CHAPTER V
DEVELOPMENT OF BODHISATTVA IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES

INTRODUCTION

In the Centuries following the Buddha's lifetime, His followers faithfully preserved His teachings and spread it not only throughout India, but also to many countries in Asia and lately even to Europe and America. During the first five hundred years after the Buddha's Final Nirvana, the Teaching and Discipline were not yet written down. Instead, they were retained in the memories of the monks who periodically assembled to recite and review them. A number of councils were held during this period to make sure that the Buddha's teachings were transmitted accurately.

BODHISATTVA IN TIBET POLITICS

The ancient caravan routes that long linked the literate cultures of Asia avoided the formidable mountains of Tibet and the Tibetan people, although surrounded by Buddhist societies for centuries, remained illiterate followers of an awesome animistic religion. In time military expansion of the ancient monarchy brought the Tibetans in contact with the advanced civilizations of China and India and, finally in the 8th Century A.D. a dichotomous spread of Buddhism penetrated the isolated 'Land-of Snows.' From China came Ch'an, the 'mind-only' school of meditational Buddhism referred to in Tibetan tradition as the 'instant method' of enlightenment. This school maintained that enlightenment could be obtained at any 'instant' in meditation and that meritorious deeds and canonical study were not only useless for gaining enlightenment, but actually impediments to it. About the same time, the symbiosis of Madhyamika and Yogacara teachings, referred to as the 'gradual method' was introduced from India. This school
taught that one advances gradually on the path to enlightenment by means of meritorious deeds and canonical study during the course of many lifetimes. Of particular relevance to the theme of this section is the emphasis placed by the Indian school on the soteriologic role of the Bodhisattva as a faith object who leads the way and the gradual path.¹

According to late Tibetan sources, conflict between these two schools led to a protracted debate at Bsamyas monastery with the Indian guru, Kamalasila, defending the 'gradual method' and defeating the Chinese monk, Mahayana, who argued for the 'instant method.' This traditional account has been shown to be an apocryphal creation of later Tibetan historians.² The doctrinal dispute was purportedly resolved in due time when the king, Khri-srong Ide-brtsan, issued an edict which proscribed the Chinese system and sanctioned the Indian school alone.³

Victory for the Indian school may well have been more the result of political pragmatism than philosophical preference. Assuming that the king wanted to foster a foreign religious system for the 'advancement of the Tibetan Monarchy, then the Indian school of Buddhism would appear to have been the logical choice. While stressing faith in a Bodhisattva as an infallible shepherd for the masses in this and later lives, it overtly taught the importance of meritorious deed and canonical study, and covertly, it justified the societal status quo as one dictated by the law of karma. The promulgation of such doctrines would enhance a viable and pliable monarchy in Tibet.

In comparison, the 'mind-only' teachings of the Ch'an school of Buddhism could be counterproductive to the advancement of the monarchy. Ch'an masters, particularly those of the T'ang dynasty, were noted for violent anti-traditionalism.⁴ The iconoclasm of
Ch'an Buddhism could, at best, foster anti-social behaviour in the monarchy and, at worst, encourage outright anarchy itself. In view of the political implications inherent in this system, it is not surprising that the Indian school, with its Bodhisattva emphasis and karmic reliance, received the royal sanction.

The introduction of Buddhism in the Tibetan court was not without open opposition from the conservative faction representing the Non-Buddhist, animistic religion of the people. Antagonism between the two factions peaked in the first half of the 9th Century during the reign of Khri-gtsug Ide-btsan, better known by the epithet Ral-pa-can. i.e., 'Long Hair.' A fanatic patron of Buddhism, this king levied a tax to support the monastic community and he appointed a Buddhist monk as his chief minister at court.5

In time of anti-Buddhist faction murdered the monk minister and then, in 838.A.D. assassinated the king himself. The king's brother, Glang-dar-ma, also called 'U-durn-btsan: i.e. 'The Hairless Noble,' was elevated to the throne. This king is blamed in Tibetan tradition for a heinous persecution of Buddhism. Foreign teachers were sent back to their own countries and the translation of canonical texts was put to a stop. Tibetans who had taken Buddhist vows were forced to renounce them or face death. Finally a Buddhist monk assassinated King Glang-dar-ma in Lhasa in the year 842.6

Tibetan histories say the senior queen of Glang-dar-ma was childless so she took another's son and pretended it was her own, while the junior queen was the mother of Glang-dar-ma's son. Dispute in the court over which son was the rightful heir to the throne. led to a split in the royal lineage. The faction supporting the son of the junior queen remained in Lhasa, site of the Pro-Buddhist Court. The faction favouring the so-
called son of the senior queen returned to the Yar-Iung valley and reestablished a court in the traditional center of the Pre-buddhist kingdom. Regarding the successor to Glang-dar-ma, the official history of the T'ang dynasty states that he had no sons whatsoever and so a son of the queen's older brother was elevated to the throne. Be that as it may, a dichotomy of the royal lineage fragmented the monolithic loyalty structure upon which the monarchy depended and as a result the great Tibetan empire collapsed, never to rise again.

The 9th Century dichotomy of the monarchy was followed by still further disintegration of the body politic and central Tibet remained fragmented by local hegemons for the next four hundred years. Little is known about the political history of that medieval hiatus due largely to the bias of later 'lama-historians' who compiled aho-'byung, a genre of religious historiography, concerned all but exclusively with the vicissitudes of Buddhism. These myopic histories ignore Central Tibet where Buddhism is said to have died out after the persecution, and they concentrate on events in the Western Kingdom where the renaissance of Buddhism took place.

Pertinent to the theme of this paper is the fact that when Tibet fragmented politically in the 9th Century, its society was still dominated by the Pre-buddhist, shamanic religion. Buddhism had been introduced into the royal court, but did not control it, nor had its teachings spread widely among the common people. Yet, when central Tibet resurfaced in the main stream of recorded history in the Thirteenth Century, it is clear that Vajrayana Buddhism had gained religious supremacy in the land.

The impetus for that cultural metamorphosis may be traced to the soteriologic aspirations embodied in the Bodhisattva doctrine. The indigenous animistic religion of the
Tibetan people, kept the ‘life-force’ (srog) in the hands of the capricious gods and malicious demons while alive, and offered the 'soul' (bla) nothing but an eschatological future in the Underworld. Buddhism, on the other hand, offered the common people the hope of a better rebirth through faith in a Bodhisattva who served as a model of virtuous behavior while guiding them on the gradual path to ultimate liberation. The profound ontological and epistemological concepts of the symbiotic Madhyamika-Yogacara school of Vajrayana Buddhism appealed to the hieratic intellectuals of Tibet, but it was the Bodhisattva doctrine with its hope for a better future life that attracted the common people.

Traditional Tibetan sources compiled not long after the end of the four-hundred-year hiatus in central Tibetan history testify to the pervasive popularization of the Bodhisattva doctrine. The general idea that a Bodhisattva incarnates in the phenomenal world for didactic purposes had already been adopted by the Tibetans to embellish their own early history. 'Religious historiography' (chos-byung) dating from the early Thirteenth Century uses the titulary Chos-rgyal (Sanskrit: Dharmaraja) in reference to three of the ancient kings; namely, Srong-brtsan sgam-po of the 7th Century, Khri-srong Id'e-u-brtsan of the Eighth Century, and Khri Ral-pa-can of the Ninth Century. These three kings are said to have been 'incarnations' (sprul-pa) of the Bodhisattvas Avalokitesvara, Manjusri, and Vajrapani, respectively. 11 Acceptance of the doctrine of 'incarnation' became so widespread that it seemed inconceivable to the common people that an ordinary mortal could, in fact, achieve the state of enlightenment. As a case in point, the disciples of Mi-la-ras-pa, attributing his ascetic mysticism to supermundane powers, asked him whose 'incarnation' he was. Replying that he had no knowledge of being the
incarnation of anyone, Mi-la-ras-pa then chided his disciples for having doubts about the true efficacy of the Dharma.\(^1\)\(^2\)

By the Thirteenth Century the cultural milieu in Tibet had become dominated by Buddhism, which had by pro-selytical necessity adopted many features of the indigenous shamanic religion. Moreover, Tibet still lacked a centralized form of government and its lands were politically fragmented among various local hegemons, both lay and ecclesiastic. It was in this matrix, that an embryonic form of hierocratic government was engendered.

