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## Research Article

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Global Buddhism: Developmental Periods,  
Regional Histories, and a New Analytical Perspective.

By Martin Baumann



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**GLOBAL BUDDHISM:  
DEVELOPMENTAL PERIODS, REGIONAL HISTORIES,  
AND A NEW ANALYTICAL PERSPECTIVE**

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INTRODUCTION

In summer 2000, the northern German city of Hannover hosted the World EXPO, which had an overwhelming, if not confusing, variety of technical and cultural presentations of various nations' achievements. Upon joining the visitors flowing into the spacious fairgrounds at the northwest entrance, the dome of the Nepalese pagoda soon caught one's interest. A few steps onward, the Thai pavilion attracted visitors with a miniature reproduction of a golden traditional temple. Pagoda and temple were marvelously illuminated during the evenings. Strolling on, in front of the Sri Lankan pavilion a huge Buddha statue stretched up to the roof. However, one of the most discussed and admired national pavilions was the Bhutanese pagoda, enthusiastically portrayed as "a jewel of the Himalaya." Bhutan was represented by a traditional, entirely wooden construction—a three-part temple with carved ornaments, icons, and symbols of Buddhism. The pagoda's center was a *lhakang* (Tib. "shrine room") in which late every afternoon a Buddhist priest ritually honored the *bodhisattvas* depicted by three gloriously dressed statues. The pagoda not only represented a religious place—it *was* a religious place, a temple. These religious overtones contrasted strongly with the disenchanting, electronically-focused, "cold" atmosphere found in many other nations' pavilions. In the Bhutanese pagoda visitors could take part in an introduction to Buddhism provided at half-hourly intervals in the meditation room situated right under the *lhakang*. The pagoda's strangeness and—for many visitors—seemingly out-of-place contents and practices aroused both curiosity and excitement. The offer to learn more about Buddhism—presented by German-born Buddhists, not by the Bhutanese—filled the instruction room from morning to evening.

The public presence that Buddhism gained at this World EXPO exemplifies the

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current widespread curiosity and interest in Buddhist practices and teachings in Western countries. Be it teachings of the Dalai Lama, Thich Nhat Hanh, or other prominent teachers, halls are filled by people flocking to such events. Not surprisingly, during the last two decades, Buddhist groups and centers have flourished and multiplied to an extent never before observed during Buddhism's 150 years of dissemination outside of Asia.

For the first time in its history, Buddhism has become established on virtually every continent. During the twentieth century, Buddhists have set foot in Australia and New Zealand, in the Southern region of Africa, and in a multitude of European countries, as well as in South and North America. Just as Buddhism in no way forms a homogenous religious tradition in Asia, the appearance of Buddhism outside of Asia is likewise marked by its heterogeneity and diversity. A plurality of Buddhist schools and traditions is observable in many thus-denoted "Western" countries. The whole variety of Theravāda, Mahāyāna, and Tibetan Buddhist traditions can be found outside of Asia often in one country and sometimes even in one major city with some forty or fifty different Buddhist groups in a single place. Buddhists of the various traditions and schools have become neighbors—a rarity in Asia itself. Additionally, Western Buddhist orders and organizations have been founded, signaling ambitious moves to create new, indigenized variations of Buddhist forms, practices, and interpretations.

For a better understanding and evaluation of the current situation, a historic contextualization is of much value. Such a perspective brings to the fore the continuities of developments, interests, and experiences, as well as of the particularities and differences. It might justly be asked how much historical perspective is needed on current events and patterns in order to enhance an understanding of the settlement of Buddhists and of Buddhist traditions becoming established outside of Asia. These processes will be sketched in part two, following the outline of a categorization of periods of Buddhism's history in part one. As I shall argue in the third section, it is not only necessary to look to past events and developments in Western, non-Asian countries. Rather, the view must turn to Asia and past changes *there* in order to set the framework for better understanding of the main patterns of Buddhism in the so-called "West." Whereas hitherto studies have structured the appearance of Buddhism in non-Asian settings along the line of "two Buddhisms,"<sup>1</sup> referring to a "gulf between [Buddhist] immigrants and converts" (Seager 1999: 233), I shall suggest that the main line of difference is not only one of people and ethnic ancestry. Rather, I shall demonstrate that the religious concepts held and practices followed are of primary importance in shaping the strands. Attention needs to be drawn to the contrast

between traditionalist and modernist Buddhism that is prevalent in both non-Asian and Asian settings.

### I. PERIODS OF BUDDHISM

The designations “traditionalist” and “modernist Buddhism” relate to an approach of dividing the history of Buddhism into periods based on the history of Southern or Theravāda Buddhism in particular. According to this approach, Theravāda Buddhism can be differentiated into three separate periods, those of canonical, traditional, and modern Buddhism. As George Bond explains, Buddhism is understood as a “cumulative religious tradition” (1988: 22) that has changed over time. However, despite all the changes, it has succeeded in regaining its unique identity. The tripartite differentiation, developed by Buddhologists such as Smith, Tambiah, Bechert, Malalgoda, and Bond, invites the question of whether, with the geographical spread outside of Asia and the emergence of new forms and interpretations of Buddhism, it is time to conceptualize a succeeding, fourth period. Before doing so, the threefold periodization shall be outlined briefly:

Canonical or early Buddhism is the Buddhism reflected in the Pāli Canon and may be taken to refer to the form of Buddhist tradition developing up to the time of Aśoka (third century B.C.E.). Traditional or historical Buddhism started with the reign of Aśoka and lasted until the beginning of revival or reformist Buddhism in the mid- to late nineteenth century. It is during this period that the gradual path of purification developed in formal terms, especially as the soteriological goal of attaining *arhantship* (becoming an *arhant*, an enlightened person) in this life was more and more perceived to be attainable only after an immensely long, gradual path of purifying oneself from imperfections. Buddhists came to perceive *nibbāna* (Pāli) or *nirvāna* (Skt.) as being “a thousand lives away,” as Winston King so resonatingly describes it (1964). During this period, merit-making rituals, *deva*, and spirit cults became integral to Buddhism due both to Buddhism’s geographical spread across Asia and the effect of having lay people encounter the long-range problem of rebirth and immediate needs of this life. The third period, modern or revival Buddhism, commenced with Buddhist monks and spokespeople responding to the challenges posed by the impact of colonialism, missionary Christianity, and the disestablishment of the *sangha* in the nineteenth century. The main features of this reformist Buddhism include an emphasis on rationalist elements in Buddhist teachings accompanied by a tacit elimination of traditional cosmology, a heightened recognition and use of texts, a renewed emphasis on meditation practice, and a stress on social reform and universalism.<sup>2</sup>

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The form of Buddhism that evolved during the period of traditional Buddhism did not end with the emergence of revival or modern Buddhism. On the contrary, both forms existed side-by-side, with reformist Buddhists strongly criticizing traditional Buddhist ritualistic practices and views. It should be noted—and this applies to the early as well as the late twentieth century—that the two strands or forms have been and continue to be internally multifaceted and diverse. These should be understood as Weberian ideal types. Also, for convenience I shall refer to the second form as traditionalist and to the third form as modernist Buddhism. This classification intends to avoid terminological confusion. It aims to standardize the varied designations chosen by the above-named Buddhologists.

Two methodological reservations have to be made: the threefold distinction relates to periods of rather varied length. Whereas the first, canonical period lasted for about three to four centuries and the third, modern period about one to two, the period of traditional Theravāda lasted for almost twenty centuries. Here questions of comparability and possible sub-differentiations of the second period arise. Secondly, the named Buddhologists established these distinctions only on the basis of Theravāda Buddhism in those South Asian countries where this particular form of Buddhist tradition is dominant (Ceylon/Sri Lanka, Myanmar (formerly Burma), Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos). Developments outside South and Southeast Asia have not been taken into consideration in this differentiation. What categorization of periods would emerge on the basis of the history of Buddhism in China, in Japan, and in Tibet? And could these periodizations be aligned with one another and with the sketched threefold categorization?

Nevertheless, for heuristic and systematic reasons, it is worthwhile to adopt the idea of developmental periods. This differentiation allows demarcation of periods and specific forms of Buddhism in pre-modern times, that is, traditional and canonical Buddhism. At the same time, this approach leads to the question of how Buddhism may be described following this modernist period. I would like to ask whether at the close of modernity and the beginning, or rather, on-going, of so-called post-modernity, developments are determinable that point to a new and different form of Buddhism. Is it possible to extend the suggested periodization of Buddhism's history? And what might qualify as a distinctive characteristic, shaping Buddhism in the period after modernity, that is, in post-modernity?

To my mind, there are good reasons to argue that, at least in Western, industrialized countries, Buddhism has acquired a post-modern shape. As some writers, philosophers, and critics characterize post-modernity as favoring plurality, hybridity, ambivalence, globality, and de-territoriality, in the same way these features have become prominent in the process

of Buddhism's spread outside of Asia. Part two will illustrate these plural, heterogeneous, and globally-spread characteristics of Buddhism.

However, too many varying connotations are attached to the notion of post-modernity. It appears debatable whether the designation "post-modern Buddhism" is an explanatory hit or a confusing miss. To avoid disorientation and mystification—especially because theorists disagree whether the era of post-modernity has started or whether it possibly has already ended—I suggest a less ambiguous term, that of "global Buddhism." This proposal fits with the descriptive designations "canonical," "traditional," and "modern" Buddhism in singling out prominent features and patterns. In the same way, "global" focuses on and highlights one of Buddhism's current characteristics, that of its global diffusion and dissemination. Certainly, "global" does not equal "West," for globalization processes of cultural and economic flows have markedly affected all nation-states, be they Asian, African, European, or elsewhere. Nor does "global" reflect some colonial or imperialistic attitude by way of—again—naming and analyzing developments along Western, Orientalist perceptions. Rather, the designation is meant to point to and conceptually capture the transnational and transcontinental flow of Buddhist ideas and practices and the global travel of Buddhist teachers and students.

How did this global Buddhism come about? What is its history in geographic and chronological terms? Part two points to key points in the history, or rather, histories, of Buddhism's spread to non-Asian regions. Eschewing a detailed outline of the multifarious forms and interpretations of Buddhism evolving in this global period, part three shall analyze Buddhism's Western presence along the lines of traditionalist and modernist strands. The fourth, final section shall explicate a few implications of the proposed approach, focusing on the parallel, often tense relationship between traditionalist and modernist Buddhism and that of modernist and global Buddhism.

