
BUDDHISM AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

A SOURCEBOOK OF
SCRIPTURAL, THEOLOGICAL, AND LEGAL TEXTS

Religious
Freedom
Project

BERKLEY CENTER
for Religion, Peace & World Affairs
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE INSTITUTE FOR STUDIES OF RELIGION AT BAYLOR UNIVERSITY

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INTRODUCTION

by Thomas Borchert¹

For many people in the early twenty-first century, there would seem to be a close resonance between Buddhism and religious freedom.¹ This presumption of affinity has emerged for several reasons. The idea that Buddhism is a non-theistic religion that emphasizes personal meditation causes many people to see it as spiritual rather than religious, and thus free from hidebound religious strictures and institutions. This vision is encouraged by the writings of both American and Asian Buddhists, such as Thich Nhat Hanh, who emphasize wellbeing and personal freedom. It is also linked to figures such as the Dalai Lama, Aung San Suu Kyi, and the Thai dissident and Buddhist activist Sulak Sivaraksa, who have drawn close connections between Buddhism and political freedom in their writings and activism. Indeed, this linkage seemed manifest in the 2007 Saffron Revolution, when the Burmese Buddhist sangha² engaged in high-profile protests against the government of Myanmar.³ These protests produced memorable images of monks walking down the streets of Yangon, surrounded by Burmese who were both protecting and protected by the monks from a violent government crackdown.⁴

This linkage of religious freedom and Buddhism has been undermined to some degree by other recent occurrences, such as the violence organized by some Buddhists, led by the monk Ashin Wirathu and his group 969, against Muslims (particularly the Rohingya) in Burma. Still, activists and occasionally scholars have tended to presume that any apparent Buddhist violence and repression

i. The understanding of religious freedom adopted by the Religious Freedom Project is robust and has two parts. First is the right to believe or not (freedom of belief or of conscience); to worship, alone or with others; and to exit religious groups because of belief or conscience. These components of religious freedom are essentially interior (belief and conscience) or private (worship). As such, they are, or ought to be, virtually absolute. There is no legitimate rationale for their restriction by any human agent, including governments. The second element entails both individuals and groups, and has distinctive public dimensions. It includes the rights of individuals and groups to act in civil and political society on the basis of religious conscience or belief, within very broad limits equally applied to all—religious or not. This two-part understanding of religious freedom, with its robust public components, is not present within any religious tradition or nation until the modern era. Even then, the degree of religious freedom present in any given nation was, and continues to be, contingent on historical and contemporary forces that may or may not be related to the dominant religious tradition. Restrictions on religious freedom, especially in its public forms, result from a variety of conditions, including communism, religious nationalism, violent religious extremism, and aggressive modern secularism.

directed against non-Buddhists betrays “authentic” Buddhism and does not involve “true” Buddhists.⁵

These sanguine visions of Buddhism are somewhat overdrawn. Like most of the major world religions, Buddhism has many countervailing tendencies. This is particularly the case with religious freedom, which has not been a native category in Buddhist tradition and history. This is not particularly surprising, since the Asian countries where Buddhism is widespread were not part of the 1648 Peace of Westphalia, which played an important role in diffusing and institutionalizing religious freedom among modern nation-states.⁶

This does not mean that Buddhists have not made arguments for ideas conceptually akin to freedom in general and religious freedom in particular. However, particularly before a more global political vocabulary emerged in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, one has to be careful about interpreting Buddhist discussion and articulation of concepts such as freedom, religious freedom, politics, and even the very notion of religion. Before one can make sense of this conceptual challenge and accurately describe the presence or absence of religious freedom across the sweep of Buddhist history, it is essential to explain some of the most basic aspects of Buddhism.

At a basic level, Buddhism is a religion organized around the teachings of the figure of the historical Buddha. The teachings of the Buddha (*Sasana*) are understood to be a perfect rendering of the true nature of the world and of existence (*Dharma* in Sanskrit; *Dhamma* in Pali; *Fa* in Chinese). The Buddha, or rather the historical Buddha, is understood as a perfect human being, who developed wisdom over the course of several lifetimes. He then discovered, or recovered, this accumulated wisdom during his last lifetime while meditating under a Bodhi tree roughly 2,500 years ago. The core problem that Buddhism sought to solve was that of suffering, and part of the Buddha’s account focused on the transient nature of all things, including the self, and the delusion that leads to unwarranted attachment to transient things. Buddhism has frequently been described as a non-theistic religion because its principal figure is not a god, and its summum bonum would seem to be the complete extinction of the karmic stream known as the self (an extinction known as nirvana), rather than union with a god in heaven.⁷ While there is a modicum of truth in this view of Buddhism, it is also true that Buddhism’s model of religion has some real points of contact and overlap with the theistic and supernatural frameworks of religious traditions such as Christianity and Islam. Buddhists have for the most part believed in the truth of supernatural beings and a metaphysics beyond the

human world (and indeed beyond the divine which is, like the human world, embedded in the cycle of reincarnation).

It is difficult to discuss the views and attitudes of Buddhism as a whole because for most of its history it has been highly decentralized and marked by a great diversity of teachings. The body of teachings and practices we now call Buddhism originated in India about 2,500 years ago, at a time of great intellectual and religious fluidity and ferment. It emerged in conversation and debate with both Jainism and the early Vedanta school of Hinduism. The religion spread throughout the subcontinent over the next 600 years, and was widespread until the end of the first millennium CE, when its influence began to wane. During this roughly 1,500-year period, it was in regular conversation and competition with a wide variety of schools of thought, both Buddhist and non-Buddhist.

Among the many different Buddhist schools and textual traditions that developed during this period, the more important (macro) traditions have been the Mahayana, the Vajrayana, and the Theravada. The Mahayana emerged around the start of the Common Era. The Vajrayana is an esoteric form of the Mahayana that developed between the sixth and eighth centuries, at about the same time as esoteric forms of Hinduism. The Theravada has been generally presumed (incorrectly) to be the oldest and most original form of Buddhism.⁸ The Pali texts on which it is based are among the oldest texts that we have, though they were not written down until perhaps five centuries after the death of the historical Buddha, and their final redaction occurred another 500 years after that (about 1,000 years after the historical Buddha). Over the course of the first millennium CE, these different schools of Buddhism spread throughout Asia: Mahayana into East Asia, starting in the first centuries of the Common Era; Theravada into Sri Lanka and later to Southeast Asia in the centuries after the death of the historical Buddha⁹; and Vajrayana into the Central Asian kingdoms of the Himalayas, most significantly Tibet.

The Buddhism that spread to these regions conceptualized important aspects of the religion in different ways. For example, where Theravada Buddhists have tended to emphasize a human Buddha, Mahayana Buddhists have focused on more god-like superhuman forms of the Buddha. Inside India, these different schools peacefully coexisted for several hundred years, though there are important sectarian arguments that survive from that time. At the same time, as the religion traveled, Buddhists encountered other “religions,” such as Taoism in China or the variety of folk traditions in Japan, Tibet, and Southeast Asia,

and engaged in significant competition and negotiation with them.¹⁰ In other words, we see in Buddhism at a very early stage in its history both significant internal diversity and considerable interaction with other religious traditions and communities.

Buddhism's internal diversity has an important implication for our understanding of its relationship to politics. All of the major religions of the world are marked by both centralizing and decentralizing forces, imaginations of unity as well as disunity. However, Buddhism has never had a singular authority. In the third century BCE, the emperor Asoka unified much of India, and was probably a patron of Buddhism (among other religions). All schools of Buddhism remember him in this way, at least. Beyond this, however, Buddhists and Buddhist institutions have long been shaped by the politics of the polity that they are a part of. There has never been an influential notion of political unity across the Buddhist world—a notion of a “Buddhendom” or a set of institutions that asserted meaningful transnational authority in the way that the medieval Church did (however imperfectly) in Europe in the age of Christendom. This means that Buddhists in China were shaped by the Chinese empire as much as by any Buddhist ideologies, and the same point could be made concerning Buddhism's relationship to almost all other polities.

This does not mean that Buddhists did not interact across political boundaries. Buddhists across East Asia interacted with each other quite extensively during certain periods: Tibetan Buddhists moved into China at various points, and Theravada Buddhists in Southeast Asia often revived lineages between Thailand, Sri Lanka, and Burma (for example, in the eleventh and eighteenth centuries CE). However, these interactions, though important, were relatively small-scale, and the daily life of Buddhist communities was, for the most part, unaffected by the influence of kings and political institutions in distant nations or polities. An important consequence of this is that it is difficult to speak about specifically Buddhist approaches to religious freedom. Instead, for most of Buddhist history, one needs to speak about ideas and articulations of religious freedom developed by *Chinese* Buddhists, *Tibetan* Buddhists, *Thai* Buddhists, and so forth.

However, with accelerating globalization in the last 200 years, a more common discourse on religious freedom and human rights has emerged among Buddhist communities across geographic and political boundaries. Buddhists in the twentieth century have been more direct and consistent in adopting and articulating the language and norms of religious freedom. It is

important to understand that Buddhism as a singular religion—as opposed to several different religious teachings that did not regularly interact with one another—was in large part a creation of the nineteenth century, through the negotiations, appropriations, and impositions between colonizers and Asians, officials and scholars, lay and monastic Buddhists. These groups emphasized aspects of Buddhism that were consonant with modern forms of rationality. In other words, Europeans did not “invent” Buddhism, but processes of modernization and globalization have significantly shaped how Buddhists and non-Buddhists have come to understand Buddhism as a world religion.¹¹ For example, authority within Buddhism has several different sources, including knowledge of the teachings of the Buddha, the ability to perform supernatural miracles, time spent as a monk, and the knowledge and wisdom that arise from the practice of meditation.

Depending on what sources of authority one emphasizes, Buddhism has exclusive and inclusive, authoritarian and non-authoritarian tendencies within it. However, a number of Buddhist modernizers have stressed Buddhism’s more inclusive and progressive tendencies, making claims that Buddhism is particularly appropriate for modernity. On the other hand, other Buddhists have emphasized Buddhism’s more authoritarian tendencies, and indeed there have been many moments when Buddhist leaders and political authorities have mobilized Buddhist teachings and institutions to circumscribe and even eliminate what we might think of as religious freedom.

Nonetheless, with due allowance for all of these caveats and qualifications, Buddhists have engaged and utilized ideas of freedom, including religious freedom, in several important and distinctive ways. The first of these relates to the cessation of suffering. While Buddhists do not believe that all existence is suffering, Buddhist thought points to the inevitability of suffering within existence. Because of the cycle of rebirths that all beings—human and not—are in, existence itself is theoretically endless. One of the key arguments within Buddhist philosophy has been that people are attached to things and ideas which are conditioned and changing, and that these attachments lead inevitably to continued suffering. A number of the texts in this collection, such as the Lotus Sutra and the *Dhammapada*, thus articulate the goal of abandoning these attachments in terms of freedom from impediments and freedom from desire. Moreover, this condition for Buddhists is a universal one: All beings suffer, and thus it may very well be the responsibility of committed Buddhists to help relieve the suffering of other beings. As in Hinduism, the goal of Buddhism has often been spoken of in terms of “liberation” (*moksha*). In some sense, nirvana

is release or liberation from the endless cycle of rebirth. It should be noted that the discussion of freedom and liberation in this context is not explicitly political, though at certain moments in Buddhist history (and certainly in the twentieth century), Buddhists have deployed the vocabulary of liberation in more explicitly political ways.

A second way to think about Buddhism and religious freedom is within the discussions and debates that Buddhists have had internally over the best ways to exist within society and to cultivate wisdom. There is a fairly common misconception that Buddhist monastics were distinct from society because of the personal asceticism of monks and nuns. While Buddhist discourse highlights the problems of attachment to things within society, Buddhist monastics have always lived within society, and indeed have always been dependent on laywomen and laymen for support. Indeed, the classic formulation is that monks and nuns are responsible for caring for the teachings of the Buddha and teaching non-monastics, while lay folk, including kings, were responsible for caring for the monks and nuns.

This has also meant that Buddhist monastics have been closely linked with social and political institutions, though the extent and form of this relationship has varied greatly across space and time. For example, the symbiotic relationship between monastics and lay folk is not simply about the care of monks and nuns; it is also about questions of how monastics interact with political authorities, as well as their responsibility to care for the health of the nation. For example, in China, prior to the seventh century CE, Chinese Buddhists discussed how to act in relation to the emperor (see the selection attributed to Mouzi in the political documents of the Classical/Civilizational Period). Monks also asserted for themselves a responsibility in both Tang China and Japan during the Nara period (eighth century) to chant sutras to protect the nation. Later figures in Japan were known to perform miracles to protect the nation, such as Kukai in the ninth century, Eisai in the twelfth, and Nichiren in the thirteenth. At the same time, Buddhists throughout history have also been leery of excessive entanglements with kings and other powerful figures because they could lead to compromising distractions and attachments. For example, in chapter 13 of the Lotus Sutra (included among the philosophical texts in the Classical/Civilizational Period), the Buddha encourages Bodhisattvas to “constantly avoid intercourse with kings and princes.”

We also see Buddhist movements of reform and purity working against religious freedom. The third-century BCE emperor Asoka was the paradigmatic Buddhist king who is remembered as having converted to Buddhism out of compassion

for enemies that he slaughtered, but also for having purged the Buddhist community of bad monks. The tradition remembers him for having done so because of a concern that monks were not following the proper disciplinary framework, pointing to the importance of discipline as a constraint on religious freedom among monks. While Asoka was the progenitor of this, Buddhists have often engaged in arguments over the best ways to cultivate wisdom. In the Lotus Sutra, for example, we see critiques of Hinayana Buddhists because they are pursuing a lesser form of Buddhism (see, for example, the parable of the burning house). In Kamakura, Japan, there were significant arguments over the best practices, with key figures such as Shinran being arrested in part because of their single-minded devotion to the practice of the *nembutsu*, chanting the name of the Buddha, Amitabha. (Another Japanese priest, Nichiren, was famously caustic about what the proper practice of Buddhists should be, as is clear in the official religious texts in the Local/Cultural Period.) There were also important moments when Buddhism was used actively to constrain the populace, both in terms of their religious belief and practice and in terms of other aspects of their lives. The best example of this is the Tokugawa Shogunate (1600-1868) when the Japanese government required that all subjects register with a Buddhist temple and decreed that they could perform funerals only in Buddhist temples (see Ishin Suden's letter on expelling Christians from Japan in the Local/Cultural Period).

A third important and common way in which Buddhists engaged the question of religious freedom was in relation to religious pluralism. Here the record is mixed. On the one hand, the rock edicts of Asoka provide a model of pluralism and ecumenical governance. Similarly in Ming and Qing-era China, Buddhism was one of the “three teachings,” which many Chinese people saw as being different routes to the same basic ends. On the other hand, Buddhists asserted the superiority of their religion at various points: The Buddha criticized and mocked Brahmanical religion; Chinese Buddhists debated with Taoists; Japanese Buddhists incorporated Shinto institutions into a hierarchical relationship; and Sri Lankan monks even asserted the right and duty of kings to kill non-Buddhists in historical chronicles in the name of protecting the teachings of the Buddha (see the Mahavamsa in the political texts of the Classical/Civilizational Period). These teachings have not always led directly to persecution and violence; some have simply involved the assertion of the superiority of the Buddha's teachings. However, they have provided religious resources and warrants for Buddhists—such as Venerable Wirathu in contemporary Myanmar—who seek to restrict the religious freedom and civic equality of non-Buddhists.