The pivotal point in Tibetan history at which the evolution of its body politic was turned in the direction of a theocracy came when the Mongols intervened in Tibetan affairs in the thirteenth century.\(^1\)\(^3\) Suffice it to say here that it was the policy of Chinggis Khan and his followers to subjugate a foreign land by offering its ruler a choice between submission or annihilation. Continuance of submission and the payment of tribute to the Mongols were assured by taking members of the ruler’s family as hostages. In addition, the Mongols preferred to administer subjugated territories through local ecclesiastic wherever possible.\(^1\)\(^4\)

When the Mongols first invaded Tibet circa 1240 they found a politically fragmented land with no identifiable ruler to negotiate a submission. Subsequently, Sa-sa-skya pandita, the learned hierarch of the 'Khon ruling family of the Sa-skya sect, was summoned to the Kokonor region to submit Tibet (albeit symbolically rather than veridically) to Prince Khoden. Two of his nephews, 'Phags-pa and Phyag-na rdo-rje, were taken along as hostages. Following the death of Sa-skya Pandita in 1251, the two
nephews were taken to the camp of Prince Khubilai. In time, Khubilai appointed 'Phags-pa, then heir and successor to the abbatial see of Sa-skya, as his court lama. The deaths of Guyug Khan (1248) and Mongke Khan (1259) led to protracted rivalry between princes of the blood over the rights of succession to such an extent that Tibet remained all but ignored by the Mongols. Not until Khubilai became undisputed Khan of the Eastern Mongols was any military attention turned to the veridical subjugation of Tibet. Finally in 1265, 'Phags-pa Lama and his younger brother, Phyag-nar-do-rje, who had been designated as chief of Tibet by Khubilai Khan himself, returned with a Mongol military escort to Sa-skya and began taking steps to establish a centralized government. A census was taken and central Tibet was divided into thirteen myriarchies for taxation and administrative purposes. In keeping with the subjugation policy of the Mongols, most if not all of the thirteen myriarchs appointed were hierarchs themselves or members of hierarchic families. Thus, by the end of the Thirteenth Century, Tibet once again had a central government, albeit one imposed by a foreign power whose military troops enforced the hierocratic rule of the Sa-skya lama as a 'regent' of the Mongol Khan.

As stability in the Sa-skya regency began to wane early in the Fourteenth Century due in part to protracted sibling rivalry for ruling power among the numerous offspring of the then late Sa-skya lama, Bdag-nyid chen-po Bzang-po-dpal, the Mongols began to lose interest in the welfare of Sa-skya and, for reasons of their own, turned their military attention elsewhere. Consequently, Sa-skya was overthrown in the middle of that century by the combined Tibetan forces of the Phag-mo-gru myriarch, a lama of the Bka'-brgyud-pa tradition of Tibetan Buddhism.
This lama, commonly known by the title Ta'i: Si-tu in Tibetan,\textsuperscript{17} structurally reorganized the government. He abolished the myriarchal system established by the Mongols and implemented a new administrative unit called a rdzong. Basically meaning a 'fortress,' the term rdzong was used to define the administrative area around various rdzong or 'fortresses,' which were constructed at strategic places throughout the land. Unlike the Mongol system which appointed local leaders to be myriarchs in their own territories, the officials appointed under the Phag-mo-gru system to govern each rdzong were those individuals who had proven their loyalty to Ta'i: Si-tu himself in the overthrow of the Sa-skya 'regency.' Thus, the independent government established by Ta'i Si-tu was more politically centralised than the administrative system of the Mongol-imposed Sa-skya 'regency.'

The rdaong system as implemented by the astute and charismatic lama, Ta'i Si-tu, embodied the same inherent weakness that led to the downfall of the ancient monarchy, that is to say, it depended upon singular loyalty for stability and viability. After the death of Ta'i Si-tu, disloyalty began to appear in the government and finally, in the Fifteenth Century, open rebellion on the part of officials in charge of the Rin-spungs rdzong marked the beginning of the end of the Phag-mo-gru dynasty.

A radical innovation in Tibetan Buddhism occurred in the Fourteenth Century that served to channel the evolutionary stream of the body politic irrevocably from a hierocracy towards a theocracy. That pivotal event was the appearance of the unprecedented concept of the 'reincarnation' of a lama.
'Incarnation' is used for Tibetan spruZ-sku (Sanskrit: nirma~a-kaya), a term generally and better translated outside of this paper as 'emanation body.' In contrast, 'reincarnation' renders Tibetan yang-arid, literally again exist, and is used to identify an individual who is considered to be the 'rebirth' of an antecessor. By way of illustration, Tibetan tradition claims that the ancient king, Srong-brtsan agaro-po, was an 'incarnation' (spruasku) of the Bodhisattva of Mercy, Avalokitesvara; but it does not regard him as being the 'reincarnation' (yang-srid) of any earlier king. By comparison, the fifth Dalai is regarded as having been the 'reincarnation' of the fourth Dalai Lama, who in turn was the 'reincarnation' of the third, and so forth.

The doctrine of 'incarnation,' referring to a discrete phenomenal form emanated by a Bodhisattva for didactic reasons, dates from the early days of Mahayana Buddhism and is widely accepted by various schools. On the other hand, the concept of 'reincarnation' as defined here is unique to the Tibetan form of Buddhism. Tibetan tradition places the first occurrence of 'reincarnation' in the lineage of the Black-hat Karma-pa hierarchs. Tradition favours the second hierarch, Karma pakai (1206-1283), as the first yang-arid in Tibet, but the evidence indicates the idea arose in the time of the third hierarch, Rang-byung rdo-rje, who was born just over four months after the death of Karma pakai. The author dealt in some detail elsewhere with the identification of the first 'reincarnation' and the theoretical reasons why the concept emerged when and where it did. Suffice it to say here that 'reincarnation' was engendered in the Tibetan matrix by the political need to affect a transition from a hierocratic form of government based on 'charisma of person' to an institutionalized one dependent on 'charisma of office.' The establishment of both the Sa-skya regency and the Phag-mo-gru dynasty can be attributed to the charisma of their founding lamas, 'Phags-pa and Ta'i si-tu, respectively; just as their decline and fall can be
blamed on the diminution of charisma in succeeding rulers and their overthrow before charisma of office could become institutionalized. As will be seen later in this paper, the theoretical purpose for the origination of the concept of 'reincarnation' in the Fourteenth Century became a political reality in the Seventeenth Century.

Not long after the concept of 'reincarnation' surfaced in Tibetan Buddhism, another religious development began that was to have a long-range impact on Tibetan political history; namely, the great reformation movement led by Tsong-kha-pa (1357-1419). Aiming his reform at the general decline in monastic morality prevalent in his time, Tsongkha-pa emphasized adherence to the disciplinary vows set forth in the Vinaya and stressed the importance of academic study, while rejecting many of the tantric texts used by the other sectarian traditions as Non-buddhist works. These reformed teachings found receptive audience in a disenchanted society, and within one decade the three major monasteries of the reformed sect in the Lhasa region were founded: Dga'-ldan in 1409, 'Bras-spungs in 1416, and Se-ra in 1419, the year of Tsong-kha-pa's death. This reformed order became known as the Dge-lugs-pa and is popularly referred to as the Yellow-hat sect. In 1447 the monastery of Bkra-shis lhun-po was founded near Shigatse by Dge-'dun grub-pa, a personal disciple of Tsong-kha-pa and the Yellow-hat hierarch revered in Tibetan tradition as the first Dalai Lama.21

During the ensuing years, the reformed Yellow-hat sect continued to increase the size of its monastic communities and to receive more patronage from local officials. Meanwhile, conflict between the declining rulers of the Phag-mogru dynasty and the rebellious Rin-spungs lords who seized the strategic rdzong at Shigatse in Gtsang province in 1435 led to a state of protracted civil war between the two. In time, the Phag-
mo-gru patronized the Yellow-hat sect, which waxed in the province of Dbus; and the powerful Lords of Gtsang became patrons of the Red-hat Karma-pa hierarchs. Thus began a general struggle for supremacy between the Red-hats and the Yellow-hats that was to last some two hundred years.

Following the course of Sixteenth-Century history, Tibet seemed to be headed toward a viable separation of church and state. Unlike the successive hierarchs of the 'Khon family who administered the Sa-skya regency, or those of the Rlangs family who ruled the Phag-mo-gru dynasty, the lay Lords of Gtsang had no familial ties with the lineage of reincarnate hierarchs of the Red-hat Karma-pa sect.