## II. THE HISTORIES OF BUDDHISM SPREADING GLOBALLY

### *Buddhism has become global*

The planet-spanning distribution of Buddhism in the early twenty-first century can be illustrated by a recent incident: in March 2000, a friend of mine who is a monastic novice living in the Vietnamese Buddhist monastery built right near the above-mentioned world fairgrounds in Hannover, sent the following e-mail to some 70 people: "Hallo everybody, I'll be absent for the next 2 weeks (leaving Germany for Australia to become a bhiksu/monk(ey)) [sic]." The mail not only signifies some sense of humor on the part of the

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novice (Skt. *śramaṇera*) by way of denoting the formalized ritual to become a fully-ordained monk (Skt. *bhikṣu*) as becoming a “monk(ey)”; it also directly demonstrates the—by now taken-for-granted—globalized shape of Buddhism and its transcontinental setup. This brief message is indicative in another way too, as Buddhists outside of Asia would not necessarily travel to the tradition’s Asian home country to receive full valid authentication. But in the globalized Buddhism represented by our case, the novice travels from one Vietnamese exile monastery to another diasporic venue, that is, traveling from Germany to Australia to receive the higher ordination (Skt. *upasampadā*). Certainly *bhikṣu* and *bhikṣuṇī* ordinations in the Vietnamese Buddhist tradition have taken place in Germany and other parts of Europe previously. However, in this case, Buddhists in Perth, Australia, were inaugurating a new temple. This required the assemblage of a certain number of monks; sufficient monks were also required to be present to conduct a valid ordination ceremony. Because distance in the early twenty-first century no longer seems to play a role, monks and nuns from various countries assembled in Australia and solemnly ordained the novices, who had also come from a multitude of countries.

This examples provides a glimpse, albeit a paradigmatic one, of the vigorous global dissemination of Buddhist people and institutions that occurred in the late twentieth century. Although transcontinental travel and exchange of teachers and texts had taken place a century previously, tremendously improved modes of transportation now enable an intensity of communication previously unknown. Aided by post-modern technology such as telecommunications and the Internet, formerly confined or rural localities have become active agents in a global web. In this “Global Period of world history” (Smart 1987: 291), the maintenance of close links with both the (mainly) Asian home country and the various globally-spread overseas centers of a Buddhist tradition happens with a historically unprecedented scope and speed. The start of these developments and of the encounter of the Oriental and occidental worlds can be found at least three centuries ago.<sup>3</sup>

### *Early contacts*

Scholars in South Africa recently unearthed a curious seventeenth-century attempt to internationalize Buddhism that has almost been forgotten historically. In 1686, the Siamese king Narai sent some 10 ambassadorial emissaries, including three Thai *bhikkhus*, to inform Don Pedro, Catholic king of Portugal, about Siam’s customs and religious beliefs. The embassy included ritually-carried religious texts, most likely a collection of Thai *suttas* (texts). Unfortunately, the Portuguese ship was shipwrecked on the West coast of

Southern Africa. The Siamese noblemen and monks were rescued and later shipped home to Siam from the Cape colony. The messengers never reached Europe; consequently it was more than two centuries later before a fully-ordained Theravāda monk arrived in a Western country.<sup>4</sup>

Predating any such arrival, fragmentary and distorted information about the customs and concepts of the “remote” Buddhists in Asia had been trickling into Europe since the seventeenth century. Travelers—particularly Jesuit missionaries to Tibet, China, and Japan—had given varied accounts of what they devalued as the obscure cult of the “False God” called “Bod” (Wessels 1992). In the course of European colonial expansion, information was gathered about the customs and history of the peoples and regions that had been subjected to British, Portuguese, and Dutch domination. Texts and descriptions were collected and sent home to London and Paris. Simultaneously, in Europe the Romantic movement, with its rejection of the preeminence of rationalism, had given rise to a glorifying enthusiasm for the East. The Oriental Renaissance, a term first used by Friedrich Schlegel (1772-1829) in 1803, discovered the Asian world and its religious and philosophical traditions. Like many fellow Romantics, Schlegel was determined to trace the lost, genuine spirituality of India found in Sanskrit texts.<sup>5</sup>

*Mid-nineteenth century encounters: Text without context*

The credit for systematizing the increasing amount of information on Buddhist texts and concepts for the first time undoubtedly goes to Eugène Burnouf (1801-1852). In *L'introduction à l'histoire du buddhisme indien* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale 1844), the Paris philologist presented a scientific survey of Buddhist history and doctrines. He imposed a rational order on ideas hitherto perceived as unrelated, thus creating the “prototype of the European concept of Buddhism” (Batchelor 1994: 239). As Philip Almond holds, “the textual reification of Buddhism reaches its highest exemplification in 1844 in Burnouf’s *Introduction*” (1988: 25), establishing Buddhism mainly as a textual object. In the 1850s, Europe witnessed a boom of studies and translations, paving the way for an enhanced knowledge of and interest in the teachings. All of a sudden, Buddhism appeared on the European scene. It was not that Asian emissaries exported Buddhism, but rather, that European Orientalists imported it from within. The discovery of the Asian religion was, however, essentially treated as a textual object, being located in books, Oriental libraries, and institutes of the West. This Orientalist predefinition and selection carved Buddhist traditions according to Western, that is, Judeo-Christian, understandings; Buddhism as



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actually lived was of no interest (Almond 1988).

In this way, Orientalists and philosophers made Buddhism known in the West first. In Germany, following the enthusiastic interpretations of the Oriental Renaissance, the writings of the German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1869) inspired a wide interest in Buddhist philosophy and ethics among intellectuals, academics, and artists. In the U.S.A. (on the East Coast), the transcendentalists Emerson (1803-82), Thoreau (1817-62), and Whitman (1819-92) praised Indian philosophy and introduced translations, produced in Europe, to members of the American middle- and upper classes (Tweed 1992). Texts and circles of aesthetic conversation were the mediators that initiated the spread and provided public presence of Buddhist ideas in Europe and the U.S.A. Contact with Buddhist ideas was thus established on the basis of Buddhism as represented and essentialized in textual sources.

### *Buddhist converts and initial institutions*

A shift of emphasis is observable among Western sympathizers around 1880. Sir Edwin Arnold (1832-1904) published his famous poem “The Light of Asia” in 1879, followed by Henry Steel Olcott’s *Buddhist Catechism* in 1881. Both works praised the Buddha and his teaching. Echoing this overt glorification of the Asian religion, a few Europeans became the first self-converted followers of the teaching in the early 1880s. The appeal of Indian spirituality was strengthened by the intervention of the Theosophical Society, which was founded by the flamboyant Madame Helena P. Blavatsky (1831-1891) and the American Henry Steel Olcott (1832-1907) in 1875 in New York.

During this time, further translations and studies were published. Special reference needs to be made to the Pāli Text Society, founded by Thomas W. Rhys Davids (1843-1922) in 1881. The society’s aims were (and still are) the study of Buddhist texts preserved in the Pāli language and the distribution of such texts in scholarly editions and translations. Within the German-speaking arena, Hermann Oldenberg (1854-1920), with his Pāli-based study *Buddha: His Life, his Doctrine, his Order* (1881/Engl. 1882), served to popularize Buddhism more than any other work of the time. The Pāli Canon was held to represent the authentic, original “pure” Buddhist teaching, devoid of interpretations and changes of later times and traditions.

Around the turn of the century, Buddhists formed the first Buddhist organizations outside of Asia. In 1897, the Ceylonese Buddhist activist Anagarika Dharmapala founded an American branch of the Maha Bodhi Society. In Europe, the Indologist Karl Seidenstücker

(1876-1936) established the Society for the Buddhist Mission in Germany in 1903 in Leipzig. Likewise, the first British monk, Ananda Metteyya (1872-1923), formed the Buddhist Society of Great Britain and Ireland in 1907 in London. By means of lectures, pamphlets, and books, the first professed Buddhists tried to win recruits from the educated middle- and upper social strata of society. Additionally, a few Europeans had become monks in the Theravāda tradition in the early twentieth century. Their temporary stay in Europe resulted in some activity, although on a whole, it had no lasting impact. It was not until the 1970s that monastics would have a prominent say and role in the spread and representation of Buddhism outside of Asia.

In Australia, only a few theosophists and a “handful of isolated Australian Buddhists” (Croucher 1989: 25) advocated Indian philosophy and religion; a Buddhist society was not founded until the early 1950s. Similarly in South Africa, theosophists and Unitarians sympathized with Buddhist concepts. However, as was the case with many early Buddhists in Europe and North America, Buddhism was approached as little more than an intellectual hobby, which left their lives, in all other respects, unchanged.

#### *Internationalization: Toward a global Buddhism*

The incipient Buddhist activities outside of Asia have to be contextualized in light of Buddhism’s commencing internationalization. Of prime importance are changes and new interpretations brought about in adapting Buddhist teachings and practices to modernity. Be it in Japan, China, Thailand, or Ceylon, countries and peoples of mainly Buddhist faith were confronted by colonialism, Western technology and ideas, and missionary Christianity. In the late nineteenth century, the erstwhile passive endurance of being dominated by a foreign power changed to efforts to regain self-respect and self-determination. Reinterpretations of Buddhism to fit with modernity and Western concepts became an important resource in the renewal of national identity and pride. In Ceylon, the focal point of South Asian Buddhist revival, educated urban Buddhists emphasized the rational and scientific aspects of Buddhist teachings. Encouraged by the high esteem that Buddhist ideas had gained among Western intellectuals, Buddhism was conceived as a rational way of thought, being entirely in accordance with the latest findings of the natural sciences. In contrast with Christianity, Buddhism was not based on “dogmas of blind belief” and revelation, but on rational thought and experiential examination. In collaboration with nineteenth-century European scholarship and its historical-critical approach, Buddhists worked to unearth a thus conceived “original Buddhism” that could be found in the texts

of the Pāli Canon, the collections held to be undefiled by tradition and later “inessential accretions.” Belief in gods and malevolent spirits, as well as the ritualistic acts of protection and making of Buddhist merit (Pāli *puñña*) carried out by village monks, was frowned upon and strongly criticized. Ceylonese modernist Buddhists, derived from a new social stratum that came into existence in colonial times, portrayed Buddhism as text-based, pragmatic, rational, universal, and socially active. The Western Orientalist perception and its Protestant bias had been taken over and applied by Buddhist spokesmen themselves in Asia.<sup>6</sup>

