

### 1: 10/31 On Inclusion! NABA's Buddhist Intrafaith Gathering - North American Buddhist Alliance

*North American Buddhist Alliance shares Dharma resources across Buddhist traditions. We aim to foster supportive networks. We encourage collaboration, communication, and interaction among Buddhists and Buddhist groups.*

Modern humanist values, themselves, are under attack for being unfriendly to humans, so what exactly is Horgan talking about here? An unfriendly dialogue has been going on between the two since the Jesuit missionary Matteo Ricci encountered Chinese Buddhism in the early s. He preferred Confucian scholars for their cultured minds, secular philosophical systems, and advanced ideas on good government. Both ridiculed Buddhism as an inferior parody of Christianity. For Ricci, the parody was demonic. For Hardy, it was merely uninspired. Only in Japan did Buddhism meet with admiration “ from another Jesuit missionary, Francis Xavier arrived When he challenged the Zen monks on doctrine, they laughed at him, saying Zen had no doctrine and no truths to transmit. He wrote to the order asking for the most educated and capable missionaries that the Jesuits could provide. Soen was the first Japanese to address the West on Japanese Buddhism. However, unlike Soen, Suzuki was fluent in English, and so he ended up as the main apologist for Zen in the West, right up until the s. Suzuki comes from a branch of Zen Rinzai that emphasizes the use of the koan paradoxical statement as a means of getting past all of our prior assumptions. As a result, Soto can appear inactive and non-experiential “ not to mention bizarre, negative and frightening. On the other hand, Rinzai is sexy. And everyone from Heidegger to Jack Kerouac latched onto his presentation of Zen, spawning an entire cultural framework to counter that of rationalism, functionalism and materialism. Buddhist truth is not psychological, it is religious. So many in fact that we forget ever having put them in place. So the question is “! Now, on the question of how we know something exists, both have very different points of view. That whole conversation will have to wait for another day. Tibetan buddhist truth is for the initiate only. Moreover, Japanese Zen finds its roots in Chinese Chan. So it is practical in nature. Top that off with a heavy admixture of ideas imported from Hinduism and you get a mystery religion and not mysticism. Rationalism All Buddhist apologists in the West have found themselves up against the modern point of view. And with Horgan brooding away there in Scientific American, obviously they still do. He attacked Social Darwinism: According to Social Darwinism, the evolution of religion was supposed to result in a type of universal rational Christianity. He demonstrated that Buddhism was a logical system of thought, with its own theory of evolution that developed roughly years before Darwin. In this way “ though it took much doing “ he, and his Therevada successors, were able to bring Buddhism to the fore as the humanist tradition best able to respond to modern scientific and spiritual needs. This is the guy who emptied Buddhism of its supernatural, one could say mystical, elements and made it rational. He emphasized it as a individualist way of life, good for the mind, good for society and thoroughly compatible with a modern, Western point of view. First of all, karma is not reincarnation. Properly, the round of rebirth is samsara. Karma, as well all know, means action or deed, and the consequences of that action. At some distant point in the history of India, long before the Buddha arrived, the idea of samsara was merged with karma. Moreover, the morality of an act is found in the intentions behind it.

### 2: Jodo Shu North America Buddhist Missions |

*Buddhism, once thought of as a mysterious religion from the East, has now become very popular in the West, and is one of the largest religions in the United States. www.enganchecubano.com Buddhism does not require any formal "conversion", American Buddhists can easily incorporate dharma practice into their normal routines and traditions.*

So, those who know me laughed, but for others, my comments touched a nerve. And I was told, in no uncertain terms, that euthanasia is illegal in Canada. Something I well know. My sister is a doctor in Nova Scotia. Through her, I heard about Nancy Morrison, a physician charged with 1st degree murder for injecting a dying cancer patient with nitroglycerine and potassium chloride to stop his heart. The courts acquitted Dr. Morrison. The ethics around euthanasia are obviously a universal concern. Any broad-based argument for it leads to horror and chaos. All religions have their load-bearing articles of faith, without which they cannot stand. Buddhism, looser than many religions, more syncretic and adaptive, is still no exception. Also, enlightenment is possible for all sentient beings that means bugs and animals, even if human existence is the best possible state to be in to reach nirvana. Notably, buddhism focuses on the quality of mind and intentions behind human action and expression, rather than on the actions themselves. Buddhist doctrine is also not divine revelation from one, or any, god. The Buddha is not a prophet and his words are not prophecy. Rather, he discovered his wisdom over the course of his life through meditative experience. As a result, buddhism does not place the same expectations upon everyone. Buddhists tend to work out their own salvation, for themselves, through meditation, reflection upon scripture, life experience and participation in a religious community, be it monastic or lay. And the tradition offers many ways to achieve enlightenment. Christians have long criticized buddhists for taking no interest in the lot of others, but of course, this is not true. Buddhists tune in to worldly concerns. Nirvana According to the Four Noble truths, we are trapped in the human condition dukkha "suffering through our ignorance over its true cause. There is no linear relationship from delusion, greed or hatred to craving to rebirth. Rather, because everything depends upon everything else, to cut it all, one must cut at the root "ignorance about the true nature of things. Nevertheless, insight into the reality of things and a state of non-attachment approximates nirvana across all of buddhism. Yes, we all know that nirvana is the buddhist end game "extinguishment of karma, freedom from suffering and the cycle of rebirth. Whether it takes on cosmic properties or not, is also subject to different ideas among the schools. On the other hand, the situation gets insensible when it does. Something else buddhism is famous for. Though the fool should hope, by the same means, to gradually get rid of karma that has matured. Neither of them can do it. It is just one of those things that automatically produces karma. Blatantly, this means to abstain from killing. As I mentioned earlier, buddhism stresses that intentions more powerfully generate karma than actions themselves. Buddhists worry about state of mind at time of death, because they believe it helps determine the rebirth to follow. As with everything, buddhism takes the middle way. Theravada accepts that society changes, and sees the precepts as principles that help people work out codes to meet their circumstances, rather than as iron-clad social laws. More so than Theravada, Mahayana applies the precepts with an eye to the circumstances at the time: The well-instructed disciple of the noble ones discerns what ideas are fit for attention, and what ideas are unfit for attention. This being so, he does not attend to ideas unfit for attention, and attends to ideas fit for attention. As he attends appropriately in this way, three fetters are abandoned in him: Nagarjuna While suicide is not a breach the 1st precept, buddhists assert that no one in a state of equanimity would kill themselves; the state of mind that leads to suicide must be aversion to an unpleasant situation, or craving for some goal. And since craving and aversion lead to suffering and rebirth, the state of mind that leads to suicide is not the state of mind in which spiritual development can be achieved. So, suicide, including martyrdom, is strongly discouraged. The code legitimates two instances of suicide when death is imminent. In both cases, death does not impede spiritual development. Neither case is an example of assisted suicide. Euthanasia or Mercy Killing What happens, though, when similar actions are carried out by another: The code is unequivocal: The Vinaya elaborates upon its condemnation of euthanasia via the following points: Killing someone to end their suffering may not have its intended consequences, the suffering may continue, and in worse form than before.

