preserve it as a memento." At this he took up his pen and wrote as follows: "The method of final salvation that I have propounded is neither a sort of meditation, such as has been practiced by many scholars in China and Japan, nor is it a repetition of the Buddha's name by those who have studied and understood the deep meaning of it. It is nothing but the mere repetition of the *Namu Amida Butsu*, without a doubt of his mercy, whereby one may be born into the Pure Land of Bliss. The mere repetition with firm faith includes all the practical details, such as the threefold preparation of mind and the four practical rules. If I as an individual have any doctrine more profound than this, I should miss the mercy of, the two Honorable Ones, Amida. and Shaka., and be left out of the Vow of the Amida Buddha. Those who believe this, though they clearly understand all the teachings Shaka taught throughout his whole life, should behave the themselves like simple-minded folk who know not a single letter, or like ignorant nuns, or monks whose faith is implicitly simple. Thus without pedantic airs, they should fervently practice the repetition of the name of Amida. and that alone."

Joseph A. Fitzgerald, ed. *Honen the Buddhist Saint: Essential Writings and Official Biography*. Translated by Harper Havelock Coates and Ryugaku Ishizuka, (Bloomington, IN: World Wisdom Inc, 2006.) p. 135.

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Shinran (1173-1262)

Entrusting

Next, concerning entrusting, it is the ocean of shinjin, perfect and unhindered, that is the Tathagata's consummately fulfilled great compassion. Hence, there is no mixture of doubt. It is therefore called "entrusting." The essence of entrusting is the sincere mind of benefiting others and directing virtues.

However, since the beginningless past, the multitudes of beings have been transmigrating in the ocean of ignorance, sinking aimlessly in the cycle of all forms of existence and bound to the cycle of all forms of pain; accordingly, they lack the entrusting that is pure. In the manner of their existence, they have no entrusting that is true and real. Hence, it is difficult for them to encounter the unexcelled virtues, difficult to realize the supreme, pure shinjin. In all small and foolish beings, at all times, thoughts of greed and desire incessantly defile any goodness of heart; thoughts of anger and hatred constantly consume the dharma-treasure. Even if one urgently acts and urgently practices as though sweeping fire from one's head, all these acts must be called "poisoned and sundry good" and "false and deceitful practice." They cannot be called "true and real action." To seek to be born in the land of immeasurable light through such false and poisoned good is completely wrong. Why? Because when the Tathagata was performing bodhisattva practices, there was not a moment-not an instant-when his practice in the three modes of action was tainted by the hindrance of doubt. Because this mind is the Tathagata's mind of great compassion, it necessarily becomes the truly decisive cause of attaining the fulfilled land. The Tathagata, turning with compassion toward the ocean of living beings in pain and affliction, has given unhindered and vast pure shinjin to the ocean of sentient beings. This is called the "true and real shinjin that is [Amida's] benefiting of others."

Collected Works of Shinran. (Kyoto: Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha, 1997.) pp. 97-98, #28.

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Great Sea of True Entrusting (*Shinjin*)

In reflecting on the ocean of great shinjin, I realize that there is no discrimination between noble and humble or black-robed monks and white-clothed laity, no differentiation between man and woman, old and young. The amount of evil one has committed is not considered, the duration of any performance of religious practices is of no concern. It is a matter of neither practice nor good acts, neither sudden attainment nor gradual attainment, neither meditative practice nor non-meditative practice, neither right contemplation nor wrong contemplation neither thought nor no-thought, neither daily life nor the moment of death, neither many-calling nor once-calling. It is simply shinjin that is inconceivable, inexplicable, and indescribable. It is like the medicine that eradicates all poisons. The medicine of the Tathagata's Vow destroys the poisons of our wisdom and foolishness.

Collected Works of Shinran. (Kyoto: Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha, 1997.) pp. p. 107, #51.

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Zen Buddhism in China, Korea and Japan (Ch'an/Son/Zen)

Hui-neng (638-713)

The Sixth Patriarch's Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra

The One Important Matter is the knowledge and vision of the Buddha. Worldly people, deluded by the external world, attach themselves to marks, and deluded by the inner world, they attach themselves to emptiness. If you can live among marks and yet be separate from it, then you will be confused by neither the internal nor the external. If you awaken to this Dharma, in one moment your mind will open to enlightenment. The knowledge and vision of the Buddha is simply that.
p.273/311

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In every thought you should open up to the knowledge and vision of the Buddha; do not open up to the knowledge and vision of living beings. To be open to the knowledge and vision of the Buddha is transcendental; to be open to the knowledge and vision of living beings is mundane. If you exert yourself in recitation, clinging to it as a meritorious exercise, how does that make you different from a yak who loves his own tail?"
[p. 275/313]

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...Fa Ta said, "If this is so, then I need only understand the meaning and need not exert myself in reciting the Sutra. Isn't that correct?"

The Master replied, "What fault does the Sutra have that would stop you from reciting it? Confusion and enlightenment are in you. Loss or gain comes from yourself. If your mouth recites and your mind practices, you 'turn' the Sutra, but if your mouth recites and your mind does not practice, the Sutra 'turns' you. Listen to my verse:

*When the mind is confused,
the Dharma Flower turns it.
The enlightened mind
will turn the Dharma Flower.
Reciting the Sutra so long
without understanding
Has made you an enemy
of its meaning.
Without a thought
your recitation is right.
With thought,
your recitation is wrong.
With no "with"
and no "without"
You may ride forever
in the White Ox Cart.
p. 315*

Fa Ta heard this verse and wept without knowing it. At the moment the words were spoken, he achieved a

great enlightenment and said to the Master, "Until today I have never actually turned the Dharma Flower; instead it has turned me."
[pp. 277/315-278/316]

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One day Chih Ch'ang asked the Master, "The Buddha taught the dharma of the three vehicles and also the Supreme Vehicle. Your disciple has not yet understood that and would like to be instructed." The Master said, "Contemplate only your own original mind and do not be attached to the marks of external dharmas. The Dharma doesn't have four vehicles; it is people's minds that differ. Seeing, hearing, and reciting is the small vehicle. Awakening to the Dharma and understanding the meaning is the middle vehicle. Cultivating in accord with Dharma is the great vehicle. To penetrate the ten thousand dharmas entirely and completely while remaining without defilement, and to sever attachment to the marks of all the dharmas with nothing whatsoever gained in return: that is the Supreme Vehicle. Vehicles are methods of practice, not subjects for debate. Cultivate on your own and do not ask me, for at all times your own self-nature is itself 'thus.'" Chih Ch'ang bowed and thanked the Master and served him to the end of the Master's life.
[pp. 297/335-298/336]

(The Sixth Patriarch's Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra
(Burlingame CA: Buddhist Text Translation Society, Dharma Realm University, rep. 2001)
[2006 <http://online.sfsu.edu/~rone/Buddhism/Platform%20Sutra.pdf>]

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Lin-Chi I-hsuan (China, jpn. Rinzai, d. 867)

Many students come to see me from all over the place. Many of them are not free from their entanglement with objective things. I treat them right on the spot. If their trouble is due to grasping hands, I strike there. If their trouble is a loose mouth, I strike them there. If their trouble is hidden behind their eyes, it is there I strike. So far I have not found anyone who can set himself free. This is because they have all been caught up in the useless ways of the old masters. As for me, I do not have one only method which I give to everyone, but I relieve whatever the trouble is and set men free.

Friends, I tell you this: there is no Buddha, no spiritual path to follow, no training and no realization. What are you so feverishly running after? Putting a head on top of your own head, you blind idiots? Your head is right where it should be. The trouble lies in your not believing in yourselves enough. Because you don't believe in yourselves you are knocked here and there by all the conditions in which you find yourselves. Being enslaved and turned around by objective situations, you have no freedom whatever, you are not masters of yourselves. Stop turning to the outside and don't be attached to my words either. Just cease clinging to the past and hankering after the future. This will be better than ten years' pilgrimage.

[<http://sped2work.tripod.com/linchi.html> *The Record of Lin-chi*. Kyoto, Japan: Institute For Zen Studies, 1975.]