As a result, we should be very careful about assuming a straightforward connection, whether positive or negative, between these texts and religious freedom. Depending on the context, assertions about the proper rights of Buddhists may either translate into advocacy for greater religious freedom for Buddhists (as was the case with the advocacy of Buddhist monks in South Vietnam in the 1960s) or justify efforts to restrict the religious freedom of non-Buddhists or even violently persecute, expel, or convert them (as in seventeenth-century Japan or Myanmar today).

A word is in order about the historiographical frame of this sourcebook. Because there are many different forms of Buddhism located in different polities, there is no single way of dividing Buddhist history, and any attempt to create clear divisions distorts our understanding of history. It is important to avoid distorting anachronisms, such as projecting the structures and characteristics of a modern nation-state onto a pre-modern Buddhist society (such as talking about Buddhism in India in the second century CE). Similarly, the lack of a single unifying institution has often led scholars inadvertently either to impose purely external historiographic models (classical-medieval-modern) or to adopt purely internal historiographic models (such as the “three turnings of the wheel of the law,” which sees a clear trajectory from Hinayana to Mahayana to Vajrayana forms of Buddhism). The historiographical problem of diversity is compounded by the difficulty that often arises in trying to determine when a specific text was first composed or by whom it was written. For example, the *tipitaka*, the “three baskets” that comprise the core of the teachings of the Buddha according to Theravada Buddhists, are impossible to date. While much of it is presumed to date back to the historical Buddha in perhaps the fifth century BCE, it was not written down until perhaps the first century BCE, and it may have gone through editing as late as the fifth century CE. This means that the materials presented here as coming from the Third Council (during the reign of Asoka in the third century BCE) may have been written or edited in a later period.

In organizing the texts that follow, I have adopted a modified version of the periods used in the work of Charles Hallisey and Frank Reynolds on one hand, and Steven Berkwitz on the other.¹² In both cases, these scholars are moving away from relying simply on the historiography of the West, and instead are attempting to identify key signposts that are proper to Buddhist history. Hallisey and Reynolds suggest that we see Buddhism as a sectarian religion (fifth to third centuries BCE) and then as a civilizational religion, both in imperial-political forms (from Asoka in the third century BCE until the seventh century CE)

and pan-Asian forms (from the second to ninth century CE). Buddhism then became a cultural religion until the beginning of modern Buddhism in the eighteenth century. By this, they mean that Buddhism was shaped by local cultural forms far more than trends and debates across Buddhism as a whole. Berkwitz frames Buddhist history in terms of a formative period (fifth century BCE to first century CE), a classical period (second to tenth century CE), a late-medieval period (tenth to fifteenth century CE), and finally the modern period, which he begins with the start of contact with European powers.¹³ Synthesizing these valuable periodizations, I suggest here four periods: the Formative Period (fifth century BCE to the first century CE), which roughly corresponds with the pre-Mahayana forms of Buddhism; the Classical/Civilizational Period (first to eleventh century CE), corresponding to the spread of Buddhism around Asia and a continued intra-Asian movement of monastics, texts, and lineages; the Local/Cultural Period (eleventh to nineteenth century CE); and the Modern Period (late nineteenth to twenty-first century CE).

THE FORMATIVE PERIOD

(5TH CENTURY BCE–1ST CENTURY CE)

Buddhism emerged in the fertile world of fifth- and sixth-century BCE South Asia, the same period when Jainism and many of the foundations of Hinduism also began. Formed around a concern with ending the problem of suffering, the tradition understood its origins in the life of a prince born in a small kingdom in the foothills of the Himalayas who realized that suffering was inevitable in existence. He thus abandoned his family and his status and became an ascetic. It took him several years to find what he called the “middle way,” and he then taught this path for several decades until his body expired in the *mahaparinirvana*. The Pali Canon, out of which many of the texts below come, preserves much of what he taught during these decades. In the view of the Theravada tradition, the monks and nuns who were the disciples of the Buddha gathered together at several times in the centuries after the *mahaparinirvana* to recite the teachings in order to properly preserve them. They also debated the proper form of the *Vinaya*, the disciplinary codes of Buddhism. While these councils are important within the internal understanding of the development of Buddhism, the actual historical process of the formation of central Pali texts remains somewhat obscure.

During these first centuries, the teachings of the Buddha spread throughout South Asia, likely aided by the emperor Asoka, to Sri Lanka and East Asia. A number of different schools and lineages developed during these periods. Establishing and maintaining the unity of the sangha, the community of Buddhist monks, was an important concern within a number of Buddhist texts.

The texts in this section reflect some of these concerns. In several of them, the Buddha asserts that he should teach and show compassion to all people, regardless of their qualities. Similarly, the story of Angulimala suggests that the teachings of the Buddha should not be held back from anyone. At the same time, there is also a clear assertion about the superiority of the teachings of the Buddha. It is also important to note the Edicts of Asoka that spoke of the importance of supporting dharma in Buddhist and non-Buddhist forms, and of respecting and supporting many different kinds of religious teachings.

THE FORMATIVE PERIOD: SOURCES

SCRIPTURAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL TEXTS

Document Title: Anguttara Nikaya

Author: attributed to the historical Buddha

Date: ca. fifth century BCE

Source: Nyanaponika Thera and Bhikkhu Bodhi, trans., *Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: An Anthology of Suttas from the Anguttara Nikaya* (New York: Altamira Press, 1999).

33. *To Whom Should Gifts Be Given?*

Once Vacchagotta the wanderer approached the Blessed One and spoke to him thus:

“I have heard it said, master Gotama, that the ascetic Gotama says: ‘Gifts should be given only to me and not to others; they should be given only to my disciples and not to the disciples of others. Only what is given to me brings great fruit, not what is given to the disciples of others.’ Now, Master Gotama, so those who say so report Master Gotama’s actual words and not misrepresent him? Do they declare this in accordance with your teachings and will their assertion give no grounds for reproach? We certainly do not wish to misrepresent Master Gotama.”

“Those who have said so, Vaccha, have not reported my words correctly, but misrepresent me. Their declarations do not accord with my teachings and their false assertion will certainly give cause for reproach.

“Vaccha, anyone who prevents another person from giving alms causes obstruction and impediment to three people: he obstructs the donor from doing a meritorious deed, he obstructs the recipient from getting the gift, and prior to that, he undermines and harms his own character. What I actually teach, Vaccha, is this: even if one throws away the rinsings from a lot or cup into a village pool or pond, wishing that the living beings there may feed on them—even this would be a source of merit, not to speak of giving a gift to human beings.

“However, I do declare that offerings made to the virtuous bring rich fruit, and not so much those made to the immoral. The virtuous one has abandoned five

qualities and possesses another five qualities. What are the five qualities he has abandoned? Sensual desire, ill will, sloth and torpor, restlessness and worry, and doubt. What are the five qualities he possesses? He possesses the virtue, concentration, wisdom, liberation, and knowledge and vision of liberation of one perfect in training. These are the five qualities he possesses.

“What is given to one who has abandoned those five qualities and who possesses these five qualities—this, I declare, brings rich fruit.”

57. The Best Kinds of Faith

Monks, there are four best kinds of faith. What four?

Monks, among all living beings—be they footless or two-footed, with four feet or many feet, with form or formless, percipient, non-percipient or neither percipient nor non-percipient—the Tathagata, the Arhant, the Fully Enlightened One, is reckoned the best of them all. Those who have faith in the Buddha have faith in all that is best; and for those who have faith in the best, the best result will be theirs.

Monks, among things conditioned, the Noble Eightfold Path is reckoned the best of them all. Those who have faith in the Noble Eightfold Path have faith in the best, the best result will be theirs.

Monks, among things conditioned and unconditioned, dispassion is reckoned the best of them all: the crushing of all infatuation, the removal of thirst, the uprooting of attachment, the cutting off of the round (of rebirth), the destruction of craving, dispassion, Nirvana. Those who have faith in the Dharma of dispassion have faith in the best; and for those who have faith in the best, the best result will be theirs.

Monks, among all (religious) orders or communities, the Sangha of the Tathagata’s disciples is reckoned the best, that is to say, the four pairs of noble persons, the eight noble individuals; this Sangha of the Blessed One’s disciples is worthy of gifts, worthy of offerings, worthy of reverential salutation, an unsurpassed field of merit for the world. Those who have faith in the Sangha have faith in the best; and for those who have faith in the best, the best result will be theirs.

These, O’ monks, are the four kinds of faith.

Document Title: Dhammapada

Author: attributed to the historical Buddha

Date: ca. fifth century BCE

Source: Acharya Buddharakkhita, trans., *The Dhammapada: The Buddha's Path of Wisdom* (Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society, 1985); buddhanet.net/pdf_file/prn1dhamma.pdf

Chapter 14: The Buddha

182: Hard is it to be born a man; hard is the life of mortals. Hard is it to gain the opportunity of hearing the Sublime Truth, and hard to encounter is the arising of the Buddhas.

Chapter 23: The Elephant

320: As an elephant in the battlefield withstands arrows shot from bows all around, even so shall I endure abuse. There are many, indeed, who lack virtue.

321: A tamed elephant is led into a crowd, and the king mounts a tamed elephant. Best among men is the subdued one who endures abuse.

322: Excellent are well-trained mules, thoroughbred Sindhu horses and noble tusker elephants. But better still is the man who has subdued himself.

Chapter 26: The Holy Man

393: Not by matted hair, nor by lineage, nor by birth does one become a holy man. But he in whom truth and righteousness exist—he is pure, he is a holy man.

396: I do not call him a holy man because of his lineage or his high-born mother. If he has impeding attachments, he is just a supercilious man. But he who is free from impediments and clinging—him do I call a holy man.

Document Title: Digha-Nikaya II, 100

Author: attributed to the historical Buddha

Date: ca. fifth century BCE

Source: Edward Conze, ed., *Buddhist Texts Through the Ages* (Oxford: One-world Publications, 1995), 35.

Dhamma has been taught by me without making a distinction between esoteric and exoteric. For the Tathagata has not the closed fist of a teacher in respect to mental states.

Document Title: Samyutta-Nikaya IV, 314-316

Author: attributed to the historical Buddha

Date: ca. fifth century BCE

Source: Edward Conze, ed., *Buddhist Texts Through the Ages* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 1995), 34.

A Village Headman Spoke Thus to the Lord:

“Is a Tathagata compassionate towards all living breathing creatures?”

“Yes, headman,” answered the Lord.

“But does the Lord teach Dharma in full to some, but not likewise to others?”

“Now, do you think headman? Suppose a farmer has three fields, one excellent, one mediocre, and one poor with bad soil. When he wanted to sow the seed, which field would he sow first?”

“He would sow the excellent one, then the mediocre one. When he had done that, he might, or might not sow the poor one with the bad soil. And why? Because it might do if only for cattle fodder.”

“In the same way, headman, my monks and nuns are like the excellent field. It is to these that I teach Dharma that is lovely at the beginning, lovely in the middle and lovely at the ending, with the spirit and letter, and to whom I make known the Brahma-faring completely fulfilled, utterly pure. And why? It is these that dwell with me for light, me for shelter, me for stronghold, me for refuge.”

“Then my men and women lay followers are like the mediocre field. To these too I teach Dharma and make known the Brahma-faring completely fulfilled, utterly pure. For they dwell with me for light, me for shelter, me for stronghold, me for refuge.”

“Then recluses, Brahmins, and wanderers of other sects than mine are like the poor field with the bad soil. To these too I teach Dharma and make known the Brahma-faring completely fulfilled, utterly pure. And why? Because if they were to

understand even a single sentence, that would be a happiness and a blessing for them for a long time.”

Document Title: Suttanipata II, 46, 182, 184

Author: attributed to the historical Buddha

Date: ca. fifth century BCE

Source: Edward Conze, ed., *Buddhist Texts Through the Ages* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 1995), 52.

By faith you shall be free and go beyond the realm of death.

Faith is the wealth here best for man—by faith the flood is crossed.

Document Title: Theragatha (Verses of the Elders)

Author: attributed to the historical Buddha

Date: ca. fifth century BCE

Source: Donald S. Lopez, ed., *Buddhist Scriptures* (London: Penguin Books, 2004), 337-338.

Those men, overcome by defilements, run here and there in the divisions of defilement, as if their own private battle [with Mara, the god of death] has been proclaimed.

Having abandoned the true doctrine they quarrel with one another; following after false views they think, “This is better.”

They cause the assembly to meet for business purposes, not because of the doctrine; they preach the doctrine to others for gain, and not for the goal.

Document Title: The Story of Angulimala

Author: attributed to the historical Buddha

Date: ca. fifth century BCE

Source: Donald S. Lopez, ed., *Buddhist Scriptures* (London: Penguin Books, 2004), 259-260.

Let my enemies hear the discourse on the Dharma,

Let them be devoted to the Buddha’s teaching,

Let my enemies wait on those good people

Who lead others to accept the Dharma.

Let my enemies give ear from time to time

And hear the Dharma of those who preach forbearance,

Of those who speak as well in praise of kindness,
And let them follow up that Dharma with kind deeds.

For surely then they would not wish to harm me,
Nor would they think of harming other beings,
So those who would protect all, frail or strong,
Let them attain the all-surpassing peace.

LEGAL AND POLITICAL TEXTS

Document Title: Edicts of Asoka

Author: Emperor Asoka

Date: 269-231 BCE

Source: N.A. Nikam and Richard McKeon, eds. and trans., *The Edicts of Asoka* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959).

Rock Edict VII

King Priyadarsi wishes members of all faiths to live everywhere in his kingdom. For they all seek mastery of the senses and purity of mind. Men are different in their inclinations and passions, however, and they may perform the whole of their duties or only part.

Even if one is not able to make lavish gifts, mastery of the sense, purity of mind, gratitude, and steadfast devotion are commendable and essential.

Rock Edict XI

King Priyadarsi says: There is no gift that can equal the gift of Dharma, the establishment of human relations on Dharma, the distribution of wealth through Dharma, or kinship in Dharma.

That gift consists in proper treatment of slaves and servants, obedience to mother and father, liberality to friends, acquaintances, relatives, priests and ascetics, and abstention from the slaughter of animals.

Father, son, brother, master, friend, acquaintance, or even neighbor ought to say, "This has merit. This ought to be done."

If one acts in this way, one achieves by the gifts of Dharma happiness in this world and infinite merit in the world to come.

Rock Edict XII

King Priyadarsi honors men of all faiths, members of religious orders and laymen alike, with gifts and various marks of esteem. Yet he does not value either gifts or honor as much as growth in the qualities essential to religion in men of all faiths.

This growth may take many forms, but its root is guarding one's speech to avoid extolling one's own faith and disparaging the faith of others improperly or, when the occasion is appropriate, immoderately.

The faiths of others all deserve to be honored for one reason or another. By honoring them, one exalts one's own faith and at the same time performs a service to the faith of others. By acting otherwise, one injures one's own faith and also does disservice to that of others. For if a man extols his own faith and disparages another because of devotion to his own and because he wants to glorify it, he seriously injures his own faith.

Therefore concord alone is commendable, for through concord men may learn and respect the conception of Dharma accepted by others.

King Priyadarsi desires men of all faiths to know each other's doctrines and to acquire sound doctrines. Those who are attached to their particular faiths should be told that King Priyadarsi does not value gifts or honors as much as growth in the qualities essential to religion in men of all faiths.

Many officials are assigned to tasks bearing on this purpose—the officers in charge of spreading Dharma, the superintendents of women in the royal household, the inspectors of cattle and pasture lands, and other officials.