Also there was no geographical proximity between the two since Yangs-pa-can, the mother monastery of the Red-hats, was located far from Shigatse, site of the court in Gtsang.22

Continuation of this separation of church and state could well have led to a radically different form of government in Tibet, but it came to naught due to a stratagem on the part of the Yellow-hat sect. Facing unrelenting military and religious harassment from his Gtsang adversaries, the hierarch of the Yellow-hats, the third Dalai Lama, traveled to Mongolia, where it is, 'said he converted the great Altan Khan.23 After the third hierarch died in Mongolia, his 'reincarnation' was 'discovered' to be none other than the great-grandson of Altan Khan himself. This, the fourth Dalai Lama, a Mongol and the only one in the entire lineage not ethnically a Tibetan, was brought to Lhasa and installed as the hierarch of the Yellow-hat Dge-lugs-pa sect. Thereafter, the Mongols became devoted followers of the Dalai Lamas and the military might of their cavalry was at their beck and call.
When the fourth Dalai Lama died, his 'reincarnation' was 'discovered' in a powerful family in the Yar-lung region, thus enhancing the geo-political power of the Yellow-hat sect. As the Yellow-hats continued to grow in strength, the then King of Gtsang, Karma Bstan-skyong, entered into an alliance with the King of Be-ri in eastern Khams, with the intention of outflanking the stronghold of the Yellow-hats at Lhasa.

Faced with this dilemma, the fifth Dalai Lama summoned Gushri Khan to lead his Khoshot Mongols from the Kokonor region to attack first the King of Be-ri and then the King of Gtsang. Gushri Khan defeated the enemies of the Yellow hat sect and then in 1642 he enthroned the fifth Dalai Lama as the spiritual and temporal head of Tibet. The Khoshot Mongols remained in central Tibet to enforce the peace. Thus, once again political unity: was imposed on Tibet by the might of the Mongols, and centralization of the body politic under the rule of the Dalai Lamas was to remain intact for over three hundred years.

The single factor perhaps most responsible for the continuous co-corporation of church and state in the hands of successive Dalai Lamas was the Bodhisattva doctrine. In the beginning, the 'reincarnation' concept in Tibet seemed primarily concerned with the identity of the human antecessor, rather than a superhuman emanator. A further embellishment of the innovative idea of 'reincarnation' emerged when the fifth Dalai Lama became temporal and spiritual head of Tibet. A 'treasure-text' (gter-mal revealed that the Dalai Lama was, in truth, the 'incarnation' (sprul sku) of the patron Bodhisattva of Tibet, Avalokitesvara.
In conclusion, the Bodhisattva doctrine helped transform the religious culture of Tibet from shamanism to Buddhism in the medieval period, it encouraged the development of the unique concept of 'reincarnation' of a lama; and by means of the traditional Mahayana acceptance of the 'incarnation' of a Bodhisattva, it moulded a symbiotic theocracy in which the 'office' of the Dalai Lama symbolized the inseparable unity of 'church and state.' It also influenced the xenophobic and myopic policies of Tibet's monastic government, reinforcing its political indifference to critical international developments and thereby contributed directly to the decline and fall of the traditional state.

BODHISATTVA IN CHINA

Although Buddhism first entered China from India during the Later Han, in the time of Han Ming Ti (AD 58-76), it did not become popular until the end of the 3rd century. The prevailing disorders, aggravated by barbarian invasions and the flight of northern Chinese to the south, heightened the attraction of Buddhism with its promise of personal salvation, despite its lack of affinity with the society-oriented thought of the Chinese. Buddhism was founded by Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha, a prince of the Sakya kingdom on the borders of what are now India and Nepal and a contemporary of Confucius. Intent on finding relief for human suffering, he received a moment of enlightenment while meditating under a Bodh tree. The Buddha taught that desires are the source of pain, and that by overcoming desires, pain can be eliminated. To this end, he advocated meditation and pursuing the Eightfold Path, similar to the Ten Commandments of Judaism and Christianity. The objective was to reach Nirvana, the condition of serenity of spirit, where all cravings, strife, and pain have been overcome, giving way to a merging of the spirit with eternal harmony.
At an early stage of its development, Buddhism split into two major trends, Mahayana (Greater Vehicle) and Hinayana (Lesser Vehicle). Hinayana remained closer to the original Buddhism and is still the religion of the Southeast Asian countries. The Buddhism of China, Korea, Japan, Nepal, Tibet, and Vietnam, however, stems largely from Mahayana. Mahayana Buddhism contained more popular elements, such as belief in repetitive prayers, heaven and deities Bodhisattvas who would help people gain salvation. It also readily adapted to the land and people it converted. In China, it split into several schools, including Ch'an (Zen in Japan), T'ien-t'ai (Tendai in Japan), and Pure Land.

**Ch'an Buddhism:** Through his popular book `The Way of Zen' (1957), the British-born American philosopher Alan Watts introduced Americans to the Zen school of Buddhism, which has a long tradition of development in China and Japan. Zen (Ch'an in Chinese) is a Japanese term meaning 'meditation'. It is a major school of Japanese Buddhism that claims to transmit the spirit of Buddhism, or the total enlightenment as achieved by the founder of the religion, the Buddha.

Zen has its basis in the conviction that the world and its components are not many things. They are, rather, one reality. The one is part of a larger wholeness to which some people assign the name of God. Reason, by analyzing the diversity of the world, obscures this oneness. It can be apprehended by the non-rational part of the mind--the intuition. Enlightenment about the nature of reality comes not by rational examination but through meditation.

Meditation has been an integral part of Buddhism from the beginning. Nevertheless, a school of meditation grew up in India and was taken to China by
Bodhidharma about A.D 520. When the meditation school arrived in China, it had a strong foundation on which to build: Taoism, the ancient Chinese religion (See Taoism). This religion is based on the idea that there is one underlying reality called the Tao. Taoists, like the followers of the meditation school, exalted intuition over reason. This Taoist tradition was easily absorbed by the Chinese meditation school, the Ch'an.

Within two centuries the meditation school had divided into two factions: Northern Ch'an and Southern Ch'an. The northern school, a short-lived affair, insisted on a doctrine of gradual enlightenment. The southern school, which became dominant, held to a doctrine of instantaneous enlightenment.

The southern school evolved under the powerful influence of Hui-neng (638-713), who is recognized as the sixth great patriarch of Zen and the founder of its modern interpretation. In a sermon recorded as the "Platform Scripture of the Sixth Patriarch," he taught that all people possess the Buddha nature and that one's nature before and after being born is originally pure. Instead of undertaking a variety of religious obligations to seek salvation, one should discover one's own nature. The traditional way to do this, sitting in meditation is useless. If one perceives one's own nature, enlightenment will follow suddenly.26

The goal of adherents of the Southern Ch'an is to gain transcendental, or highest, wisdom from the depths of one's unconscious, where it lies dormant. Ch'an tries to attain enlightenment without the aid of common religious observances: study, scriptures, ceremonies, or good deeds. Reaching the highest wisdom comes as a breakthrough in everyday logical thought. Followers are urged to find within themselves the answer to any
question raised within because the answer is believed to be found where the question originates. Training in the methods of meditation leading to such enlightenment is best transmitted from master to disciple.

Ch'an flourished in China during the T'ang and Sung dynasties (960-1279), and its influences were strongly felt in literature and painting. Ch'an declined during the Ming era (1141-1215), when Ch'an masters took up the practice of trying to harmonize meditation with the study of traditional scriptures.

Meanwhile, sects of Zen had been transplanted to Japan. The Rinzai school was taken there in 1191 by the priest Enzai (1141-1215), and the Soto tradition arrived in 1227, taken there by Dogen (1200-53), the most revered figure in Japanese Zen. These schools had their origin in China during the 9th Century, when Ch'an divided into five sects that differed from each other in minor ways.

The Rinzai sect evolved from the work of Lin-chi (died 866), who was an exponent of sudden enlightenment. The Soto was founded by Liang-chieh (died 869) and Pen-chi (died 901). The Soto stressed quiet sitting in meditation to await enlightenment. A third group, the Obaku, was established in 1654. The Obaku school is closer to the Rinzai tradition except for its emphasis on invoking the name of Buddha.

Zen gained an enthusiastic following among the Samurai warrior class and became in effect the state religion in the 14th and 15th Centuries. In the 16th Century Zen priests were diplomats and administrators, and they enhanced cultural life as well. Under their influence literature, art, the cult of the tea ceremony, and the No drama developed.
The focal point of Zen is the monastery, where masters and pupils interact in the search for enlightenment. A newcomer arrives at a monastery with a certificate showing that he is a regularly ordained disciple of a priest. He is at first refused entry. Finally being admitted, he spends a few days of probation being interviewed by his master. When he is accepted he is initiated into the community life of humility, labor, service, prayer and gratitude, and meditation.

**Development stages:** Before the Qin Dynasty (221-207BC), traditional values from the Zhou Dynasty gradually collapsed, with different regimes and different thoughts flourishing throughout China. According to official records of the Han Dynasty, there are as many as 189 different schools of thoughts at the time, making that period the pinnacle of Chinese philosophy. Scholars in the Han Dynasty summed up the pre-Qin philosophy in Nine genres and 10 schools.