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The Master told the congregation: "Seekers of the Way. In Buddhism no effort -is necessary. All one has to do is to do nothing, except to move his bowels, urinate, put on his clothing, eat his meals and lie down when he is tired. The Stupid will laugh at him; but the wise one will understand. An ancient person said, 'One who makes efforts externally is surely a fool.'

Wing-tsit Chan, *Sourcebook in Chinese Philosophy*. (Princeton, N.J. Princeton University Press, 1963.) p. 445.

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Seekers of the Way, if you want to achieve the understanding according to the Law don't be deceived by others and turn to your thought internally or objects externally. Kill anything that you happen on. Kill the Buddha if you happen to meet him, Kill a patriarch or an arhat if you happen to meet him. Kill your parents

or relatives if you happen to meet them. Only then can you be free, not bound by material things and absolutely free and at ease...I merely put clothing and eat meals as usual and pass my time without doing anything. You people coming from the various directions have all made up your minds to seek the Buddha, seek the Law... Crazy people! If you want to leave the Three Worlds, where can you go? "Buddha" and "Patriarchs" are terms of praise and also bondage. Do you want to know where the Three Worlds are? They are right in your mind which is now listening to the Law.

Wing-tsit Chan, *Sourcebook in Chinese Philosophy*, p. 447-448.

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Chinul (Korea 1158-1210)

At an assembly, someone asked Chinul, "How is it that saints and ordinary people are not the same?"Chinul responded to this question, "The true mind is originally the same in the saint and the ordinary man, but because the ordinary man endorses the reality of material things with the false mind, he loses his pure nature and becomes estranged from it, therefore the true mind cannot appear. It is like the tree's shadow in the darkness, or a spring flowing underground. It exists."

"Although we know that the frozen pond is entirely water, the sun's heat is necessary to melt it. Although we awaken to the fact that an ordinary man is Buddha, the power of dharma is necessary to permeate our cultivation. When the pond is melted, the water flows freely and can be used for irrigation and cleaning. When falsities are extinguished, the mind will be luminous and dynamic, and then its function of penetrating brightness will manifest."

"Sentient beings are those who are deluded in regard to the one mind, and give rise to boundless defilements. Buddhas are those who have awakened to the one mind and have given rise to the boundless sublime functions. Although there is a difference between delusion and awakening, essentially both are derived from the one mind. Hence, to seek Buddhahood apart from the (deluded) mind is impossible."

Primary Point volume 6, number 1 (June 1989) and volume 6, number 2 (October 1989). [2006 <http://users.libero.it/seza/kzengb.html>]

Unfortunately, people today have been confused for a long time. They do not know that their own mind is the real Buddha. They do not know that their own essence is the real Dharma. Wishing to seek Dharma, they attribute it to remote sages; wishing to seek Buddhahood, they do not observe their own mind.

If you say that there is Buddha outside the mind, and there is Dharma outside of essence, and want to seek the Way of Buddhahood while clinging tightly to these feelings, even if you spend ages burning your body, branding your arms, breaking your bones and taking out the marrow, wounding yourself and copying scriptures in your own blood, standing for long periods of time without sitting down, eating only once a day, reading the whole canon and cultivating various austere practices, it will be like steaming sand to produce cooked rice; it will only increase your own fatigue.

Just know your own mind and you will grasp countless teachings and infinite subtle meanings without even seeking. That is why the World Honored One said, "Observing all sentient beings, I see they are fully endowed with the knowledge and virtues of Buddhas." He also said, "All living beings, and all sorts of illusory events, are all born in the completely awake subtle mind of those who realize suchness."

Secrets of Cultivating the Mind was composed by Chinul (1158-1210). Taken from *Minding Mind; A Course in Basic Meditation*, edited and translated by Thomas Cleary, (Boston: Shambala Publications, 1995.) <http://users.libero.it/seza/mindgb.htm>

Dogen (Japan, 1200-1253)

According to the authentic transmission of our Zen tradition, it is said that this Buddha-dharma that has been transmitted one-to-one, without deviation, is affirmed as the highest of the highest. From the initial moment of visiting one's master and receiving his teaching, one has no need of incense-offering, ceremonial veneration, Nembutsu chanting, ceremonial penance, or silent reading of Sutras. Just be seated properly and cast off your body and mind.

Quoted in Eto Sokuo. *Dogen Zenji as Founding Patriarch [of the Japanese Soto Zen School]*, Shohei Ichimura, trans. (North American Institute of Zen and Buddhist Studies, 2001.) p.352.

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Is the way attained through the mind or through the body? The teaching schools say that, since the body and mind are identical, it is not explicitly stated that the way is attained by the body. In Zen the Way is attained with both body and mind. If you contemplate Buddhism with the mind alone, not for ten thousand kalpas or a thousand lives can you attain the Way. But if you let go the mind and cast aside knowledge and intellectual understanding, you will gain the Way. Those who gained enlightenment by seeing blossoms or hearing sounds achieved it through the body. Therefore, if you cast aside completely the thoughts and concepts of the mind and concentrate on *zazen* alone, you attain to an intimacy with the Way. The attainment of the way is truly accomplished with the body. For this reason, I urge you to concentrate on *zazen*.

Reiho Masunaga, trans. *A Primer of Soto Zen*. (Honolulu: East-West Center Press, 1971.) p. 47.

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As all things are buddha-dharma, there is delusion and realization, practice, and birth and death, and there are buddhas and sentient beings. As the myriad things are without an abiding self, there is no delusion, no realization, no buddha, no sentient being, no birth and death. The buddha way is, basically, leaping clear of the many and the one; thus there are birth and

death, delusion and realization, sentient beings and buddhas. Yet in attachment blossoms fall, and in aversion weeds spread.

To carry yourself forward and experience myriad things is delusion. That myriad things come forth and experience themselves is awakening. Those who have great realization of delusion are buddhas; those who are greatly deluded about realization are sentient beings. Further, there are those who continue realizing beyond realization, who are in delusion throughout delusion.

When buddhas are truly buddhas they do not necessarily notice that they are buddhas. However, they are actualized buddhas, who go on actualizing buddhas. When you see forms or hear sounds fully engaging body-and-mind, you grasp things directly. Unlike things and their reflections in the mirror, and unlike the moon and its reflection in the water, when one side is illumined the other side is dark.

To study the buddha way is to study the self. To study the self is to forget the self. To forget the self is to be actualized by myriad things. When actualized by myriad things, your body and mind as well as the bodies and minds of others drop away. No trace of realization remains, and this no-trace continues endlessly.

When you first seek dharma, you imagine you are far away from its environs. But dharma is already correctly transmitted; you are immediately your original self. When you ride in a boat and watch the shore, you might assume that the shore is moving. But when you keep your eyes closely on the boat, you can see that the boat moves. Similarly, if you examine myriad things with a confused body and mind you might suppose that your mind and nature are permanent. When you practice intimately and return to where you are, it will be clear that nothing at all has unchanging self. ...

Enlightenment is like the moon reflected on the water. The moon does not get wet, nor is the water broken. Although its light is wide and great, the moon is reflected even in a puddle an inch wide. The whole moon and the entire sky are reflected in dewdrops on the grass, or even in one drop of water. Enlightenment does not divide you, just as the moon does not break the water. You cannot hinder enlightenment, just as a drop of water does not hinder the moon in the sky. The depth of the drop is the height of the moon. Each reflection, however long or short its duration, manifests the vastness of the dewdrop, and realizes the limitlessness of the moonlight in the sky. ...

When dharma does not fill your whole body and mind, you think it is already sufficient. When dharma fills your body and mind, you understand that something is missing. For example, when you sail out in a boat to the middle of an ocean where no land is in sight, and view the four directions, the ocean looks circular, and does not look any other way. But the ocean is neither round or square; its features are infinite in variety. It is like a palace. It is like a jewel. It only look circular as far as you can see at that time. All things are like this.

Though there are many features in the dusty world and the world beyond conditions, you see and understand only what your eye of practice can reach. In order to learn the nature of the myriad things, you must know that although they may look round or square, the other features of oceans and mountains are infinite in variety; whole worlds are there. It is so not only around you, but also directly beneath your feet, or in a drop of water.