An enforced death could cut short an opportunity, which, given the buddhist principle of no-self, could arise at any time, since a person is changeable moment by moment. In all cases a person who kills someone must bear responsibility for the action, even if that person has asked to be killed. The consequences that follow from euthanasia in this life need to be considered, and the effects of the act on all concerned, rather than speculating about what may take place in the next. The second argument, I think holds universally. However, for buddhists, suffering has no inherent value. Unlike christianity, buddhism rules out suffering for the sake of penance, or because it has been ordained by God. As humans, we are free to take action and change our circumstances, rather than to simply bear them. I agree with some of the implications in third argument: Its natural extension, picked up in Mahayana, is that enlightenment is possible for anyone at any time, given the right conditions. However, unless a person can accept suffering in a way that allows spiritual progress, it has no good, or practical use. It is a distinction to be made by a physician " someone who has vowed to preserve life and do no harm " experienced in managing end-of-life care, who has the quality of person and ethical foundations that enable her to best serve the needs of the person dying " with compassion above self-interest. There is, also, no point in attaching to these concepts. Santideva was a fan of the bodhisattva: A bodhisattva is prepared to go to hell, rather than allow another to be reborn there. But for all that he must not be lax. Some Mahayana texts e. The act of killing would be accompanied by horror. The bodhisattva would have to acknowledge that the killing is evil, not in anyway justified or meritorious, and that it can lead to many rebirths in hell. Obviously, the ends justify the means approach in skillful means leaves the doctrine open to abuses on the basis of expedience. Rather, first we have to see things for what they really are, as they are, in their full entirety, and only then make painfully careful decisions and take full responsibility for their consequences. Conclusion If we return to my original enquiry " the question at hand is the standards by which buddhists evaluate the pros and cons of euthanasia.. On both sides of the equation euthanasia cannot be an expedient, it must be a pure manifestation, as it were, of right view. Theravada, of course, does allow for unlimited expression of a fully aware mind. As is typical, though, with Theravada, everything important is a lonely business. It will take lifetimes in the making, but gentle self-mortification " suicide " while not preferred, can be an expression of enlightenment. I will end here, where I think both Theravada and Mahayana merge " with the capacity for enlightenment given the worst conditions in this world. All of life is interpenetration. This insight, in its full flower, breeds boundless, wise compassion. For Mahayana, enlightenment can arise out of that mud under any conditions, plain and simple. Buddhism " enlightenment and death are tied so closely together. But if it were my dad, enlightenment would be the very last thing on my mind. And there would be no cause to put him through that, just so that I could sit back and observe that I am upset by his suffering and save myself from heading down the roads of hell with him.

## 3: Buddhism in the United States - Wikipedia

*North American Buddhists are likely to create their own traditions and schools of thought, but they should do so with the awareness that they are forging a new Buddhist culture, not the 'true' Buddhist culture.*

Life-long teetotaler and non-smoker, here are select examples of his many contributions. Most recently , he initiated Cubans into Buddhism. A prolific communicator, and multidisciplinologist, his long list of publications, on Buddhism including meditation and more, span academia, translation, literature, fiction and poetry. He has earned an enviable reputation as a preacher and a meditation master par excellence. Born in Chittagong, Bangladesh, Bhante Saranapala, after receiving both his monastic and secular education in Sri Lanka, made his way to Canada to further his studies completed his undergrad and grad studies at the University of Toronto and McMaster University and soon addressed his mind to the noble task of spreading in the West his own tested approach to Mindfulness and Insight Meditation. Her early exposure to religious practices was that of Chinese folk religion in the family, and Christianity in the school. Her introduction to Buddhism came from books. It was the beginning of her Buddhist journey. The executives of the society were also active in organizing joint Wesak celebrations by communities from the three Buddhist traditions. In , she co-founded the Buddhist Education Foundation of Canada that financially supports Buddhist studies in Canadian universities. She currently serves as its President. Since , the foundation has been working with Emmanuel College, and since with the Department of Psychiatry, at the University of Toronto, on Buddhist spiritual care educational programming and Fellowships in Buddhism and Psychiatry. She is an Acharya senior empowered teacher with the Shambhala lineage of Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche, and teaches mindfulness and compassion internationally. She lectures and writes on Tibetan Buddhism, American Buddhism, women and Buddhism, and interreligious dialogue. Born in Rangoon, Burma, she was strongly influenced by Catholicism and Buddhism. In , she immigrated to Montreal, Canada, she found herself retaining the meditative practices of Buddhism that she learned in childhood and which seemed to surface as coping strategies in stressful situations. With the advent of Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy for Depression, she entered into the field of Mindfulness Interventions in Her writings on Buddhism are published at Zen Books and writings on Mindfulness are found here in the Ottawa Mindfulness Clinic blog. Articles in peer-reviewed journals are available on Academia. Since , he has organized an Interfaith Peace event to commemorate the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings. In addition to her work as a Zen teacher, Shinge Roshi is an award-winning writer. She compiled and edited Eloquent Silence: She is also the author of Life Lessons: She is a graduate of Vassar College. He serves as the secretary of the International Buddhist Committee of Washington DC, an inter-lineage umbrella organization for more than 20 Buddhist communities in the DC area, and sits on the board of directors of the International Buddhist Association of America. Matthew is also completing his doctoral studies at the University of Maryland, where his research focuses on democracy and culture in Southeast Asia and applications of Buddhist ethical theory. She is the first woman and first American to hold this position. She received final ordination at Kuon-ji Temple at Mt. Myokei Shonin is the first American woman and first person of African American-Japanese descent to have completed this ordination process. Myokei Shonin currently volunteers with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice as clergy to two prison sanghas. She has been engaged in this work for 15 years as a full expression of the Lotus Sutra as the teaching of equality. She is currently developing curriculum for [1] the Nichiren Shu tradition and the Lotus Sutra, and [2] dealing with the trauma of incarceration and racism. She also supports weekend trainings for Healing Warrior Hearts, a Texas project designed to truly welcome veterans home. She is included in the Hidden Lamp: Andronic holds an M. She has over 25 years of experience in engineering and business management and a first-hand understanding of the challenges we face as professionals today. Mihaela is an enthusiastic and dedicated practitioner who has successfully applied the Buddhist practice and mindfulness principles in her professional life for over 15 years. She has co-led retreats at Blue Cliff Monastery, NY, as well as Canadian retreat centers, and she has shared her experience publicly, as a guest speaker at the University of Ottawa, where she has offered Buddhist teachings and Mindfulness in

the Workplace Workshops since Ryuoh Faulconer Shonin is an ordained minister in the Nichiren Shu lineage. Ryuoh was a hospital laboratory worker when he began his journey towards ordination. He took his first vows over twenty three years ago. Since then he has helped start a temple in Texas, was the head minister of the Portland Oregon Nichiren Temple and moved to the east coast to start a new Temple in New England. He has guided several Shamis novices , of which several are now ministers in the Nichiren order. He pursued his interest in Iconography and became a icon painter. He became a reiki master and attended an esoteric monastery within the order to become a Raidan Shi. He became a certified Alcohol and Drug counselor because of the need he has seen during the ongoing opioid crisis. His temple sponsors a weekly Refuge Recovery group. He has produced numerous liturgy books in English and used his icon talents to produce many amulets. He currently works in New England building a Sangha and as a Alcohol and Drug counselor in his community. This day-long conference is a blessed opportunity to connect with Buddhists from diverse backgrounds and introduce to one another issues especially pertinent to the North American region.