The objective of these measures is the promotion of each man's particular faith and the glorification of Dharma.

Pillar Edict VII

This occurred to me. Since in the past kings have thought about ways of increasing the people's devotion to Dharma, but the people did not make progress enough in morality, how can the people be induced to follow Dharma strictly?

How can progress in morality be increased sufficiently? How can I raise them up by the promotion of Dharma?

Pursuing this subject, King Priyadarsi says: This occurred to me. I shall issue proclamations on Dharma, and I shall order instruction in Dharma to be given to the people. Hearing these proclamations and instructions, the people will conform to Dharma; they will raise themselves up and will make progress by the promotion of Dharma. To this end I have issued proclamations on Dharma, and I have instituted various kinds of moral and religious instruction.

My highest officials, who have authority over large numbers of people, will expound and spread the precepts of Dharma. I have instructed the provincial governors, too, who are in charge of many hundred thousand people, concerning how to guide people devoted to Dharma.

King Priyadarsi says: Having come to this conclusion, therefore, I have erected pillars proclaiming Dharma. I have appointed officers charged with the spread of Dharma, called *Dharma-mahamatras*. I have issued proclamations on Dharma.

These and many other high officials take care of the distribution of gifts from myself as well as from the queens. They report in various ways to all my harem worthy recipients of charity, both here [at Pataliputra] and in the provinces. I also ordered some of them to supervise the distribution of gifts from my sons and the sons of other queens, in order [to promote] noble deeds of Dharma and conformity to the precepts of Dharma. These noble deeds and this conformity [consist in] promoting compassion, liberality, truthfulness, purity, gentleness, and goodness.

King Priyadarsi says: Whatever good deeds I have done the people have imitated, and they have followed them as a model. In doing so, they have progressed and will progress in obedience to parents and teachers, in respect for elders, in courtesy to priests and ascetics, to the poor and distressed, and even to slaves and servants.

THE CLASSICAL/CIVILIZATIONAL PERIOD (1ST-11TH CENTURY CE)

The Classical/Civilizational Period of Buddhism was marked by periods of flourishing and decline, expansion across Asia, the persistence of Buddhist networks, and interactions with other kinds of religious schools and actors. In the early centuries of the first millennium, Buddhist teachers began to develop significant lines of thought, shifting how they thought about the nature of a Buddha, the nature of the universe, and the ideals of the Buddhist path. A diverse collection of texts (which may have begun to be written as early as the first century BCE), these lines of thought ultimately came to be called Mahayana, the “great vehicle.”

For much of Buddhist history, lineages and schools have been determined at least as much by affiliation to disciplinary codes as by specific teachings. To the best of our knowledge, multiple philosophical positions existed throughout this period, though ultimately the Mahayana forms were the ones that became popular and widespread in East Asia. Mahayana Buddhism is probably best understood not so much as a rejection of earlier forms of Buddhism but as a different set of emphases (though there are some radical differences, such as coming to see a Buddha as having a cosmic as well as a human body). Thus, like the texts of the Formative Period, Mahayana texts emphasized the importance of teaching all beings (see below the Lotus Sutra, the Surangama Sutra, and the Sutra of the Medicine Buddha). At the same time, there is a concern with proper forms of faith and knowledge in some of these same texts, highlighting contestation between Buddhist schools (the Song of Enlightenment, for example) as well as between Buddhists and other religious actors in South Asia. In particular, in the latter half of the millennium, esoteric forms of Buddhism developed in conversation with esoteric forms of what we now call Hinduism. Esoteric adepts created technologies to expedite the development of insight and power to enable an adept to achieve liberation in this lifetime.

The development of these different Buddhist philosophies often took place in large centers of learning, the largest and most famous of which was the great university city of Nalanda in Northeast India. Nalanda also served as a center of gravity for Buddhists from around Asia. Indeed, the other significant aspect of this period was the spread of Buddhism from South Asia to the rest of Asia. While Buddhist teachings entered Sri Lanka in the third century BCE, it was not until the beginning of the first century CE that it entered China (probably with monks traveling along

trade caravans), spreading to the Korean peninsula and Japan by the sixth century, and central Asian regions such as Tibet by the end of the first millennium. An important aspect of this process was the translation of large numbers of texts from Sanskrit into other languages, notably Chinese. An intriguing aspect of this translation process was the large numbers of Buddhist apocrypha, Chinese texts that were probably written by Chinese Buddhists. In part, this is indicative of the need for Chinese Buddhists to use India as a source of authority, but it also indicates how many Buddhists saw themselves as part of a wider world marked by networks (sometimes imagined, sometimes actively traveled on) that linked Buddhists across Asia.

The spread of Buddhism meant that Buddhists found themselves in conditions of religious pluralism. Buddhist responses to this pluralism varied. At times they were critical, triumphalist, and violent, as can be seen in the short excerpt from chapter 25 of the Sinhala chronicle, the *Mahavamsa*. At other times, they were accommodating of conditions of pluralism. This is perhaps most evident in the effort of Chinese Buddhists to assimilate Buddhism into Chinese culture and vice versa, as in the texts “A Monk Does Not Bow Down Before a King” and “Why Should a Chinese Allow Himself to be Influenced by Indian Ways?”

THE CLASSICAL/CIVILIZATIONAL PERIOD: SOURCES

SCRIPTURAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL TEXTS

Document Title: The Lotus Sutra

Date: 100 BCE-200 CE

Source: Burton Watson, trans., *The Essential Lotus: Selections from the Lotus Sutra* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

Chapter 2: Skillfulness

When I first sat in that place of practice
and gazed at that tree and walked around it,
for the space of three times seven days,
I pondered the matter in this way.
The wisdom I have attained, I thought,
is subtle, wonderful, the foremost.
But living beings, dull in capacity,
are addicted to pleasure and blinded by stupidity.
With persons such as this,
what can I say, how can I save them?
At that time the Brahma kings,
along with the heavenly king Shakra,
the Four Heavenly Kings who guard the world,
and the heavenly king Great Freedom,
in company with the other heavenly beings
and their hundreds and thousands and ten thousands of followers,
reverently pressed their palms together and bowed,
begging me to turn the wheel of the Law.
Immediately I thought to myself
that if I merely praised the Buddha vehicle,
then the living beings, sunk in their suffering,
would be incapable of believing in this Law.
And because they rejected the Law and failed to believe in it,
they would fall into the three evil paths.
It would be better if I did not teach the Law

but quickly entered into nirvana.
Then my thoughts turned to the Buddhas of the past
and the power of expedients means they had employed,
and I thought that the way I had now attained
should likewise be preached as three vehicles.
When I thought in this manner,
the Buddhas of the ten directions all appeared
and with brahma sounds comforted and instructed me.
“Well done Shakyamuni!” they said.
Foremost leader and teacher,
you have attained the unsurpassed Law.
But following the example of all other Buddhas,
you will employ the power of expedient means.
We too have all attained
the most wonderful, the foremost Law,
but for the sake of living beings
we make distinctions and teach the three vehicles.

Chapter 3: A Parable

And the Thus Come One does the same. Though he possesses power and freedom from fear, he does not use these. He merely employs wisdom and expedient means to rescue living beings from the burning house of the threefold world.

Chapter 10: The Preacher

O Bhaisajyaraja! I will dispatch transformed beings to other worlds who will gather the people together to hear the teaching. I will also dispatch transformed monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen to hear this teaching. All these transformed beings will hear the Dharma, believe and accept it, and not reject it.

Document Title: The Lotus Sutra

Date: 100 BCE-200 CE

Source: H. Kern, trans., *The Lotus of the True Law* (Clarendon Press, 1884); sacred-texts.com/bud/lotus/lot13.htm

Chapter 13: Peaceful Life

This, Manjusri, is called the second proper sphere of a Bodhisattva Mahasattva.

And in order to expound this matter in greater detail, the Lord uttered the following stanzas:

1. The Bodhisattva who, undaunted and unabashed, wishes to set forth this Sutra in the dreadful period hereafter,
2. Must keep to his course (of duty) and proper sphere; he must be retired and pure, constantly avoid intercourse with kings and princes.
3. Nor should he keep up intercourse with king's servants, nor with Kandalas, jugglers, and Tirthikas in general.
4. He ought not to court conceited men, but catechise such as keep to the religion. He must also avoid such monks as follow the precepts of the Arhat [of the Gainas], and immoral men.
5. He must be constant in avoiding a nun who is fond of banter and chatter; he must also avoid notoriously loose female lay devotees.
6. He should shun any intercourse with such female lay devotees as seek their highest happiness in this transient world. This is called the proper conduct of a Bodhisattva.
7. But when one comes to him to question him about the law for the sake of superior enlightenment, he should, at any time, speak freely, always firm and undaunted.
8. He should have no intercourse with women and hermaphrodites; he should also shun the young wives and girls in families.
9. He must never address them to ask after their health. He must also avoid intercourse with vendors of pork and mutton.
10. With any persons who slay animals of various kind for the sake of profit, and with such as sell meat he should avoid having any intercourse.
11. He must shun the society of whoremongers, players, musicians, wrestlers, and other people of that sort.
12. He should not frequent whores, nor other sensual persons; he must avoid any exchange of civility with them.

13. And when the sage has to preach for a woman, he should not enter into an apartment with her alone, nor stay to banter.

14. When he has often to enter a village in quest of food, he must have another monk with him or constantly think of the Buddha.

Document Title: The Lotus Sutra

Date: 100 BCE-200 CE

Source: Tsugunari Kubo and Akira Yuyama, trans., *The Lotus Sutra* (Berkeley: Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 2007).

Chapter 14: Issuing the Bodhisattva from the Gaps of the Earth

What is the sphere of the relationships of the bodhisattva mahasattva (great being)? The bodhisattva *mahasattva* should not consort with kings, princes, ministers, and chief officials. He should not consort with heretics, brahmins, Jains, and others, or with worldly writers, critics of poetry, materialists, or extreme materialists.

Nor should he become acquainted with pranksters, boxers, wrestlers, clowns, and various jugglers, nor with outcastes and people who raise boars, sheep, chickens, and dogs, nor with hunters, fishermen, and those with evil conduct. A bodhisattva should teach such people the Dharma if they come to him, but expect nothing.

Nor should a bodhisattva consort with monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen who seek the *sravaka* (disciple) vehicle. Nor should he greet them. The bodhisattva should avoid their company in chambers, on roads, or while in lecture halls, and not remain with them. If they come, teach them the Dharma according to their capacities, but expect nothing!

Document Title: Sukhavati-Vyuha

Date: ca. late second century¹⁴

Source: Max F. Mueller, ed., *Sacred Books of the East: Buddhist Mahayana Texts* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1894).

18: O Bhagavat, if those being who have directed their thought towards the highest perfect knowledge in other worlds, and who, after having heard my name when I have obtained the Bodhi (knowledge), have meditated on me with serene thoughts; if at the moment of their death, after having approached

them, surrounded by an assembly of *Bhikshus*, I should not stand before them, worshipped by them, that is, so that their thoughts should not be troubled, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

19: O Bhagavat, if those beings who in immeasurable and innumerable Buddha countries, after having heard my name when I shall have obtained Bodhi, should direct their thought to be born in that Buddha country of mine, and should for that purpose bring their stock of merit to maturity, if these should not be born in that Buddha country, even those who have only ten times repeated the thought (of that Buddha country), barring always those beings who have committed the (five) Anantarya sins and how have caused an obstruction and abuse of the good Law, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

46: O Bhagavat, if after I have obtained Bodhi, and have become a Buddha-teacher, the Bodhisattvas who hear my name in Buddha countries, and obtain the first, the second and the third degrees of endurance, as soon as they have heard my name, should turn away from Buddha, the Law, and the Church, then may I obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

Document Title: The Buddha-Carita

Author: Asvaghosa

Date: 200

Source: Asvaghosa, *The Buddha-Carita, or Life of the Buddha*, ed. and trans. Edward B. Cowell (New Delhi: 1977); ancient-buddhist-texts.net/Texts-and-Translations/Buddhacarita/Buddhacarita.pdf

Book IX: Kumaranvesano (The Deputation to the Prince)

18. Religion is not wrought out only in the forests, the salvation of ascetics can be accomplished even in a city; thought and effort are the true means; the forest and the badge are only a coward's signs.

Document Title: The Lankavatara Sutra

Date: 200-300

Source: sacred-texts.com/bud/bb/bb17.htm

Chapter X: Discipleship: Lineage of the Arhats

Then Mahamati asked the Blessed One: Pray tell us how many kinds of disciples there are?

The Blessed One replied: There are as many kinds of disciples as there are individuals, but for convenience they may be divided into two groups: disciples of the lineage of the Arhats, and disciples known as Bodhisattvas. Disciples of the lineage of the Arhats may be considered under two aspects: First, according to the number of times they will return to this life of birth-and-death; and second, according to their spiritual progress. Under the first aspect, they may be subdivided into three groups: The “Stream-entered” the “Once-returning,” and the “Never-returning.”

The Stream-entered are those disciples, who having freed themselves from the attachments to the lower discriminations and who have cleansed themselves from the twofold hindrances and who clearly understand the meaning of the twofold egolessness, yet who still cling to the notions of individuality and generality and to their own egoness. They will advance along the stages to the sixth only to succumb to the entrancing bliss of the Samadhis. They will be reborn seven times, or five times, or three times, before they will be able to pass the sixth stage. The Once-returning are the Arhats, and the Never-returning are the Bodhisattvas who have reached the seventh stage.

The reason for these gradations is because of their attachment to the three degrees of false-imagination: namely, faith in moral practices, doubt, and the view of their individual personality. When these three hindrances are overcome, they will be able to attain the higher stages. As to moral practices: the ignorant, simple-minded disciples obey the rules of morality, piety, and penance, because they desire thereby to gain worldly advancement and happiness, with the added hope of being reborn in more favorable conditions. The Stream-entered ones do not cling to moral practices for any hope of reward for their minds are fixed on the exalted state of self-realisation; the reason they devote themselves to the details of morality is that they wish to master such truths as are in conformity with the undefiled out-flowings. As regards the hindrance of doubt in the Buddha’s teachings, that will continue so long as any of the notions of discriminations are cherished and will disappear when they disappear. Attachment to the view of individual personality will be gotten rid of as the disciple gains a more thorough understanding of the notions of being and non-being, self-nature and egolessness, thereby getting rid of the attachments to his own selfness that goes with those discriminations. By breaking up and clearing away these three hindrances the Stream-entered ones will be able to discard all greed, anger, and folly.

As for the Once-returning Arhats: there was once in them the discrimination of forms, signs, and appearances, but as they gradually learned by right knowledge not to view individual objects under the aspect of quality and qualifying, and

as they became acquainted with what marks the attainment of the practice of dhyana, they have reached a stage of enlightenment where in one more rebirth they will be able to put an end to the clinging to their own self-interests. Free of this burden of error and its attachments, the passions will no more assert themselves and the hindrances will be cleared away forever.

Under the second aspect disciples may be grouped according to the spiritual progress they have attained, into four classes, namely, disciples (*śrāvaka*), masters (*pratyekabuddha*), Arhats, and Bodhisattvas.