A fish swims in the ocean, and no matter how far it swims there is no end to the water. A bird flies in the sky, and no matter how far it flies there is no end to the air. However, the fish and the bird have never left their elements. When their activity is large their field is large. When their need is small their field is small. Thus, each of them totally covers its full range, and each of them totally experiences its realm. If the bird leaves the air it will die at once. If the fish leaves the water it will die at once.

Know that water is life and air is life. The bird is life and the fish is life. Life must be the bird and life must be the fish.... [2006 [http:// genjokoan.com/](http://genjokoan.com/)]

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Nichiren (Japan, 1222-1282)

Sovereigns of Our Divine Land (*Shinkoku-o Goshō*)

TRUE AND FALSE DHARMAS AND RISE AND FALL OF A COUNTRY

Pondering these two great events in the history of Japan, I, Nichiren, since my childhood seriously studied both exoteric and esoteric Buddhism as well as all the sutras of various Buddhist schools by either learning from others or reading the sutras and contemplating them. Finally, I discovered the reason for these events. In order to see our own faces we have to look at them reflected upon a spotless mirror. Likewise, in order to see the rise and fall of a country, there is no way better than to see them reflected upon the mirror of the Buddhist dharma. As we respectfully read such Mahayana sutras as the *Sutra of the Benevolent King*, " *Sutra of the Golden Splendor*,* *G.uardian Sutra*, " *Nirvana Sutra*, " and *Lotus Sutra*," it is " preached that the rise and fall of a country and the life span of people :, in it depend on the Dharma they believe, whether they believe in the. True Dharma or a false dharma. It is like water that keeps a boat afloat ': but also destroys it, or staple grains which. nourish human bodies but often damage them. Small winds and waves would not damage large ships, but small ships can easily be destroyed by gale winds and huge waves. Unjust government, like small winds and waves, would not cause the downfall of a great country and a great man; however, there is no doubt that a false dharma in Buddhism, like gale winds and huge waves destroying small boats, will destroy a country.

.....As I look at the existing state of Japan reflected upon the clear mirrors of all the holy teachings of the Buddha's lifetime," those Japanese appearing in the mirror are without doubt enemies of the country and the Buddha. Of the spotless mirrors of the holy teachings preached in His lifetime, the *Lotus Sutra* is the special divine mirror. A copper mirror can show the figure of a man but not his mind. The divine mirror of the *Lotus Sutra* shows not only a man's figure but also his mind. Not only the current mind of a man but also his karma in the previous life and his reward and retribution in the future can clearly be spotlighted.

The *Lotus Sutra*, fascicle 7, the 21st chapter on "The Divine Powers of the Buddha," preaches: "Suppose that after the Buddha passed away, someone who knows the causes and conditions and proper sequence of the sutras expounded by the Buddha will preach them truthfully according to the true meaning. As the light of the sun and moon can eliminate all darkness, so this person will wipe out the darkness of living beings as he walks about in the world."

[Kyotsu Hori, trans. Jay Sakashita, ed. *Writings of Nichiren Shonin*. (Tokyo: Nichiren Overseas Propagation, 2003.)]

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The Reply to the Wife of Sir Shijo Kingo (Shijo Kingo-dono Nyobo Go-henji)

After all it is the evil teaching of the Shingon School that blinds the eyes of all the people in Japan and leads them astray. I will talk about it later.

The ten parables described in the 23rd chapter, "The Previous Life of Medicine-King Bodhisattva," of the *Lotus Sutra* seem to compare the *Lotus Sutra* against all other Buddhist scriptures, but it is not what the Buddha intended.

Comparing a practitioner of the *Lotus Sutra* against a practitioner of all other Buddhist scriptures, the Buddha considered it important that the former be as powerful as the sun or the moon and the latter as powerless as a star or a candlelight. The reason lies in the most important sentence in the eighth parable: "Likewise one who upholds this sutra is the best of all the people." These 22 characters are the most important in the *Lotus Sutra* and in the eyes of all the people. It means that a practitioner of the *Lotus Sutra* is as precious as the sun and the moon, Brahma-heaven King or a Buddha, while a practitioner of the *Great Sun Buddha Sutra* is as minute as a star, a river, or an ordinary man. Therefore, whether male or female, monk or layman, anyone in this world who upholds the *Lotus Sutra* will be regarded by the Buddha as the master of all the people. Brahma-heaven King and Indra, too, will show respect to him. It is a joy beyond expression.

If you contemplate this sutra day and night and read it morning and evening, you will become an extraordinary practitioner of the *Lotus Sutra*. The character *sha* in the phrase "ze-kyoden-sha" (one who upholds this sutra) means any person; therefore, the phrase can mean anyone who has faith in the *Lotus Sutra* among monks, nuns, laymen and laywomen. This is not so, however, because the Buddha restates it below: "If there is a woman who hears and upholds... "Reading all Buddhist scriptures other than the *Lotus Sutra*, I don't want to be a woman. Some sutras say women are messengers of hell, other sutras say women are like a serpent or a bent tree, while still other sutras say that their seeds of Buddhahood are toasted.

In Confucianism, a man called Jung Ch'i-ch'i lists three joys including not being a woman. He thus states it is a joy not to have been born a woman in this life, It is also said that, the three kingdoms in ancient China (Hsia, Yin and Chou) were ruined by women. But it is only the *Lotus Sutra* that declares: "A woman who upholds this sutra is superior to not only other women but also men."

After all, even if a woman is abused by everybody else, it is most important that she is loved by the man she loves. If everybody hates you, let them hate you. It does not matter so long as Sakyamuni Buddha, Taho

Buddha, Buddhas all over the universe besides the Brahma-heaven King, the sun and the moon and the other gods have compassion for you. As the *Lotus Sutra* praises you, you have nothing to be ashamed of.

As you have reached the critical age of thirty-three, you sent me an offering. I placed it on the altar of Sakyamuni Buddha, the *Lotus Sutra*, and the sun god. Human beings have right and left shoulders, and *two* gods dwell on them. One is Domyo-jin and the other is Desha-jin. For the purpose of protecting people, Brahma-heaven King, Indra, and the sun and the moon assign these two gods to each person to accompany him from the time he was conceived in his mother's womb to the end of his life as though they were his shadow or eyes. They are to report to heavenly gods what this person does, good or evil, without exception. This is stated in the *Flower Garland Sutra*, which Grand Master T'ien-T'ai explains in the eighth fascicle of the *(Great Concentration and Insight)*.

However, if a woman's faith is not strong enough, Buddhas and gods will seem to abandon her even though she upholds the *Lotus Sutra*. This is only natural just as when the commander of an army is a coward, his soldiers are not courageous; when a bow is weak, a bowstring is loose; and when winds are gentle, waves are low.

Your husband, Lord Shijo Saemon, however, is a firm believer of the *Lotus Sutra* incomparable among laymen in Japan. As his wife, you are the first among women in Japan. The Buddha would consider you a female dragon who attained Buddhahood through the *Lotus Sutra*.

The character for a woman means to rely on. Just as a wisteria plant coils around a pine tree, and women rely on men, you should rely on your husband,

Lord Saemon (Shijo Kingo), as your master, who will lead you to the *Lotus Sutra*.

Your critical age of thirty-three will be changed to your thirty-third year of happiness. This is what is meant by the so-called "Seven troubles will disappear, and then seven states of happiness will arise immediately." You will grow younger and more happiness will reach you.

Respectfully yours,

Nichiren (signature)

On the 27th of the 1st month

In Response to the Wife

of Lord Shijo Kingo

St. Nichiren's Nyonin Goshō (Letters Addressed to Female Followers). [Kyotsu Hori, trans., ed. (Tokyo: Nichiren-shu Overseas Propagation Promotion Association, 1995.) pp. 88-94.]

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Tibet

Tibetan Book of the Dead

THE MILD DEITY REALITY BETWEEN

Each between phase and day begins with the suggestion that one Carry on with the reading of the Book of Natural Liberation in case the deceased is still not liberated. ...The rest of us should probably keep going, preferring to err on the side of overdoing than failing to provide an opportunity for the deceased....