Both European scholarship and the glorification of Buddhist ideas strengthened national and religious self-confidence in South Asia. In addition, in 1880 the founders of the Theosophical Society, Olcott and Blavatsky, visited Colombo (Ceylon). They publicly took *panasil*; that is, they went for refuge in the Buddha, *Dharma*, and *Sangha* and promised to follow the Five Lay Precepts. It was the first time ever that Westerners had done so in an Asian country. In the same year, Olcott and the Ceylonese Don David Hewavitarne, better known by his Buddhist name Anagarika Dharmapala (1864-1933), met and jointly worked to renew the importance of Buddhism. They founded Buddhist schools, and as an educational advisor to the Ceylonese youths, Olcott composed his *Buddhist Catechism* (1881). According to Richard Gombrich, the “*Catechism* represents the beginning of the modern world Buddhist movement.”<sup>7</sup>

This worldwide spreading of modernized, rational Buddhism and the creation of an international Buddhist network were strongly taken up by Dharmapala. In 1891, after a visit to Bodh Gaya (North India), the place where the Buddha is reputed to have gained enlightenment, Dharmapala set up the Maha Bodhi Society. The Society’s aim was to restore the neglected site to the Buddhists and to resuscitate Buddhism in India. Contrary to Theravāda organizations hitherto, the institution was not led by monks, but instead set up and directed by a lay Buddhist. Dharmapala’s well-received speech at the World’s Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893 established him as the main spokesman and representative of Buddhist revival in South Asia. It was in Chicago as well that the first American formally converted to Buddhism on American soil. After a public lecture by Dharmapala, the German American Carl Theodor Strauss (1852-1937) took refuge in the Buddha, *Dharma*, and *Sangha*. In the years to come, Strauss and Dharmapala worked jointly to spread the Buddhist teachings, both undertaking extensive travels around the globe. Dharmapala “visited England four times (1893, 1897, 1904, and 1925-6), the U.S. six times (1893, 1896, 1897, 1902-4, 1913-14, and 1925), China, Japan, and Thailand

(1893-94), and France and Italy [and the Buddhist House in Berlin 1925] en route to his journeys to England or America” (Gokhale 1973: 34). Overseas branches of the Maha Bodhi Society were formed in the U.S. (1897), Germany (1911), and Great Britain (1926). Undoubtedly, Dharmapala can be called the first global Buddhist missionary or “propagandist” and the Maha Bodhi Society the first inter- or transnational Buddhist organization.<sup>8</sup>

### *The arrival of East Asian migrants*

A totally different method of disseminating Buddhist practices and concepts outside of Asia came about as Chinese and Japanese migrants arrived on the U.S. West Coast. Gold had been found in California in 1848, and miners from China came in hopes of unearthing a fortune. By the 1880s, the number of Chinese in Gold Mountain (California), Montana, and Idaho had grown to over 100,000 people. Upon their arrival, Chinese temples were built, the first two in San Francisco in 1853. During the next fifty years, hundreds of so-called “joss-houses,” where Buddhist, Taoist, and Chinese folk traditions mingled, came about throughout the Western U.S. In striking contrast to the high esteem that Buddhist texts and ideas had gained among East Coast intellectuals, on the West Coast, Americans devalued East Asian culture as exotic, strange, and incomprehensible. The Chinese laundrymen, cooks, and miners were regarded as unwelcome immigrants; their life and culture excited curiosity and often contempt. Quite a number of Chinese were murdered and their temples and joss-houses burnt down. In 1882, the Chinese Exclusion Act restricted further immigration of Chinese nationals to the U.S. In a similar way, Japanese workers who had come since the 1870s faced racism and social exclusion. A government official regarded Buddhism as a “foreign religion,” causing a threat to the relationship between Japanese and American people. To provide “a social oasis within the sea of racial hostility,” two Jōdo Shinshū priests were sent in 1899, and the Buddhist Mission to North America was formally established in 1914.<sup>9</sup>

Around the turn of the century, further migrants from Japan arrived in Central and South America. Japanese workers came to Mexico and Peru in 1897 and to the state of São Paulo, Brazil, in 1908. The laborers intended to work for only a few years on the banana, coffee, and cotton plantations and then to return to Japan. Most often, however, their stay turned into long-term residence. During this early phase, the male immigrants showed no distinct interest in religious practices, and only at times of deaths of family members were they reminded to conduct the relevant Buddhist rituals.<sup>10</sup>

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### *The first half of the twentieth century*

During the first forty years of residence in Brazil, only one Japanese Buddhist temple became established, in Cafelândia in São Paulo State in 1932. Japanese workers were expected to assimilate as quickly as possible to Brazilian culture, an expectation that included, amongst others, the abandoning of their “heathen practices” and converting to Roman Catholicism. A fair number did, as Japanese saw conversion as a necessary part of the process of Brazilianization. Becoming a Brazilian, however, also implied that the long-held myth that immigrants would eventually return to Japan had to be changed. An additional reason for remaining permanently in Brazil was Japan’s defeat in World War II. Many Japanese opted to stay abroad rather than return to Japan, which had been destroyed both economically and morally. The decision to change status from a sojourner to an immigrant also resulted in efforts to ensure the preservation of Japanese culture and identity. It was from the 1950s onward that Brazilian religious and cultural societies were founded and Buddhist and Shintō temples became established. Gaining a footing in religious terms was accompanied by a socioeconomic advancement and growing urbanization of Japanese Brazilians, and went hand in hand with a growing emancipation from the former home country (Japan). The focus of identification had changed distinctively; it was Brazil, no longer Japan, that was regarded as the home country (Clarke 1995: 121).

As in Brazil and other South and Central American regions, World War II was the watershed for Japanese people in the United States. Acculturative processes had begun during the 1920s and 1930s to meet the needs of the American-born generation, such as education programs and naming Buddhist temples “churches” and the priestly personnel “minister” or “reverend,” indicating a growing attention to the use of English. Paradoxically, however, adaptation accelerated tremendously during the time in the internment camps. From 1942 to 1945, some 111,000 people of Japanese ancestry were interned, almost 62,000 being Buddhists, the majority of them Jōdo Shinshū (True Pure Land Teachings). In the camps, religious services were to be conducted in English, a demand that was later established as the norm. Of similar importance, formerly tight bonds with the Jōdo Shinshū mother temples in Japan dissolved. This emancipation from the normative Japanese model was expressed in the organization’s new name: No longer a “Mission [from Japan] to North America,” it became reincorporated as the Buddhist Churches of America. The U.S. had become the home of both former immigrants and a now independent Buddhist tradition, a process that culminated in the 1960s as the small, religiously distinct minority of Jōdo Shinshū Buddhists becoming a part of the broader middle class.<sup>11</sup>

The second Buddhist migrant group in the U.S., the Chinese continued to stay mostly concentrated in Chinatowns along the West Coast. After the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the number of Chinese in the U.S. steadily declined to some 62,000. As the numbers dropped, the number of temples closing rose, also due to a growing lack of interest among the American-born Chinese in religious affairs (Chandler 1998: 16-17). The other strand of Buddhism in the United States, that of convert Buddhism, was not any more successful at initiating Buddhist activities during this span of time. Although Japanese Zen masters Nyogen Senzaki (1876-1958) and Sokei-an Sasaki (1882-1945) stayed for years, the Zen meditation groups set up were met with little interest. It was not until the return of D. T. Suzuki (1870-1966) to North America for a long stay between 1950 and 1958 that Zen became popular and widespread (Fields 1981: 168-194).

Changing continents, in South Africa the 1921 census curiously identifies some 12,500 Buddhists of Asian descent. Although this number is highly suspect given the fact that the 1936 census lists only 1,771 Asian Buddhists, it points to a conversion movement that took place earlier in South India and gained prominence in West India some thirty years later. In 1917, the Indian Rajaram Dass had established the Overport Buddhist Sakya Society and called low-caste Hindus living and working in Natal to embrace Buddhism in order to escape the degrading social and religious position imposed on them by Hindu customs. As Louis van Loon, who carried out an in-depth study of this community, states, “[i]n addition to freedom from caste restrictions, many of these Hindus felt that Buddhism would give them more respectability in the eyes of European society around them as they believed that Buddhism’s lack of deity worship would make them more acceptable to their Christian superiors” (1999: 36). However, the movement was not respected by either Christians or Indian Hindus, so after peaking at some 400 families during the 1930s (1 percent of the total Indian population), in the course of time the movement gradually declined, with “only a few nominal Indian Buddhist followers left” in the late 1990s.<sup>12</sup>

In Europe, World War I (1914-1917) had brought to an end the incipient Buddhist movements. Immediately after the war, Buddhism was taken up again, especially in Britain and Germany. In contrast to the early period, Buddhism was now beginning to be practiced, at least by its leading proponents. The teachings were to be conceived not only by the mind, but also to be applied to the whole person. Religious practices such as spiritual exercises and devotional acts became part of German and British Buddhist life during the 1920s and 1930s.

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In 1921, Georg Grimm (1868-1945) and Seidenstücker initiated the Buddhist Parish in Germany and intended to employ a Buddhist itinerant preacher. The committed group saw itself expressly as a religious community of Buddhist lay followers. Its members had taken refuge in the Three Jewels and followed the ethical precepts of lay Buddhists. Lectures by Grimm were attended by some 500 listeners, and occasionally up to 1,000. During this period, Berlin Buddhist Paul Dahlke (1865-1928) started to publish Buddhist treatises and built the famous Buddhist House in 1924. In this house, which was half residential and half monastery, Dahlke led the same kind of ascetic and religious life as South Asian Buddhist monks. Two years later, Dahlke added a temple and three hermitages for meditation retreats. In addition, Dahlke had an 11-foot-high memorial stone erected on the North German island of Sylt, publicly paying homage to the Buddha. The interpretations of the Pāli Canon and Theravāda Buddhism by Grimm and Dahlke led to the formation of two independent schools. Despite the movement's small size, numerically speaking, a kind of schism arose within the German Buddhist movement as the two honored teachers fought a fierce and polemic dispute on the interpretation of the central teaching of *anattā* (Pāli, "no-self").<sup>13</sup>

Both schools continued their work during the period of Nazi domination, albeit restricted to small, private circles, at times under Nazi political control. Buddhists were regarded by the Nazis as pacifists and eccentrics. With the exception of those who had abandoned their Jewish faith and become Buddhists, no official or public persecution of Buddhism took place.<sup>14</sup>

In London, Christmas Humphreys (1901-1983) formed the Buddhist Lodge of the Theosophical Society in 1924. A Buddhist shrine room was opened in 1925, and *Vesak*, the commemoration of the Buddha's birth, enlightenment, and death, was celebrated on a regular basis. As a result of Anagarika Dharmapala's missionary efforts in Britain during the mid-1920s, British Buddhists founded a branch of the Maha Bodhi Society in 1926. Two years later, a Buddhist *vihāra* (monastery) with three resident Theravāda *bhikkhus* was established in London (1928-1940, reopened in 1954). It was the first time that several monks stayed for a lasting period outside of Asia, as hitherto attempts to implement the Theravāda *sangha* had failed.<sup>15</sup>