The first class of disciples means well but they find it difficult to understand unfamiliar ideas. Their minds are joyful when studying about and practising the things belonging to appearances that can be discriminated, but they become confused by the notion of an uninterrupted chain of causation, and they become fearful when they consider the aggregates that make up personality and its object world as being maya-like, empty and egoless. They are able to advance to the fifth or sixth stage where they are able to do away with the rising of passions, but not with the notions that give rise to passion and, therefore, they are unable to get rid of the clinging to an ego-soul and its attachments, habits and habit-energy. In this same class of disciples are the earnest disciples of other faiths, who, clinging to the notions of such things as the soul as an eternal entity, Supreme Atman or Personal God, seek a Nirvana that is in harmony with them. There are others, more materialistic in their ideas, who think that all things exist in dependence upon causation and, therefore, that Nirvana must be in like dependence. But none of these, earnest though they be, have gained an insight into the truth of the twofold egolessness and are, therefore, of limited spiritual insight as regards deliverance and non-deliverance; for them there is no emancipation. They have great self-confidence but they can never gain a true knowledge of Nirvana until they have learned to discipline themselves in the patient acceptance of the twofold egolessness.

Document Title: Saddharmapundarika V

Date: 200-400

Source: Edward Conze, ed., *Buddhist Texts Through the Ages* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1954), 124-127.

123. The Provisional and the Final Nirvana

59. Beings, because of their great ignorance, born bullied wander about;
Because of their ignorance of the wheel of cause and effect, of the track of ill.

60. In the world, deluded by ignorance, the supreme all-knowing one,
The Tathagata, the great physician, appears, full of compassion.
61. As a teacher, skilled in means, he demonstrates the good Dharma:
To those most advanced he shows the supreme Buddha-enlightenment.
62. To those of medium wisdom the Leader reveals a medium enlightenment.
Another enlightenment again he recommends to those who are afraid of birth-
and-death.
63. To the Disciple, who has escaped from the triple world, and who is given
to discrimination, it occurs: "Thus have I attained Nirvana, the blest and im-
maculate."
64. But now I reveal to him that this is not what is called Nirvana,
But that it is through the understanding of all dharmas that deathless Nirvana
can be attained.
65. To him the great Seers, committed to compassion, will say: "Deluded you
are, and you should not think that you have won gnosis."
66. When you are inside your room, enclosed by walls.
You do not know what takes place outside so tiny is your mental power.
67. When you are inside your room, enclosed by walls.
You do not know what people outside are doing or not doing, so tiny is your
mental power. [...]
75. As a device of the Buddhas it was introduced. But outside this principle or
all-knowledge. They teach there is no (final) Nirvana. Exert yourselves on behalf
of that!
76. The absolute cognition of the three periods of time and the six lovely perfec-
tions.
Emptiness, the Signless, the shedding of plans for the future,
77. The thought of enlightenment and all the other dharmas which lead to
Nirvana,
(Be they with or without outflows, tranquil and like empty space.)

78. What has been taught of the four stations of Brahma, and as the (four) means of conversion.

All that the great Seers have proclaimed for the purpose of disciplining beings.

79. And someone who discerns dharmas as in their own being like an illusion or a dream.

Without a core, like a plantain tree or similar to an echo.

80. And who knows that the triple world without exception has such an own-being, And is neither bound no freed, he does nor discern Nirvana (as separate from the triple world).

81. He knows that all dharmas are the same, empty, essentially without multiplicity, He does not look towards them and he does not discern any separate dharma.

82. Then, greatly wise, he sees the Dharma-body completely.

There is no triad of vehicles but here but there is only one vehicle.

83. All dharmas are the same, all the same, always quite the same.

When one has cognized this, one understands Nirvana, the deathless and blest.

Document Title: Dhammapada-atthakatha (Dharmapada Commentaries)

Date: 400-500

Source: Eugene Watson Burlingame, trans., *A Treasury of Buddhist Stories from the Dharmapada Commentary* (Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society, 1996).

22. The Brahmin Who Asked About Loss

Then said the Teacher, “Brahmin, a trifling matter is the victory of him who defeats another; there is no superior advantage in such a victory. But he who overcomes his defilements and so conquers self, wins a better victory, for such a victory no one can turn into defeat.” So saying, he showed the connection, and teaching the Dhamma, pronounced the following stanzas:

Better the conquest of oneself
Than that of other people;
The man who has trained himself
In conduct ever well-restrained—

Neither deva nor minstrel divine,
Nor Mara together with Brahma,

Can overthrow the victory
Of such a man as this.

Document Title: Diamond Sutra

Date: 400-500 (first Chinese translation from Sanskrit)

Source: Dhyana Master Hsuan Hua, trans., *The Diamond Sutra* (San Francisco: The Buddhist Text Translation Society, 1974); buddhanet.net/pdf_file/prajparagen2.pdf

Chapter 3: The Orthodox Doctrine of the Great Vehicle

The Buddha told Subhuti, “all Bodhisattvas, Mahasattvas, should thus subdue their hearts with the vow, ‘I must cause all living beings—those born from eggs, born from wombs, born from moisture, born by transformation; those with form, those without form, those with thought, those without thought, those not totally with thought, and those not totally without thought—to enter nirvana without residue and be taken across to extinction. Yet of the immeasurable, boundless numbers of living beings thus taken across to extinction, there is actually no living being taken across to extinction. And why? Subhuti, if a Bodhisattva has a mark of self, a mark of others, a mark of living beings, or a mark of a life, he is not a Bodhisattva.’”

Chapter 6: Proper Belief is Rare

Subhuti said to the Buddha, “World Honored One, in the future will there be living beings, who, when they hear such phrases spoken will truly believe?”

The Buddha told Subhuti, “do not speak in such a way! After the Tathagata’s extinction, in the last five hundred years, there will be those who hold the precepts and cultivate blessings who will believe such phrases and accept them as true.

“You should know that such people will have planted good roots with not just one Buddha, two Buddhas, three, four, or five Buddhas, but will have planted good roots with measureless millions of Buddhas. All who hear such phrases and produce even one thought of pure faith are completely known and completely seen by the Tathagata. Such living beings thus obtain measureless blessings and virtue. And why? Those living beings have no further mark of self, of others, of living beings, or of a life; no mark of dharmas and no mark of no dharmas. If living beings’ hearts grasp at marks, then that is attachment to self, to others, to living beings, and to a life. For that reason you should not grasp at dharmas, nor should you grasp at no dharmas. Regarding that principle, the Tathagata often says, ‘all you

bhikshus should know that the Dharma which I speak is like a raft. Even dharmas should be relinquished, how much the more so no dharmas.”

Document Title: Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva Sutra (The Sutra on the Original Vows and the Attainment of Merits of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva)

Date: 600-700

Source: buddhanet.net/pdf_file/ksitigarbha.pdf

Then King No-poison answered, “Those sinners are the new Deaths from the human world. After having passed away for forty-nine days with no descendants to do good deeds to relieve them from their suffering and as a result of their having raised nothing for the benefit of humanity during their lifetime but only that of committing sins in one way or the another, their first punishment is to cross this Sea of Suffering which extends ten million miles east-wards. There is another Sea, where sinners double punishments. East of this latter Sea in view is yet another Sea of Suffering where sinners suffer extreme tortures.

“The above three Seas are called the Seas of Sufferings. Those who have committed sins through actions, words and thoughts, are cast into these Seas to be punished, as they should be, for their evil deeds.”

The Sacred Girl asked King No-poison, “Where is Hell?” King No-poison answered, “Within the three Seas of Sufferings, there are thousands of varieties of Hells. There are eighteen great Hells and five hundred smaller ones where sinners have to undergo boundless punishments. Also, there are thousands of others where leniency is bestowed on all those who have not committed too serious offences during their lifetime.”

The Sacred Girl said to King No-poison, “My mother has passed away recently. I am anxious to know where she has been sent.” King No-poison questioned the girl, “What has your mother done during her lifetime?”

The Sacred Girl replied, “My Mother during her lifetime, had envious views of the Triple-Gems and had spoken evil against them. Many a time, did she strive to embrace Faith in the Exalted Buddha, but was insufficiently firm over it. She expired only a few days ago and I have no idea where she is at the moment.”

King No-poison asked, “What was your mother’s name?”

The Sacred Girl responded, “Both my parents were Brahmins. The name of my father was Sila Sen-sen and my mother and the name of my mother was Yuet Tee-li.”

King No-poison answered the Sacred Girl with clasped hands and said, “My Sacred Girl, pray do not feel distressed and return home with a joyful heart as your mother has ascended to Heaven just three days ago. It was earnest and filial devotion of making offerings to the Buddha of Flower of Meditation and Enlightenment that your mother was relieved. Not only did your mother receive deliverance from Hell, but all sinners of the Avici Hell also benefited from it, for they ascended to Heaven on the same day.

After intimating to the Sacred Girl of her mother’s Salvation, the King of the Devils retreated with clasped hands. With this enlightening message about her mother, the Sacred Girl felt that her earlier fears were unfounded. She then knelt before the Buddha of Flower and Meditation and Enlightenment and expressed this strong vow, “I shall exercise my best to relieve people of their sufferings forever in my future lives of kalpas to come.”

Document Title: The Refuge of the Four Buddhas of the Universal Dharma
Date: 600-700

Source: “A Heretical Chinese Text,” in *Buddhism in Practice*, ed. Donald S. Lopez, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995).

According to the “Chapter on Clarifying the Dharma” in the eighth book of the *Huayan Sutra*, the superior and inferior levels of living beings are all to be thought of as the Buddha. Although we may speak of the many levels of living beings and their differences, from the point of view of their essence they are all the Buddha as the matrix of enlightenment, the Buddha as the Buddha nature, and the future Buddha; they should, therefore, all be respected with the thought that indeed they are buddhas.

Document Title: Sutra of the Medicine Buddha
Date: 650

Source: Minh Thanh, trans., *Sutra of the Medicine Buddha* (North Hills, CA: International Buddhist Monastic Institute, 2001) 20-22, 25, 26-27; buddhanet.net/pdf_file/medbudsutra.pdf

Fourth Great Vow

I vow that in a future life, when I have attained Supreme Enlightenment, I will set all who follow heretical ways upon the path to Enlightenment. Likewise, I will set those who follow the Sravaka and Pratyeka-Buddha ways onto the Mahayana Path.

Fifth Great Vow

I vow that in a future life, when I have attained Supreme Enlightenment, I will help all the countless sentient beings who cultivate the path of morality in accordance with my Dharma to observe the rules of conduct (Precepts) to perfection, in conformity with the Three Root Precepts. Even those guilty of disparaging or violating the Precepts will regain their purity upon hearing my name, and avoid descending upon the Evil Paths.

Eighth Great Vow

I vow that in a future life, when I have attained Supreme Enlightenment, those women who are extremely disgusted with the 'hundred afflictions that befall women' and wish to abandon their female form, will, upon hearing my name, all be reborn as men. They will be endowed with noble features and eventually realize Unsurpassed Supreme Enlightenment.

Ninth Great Vow

I vow that in a future life, when I have attained Supreme Enlightenment, I will help all sentient beings from the demons' net and free themselves from the bonds of heretical paths. Should they be caught in the thicket of wrong views, I will lead them to correct views, gradually inducing them to cultivate the practices of the Bodhisattvas and swiftly realize Supreme Enlightenment. [...]

Moreover, there are also countless sentient beings who are miserly and avaricious. They spend their time amassing wealth, while not daring to spend it on themselves, let alone ones parents, spouse, children, servants, or beggars. Upon their death, these stingy persons will descend onto the paths of hungry ghosts or animality.

However, even though they may suffer such a fate, if in a previous existence in the human realm they happened to hear the name of the Medicine Buddha, and now recall and recite his name, even briefly, they will immediately vanish from the Evil Paths to be born once more among humans. However, they will remember their stay on the Evil Paths and, dreading their past suffering, will cease to wallow in worldly pleasures. They will gladly practice charity themselves, praise others who do so and will no longer be stingy. [...]

Moreover, Manjusri, there are sentient beings who have accepted the teachings of the *Tathagata* but have violated the Precepts (moral rules). Or, they have not

violated the Precepts but have broken the regulations. Or else, while they have violated neither the Precepts nor the regulations, they have disparaged the Right Views; or they have not disparaged Right Views but have abandoned extensive study of the Dharma and thus cannot explain the profound meaning of the sutras preached by the Buddha. Or else, although they may be learned, they have grown conceited. Because conceit clouds the mind, they believe they are in the right and others are in the wrong. Therefore, they deprecate the correct Dharma—and ally themselves with demons.

Such deluded persons not only follow wrong views themselves, they also lead countless other sentient beings into the same great pitfall. These sentient beings are bound to wander endlessly on the paths of hell, animality and hungry ghosts.

Yet, if they succeed in hearing the name of the Medicine Buddha, they will abandon their evil conduct forthwith to cultivate wholesome ways, and thus, avoid descending upon the Evil Path.

Even those who cannot abandon evil practices or cultivate wholesome ways, and thus descend onto the Evil Paths can still benefit from the awesome power of the Medicine Buddha's past vows. If through the power, they should hear his name even briefly, their lives on the Evil Paths will end and they will be born again in the human realm. They will hold correct views, diligently pursue their practice and tame their minds. They will then be able to abandon the home life to become monks or nuns. They will uphold and study the Dharma of the *Ta-thagatas* rather than disparaging and violating it. With correct views and extensive study, they will fathom the extremely profound meaning of the teachings, abandon all conceit and cease to disparage the correct Dharma.

Document Title: Song of Enlightenment

Author: Yoka Daishi

Date: ca. late seventh or early eighth century

Source: sacred-texts.com/bud/mzb/mzb04.htm

40. Alas! this age of degeneration is full of evils;
Beings are most poorly endowed and difficult to control;
Being further removed from the ancient Sage, they deeply cherish false views;
The Evil One is gathering up his forces while the Dharma is weakened, and
hatred is growing rampant;
Even when they learn of the “abrupt” school of the Buddhist teaching,
What a pity that they fail to embrace it and thereby to crush evils like a piece of brick!

41. The mind is the author of all works and the body the sufferer of all ills;
Do not blame others plaintively for what properly belongs to you;
If you desire not to incur upon yourself the karma for a hell,
Cease from blaspheming the Tathagata-wheel of the good Dharma.

42. There are no inferior trees in the grove of sandalwoods,
Among its thickly-growing primeval forest lions alone find their abode;
Where no disturbances reach, where peace only reigns, there is the place for
lions to roam;
All the other beasts are kept away, and birds do not fly in the vicinity.

43. It is only their own cubs that follow their steps in the woods,
When the young ones are only three years old, they roar.
How can jackals pursue the king of the Dharma?
With all their magical arts the elves gape to no purpose.

44. The perfect “abrupt” teaching has nothing to do with human imagination;
Where a shadow of doubt is still left, there lies the cause for argumentation;
My saying this is not the outcome of my egotism,
My only fear is lest your discipline lead you astray either to nihilism or positivism.

45. “No” is not necessarily “No,” nor is “Yes” “Yes;”
But when you miss even a tenth of an inch, the difference widens up to one
thousand miles;
When it is “Yes,” a young Naga girl in an instant attains Buddhahood,
When it is “No,” the most learned Zensho while alive falls into hell.

Document Title: Sutra on the Merit of Bathing the Buddha

Author: Yijing

Date: ca. early eighth century

Source: Donald S. Lopez, ed., *Buddhism in Practice* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995).

I now bathe the Tathagatha.
His pure wisdom and virtue adorn the assembly.
I vow that those living beings of this period of the five impurities
May quickly witness the pure dharma body of the Tathagata.
May the incense of morality, meditation, wisdom, and the knowledge and experience of liberation constantly perfume every realm in the ten directions.
I vow that the smoke of this incense will likewise

Do the Buddha's work [of salvation] without measure or limit.
I also vow to put a stop to the three hells and the wheel of samsara,
Completely extinguishing the fires and obtaining the coolness [of relief]
So that all may manifest the thought of unsurpassed enlightenment
Perpetually escaping the river of desires and dancing to the other shore [of nirvana].