Hey, noble one! Listen unwavering with intense concentration!
There are six kinds of between: the natural life between, the dream between, the contemplation between, the death-point between, the reality between, and the emergent existence between,

Hey, noble one, three betweens will dawn for you; the death-point between, the reality between, and the existence between will dawn. Until yesterday, in the death-point between, the reality clear light dawned. But you did not recognize it, so you had. to wander here. Now the reality between and the existence between will dawn for you. As I describe them, you must recognize them without fail.

Hey, noble one! Now you have arrived at what is called "death."
You are going from this world to the beyond. You are not alone; it happens to everyone. You must not indulge in attachment and insistence on this life. Though you are attached and you insist, you have no power to stay, you will not avoid wandering in the life cycle. Do not lust! Do not cling! Be mindful of the Three Jewels!

Hey, noble child! Whatever terrifying visions of the reality between may dawn upon you, you should not forget the following: words. You must proceed remembering in your mind the meaning of these words. Therein lies the key of recognition.

Hey! Now when the reality between dawns upon me,
I will let go of the, hallucinations of instinctive terror,
Enter the recognition of all objects as my mind's own visions,
And understand this as the pattern of perception in the between;
Come to this moment, arrived at this most critical, cessation
I will not fear my own visions of deities mild and fierce!

.....

You should proceed clearly saying this verse aloud and remembering its meaning. Do not forget this, as it is the key to recognizing whatever terrifying visions dawn as certainly your own perceptions.

Hey, noble: one! At: this time when your mind and body are parting ways, pure reality manifests in subtle, dazzling visions, vividly
Experienced, naturally frightening and worrisome, shimmering like a mirage on the plains in autumn. Do not fear them. Do not be terrified!
Do not panic! You have what is called an instinctual mental body,"
not a material flesh and blood body. Thus whatever sounds, lights, :

and rays may come at you, they cannot hurt you. You cannot die. It is enough just for you to recognize them as your own perceptions. Understand that this is the between.

Hey, noble one! If you don't recognize them as your own perceptions in this way –whatever other meditations and achievements you may have experienced in the human world, . if you did not meet this particular instruction—the lights will frighten you, the sounds will panic you, the rays will terrify you. If you don't know the key of this instruction, you will not recognize the sounds, lights, and rays, and you will wander in the life cycle.....

Robert A. F. Thurman, trans. *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. (New York: Quality Paperback Book Club, 1994.) pp. 131-133

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Songs of Milarepa (From *The Hundred Thousand Songs of Milarepa*.)

Then what exists appearing to be things,
And their non-existence, reality that's empty,
Are essentially inseparable, one-taste;
And therefore there is neither self-awareness,
Nor awareness of what' s other anywhere.
All of this a union vast and spacious,
And all those skilled in realizing this,
Do not see consciousness, they see pure wisdom,
Do not see sentient beings, they see buddhas,
Don' t see phenomena, they see their essence,
And out of this compassion just emerges,
Retention, powers, fearlessness and all?
The qualities embodied by a Buddha
Just come as if you had a wishing jewel,
This is what I, the yogi, have realized.

2006 <http://groups.msn.com/AryaTaraTibetanBuddhismUK/songofmilarepa.msnw>

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The Twelve Meanings of Mind

I bow down at the feet of my Guru.

Oh good patrons! If you wish to realize the Essence of Mind,
You should practice the following teachings:
Faith, knowledge, and discipline,
These three are the Life Tree of Mind.
This is the tree you should plant and foster.

Non-attachment, non-clinging, and non-blindness,
These are the three shields of Mind;
They are light to wear, strong for defense,
And the shields you should seek.

Meditation, diligence, and perseverance,
These are the three horses of Mind;
They run fast and quickly flee!
If you look for horses, these are the right ones.d.

Self-awareness, self-illumination, and self-rapture,
These three are the fruits of Mind;
Sow the seeds, ripen the fruit,
Refine the fluid, and the essence emerges.
If you look for fruit, these are the fruit you should seek.

Sprung from yogic intuition,
This song of the Twelve Meanings of Mind is sung.
Inspired by your faith, continue with your practice, my good patrons!

2006 http://www.buddhism-blog.com/2006/03/song_of_milarep.html

Festivals and Observances

Except for Japan which adopted the Solar Calendar, Buddhist festivals are generally on the Lunar Calendar. There are some variations among Theravadin countries in South Asia. This list is not exhaustive. There are many local and recently developed festivals and observances.

South/South East Asia

Uposatha (Observance Day)- four monthly holy days which are observed in Theravada countries - the new moon, full moon, and quarter moon days. Monks and lay people renew dedication to the Dharma.

4/ First full moon day, celebration of New Year.

5/16) Commemorates the birth, enlightenment, and parinirvana of Buddha Gautama Siddhartha

[a/k/a Wesak, Vesak, Vesakha Puja, Visakha Puja, Budh Purnima, Buddha Jayanti Vesak is the name of the month for this event.]

7/13) Theravada Buddhism: Esala, Ashala Dhamma; celebrates Buddha's first teaching.

8th month- Full moon: (Sri Lanka) Festival of the Tooth The tooth relic of the Buddha is paraded in Kandy for 9 consecutive nights.

10/19-11/16- Kathina observance at end of Vassa retreat-residence during monsoon rainy season. Offerings of cloth given to monks.

China

1/First full moon day Celebration of New Year in late January or early February.

3/full moon day Celebrates birth of Kuan-yin Bodhisattva and her virtues.

12/8 Buddha's Enlightenment

2/15 Buddha's Nirvana

2/19 Birth of Kuan-yin

4/8 Birth of Sakyamuni

4/15 Vesak

6/10 Birth of Padmasambhava

8/19 Enlightenment of Kuan-yin

7/15 Ullambana- Feeding Hungry spirits (corresponds to Obon)

7/30 Birth of Ti-tsang p'usa (Jizo Bodhisattva)

9/19 Renunciation day of Kuan-yin

10/5 Memorial for Death of Ta-mo (Bodhidharma- founder of Ch'an in China)

11/17 Birth of O-mi-to-fo (Amida Buddha)

Korea

5th Lunar month, 5th day and 1st and 3rd Saturdays during April to October. Performs re-enactment of Buddha's preaching the Lotus Sutra.

1/1 Lunar Gujeong, (seolnal) New Year; a major festival

1/15 Daeboreum, burning talismans to ward off evil spirits

4/5 Hanshik, Visiting graves of Ancestors

5/8 Buddha's birthday (lunar)- festival of lanterns

Japan

2/15: Nirvana Day: celebrates the Buddha's complete nirvana (parinirvana) (483 BCE).

3/21: Spring Equinox (Haru-no-Higan); meditation on the impermanence and death. [a/k/a Ohigan, meaning other shore]

4/8: Buddha's Birth (Hana Matsuri/Flower Festival)

7/13 to 7/15: Obon—commemorating and honoring departed ancestors. [a/k/a Ulambana (skt) Bon (jpn)]

9/23: Fall Equinox (Aki-no-Higan); meditation on the impermanence of life.

12/8: Bodhi day (Jodo-e) celebrates Buddha's enlightenment.

Tibet

Tibetan Buddhism has observances each month corresponding to various phases of the moon dedicated to Sakyamuni, White, Green, Red Tara (Avalokitesvara/ Kuan-yin/Kannon, Amitabha.

3/3 to 3/18: Losar/Tibetan Buddhist New Year (Year 2130. Considered the most important in the year.

5/25: Dakinis' Day--Day Tantric Buddhists make offerings to Mother Tantra; day to unite will and power to manifest positive social change. [a/k/a Mother Tantra Puja, Tsog, Tsok, 25th day. Observed primarily by Tantric initiates.]

6/14 (Ch B 5/8,: Saga Dawa Duchen--Tibetan Buddhist festival celebrating the birth, enlightenment, and parinirvana of Buddha Siddhartha Gautama. [a/k/a Wesak, Vesak, Vesakha Puja, Visakha Puja, [Tib B: 4th Tibetan month, Chin. B. 15th day.