Until the mid-twentieth century, Buddhist activities in Europe were strongest in Germany, followed by Great Britain. In other European countries, only few organizational developments had taken occurred. Buddhist activities relied almost exclusively on one leading person who was able to gather more people. In France, wealthy American Grace

Constant Lounsbery (1876-1964) founded the society *Les amis du Bouddhisme* in 1929. The Paris-based group remained small, however. Nevertheless, it succeeded in publishing its own journal, *La Pensée Bouddhique*. In Switzerland, Max Ladner (1889-1963) established Buddhist activities during the 1940s and 1950s; between twelve and fifteen people met once a month in Ladner's house. The Zurich-based group published the Buddhist journal *Die Einsicht* ("Insight"), which appeared until 1961; the group ended in the same year as well. Although there had been few convert Buddhists in Austria, Hungary, and Italy (including the famous Giuseppe Tucci), no further Buddhist organizations came into being until the end of World War II.<sup>16</sup>

In Europe, it was undoubtedly people who had taken up Buddhism as their new orientation in life that dominated the small Buddhist scene. Except for a few Buddhist activists such as Anagarika Dharmapala and Japanese Zen Buddhists (such as Zenkai Omori and D. T. Suzuki), no Buddhist migrants from Asia had come to Europe during this time. However, there were two exceptions to this pattern. Both relate to Russian Kalmyk Buddhists, who had migrated from the Volga region to new places. In the early twentieth century, people from Kalmykia and from Southeast Siberian Buryatia had established sizeable communities in St. Petersburg, the czarist Russian capital until 1917. Buddhism in a Mongolian form, dominated by the Tibetan Gelug school, was the established religion of these people and the regions in which they lived. In St. Petersburg, Kalmyk and Buryat people built a Gelugpa temple and monastery in 1909-1915. The first Buddhist monastery on European soil thus became established not by European convert Buddhists, but by the Buryat-Mongol *lama* Agvan Dorzhev. During the Communist Revolution in 1917, however, the temple was desecrated. Following the comparative calm of the 1920s, Buddhists and scholars were persecuted and murdered under Stalin's dictatorship (1930s-1953). It was not until the 1980s that Buddhists were able to see conditions improve in Russia.<sup>17</sup>

A second, again temporary stay of Kalmyk people evolved in Belgrade (Yugoslavia) from the late 1920s to the mid-1940s. A recent online exhibition tells the story: Fleeing the aftermath of the Russian Revolution after a brief sojourn in Turkey, a few hundred Kalmyks settled in the outskirts of Belgrade and established a Buddhist community. The refugees built a temple with a typical tower, consecrated in 1929 according to the traditional rituals. As Pekic tells us, "[q]uite soon the temple became a Belgrade landmark—it became an attraction for Serbs as well as for foreigners arriving from abroad. In 1930 it was referred to in the 'Belgrade Guide,' and a year later the street was renamed the



‘Buddhist street’” (Pekic 2000). Buddhist festivals and regular ceremonies were scrupulously observed, marriages conducted, and a Kalmyk Sunday school set up. At the end of World War II, the Kalmyk community came to an end, as its members, having fought on the German side, had to flee Belgrade and retreated to Germany and later to the U.S. or France.<sup>18</sup>

*1950s and 1960s: Spread and pluralization*

In contrast to the first half of the twentieth century, the second half witnessed a boom of Buddhism outside of Asia, with regard to both the heavy influx of Asian migrants and a tremendously risen interest in Buddhist meditation, liturgy, and teachings. By no means will it be possible to refer to all instances and developments having taken place since the late 1940s.

World War II had brought an end to most public Buddhist activities in Europe. However, after 1945, as the war’s ruins still had to be cleared away, Buddhists reconstructed former Theravāda groups or founded new ones. The agony of the war led fair numbers of people to look for non-Christian, alternative life orientations. Buddhist lectures were well attended and Buddhist books and journals well received. From the 1950s onwards, new Buddhist traditions were brought to Europe. Japanese Jōdo Shinshū was established in Britain (1952) and Germany (1956). The writings of D. T. Suzuki and Eugen Herrigel (1884-1955) made known Zen meditation and art. Tibetan Buddhism won its first convert followers in Berlin in 1952 through the establishment of the Western branch of the Arya Maitreya Mandala (founded by the German-born Lama Govinda in 1933 in India). In addition, Buddhist missionary activities from South Asia gained momentum. For example, the jeweler Aśoka Weeraratna (1917-1999) had set up the Lanka Dharmaduta Society (Lankan Society for the Spreading of the Teaching) in Colombo in 1952, and following the purchase of the partly dilapidated Buddhist House built by Dahlke, from 1958 onward Theravāda *bhikkhus* were sent to Berlin in order to spread the *Dharma*.<sup>19</sup>

Buddhism established new groups and societies in various European countries. Buddhism spread more and more widely as attractive books and translations became more readily available. Simultaneously, Asian teachers began visiting the incipient groups to lecture and conduct courses on a regular basis. During the 1960s, a considerable change occurred in the way that members and interested people wanted to experience Buddhism both spiritually and physically. Meditation became very popular. Buddhists and sympathizers booked up courses in *vipassanā* meditation (Theravāda tradition) and Japanese Zen meditation

well in advance. Zen seminars, that is, *sesshins* (Jap.), took place in increasing numbers with *Rōshis* (teachers) coming from Japan to guide the newly-formed Zen groups.<sup>20</sup>

In the United States, lecture tours by D. T. Suzuki instigated an upsurge of interest in Zen concepts and meditation. At the same time, “Beat Zen” and “Square Zen” created by Allan Watts, Allen Ginsberg, and Jack Kerouac popularized Zen and attracted members of the emerging counterculture. Some Japanese teachers settled in America as the immigration regulations were relaxed during the mid-1950s and 1960s.<sup>21</sup> Around 1960, “American Zen turned from the intellectual to the practical,” as Fields noted (1981: 243). Furthermore, various meditation centers were founded as young Americans returned from Japan having received a traditional religious education, among them Philip Kapleau (b. 1912) and Robert Aitken (b. 1917) (see Rawlinson 1997). In addition, further Buddhist traditions arrived from Asia with Sri Lankan, Thai, Chinese, Taiwanese, Korean, and Japanese teachers. Among these traditions and schools, one of the most vigorous turned out to be the Sōka Gakkai, gaining a stronghold with a claimed membership of 500,000 people in the mid-1970s.<sup>22</sup>

In Australia, this span of time somewhat parallels the development of the adoption of Buddhism in Europe around the turn of the century. The first organization was founded in 1952, with a membership of mainly well-educated citizens. These few Buddhists in the mid-1950s “adopted Buddhism as a kind of hobby: it did not inform every breath taken,” as Croucher observed (1989: 45). Leading Buddhists such as Charles F. Knight (1890-1975) and Natasha Jackson (1902-90) “saw Buddhism as a triumph of rationalism and used it as a foil in their attacks on Christianity. It was a strongly intellectualized approach, going to great lengths to prove that Buddhism was fully consonant with scientific thinking” (Croucher 1989: 54-55). European Buddhist converts had emphasized just the same points fifty years earlier. As in Europe and the U.S. during the 1960s, Zen, Pure Land, and Sōka Gakkai were also imported into Australia.<sup>23</sup>

In general, during this time two characteristics stand out in contrast to the previous phases: Buddhism was no longer dominated by a single main tradition, as had been the case in Europe with Theravāda and in the U.S. with Mahāyāna Buddhism. Rather, since the 1950s, Buddhist teachers of various traditions arrived from Asia to win converts and to found centers. A plurality of Buddhist traditions emerged, substantially supplemented by various Buddhist strands formed by immigrant Buddhists. Secondly, the shift from intellectual interest to practical application deepened and spread through increased interest in meditation. Meditation practices served as a significant mediator to transplant Buddhist

traditions from Asia to Southern and Western regions.

*From the 1970s onward: Rapid increase*

The Zen boom of the 1960s was followed by an upsurge of interest in Tibetan Buddhism. Tibetan teachers such as Tarthang Tulku (b. 1935) and Chögyam Trungpa (1939-1987) had already arrived in the U.S. in 1969 and 1970. They formed their own organizations that established European branches during the 1980s. From the mid-1970s, high ranking *lamas* conducted preaching tours in Europe, North America, and Australia, as well in South Africa and South America in later years. Many members of the protest movements and the counterculture of the late 1960s became fascinated by Tibetan Buddhist rituals, symbols, and the lives of the *lamas*. Within only two decades, converts to Tibetan Buddhism were able to found a multitude of centers and groups, at times outnumbering all other traditions in a given country.

This rapid increase, accompanied by an expansion of the already existing institutions, led to a considerable rise in the number of Buddhist groups and centers on the side of convert Buddhists. In Britain, for example, within only two decades the number of organizations *quintupled* from seventy-four to 400 groups and centers (1979-2000). In Germany, interest in Buddhism resulted in an exponential increase from some 40 to more than 500 groups, meditation circles, centers, and societies (1975-1999). For North America, Don Morreale's *Complete Guide to Buddhist America* listed some 1,062 meditation centers in 1997; "more Buddhist meditation centers—nearly sixty percent—were established in the last twelve year period than the total number founded in the first eighty-five years of the twentieth century."<sup>24</sup>

Similar patterns and a comparable rate of growth are observable in Australia. There the figure of Buddhist groups, centers and societies rose from 167 to 308 during the 1990s (1991-1998). Due to large-scale immigration, especially of Vietnamese people, the number of Buddhists multiplied itself nearly six times from 35,000 to 200,000 people (1981-1996). Buddhists themselves proudly classified Buddhism as "Australia's fastest growing religion."<sup>25</sup> As in Europe and North America, numerous schools, branches, and traditions of Theravāda, Mahāyāna, Tibetan Buddhism, and non-sectarian Buddhism have gained a firm standing.<sup>26</sup>

Often neglected and hardly noticed, considerable numbers of Buddhists from Asian countries have come to Western Europe, North America and Australia since the 1960s. With regard to Europe, and France in particular, strong communities of refugees from

Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia have emerged, numerically speaking. Paris has become the central place for Southeast Asian Buddhist migrants.<sup>27</sup> Although Vietnamese Buddhists in France aim to build a huge pagoda near Paris, so far the biggest temple or pagoda in Europe has been built by Vietnamese Buddhists in Hannover (Germany). What is more, in Great Britain, Germany, the Netherlands, Scandinavian countries, and in further Western European nation-states, refugees, migrants, and business men from Asian countries have found asylum or a place to work. Likewise, in Canada and the U.S., hundred of thousands of migrants had arrived as the immigration regulations changed in the mid-1960s. Whether in North America, Western Europe, or Australia, in the process of settling down, migrants founded their own religious and cultural institutions to preserve the religious-cultural identity and heritage. By visiting pagodas and temples, performing customary acts of devotional worship, and jointly celebrating Buddhist festivals, the Asian Buddhists regain an “*esprit de clocher*” (Choron-Baix 1991: 22), a “home away from home.” More often than not, most Asian migrant communities have turned out to be markedly conservative, presenting a primarily stable and familiar environment for their members in the socio-culturally foreign and, often, discriminatory environment.