### 4: World Buddhist Directory - Presented by www.enganchecubano.com

*However, since classical Buddhism is basically directed towards a world-transcendent goal—however differently understood, whether as in Early Buddhism or in Mahayana Buddhism--this becomes another challenge facing Buddhist monasticism in our country today.*

Another society, the Ning Yeong Company, built a second in ; by , there were eight temples, and by approximately Chinese temples on the west coast of the United States, most of them containing some Buddhist elements. Unfortunately a casualty of racism , [15] these temples were often the subject of suspicion and ignorance by the rest of the population, and were dismissively called joss houses. Japanese and Korean immigration[ edit ] The Chinese Exclusion Act of curtailed growth of the Chinese American population, but large-scale immigration from Japan began in the late s and from Korea around In both cases, immigration was at first primarily to Hawaii. Populations from other Asian Buddhist countries followed, and in each case, the new communities established Buddhist temples and organizations. After internment ended, some members returned to the West Coast and revitalized churches there, while a number of others moved to the Midwest and built new churches. During the s and s, the BCA was in a growth phase and was very successful at fund-raising. It also published two periodicals, one in Japanese and one in English. However, since , BCA membership declined. The 36 temples in the state of Hawaii of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission have a similar history. Thus, it has limited aspects of export Buddhism. As involvement by its ethnic community declined, internal discussions advocated attracting the broader public. Although it caters primarily to Chinese Americans, it also has regular services and outreach programs in English. Import Buddhism[ edit ] While Asian immigrants were arriving, some American intellectuals examined Buddhism, based primarily on information from British colonies in India and East Asia. In the last century, numbers of Asian Buddhist masters and teachers have immigrated to the U. Most have belonged to three major Buddhist traditions or cultures: Zen , Tibetan , and Theravadan. The American Transcendentalists and associated persons, in particular Henry David Thoreau took an interest in Hindu and Buddhist philosophy. His Indian readings may have influenced his later experiments in simple living: Olcott, a former U. In , he, Helena Blavatsky , and William Quan Judge founded the Theosophical Society , dedicated to the study of the occult and influenced by Hindu and Buddhist scriptures. The leaders claimed to believe that they were in contact, via visions and messages, with a secret order of adepts called the "Himalayan Brotherhood" or "the Masters". In , Olcott and Blavatsky travelled to India and in , to Sri Lanka , where they were met enthusiastically by local Buddhists, who saw them as allies against an aggressive Christian missionary movement. On May 25, Olcott and Blavatsky took the pancasila vows of a lay Buddhist before a monk and a large crowd. Although most of the Theosophists appear to have counted themselves as Buddhists, they held idiosyncratic beliefs that separated them from known Buddhist traditions; only Olcott was enthusiastic about following mainstream Buddhism. Olcott authored a Buddhist Catechism, stating his view of the basic tenets of the religion. Paul Carus was an editor and collaborator with D. Suzuki Several publications increased knowledge of Buddhism in 19th-century America. In , Edwin Arnold , an English aristocrat, published *The Light of Asia* , [19] an epic poem he had written about the life and teachings of the Buddha , expounded with much wealth of local color and not a little felicity of versification. The book became immensely popular in the United States, going through eighty editions and selling more than , copies. Paul Carus , a German American philosopher and theologian , was at work on a more scholarly prose treatment of the same subject. Carus was the director of Open Court Publishing Company , an academic publisher specializing in philosophy , science , and religion , and editor of *The Monist* , a journal with a similar focus, both based in La Salle, Illinois. Early converts[ edit ] In a brief ceremony conducted by Dharmapala, Charles T. Strauss , a New York businessman of Jewish descent, became one of the first to formally convert to Buddhism on American soil. Appearing with little fanfare in In Illinois, Paul Carus wrote more books about Buddhism and set portions of Buddhist scripture to Western classical music. Goddard was a Christian missionary to China when he first came in contact with Buddhism. In , he spent a year living at a Zen monastery in Japan. In , he founded "The Followers of Buddha, an American

Brotherhood", with the goal of applying the traditional monastic structure of Buddhism more strictly than Senzaki and Sokei-an. The group was largely unsuccessful: In , he began publishing ZEN: In , he collaborated with D. Suzuki , on a translation of the Lankavatara Sutra. That same year, he published the first edition of A Buddhist Bible, an anthology of Buddhist scriptures focusing on those used in Chinese and Japanese Zen.

### 5: As Buddhism rises in North America, two "solitudes" are emerging (with video)

*Section 2 delineates 'American Buddhism' according to the variety of Buddhist traditions and schools. This section is arranged roughly in accordance with a tradition's appearance in North America. Section 3 refers to issues at stake in the history and adaptation of Buddhism in North America.*