Document Title: Surangama Sutra

Date: 700-800

Source: buddhanet.net/pdf_file/surangama.pdf

World Honoured One, as I (followed and) made offerings to Tathagata Avolokitesvara, he taught me to use my illusory hearing and sublimate it to realize the Diamond (Vajra) Samadhi which gave me the power of mercy of all Buddhas and enabled me to transform myself into thirty-two bodily forms for the purpose of visiting all countries in samsara (to convert and liberate all living things).

World Honoured One, if there are Bodhisattvas who practice Samadhi to attain the transcendental (Mean), when there is a chance for them to realize absolute Wisdom, I will appear as the Buddha to teach them the Dharma and liberate them.

If there are solitary students seeking (only) self-enlightenment, who practice the stillness of nirvana, when there is a chance for them to realize it, I will appear as the teacher of self-enlightenment to teach them the Dharma to liberate them.

If there are students of the Four Noble Truths who, after realizing the unreality of suffering and its accumulation, tread the Path leading to the extinction of passions, when there is a chance for them to achieve this, I will appear as the hearer (sravaka) to teach them the Dharma to liberate them.

If there are living beings who realize (the harmfulness of) desire in the mind and abstain from all worldly cravings to achieve purity of body, I will appear as Brahma to teach them the Dharma and liberate them.

If there are living beings who desire to be Lords of devas to rule over the realms of the gods, I will appear as Sakra to teach them the Dharma so that they can reach their goals.

If there are living beings who wish to roam freely in the ten directions, I will appear as Isvaradeva to teach them the Dharma so that they can reach their goals.

If there are living beings who wish to be lords of ghosts and spirits to protect their countries, I will appear as a great warrior to teach them the Dharma so that they can reach their goals.

If there are living beings who wish to rule over the world to protect its inhabitants, I will appear as the deva king of the four quarters to teach them the Dharma so they can reach their goals.

If there are living beings who wish to be reborn in the palace of devas to command ghosts and spirits, I will appear as the son of the deva king of the four quarters to teach them the Dharma so that they can reach their goals.

If there are living beings who wish to be heads of clans to enjoy the respect of their clansmen, I will appear as a respectable elder (grhapati) to teach them the Dharma so they can reach their goals.

If there are living beings who enjoy discussing well-known sayings and practice pure living, I will appear to them as a respectable scholar to teach them the Dharma so that they can reach their goals.

If there are living beings who wish to govern cities and towns, I will appear as a magistrate to teach them the Dharma so they can achieve their goals.

If there are living beings who delight in practicing mysticism for self-welfare, I will appear as a Brahmin to teach them the Dharma so they can achieve their goals.

If there are men who are keen on study and learning and leave home to practice the rules of morality and discipline, I will appear as a bhiksu to teach them the Dharma so that they can achieve their goals.

If there are women who are eager to study and learn and leave home to observe the precepts, I will appear as a bhikuuoa to teach them the Dharma so that they reach their goals.

If there are men who observe the five precepts, I will appear as an upasaka to teach them the Dharma so that they reach their goals.

If there are women who observe the five precepts, I will appear as an upasika to teach them the Dharma so that they reach their goals.

If there are women who are keen to fulfill their home duties thereby setting a good example to other families and the whole country, I will appear as a queen, a princess or a noble lady to teach them the Dharma so that they reach their goals.

If there are young men who are chaste, I will appear as a celibate youth to teach them the Dharma so that they reach their goals.

If there are young women who are keen to avoid carnality in order to preserve their virginity, I will appear as a maiden to teach them the Dharma so that they reach their goals.

If there are gods who wish to be freed from bondage in their realms, I will appear as a deva to teach them the Dharma so that they reach their goals.

If there are dragons (nagas) who wish to be freed from bondage in their realms, I will appear, as a naga to teach them the Dharma so that they reach their goals.

If there are yakuas who wish to be freed from bondage in their realms, I will appear as a yakua to teach them the Dharma so that they reach their goals.

If there are gandharvas who wish to be freed from bondage in their realms, I will appear as a gandharva to teach them the Dharma so that they reach their goals.

If there are asuras who wish to be freed from bondage in their realms, I will appear as an asura to teach them the Dharma so that they reach their goals.

If there are garuoas who wish to be freed from bondage in their realms, I will appear as a garuoa to teach them the Dharma so that they reach their goals.

If there are kinnaras who wish to be freed from bondage in their realms, I will appear as a kinnara to teach them the Dharma so that they reach their goals.

If there are mahoragas who wish to be freed from bondage in their realms, I will appear as a mahoraga to teach them the Dharma so that they reach their goals.

If there are living beings who wish to be reborn as human beings, I will appear in human form to teach them the Dharma so that they reach their goals.

If there are non-human beings with or without forms and either thoughtful or thoughtless, who wish to be freed from bondage in their realms, I will appear as one of them to teach them the Dharma so that they reach their goals.

LEGAL AND POLITICAL TEXTS

Document Title: A Monk Does Not Bow Down Before a King

Author: Huiyuan

Date: 404

Source: William Theodore deBary and Irene Bloom, eds., *Sources of Chinese Tradition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 427-428.

He who has left the household life is a lodger beyond the earthly (secular) world, and his ways are cut off from those of other beings. The doctrine by which he lives enables him to understand that woes and impediments come from having a body, and that by not maintaining the body one terminates woe...

If the termination of woe does not depend on the maintenance of the body, then he does not treasure the benefits that foster life. This is something in which the principle runs counter to physical form and the Way is opposed to common practice. Such men as these commence the fulfillment of their vows with the putting away of ornaments of the head [shaving the head] and realize the achievement of their ideal with the changing of their garb... Since they have changed their way of life, their garb and distinguishing marks cannot conform to the secular pattern... Afar they reach to the ford of the Three Vehicles, broadly they open up the Way of Heaven and the human. If but one of them be allowed to fulfill his virtue, then the Way spreads to the six relations and beneficence flows out to the whole world. Although they do not occupy the positions of kings and princes, yet, fully in harmony with the imperial ultimate, they let the people be. Therefore, though inwardly they may run counter to the gravity of natural relationships, yet they do not violate filial piety; though outwardly they lack respect in serving the sovereign, yet they do not lose hold of reverence.

Document Title: The Mahavamsa

Date: 400-500

Source: Wilhelm Geiger, trans., *The Mahavamsa or the Great Chronicle of Ceylon* (Colombo: Ceylon Government Information Department, 1960), 178.

Chapter XXV

And thereon the king said again to them: “How shall there be any comfort for me, O venerable sirs, since by me was caused the slaughter of a great host numbering millions?”

“From this deed arises no hindrance in thy way to heaven. Only one and a half human beings have been slain here by thee, O lord of men. The one had come unto the (three) refuges, the other had taken on himself the five precepts. Unbelievers and men of evil life were the rest, not more to be esteemed than beasts. But as for thee, thou wilt bring glory to the doctrine of the Buddha in manifold ways; therefore cast away care from thy heart, O ruler of men!”

Thus exhorted by them the great king took comfort.

Document Title: Why Should a Chinese Allow Himself to be Influenced by Indian Ways?

Date: unknown (probably before the sixth century)

Source: William Theodore deBary and Irene Bloom, eds., *Sources of Chinese Tradition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).

Mouzi said... “What Confucius said [“The barbarians with a ruler are not as good as the Chinese without one”] was meant to rectify the way of the world, and what Mencius said was meant to deplore one-sidedness. Of old, when Confucius was thinking of taking residence among the nine barbarian nations, he said, “If a noble person dwells in their midst, what rudeness can there be among them? ... The commentary says, “The north polar star is in the center of Heaven and to the north of man.” From this one can see that the land of China is not necessarily situated under the center of Heaven. According to the Buddhist scriptures, above, below, and all around, all beings containing blood belong to the Buddha-clan. Therefore I revere and study these scriptures. Why should I reject the Way of Yao, Shun, Confucius and the Duke of Zhou? Gold and jade do not harm each other, crystal and amber do not cheapen each other. You say that another is in error when it is you yourself who err.”

Document Title: Bodhicaryavatara (Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life)

Author: Shantideva

Date: 800

Source: Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, ed., *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life: A Buddhist Poem for Today* (Glen Spey, NY: Tharpa Publications, 2002).

Chapter 6: Relying upon Patience

64: Even if someone were to insult or destroy the Dharma,
The holy images, or the stupas,
It would still not be appropriate to get angry with them,
For how could the Three Jewels ever be harmed?

65: We should also prevent anger arising towards anyone
Who might harm our Spiritual Guide, our friends, or our relatives
By seeing that such harm also occurs in dependence upon conditions
In the way that was just explained. [...]

75: But now, through enduring comparatively little discomfort,
I can accomplish the greatest purpose of all—
To free all living beings from their suffering—
So I should feel only joy at having to endure such hardships.[...]

87: The thought that wishes for our enemy to suffer
Harms only us, through creating non-virtue;
Understanding this, we should not develop harmful thoughts
Towards anyone, including our enemies.

88: And even if your enemy did suffer as you wish,
How would that benefit you?
If you say, "Well, at least it would give me some satisfaction,"
How can there be a mind lower than that?

THE LOCAL/CULTURAL PERIOD (11TH-19TH CENTURY CE)

The eleventh to nineteenth centuries are perhaps the most diverse within the Buddhist world, and the most difficult to characterize. This time is sometimes referred to as a medieval period for Buddhism, appropriating the historiographic models of Western Europe, but this is not appropriate because Buddhism thrived in many places within Asia during these centuries. However, the period is marked by significantly fewer interactions between Buddhist communities in different polities. With the decline of Buddhism in South Asia proper, there was a shift from a more cosmopolitan orientation of Buddhism in India (with an imagined India as its center) to one marked more by vernaculars and local concerns. While some Japanese monks traveled to China for new instruction, there was significantly less transnational interaction than there had been in the last century of the Civilizational Period. Moreover, the significance of travel from Sri Lanka to mainland Southeast Asia waxed and waned over this period.

The texts in this section are reflective of these regional and local vernaculars. While they still talk about the need to relieve the sufferings of other beings, they are also focused on specific local concerns. Honen for example discusses the centrality of chanting the name of the Buddha Amitabha, while a Chinese monk, Zanning, argues that Buddhist incense burning fits into the Chinese religio-political world, an argument not supported by the classics. Particularly in East Asia, this period is marked by close links between the political and religious worlds. We see this with the 1614 statement about the need to expel Christians from Japan written by a Japanese monk.

THE LOCAL/CULTURAL PERIOD: SOURCES

SCRIPTURAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL TEXTS

Document Title: Pancagatidipani (Illumination of the Five Realms of Existence)

Date: 1100-1200

Source: Ann Appleby Hazlewood, trans., “A Translation of the Pancagatidipani,” *Journal of the Pali Text Society: Vol. 11* (1987), 133-159; palitext.com/JPTS_scans/JPTS_1987_XI.pdf

The nihilist who asserts perversely that the Dharma is non-Dharma [that is, that the truth is untruth] and whoever torments beings is consumed by fire in *Patapana* [one of the eight hot hells]. [...]

Among *devas*, *asuras* and men, man is short-lived because of injuries [done by him] or long-lived because of injuries not [done]—therefore one should avoid causing injury.

Document Title: Senchaku Hongan Nembutsushu (On the Nembutsu [recitation of the name of the Buddha] in the Primal Vow)

Author: Honen

Date: 1198

Source: Ohashi Shunno, ed., *Honen Ippen, Nihon Shiso Taikei: Vol. 10* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1971).

Know that had the various practices mentioned above been made the core primal vow, those attaining birth would have been few, while those unable to be born would have been numerous. For this reason, Amida Buddha, in the distant past, as the *bodhisattva* Dharma-Repository, was moved by indiscriminating compassion and sought to embrace all beings universally. In order to do so, he declined to make the various forms of practice such as creating images and erecting *stupa* [reliquary] towers the practice resulting in birth in the primal vow. Rather, he made the single practice of simply saying the name of the Buddha the core of his primal vow.

Document Title: Senchakushu

Author: Honen

Date: 1198

Source: Senchakushu English Translation Project, ed. and trans., *Senchakushu* (Honolulu, HI: Kuroda Institute, 1998), 102-103.

Question: The wisdom of ordinary people is shallow, and the obstruction of their delusions is deep-rooted. Suppose we meet a person whose understanding and practice differ from ours and who attempts to hinder us by proving with passages from many Sutras and *sastras* that no sinful ordinary people are able to attain birth. How might we refute such a person's argument, accomplish our own faith, and decisively make steady progress without discouragement or retreat?

Answer: If a practitioner should meet such a person who tries to prove with the passages from the many sutras and *sastras* that no single ordinary person can attain birth, he or she should reply, "Even though you come to me with sutras and *sastras* and say they prove that I cannot be born, my own faith will certainly suffer no harm from your attacks." The reason is as follows: This is not because I do not have faith in the many sutras and *sastras*; in fact, I reverently believe in all of them.

But the Buddha expounded these sutras at different times and in different places to sentient beings of differing capacities in order to bless them with differing benefits. Thus, the occasions when the Buddha expounded these sutras you have referred to were not the same as those when he expounded the *Kuan wu-liang-shou ching*, the *A-mi-t'o ching*, and other Pure Land sutras.

Document Title: A Hymn to the Buddha

Author: Tsongkhapa

Date: 1357-1419

Source: Donald S. Lopez, ed., *Buddhist Scriptures* (London: Penguin Books, 2004).

31: Those who oppose your teaching, no matter how long or how hard they try, are like those who repeatedly summon faults, because they rely on the view of the self.

38: How amazing! All those whose ears your teaching enters become serene. Thus, who would not respect those who uphold your teaching?

39: You have refuted all who oppose you and are free from all contradictions.

45: Those people who do not understand your auspicious and wondrous ways are utterly confused, like grass twisted together.

Document Title: The Monkey and the Monk: An Abridgement of the Journey to the West

Date: 1390-1400

Source: Anthony C. Yu, ed. and trans., *The Monkey and the Monk* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).

This bold, secret saying that's wondrous and true:
Spare, nurse nature and life—there's nothing else.
All power resides in the semen, breath, and spirit;
Store these securely lest there be a leak.
Lest there be a leak!
Keep within the body!
Heed my teaching and the Way itself will thrive.
Hold fast the oral formulas so effective
To purge concupiscence, to reach pure cool;
To pure cool,
Where the light is bright.
You'll face the elixir platform, enjoying the moon.
The moon holds the jade rabbit, the sun, the crow;
The tortoise and snake are now tightly entwined.
Tightly entwined,
Nature and life are strong.
You can plant gold lotus e'en in the midst of flames.
Squeeze the Five Phases jointly, use them back and forth—
When that's done, be a Buddha or immortal at will!

Document Title: Song of Zazen

Author: Hakuin Zenji

Date: ca. early eighteenth century (translation)

Source: sacred-texts.com/bud/zen/daily-ze.txt

All beings by nature are Buddha,
As ice by nature is water.
Apart from water there is no ice;
Apart from beings, no Buddha.

How sad that people ignore the near
And search for truth afar:
Like someone in the midst of water
Crying out in thirst;

Like a child of a wealthy home
Wandering among the poor.

Lost on dark paths of ignorance,
We wander through the Six Worlds;
From dark path to dark path—
When shall we be freed from birth and death?