8/2 Chokhor Duchen-- celebrates the Buddha's first teaching.

8/7: Dakas' Day--Day Tantric Buddhists make offerings to Father Tantra. [Observed primarily by Tantric initiates.]

11/16: Lha Bab Duchen Day. Tibetan Buddhists celebrate the Buddha's descent from heaven after teaching the Dharma there.

12/18: Day for meditation on Tantric Bodhisattva Deities Manjusri and Prajna-Paramita, consciousness and empowerment of Wisdom. Prajna-Paramita is considered Mother of All Buddhas.

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<http://www.wheeloftheyear.com/2003/buddhist.htm>

BBC- Religion and Ethics

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/buddhism/holydays/>

<http://www.zip.com.au/~lyallg/BuddhistFestival.htm>

Buddha Net
<http://www.buddhanet.net/festival.htm>

HBMC Buddhapia

http://eng.buddhapia.com/_Service/_ContentView/ETC_CONTENT_2.ASP?pk=0001450570&sub_pk=&class_cd=0002201947&top_menu_cd=0000000606&Menu_code=0000008609&sub_menu=

Buddha-net
http://www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/history/chin_fest.htm

Buddhism In History

c. 1500 BCE: Invasion of Aryans in India, development of Vedas, Brahmin priesthood, caste system, sacrificial ritual system. Formation of philosophic schools.

800 BCE-500 BCE: Formation of the Upanishads, basic texts of Indian philosophy

590-470 BCE: Mahavira – (Founder of Jainism), contemporary of the Buddha.

563-483 BCE: Birth of Siddhartha Gautama

Renunciation,- age 29; Enlightenment, age 35.

First Sermon of the Buddha at Benares, teaching career,-45 years

Death- Parinirvana of Gautama

552-479 BCE: Confucius in China

500 BCE: Lao-tzu-Taoism in China

543-479 BCE: 1st Buddhist Council in Rajagraha

443-379 BCE: 2nd Buddhist Council in Vesali, 100 years after the Buddha's Parinirvana. Background for origin of Mahayana Buddhism.

327-325 BCE: Alexander in India

297 BCE: King Asoka (274-236 BCE) converted to Buddhism.

247 (308?) BCE: 3rd Buddhist Council, convened by King Asoka at Pataliputra (Patna?) India.

240 BCE: Ven. Mahinda establishes the Mahavihara (Great Monastery) of Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka.

200 BCE: Development of “Hinayana” Buddhism later known as Theravada (Way of the Elders)

1st Cent BCE: Erection of the great Stupa at Sanchi, India.

94 BCE: Sri Lanka: 4th Buddhist Council (acc. to Theravadins)

35 BCE: Sri Lanka (or 100 BCE?): King Vattagamani (reign 29-17) orders the Buddhist teachings (Theravada canon) to be committed to writing.

65 CE: China: First historic proof of Buddhist community.

1st Cent CE: Thailand and Burma: monks from Sri Lanka establish Theravada.

2nd Century: 4th Buddhist Council in India under King Kaniska.

Appearance of Mahayana Buddhism as separate school.

2nd Century: Beginnings of translation of texts into Chinese – An Shih-Kao.

2nd Century: Buddhism first introduced to Vietnam from China,

2nd-3rd Century: Nagarjuna and rise of Madhyamika philosophical school known for teachings on emptiness. 150-250 CE He taught the philosophical Middle Path between extremes of existence and non-existence. All things exist provisionally or conditionally as the result of interrelated causes and conditions and are essentially empty.

350-650: Gupta Empire flourishes in India. Heyday of Indian philosophy

320 to 1000: Development of Vajrayana Buddhism, based on Mahayana in India.

4th Century: Master Vasubandhu in India ; founded the “Consciousness-Only” school, reputed writer of Treatise on the Pure Land of Amida Buddha and basis of the later Pure Land school.

334-416: Hui-yuan founds the White Lotus Movement of Pure Land Buddhism in China.

372: Arrival of Buddhism in Korea. Monks bring scriptures and images.

425: Buddhaghosa in Sri Lanka, the author of important Theravada text: *The Path of Purity*

5th Century: Emergence of popular Pure Land Buddhism with T'an Luan (476-542) in China.

480: Bodhidharma arrives in China and founds Ch' an-Zen school.

552: Buddhism arrives in Japan

6th Century: Establishment of Chinese T'ien-t'ai school by Chih-I (538-597)

641 Buddhism introduced to Tibet from India, under King Song Tsen Gampo

650: First Buddhist temple in Tibet

7th century: Hua-yen school of Fa-tsang (643-712) founded in China. 6th Patriarch Hui-neng (638-713) active in Ch' an (Zen) school

710: Capital of Japan moved to Nara; development of the 6 Nara-schools

719: Buddhism introduced to Thailand

787: Padmasambhava opens Samye, first Buddhist monastery in Tibet

794-1185: Heian period in Japanese History – establishment of Tendai and Shingon sects

805: The Japanese Tendai School (from the Chinese T'ien-t'ai) officially introduced by Master Saicho (Dengyo Daishi 767-822)

845: Chinese persecution of Buddhism greatly weakens Buddhism. Islam spreads in China. Pure Land and Zen schools survive.

9th Century: Kukai (Kobo Daishi 774-835) establishes the Shingon ("True Word" mantra) Buddhism in Japan

10th- 14th Centuries: Second revival of Buddhism in Tibet; Buddhism enters Mongol court.

11th-13th Centuries: Encounter between Buddhism and Islam in India, Disappearance of Buddhism in India.

1185-1332 Kamakura Period: Formative period for popular Buddhism in Japan

13th-15th Centuries: Decline of Buddhism in North and South India.

13th Century: Emergence of Feudalism in Japan; Major schools in Kamakura period (1185-1332) appear: Jodo (Pure Land)

school is founded by Honen (1133-1212). His disciple Shinran (1173-1263) founds the True Pure Land School (Jodo Shinshu); Dogen (1200-1235) introduces the Soto-shu (Chinese Ts'ao-tung) school. Eisai (1141-1251) founds the Rinzaishu (Chinese Lin-Ch'i) school. Nichiren Daishi (1222-1282) founds Nichiren Buddhism based on *Lotus Sutra*.

1391-1474: Gendun drup, the First Dalai Lama; believed to be incarnation of Avalokitesvara (Chenrezig, in Chinese Kuan-yin and Japanese Kannon, the Bodhisattva of Mercy/Compassion)

1600-1868: Tokugawa period in Japanese history; a time of isolation

1853: Admiral Perry arrives in Japan; the end of Japan's isolation

1862: First Western translation of the *Dhammapada* into German

1868: End of Tokugawa era and restoration of Emperor Meiji; Japan's modernization begins.

Late 19th Century: Gradual revival of Buddhism in China

1885: Beginning of migration of Japanese to Hawaii and North America, bringing Buddhism.

1892: Anagarika Dharmapala establishes the Mahabodhi Society in Calcutta India to revive and propagate Buddhism

1893: The Chicago Exposition and World Parliament of Religions, introduces Asian religions to the West.

1905: North America: First Zen teachers arrive in North America.

1924-1929: Chinese Buddhist Canon (*Taisho Shinshu Daizokyo*) published in Tokyo

1928: Tsunesaburo Makiguchi founds the Soka Kyoiku Gakkai (Educational and Scholarly Society for Creation of Values) after conversion to Nichiren Shoshu. Opposes military and dies in prison in 1944.

1945: End of World War II, religious freedom established in Japan

1950: China: Communist suppression of Buddhism and other religions.

1952: Formation of World Fellowship of Buddhists

1956: Celebrate 2500th year of Buddhism

1959: China invades Tibet; Dalai lama, 14th incarnation, flees to India; Establish center in Dharamsala; The Dispersion of Tibetan Buddhism. Tibetan Buddhism spreads to western countries

1960: Translation and publication of Tibetan texts

1963: On June 11, Duc, a 67-year-old Vietnamese monk burned himself to death at a busy intersection in Saigon.