At the end of the Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220), the notion that "heaven is dead" prevailed. Confucian moral concepts and values waned and society experienced major turbulence. Philosophers at the time used metaphysical discussions on the interrelation between Confucianism and Taoism to explain a number of important topics like the relationship between Confucianism and nature. Theoretical hypotheses were unprecedented during this time.

From the Tang to the Song Dynasty (960-1279), traditional values suffered from disorder as the Han people blended with other ethnic groups. The contradictions between foreign and indigenous cultures, and official and folk cultures, were more glaring than ever. Facing the contradictions, Han Yu and Li Ao made their voices heard, followed by
the "three doctors at the Beginning of Song Dynasty," Sun Fu, Shi Jie, and Hu Yuan, as well as "five scholars in the Northern Song Dynasty," Zhou Dunyi, Shao Yong, Zhang Zai, Cheng Hao, and Cheng Yi. The Confucian school of idealist philosophers endeavoured to re-establish a spiritual world for the people in the Song Dynasty, with their efforts to integrate Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism.

At the juncture of the Ming and Qing dynasties (1368-1644), a generation of scholars chose secluded lives in the mountains and temples after the Manchu Ethnic Group seized power. They sorted out a traditional system and rules, and profoundly criticized and meditated on traditional culture. A galaxy of philosophers with noticeable achievements like Wang Fuzhi, Gu Yanwu, Huang Zongxi, and Fang Yizhi brought Chinese philosophy to a profound new theoretical height.

In modern times, the "Middle Kingdom" was repeatedly defeated by the imperial countries, and the nation's confidence was at its lowest point ever. The task of the time was to "save the nation from subjugation and ensure its survival." Chinese philosophers researched a wide range of subjects on ancient, modern, eastern, and western philosophies, striving to improve China's own philosophy. The trend is still continuing today, forming a new mixed cultural philosophy.

As a result of its features, Chinese philosophy has always had a close relationship with society in its development process. The "misfortunes" the nation has suffered from time to time presented major philosophical challenges, and the "fortunes" of philosophers were vital creations as responses to philosophical subjects of the time.
Whenever Chinese philosophy experienced a thriving period, a number of different schools, abundant talented people, the extent of freedoms, and scope of studies tended to surpass the previous period. The rise and decline of Chinese philosophy has much to do with the rise and decline of society, shaping characteristics and connotations of the nation's ethos. (chinaculture.org)

**The Huayan Bodhisattva:** Huayan (Flower Garland) Buddhism valorizes the form of existence known as Bodhisattva. To be a Bodhisattva is to dwell in the margins between experienced enlightenment and surrounding moral and karmic views. The Bodhisattva has already abandoned desires and the discriminations of the mundane world that are the cause of suffering. Accordingly, such the Bodhisattva dwells in this world with a mind that transcends that which causes suffering and has no attachment to the self. Those still caught in this world are attached to the self and to the discriminations of existence, and they suffer because of the desires such attachment creates. When a Bodhisattva lives among such people, the difference is obvious and the other sentient beings see that the Bodhisattva does not suffer. Thereby, the Bodhisattva becomes a savior.

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DEVELOPMENT OF BODHISATTVA IN VIETNAM

Buddhism has an ancient and layered history of more than 2000 years in Vietnam. In brief summary, however, there are four periods generally identified by scholars from the introduction of the religion until the 10th century C.E, the “golden age” of the 11th and 14th Centuries, a period of decline in the 15th Century followed by a gradual revival, and modern practices (Mih Chau 1). Both East Asian and Indian Buddhist influences from trade routes began to filter into Vietnam during the first Century C.E. Zen was first introduced to Vietnam by the Indian monk Vinitaruci in 580 CE by way of China, but this tradition remained relatively unpopular in comparison to Pure Land and other more devotional Mahayana (large vehicle) strains that were easily incorporated into indigenous animistic practices. Chinese Mahayana Buddhism dominated the Northern kingdoms; Theravada (small vehicle) traditions were incorporated with the annexation of the Khmer and Champa kingdoms to the South.

While Mahayana Buddhism traces its roots back to the teachings of the historical Gautama Buddha, it is largely based on sutras and other religious writings from India and China at the beginning of the Common Era. The Mahayana tradition de-emphasizes the belief in Karma and the individual’s escape from the cycle of birth and rebirth through the attainment of Nirvana. The focus of Mahayana practice is instead the liberation of all living beings from suffering with the aid of Bodhisattvas, enlightened followers of the Buddha who remain in the worldly realm to help others. Teachings of compassion,
loving-kindness, and the universal transcendent Buddha-nature of all beings permeate this tradition and lend themselves to a Buddhism that is grounded in relieving the suffering of worldly experience.

Following the country’s independence from China at the beginning of the 11th Century, Vietnamese Buddhism moved to the forefront of society. In the 11th to 14th Centuries, monks were influential in government affairs and the court financially and ideologically supported the development of pagodas and other Buddhist institutions. King Tran Nhan Tong, who ruled during the period, was the official founder of the Truc Lam (Bamboo Forest) school of Zen, and remains a national icon of the synthesis of worldly and spiritual leadership (Government Committee for Religions Affairs, 2006).  

A period of decline in Buddhist practice is attributer to the Le Dynasty’s replacement of Buddhism with Confucianism as the national system of belief during the 15th Century. “The village communal house replaced the pagoda as the center of village life” (Government Committee for Religious Affairs, 2006). However, some scholars argue that Buddhist practice remained active during this period on a local, less conspicuous scale, and in fact “continued to receive imperial or other elite support until at least 1900” (De Vido, 2007).  

This indicates that although notions of period of Buddhism’s development and decline may be useful for a general historical framework, it is important to remember that these categories fall short in describing the complexity of religious identity and practice. They are also highly subjective, with the concept of ‘decline’ often rooted in a critique of ‘superstitious’, ‘popular” or ‘impure’ beliefs influenced by other religions.
It is quite difficult to speak of Buddhism as a distinct entity, as the two other branches of Vietnam’s “triple religion”. Confucianism and Taoism, have been highly influential on Buddhist life throughout history. In recent years, the increasing popularity of Catholicism and Protestantism and the creation of the indigenous religious movements of Hao Hao Buddhism and Cao Dai have further complicated the country’s religious identity. The inconsistency between statistical studies on religion in Vietnam demonstrates the unclear parameters of what constitutes Buddhist practice and identity today, studies deem anywhere between 15 and 95 per cent of the population practicing “Buddhists”. What is clear, however, is that the majority of the population is in some way influenced by a Buddhist world, view and religious traditions.

The legacy of the factionalism and political unrest of the 1950s-1970s continues to effect Vietnamese Buddhism today. Many monastics, including Thich Nhat Hanh, were prominently involved in protesting the Vietnam-American war. Because these monastics advocated for reconciliation over victory, both sides of the conflict disapproved of and often violently suppressed their actions. Many members of the conservative Buddhist hierarchy also disapproved. The Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam, a pre-eminent Buddhist organization in the South during the 1960s, has denounced the control of the socialist state since the end of the war in 1975 and repeatedly calls for the establishment of a democratic political system. When the socialist government established the Vietnamese Buddhist Sangha in 1981 in order to consolidate all Buddhist organizations, the UBCV denied affiliation. This has resulted in several respected monks in the UBCV’s leadership to be placed under house arrest and their activities heavily restricted. The socialist state claims that it is non-state-sponsored religious organizations that they
prohibit not the religious practices or beliefs themselves. Supporters of the UBCV instead see the conflict as ideological (Chapman, 2007).29

Within the contemporary organized Buddhist traditions, Theravada Buddhist practices prevalent in most Southeast Asian countries remain largely exclusive to ethnic minority groups. In the majority Mahayana Buddhist community, two major strains are active today: Pure Land mixed with other devotional practices, and Zen traditions, which have been revived in the past half a Century.

Pure Land practices are based on the accumulation of merit in order to obtain a higher level of incarnation in the next lifetime. The most common practice of merit accumulation is the chanted recitation of the Amitabha and Lotus Sutras. Combined with indigenous, animistic beliefs in the influence of gods and spirits, Pure Land practice in East Asian countries usually includes prayer. This devotional practice directed toward the Buddha and various Boddhisatvas is not instructed in any Buddhist scriptures, but is an integral part of the practices conducted in Buddhist pagodas in Vietnam. Confucian ancestor worship also comes into play in the prayers performed at Buddhist sites. Many pagodas include altars to the temple ancestry as well as the deceased relatives of local lay practitioners. Another aspect of many Pure Land practices is making monetary and symbolic offerings to the Buddha.