Although a marked emphasis is placed on the retention of the transplanted ritual forms of devotional acts such as prostration and chanting, and on the maintenance of the monk versus lay hierarchy, changes and adaptations have nevertheless taken place. This applies to the times of rituals, the performance of festivals, the role of the laity, and much more. Also, more and more, the use of language in gatherings and religious services has become an issue of discussion, especially when the up-and-coming generation is fluent to a large extent in the language of the host country. The ability to communicate in the language of one’s parents or grandparents is increasingly lost. Far from being an “object” unchanged and frozen in time, these diasporic Buddhist communities reluctantly or willingly change. They create new, adapted forms of traditionalist Buddhism. In this respect, processes are observable and can be compared with developments that have already taken place in the history of adapting and localizing Jōdo Shinshū Buddhism in the U.S. (see above, references in note 11).

In both South America and South Africa, Buddhism grew as well, commencing from the 1970s onward. So far, no in-depth study exists for any of the South American nation-states, although research on Buddhism in Brazil has been emerging in recent years. Zen has captured the interest of non-Japanese Brazilians since the late 1970s, resulting in the establishment of numerous local meditation groups, centers, and *dojos* (meditation

halls). Likewise, Japanese traditions of Nichiren, Shingon, Pure Land, and Sōka Gakkai have gained a following. Tibetan Buddhism, arriving in the late 1980s, also experienced a boom during the 1990s. As in other countries to which Buddhism spread, a plurality of schools and traditions has become established. So-called informed guesses estimate the number of Buddhists in Brazil as being up to half a million in the late-1990s (0.3% of the population). The latest reliable figure dates back to the 1991 census, counting some 236,000 Buddhists among the Brazilian population.<sup>28</sup>

In South Africa, during the 1970s small Buddhist groups were formed in the main metropolitan centers. The emphasis was a nondenominational one. Followers of Tibetan, Zen, or Theravāda practice and teaching came together for joint meetings. One of South Africa's main Buddhist reference points became the Buddhist Retreat Center near Ixopo. It was formally inaugurated in 1980. In contrast to the ecumenical spirit prevalent, since the mid-1980s the various groups have begun sharpening their doctrinal identity and lineage adherence. Often hitherto loose bonds with the Asian mother tradition or headquarters were strengthened. During the 1990s, Tibetan Buddhism was able to gain a comparatively strong following, as teachers started to stay on a permanent basis. Likewise, Zen teachers and Theravāda *bhikkhus* settled for long and firmly established their traditions. In contrast to previous activities, which had imported the respective Buddhist tradition or school, the Taiwanese-based Fo Kuang Shang Order established itself in 1992 with a costly temple complex and straightforward missionary plans. It remains to be seen whether the investment will pay off in the long run. Estimations for the current number of Buddhists range from 6,000 to some 30,000, although the lower "informed guess" seems to be more reliable, especially in view of the 1994 census, giving a total of only 2,400 Buddhists.<sup>29</sup>

Speaking of figures and "informed guesses," table 1 states the numbers of estimated Buddhists in selected non-Asian countries for the late 1990s.<sup>30</sup>

*Table 1: Buddhists and Buddhist groups in selected countries outside of Asia; estimates for the late 1990s*

country	Buddhists	Buddhists of Asian ancestry	groups and centers	population	(sum)
U.S.A.:	~2.5-4 mill.	~2-3.5 mill.	~1,300	268 mill.	(0.8-1.5%)
Canada:	300,000	??	700	30 mill.	(1.0%)
Mexico:	no figures available			95 mill.	
Brazil:	~350,000	??	??	164 mill.	(0.2%)
South Africa:	6,000	3,000	50	42 mill.	(0.01%)
Australia:	200,000	~170,000	300	18 mill.	(1.1%)
New Zealand:	28,000	??	60	4 mill.	(0.8%)
Europe:	~900,000	~650,000	1,500	400 mill.	(0.2%)
France:	~350,000	~300,000	~250	58 mill.	(0.6%)
Britain:	180,000	130,000	400	58 mill.	(0.3%)
Germany:	170,000	120,000	530	82 mill.	(0.2%)
Italy:	75,000	~25,000	~80	57 mill.	(0.1%)
Netherlands:	33,000	20,000	~60	15 mill.	(0.2%)

Switzerland:	25,000	20,000	100	7 mill.	(0.3%)
Austria:	17,000	5,000	50	8 mill.	(0.2%)
Denmark:	10,000	7,000	~32	5 mill.	(0.1%)
Hungary:	7,000	1,000	~12	10 mill.	(0.1%)
Poland:	~5,000	500	30	39 mill.	(0.02%)
Portugal, Spain, Greece:	no figures available			60 mill.	(sum)

### III. A NEW ANALYTICAL PERSPECTIVE ON BUDDHISM IN THE WEST

#### *Plurality and globality*

As explained in the beginning, Buddhism outside of Asia is deeply marked by its plurality and heterogeneity. A multitude of schools and traditions have embarked from their Asian home countries and successfully settled in urbanized, industrialized settings. The general traditions of Theravāda, Mahāyāna, and Tibetan Buddhism are internally heavily subdivided according to country of origin (for example, Laos, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, or Thailand), lineage (for example, Gelug, Karma Kagyu, Sakya, Nyingma, Rinzhai, or Sōtō), teacher (Asian and Western, manifold), and emphasis on specific Buddhist concepts and practices (for example, *vipassanā*, chanting, or scriptural study). Flourishing in the West, these various Asian-derived schools and traditions did not remain unchanged to a great extent. Various sub-schools and sub-branches have evolved. In the course of time, a process of authentication of Western teachers by the Buddhist mother tradition in Asia has occurred (Rawlinson 1997). This has given birth to both traditionally-oriented centers and to independent centers favoring innovative changes and the creation of a “Western Buddhism.” With regard to the latter, noteworthy examples include the Insight Meditation Society in the U.S. or the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order (FWBO), founded by the British Sangharakshita in 1967.

The marked plurality of Buddhism outside of Asia has been intensified by the globalization of once locally-founded organizations. The British based FWBO has spread worldwide. Organizations formerly restricted to the U.S., such as the Insight Meditation Society or Robert Aitken's Diamond Sangha, have established branch centers in Europe and elsewhere. This applies also to various American Zen teachers (for example, Richard Baker Rōshi, Bernard Glassman Rōshi, and the late Prabhasadharmā Rōshi) as well as to prominent Vietnamese and Korean meditation masters (for example, Thich Nhat Hanh and Seung Sahn's Kwan Um School of Zen). In a similar way, Tibetan Buddhist organizations have created global networks. *Lamas* and teachers untiringly tour the globe and visit the multitude of local groups and centers. These include Chōgyam Trungpa's Vajradhatu organization (renamed Shambhala), the Karma Kagyu centers affiliated to the Danish Ole Nydahl, Sogyal Rinpoche's Rigpa organization, the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahāyāna Tradition, or the New Kadampa Tradition of Geshe Kelsang Gyatso.

Academics and Buddhists repeatedly have thought of emergent trends and characteristics observable as Buddhism develops in countries outside of Asia. Among a list of varying items, issues such as the emphasis on lay practice and participation, the critical evaluation of women's roles, the application of democratic and egalitarian principles, the close linkage to Western psychological concepts, the conceptualization of a socially engaged Buddhism, and the creation of an ecumenical, nonsectarian tradition have been proposed. Although these features and issues are primarily discussed within convert circles thus far, they form prominent characteristics of the period of "global Buddhism" and incipiently take on relevance in Buddhist migrant circles. Rather than presenting these listed issues in detail, a generalized perspective is taken in order to analyze the shape of Buddhism's presence in the West.<sup>31</sup>

### *Two Buddhisms: Immigrant and convert Buddhism*

Table 1 above would have dwindled to a few entries and much lower numbers fifty years ago, and to even lower numbers some 100 years ago. And it needs no Tibetan state oracle to predict that in fifty years both the number of countries listed and figures stated will have grown considerably. As the table underscores, in quantitative terms the strand of Asian Buddhists often outnumbers that of convert Buddhists by two or three times. During recent decades Buddhism became institutionally firmly established outside of Asia. "[F]or many years to come, Buddhists in a number of schools and traditions will look back on the years between 1960 and 2000 as an era in which the foundations were



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laid for their sanghas,” predicts Richard Seager, historian of religion (1999: 236). Although Seager refers to the American situation, his observation is valid for other non-Asian countries, although the focus needs to be on the 1980s and 1990s.

The diversity of Buddhism’s presence has analytically been structured along the lines of immigrant Buddhists versus convert Buddhists. Although this binary differentiation holds true for many cases, it does need some examination. The two-category dichotomy becomes blurred when faced with empirical data. Certainly, Buddhists from Asia who left their ancestral country and migrated to a non-Asian region can be called immigrants. However, in the course of generations, does this label also apply to their children and grandchildren? And what about the fourth and fifth generations? In most cases, members of the second and third generation have become citizens of the state, regarding themselves not as immigrants, but as a part of the nation’s citizenry. Indeed, more often than not they consider the notion of “immigrant” as a term of social and political exclusion. Such generational changes have taken place for Japanese and Chinese Buddhists in the Americas, and it will become true for Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Laotian refugees in the next decades, be it in Australia, Europe, or North America. Although emigration from Asia continues, in a historic perspective the category of immigrant is too transitory and in the long run a misnomer.

In the same way, should children and grandchildren of convert Buddhists, if raised as Buddhists, qualify as convert Buddhists without conversion? This strand of Buddhist followers will need to be renamed, as the number of children born into Buddhism will outnumber the actual converts. Without going into detail, the category again appears ambiguous. It does, however, certainly carry heuristic explanatory value for the generation whose members actually converted. As it turns out, the categories of immigrant and convert are labels to differentiate and qualify the first generation of each strand. They become blurred and increasingly meaningless, however, when applied to consecutive generations and a longer span of time.