1965: Mr. Yehan Numata, Japanese industrialist, establishes the Buddhist Promotion Society in Tokyo; publication of *Teaching of the Buddha* to be placed in hotels

1975: Founding of Soka Gakkai (Scholarly Society for the Creation of Values) International by Daisaku Ikeda

1978: Founding of Buddhist Peace Fellowship

1982: Mr. Numata opens the Numata Center for Translation and Research in Berkeley to translate the Buddhist Canon to English

..... Thich Nhat Hanh establishes the Plum Village Meditation Center in France; emphasizing peace and mindfulness meditation.

1984: Mr. Numata endows Chairs in Buddhist Studies in 13 major Universities in North America and Europe

1987: American Buddhist Council established

.....Sakyadhita (Daughters of the Buddha) founded in Bodhgaya, India, an international Buddhist women' s organization

1989: Dalai Lama receives Nobel Peace Prize (1989)

1993: Centennial of World Parliament of Religions, in Chicago

1999: World Parliament of Religions meets in Capetown South Africa

2004: World Parliament of Religions meets in Barcelona, Spain

2006: Opening of the Center for World Jodo Shinshu Buddhism in Berkeley, CA, sponsored by the Buddhist Churches of America together with the Nishi Hongwanji Sect and affiliated Ryukoku University

Glossary

Alaya-vijnana (skt)	Store Consciousness, a principle in Yogacara, Consciousness Only teaching.
Amitabha, Amitayus (skt) Amida (jpn)	The Buddha of Infinite Light and Eternal Life, central object of worship in Pure Land Buddhism, respectively. They are identified as the same Buddha in two aspects. Names are in Sanskrit. Most common name Amida is Japanese.
Anatta-Anatman (pali-skt)	Pali and Sanskrit languages respectively, the term for non-soul. A distinctive teaching of early Buddhism.
Buddha (skt)	The Enlightened One, a title for Gautama, Sakyamuni
Bodhisattva	Sanskrit term for one on the path to Buddhahood in Mahayana Buddhism.
Ch'an, (ch)	Term for Meditation, usually refers to Ch'an/Zen Buddhism.)
Cheng-yen, (ch)	Term for True Word, referring to use of Mantras (see below), the name of a school in China and

	Japan.
Ching-tu, (ch)	Pure Land, refers to Pure Land teaching developed in China and very important in Japan in the Kamakura period. It is often compared to heaven in other traditions, though it symbolizes Nirvana.
Dainichi (jpn)	Refers to the Great Sun Buddha in Shingon (Cheng-yen) Teaching.
Dharma (skt)	A variety of meanings: the teaching, truth, basic elements of existence. Generally means the Buddha's teaching.
Dharmakaya (skt)	The Body of Truth, one of three bodies of the Buddha in Mahayana tradition. Refers to the ultimate, inconceivable Truth. See below Trikaya
Dhyana (skt)	See Ch'an.
Dzogchen (tbt)	Great Perfection; the ultimate nature of all being. The fundamental ground of all existence, realized through meditation.
Hinayana-Mahayana (skt)	Early division in Buddhism, Hinayana, a pejorative term meaning small, narrow vehicle, compared to the large, spacious vehicle, Mahayana.
Hoben, (jpn)	Compassionate, tactful means or device, to aid untutored people to understand Buddhism.
Hua-yen (chn)	The philosophy of perfect mutual interpenetration of all things in Mahayana Buddhs. The name of a Sutra, Wreath or <i>Garland Sutra</i> .
Hwadu (kor)	a method in Korean Buddhism for attaining enlightenment.

Jodo (jpn)	See Ching-tu
Jodo Shinshu (jpn)	True sect of the Pure Land, established by Shinran (1173- 1262).
Karma (skt) kamma (pali)	Deed or Action
Koan (jpn)	A “case”; as story, phrase or statement used in Ch’an/Zen/Son meditation to break through the limitations of reasoning.
Laws of Manu	Ancient Indian Law book governing daily behavior.
Li (ch)	Principle, reason in Chinese thought.
Madhyamika (skt)	Middle path between extremes such as existence and non-existence. Everything exists provisionally in interrelation of causes and conditions. The basic teaching of Nagarjuna (150-250 CE. in India.
Mandala (skt)	Sacred Diagram of the universe in Esoteric Buddhism.
Mantra (skt)	A charged, mystic word or phrase in Esoteric Buddhism.
Mappo (jpn)	The last age in the decline and disappearance of the Dharma in Buddhist eschatology.
Mudra (skt)	Symbolic gestures or hand signals, with spiritual meaning in Esoteric Buddhism.
Namu-myoho-renge-kyo (jpn)	The Daimoku or mantra in Nichiren Buddhism, meaning I take refuge in the <i>Lotus Sutra</i> .
Nembutsu (jpn)	The term refers to the recitation of the name of Amida Buddha; Namu Amida Butsu (I take refuge in Amida Buddha) in Pure Land Buddhism.
Nirvana (skt)	Ultimate realization in Buddhism, beyond words or conception; the realm of perfect

	freedom from all forms of bondage, bliss and purity.
Omamori (jpn)	Amulet, talisman, device for spiritual protection.
Prajna (skt)	Wisdom attainment.
Rinpoche, (tb)	'Great jewel' or 'great precious one', a term for a highly respected Lama..
Samadhi (skt)	The condition of concentration, trance where the mind is highly focused- one pointed, experience peace and calm.
Samatha (skt)	A phase or aspect of meditation, Disciplining the mind to develop calmness as a basis for insights and understanding.
Samsara (skt)	The stream of births and deaths, realm of transmigration.
Shingon, (jpn)	See Cheng-yen
Son (kor)	See Ch'an
Sunyata (skt)	Emptiness, Void, non-dual in Mahayana Buddhism
Tantra (skt)	“to weave”; “loom”; the interweaving of two basic elements male and female. Everything is an expression of divine energy with which union is achieved through a variety of practices and ritual including use of sexual practices, under the guidance of a teacher in the esoteric traditions of Hinduism and Buddhism.
T'ien-t'ai (ch)	School of Chinese Buddhism, found by Chih-I in China on Mount T'ient'ai.
Ti-yung (ch)	Essence and function, interpenetrating non-dual aspects of every existence in Chinese thought.
Tong Bulgyo, (Kor)	“ Interpenetrated Buddhism” taught by Won-hyo

Trikaya (skt)	Three bodies of the Buddha; a Mahayana concept of aspects of Buddha taken up in the texts: The historical manifestation, the supernal (or mythic) manifestation. While the former two have form, the ultimate truth body is formless, colorless and inconceivable source of all. See above Dharmakaya.
Tulku (tb)	A Lama who can be reborn wherever he desire as a result of his attainment in a previous life.
Upanishads (skt)	Ancient Indian mystical literature about 800-600 BCE. Though speculative, they are considered part of the Vedic texts.
Upaya, (skt)	See Hoben
Vajra (skt)	“Adamantine” “strong” A ritual implement in esoteric Buddhism
Vedanta (skt)	“The end of knowledge” reaching its completion. Philosophy said to be taught by the Veda, ancient sacred teaching knowledge of God and self.
Vishnu Purana	Ancient story of Vishnu, One of the major Puranas, a type of Indian literature.
Vinaya (skt)	Rules of Buddhist discipline
Vipassana (skt)	A phase or aspect of meditation practice together with samatha, to see things as they really are. To develop insight. Sometimes called Insight Meditation.
Yin-yang	Complementary forces in the universe, female and male; softness-wet and hard-dry, in Chinese thought.
Zen (jpn)	See Ch’an

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ENDNOTES

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¹ E. J. Thomas. *The Life of Buddha in Legend and History*. (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1952.)

² *Ibid.*, p. 139.

Chapter Two The Teaching of the Buddha: Two Streams of Tradition

³ *Dhammapada* IX:128. F. Max Mueller, Ed., *Sacred Books of the East*, X (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1881.) p.35.)

⁴ Robert O. Ballou. *The Bible of the World*. (New York: Viking Press, 1939)., pp. 306-309.

⁵ *Mahaparinibbana Sutta*, F. Max Mueller, Ed., *Sacred Books of the East*, XI (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1881.)