Many proponents of the Buddhist revival (Chan Hung Phat Giao) that began in the 1920s, a national movement to both return to the scriptural roots of Buddhism and create a modern Buddhist institutional system, were highly critical of these “superstitious” and “irrational” Pure Land practices. A de-emphasis on reincarnation and a pragmatic belief
that “one could do a lot more to influence one’s lot materially by practicing frugality and by educating oneself in scientific advances than by making offerings to the spirits” arose during this period, catalyzed by criticisms of superstition by the French colonists and other Western powers. In writing about the “problem of religious expenditures,” Philip Taylor concludes that while this critique may be valid in some cases, material contributions to religious rites can and do play important social and spiritual roles. “Sacrifice is at the heart of the construction of social identities. In place of those critics who regard such practices as symptomatic of destruction and disorder, the contributors find paradoxically that in them lie the key to constitution and re-ordering of community” (Taylor, 2007).30

From this point of view, Pure Land practices include a clear call to social engagement, contributing to the construction of collective identity, these practices are intricately involved in the worldly, social realm. In another sense, Pure Land devotional beliefs remove the responsibility of the individual practitioner for relieving suffering on earth and instead situate this responsibility in divine figures. Pure Land has a great potential for inspiring social engagement because it includes community rituals that generate social capital and focus on worldly realities such as health and happiness in the family, but it is also has the potential for encouraging individual irresponsibility and social complacency.

The largest sect of Zen (Thien) in Vietnam is the Lam Te School, the most prominent branch of which is the Lieu Quan school. Lieu Quan was founded in the 18th century as a domesticated version of a tradition that was introduced from China in the
previous century. The Truc Lam sect, founded in 13th Century, is the only Zen tradition that is indigenous to Vietnam.

The lineage of the Lieu Quan school has remained unbroken, and for centuries Zen meditation has been practiced in synthesis with Pure Land traditions by its monastics. In the 1970s monk Thich Thanh Tu instigated a revival of a ‘pure’ Vietnamese Zen tradition under the banner of the Truc Lam sect, which had disappeared for centuries. This tradition has been growing rapidly in popularity, especially in the North, centered around Truc Lam Yen Tu pagoda outside of Hanoi. In last so many years, other Zen pagodas have also seen a significant rise in the number of lay participants at meditation retreats lead by “teaches who espouse a form of Buddhism stripped of many former devotional practices” (Taylor 2007).

However, accompanying this increased interest in meditation practice has been an ideological repositioning of Zen as the original, legitimate form of Vietnamese Buddhism, something that scholar Alexander source calls “largely a case of cultural invention”. Traditionally, only monastics at large pagodas with Zen masters and the intellectual and economic lay elite practiced meditation. In most small village Pagodas, neither monastics nor lay practitioners had any contact with Zen. Again, Western notions of ‘legitimacy’ and critiques of ‘fold beliefs’ may be now coming into play in this newest period of Buddhist revival. Because Zen is the primary form of Buddhism popular in the West, “the Communist party seeks to boost its legitimacy by endorsing Zen, a version of Buddhism supported by a transnational movement, as an authentic national tradition”. The introduction to Thich Thanh Tu’s Keys to Buddhism indicates this tendency to critique Buddhism within Western frameworks of “rationality”.

The Zen tradition also carries mixed messages about social engagement. Primarily concerned with the internal transformation of the mind, many Zen teachers discourage their followers from becoming distracted by earthly illusions of suffering. Sister Chan Khong, Thich Nhat Hanh’s closest assistant and a highly respected dharma teacher, describes her interactions with Thich Thanh Tu as a dedicated young social worker: “Usually when I talked to about social work, he expressed the folk belief that it was just ‘merit work’ that could never lead to enlightenment. He said work like that was only a means to get reborn into a wealthy household. No notion could have been more alien to me. I didn’t care at all about rebirth, especially into a wealthy family. There was so much to do right in the present moment.

However, Zen meditation practices do provide more concrete tools for the transformation of internal suffering than the Pure Land tradition. The individual is responsible for this transformation rather than divine forces. While some Zen traditions use mantras as the object meditation, others focus on the practice of mindfulness – beginning full awareness to the body’s experience in the present moment in order to calm and ground the mind. This type of meditation engages with earthy reality as a tool for transforming individual suffering. However, the potential for social engagement can only be realized if Zen practices include the Mahayana Bodhisattva ideal of working to relieve the suffering of all other beings. Zen social engagement may also be complicated by the common belief that earthly suffering is a product of the mind rather than a reality than needs to be addressed through social action. Chan Khong expresses her frustration with this definition” “The monks and nuns told us to release our anger, for example, ‘because life is an illusion’, but they never told us how to do it. For me, life was not an illusion –
the injustices and suffering of life in the slums were very real, and I wanted to learn how to cope with these realities, not deny them” (Cao Ngoc Phuong, 1993).³³

THE ROLE OF BUDDHISM IN SRI LANKA

About the year 246 B.C., Emperor Ashoka sent his son, Mahindra, as the head of a mission to Sri Lanka. There, he converted the king to Buddhism. The king supported these Buddhist missionaries and provided facilities for them in his capital. From there, they were able to carry on their work of spreading the Teaching of the Buddha. A great monastery was then built near the capital. Later, Ashoka's daughter, Sanghamitra, brought a shoot of the Bodhi tree in Buddha Gaya to Sri Lanka. She also established an Order of Nuns in Sri Lanka. With the help of royal patronage, Buddhism became the dominant religion of Sri Lanka by the Second Century B.C. later, a Sri Lankan king commissioned the compilation of a collection of the Buddhist scriptures in written form.

In the First Centuries of the Common Era, Buddhist culture and scholarship flourished in Sri Lanka. The Fifth Century saw the arrival of the famous scholar, Buddhaghosha, from South India. He made an outstanding contribution to the literature of the Theravada tradition.

From the earliest period of Sri Lankan history, invasions and migrations from India have threatened the independence of the island and have left it with a composite population consisting of both Hindu and Buddhist elements. Buddhism in Sri Lanka suffered setbacks during the periods when Hindu influence was greatest. Later, during the centuries of colonial rule under the Portuguese, Dutch and British, Buddhism suffered further setbacks.
A movement to revive Buddhism in Sri Lanka began in the later half of the Nineteenth Century through the efforts of a learned monk named Gunananda. His eloquent lectures on Buddhism aroused much interest. These lectures attracted the attention of H. S. Olcott, an American, who then came to Sri Lanka and enthusiastically supported the revival of Buddhism there. A young Sri Lankan Named Dharmapala soon aided Olcott. Both of them travelled widely, giving lectures on Buddhism, distributing Buddhist literature and collecting funds for Buddhist education. Their active missionary work created widespread support for Buddhism in Sri Lanka. By the Mid-Twentieth Century, Buddhism was once again as strong as it had ever been on the island. Today, as in the past, Sri Lanka is famous as a source of inspiration to the Buddhist world.

A major component of Mahayana Buddhism is the importance of the various Bodhisattvas that gained prominence in Sri Lankan Buddhist history around the 3rd Century A.D during the reign of King Datusena and King Mahasen. One of the best examples of Mahayana Buddhist art in Sri Lanka is at Buduruwagala, located about five kilometres south of Wellawaya, off the Wellawaya-Tanamalwila road.34

A rough surfaced road passes through rice fields and along a small reservoir surrounded by dry zone vegetation. The road leads you towards one of the many large monolithic rock formations found across Sri Lanka's dry zone. And here, in the middle of the dry zone forest, and carved into the rock face are seven figures facing eastward towards the rising sun. The exact origins of these figures remain unclear but historians believe they were sculptured some time during the 8th and 9th Centuries A.D based on the artistic form. Although the figures appear to be rather plain and lacking colour the original sculptures were plastered and painted over as is evident by traces of stucco and orange streaks.
On approaching the site the visitor is greeted by an imposing figure of a standing Buddha carved out of the rock face and surrounded by vegetation. At 13m it is the tallest Buddha image carved out of rock in the country and is considered the only major historical sculpture of the Buddha influenced by Mahayana Buddhism in Sri Lanka. Based on its size, style and physical features it is believed to be a depiction of the Deepankara Buddha although a few scholars believe it to be a depiction of the Amitabha Buddha. on either side of this image are a total of six other images depicting various Bodhisattvas and their consorts.