To be precise, Charles Prebish, who suggested the dichotomy (1979: 51) and later coined it (1993), spoke of “two Buddhisms” with regard to the U.S. Buddhist scene. As Prebish underscored, he “was not trying to imply that there were only two kinds of Buddhism in America, however conceived, but rather that there had been *two completely distinct lines of development* in American Buddhism.”<sup>32</sup> Prebish did not employ the labels of immigrant and convert Buddhists or Buddhism that subsequent studies—in particular those by Paul Numrich, Rick Fields, and Richard Seager—brought into play.<sup>33</sup> As I have

questioned the immigrant/convert labels as too transitory and, for reasons given below, do not subscribe to a model consisting of the three categories of elite, evangelical, and ethnic Buddhism as suggested by Jan Nattier (1995, 1998), an approach for a hopefully convincing systematization with explanatory value is sought.

*Reconsidering the two Buddhisms: Traditionalist versus modernist Buddhism*

Rather than looking at the individual person (immigrant or convert) or taking the modes of transmission as the qualifying criteria, i.e., that of importation by “elite Buddhists,” exportation by Buddhist missionaries, and “baggage” by ethnic Buddhists (Nattier 1995), I suggest paying more attention to the religious concepts held and practices followed. Surveying the variety of Buddhist interpretations and practices observed in non-Asian countries, *religiously* a gulf between traditionalist versus modernist forms of Buddhism comes to the fore. Although the categories of traditionalist and modernist Buddhism need to be understood as Weberian ideal types, such an understanding aims to enhance a comprehension of the Buddhisms that have settled in non-Asian regions. To remain both brief and concrete, the approach shall be illustrated by the Western presence of Theravāda Buddhism only.

As pointed out earlier, Western converts had already adopted Theravāda or Pāli Buddhism a century ago. However, it was not the traditionalist form that was taken up, a form that places emphasis on ritual and devotional acts of merit-making and holds specific cosmological worldviews. Rather, converts from the 1880s onward adopted a form that was refashioned by Western Orientalists and South Asian modernists alike. This modernist Buddhism, which characteristically departed from hitherto traditionalist Buddhism emphasized rational, scientific, and scriptural elements in Theravāda Buddhism. In contrast, so-called “popular” or traditionalist Buddhism was devalued and considered incompatible with modern times.

This cognitive, modernist strand of Theravāda Buddhism has remained rather small in Western countries. Pioneering examples may be Paul Carus in the United States, Paul Dahlke and Georg Grimm in Germany, and Charles F. Knight and Natasha Jackson in Australia. This highly intellectualized and anti-ritualistic strand does continue to this day, although it has rarely had a widespread audience.

During the recent three decades, however, a related modernist Theravāda strand, that of emphasizing meditation, has gained a growing popularity. Western teachers instructing the meditation practices of *vipassanā* (“penetrative seeing”), *samatha* (“self-cultivating

meditation”), or *satipaṭṭhāna* (“application of mindfulness”) have founded numerous groups and organizations. These teachers—for example, Jack Kornfield, Joseph Goldstein, Sharon Salzberg, Ruth Denison, John Colemann, Fred von Almen, and Christopher Titmuss—have been disciples of Burmese meditation masters Sayagyi U Ba Khin (1899–1971), Mahasi Sayadaw (1904–1982), or Satya Narayan Goenka (b. 1924 and a disciple of U Ba Khin). Best known among the institutions founded by these Western lay teachers is the Insight Meditation Society, founded in 1975 in Barre (Mass., U.S.A.).<sup>34</sup>

It has to be borne in mind that this distinct emphasis on meditation practice is a recent phenomenon, that of revival Buddhism in South Asia. Although Buddhists have practiced meditation since the tradition’s start 2,500 years ago, in the course of time a “division of labor” came about: village-dwelling monks (Pāli *gamavasi*) specialized in ritual and doctrinal aspects of the Buddhist tradition, whereas forest-dwelling monks (Pāli *arattavasi*) pursued ascetic and meditation practices. Importantly, meditation was not considered able to be practiced by lay Buddhists; it was reserved only for the ordained. In actual terms, village *bhikkhus* rarely meditated whereas forest monks were renowned for their meditation practices. In the first half of the twentieth century, however, in the course of the revival of Theravāda Buddhism, meditation practices were “rediscovered,” having previously been more or less “hidden” in the forests with the secluded monks. Importantly, meditation was also taken up by lay Buddhists on the basis of texts or taught by monks to lay people. Meditation centers, quite different from monasteries, became established in rapidly increasing numbers. Such institutions, often led by lay people, were unknown in pre-modern, traditionalist Buddhism. Since the 1960s, lay teachers such as U Ba Khin and Goenka—in addition to their many Burmese practitioners—were increasingly visited by young Americans and Europeans. Since the 1970s, these Western disciples have spread the modernist forms and approaches, attracting a growing number of Western converts. Not only lay men, but also lay women taught. And, as best exemplified by the Insight Meditation Society, the meditation practice was not presented as a training rooted in a religious system, but rather as an awareness technique and an approach for psychological healing.<sup>35</sup>

In contrast to this strand of modernist Theravāda Buddhism, be it with its emphasis on cognitive or on meditational elements, the strand of traditionalist Theravāda Buddhism has a very different focus and form. In Western countries, this strand can be found in many “ethnic” temples, and its carriers are Asian migrants, immigrants, and their descendants. Emphasis is placed on the monk-lay hierarchy, the monk embodying the ideal of a pious Buddhist life and aspiration. Lay Theravāda Buddhists are engaged in various forms of

acquiring merit (Pāli *puñña*) in order to accumulate good deeds and actions (Pāli *kamman*, Skt. *karma*) for better circumstances both in this and subsequent existences. They donate to the *sangha*, give *dāna*, take part in ritualized chanting and *pujas* (worship), and at times participate in meditation. However, as Numrich noted, “Meditation is not a major component of temple-centered religious activities for the immigrant congregations of these temples” (1996: 82). Less known by the general public, a variety of so-called folk religious practices are requested from the monks, be they palm reading, fortune telling, countering evil spells, or preparing protective amulets. These practices and the belief in their efficacy, usefulness, and benefits are rooted in specific cosmological and ontological views that are taken for granted.<sup>36</sup>

The contrast of traditionalist Buddhism to modernist interpretations becomes most apparent when it comes to the underlying religious assumptions and premises. As the cosmological views and religious goals are very different, so are the practices pursued and held to be effective. The findings can be summarized in a polarized, ideal-type way; traditionalist Buddhism with its emphasis on devotion, ritual, and specific cosmological concepts contrasts that of modernist Buddhism with its emphasis on meditation, text reading, and rational understanding. Whereas traditionalist Buddhists strive to acquire “merit” and aim for good conditions in this and the next life, in contrast most Western modernist Buddhists have abandoned the idea of rebirth. They do not share concepts such as accruing “merit,” but rather endeavor to reach “enlightenment” or “awakening” in this life. Western convert Buddhists have already started to shape a “Buddhism without beliefs,” as a recent book by Stephen Batchelor is titled (1997). Concepts such as *karma* and reincarnation are held to be “beliefs” that need to be checked critically against a Buddhist, existential agnosticism.<sup>37</sup>

This article has sketched the “two Buddhisms” for the Theravāda tradition(s) only. Similar contrasts and departing practices are observable in other Buddhist traditions prevalent in non-Asian countries as well, however. The characteristic contrast between Zen traditionalist temples, visited mainly by Japanese migrants, and Zen modernist centers, visited mainly by convert Buddhists, has recently been worked out in detail for the United States by Asai and Williams (1999). The authors’ data “strongly suggests a kind of parallel world between Asian American Buddhism and primarily Euro-American Buddhism, with the former focusing on cultural rites and the latter on meditation” (1999: 30). Again, it is paramount to bear in mind that Zen Buddhism in Japan has been substantially reinterpreted in the early twentieth century by Japanese Buddhist philosophers and modernists

such as Nishida Kitaro (1870-1945) and D. T. Suzuki. As Robert Sharf underscored, the reformist or modernist, “laicized styles of Zen . . . strive to rationalize Zen practice through minimizing the importance of the pietistic, ritualistic, and sacramental dimensions of practice in favor of an instrumental or goal-directed approach” (1995: 250). Zen Buddhism was purged of so-called “degenerate accretions” of tradition and culture. Instead, notions of “inner” or “universal experience” to be achieved through meditation training were stressed. Again, as in the case of revival Buddhism in South Asia, only a minority took over this modernized Buddhism. However, it was this 5 to 10 percent that the elite and Western observers perceived to be representative for the Buddhist traditions practiced in South Asia and Japan.<sup>38</sup>

Applying the suggested analytical perspective to further Buddhist traditions, it becomes obvious that convert Buddhists primarily take up modernized interpretations of Buddhism. This holds true for the 1983-founded Korean Kwan Um School of Zen, to the Zen meditation practice spread by the Vietnamese monk Thich Nhat Hanh, and, last but not least, to the numerically strong Sōka Gakkai, founded in Japan in 1930. Perceiving Sōka Gakkai primarily as a modernized version of Japanese Nichiren Buddhism would make it possible to subsume the second category of Nattier’s three-fold categorization, that of missionary or evangelical Buddhism, under the broad strand of modernist Buddhism. In contrast to Nattier, I suggest that it is not primarily a question of transmission, that is, how a particular strand arrived in the West, but rather, which religious concepts and practices are favored.

However, an exception to the rule might be suggested: Is it not Western followers in Tibetan Buddhist traditions who hold traditionalist elements such as devotional practices (for example, prostrations, Tib. *ngöndro*), liturgical *pujas*, and the supremacy of the teacher in high regard? One may argue that it is the exoticism and the motive to re-enchant the world, perceived as cold, rational, and, in Max Weber’s words, deprived of all mystique (1920 [1984]: 123, 367), which attracts convert Buddhists. True, converts focus on the charisma of the *lama*, but they seek his (rarely her, so far) guidance for meditative purposes and for understanding texts. In contrast, most Tibetans emphasize donation-centered and devotional religion. And undoubtedly Tibetan Buddhism has been strongly adapted to Western cultural settings, acquiring modernized forms in the interpretations shaped by Chögyam Trungpa, Tarthang Tulku, Sogyal Rinpoche, Lama Surya Das (Jeffrey Miller), Ole Nydahl, or Robert Thurman.<sup>39</sup>

IV. CONCLUSION:  
TRADITIONALIST, MODERNIST, AND GLOBAL BUDDHISM

Taking a historic view at the global spread of Buddhism directs attention to the different developments Buddhism has taken in various countries outside of Asia. Importantly, it underscores that the history of Buddhism in the West had already started about 150 years ago. Interest in Buddhist teachings and practices is not only a recent phenomenon, as it might at times appear. Similarly important, Buddhism in the West does not consist only of white, educated, urban middle-class people who have taken up Buddhism. It also is made up of the numerous people who come from Asian countries where Buddhism is often the dominant religious tradition. So far, in terms of a politics of representation, these migrant or Asian Buddhists have received limited public and scholarly attention despite their numbers and achievements in settlement. The descriptive picture of Buddhism at the Hannoverian world exhibition is exemplary here again: Asian, “exotic” Buddhism—for example, the Bhutanese pagoda—provided the attraction and the stage. The representation and explanation of Buddhism was, however, done by well-versed Western Buddhists.