If Buddhism is to be successfully transplanted in the U. Must there be a monastic Sangha at all, or is Buddhist monasticism an outdated institution? If monastics are necessary, what should their role be? What changes in lifestyle and orientation, if any, are required by the new conditions imposed by the Western culture in which Buddhism has taken root? My personal belief is that for Buddhism to successfully flourish in the West, a monastic Sangha is necessary. At the same time, I think it almost inevitable that as Buddhism evolves here, monasticism will change in many ways, that it will adapt to the peculiar environment impressed upon it by Western culture and modes of understanding, which differ so much from the culture and worldview of traditional Asian Buddhism. As a result, I believe, the role monastics play in Western Buddhism will also differ in important ways from the role they play in Asia. I do not think this is something that we need lament or look upon with dread. At the same time, I also think we need to exercise caution about making adaptation. It would certainly be counterproductive to be in a hurry to make changes uncritically, without taking the long-standing pillars of our Buddhist heritage as our reference point. If we are too hasty, we might also be careless, and then we might discard fundamental principles of the Dharma along with the adventitious cultural dressing in which it is wrapped. I first want to examine the traditionalist understanding of this issue, even though--and I stress this--the position to which I incline is not a strictly traditionalist one. From a traditionalist point of view, the monastic Sangha is necessary for the successful transmission of Buddhism to occur because the monastic Sangha sustains the continuity of the Triple Gem. We can briefly consider how this is so with regard to each of the Three Jewels individually. When the Buddha decided to embark on the quest for enlightenment, his first step was to become a samana, an ascetic. On the one hand, by adopting the lifestyle of an ascetic, the future Buddha was conforming to an ancient Indian paradigm of the spiritual life, a paradigm that might well have gone back centuries before his own time. But by taking up this mode of life, and continuing to adhere to it even after his enlightenment, the Buddha did something more than simply conform to the prevailing Indian convention. He conveyed a message, namely, that the renunciant way of life was an essential step on the path to the ultimate goal, to the state of transcendent liberation from birth and death, the ideal shared by many of the old Indian schools of spiritual culture. Renunciation of sensual pleasures and cyclic existence is not merely a means to liberation; it is also integral to the goal itself. The goal is renunciation, and thus the act of renunciation with which the monastic life begins is not simply a step in the direction of the goal but also partly the realization of the goal, an embodiment of liberation, even if only symbolically so. After his enlightenment, the Buddha created a monastic Sangha on the model of the lifestyle that he had adopted during his quest for enlightenment. The monks and later nuns were to live in a state of voluntary poverty, without personal wealth and with minimal possessions. They were to shave their heads and wear simple dyed robes, to gather their meals by going on alms round, to live out in the open, in caves, or in simple huts. They were governed by a disciplinary code that minutely regulated their behavior, and were to undertake a training that directed their energies towards the same path that the Buddha had embarked on when he discovered the way to enlightenment. By his robes, deportment, and lifestyle, the monk represents the Buddha. He enables the Buddha, vanished from the stage of human events, to continue to shed his blessing power upon the earth. If we take this passage in isolation, it might seem as if the Buddha is assigning the four groups to a level of parity with respect to the Dharma, for they are described in the same way. However, another sutta in the Samyutta Nikaya Here the Buddha illustrates the three kinds of recipients of his teaching with a simile of three fields: The three kinds of recipients "compared respectively to the superior, middling, and inferior fields" are the bhikkhus and bhikkhunis taken jointly, the male and female lay disciples taken jointly, and the monks and ascetics of other schools. Often sincere lay disciples are more serious and diligent in practice and more knowledgeable about the Dharma than many monastics. Traditionally, monastics have

not only been charged with the intensive practice of the Dharma, but also with the responsibility of preserving it and teaching it to others. This implies that there must be monastics who have thoroughly learned the Buddhist scriptures and mastered the body of Buddhist doctrine. In all Buddhist traditions, parallel with the exemplary practitioner, there stands the figure of the learned monk, the pandita, the dharma-master, the geshe—those who have acquired expertise in the doctrine and can skillfully teach others. In this way, too, the monastic person becomes a channel for the preservation and transmission of the Dharma. The monastic Sangha also serves as a conduit for the transmission of the third Jewel, the Sangha itself, in the world. Going beyond this, he created a monastic order, a community of monks and nuns bound together by a common code of discipline, the Vinaya, and by other guidelines intended to ensure that they serve the well-being of the community that they have joined. He also established a number of communal monastic observances that bind the members of the Sangha together, the most important being the ceremonies of ordination, recitation of the monastic code, the rains retreat, and the ending of the rains retreat: Buddhist tradition—at least Theravada tradition—says that the performance of these ceremonies is the criterion for the continued existence of the Sasana, that is, for Buddhism to survive as a social and historical institution. Thus, to sum up: From a traditional point of view, a monastic Sangha is essential for the continuing presence of all three Jewels in the world. The renunciant monks and nuns symbolically represent the Buddha; they learn, practice, and teach the Dharma; they observe the guidelines, regulations, and rites of the Sangha; and they practice in such a way that they themselves might become enlightened beings themselves, fulfilling the ultimate intention of the Buddha. Do we face new challenges, never foreseen by the tradition, that compel us to renew our understanding of Buddhism and revitalize our monastic lifestyle in order to ensure greater durability for monasticism as an institution and a way of life? Are there forces at work that might actually undermine the survival of Buddhist monasticism? Interestingly, while the Buddha speaks of forces threatening the future long life of the Dharma, we find nothing to indicate that he foresaw the kind of transformations that are taking place today. When the early texts speak about the future, they generally predict decline and degeneration—what they call future perils anagatabhaya—and the remedy they propose is simply to strive diligently in the present, so that one attains liberation before the dark ages arrive. There is no recognition that society might undergo major social, cultural, and intellectual transformations that could stimulate the emergence of positive developments within Buddhism. There is no recognition that Buddhism might migrate to countries and continents remote from ancient India, lands where different material conditions and modes of thinking might allow the Dharma to develop in different directions from that it was to take in its Indian homeland. In general, from the standpoint of the early texts, the revolving Wheel of Time draws us ever closer to the end of the proper Dharma, and the best we can do is resist the tide sweeping over us. Change is subversive, and we must preserve the proper Dharma against its corrosive influence. I do not like to take issue with the early Buddhist canon, but I have often asked myself whether it is necessary to take such a dark view of change or to see it as inevitable that Buddhism slides ever more rapidly down a slippery slope. I wonder whether we might not instead adopt an evolutionary perspective on the development of Buddhism, a perspective that does not oblige us to regard change in the doctrinal and institutional expressions of Buddhism as invariably a sign of degeneration. Perhaps we can see such change instead as a catalyst able to bring about a process of natural, organic growth in Buddhism. Perhaps we can consider changing social, intellectual, and cultural conditions as providing an opportunity for Buddhism to respond creatively, and thus to re-envision and re-embody the Dharma in the world, bringing to manifestation many aspects implicit in the original teaching but unable to appear until the requisite conditions bring them forth. The history of Buddhism might be viewed as the record of an interplay between two factors, challenge and response. Time and again, change takes place—a seismic shift in cultural or intellectual conditions—that strikes at the core of Buddhist tradition, setting off a crisis. Initially, the new development might seem threatening. But often there will arise Buddhist thinkers who are acute enough to understand the challenge and resourceful enough to respond in creative ways that tap into hidden potentials of the Dharma. Their responses lead to adaptations that not only enable the Sasana to weather the storm, but which embody new insights, new ways of understanding the Dharma, that could never have appeared until the appropriate conditions called them forth, until unforeseen historical, social, cultural, and philosophical