⁶ *Dhammapada* XVI, pp 210-211 F.Max Mueller ed., *Sacred Books of the East* X, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1881.) p. 56.)

⁷ For contrast see Warren, *Buddhism in Translation*, p. 123 and *The Lotus Sutra*, SBE, III, pp. 6-7. On

opposition see *Lotus Sutra*, pp. 219, 221-223.

⁸ E. A. Burtt, *The Compassionate Buddha*. New York: New American Library, 1955) p.60.

⁹ Charles S. Prebish, ed. *Buddhism: A Modern Perspective*. (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 1975.) p. 188

¹⁰ Wing-tsit Chan, *A Sourcebook in Chinese Philosophy*, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1963.

¹¹ Wing-tsit Chan, *A Sourcebook in Chinese Philosophy*, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1963.) p. 445.

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 447-448.

Chapter Four Korean Buddhism: The Way of Synthesis

¹³ This essay summarizes information from various sources below:

Donald W. Mitchell, *Buddhism: Introducing the Buddhist Experience*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.) pp. 237-239.

Henrik H. Sorenson, "Buddhist Spirituality in Premodern and Modern Korea," in Takeuchi Yoshinori, et al, ed., *Buddhist Spirituality: Later China, Korea, Japan and the Modern World*. (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Co.,1999.) p. 115.

<http://www.asianinfo.org/asianinfo/korea/rel/buddhism.htm>

<http://www.taekwondobible.com/korculture/spirit/historybud.html>

<http://www.hm.tyg.jp/~acmuller/kor-bud/korbud-overview.html>

<http://www.acmuller.net/xml-tei-tut/ogahae-tgu2003.html#div-1>

http://en2.wikipedia.org/wiki/Korean_Buddhism

¹⁴ Takeuchi Yoshinori, ed. *Buddhist Spirituality: Later China, Korea, Japan and the Modern World*. (New York: Crossroad Publishing Co.,1999.) p. 121.

¹⁵ Honen's tradition is called Jodo-shu, Pure Land Sect, Shinran's sect came to be called Jodo Shinshu because Shinran found himself disputing the followers of Honen. His movement came to be called Jodo Shinshu where the Shin meant True or correct interpretation of Honen and therefore, of the Pure Land tradition. Eventually the group divided into ten sects which have come down through history. However, the root branch of Shinran's descendants came to be called Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji –ha or "branch" (ha). This major segment declined for a time and was revived by Rennyō the 8th Abbot in the 15th Century. It became one of the largest Buddhist denominations. As a result of the victory of Tokugawa Ieyasu in the 17th century and the unification of Japan, the Hongwanji divided because of politics into two branches, East (Otani-ha) and West (Hongwanji-ha) to reduce their power. They remain divided today and the minor sects have merged in some cases with the Hongwanji-ha.

Chapter Five The Flowering of Buddhism in Japan

¹⁶ George B. Sansom. *A History of Japan*. (Stanford Ca: Stanford University Press, 1961) II, p. 153.

Chapter Six Vajrayana: Esoteric Buddhism of Tibet

¹⁷ Robert A. F. Thurman, *Essential Tibetan Buddhism*. (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1995.) p. 292.

¹⁸ Robert A.F. Thurman. *Inner Revolution: Life Liberty and the Pursuit of Real Happiness*. (New York: Riverhead Books, 1998.) p. 21.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.30.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 117 for the five principles of politics of enlightenment; also p. 151 Asanga [fourth century] seven meditational steps)

²² *Ibid.*, p.235.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 236.

²⁴ <http://www.tibet.com/Status/3kings.html> This site is maintained and updated by The Office of Tibet, the official agency of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in London. This Web page may be linked to any other Web sites. Contents may not be altered. Last updated: 2-Feb-96.

²⁵ Reginald Ray, *Indestructible Truth*. (Boston, MA: Shambala Publication, Inc.,2000.) pp.113-114.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

²⁷ <http://www.tibet.com/Status/3kings.html> This site is maintained and updated by The Office of Tibet, the official agency of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in London. This Web page may be linked to any other Web sites. Contents may not be altered. Last updated: 2-Feb- 96.

²⁸ <http://www.geocities.com/tibetanprinting/manu.html>.

²⁹ Moke Moktoff, [http://www.tibetart.com/exhibits/origins/;](http://www.tibetart.com/exhibits/origins/) <http://www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/history/tibetans.htm>. John Powers, Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism, p. 138.

³⁰ John Powers, *Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism*. (Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 1995.) p. 348.)

³¹ Ray, *op.cit.*, p. 165.

³² Powers, *op.cit.*, pp. 143-144.

³³ *Ibid.*, Powers, p. 144

³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 162-163).

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 314-317.

³⁶ Ray, *op. cit.*, p.106

³⁷ Powers, *op.cit.*, p. 386.

³⁸ Ray, *op. cit.*, p. 207

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 224-225.

Also [http:// www. buddhistinformation.com/ tibetan/rim%C3%A9_movement_of_jamgon_kongtrul.htm](http://www.buddhistinformation.com/tibetan/rim%C3%A9_movement_of_jamgon_kongtrul.htm)

⁴⁰ <http://www.Tibet.com/Buddhism/kala1.html>

⁴¹ Powers, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

⁴² <http://www.dharma-haven.org/tibetan/chen-re-zig.htm>

⁴³ Thurman, *Essential Tibetan Buddhism*, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

⁴⁴ Robert A. F. Thurman. *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. (N.Y.: Quality Paperback Book Club, 1994.) 278 pp.

⁴⁵ http://www.berzinarchives.com/islam/history_afghanistan_buddhism.html

⁴⁶ (T.W. Rhy Davids, trans. [N.Y.: Dover Publications, rep. 1963 (1890)] *Sacred Books of the East*, v.35-36. Pali title: *Milinda panha*.)

⁴⁷ Rick fields. *How the Swans Came to the Lake*. (Boulder; Shambhala, 1981.) pp. 14-16.)

⁴⁸ *Catholic Encyclopedia*: <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/02101.htm>);

⁴⁹ (Roger-pol Droit. *The Cult of nothingness: The Philosophers and the Buddha*. (Chapel Hill, London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003.) pp. 10-11; 13-14.)

50 Gnosticism derives from *gnosis*, a Greek word for knowledge and wisdom. Such knowledge is liberating from spiritual blindness, ignorance, and the vanity of existence.

⁵¹ <http://www.catholic-forum.com/saints/heresy03.htm>)

⁵² <http://www.gnosis.org/thomasbook/ch22.html>)

⁵³ *Gymnosophists were naked ascetics. However, Gautama Buddha opposed the Jains who practised nudity.*

⁵⁴ New York: (D. Appleton and Company, 1898.)

⁵⁵ *Catholic Encyclopedia*, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08459b.htm>

⁵⁶ 2 Jason Barthasius. <http://www.mkzc.org/barthasius.htm> From the web page of the Maria Kannon Zen Center.

⁵⁷ Asian Topics in World History. Columbia University.
<<http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/mongols>

⁵⁸ “Marco Polo’s Asia.” John Hubbard, Macalester College December 1994.
form<http://www.tk421.net/essays/polo.html>

⁵⁹ Droit, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-15, notes other accounts of apparent contact with Buddhism, as well Muslim sources.

⁶⁰ (<http://depts.washington.edu/uwch/silkroad/texts/rubruck.html#buddhism>)

⁶¹ See also Henri Du Lubac. *History of Pure Land Buddhism*. Amita Bhaka, trans. Chapter 7. (<http://www.bdcu.org.au/BDDR/bddr12no6/pureland7.html#sdfootnote15sym>)

⁶² John Laures, S.J. *St. Francis Xavier At Yamaguchi*. <http://pweb.sophia.ac.jp/~d-mccoy/xavier/laures/laures.html>

⁶³ http://www.manresa-sj.org/stamps/1_Ricci.htm

⁶⁴ <http://ricci.rt.usfca.edu/biography/view.aspx?biographyID=1018>)

⁶⁵ http://salempress.com/Store/samples/great_events_from_history_renaissance/great_events_from_history_renaissance_matteo.htm

⁶⁶ http://www.acay.com.au/~silkroad/buddha/h_west.htm

⁶⁷ Roger-Pol Droit. *The Cult of Nothingness: The Philosophers and the Buddha*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003.), pp. 16-17

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p.21.