Added to such a Western-historic view, a perspective looking at the main strands of Buddhism outside of Asia along the analytical lines of traditionalist and modernist Buddhism enables contemporary developments and the current level of Buddhist presence to be related back to the periods and places of formation in Asia. It underlines the idea that each assumed “authentic” or “traditional” form has been shaped by long-term developments and influences. In contrast to a parochial view that primarily looks at changes and developments only in Western countries, Buddhism’s global spread and presence is taken seriously. A perspective is suggested that pays attention to the interconnectedness of East and West. This certainly highlights the developments and changes that modernist Buddhist traditions themselves have undergone in Asia, most often highly influenced by Western ideas. Deserving of mention are B .R. Ambedkar’s anti-caste appropriation of Buddhist teachings in India, A. T. Ariyaratne’s Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement in Sri Lanka, Bhuddhadasa Bhikkhu’s *dhammic* socialism, and Sulak Sivaraksa’s rationalized, engaged Buddhism in Thailand.<sup>40</sup>

In the same way, developments of Buddhism outside of Asia might shed light on changes and developments in Asia. To continue in the vein of the analytical perspective suggested, in Asia, traditionalist and modernist Buddhism are generally in a state of tension and institutionally do not go well together. However, in Western countries, at times these two main strands actually meet in the same pagoda or temple. Numrich coined

the term “parallel congregations” (1996: 63) to denote the coming together of immigrant and convert Buddhists in a Theravāda monastery or temple. Observable is a somewhat distant “intersection without interaction” (Numrich 1996: 67) of the congregations. Each Buddhist pursues his or her specific type of either traditionalist or modernist practice without taking much notice of the Buddhists of the other strand. The same is observable at other Theravāda institutions, for example, at Thai monasteries in Britain, set up by Western disciples of Ajahn Chah (1918-1992) during the 1980s and 1990s. Whereas the Thai Buddhists are mainly interested in ritual performances and devout serving of the *bhikkhus*, British convert Buddhists focus on meditation, the monk’s lectures, and study of the subtle teachings (Bell 1998).

Similar patterns are not only observable in Theravāda monasteries, be they in the U.S., Britain, France, or elsewhere. Parallel congregations can be found, for example, in Vietnamese Buddhist pagodas as well. Again, whereas Vietnamese refugees focus on devotional acts such as chanting (to gain merit), death rites, and cultural events, Western converts attend meetings of *sūtra* studies and meditation (Baumann 2000: 85-89). Also, as observable in Tibetan monasteries in Switzerland, parallel congregations of Tibetan Buddhists and Swiss convert Buddhists come to the same place, each having their specific religious interest and focus. Likewise, Asai and Williams direct attention to the “split between Japanese American and non-Japanese American participation in Zen meditation” (1999: 30) at Zen temples in the U.S., as mentioned before. To list a final example, Cristina da Rocha refers to the short-lived parallel congregations existent at the Zen temple Busshinji in São Paulo, Brazil. In this case, however, no peaceful coexistence of the strands came about except for a conflict between Japanese Brazilians and non-Japanese Brazilians. The conflict ended with the dismissal of the abbot and the walkout of the meditation-based group of non-Japanese Brazilians (2000a: 40-42).

This latter example illustrates that the parallelism of traditionalist and modernist Buddhism at traditionalist temples is by far not a situation without tension, rivalry, and conflict. Without going into detail in addressing topics such as the monks’ and nuns’ role in administering the separate congregations simultaneously, the positions and responsibilities held by Asian and convert lay people, the use of language, changes to rituals, and so forth, I would like to direct attention to the general topic of the dynamics of religious change. Viewed in a global perspective, the occurrence of such parallel congregations provides opportunities to observe processes of modernization or Westernization of traditionalist Buddhism. The topic has repeatedly been studied with regard to Buddhist traditions in

Asia, focusing on reformist or revival Buddhism and its modernist forms in particular. In a similar way, these processes of change, rationalization, and modernization can be studied in non-Asian settings, giving the advantage of a more or less confined locality and a determinable beginning of the coming into existence of the temple and migrant group. One example of such rationalization shall be stated.

As mentioned above, a traditionalist temple's aim is to provide a home away from home and to serve the religious and cultural needs of the transplanted community. In the diasporic, non-Asian context a number of the cultural or folk religious customs—such as palm-reading for fortune-telling, amulet-blessing, god-worship, or acts of protection against malevolent spirits—are considered by monks and temple visitors as “ceremonial” or “popular Buddhism” (referred to in Numrich 1996: 61, 85). It is worth observing to what extent these practices have been set aside, being considered inappropriate in a temple setting in a Western society. In Asia, such criticisms and the resultant so-called “purifying” or “purging” constituted an important element of the reinterpretation and modernization of Buddhism. The study of diasporic Buddhist groups might thus provide new insights on general processes having taken place in the shaping of Buddhist traditions in Asia past and present.

A final point: up to now, the article has pointed to some implications of making use of the proposed analytical perspective, that is, to look at Buddhism in Western settings as strands of traditionalist and modernist forms and worldviews. It is worth remembering that the differentiation of these strands was based on the tripartite periodization of Buddhism's history as explained in part one. Taking the established periodization a step further, I proposed to conceptualize a subsequent, fourth period, that of “post-modernist,” or—to my mind, more meaningful—“global Buddhism.” As the reflections so far have dwelled on the tense relations between traditionalist and modernist Buddhism, an initial look must be taken at the relations between modernist and post-modernist or global Buddhism.

Obviously, neither form or period of Buddhism, be it canonical, traditionalist, modernist, or global Buddhism, is static and fixed. Rather, an ongoing change is observable, and the cumulative tradition of Buddhism constantly engenders new interpretations of Buddhist practices and teachings. This applies to the traditionalist and modernist forms in particular, as they strive to adapt to the pluralistic settings, globalized contexts, and post-modern, individualized times in which they are placed. It has been said that a periodized Buddhist form is internally manifold and consists of different interpretive understandings and approaches. Looking solely at modernized Theravāda Buddhism in the West, I have



differentiated the lines of rationalist, cognitive interpretation and of spiritual, meditational emphasis. In a similar way, global Buddhism is neither monolithic nor standardized. Rather, a spectrum of understandings and particular interpretations comes to the fore. I may single out the interdenominational or “integrative Buddhism” of Lama Govinda’s order Arya Maitreya Mandala or Sangharakshita’s Friends of the Western Buddhist Order (Baumann 1996: 357-361); Ole Nydahl’s “instant Buddhism” of an astonishingly quickly taught Karma Kagyu Buddhism (Saalfrank 1997); the approach of the Insight Meditation Society, portraying meditation practices as an awareness technique to promote psychological healing and awakening; or, among further candidates (for example, Toni Parker), Chögyam Trungpa’s Shambhala Training, designing a secular path for the cultivation of a contemplative life.

To a varying degree, all of these organizations have spread globally and thus further multiplied the internal plurality and heterogeneity of Buddhism apparent in the West. Furthermore, they have reinterpreted traditionalist or modernist Buddhism to such a degree that their proposed approaches might be called post-modernist content and forms of Buddhism. In particular, a few within this category of global Buddhism have gone so far as to separate method or practice from its conceptual Buddhist context. Some, such as the Insight Meditation Society, Shambhala Training, or certain *vipassanā* teachers, emphasize a non-Buddhist and expressively non-religious understanding, highlighting individualized “healing,” therapeutic remedy, and psychological well-being. On the basis of such an understanding, I hold that—as modernist Buddhists have demythologized and rationalized traditionalist Buddhism—in a related way certain post-modernist Buddhists secularize and psychologize modernist Buddhism. In whatever way the current period—following that of modernist Buddhism—might be labeled, an important part is constituted by approaches and understandings that no longer refer to themselves as Buddhist. Future developments will show whether this period of Buddhism in its appropriation to individualized and secularized contexts—at least in parts—will cease to be Buddhist. Obviously, some Buddhists take on the Buddhist concepts of “no attachment” (Pāli *anupādānam*) or “not clinging” (*anālayo*) is resulting in radical consequences.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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ENDNOTES

1. See Prebish 1979: 51, 1993, 1999: 57-63, adopted by Numrich 1996, Fields 1998, and others.
2. See Bond 1988: 22-40, likewise Bechert 1966: 37-108 and 1973, Smith 1968, Tambiah 1973, Malalagoda 1976, Gombrich and Obeyesekere 1988: 15-29, 202-240, and recently Seneviratne 1999.
3. So far, scholars have not applied theories of global cultural flow and transnationalism to the global spread of Buddhism. These concepts have been discussed by Appadurai 1996, Rudolph and Piscatori 1997, and Foner 1997, among others; see also the issue of *Ethnic and Racial Studies* on transnationalism, Vol. 22 (2) 1999. For theories of globalization and the impact of globalization on religion, see Seiwert 1989, Robertson 1992, and Beyer 1994, 1998, among others.
4. See Wratten 1995: 32-35, 336; Clasquin 1999: 94-95; and Wratten 1999: 13. For previous contacts, starting with the encounter between Greeks and Buddhist Indians in the early second century BCE, later followed by the sending of Christian missionaries to Asian kingdoms, see Fields 1981: 13-30, Batchelor 1994, and Obadia 1999.
5. See Schwab 1984 and Halbfass 1988. For many qualified studies on the nineteenth-century European encounter with Asian philosophies and concepts, see the annotated online bibliography "Buddhism in Europe" by Baumann 2001 (<http://www.rewi.uni-hannover.de/for4.htm>).
6. For an overview of Buddhism's revival and changes in various Asian countries, see Dumoulin and Maraldo 1976 and Harris 1999. In addition to the studies listed in note two, for the Buddhist revival in Ceylon, which shall be presented as an example and Buddhism in Japan during the Meiji period as another example, see Bechert 1984, Obeyesekere 1970, and Gombrich 1988: 172-197. For the Ceylonese Orientalist refabrication of Buddhism, see Hallisey 1995: 43-49 and Goldberg 1999: 344-348.
7. Gombrich 1988: 186. For Olcott, see the references in the previous note and Prothero 1996.
8. Gokhale 1973: 35. For Dharmapala, apart from the detailed mention in the studies listed in the two previous footnotes, see also Sangharakshita 1964 and Guruge 1965; for his impact in the U.S., see Fields, 1981: 130-135. For Strauss, see Fields 1981: 128 and Tweed 1992: 39. Valuable biographical material on Strauss is collected in Hecker 1997: 338-340. For the rationalist, modernized version of Buddhism taking up by American sympathizers around the turn of the century, see Tweed 1992: 60-68; with regard to early German convert Buddhists, see Baumann 1997a.
9. Tanaka 1999: 6. For the beginnings of Jōdo Shinshū (Pure Land Buddhism) in the U.S., see Bloom 1998: 33-36, Tanaka 1999: 5-7, Seager 1999: 53-55, and Prebish 1999: 4-7. For the Chinese in the U.S. during this period, see Wells 1971, Lyman 1976, Chandler 1998: 16, and Seager 1999: 159.
10. See Shimazono 1991: 109; Clarke 1995: 120-121, 1999: 205; and Rocha 2000a: 32. Also, a few Indian Buddhists came to South America and the Caribbean via the British-Indian indentured worker system, which was in operation from the 1830s through 1917. See, for example, the case of Trinidad, where the 1931 census lists some "119 Buddhists" [*sic*] among the Indian population of almost 140,000 people (Kirpalani 1945: 61).