Oh, the zazen of the Mahayana!
To this the highest praise!
Devotion, repentance, training,
The many paramitas—
All have their source in zazen.

Those who try zazen even once
Wipe away beginningless crimes.
Where are all the dark paths then?
The Pure Land itself is near.

Those who hear this truth even once
And listen with a grateful heart,
Treasuring it, revering it,
Gain blessings without end.

Much more, those who turn about
And bear witness to self-nature,
Self-nature that is no-nature,
Go far beyond mere doctrine.

Here effect and cause are the same;
The Way is neither two nor three.
With form that is no-form,
Going and coming, we are never astray;
With thought that is no-thought,
Singing and dancing are the voice of the Law.

Boundless and free is the sky of Samadhi!
Bright the full moon of wisdom!
Truly, is anything missing now?
Nirvana is right here, before our eyes;

This very place is the Lotus Land;
This very body, the Buddha.

Document Title: Phra Malai Klon Suat

Date: ca. early nineteenth century

Source: Donald S. Lopez, ed., *Buddhist Scriptures* (London: Penguin Books, 2004).

All people will be able to listen to the Dharma that the Lord will preach to them, and they will reach the edge of the city, enabling them to escape from samsara (beginningless cycle of birth, death, and rebirth).

When the people of Chomphu will be concerned even about those far away, and when they will love each other as if they were one family—like brothers and sisters; when they live close together, as close as bamboo trees in a grove; when their houses are so close together that a chicken could fly from one to the other, that’s when I will go, Phra Malai, lord arahant (worthy one), to help living beings get to heaven, and have them reach nirvana. [...]

When the people of this world are no longer violent, when they no longer torment one another or wage war against each other, when they love each other as family, that’s when I will go, Phra Malai, have no doubt, to help people and celestials enter nirvana. Whoever wishes to see Phra Sri Ariya should resolve to make merit immediately.

When all people, women and men, lead moral lives, not envying each other; when all living beings, no matter how small—even gnats and lice—are not tormented, are not swatted or slapped; when friendship and good will radiate to all living beings without ceasing, that’s when I will go, Phra Malai, O excellent one, taking the Dharma to teach all living beings to pass beyond suffering.

OFFICIAL RELIGIOUS TEXTS

Document Title: Justification for Buddhist Incense-Offering Rites

Author: Zanning

Date: ca. late tenth century

Source: “Buddhist Ritual and the State,” in *Religions of China in Practice*, ed. Donald S. Lopez (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 393-396; mrdoran.net/uploads/3/1/6/7/3167511/buddhism_-_buddhist_ritual_and_the_state.pdf

Cui Yuan said there was no authorization [for the incense-offering rite] in the classic scriptures, but isn't the reference to offering incense in the above episode involving the snake (Sariputra in a previous life) from a classic scripture? Master Dao'an quoted from Buddhist teaching to establish the regulations for offering incense, so how can it be said to be without authorization? The imperial decree stated that Cui Yuan discerned the roots from the branches, and that the ritual texts and stipulated rules of conduct clearly do not include any mention of it, but how could the rituals of the ancient Chinese dynasties, the Xia, Shang and Zhou, refer to sponsoring feasts for Buddhist monks and incense-offering rites? In any case, the stipulated rules of conduct are simply laws that change with the passing of the ages. How, for example, could regulations implemented after the reign of Emperor Daizong (r. 762-779) appear in the stipulated rules of conduct for the late Sui or early Tang dynasty [prior to Daizong's reign]? Doesn't it make much more sense to take Buddhist texts as evidence for rites that are beyond the purview of Confucians? It surely makes no sense to use the Confucian canon to authorize activities that originated with Buddhists. Judged in terms of their own criteria, the Buddhist rites would at once be said to be reasonable, but Confucians fail to allow this and instead cite Confucian texts [to deny their validity]. How do Buddhists differ from those facing criminal prosecution summoning relatives and colleagues to provide testimony? If the Confucians wish to dismiss the evidence supporting the incense rite in Buddhist scriptures, on what grounds is it defensible?

For the filial son, goodness is exclusively associated with paying respect to his departed forebears. [In this regard] the [Confucian sanctioned] practice of burning the living with the dead is of no benefit to the deceased in the realm of constant rebirth and must definitely be prohibited. The practice of offering incense, [on the other hand,] is beneficial to the deceased in [their journey through] the vast underworld. Filial sons know this and always act accordingly.

Document Title: Kozen Gokokuron (Promote Zen to Protect the Kingdom's Rulers)

Author: Eisai

Date: 1198

Source: Donald S. Lopez, ed., *Buddhist Scriptures* (London: Penguin Books, 2004), 323-324.

Question 2: From this passage know that all kings upon hearing the true Dharma will accept it and have faith in it...Your criticisms are the kinds of circumstances that destroy the Buddha-Dharma and destroy the kingdom. Don't say such things! [...] The Buddha has already entrusted the unsurpassed true dharma of *prajna* (wisdom) to the kingdom's rulers.

Question 10: Moral precepts and monastic discipline cause Buddhism to flourish forever. Moral precepts and monastic discipline are the essence of Zen. Therefore, Zen causes Buddhism to flourish forever.

Document Title: Shuju Onfurumai Goshō (On Various Actions of the Priest Nichiren)

Author: Nichiren

Date: 1222-1282

Source: Philip B. Yampolsky, ed., *Selected Writings of Nichiren* (New York: Columbia University Press), 1990.

Homma Rokurozaemon addressed them, saying, “An official letter has arrived from the Regent directing that the priest shall not be executed. This is no ordinary, contemptible criminal, and if anything happens to him, I will be guilty of grave dereliction. Instead of killing him, why don’t you confront him in religious debate?”

Following this suggestion, the Nembutsu and other priests, accompanied by apprentice priests carrying the three Jodo sutras, the *Maka Shikan*, the Shingon sutras, and other literature under their arms or hanging from their necks, gathered at Tsukahara on the sixteenth day of the first month (1272). They came not only from the province of Sado but also from the nearby provinces of Echigo, Etchu, Dewa, Mutsu, and Shinano.

Several hundred priests and others gathered in the spacious yard of the hut and in the adjacent field. Homma Rokurozaemon, his brothers, and his entire clan came, as well as lay priest farmers, all in great numbers. The Nembutsu priests uttered streams of abuse, the Shingon masters turned pale with rage, and the Tendai monks vowed to vanquish the opponent. The lay believers cried out in hatred, “There he is—the notorious enemy of our Amida Buddha!”

The uproar and the jeering resounded like thunder and seemed to shake the earth. I let them clamor for a while and then said, “Silence, all of you! You are here for a religious debate. This is not time for abuse.” At this, Homma and several others voiced their accord, and some of them grabbed the abusive Nembutsu priests by the neck and pushed them back.

The priests proceeded to cite the doctrines of the *Maka Shikan* and the Shingon and the Nembutsu teachings. I responded to each point, establishing the exact meaning of what had been said, then coming back with questions. However,

I needed to ask only one or two at most before they were completely silenced. They were far inferior even to the Shingon, Zen, Nembutsu, and Tendai priests in Kamakura, so you can imagine how the debate went. I overturned them as easily as a sharp sword cutting through a melon or a gale bending the grass.

They were not only poorly versed in Buddhism but contradicted themselves. They confused sutras with treatises or commentaries with treatises. I discredited the Nembutsu by telling how Shantao fell out of the willow tree, and refuted the story about the Great Teacher Kobo's three-pronged *vajra* implement and how he transformed himself into Dainichi Buddha. As I demonstrated each falsity and aberration, some of the priests swore, some threw away their robes and beads on the spot and pledged never to chant the Nembutsu again.

Document Title: Bendowa (On the Endeavor of the Way)

Author: Dogen

Date: 1231

Source: Kazuaki Tanahashi, ed., *Moon in a Dewdrop: Writings of Zen Master Dogen* (New York: North Point Press, 1985).

Question 14: Home-leavers are free from various involvements and do not have hindrances in *zazen* in pursuit of the way. How can the laity, who are variously occupied, practice single-mindedly and accord with Buddha-Dharma which is unconstructed?

Answer: Buddha ancestors, out of their kindness, have opened the wide gate of compassion in order to let all sentient beings enter realization. Who among humans and heavenly beings cannot enter?

If you investigate olden times the examples are many. To begin with, emperors Daizong and Shunzong had many obligations on the throne; nevertheless, they practiced *zazen* (meditation) in pursuit of the way, and penetrated the great way of Buddha ancestors. Ministers Li and Fang both closely served their emperors but they practiced *zazen*, pursued the way, and entered realization in the great way of Buddha ancestors.

This just depends on whether you have the willingness or not. It does not matter whether you are a lay person or home-leaver. Those who can discern excellence invariably come to this practice. Those who regard worldly affairs as a hindrance to Buddha-Dharma only think that there is no Buddha-Dharma in the secular world, and do not understand that there is no secular world in Buddha-Dharma.

Document Title: Statement on the Expulsion of the Bateren [Christian missionaries]

Author: Ishin Suden

Date: 1614

Source: William Theodore de Bary et al., ed., *Sources of Japanese Tradition, Volume I: From Earliest Times to 1600* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).

Japan is by origin the Land of the Gods. The unfathomable functioning of yin and yang, given a name, is called god. Who would fail to hallow and revere the sacredness of the sacred, the spirituality of the spirit? All the more so because it is entirely as a result of the functioning of yin and yang that man gains life! None of the five bodily parts or the six senses, indeed no human action or undertaking, is for as much as an instant separate from god. God is not to be sought anywhere apart. What human beings are all endowed with, what each and every individual is invested with—that is the substance of god.

Japan is also called the Land of the Buddhas, and not without reason. It is written: “This is the land where the Buddhas manifest themselves as gods, the homeland of the Dainichi [Cosmic Buddha].” And the Lotus says: “As saviors of the world, the Buddhas abide by their great godlike faculties; for the sake of bringing joy to sentient beings, they display boundless divine powers.” These are golden words, wonderful phrases. The names “gods” and “Buddhas” differ, but their purport is the same; they are just like the two halves of a tally joined.

And now the band of Kirishitans [Christians] has unexpectedly come to Japan. They do not merely sail trading vessels here to traffic in commodities. Rather, they recklessly desire to spread a pernicious doctrine, confound true religion, change the governmental authority of this realm, and make it their own possession. These are the germs of disaster. This band must not be left unsuppressed.

All of that notorious band, the Bateren [missionaries], contravene the aforesaid governmental regimen, traduce the Way of the Gods, calumniate the True Law, derange righteousness, and debase goodness. When they see that there are criminals to be executed, then they rejoice, then they rush to the scene, then they do reverence and pay obeisance in person. This [sort of death] they make out to be a consummation to be devoutly wished in their religion. If this is not a pernicious doctrine, then what is it? These are truly the enemies of the gods and the enemies of the Buddhas.

If they are not banned immediately, the state will be sure to suffer grief in the future. Indeed, unless they are checked, those in charge of enforcing the ordi-

nances shall themselves become the targets of the punishment of Heaven. So purge Japan of them! Expel them quickly without giving them an inch of land to grasp, a foot of ground to stand on! And if any dare resist these orders, they shall be executed.

Happily, these Precincts of the Sun have for some years now been ruled by a recipient of the Mandate of Heaven to hold sway over the state. Outwardly, he manifests our cardinal virtues, the Five Constants; inwardly, he turns to the great teachings of the Tripitaka. Therefore the country prospers and the people are at peace. The Sutra says: “Peace and tranquility in the present world, a good repose in the life to come.” And Confucius says: “Our bodies, down to the hair and the skin, are received by us from our fathers and mothers. Not to let them be injured or disfigured presumptuously: this is the beginning of filial piety.”

To keep that body whole: this means to revere the gods. To repulse the pernicious doctrine of the foreigners without delay is to prosper our True Law all the more. Although the world may already have entered an age of decline, our government pursues an excellent course: It steadily increases the traditional patronage of the Way of the Gods and the Law of the Buddhas. Let all under Heaven and within the Four Seas take note! Let no one dare to err!

MODERN BUDDHISMS

(LATE 19TH-21ST CENTURY CE)

The last two centuries have seen significant developments in the ways that Buddhists see themselves and other Buddhists. Beginning in the sixteenth century, the politics of Asia were colonized by European powers. However, in the early centuries of European imperialism, there was relatively little penetration of European thought or governance practices into the Buddhist communities of Asia. Indeed, when the Portuguese and later the British appropriated Buddhist polities like Sri Lanka or Burma, colonizers were initially incorporated into local frameworks, whereby the king or state was responsible for the maintenance of the sangha more broadly.

However, Buddhists began to transform the ways they located themselves in the world in the nineteenth century. The imposition of ruling technologies by both colonizing and local nation-states, the increase in intra-Asian travel for both Europeans and Asians (Buddhist and non-Buddhist alike), and the penetration of Christian missionaries were just three catalyzing factors. Their effects were profound, particularly in combination with the adaptation of nationalist ideologies that led to anti-colonial and anti-imperialist movements across Asia.

Just as importantly, Buddhism emerged as a singular, universal religion along the model of Protestant Christianity. While not all Buddhist practices and communities were directly affected by these forces, the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries witnessed the rise of forms of Buddhism that appealed to the emerging educated and middle classes. These forms were concerned with questions of belief and meaning as much as with ritual practice, and they sought to reform Buddhism to make it relevant to the modern age.¹⁵

The texts in this section are diverse, but many assume that Buddhist values correspond well with both core aspects of human rights discourse and the idea of religious freedom. The idea of religious freedom—if not its practice—is widespread in the constitutional documents of many Asian nations, including those of the more formally Buddhist nations included in this section. Moreover, Buddhist thinkers of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, such as the Dalai Lama or Walpola Rahula, tend to see the Buddhist concern with the relief of suffering as consistent with a concern for human rights—perhaps uniquely so. These ideas thread through texts that are labeled in this section as both “philo-

sophical” and “political” (though sometimes it can be hard to differentiate between these two categories).

At the same time, there is also a thread of intolerance, primarily in the context of nation-state politics and ethno-religious mobilization and defense. As noted in the general introduction, some Buddhists in the modern era are concerned with fostering universal discourse of rights, while some seek to defend the teachings of the Buddha or the sangha, even if doing so means depriving others of their rights and freedoms.

MODERN BUDDHISMS: SOURCES

PHILOSOPHICAL TEXTS

Document Title: *Zen Flesh, Zen Bones: A Collection of Zen and Pre-Zen Writings*
Date: derived from thirteenth-century Japanese collection Shaseki-Shu
Source: Paul Reps, trans., *Zen Flesh, Zen Bones: A Collection of Zen and Pre-Zen Writings* (Rutland: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1959).

16. *Not Far From Buddhahood*

A University student while visiting Gasan asked him: “Have you ever read the Christian Bible?”

“No, read it to me,” said Gasan.

The student opened the Bible and read from St. Mathew: “And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. They toil not, neither do they spin, and yet I say unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Take therefore no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself.”

Gasan said: “Whoever uttered those words I consider an enlightened man.” The student continued reading: “Ask and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you. For everyone that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.”

Gasan remarked: “That is excellent. Whoever said that is not far from Buddhahood.”

63. *Killing*

Gasan instructed his adherents one day: “Those who speak against killing and who desire to spare the lives of all conscious beings are right. It is good to protect even animals and insects. But what about those persons who kill time, what about those who are destroying wealth and those who destroy political economy? We should not overlook them. Furthermore, what of the one who preaches without enlightenment? He is killing Buddhism.”