The Bodhisattvas appear to have been important figures of worship during the time that the Buduruwagala sculptures were made. The most significant of the three figures to the Buddha's left is thought to be the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara that stands over seven metres in height and retains much of its original white finish. To the left of this white painted figure is the form of Prince Sudhana, while on the right side is a female figure of his consort Tara Devi, depicted in the traditional thrice bent posture. In Buddhist mythology Tara Devi was believed to have the power to prevent natural disasters, disease and be particularly helpful to women. To the immediate right of the main Buddha is an image of the Bodhisattva Manjusri. This image has suffered some damage over time especially to its lower section. The central figure to the left adorned with a crown and ornaments is that of the Maithri Bodhisattva, another prominent Bodhisattva in Buddhism. on the extreme right is the Vajrapani Bodhisattva. This image has lost all traces of its original paintwork and shows the intricate carving carried out on the rock.

In addition to the rock sculptures a small bronze figure of a Bodhisattva less than four inches in height has been recovered from the site and is now on display at the
National Museum in Colombo. Another interesting aspect of this site is a large hole carved in the shape of the flame from an oil lamp. The rock face inside this has a natural oily coating and many devotees who visit Buduruwagala believe that anointing their foreheads with this oil and presenting themselves before the figures of Tara Devi or Vajrapani can solicit cures for various ailments.

The Buduruwagala sculptures are an important part of Sri Lanka's Buddhist heritage and art. They are perhaps the best representation of the little known influence of the Mahayana school of Buddhist thought and Tantric Buddhism that is mainly associated with South East and East Asian countries. A visit to Buduruwagala is also an opportunity to explore the surrounding area and experience typical rural life in the dry zone of Sri Lanka. Leaving the main road is a step back from the chaos of Sri Lankan road travel and the fast pace of modern life. Life moves at a slow pace through the heat of the day, the air still except for the sound of insects and the occasional call of a bird or monkey. Fishermen go out in small outrigger canoes to fish in the reservoir while farmers tend acres of golden rice fields.

The best time to visit is early morning when the call of forest birds echo through the countryside as the sun dawns to light up the magnificent sculptures of Buduruwagala. The world seems perfect at that moment and gazing upon the rock sculptures can provide a rewarding sense of peace and tranquillity.

**BODHISATTVA PRACTICE IN JAPAN**

In Japan, Amida (from the Indian Amitabha) worship reached a radical and popular form that bears interesting resemblances to Protestant Christianity. Shinran
(1173-1262) founded one of the most popular forms of Japanese Buddhism, Jodoshinshu, which taught that other than the most dedicated sages human beings are too sinful to gain enlightenment, so the best way for all people to gain entrance to higher existence, in accord with the Mahayana tradition, was to rely entirely on the grace and power of Amida who could bring both the good and the bad to heavenly realms or pure lands. It is only in turning away from self accomplishment and entirely towards the salvation of all by grace that the most people could be saved from hell worlds. Shinran decided that no vow of celibacy would make much difference, and so he married and taught his priests to marry, for which he was persecuted for the rest of his life.35

Buddhism reached Japan at least by 552 C.E., arriving with a Chinese missionary group of monks and nuns carrying texts and ritual objects with them, though some Chinese scholars argue that it spread earlier. Just as in Tibet, Buddhism arrived as Japanese culture was gathering itself into a coherent whole, receiving much in addition to Buddhism from China and Korea. As in Tibet, older shamanic traditions blended together with Buddhist culture to create Japanese culture as it was just beginning to be written down and given a stable form.

The first empress of Japan, Empress Suiko, ruled from 593-628 C.E. Already a Buddhist, one of the first Buddhist rulers of Japan as well as its first historically recorded female rulers, Suiko promoted Buddhism from the beginning. Suiko, much like Empress Wu from China, the only empress to rule without an emperor in Chinese history, promoted Buddhism to legitimate her reign. Empress Wu began her reign in 655 C.E, Twenty five years after Suiko’s death. For a female ruler, Buddhism was a much better alternative than Confucianism, which prescribed male rulers of households as well as
empires as the well being of the state. Both empresses were important for the spread and popularity of Buddhism in their lands, the places where Buddhism thrived the most as one of the most popular forms of human thought in history.

Up until the establishment of the Shogun in 1185 C.E, the Central ruler who administered power through the samurai local lords, Buddhist monasteries became the central source of political power in Japan. In spite of the fact that the first of ten vows taken by monks and nuns is to refrain from killing, some monasteries and temples created armies of warrior monks, sohei, who fought in battles between rival factions as well as investigated supernatural phenomena. Many wore samurai armor and fought with a great variety of weapons. They also often wore, unlike samurai, a white or yellow cloth covering the face and head, an adaptation of monks’ robes.

One final modern Japanese figure to mention is Nishida Kitaro (1870-1966), a philosopher and zen practitioner who founded an entire school of philosophy in Japan by comparing zen and the Buddhist tradition to German philosophy, particularly the existentialism of Nietzsche and Heidegger. In his book the self overcoming of Nihilism, he argues that German and French existentialists have a preoccupation with the emptiness of existence as a negative, meaningless and frightening thing, and that Buddhism and zen have gone beyond this to affirm the positive abundance and richness of the emptiness and void.

**Characteristics of Japanese Buddhism Seen in the Integration Concept of New Religions in the Lotus Sutra/Nichiren Tradition:**

Buddhist organizations in other countries may place significance on faith and practice by lay followers, but one unique characteristic of Japanese Buddhism is that it
places such great significance on the faith and practice of laypeople. The term lay orientation implies all the characteristics of the concept of integration through horizontal solidarity, the principle of self-reliance, and this-world orientation. The fact that the term already existed in Japan before modern times may suggest that it is a notable characteristic of Japanese Buddhism. The formation of lay orientation may have been related to the process of positive efforts to spread Japanese Buddhism among people while being influenced by the Lotus Sutra, Pure Land teachings, and esoteric Buddhism, and while promoting its spread through syncretization with Shinto.

The move to enhance the involvement of laypeople by removing the distinction between them and monks appears in historic documents from the Nara period (710-94), together with the names of Gyoki and En no Ozunu. The Pure Land and the Shugendo mountain asceticism traditions promoted their non-orthodox ways of training and practices for laypeople in respective directions, resulting in the gelatinization of the authority of those who had taken the tonsure. Non-priests and non-lay leaders were developed in organized ways in Shugendo and in the Pure Land sects to meet the people's quest for salvation. Moreover, recluse monks in black clothing in the Kamakura period (1185-1333) and Buddhist groups formed by recluse monks became widespread in other forms. It should be remembered that the wide prevalence of lay Buddhist followers has supported the development of Lotus Sutra/Nichiren Buddhism in Japan.

Nichiren himself did not encourage lay orientation. However, the trend to place emphasis on laypeople developed in the Nichiren tradition in the form of lay associations eventually called Hokke-ko and other names. The most active lay associations were the Happon subsect of the Honnoji Temple School of the Nichiryu line, and Fujimon-ryu of
the Taisekiji Temple school of the Nikko line in Edo (Tokyo) and Kyoto toward the end of the Tokugawa period. Honmon Butsuryuko and Soka Gakkai both reflect this lay tradition. In the meanwhile, during the Tokugawa period, the tradition of the Nichiren sect was united with shamanism, and follower groups were formed around ascetics who responded to people's needs. Nyoraikyo, the earliest New Religion, was established by a woman in Atsuta in Owari Province (present-day Aichi Prefecture), a former servant in a warrior's house, who was strongly influenced by an ascetic of Nichiren Buddhism. The foundation of Reiyukai's movement was laid by Chise Wakatsuki, a female ascetic in Nichiren Buddhism, in cooperation with Kakutaro Kubo.

These lay associations of the two lines of Nichiren Buddhism have contrasting natures, in that one inherits its exclusive nature while the other inherits its tolerant nature and syncretism with Shinto. Even before the Meiji Restoration (1868), there were two lines of religious organizations aiming for horizontal solidarity by involving laypeople as participants, advocating both exclusivity on the one hand and tolerance on the other.

The development of the tradition of Bodhisattva practice in the Lotus Sutra in the direction of nationalism is deeply related to the tradition emphasized in Japanese Buddhism of keeping the nation tranquil by reciting Buddhist prayers and conducting Buddhist ceremonies. Historically, this began with Prince Shotoku (574-622), who placed a premium on the Lotus Sutra; he was succeeded by Saicho and Nichiren, who emphasized the concept of protecting and saving the nation through the Lotus Sutra. Nichiren, in particular, warned Japan of the danger of Mongolian invasion and taught that the nation could be saved by the Lotus Sutra and through constructing an ideal Buddhist state. He redirected the concept of integration based on horizontal solidarity toward
integration under the state. The fact that the Nichiren Buddhist tradition was so influential in Japan in the modern age of nationalism will not be understood without taking into account its concern for protecting and saving the nation.