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11. For the development of Jōdo Shinshū in the United States during the first half of the twentieth century, see Kashima 1977: 11-46, Tanaka 1999: 6-8, Seager 1999: 54-59, and Prebish 1999: 20-22.
12. van Loon 1999: 36. Regarding the Indian Buddhist community from the 1920s to the late 1970s, see also van Loon 1980, Wratten 1995: 164-178, and Clasquin 1999: 97-100.
13. For details on specific Buddhist interpretations, see Notz 1984: 58-67, Bechert 1984: 279-280, Baumann 1995a: 59-67, and Hecker 1996, 1997. For Dahlke in particular, see Baumann 1997b, for the supposedly first public Buddhist monument in Europe, see pictures in Klar 1995: 28, 146-147 (also online at <http://www.uni-konstanz.de/ZE/Bib/vv/soz/kantow/klar028.jpg>).
14. See Klar 1991, 1995: 29-34, 105-108, and Baumann 1995a: 65-67.
15. For further details, see Humphreys 1968: 20-45, Oliver 1979: 50-53, 66-67, Somers 1991, Cousins 1994: 146-147, and Bell 2000: 8. Regarding the failed attempt to set up a Theravāda monastery in Switzerland in 1910 pursued by the German-born *bhikkhu* Nyānatiloka (1878-1957), see Hecker 1995 and Baumann 1998: 256-258.
16. A few scattered articles provide more information on the rare Buddhist activities during this time. See the listing in the bibliography by Baumann 2001. Regarding Buddhism in France during this time, see Klar 1991: 14-15. For information on Buddhism in Switzerland and on Ladner, see Hecker 1996: 116-126 and Baumann 1998: 259-260.
17. See Snelling 1993 and Batchelor 1994: 283-302.
18. See Pekic 2000 and references to further sources. The German Buddhist Helmut Klar visited the temple in early 1944 and took the last existing pictures, as the temple was heavily damaged half a year later during the battle for Belgrade (October 1944). See Klar 1995: 7, 125 (also online at [http://members.xoom.com/\\_XOOM/kalmyk/klar.htm](http://members.xoom.com/_XOOM/kalmyk/klar.htm)), also provided in Pekic 2000.
19. With regard to this missionary activity, see Bhikkhu Bodhi 2000 and Weeraratna 2000.
20. For further details, see Batchelor 1994: 119-123, 205-223 and Baumann 1995b: 59-63
21. For more details, see Prebish 1979: 9-12, 20-31; Fields 1981: 195-272; and Melton and Jones 1994: 35, 43-46.
22. For the Sōka Gakkai, formerly founded in 1975 with Daisaku Ikeda as honorary president, see Hurst 1992; Seager 1999: 77-89; Prebish 1999: 23-26, 114-127; and Hammond and Machacek 1999. Since the peak in the 1970s, the membership dropped to some 100,000 to 300,000 people in the late 1990s.
23. For further details, see Croucher 1989: 37-79 and Spuler 2000.
24. Morreale 1998: xvi. Far from being “complete,” as claimed, the *Guide* primarily lists groups and centers with a meditational focus, omitting Buddhist institutions such as the Sōka Gakkai and many immigrant Buddhist traditions. Morreale’s 1988 inventory lists 487 Buddhist centers in Canada and the U.S. Numbers for Great Britain are based on Weller 1997, Waterhouse 1997: 13-19, and *The Buddhist Directory* (first ed. 1979, eighth ed. 2000) of the Buddhist Society London. For Germany, see Baumann 1995a: 218-223 and Baumann 1999: 7, 24-25. As in Morreale’s *Guide* 1998, the many local Sōka Gakkai groups are not included in these figures.
25. Buddhist Council of New South Wales, “1996 Census Shows that Buddhism is still Australia’s Fastest Growing Religion,” website, no date given (<http://www.zip.com.au>)

- ~lyallg/cencom.htm). Adam and Hughes already noted that during the decade ranging from 1981 through 1991, “Buddhism was the fastest-growing religious group in Australia” (1996: 12).
26. See Spuler 2000. For studies on Buddhism in Australia, see the online bibliography by Spuler 2001 (<http://www.spuler.org/ms/biblio.htm>).
  27. With regard to Asian Buddhists settling in France, see Choron-Baix 1991, Matras-Guin and Taillard 1992, and Kalab 1994.
  28. See Rocha 2000a: 38-39. Usarski opts for a much lower estimation regarding the current number (forthcoming). For studies on Buddhism in Brazil, see the online bibliography by Rocha 2000b (<http://sites.uol.com.br/cmrocha/>).
  29. The 1994 census number is taken from Krüger 1999: 3, the higher estimate from van Loon 1999: 40, and the conservative estimate from Clasquin 1999: 86. Regarding development since the 1970s, see Wratten 1995: 182-290, Clasquin 1999: 100-118, van Loon 1999, and Clasquin and Krüger 1999.
  30. The table is based on the previously-stated studies. Note that the number of groups and centers would be considerably higher if the numerous local chanting groups of Sōka Gakkai were included. For the European nation-states, some further country related references are listed in Baumann 2001. Additionally, for Portugal see the homepage of the 1997 formed União Budhista Portuguesa at <http://www.uniaobudista.com/>. For Spain, see <http://www.arrakis.es/~jp.arroy/index.htm>. For Canada, see the listing of groups and centers at <http://www.interlog.com/~klima/toronto.html> and the account by Matthews (forthcoming). Buddhist activities also take on in countries as Rumania and Israel, as I was kindly informed by Lionel Obadia.
  31. For the issues listed, see the presentation and discussion in Prebish 1979: 180-193, 1999: 51-93; Kornfield 1988: xi-xxviii; Baumann 1995a: 268-309, 1996; Lama Surya Das 1998: 543-554; Fields 1998: 202; Tanaka 1998; Seager 1999: 185-231; and Queen 1999, 2000. The forthcoming edited volume by Prebish and Baumann will present and discuss these and further issues of relevance.
  32. Prebish 1993: 187, emphasis by Prebish, given in bold. Speaking of “Buddhism in America” or “American Buddhism,” most U.S. scholars in an unquestioned naturalness and apparent casualness refer only to the United States (not thinking of Latin and South America rarely thinking of Canada).
  33. See Numrich 1996: 63-64 and 2000, Fields 1998, and Seager 1999: 232-248. Prebish employed the terms in his *Luminous Passage* (1999: 58) and provided a concise discussion of the topic (57-63). The important issue of sympathizers of Buddhism or “night-stand Buddhists,” as Thomas A. Tweed calls them, cannot be considered here for the time being; see the discussion in Tweed 1999.
  34. For these and further Asian Theravāda meditation teachers, see Kornfield 1993. The Asian teachers themselves had been disciples of earlier Buddhist reformers, especially those of Ledi Sayādaw (1846-1923), Phra Mun Bhuridatta (1870-1949) and U Nārada (1868-1955). Certainly, Anagarika Dharmapala deserves to be listed here as well. For the Western “vipassanā sangha,” as Rawlinson calls it, see Rawlinson 1997: 586-596. For the Insight Meditation Society, see Fronsdal 1998, Seager 1999: 146-151 and Prebish 1999: 148-158. For an overview of Theravāda meditation activities in Europe, see Batchelor 1994: 341-352 and Gruber 1999.
  35. For changes and developments with regard to Myanmar, see the classic by King 1964;

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- with regard to Ceylon, see in detail Bond 1988: 130-240. Further relevant literature is provided in Sharf 1995, especially in notes 18-22 and 31-50. Mention certainly needs to be made to the German-born *bhikkhu* Nyānaponika (1901-1994), disciple and successor of Nyānatiloka and author of the bestseller *The Heart of Buddhist Meditation* (1953); see Bhikkhu Bodhi 1995 and Hecker 1997: 60-92.
36. On the practices conducted in Thai and Laotian temples in the U.S., see Numrich 1996: 84. An in-depth study of these traditionalist practices carried out in Western settings does not exist thus far. For South Asia, see, among others, Bechert 1973 and Bond 1988. Certainly it is a simplification to portray traditionalist Buddhism with these few characteristics. Like modernist Buddhism, traditionalist Buddhism changes and is neither static, nor monolithic.
37. In the same way, Richard Hayes, a Canadian Buddhist and professor of Sanskrit, holds that “Buddhism [needs to be] purged of some of the Asian habits it has acquired down through the millennia” until a “North American Buddhism” evolves. “Asian habits,” the concepts of rebirth and karma, are held to be “obstructive doctrines” that “serve more to impede Westerners than to help them acquire wisdom and become less self-centered”; see Hayes 1998: 59 and 60-61.
38. Instead of providing a long list of relevant literature, the reader is referred to Sharf 1995.
39. I am indebted to Frank Korom for pointing out the difference to me. For modernist Tibetan Buddhist approaches, see, among others, Korom 1997, Seager: 132-135, and Obadia 1999.
40. See the instructive chapters in Queen and King 1996. Reference has been made only to South Asia again; other relevant examples are provided in the same volume and in Harris 1999.

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