77. *No Attachment to Dust*

Zengetsu, a Chinese master of the T'ang dynasty, wrote the following advice for his pupils:

Living in the world yet not forming attachments to the dust of the world is the way of a true Zen student. When witnessing the good action of another encourage yourself to follow his example. Hearing of the mistaken action of another, advise yourself not to emulate it. Even though alone in a dark room, be as if you were facing a noble guest. Express your feelings, but become no more expressive than your true nature. Poverty is your treasure. Never exchange it for an easy life.

A person may appear a fool and yet not be one. He may only be guarding his wisdom carefully. Virtues are the fruit of self-discipline and do not drop from heaven of themselves as does rain or snow. Modesty is the foundation of all virtues. Let your neighbors discover you before you make yourself known to them. A noble heart never forces itself forward. Its words are rare gems seldom displayed and of great value.

To a sincere student, every day is a fortunate day. Time passes but he never lags behind. Neither glory nor shame can move him.

Censure yourself, never another. Do not discuss right and wrong. Some things, though right, were considered wrong for generations. Since the value of righteousness may be recognized after centuries, there is no need to crave an immediate appreciation. Live with cause and leave results to the great law of the universe. Pass each day in peaceful contemplation.

Document Title: Nuclear Technologies and the Future of Humanity

Author: Nichidatsu Fujii

Date: 1956

Source: angelfire.com/on/GEAR2000/Fujii2.pdf

There is a single gate open for us to escape from the calamity of this conflagration. That is to dispel the delusion of the military and the politicians, who view all of the triple worlds, i.e., the heavens, earth and underwater, as battlefields for murder and destruction. Instead, we are to believe that this very world we live in is essentially a sacred Pure Land, where the practice of the Dharma brings

pleasure, and everything we produce can become gems to adorn our land, such as gardens, parks, temples and pavilions. In this Pure Land the Enlightened World Honored One, the people who listen to Him preach, and the golden words of the Dharma are all equally revered.

We must make this very world of ours such a solemn ceremonial ground, where flowers are always offered. To practice the Bodhisattva work of creating the Pure Land, with faith in the eternal presence of the Lord, without ever leaving this world of ours, and to believe in the intrinsic existence of the Pure Land, are the ultimate and fundamental aims that can be undertaken by human beings. Religions in general encourage devoted practice in pursuit of a noble and supreme goal, with a view toward eternal life without departing from our reality as a physical existence.

Document Title: What the Buddha Taught

Author: Walpola Rahula

Date: 1974

Source: Walpola Rahula, *What the Buddha Taught* (London: Oneworld Publications, 1959).

This spirit of tolerance and understanding has been from the beginning one of the most cherished ideals of Buddhist culture and civilization. That is why there is not a single example of persecution or the shedding of a drop of blood in converting people to Buddhism, or in its propagation during its long history of 2,500 years. It spread peacefully all over the continent of Asia, having more than 500 million adherents today. Violence in any form, under any pretext whatsoever, is absolutely against the teaching of the Buddha.

In the same way Truth needs no label: it is neither Buddhist, Christian, Hindu nor Moslem. It is not the monopoly of anybody. Sectarian labels are a hindrance to the independent understanding of Truth, and they produce harmful prejudices in men's minds.

Document Title: Human Values in a Changing World

Author: Daisaku Ikeda and Bryan Wilson

Date: 1985

Source: Daisaku Ikeda and Bryan Wilson, *Human Values in a Changing World* (London: Tauris Press, 2008).

For this reason, I insist that true religious freedom must permit missionary work, allowing people to air and explain their thoughts and beliefs, since only

such freedom makes possible continual examination and stimulation and, of course, growth and development.

Document Title: Religious Tolerance and Human Rights: A Buddhist Perspective

Author: Masao Abe

Date: 1986

Source: Quoted in Damien V. Keown, Charles S. Prebish, and Wayne R. Husted, eds., *Buddhism and Human Rights* (Cornwall: Curzon Press, 1998), 82.

In Buddhism, which is based on the doctrine of the Middle Way, neither the Buddha nor the great Buddhist sages said, “My teachings alone are true.” They did not encourage persecution by religious wars, burning at the stake, massacres, or forced conversions for the sake of their own Dharma, nor did they state that all teachings are the same. In the First *Suttanta* of the *Digha Nikaya*, the Buddha said: “Make a trial, find out what leads to your happiness and freedom and what does not, reject it. What leads on to greater happiness—follow it.”

This practical and sure way of distinguishing truth amid falsehood was meant by the Buddha to be applied to his own teachings as well, for he emphasized that one ought not to believe in the authority of any teachers and masters but should believe and practice the religious truth embodied by them. This is the Middle Way in action—as something practicable, by means of which one can steer a course between blind dogma and vague eclecticism.

Document Title: Old Path, White Clouds: Walking in the Footsteps of the Buddha

Author: Thich Nhat Hanh

Date: 1991

Source: Thich Nhat Hanh, Old Path, *White Clouds: Walking the Footsteps of the Buddha* (New York: Parralax Press, 1991).

45. *A Handful of Simsapa Leaves*

Though the Buddha was residing not far from the monastery, he was unaware of the conflict until a delegation of concerned *bikkhus* visited him, told him of it, and asked him to intervene. The Buddha went to meet directly with the precept master and said, “We should not become too attached to our own viewpoint. We should listen too carefully in order to understand the others’ viewpoint. We should seek all means to prevent the community from breaking.” Then he went to the sutra master and said the same things. Returning to his hut, he was hopeful the two men would reconcile. But the Buddha’s intervention did not

have the desired effect. Too many ill words had already spoken. Many wounds had been inflicted.

The *bikkhus* who remained impartial did not possess enough influence to bring the two sides together. The conflict reached the ears of the lay disciples, and before long, even other religious sects had heard of the trouble in the Buddha's *sangha*. Nagita, the Buddha's attendant, was unable to endure the situation anymore. He discussed the matter again with the Buddha, beseeching him to intervene once more. The Buddha put on his outer robe and went at once to the monastery's meeting hall. Nagita rang the bell to summon the community. When all were present, the Buddha said, "Please cease your arguing. It is only creating division in the community. Please return to your practice. If we truly follow our practice, we will not become victims of anger and pride."

59. *The Net of Theories*

"*Bikkhus*, there are countless philosophies, doctrines, and theories in this world. People criticize each other and argue endlessly over their theories. According to my investigation, there are sixty-two main theories which underlie the thousands of philosophies and religions current in our world... Looked at from the Way of Enlightenment and Emancipation, all sixty-two of these theories contain errors and create obstacles. A good fisherman places his net in the water and catches all the shrimp and fish he can. As he watches the creatures try to leap out of the net, he tells them, 'No matter how high you jump, you will only land in the net again.' He is correct. The thousands of beliefs flourishing at present can all be found in the net of these sixty-two theories. *Bhikkus*, don't fall into that bewitching net. You will only waste time and lose your chance to practice the Way of Enlightenment."

Document Title: No Religion

Author: Buddhadasa Bhikkhu

Date: 1993

Source: abuddhistlibrary.com/Buddhism/B%20-%20Theravada/Teachers/Buddhadasa/No%20Religion/NORELIG.HTM

To illustrate the importance of language, let us consider the following example. Ordinary, ignorant worldly people are under the impression that there is this religion and that religion, and that these religions are different, so different that they're opposed to each other. Such people speak of "Christianity," "Islam," "Buddhism," "Hinduism," "Sikhism," and so on, and consider these religions to

be different, separate, and incompatible. These people think and speak according to their personal feelings and thus turn the religions into enemies. Because of this mentality, there come to exist different religions which are hostilely opposed to each other.

Those who have penetrated to the essential nature of religion will regard all religions as being the same. Although they may say there is Buddhism, Judaism, Taoism, Islam, or whatever, they will also say that all religions are inwardly the same. However, those who have penetrated to the highest understanding of Dharma will feel that the thing called “religion” doesn’t exist after all.

There is no Buddhism; there is no Christianity; there is no Islam. How can they be the same or in conflict when they don’t even exist? It just isn’t possible. Thus, the phrase “No religion!” is actually Dharma language of the highest level. Whether it will be understood or not is something else, depending upon the listener, and has nothing to do with the truth or with religion.

Document Title: Education for Peace

Author: Phra Prayudh Payutto (Phra Dharmapadok)

Date: 1995

Source: Quoted in *Buddhism and Human Rights*, eds. Damien V. Keown, Charles S. Prebish, and Wayne R. Husted, (Cornwall: Curzon Press, 1998), 103.

Why are people making war? Because they hate each other, or sometimes their interests come into conflict. Sometimes it’s because their views are different... They are attached to the view that their own particular religion is the best; anyone else’s are all bad. These are all the world’s problems.

POLITICAL TEXTS

Document Title: Magha Bucha Day Broadcast

Author: Luang Vichitr Vadakarn

Date: 1941

Source: M. Searle Bates, *Religious Liberty: An Inquiry* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1945).

Realizing that the importance of the nation is greatest and that national unity is more important than the religion they used to worship, several hundred Christians converted themselves to Buddhism.

The event is a victory for Thailand and Buddhism of which the people of the whole Thai nation and all Buddhists should be proud.

The Magha Bucha Day, B.E. 2484, will go down in history and is a good omen that the Thai race and Buddhism will thrive and remain consolidated to eternity.

Document Title: G.P. Malasekera Statement

Author: G.P. Malasekera

Date: 1951

Source: Quoted in *In Defense of Dharma: Just War Ideology in Buddhist Sri Lanka*, Tessa J. Bartholomeusz (New York: Routledge, 2002).

We should gather the weapons of *maitri* [friendship], *karuna* [kindness] and *shanti* [peace] and prepare for a “*dharma yudhaya*” [holy war]. We have to prepare for a religious fight; a long fight. This is not a revolution but an attempt to protect our ancestral religion—Buddhism. Thus, this is a *dharma yudhaya*.

This is not a war fought with the aid of weapons. We are fighting for the truth and the dharma. We have to start with friendship and kindness. We have to fight to the end.

Document Title: The Sri Lankan United National Party (UNP) and Buddhism

Author: J.R. Jayewardene

Date: 1977

Source: Quoted in *In Defense of Dharma: Just War Ideology in Buddhist Sri Lanka*, Tessa J. Bartholomeusz (New York: Routledge, 2002).

[The UNP aims] at building a new society on the foundation of the principles of Buddha Dharma. We have a duty to protect the Buddha and to pledge that every possible action would be taken to develop it.

Document Title: Buddhism and Human Rights: A Buddhist Commentary on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Author: L.P.N. Perera

Date: 1991

Source: L.P.N. Perera, *Buddhism and Human Rights: A Buddhist Commentary on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (Colombo: Karunaratne and Sons, 1991).

It is from the point of view of its goal that Buddhism evaluates all action. Hence Buddhist thought is in accord with this [Article 1] and other Articles in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to the extent to which they facilitate the advancement of human beings towards the Buddhist goal.

Document Title: Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech

Author: Aung San Suu Kyi

Date: 1991

Source: nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1991/kyi-acceptance_en.html

Buddhism, the foundation of traditional Burmese culture, places the greatest value on man, who alone of all beings can achieve the supreme state of Buddhahood. Each man has in him the potential to realize the truth through his own will and endeavour and to help others to realize it.

Document Title: Human Rights and Universal Responsibility

Author: Dalai Lama

Date: 1993

Source: fpmt.org/teachers/hhdl/speeches/human-rights-and-universal-responsibility/

As free human beings we can use our unique intelligence to try to understand ourselves and our world. But if we are prevented from using our creative potential, we are deprived of one of the basic characteristics of a human being. It is very often the most gifted, dedicated and creative members of our society who become victims of human rights abuses. Thus the political, social, cultural and economic developments of a society are obstructed by the violations of human rights. Therefore, the protection of these rights and freedoms are of immense importance both for the individuals affected and for the development of the society as a whole. [...]

Recently some Asian governments have contended that the standards of human rights laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are those advocated by the West and cannot be applied to Asia and other parts of the Third World because of differences in culture and differences in social and economic development. I do not share this view and I am convinced that the majority of Asian people do not support this view either, for it is the inherent nature of all human beings to yearn for freedom, equality and dignity, and they have an equal to achieve that. I do not see any contradiction between the need for economic development and the need for respect of human rights. The rich diversity of cultures and religions should help to strengthen the fundamental human

rights in all communities. Because underlying this diversity are fundamental principles that bind us all as members of the same human family.

Document Title: Declaration of Interdependence

Author: Online Conference on Buddhism and Human Rights

Date: 1995

Source: abuddhistlibrary.com/Buddhism/F-%20Miscellaneous/Miscellaneous%20Buddhism/Journal%20of%20Buddhist%20Ethics/Closing%20Statement/Closing%20StatementOnline%20Conference%20on%20Buddhism%20and%20Human%20Ri.htm

The Buddhist teaching that we lack an inherently existing Self (*anatta*) shows that suffering does not really “belong” to anyone. It arises in the life-stream of various sentient beings. To try and reduce it in “my” stream at the expense of increasing it in another life-stream is folly, both because this will in fact bring more suffering back to me (*karma*), and because it depends on the deluded notion that “I” am an inviolable entity that is not dependent and can treat others as if only *they* are limited and conditioned.

Whereas in its teachings Buddhism recognizes:

1. The interdependency of all forms of life and the reciprocal obligations which arise from it, such as the duty to repay the kindness of those who in previous lives may have been our parents, relatives and friends;
2. The need for universal compassion for sentient beings who are all alike in that they dislike pain and wish for happiness;
3. The inalienable dignity which living creatures possess by virtue of their capacity to achieve enlightenment in this life or in the future;

The Conference affirms:

1. Every human being should be treated *humanely* both by other individuals and governments in keeping with the Buddhist commitment to non-violence (*ahimsa*) and respect for life.
2. Every human being must be treated *equally* and without discrimination on grounds of race, nationality, religion, sex, color, age, mental ability, or political views.

3. Human beings have obligations to other sentient beings and to the environment that all depend on for life and flourishing, now and in the future. Accordingly, humans have an obligation to present and future generations to protect the environment they share with other sentient beings and to avoid causing direct or indirect harm to other forms of sentient life.

Document Title: The Importance of Religious Harmony

Author: Dalai Lama

Date: 1996

Source: Quoted in *The Community of Religions: Voices and Images of the Parliament of the World's Religions*, ed. Wayne Teasdale and George Cairns (New York: Continuum, 1996).

Each religion has its own philosophy and there are similarities as well as differences among the various traditions. What is important is what is suitable for a particular person. We should look at the underlying purpose of religion and not merely at the abstract details of theology or metaphysics. All religions make the betterment of humanity their primary concern. When we view the different religions as essentially instruments to develop a good heart—love and respect for others, a true sense of community—we can appreciate what they have in common.

A variety of religions is a natural need. Even our body needs a variety of food. If a restaurant were to sell only one kind of meal, eventually it would have no customers. But because the restaurant offers a variety of food, more people come and enjoy it. Everyone feels that his or her form of religious practice is the best. I myself feel that Buddhism is best for me. But this does not mean that Buddhism is best for everyone else. We all have a right to make our own choice.

Those of us involved with religion should also understand that it is impossible for all human beings to become religious-minded. It is out of the question that everyone become a Buddhist or Christian or Muslim, or anything else. Buddhists will remain Buddhists; Christians and Muslims will remain their own faiths; and nonbelievers will remain nonbelievers. Whether we like it or not, we have all been born on this earth as part of one great human family. This is not to say that all human beings are the same or that because everyone wishes for happiness that the same things will make each of them happy. Brothers and sisters resemble each other without being identical.