As described above, the spread of lay-centered religious organizations and the strong interest in national integration in Nichiren Buddhism laid the foundation for the development of New Religions in the Lotus Sutra/Nichiren tradition. The concept of integration through horizontal solidarity upheld by those New Religions has evolved on the basis of the lay-centered Buddhist tradition, which is also concerned with national integration. Both the Lotus Sutra and Nichiren Buddhism put forward the integration concept based on horizontal solidarity. This can be understood as a part of the characteristics of Bodhisattva practice, one of the central concepts of the Lotus Sutra.

Modernity of the Integration Concept of New Religions:

Hanks to the advancement of printing techniques and school education, the formation and spread of a national consciousness reflecting a democratic political ideology became prevalent not only in Japan but also in various countries from the beginning of the nineteenth century onward. The vision of integration through horizontal solidarity and the vision contained in various New Religions have evolved in many entangled ways. A religious tradition emphasizing the subjectivity or self-reliance of the people may have found it easier to keep pace with democratic nation-states.

Among the New Religions of the Lotus Sutra/Nichiren School, very few organizations have developed away from the trend of nationalism. Among them, those that were founded and have developed rapidly between the 1920s and the 1960s have the
strongest inclination toward nationalism. Typical are Reiyukai and Soka Gakkai. In these organizations, nationalism was associated with their vision of the millennium and was developed while competing with State Shintoist nationalism. The integrated vision of Lotus Sutra/Nichiren Buddhism was based strongly on horizontal solidarity and was favorably accepted by people as a guiding principle to use in overcoming any crises confronting the nation. It is no wonder, therefore, that the integrated vision of New Religions contains abundant elements of nationalism.

In modern times, people have become increasingly aware not only of the existence of various religions and people within each country but also of the need for coexistence of all countries and cultures in the world. Religious organizations are required to show an awareness of being members of global society and also to display a religious spirit while coping with social needs. It is against the social background of modern times that the perception of religious diversity and the promotion of international cooperation for peace have come to occupy important positions in the New Religions of the Lotus Sutra/Nichiren tradition. These features were observed earlier in Bukkyo Kanka Kyusaikai. In postwar days, the concept of integration in diversity has developed in Rissho Kosei-kai, Myochikai, Soka Gakkai, and other religious organizations.

Finally, it should be noted that the integrated vision of horizontal solidarity of New Religions has kept pace with modern egalitarianism and progressive thought. One feature of Lotus Sutra/Nichiren-school New Religions is that they evaluate the development of modern times positively. Integration based on horizontal solidarity greatly affects their evaluation. They believe that people can attain direct access to the truth taught in the Lotus Sutra and involve themselves in the practice of genuine Buddhism because of the
advancements made in modern times. On the other hand, the pessimistic view based on the concept of the Latter Day of the Law is also emphasized, warning that righteous Buddhism is not practiced in current times and that a crisis is growing. Contradictory as these two ideas may appear, they can be seen to be supporting each other in a state of delicate balance. While celebrating advances in the human spirit together with technological progress, these organizations also see the human tendency to become violent and to ignore the truth—against which genuine Buddhism should take a stand.

New Religions in the Lotus Sutra/Nichiren School can be understood as examples of a modern embodiment of Mahayana Buddhism, more specifically, its concept of Bodhisattva practices. However, in order to fully understand this, its entire historical development must be considered from ancient times, when Mahayana Buddhism and the Lotus Sutra were conveyed to Japan through China, accepted in the Japanese style, and crystallized as Lotus Sutra/Nichiren Buddhism through the great efforts of such intermediaries as Saicho and Nichiren.

FEATURES OF KOREAN BUDDHISM

Korean Buddhism is practiced in South Korea also known as Republic of Korea in northeast Asia. Buddhism developed in South Korea during the Three Kingdoms that is Koguryo, Paekje and Shilla. It was introduced from China in the 372 A.D. by a monk, who brought with him Chinese texts and statutes when he was invited from China to the northern Kingdom of Koguryo. In China, Buddhists believed in the law of cause and effect which is, one would reap what he sow and in the search for happiness a philosophy that had much in common with the indigenous Shaman beliefs. This made absorption of
Buddhism by the people of Koguryo and subsequently to Paekje and Shilla respectively was quick.

It is, therefore, combined with the original Shamanism whose origin in Korea is still not yet known. As Shamanism is the ancient religion of animism and worship of nature spirits, it easily merged with Buddhism which did not differ with the rites of nature worship. This led to the establishment of Buddhist temples on special mountains where spirits were believed to reside before the introduction of Buddhism. Buddhists even set aside shrines in some temples for the Mountain Spirit, Sanshin depicted as an old man with a tiger at his feet, Toksong, or the Recluse, and Chilsong (the spirit of the seven stars, the Big Dipper) who were important and specially revered in Korean Shamanism. Buddhism then underwent renewal when colonization by the Japanese came to an end in 1945.

Four special features characterize Korean Buddhism. These are Bodhisattva principles which embody generosity, good conduct, vigor, patience, meditation and wisdom as its perfections unification which led to the formation of the Unified Shilla Period after it brought the people on the peninsula together hence social harmony, openness and the mundane.

**Approach of Korean Buddhism:** Buddhist thought is practically oriented and aims to attain Buddha hood at individual level, and save living beings at the social level. This goal is attained through use of skills. Living beings regardless of religion form the basis of salvation in Buddhism. Therefore Buddhism, Korean Buddhism included is inclusive and tolerant. Together with the concept of Buddhist schools, it is evident that Korean Buddhism adopted all concepts of Buddhism.
Korean Buddhism is portrayed as ecumenical as it incorporates both Shamanism and Buddhist systems although it incorporated all concepts of Buddhism. The synthetic feature of Korean Buddhism is well reflected in the inclusion of diverse faith systems in the Korean Buddhist prayer books. The most commonly used Buddhist prayer book in Korea is Seokmun Euibeom or the Guide Book for Buddhist Rituals that records diverse rituals. Within them all Buddhists thoughts and faith systems are intermingled. Hua-yen system is the most prominent among the variety of faith system. This is also confirmed by the worship for Buddha and Bodhisattvas in the Worship, and the chanting of Beopseongge and the Hua-Yen.

Misconceptions resulted from the diverse system of faith in Korean Buddhism leading to arguments and conflicts. Various people tried to resolve this by coming up with philosophies aimed at unifying the different Buddhism sects and reforming Buddhism.

Wonhyo, an intellectual according to Korean history used a symbolic thought of Korean Buddhism to warn against rigidity of doctrines and noble domination on Buddhism. He attempted to create a practical Buddhism that was oriented towards the common people. Buddhist research found his work to systemize and integrate Buddhism's diverse doctrines very important.

In an approach known as Hwajaeng-sasang, Wonhyo came up with the philosophy of reconciliation and harmonization. This was in the effort to harmonize and integrate different viewpoints of the various Buddhist sects. With time, conflicts and arguments arose due to different interpretations of this philosophy. To avoid this, he stressed the
principle of harmonization of disputes which unified the total view of Buddhist doctrines and created a unique synthesis of Buddhist thought.

He harmonized all contradictions and disputes by admitting traits of each doctrine emphasizing the teaching that all phenomena are merely products of the mind and urged people to awaken to this fact (K.E2) Wonhyo always focused on oneness, the interconnection of everything with the whole universe. As a result the philosophy of one mind was introduced from his Hwajaeng-sasang. This philosophy teaches that true understanding is attained if one is enlightened and has oneness of mind. As it was embraced by many people it made Buddhism very popular. This way, with his life, he unified doctrine and behavior while he constantly popularized Buddhism, portraying practical orientation.

Uicheon used teaching to seek the standard points of Seon and Doctrine. He was a National Master during the Koryo period and tried to re-establish organized Buddhism and bring unity to the Koryo society. During the late-Shilla and early-Koryo period, the Buddhist order became corrupt and so he tried to change it focusing majority around the royal house.

As the Unified Shilla period was coming to an end, son Buddhism suddenly expanded following a movement that was centered on the Nine Mountains meditation schools. It emphasized personal cultivation and rejected the royal house central control and doctrinal orders and thus advanced the trend towards regional power centers. Doctrinal orders declined as son Buddhism expanded and doctrinal Buddhism required funds from the royal house so as to publish Buddhist sutras and written works. Uicheon,
noticed the risk and intervened by promoting religious practice based on both doctrinal learning (Kyo) and meditation (son). However, his approach only led to doctrinal studies acceptance of son in a minimal way.