challenges made them possible and even necessary. At times these responses may veer off the proper track into the wilderness of subjective interpretations and deviant practices; but often enough they reveal the creative viability of Buddhism, its ability to adapt and assume new expressions in response to new needs and new modes of understanding implanted in people by new social and cultural conditions. In facing the new challenges, creative adaptation has to be balanced by an effort to maintain continuity with the roots and past legacy of Buddhism. This double task points to a certain struggle between two factors in the unfolding of Buddhist history: The weight that is assigned to these two competing forces establishes a tension between conservative and innovative tendencies within Buddhism. Inevitably, different people will gravitate towards one or another of these poles, and such differences often bring conflict between those who wish to preserve familiar forms and those who think change and reformulation are necessary to maintain the vitality and relevance of the Dharma. This same tension is still very much with us today, as we will see. In the early centuries of Buddhist history, the architects of the evolving Buddhist tradition preferred to ascribe these newly emergent dimensions of the Dharma to the Buddha himself. This, however, was just a mythical way of conferring the mantle of authority upon new formulations of the teaching. Such is the characteristic Indian way of thinking. It is an open question whether these masters actually believed that these new teachings had sprung from the Buddha himself or instead used this device as a symbolic way of indicating that such teachings brought to light previously unexpressed aspects of the enlightenment realized by the Buddha. Let us take a few examples of this: Several generations after the passing of the Buddha, the Vedic philosophical schools took to compiling complex, systematized lists of all the components of the universe. This tendency is particularly evident in the Sankhya school, which may have already arisen before the time of the Buddha and must have been evolving parallel with early Buddhism. This fashion of the age presented the Buddhists with the challenge of applying the same style of fine analysis to their own heritage. This trend cut clear across the early Buddhist schools, and the result was the creation of at least three different but related schools of Abhidharma: Perhaps to give a competitive edge to their own system, the Theravadin commentators ascribed their Abhidharma to the Buddha, claiming that he taught it to the deities in a deva world; all the evidence, however, indicates that the Abhidharma resulted from a process of historical evolution extending over several centuries. This position assumes that because the Abhidharma treatises were not actually taught by the Buddha, they are useless and fruitless, a lamentable deviation from the proper Dharma. However, by taking an evolutionary perspective, we can view the Abhidharma schools as responses to intellectual challenges faced by the Buddhist community in an early stage of Buddhist intellectual history. From this point of view, they then appear as impressive attempts to incorporate all the elements of the teaching into a systematic structure governed by the broad principles of the original teaching. The Abhidharma then emerges as a bold project that proposed to establish nothing less than a comprehensive inventory of all known phenomena and their relations, subordinated to the governing concepts of the Dharma and the project of transcendent liberation. Similar considerations apply to the Mahayana sutras, which introduce far more radical re-assessments of Buddhist doctrine and spiritual ideals than the Abhidharma. This, in fact, is a view that many conservative monks in Theravada countries take of the Mahayana sutras, even when they are completely unfamiliar with them. Some of these challenges might have been internal to the Buddhist community, such as a disenchantment with the rigidity of the Abhidharma systems and a narrow interpretation of the arahant ideal; also, an interest in elaborating upon the path that a bodhisattva must travel over countless eons to arrive at Buddhahood. Other challenges may have been external, particularly the mingling in the Indian subcontinent of new peoples of different ethnicities, speaking different languages, and holding different worldviews. This would have challenged Buddhism to break out of the mold imposed upon it by its Indian origins and draw out, from its own inner resources, a new conception of the universal ethical ideal already articulated in archaic Buddhism. Such challenges, I have to emphasize, are already at work; they have brought about remarkable changes in the contemporary manifestation of Buddhism as a whole. It is likely, too, that they will accelerate in the future and have a significant impact on Buddhist monasticism over the next few decades. I believe the present era confronts us with far different challenges than any Buddhism has ever faced before. These challenges are more radical, more profound, and more difficult to address using traditional modes of

understanding. Yet for Buddhist monasticism to survive and thrive, they demand fitting responses—responses, I believe, that do not merely echo positions coming down from the past, but tackle the new challenges on their own terms while remaining faithful to the spirit of the teaching. In particular, we have to deal with them in ways that are meaningful against the background of our own epoch and our own culture, offering creative, perceptive, innovative solutions to the problems they pose. On what grounds do I say that the present era confronts Buddhist monasticism with far different challenges than any it has faced in the past? I believe there are two broad reasons why our present-day situation is so different from anything Buddhist monasticism has encountered in the past. The first is simply that Buddhist monasticism has taken root in North America, and most of us involved in the project of establishing Buddhist monasticism here are Westerners. When, as Westerners, we take up Buddhism as our spiritual path, we inevitably bring along the deep background of our Western cultural and intellectual conditioning. We cannot alienate ourselves from our Western heritage, for that heritage is what we are and thus determines how we assimilate Buddhism, just as much as a brain that processes objects in terms of three dimensions determines the way we see them. The second reason is partly related to the first, namely, that we are living not in fifth century B. India, or in Tang dynasty China, or in fourteenth century Japan or Tibet, but in 21st century America, and thus we are denizens of the modern age, perhaps the postmodern age. As people of the 21st century, whether we are indigenous Americans or Asians, we are heirs to the entire experience of modernity, and as such we inevitably approach the Dharma, understand it, practice it, and embody it in the light of the intellectual and cultural achievements of the modern era. In particular, we inherit not only the heritage of enlightenment stemming from the Buddha and the wisdom of the Buddhist tradition, but also another heritage deriving from the 18th century European Enlightenment.

## 6: Buddhism in the West (North America and Europe) - Buddhism - Oxford Bibliographies

*One stream of Buddhism in North America, represented by Gold Buddha monastery and the Pure Land school, tends to fly below the radar of mainstream Canadian media culture. It is often called.*

The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections, Buddhists The number of Buddhists around the world is expected to increase between and , rising from million to about million. However, the global Buddhist population is projected to decline after , falling to million by , roughly where it was in The annual growth rate of Buddhists also is expected to decline. The Buddhist growth rate is 0. After , the growth rate of the global Buddhist population is forecast to enter negative territory, ending with a negative rate of growth in of minus 0. This represents a projected decline in the Buddhist population after Europe and the Middle East-North Africa region also are expected to see very slight increases in their shares of the global Buddhist population. Although the Asia-Pacific region will remain home to the overwhelming majority of Buddhists in the coming decades, the Buddhist population in the region is projected to decline, both in absolute number and as a share of the overall population in Asia and the Pacific. Over the same period, the number of Buddhists in the region is expected to drop from million to about million. In all other regions, Buddhist populations are projected to increase in absolute number. In North America, for example, the Buddhist population is projected to grow by more than 2 million, from 3. At the same time, the Buddhist populations in Europe and the Middle East-North Africa region are expected roughly to double. Buddhist populations in Latin America and the Caribbean as well as sub-Saharan Africa are expected to remain relatively small. Between and , the most rapid Buddhist population growth, in percentage terms, is projected to occur in the Middle East and North Africa. But in many other countries with large Buddhist populations, the Buddhist share of the population is expected to decline in the decades ahead, because Buddhists tend to be older and have fewer children than non-Buddhists. By a wide margin, China, with a Buddhist population of million, had the most Buddhists living within its borders in China and Thailand are expected to remain atop the list. Burma Myanmar is projected to have the third-largest Buddhist population in 45 million , surpassing Japan 27 million. Due in part to projected immigration, the United States is expected to go from having the 13th-largest Buddhist population in to the 10th-largest in , when it is projected to be home to 5. Indeed, the TFR for Buddhists is below the replacement level of 2. The countries with the highest Buddhist fertility in the period Cambodia, Mongolia and Peru have fertility rates that are only slightly lower 2. However, Buddhist fertility is very low in such countries as South Korea 1. By , the fertility rate among Buddhists is expected to rise in some countries, but it will not have reached the replacement level worldwide. Age Structure Globally, Buddhists were older median age of 34 than the overall population median age of 28 as of , and more than half of Buddhists were ages 30 and older. In the Asia-Pacific region, the median age of Buddhists in 34 was five years older than the median age of the population overall This is largely due to a high number of young Buddhist immigrants and their children living in North America. See this sidebar for more details. North America is the only region where sufficient data were available to project rates of religious switching into and out of Buddhism. In this region, the Buddhist population experiences a net loss of members when religious switching is taken into account. Consequently, the projected number of Buddhists in North America in 6. The limited data available on religious switching among Buddhists were factored into the main projection scenario for this report. In an alternative scenario, no religious switching was modeled in any country. A comparison of the two scenarios finds that at the global level, religious switching makes little difference in the growth projections for Buddhists. Migration About half a million Buddhists are expected to move from one region to another between and Most are expected to come from the Asia-Pacific region, where the vast majority of Buddhists reside. The primary destinations of these migrants are the Middle East-North Africa region , migrants , North America , and Europe , A small number of Buddhists 60, are forecast to move to the Asia-Pacific region from the Middle East and North Africa; many of them are returning after working in the oil-rich Persian Gulf countries. These migration patterns are projected to continue in the decades ahead. See the Methodology for more information on how migration flows were estimated. The impact of migration on Buddhist populations