We have seen how new found freedoms, widely celebrated though they are, have given rise to fresh economic difficulties and unleashed long-buried ethnic

and religious tensions that contain the seeds for a new cycle of conflicts. In the context of our newly emerging global community, all forms of violence have become totally unacceptable as a means of settling disputes. Let me express my view in the language and spirit of the Universal Declaration on Nonviolence:

Religious groups throughout the world have a responsibility to promote peace in our own age and in the future. It is true that in the history of the human family people of various religions, sometimes even acting officially in the name of their different traditions, have initiated or collaborated in systemic violence or war. At times such actions have been directed at people of other faiths or communities, as well as within a particular religious denomination. This kind of behavior is totally inappropriate for spiritual persons or communities.

Document Title: Remarks in Madrid, Spain

Author: Dalai Lama

Date: 2003

Source: zenit.org/articles/dalai-lama-asks-west-not-to-turn-buddhism-into-a-fashion/

People from different traditions should keep their own, rather than change. However, some Tibetan may prefer Islam, so he can follow it. Some Spanish prefer Buddhism; so follow it. But think about it carefully. Don't do it for fashion. Some people start Christian, follow Islam, then Buddhism, then nothing. In the United States I have seen people who embrace Buddhism and change their clothes! Like the New Age. They take something Hindu, something Buddhist, something, something. That is not healthy. [...]

For individual practitioners, having one truth, one religion, is very important. Several truths, several religions, is contradictory. I am Buddhist. Therefore, Buddhism is the only truth for me, the only religion. To my Christian friend, Christianity is the only truth, the only religion. To my Muslim friend, Moham-medanism is the only truth, the only religion. In the meantime, I respect and admire my Christian friend and my Muslim friend. If by unifying you mean mixing, that is impossible, useless.

LEGAL TEXTS

Document Title: Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand¹⁶

Author: Kingdom of Thailand

Date: 1997

Source: en.wikisource.org/wiki/1997_Constitution_of_Thailand

Section 5. The Thai people, irrespective of their origins, sexes or religions, shall enjoy equal protection under this Constitution.

Section 9. The King is a Buddhist and Upholder of religions.

Section 30. All persons are equal before the law and shall enjoy equal protection under the law.

Men and women shall enjoy equal rights.

Unjust discrimination against a person on the grounds of the difference in origin, race, language, sex, age, physical or health condition, personal status, economic or social standing, religious belief, education or constitutionally political view, shall not be permitted.

Measures determined by the State in order to eliminate obstacle to or to promote persons' ability to exercise their rights and liberties as other persons shall not be deemed as unjust discrimination under paragraph three.

Section 38. A person shall enjoy full liberty to profess a religion, a religious sect or creed, and observe religious precepts or exercise a form of worship in accordance with his or her belief; provided that it is not contrary to his or her civic duties, public order or good morals.

Section 66. Every person shall have a duty to uphold the Nation, religions, the King and the democratic regime of government with the King as Head of the State under this Constitution.

Section 73. The State shall patronize and protect Buddhism and other religions, promote good understanding and harmony among followers of all religions as well as encourage the application of religious principles to create virtue and develop the quality of life.

Document Title: Introducing the Japan Buddhist Federation

Author: Japan Buddhist Federation

Date: 1997

Source: buddhanet.net/nippon/nippon_partIV.html

a) Endorsing “Freedom of Religion” and “Separation of Religion and State”

In order to endorse the principles of “Freedom of Religion” and “Separation of Religion and State” as guaranteed by the Japanese Constitution, the federation is actively engaged in lobbying the Japanese government and political parties in regard to such issues as the revision of the Religious Corporation Law, the establishment of the Information Disclosure Law, and the maintenance of the non-tax principle for religious corporations.

Document Title: Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

Author: Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

Date: 2000

Source: parliament.lk/files/pdf/constitution.pdf

Chapter II: Buddhism

9. The Republic of Sri Lanka shall give to Buddhism the foremost place and accordingly it shall be the duty of the State to protect and foster the Buddha Sasana, while assuring to all religions the rights granted by Articles 10 and 14(1)(e).

Chapter III: Fundamental Rights

10. Every person is entitled to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion, including the freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice. [...]

12. (1) All persons are equal before the law and are entitled to the equal protection of the law.

(2) No citizen shall be discriminated against on the grounds of race, religion, language, caste, sex, political opinion, place of birth or any such grounds:

Provided that it shall be lawful to require a person to acquire within a reasonable time sufficient knowledge of any language as a qualification for any employment or office in the Public, Judicial or Local Government Service or in the service of any public corporation, where such knowledge is reasonably necessary for the discharge of the duties of such employment or office:

Provided further that it shall be lawful to require a person to have sufficient knowledge of any language as a qualification for any such employment or office where no function of that employment or office can be discharged otherwise than with a knowledge of that language.

(3) No person shall, on the grounds of race, religion, language, caste, sex or any one such grounds, be subject to any disability, liability, restriction or condition with regard to access to shops, public restaurants, hotels, places of public entertainment and places of public worship of his own religion. [...]

14. (1) Every citizen is entitled to—

- (a) the freedom of speech and expression including publication;
- (b) the freedom of peaceful assembly;
- (c) the freedom of association;
- (d) the freedom to form and join a trade union;
- (e) the freedom, either by himself or in association with others, and either in public or in private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice or teaching;
- (f) the freedom by himself or in association with others to enjoy and promote his own culture and to use his own language;
- (g) the freedom to engage by himself or in association with others in any lawful occupation, profession, trade, business or enterprise;
- (h) the freedom of movement and of choosing his residence within Sri Lanka; and
- (i) the freedom to return to Sri Lanka. [...]

27. (6) The State shall ensure equality of opportunity to citizens, so that no citizen shall suffer any disability on the ground of race, religion, language, caste, sex, political opinion or occupation.

Document Title: Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan

Author: Kingdom of Bhutan

Date: 2008

Source: bhutanaudit.gov.bt/About%20Us/Mandates/Constitution%20of%20Bhutan%202008.pdf

Article 3: Spiritual Heritage

[...] 2. The Druk Gyalpo is the protector of all religions in Bhutan.

3. It shall be the responsibility of religious institutions and personalities to promote the spiritual heritage of the country while also ensuring that religion remains separate from politics in Bhutan. Religious institutions and personalities shall remain above politics. [...]

Article 4: Culture

1. The State shall endeavour to preserve, protect and promote the cultural heritage of the country, including monuments, places and objects of artistic or historic interest, Dzongs, Lhakhangs, Goendeys, Ten-sum, Nyes, language, literature, music, visual arts and religion to enrich society and the cultural life of the citizens. [...]

Article 7: Fundamental Rights

[...] 4. A Bhutanese citizen shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. No person shall be compelled to belong to another faith by means of coercion or inducement. [...]

15. All persons are equal before the law and are entitled to equal and effective protection of the law and shall not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, sex, language, religion, politics or other status. [...]

22. Notwithstanding the rights conferred by this Constitution, nothing in this Article shall prevent the State from subjecting reasonable restriction by law, when it concerns:

- (a) The interests of the sovereignty, security, unity and integrity of Bhutan;
- (b) The interests of peace, stability and well-being of the nation;
- (c) The interests of friendly relations with foreign States;
- (d) Incitement to an offence on the grounds of race, sex, language, religion or region;

- (e) The disclosure of information received in regard to the affairs of the State or in discharge of official duties; or
- (f) The rights and freedom of others.

Document Title: Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Author: Union of Myanmar

Date: 2008

Source: burmalibrary.org/docs5/Myanmar_Constitution-2008-en.pdf

34. Every citizen is equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right to freely profess and practice religion subject to public order, morality or health and to the other provisions of this Constitution.

361. The Union recognizes special position of Buddhism as the faith professed by the great majority of the citizens of the Union.

362. The Union also recognizes Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Animism as the religions existing in the Union at the day of the coming into operation of this Constitution.

363. The Union may assist and protect the religions it recognizes to its utmost.

364. The abuse of religion for political purposes is forbidden. Moreover, any act which is intended or is likely to promote feelings of hatred, enmity or discord between racial or religious communities or sects is contrary to this Constitution. A law may be promulgated to punish such activity.

365. Every citizen shall, in accord with the law, have the right to freely develop literature, culture, arts, customs and traditions they cherish. In the process, they shall avoid any act detrimental to national solidarity. Moreover, any particular action which might adversely affect the interests of one or several other national races shall be taken only after coordinating with and obtaining the settlement of those affected.

1. Thomas Borchert is associate professor in the Department of Religion at the University of Vermont. Professor Borchert is an expert in the religions of Asia, with particular focus on religion and politics and Theravada Buddhism. He is the author of *Educating Monks: Minority Buddhism on China's Southwest Border* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2017). He received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in 2006. He would like to acknowledge the help of William Goldschmidt and Kevin Trainor in preparing his part of this sourcebook.
2. The sangha is the Buddhist community. Sometimes the term refers to the entirety of a society that follows the teachings of the Buddha, including monks, nuns, lay women, and lay men; sometimes it refers primarily to those who have been ordained.
3. Myanmar is the official name of the country formerly known as Burma. Some scholars and political activists have resisted using the name Myanmar because it has been closely linked to the oppressive military government. However, since the process of democratic reform began several years ago, Myanmar is appearing more commonly in scholarly literature.
4. See Diane Winston's chapter "Old Monks, New Media, and the Limits of Soulcraft" in *Rethinking Religion and World Affairs*, eds. Timothy Shah, Alfred Stepan, and Monica Toft (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).
5. This is a problematic stance, particularly when taken by scholars, because it presumes an understanding of Buddhism that is highly romantic and inaccurate. Buddhists have engaged in violent activities, sometimes very much within the ambit of the Buddhist world and in defense of Buddhism. Some of this is reflected in the texts in this sourcebook. There is a growing body of scholarship discussing violence committed within Buddhist communities, most often by Theravada Buddhists in contemporary Asia. See, for example, Michael Jerryson and Mark Juergensmeyer, eds., *Buddhist Warfare* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Ananda Abeysekere, *Colors of the Robe: Religion, Identity and Difference* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2002); and about religion, fundamentalism, and violence more broadly, Bruce Lincoln, *Holy Terrors* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2003).
6. I hasten to add that the relatively late development and application of a robust understanding of religious freedom in modern times should not be rashly credited to the influence of what is loosely described as "modernity," "secularism," or "the Enlightenment." Depending on what one means by those ambivalent concepts, modernity, secularism, and the Enlightenment per se have frequently proven hostile to robust religious freedom across modern history, from the seventeenth century to the present day. Furthermore, as this and the other RFP sourcebooks on religious freedom and the world's great religious traditions demonstrate, the pre-modern seeds of religious freedom are often significant and anticipate what are considered modern ideas and developments, at least to some extent. On the important pre-modern seeds of religious freedom in Judaism and Christianity, for example, and their importance for laying the foundations for robust and expansive ideas and practices of religious and political freedom, including the notion of religious freedom as a universal human right, see *Christianity and Freedom: Historical Perspectives*, eds. Timothy Samuel Shah and Allen Hertzke (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).
7. Karma is a well-known phenomenon. However, it should be noted that at an ultimate level, what makes up a person is the combination of physical and mental processes and the karmic residue of intentional actions in past lives.

8. There has been much scholarly discussion over the last decade over how to refer to Theravada forms of Buddhism. In part this is because it is a term that was adopted by Buddhists in the middle of the twentieth century as a neutral term distinct from the sectarian designation “Hinayana.” I use the term Theravada here because it is the most common term used at this point, though I acknowledge that it is at best anachronistic when referring to the early history of Buddhism. See the essays in Peter Skilling, Jason Carbine, Claudio Cicuzza, and Santi Pakdeekham, eds., *How Theravada is Theravada* (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 2012).

9. I speak in broad terms here in part because there are significant debates about when any of these things happened, beginning with the dates of the Buddha’s life. On these debates, see L.S. Cousins, “The Dating of the Historical Buddha: A Review Article,” in *Buddhism: Critical Concepts in Religious Studies*, ed. Paul Williams (London: Routledge, 2005).

10. Some of these have come to be considered to be distinct religions, such as Shinto in Japan or Bon in Tibet; others, such as the variety of popular religious traditions in China or spirit worship in mainland Southeast Asia, continue to be considered as decentralized folk traditions. Whether a collection of traditions and practices has come to be called a “religion” is a combination of politics and scholarship, and should be understood as a part of complicated local and trans-local historical processes.

11. There is much literature on this point. See Charles Hallisey, “Roads Taken and Not Taken in the Study of Theravada Buddhism,” in *Curators of the Buddha*, ed. Donald S. Lopez (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995); Richard King, *Orientalism and Religion: Postcolonial Theory, India and the ‘Mystic East’* (London: Routledge, 1999); and Tomoko Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions: Or, How European Universalism was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

12. Charles Hallisey and Frank Reynolds, “Buddhism: an Overview,” in *Encyclopedia of Religion: Second Edition*, ed. Lindsay Jones (Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005), 1087-1101; Stephen C. Berkwitz, “The History of Buddhism in Retrospect,” in *Buddhism in World Cultures: Comparative Perspectives*, ed. Stephen C. Berkwitz (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2006).

13. Jonathan Walters rightly points out that there remain problems with the historiography that Hallisey and Reynolds propose. While he appreciates that it is coming out of internal understandings and is a shift away from the western models of history, he suggests that the reliance on a “modern” category undercuts these positive steps. I would suggest that as long as we take “Buddhism” as the primary subject of history, a necessity in a project like this, the historiographical problems will remain. See Jonathan S. Walters, *Finding Buddhists in Global History* (Washington, D.C.: American Historical Association, 1998).

14. All dates hereafter are Common Era (CE).

15. I am speaking of modern Buddhism in fairly strict ways here, and in relation to the incorporation of Asian Buddhist communities into European modernity through both imperialism and the development of the nation-state. This kind of model has significant problems in that it ignores how conditions varied across Asia when talking about the development of the “modern.” For example, scholars of Japan and China discuss early modernity occurring before significant interaction with Europeans. For the purposes of this project, however, it is reasonable to frame the modern era in the context of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

16. The 1997 constitution was replaced with a similar version in 2007 after a military coup; this 2007 version has since been taken out of circulation after a 2014 military coup. As of this writing (2016), Thailand is still being ruled by a military government with an unclear timetable on the return to democratic rule.

About the Religious Freedom Project

The Religious Freedom Project (RFP) at Georgetown University's Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs is the nation's only university-based program devoted exclusively to the analysis of religious freedom, a basic human right restricted in many parts of the world. Under the leadership of Director Thomas Farr and Associate Director Timothy Shah, the RFP engages a team of international scholars to examine and debate the meaning and value of religious liberty; its importance for democracy; and its role in social and economic development, international diplomacy, and the struggle against violent religious extremism.

The RFP began in 2011 with the generous support of the John Templeton Foundation. In 2014 that support continued, while the project also began a three-year partnership with Baylor University and its Institute for Studies of Religion under Director Byron Johnson.

About the Berkley Center

The Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs at Georgetown University, created within the Office of the President in 2006, is dedicated to the interdisciplinary study of religion, ethics, and public life. Through research, teaching, and service, the center explores global challenges of democracy and human rights; economic and social development; international diplomacy; and interreligious understanding. Two premises guide the center's work: that a deep examination of faith and values is critical to address these challenges, and that the open engagement of religious and cultural traditions with one another can promote peace.

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