⁷⁰ <http://www.near-death.com/experiences/origen045.html>; Also Andrew D. White, *Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom*,y Chapter XX, <http://www.cscs.umich.edu/~crshalizi/White/criticism/victory.html>

⁷¹ <http://www.econlib.org/library/ypdbooks/lalor/llCy164.html>

⁷² <http://www.yesselman.com/BuddSpin724.html>

⁷³ <http://www.quangduc.com/English/figure/18westerncontribution-2.html>

⁷⁴ <http://www.quangduc.com/English/figure/18westerncontribution.html>

⁷⁵ <http://www.kheper.net/topics/Theosophy/Blavatsky.htm>

⁷⁶ <http://www.sangharakshita.org/e-anniversaries.html>

⁷⁷ http://www.mountainman.com.au/buddha/carus_00.htm

⁷⁸ <http://www.bartleby.com/65/ar/Arnold-S.html>

⁷⁹ <http://www.theosophy-nw.org/theosnw/books/lightasi/asia-hp.htm>

⁸⁰ Heinrich DuMoulin. "Buddhism and Nineteenth Century German Philosophy," *Journal of the History of Ideas*. (1981, 42-3,) pp. 458-460.

⁸¹ Michael O. Billington. "Confucianism and "Imago Viva Dei." Address to Schiller Institute Labor Day Conference. (American Almanac. October 4, 1993. http://members.tripod.com/~american_almanac/confuc.htm)

⁸² <http://brock.organizedhardcore.org/PHIL2P17/>

⁸³ Jurgen Offermanns. *Debates on Atheism, Quietism, and Sodomy: the Initial Reception of Buddhism in Europe*. <http://www.globalbuddhism.org/6/offermanns05.htm>

⁸⁴ <http://www.friesian.com/leibniz.htm>; See also Ming-Wood Liu. *Philosophy East and West* 32, no. 1 (January, 1982). <http://ccbs.ntu.edu.tw/FULLTEXT/JR-PHIL/ming.htm>

⁸⁵ <http://www.kirjasto.sci.fi/arthursc.htm>

⁸⁶ Edward Conze. "Buddhist Philosophy and Its European Parallels," *Philosophy East and West*, (13, no.1, January 1963.) p.9-23.
http://www.thezensite.com/zen%20essays/Buddhist_philosophy_conze.htm. See also Heinrich DuMoulin, *op. cit.*, pp. 463-468.

⁸⁷ See Roger-Pol Droit. *The Cult of Nothingness: The Philosophers and the Buddha*. Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press. 2003.) p. 135-143.)

⁸⁸
http://www.publicappeal.org/library/nietzsche/Nietzsche_the_will_to_power/the_will_to_power_book_I.htm

⁸⁹ F. W. Nietzsche, *The Antichrist*. <http://www.fns.org.uk/ac.htm>

⁹⁰ Thomas A. Tweed. *The American Encounter with Buddhism: 1844-1912*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992.) p.xxxi.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² <http://www.vcu.edu/engweb/transcendentalism/ideas/definitionbickman.html>

⁹³ <http://ralphwaldoemerson.wwwhubs.com/essays2.html>

⁹⁴ -<http://www.philocrites.com/essays/hinduism.html>; also <http://forum.quoteland.com/1/OpenTopic?a=tpc&s=586192041&f=785191641&m=460196564&r=460196564>

⁹⁵ Thomas A. Tweed. *The American Encounter with Buddhism: 1844-1912*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992.) p.xxx.

⁹⁶ Diana L. Eck. *A New Religious America*. (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 2002.) p. 95.

⁹⁷ http://www.hds.harvard.edu/cswr/publications/buddhism_seminar/buell.pdf

⁹⁸ Diana Eck, *op. cit.*, pp. 95-96.

⁹⁹ http://www.hds.harvard.edu/cswr/publications/buddhism_seminar/buell.pdf

¹⁰⁰ The Transcendentalist _A Lecture read at the Masonic Temple, Boston, January, 1842
<http://www.xmission.com/~seldom74/emerson/transcen.html>

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<http://www.walden.org/Institute/thoreau/about2/D/Dial/Preachings%20of%20Buddha.pdf>

¹⁰² "Ecological Contemplation as Spiritual Practice: The Case of Henry David Thoreau"

http://www.hds.harvard.edu/cswr/publications/buddhism_seminar/buell.pdf

¹⁰³ Thoreau The Buddhist <http://www.ralphmag.org/thoreau-swansJ.html>

¹⁰⁴ *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*, quoted in Rick Fields, *Thoreau The Buddhist* (2006 "<http://www.ralphmag.org/thoreau-swansJ.html>)

¹⁰⁵ Rick Fields. *How the Swans Came to the Lake*. (Boulder, CO: Shambala Publications, Inc., 1981.) p. 64

¹⁰⁶ The name Shin Buddhism is used for Jodo Shinshu which means “True (shin) essence or teaching (shu) of the Pure Land (Jodo) tradition. The term shu also came to mean sect, hence the “True Sect of the Pure Land.” It maintains that Shinran’s teaching was the correct understanding of his teacher Honen (see p. 42). Jodo Shinshu has traditionally been further divided into ten sects. The two major divisions are the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji Hongwanji ha (branch) and the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji Otani-ha or also Nishi (west) Hongwanji and Higashi (east) Hongwanji.

¹⁰⁷ “The Birth of Americanized Buddhism: A Historical Study of Acculturation of Japanese Buddhism with Special Reference to Bishop Yemyo Imamura” English Summary of Dr. Moriya’s Ph.D. Thesis, Division of International Studies Graduate School, Meiji Gakuin Daigaku (See 2006 <http://www.shindharmanet.com/writings/birth.htm>; also Moriya Tomoe. *Yemyo Imamura: Pioneer American Buddhist*. (Honolulu: Buddhist Study Center Press, 2000.)

¹⁰⁸ <http://chi.gospelcom.net/DAILYF/2001/09/daily-09-11-2001.shtml>

¹⁰⁹ <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Academy/5352/anagarika.html>

¹¹⁰ Wendy Heartwood Cadge. “The First Generation of Theravada Buddhism in America,” University of Chicago Press, Fall, 2004
<http://www.sangam.org/articles/view2/?uid=1136>)

¹¹¹ Dan Arnold. “Buddhists on the Brain,” *Sightings* (November 3, 2005)
http://marty-center.uchicago.edu/sightings/archive_2005/1103.shtml

¹¹² Martin J. Verhoeven. “Buddhism and Science: Probing the Boundaries of Faith and Reason,” *Religion East and West*, (June 2001, issue 1, pp. 77-97; <http://online.sfsu.edu/~rone/Buddhism/VerhoevenBuddhismScience.htm>)

¹¹³ (cited in Rick Fields. *How the Swans Came to the Lake*. (Boulder CO: Shambala Publications, 1981.) p. 127

¹¹⁴ *Anguttara Nikaya, Tika Nipata Mahavagga, Sutta No. 65*
<http://www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/kalama1.htm>

¹¹⁵ <http://www.china1900.info/gedanken/wpr05.htm>

¹¹⁶ Rick Field *How the Swan Came to the Lake*. p. 120.

¹¹⁷ John H. Barrows, ed. *The World' s Parliament of Religions: An illustrated and Popular Story of the World' s First Parliament of Religions, held in Chicago in Connection with the Columbian Exposition of 1893*
<http://www.prism.net/user/fcarpenter/parliam.html>

¹¹⁸ Dom Aelred Graham. *Zen Catholicism*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1963; William Johnston. *The Still Point: Reflections on Zen and Christian Mysticism*. New York: Orbis Books, 1970; J.K. Kadowaki. *Zen and the Bible*. [in Japanese] 1977, [English] New York: Orbis Books, 2002.

¹¹⁹ <http://jbe.gold.ac.uk/7/kakol001.html>; <http://www.processnetwork.org/>