in different regions can be seen by comparing results from the main projection scenario, which includes expected migration patterns from to , with an alternative scenario that does not attempt to take migration into account. Buddhists are expected to make up about 1.

### 7: Projected Changes in the Global Buddhist Population

*Join the conversation with 15 leading African American Buddhist teachers. This unprecedented public event brings together 15 leading Buddhist teachers of black African descent from across the country to talk about dharma, the state of the world, and what it means to be a black Buddhist in America t.*

The Buddhist faithful repeated the sacred name like a fast-clicking metronome. The two dozen Chinese-Canadians at Gold Buddha monastery in East Vancouver were gathering in the middle of the work day to chant the name of the most well-known of what they believe is an infinite number of celestial Buddhas: In Japan, the social and economic clout of the biggest Pure Land denomination, known as Jodo Shinshu, has been compared to that of the giant Sony and Toyota corporations. But, in Metro Vancouver and throughout the West, Pure Land is not what most people think about when they hear about Buddhism. They generally meet in large, extravagant-looking temples throughout the city. Pure Land stands in sharp contrast to Westernized Buddhism, to which many non-Asians have in recent decades been drawn. It focuses almost entirely on meditation as a technique to calm the mind. They are much more likely to bow reverentially before sacred Buddha statues in faithful prayer for good health and fortune. But they have little to do with each other, either as communities or as spiritual world views. It has evolved and fragmented since being founded by Siddhartha Gautama in sixth-century B. Here is how the two main streams of Buddhism contrast in Metro Vancouver, where roughly , people have told the Canadian Census they are Buddhists. Scholars believe Pure Land Buddhism came into existence in the 2nd-century AD as a path for lay people. Jung believes Pure Land is more challenging than meditation alone. But reciting Amithaba is more work than meditation. You must have faith. You must have belief. And you must recite it yourself. You earn the blessing. Despite criticism, Pure Land appears to be the dominant mode of Buddhist expression in Metro, including for many seniors, says Crowe, a contributor to the book, *Asian Religions in B*. Jung says Gold Buddha Monastery, located in an ordinary-looking four-storey building in East Vancouver, is one of the few Metro Vancouver Pure Land temples where English is routinely spoken. Gold Buddha monastery, which opened in Vancouver in , permanently houses 15 nuns, both ethnic Chinese and Caucasian. It offers chanting rituals throughout the week in its large sanctuary, which features five eye-catching gold Buddha statues. With a big smile, Jung, who has managed the monastery for more than a decade, says she has nothing at all against North Americans who mainly follow Buddhism for its meditation practices. During Gold Buddha rituals, followers are urged to free themselves of all greed, self-aggrandizement, deceit and the desire to find fault in others. Traditionally, meditation makes up just one third of Buddhism. When asked about practising virtue to avoid creating negative karma, Rue said Smith told his large contemplative audience: It just makes people feel guilty. Insight Meditation Society, is one of those Western Buddhists who is skeptical about so-called ethnic Buddhism. But they disagree on many Buddhist topics. In the s, Zakarauskas said, he was turned off Buddhism by its teaching about rebirth, also known as reincarnation. But, many years later, Zakarauskas was drawn to Buddhism when he heard the Dalai Lama claim that Buddhism would still be valuable even if rebirth were unable to be proved. Some of those who follow popular Western Buddhist teachers, such as Kornfield, are convinced of the reality of karma and rebirth, Zakarauskas says. But many more are not. But people curious about Buddhism should know it exists in dramatically different and even contradictory forms. Interfaith dialogue is often necessary to bring out the surprising differences and similarities among religious paths, Rue says.

## 8: JODO SHU English

*Welcome to Diamond Way Buddhism in North America We are a network of Buddhist meditation groups and centers within the Karma Kagyu Lineage of Tibetan Buddhism. Our centers were founded by Lama Ole Nydahl according to the wishes of the great master H.H. 16th Gyalwa Karmapa.*