As a practical methodology, Jinul on the other hand, developed the practices of the Three Gateways from his belief of Sudden Awakening and Gradual Cultivation. This philosophy teaches in relation to the mind of Buddha which he said was similar to one's original nature and is based on awakening the true nature of the mind before it is gradually cultivated through meditation and wisdom. Unlike Uicheon, he attempted to reform Buddhism from within the son sect. Jinul gathered a group of seekers who rejected fame and profit and went to live a secluded life devoted to pure religious cultivation during the troubled atmosphere of the military coup in 1170 in Korea. The group was called the Samadhi and Prajna or concentration and wisdom community as their practice included meditation and doctrinal studies.

By developing this small, dedicated community of religious practitioners devoted to the dual cultivation of son (meditation) and Kyo (doctrine) he was seeking to restructure the Buddhist world. Today, for most of the Korean son school the community serves as a role model. Though Korean Buddhism still accepted doctrinal studies as being in harmony with son, they began to favour son Buddhism after Jinul. The Korean son school is as a result, much more inclusive and integrated than its Chinese or Japanese counterparts.

Both Uicheon and Jinul built philosophies that were majorly concerned with the unification of son and Kyo as they sought to reform Buddhism from their particular historical surroundings point of view whereas Jinul and Wonhyo both believed that all...
events are as a result of what is in the mind. All the three aimed at unifying other Buddhism sects especially Korean Buddhism due to its diverse beliefs.

**Bodhisattva Principles:** From the beginning, the way of the Bodhisattva became a central feature in the development of Korean Buddhism. A Bodhisattva is a being who postpones his or her own final enlightenment in order to help all beings, for she is the perfection of altruism, perfect in wisdom and compassion. Bodhisattva are the embodiment of the Six Perfections: Generosity, Good Conduct, Vigor, Patience, Meditation and Wisdom. Initially, generosity is considered the most important perfection for the negation of the self, the first step on the spiritual path. Eventually all are interrelated and equally important on the path to becoming a Bodhisattva. 

Let us look at a practical example of the intermingling of these six perfections. As long as giving is selfish, it is not truly generous. However, in order to practice perfect generosity, one must practice the other perfections. One has to observe good conduct in order to give a pure gift. Then patience is necessary in order to choose the time and determination so that you do not give up. Finally meditation helps you to let go of your greed, so that you can offer the gift selflessly and wisdom helps you to choose the "right" gift! Just as all are linked in generosity, each one is related to the other in all aspects of our life. Perfection in these factors lead to a perfect being: one who lives for all.

With the advent of Buddhism these values became fundamental and central to the Korean way of life. The youth corp (Hwarangdo) of the Unified Shilla period (seep.14) lived according to these ideas, and the teachings of the great Korean masters all emphasized the importance of the Bodhisattva path.
In Korean temples, there are many statues and painting of Bodhisattvas representing various aspects of compassion and wisdom. Throughout the history of Korean Buddhism, different Bodhisattvas have been especially popular at different times: Maitreya, the Future Buddha, and Avalokitesvara, the Bodhisattva of Compassion, in particular (see p.97 for more details). Special shrines were built for them or they were placed in the main Buddha hall next to the principal statue.37

Unification: Buddhism was the force which originally brought the people of the peninsula together forming the Unified Shilla Period. After the unification in 668 A.D., social harmony, so necessary to maintaining defense, was fostered by Buddhism. Buddhist monks led the Korean people against the Japanese in the sixteenth century. Great Buddhist writers promoted this unity by amalgamating the different schools and teaching "Returning to the One Mind", "All is One" or "One Mindedness" (Won-hyo). Peace, harmony and unity became the foundation of Korea’s spirit and her strong patriotism.38

Openness: Although Buddhism has always mixed with local culture, in Korea this is especially true. For example, Buddhism was open to Shamanism and Confucianism. Even today, new elements are constantly being added. A lot of music has entered Buddhist life nowadays. There are Buddhist songs and concerts as well as singing groups. There also seems to be a growing vogue for Buddhist themes woven into modern stories; many old stories have been made into plays for television and movies.

The Mundane: From early on in history, Korean Buddhism emphasized mundane benefits over spiritual benefits for the people - the monks of course, being primarily
interested in spiritual growth. The people, constantly threatened by invaders and calamities, were much drawn to a teaching promising present prosperity rather than future salvation.

**BUDDHISM IN MONGOLIA**

Buddhism reached Mongolia as part of its initial spread into China but did not come into its own until after the many tribes were united under Genghis Khan (1162-1227), whose kingdom stretched across northern China. In 1240, Genghis Khan’s grandson, Prince Godan, moved his army into Tibet, meeting only token resistance. As an unplanned consequence, Lama Sakya Pandita (the leader of the Sakya sect) introduced Tibetan Buddhism to the Mongols, and Godan eventually found himself drawn to the new teachings. He adopted the Sakya form of Buddhism as his personal religion, though he did not seek to impose it upon the Mongol people. Godan’s brother and successor, Kublai Khan (1279-94), however, not only converted but proclaimed Buddhism the official religion of his empire. During his reign it became the religion of the ruling class, with less success among the common people.

Sakya Buddhism remained strong during the years of the Yuan dynasty, which Kublai Khan founded, but after the dynasty’s fall in 1368, it gave way to resurgent competitors. Daoism, Confucianism, and Pure Land Buddhism. Mongolia declined into a somewhat disunited feudal state. Then in 1552 Altan Khan (the leader of Khalha Mongols) reunited the Mongolian tribes into a single political entity (1552). As Kublai had, he looked to Tibet for assistance.
By this time the Gelug reform sect had arisen in Tibet and its leader, Sonam Gyatso, travelled to Mongolia to respond to the khan’s call. As he was about to return to Tibet, Sonam Gyatso proclaimed his patron the reincarnation of Kublai Khan as well as the embodiment of the Bodhisattva of wisdom, thus uniting his political and religious credentials. In return, the khan named Gendun Drub Dalai Lama, "teacher of the Ocean of Wisdom" in acknowledgment of his success in spreading the Gelug teachings and helping him unify the land. The title Dalai Lama was then retroactively applied to Sonam Gyatso’s two predecessors, while his successors, the future Dalai Lamas, maintained their relationship with the khan of the Mongols. Lobsang Gyatso (1617-82), the fifth Dalai Lama, secured his new role as the political leader of Tibet with the assistance of the khan’s troops.39

After Sonam Gyatso’s time in Mongolia, Tibetan Buddhism reemerged as the religion of the Mongolian ruling elite and over the next century was adopted by most Mongolians. Following the Tibetan model, church and state were merged, and organizationally the head of the Buddhist community became the priest to the Mongol ruler. In turn, the successive rulers supported the Buddhist monasteries, the centers of the monk, leaders, whose holdings and wealth steadily increased, by the end of the 19th Century, it is estimated that the monasteries controlled over a third of Mongolia’s wealth. Meanwhile, leadership of the Buddhist community was vested in the khan’s priest, who attained some autocratic powers as a lama, a living Buddha, and incarnation of a Bodhisattva deity.

Over time, the leadership of the Buddhist establishment grew corrupt. The last leader, who held kingly powers over the faithful, was known as the Bogdogagen. As
Mongolia’s spiritual leader, he gained a reputation for his sexual adventures and eventually contracted syphilis. He did severe harm to Buddhism’s reputation. When he died in 1924, there was not a tremendous outcry when the Mongolian Communists (who took power in 1921) announced that a reincarnation for the Bogdogagen could not be found. The country’s new ruler also adopted a generally antireligious stance and viewed the continuing Buddhist community as a threat.

Systematic suppression of the 2,500 temples and monasteries in Mongolia began in 1929. The government was responsible for the death of more than 20,000 monks and the destruction of more than 800 temples and monasteries in the 1930s alone. Suppression did not end until the 1960s. As part of a new policy that included a more favorable view of religion, the government supported the building of the Gandan Monastery at Unga (Ulan Bator) and the reappearance of the leadership of a Living Buddha (lama). The monastery has served as headquarters of the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace.

Since the 1960s, Buddhism has experienced a revival. By the beginning of the 21st Century, it claimed some 22 percent of the population and was on a growth trajectory. A Buddhist Association founded in the 1990s serves as an organizational vehicle for the community. The revival has been assisted by Bakula Rinpoche, a monk who also has been the Indian ambassador to Mongolia and founded a school to train priests, and the Foundation for the Preservation of Mahayana Buddhism, which entered the country at the end of the 20th Century.

Mongolian Buddhism expanded to the West in 1955 when Geshe Ngawang Wangyal (d. 1983). Mongolian lama was allowed to migrate to the United States. He
settled in Howell, New Jersey, and founded the Lamist Buddhist Monastery of America now the Tibetan Buddhist Learning Center, to serve a small community of Kalmack Mongolians and a small but expanding group of non-Mongolians who gathered around Wangyal.
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