During the past two decades, research on Buddhism in North America has expanded tremendously. This bibliography is meant to serve as a preliminary guide to the main scholarly accounts on the history, development and state of affairs of Buddhism in the U. It is not intended to provide an exhaustive listing of studies. Rather, mainly important books and articles are compiled herein. These listings certainly remain incomplete and suggestions for further entries are gratefully appreciated. The bibliography is structured in a threefold way: Section 1 lists studies surveying generally Buddhism in North America. Section 3 refers to issues at stake in the history and adaptation of Buddhism in North America. Surveying American Buddhism 1. Basic Books and Editions Fields, Rick. How the Swans Came to the Lake. A Narrative History of Buddhism in America. The Practice and Study of Buddhism in America. University of California Press, University of California Press Seager, Richard Hugh, Buddhism in America. Columbia Series on Contemporary American Religions. Columbia University Press, Williams, Duncan Ryuken and Christopher S. Methods and Findings in Recent Scholarship. The Total Buddhist Resource Guide. Sante Fe, 2nd ed. Shambhala, first ed. Curzon Press, , The Awakening of the West: The Encounter of Buddhism and Western Culture. Phases, Orders and the Creation of an Integrative Buddhism. A Survey of Recent Studies and Sources. Critical Review of Books in Religion 10 , A Handbook of Tibetan Culture: The Promise and Peril of the New Orientalism. Simon and Schuster, World Religions in America. The Buddhist Review 4, 1 , University of Hawaii Press, The Oriental Religions and American Thought. Sante Fe, New Mexico: John Muir Publications, , xi-xxviii, repr. The Untold and Unfinished Story. Seabury Press, , State University of New York Press, The Book of Enlightened Masters: Western Teachers in Eastern Traditions. Chicago and La Salle: A Survey of the Territory. American Society in the Buddhist Mirror. The Colors and Contours of American Buddhism. Prebish and Kenneth K. University of California Press, , Buddhism and the Beat Generation. Oxford University Press, Adaptive Strategies of Vietnamese Buddhists in Toronto. The Quality of Life in Southeast: Many Petals of the Lotus. Asian Buddhist Communities in Toronto. University of Toronto Press, Buddhist Traditions and Schools in North America 1. Chinese Buddhism Chandler, Stuart. The Chinese in the United States. Hong Kong University Press, Chinese Buddhism in America. The American Image of the Chinese, The University of California Press Chinese Temples in California. University of California Press, ; repr. Jodo Shinshu Becker, Carl. Buddhist Churches of America. Buddhist Churches of America: Seventy-Five Year History, Challenges for a Change in the 21st Century. Pacific World NS 6 Fall , Asian-America in the s. Japanese Religions in California. University of Tokyo, Association of Soto Zen Buddhists, Taking the Path of Zen. North Point Press, Zen and American Thought. Cultural Identity and Economics. Glassman, Bernard and Rick Fields. Instruction to the Cook: Americanizing the Face in the Mirror. The Buddhist Review, 4, 1 , University of Tokyo Department of Religious Studies, , The Three Pillars of Zen: Teaching, Practice and Enlightenment. Grove Press, , The Eight Gates Of Zen: Spiritual Training in a American Zen Monastery. The Heart Of Being: A Transmission of Zen Buddhism to America. Zen Studies Center, The Social Organization of Zen Practice. Cambridge University Press, Zen and the Way of the New Religions. The Life and Work of Issan Dorsey. Nothing on My Mind: An Intimate Account of American Zen. Getting Saved from the Sixties:

### 9: Diamond Way Buddhism in North America - Locations

*How this style of Buddhism will adapt to America, after Americans have become bored with Tibetan politics and leadership of the groups has passed to the American converts, remains one of the more interesting questions in the future of Buddhism in America.*

For more than a century, Buddhism has been on a remarkable ride in America. It has gone from the marginal religion of Chinese and Japanese immigrants on the West Coast plus a few eccentric Euro-Americans who dabbled in Theosophy and spiritualism to a religion practiced by millions of Americans throughout the country and known, at some level at least, to millions more through books, magazines, television, and movies. Buddhist ideas appear in New Age religions, psychology, medicine, and even sports and business. Buddhist values are cited in social movements for feminism, peace, ecology, and animal rights. Buddhist temples pop up in unlikely places, from Hacienda Heights, California to the cornfields of Iowa. Buddhist studies flourish in colleges and universities from Smith to Stanford. We even have a new facial lotion called "Hydra-Zen," advertised as relieving skin stress, and a snack called "Zen Party Mix. An aura surrounds words like "Buddhism" and "Zen. There are the favorite values of the health and food industries, such as wholesomeness, well-being, and natural goodness; and there are the aesthetic values of the young urban sushi culture, such as tasteful understatement, sophisticated minimalism, and multicultural cosmopolitanism. We seem to be dealing not with a religion, but with something that might be called American "secular spirituality" -- a longing among many especially the white middle and upper classes who are still not satisfied with what they have and who want something more; who have all they can eat, but are still searching for that special flavoring, some "psycho-spice" of self-acceptance, perhaps, some rare "inner herb" of guilt-free self-satisfaction. This longing for something more, though in most societies very often associated with religion, seems in our society to be associated with a suspicion of religion. We want something more than institutional religion -- something more personal, more private, more narrowly focused on "me" and how I feel about myself -- what might be called "I-dolatry. We can add a dash of Buddhism whenever we need some spiritual flavor. We can even adopt Buddhist values or practices without converting to the Buddhist religion. American Buddhists If so, what, then, are we supposed to think when we read that there are millions of Buddhists living in America? What about the hundreds of organizations that we find listed in directories of American Buddhist groups? No one seems to know just how many millions of Buddhists there are in America, in part because no one has figured out who "counts" as a Buddhist. We might also call them "Buddhist sympathizers," and we might describe their nightstand reading as "public Buddhism" or "media Buddhism. Not only is there quite a bit of it relative to other religions, but it tends to be highly positive. In international news, Buddhism is almost never blamed for the foibles of Asian societies. No one associates the state religion of Buddhism with the nasty politics in Burma; no one implicates the Buddhists of Sri Lanka in the bloody campaign against the Hindu Tamils. Rather, Buddhists tend to be [depicted as] peaceful victims of Asian politics -- Vietnamese monks burning themselves in protest against the government or Tibetan nuns tortured and jailed for their demonstrations against Chinese rule. Compare this with the media images of fanatical Muslims, Sikhs, and Hindus not to mention Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland. The domestic news almost never treats Buddhist groups as "cults" or plays up the not uncommon sexual misadventures of Buddhist leaders. Rather, it tends to focus on "human interest" feature stories: Compare this with dark media images of black Muslims and Hindu guru cults, or the evil empire of the Korean Christian movement of Reverend Moon not to mention lurid stories of televangelists and their prostitutes or Catholic priests and their choirboys. To be sure, we still get occasional hints of something suspicious as in the campaign fund-raising stories of Al Gore and the devious Taiwanese Buddhist nuns , but for the most part, Buddhism seems to have slipped free from our old images of an alien Oriental paganism, blending smoothly into the American scene as a familiar, if still somewhat exotic, feature of our cosmopolitan new multicultural. It is often said that we have adopted Asian Americans as our "model minority," and the media seem to have adopted Buddhism as our model minority religion. The transformation of Buddhism from an alien Asiatic paganism to a modern, international spiritual resource

capable of blending into the American scene owes much to the work of western academics. In the 19th century, while newly arrived immigrant Chinese were worshipping the Buddha in their temples in California, Caucasian Americans were beginning to read about the Buddha in books produced by scholars of classical Indian languages. To be sure, there were bits of the teachings that were difficult to swallow: But with these bits overlooked or explained away, for the most part Buddhism seemed safely familiar and modern, surprisingly compatible with a scientific worldview and western way of life -- in short, a religion ideal for disaffected Christians and Jews looking for a spiritual alternative. The academic study of Buddhism has come a long way since the 19th century, and we now know enough to see clearly how little that early western image of Buddhism corresponds to the actual history, teachings, and practices of the religion in Asia -- how many of the difficult bits were overlooked or explained away in the projection of modern western ideals onto the religion. Still, the projected image remains in our books and minds -- an image much more attractive and influential than all the more sophisticated studies we now produce, describing the often bizarre and alien views that Buddhists actually held and detailing the history of a religion riddled with myth and ritual, superstition and magic. Some were simply curious about Buddhism; some were no doubt practicing Buddhists. But most seem to have been "sympathizers": Many of them wanted to talk during the discussion sessions not about the scholarly presentations on Buddhist history and culture, but about liberal American interests such as ecology and social justice. More than a few wanted to share their personal understanding of what Buddhism really is and what Buddhist values are or ought to be. Such people are almost all educated, affluent, and white. At the retreat, I did not see a single black or Latino, and only one or two Asians, in the group. We also need a subcategory like "freelance Buddhist" -- those who identify themselves as Buddhist without belonging to any Buddhist organization, and perhaps another category called "client Buddhist" -- those who make use of Buddhist organizations without belonging to them. This last category is perhaps the most remarkable of all. At the Stanford retreat, about half the people came one hour early to participate in an optional instruction session on meditation taught by Buddhist monks. These people were, for that session at least, operating as "client Buddhists. They often tend to think of such participation along the lines of, say, going on a Sierra Club hike, doing massage therapy at a hot spring resort, or attending a golf clinic or an investment seminar. Some Buddhist groups, in fact, depend on such drop-in clients for income and cater to them with specially prepared programs. One of the best-known Buddhist monasteries in America, Tassajara, supports itself with a summer guest season, when it turns itself into a spiritual resort. In institutional terms, Buddhists are a disorganized lot. There is no national Buddhist organization; there is very little interest in anything like an ecumenical movement. Some groups have ties to church organizations in Asia; some have networks of affiliated communities in this country. But for the most part, American Buddhism is splintered into many different groups and factions, each with its own organizational structure, teachings, and practices. These can be very different. Buddhist probably disagree on more than they agree on. No one "speaks for" or "represents" Buddhism in this country. Within this generally messy situation, we can make some distinctions of type. First, all commentators on the sociology of American Buddhism are quick to point out that we are dealing here with two distinct kinds of communities. Some use the unfortunate terms "American Buddhists" and "ethnic Buddhists," or the fighting words "white" and "yellow" Buddhists. Whatever we call them, the distinction between the two types is striking. Buddhists from China and Japan, of course, have been living in America since the 19th century, but especially since the relaxation of quotas on Asian immigration in the 1960s, the number and variety of Asian Buddhists in America have grown dramatically. We now have representatives from virtually all the Buddhist cultures of Asia -- Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, Tibet, and Mongolia -- as well as newer Buddhist groups continuing to enter from Japan and Taiwan. Of course, there is much variation in the types of Buddhism found in these communities, but sociologically speaking, they typically have deep roots in and reflect the ways of the old country. They serve to provide not only religious services, but also a sense of cultural continuity and a cultural center of gravity. Membership in the Buddhist organizations of such groups is typically not a matter of conscious choice or the result of a spiritual quest but a more or less unconscious cultural practice. In this sense, hereditary Buddhists are more like the majority of traditional, mainstream Christians and Jews than white convert Buddhists. And in fact, the functions of their religious

organizations often look very familiar: The food may be sushi instead of hot dogs, the games may be mahjong instead of bingo, but the functions are more or less like that old-time religion that many nightstand Buddhists and white Buddhist converts are looking to escape. There are, however, a few interesting groups that have managed to bridge the ethnic divide. The American organization is very large, with centers throughout the country, and the ethnic makeup is diverse, mixing together not only Japanese and Euro-Americans but also many African-American converts. NSA is almost the only form of Buddhism that has significantly penetrated into the America that lies beyond the affluent, educated classes. Perhaps in part for this reason, it is typically ignored or dismissed by other Buddhists. More commonly, in those congregations where the clerical leadership has attracted a convert following from outside the ethnic group, it is quite usual for parallel programs to develop -- one for the ethnic community, based on traditional Asian Buddhist lay beliefs and practices, another for the mostly Euro-American converts that emphasizes their interest in the philosophical doctrines and spiritual practices traditionally left to the religious specialists or professionals. The three basic forms of American Buddhism -- Zen, Vajrayana, and Vipassana -- represent only a small fraction of the various forms of Buddhism actually present in America. In fact, they exclude most of the forms followed by the immigrant Buddhist population that makes up the majority of Buddhists in this country. But they are the forms that have most appealed to convert Buddhists and the Buddhist sympathizers from whom most converts are drawn. Of these three forms, Zen is undoubtedly the best known. It is by far the oldest and most successful form of Buddhism in America, introduced around the turn of the 20th century, discussed in both popular and academic books, and, at least since the Zen boom of the s, widely practiced in many centers throughout the country. In recent decades, there have been popular Zen teachers from China, Korea, and Vietnam, but American Zen is dominated by styles imported from Japan hence, the Japanese name "Zen". The American versions are typically a package of traditional forms of monastic practice wrapped in western philosophy and psychology. This package was first developed by Japanese intellectuals in early 20th-century Japan, in response to their study of western ideas. Thus, the religion was already "prepackaged" for export to the West -- a fact that does much to explain its popularity here. Some are quite large and include a network of residential meditation centers, monasteries, and businesses. Whether large or small, the focus is typically on lay meditation practice. In its early years, Zen groups often formed around Asian meditation teachers who were given almost complete authority over the group. But as they have matured and leadership has fallen to the converts themselves, the groups have increasingly taken on a more Protestant style: In the process, women have increasingly moved into leadership roles. To the right of the Zen groups are the organizations devoted to Vajrayana Buddhism. These represent a more recent development, largely of the last two or three decades. They are the result of the Tibetan diaspora, after the flight of the Dalai Lama to India in , that led to the appearance of Tibetan monks in the West. Although this Tibetan Buddhism has attracted more or less the same segment of American society looking for more or less the same spiritual results, its religious style is rather different from Zen. Because it has arrived quite suddenly and recently, brought by monks steeped in the old ways of Tibetan culture and largely innocent of modern western values, it still retains more of the "raw" flavor of Tibetan religion. It tends to have a more "Catholic" feel, with a sharper division between monks and laymen; a greater emphasis on ritual practices of worship, chanting, initiation rites, healing, and empowerment ceremonies; and a less critical acceptance of traditional Buddhist scholasticism and the mystical theologies and cosmologies developed in medieval India and Tibet. While modern Japanese Zen has the advantage of looking familiar, Tibetan Vajrayana has the lure of the exotic. Where Zen has appealed to Americans as a kind of this-worldly asceticism, Tibetan Buddhism has the attraction of other worlds -- of a distant pure land of Shangri-la beyond the Himalayas and the reach of international capitalism, an ancient magical realm of the spirit that preceded the modern disenchantment of the world. How this style of Buddhism will adapt to America, after Americans have become bored with Tibetan politics and leadership of the groups has passed to the American converts, remains one of the more interesting questions in the future of Buddhism in America. If Tibetan Vajrayana is to [the] right of Zen, Vipassana is to the left. This style is also quite recent and growing rapidly. Its name comes from a Pali word meaning "observation" or "discernment," and it refers to certain forms of Buddhist meditation. The Vipassana movement represents a modern adaptation of traditional

meditation practice to lay life. The movement began in Burma around the beginning of the 20th century.

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