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Buddhist Diplomacy: History and Status Quo

By Juyan Zhang

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**BUDDHIST DIPLOMACY:
HISTORY AND STATUS QUO**

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BUDDHIST DIPLOMACY: HISTORY AND STATUS QUO

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Introduction

The Pali Canon, the only completely surviving earliest Buddhist canon, is recorded as such: After attaining his full enlightenment, the Buddha arose from under the Bodhi tree, and thought to himself, *“This Dhamma¹ that I have attained is deep, hard to see, hard to realize, peaceful, refined, beyond the scope of conjecture, subtle, to-be-experienced by the wise. But this generation delights in attachment, is excited by attachment, enjoys attachment... And if I were to teach the Dhamma, others would not understand me, that would be tiresome for me, troublesome for me.”* As the Buddha hesitated, the deity Brahma Sahampati appeared before him and requested him to teach the Dharma. He asked the Buddha, *“[F]ree from sorrow, behold the people submerged in sorrow, oppressed by birth and aging.”*² The Buddha then changed his mind. He left the Bodhi tree, wandered in stages, and arrived at Varanasi, at the Deer Park in Isipatana, where he first taught Dharma to the group of five ascetics who attended to him when he was resolute in exertion. This is the Buddha’s first Sermon, or the first Turning of the Wheels of Dharma, as is termed by some later Buddhist schools such as Yogacara. The time was more than 2,500 years ago.

Today there are in total 300 million Buddhists in the world.³ Buddhism became the state religion of many countries across history, including a number of world’s largest empires during the height of their times, such as the Indian Mauryan Empire (321–185BCE) and Pala Empire (750–1174 CE), and China’s Sui Empire (589–618 CE), Tang Empire (618–907 CE) and Yuan Empire (1271–1368 CE). Throughout its history, Buddhism was disseminated in a peaceful manner. Compared to Christendom and Islam, far fewer wars were fought on behalf of Buddhism. It is regarded as one of the universal religions along with Christianity and Islam because it “welcomes all who believe,” regardless of their race, ethnicity, or nationality.⁴

As a faith, Buddhism undoubtedly has been successful in its propagation. The natural questions that follow are: Historically how did this happen? Does an ancient religion still have vitality in a modern

world? What is the status of its contemporary dissemination? These questions certainly warrant volumes of scholarly books. The present study is in no way an attempt to survey all of the communication processes that have occurred on the part of Buddhism. Instead, it will focus on examining how the faith has involved diplomacy—primarily public diplomacy—in its dissemination, and how such involvement has promoted its propagation, historically and contemporarily.

Regarding Buddhist texts, this research primarily relies on the English version of the Pali Sutta-pitaka and Vinaya-pitaka, including Digha-nikaya (DN), Majjhima-nikaya (MN), Samyutta-nikaya (SN), and Avguttara-nikaya (AN), as well as the Chinese translation of the Agamas, including Chang Ahan Jing (largely matching Digha-nikaya), Zhong Ahan Jing (largely matching Majjhima-nikaya), Zeng Yi Ahan Jing (largely matching Avguttara-nikaya), and Za Ahan Jing (largely matching Samyutta-nikaya). As mentioned earlier, the Pali canon is the only completely surviving early Buddhist canon preserved by the Theravada tradition. The Chinese Agamas were translated from the Sanskrit texts compiled by the Sarvastivada school of Buddhism. Although the two bodies of texts do not squarely match each other, both are considered significant sources for studying the pre-sectarian Buddhism.

Buddhist diplomacy during the Buddha's lifetime

The first five monks who listened to the Buddha's sermon represented the formation of the Buddhist monastic community (the Sangha), which is also the beginning of the propagation of Buddhism. During the Buddha's lifetime, there were sixteen kingdoms along the Ganges River. From the beginning, the Buddha's teaching activities were inseparably involved in the relations between the kingdoms. Not long after his first sermon, King Bimbisara of Magadha invited the Buddha and the Sangha to Magadha's capital Rajagaha so they could stay there during the rainy season. The King became the Buddha's follower.⁵ Later a wealthy businessman named Anathapindika invited the Buddha to Savatthi, the capital city of the Kosala, another Kingdom, where he purchased a park and donated it

to the Sangha. The Kosala King Pasenadi and his wife Queen Mallika also became followers of the Buddha.⁶ King Pasenadi frequently sought advice from the Buddha. He also made confessions to him on his wrongdoings.⁷ After Magadha Prince Ajatashatru imprisoned and starved his father King Bimbisara to death to take his throne, he repented of his sin and made confessions to the Buddha. The Buddha converted him into a follower.⁸ On one occasion when King Pasenadi fought and captured King Ajatashatru, the Buddha personally persuaded King Pasenadi to release King Ajatashatru.⁹ When King Ajatashatru planned to invade the Vajji Republic, he sent his Prime Minister Vassakara to the Buddha to indirectly discover whether in the Buddha's view there were any chances of conquering the Vajjians. The Buddha said that as long as the Vajjians practiced the seven conditions of prosperity, they would prosper rather than decline. As a result, a potential invasion was diffused.¹⁰

During the Buddha's life time, he not only sent his disciples to the kingdoms to spread the message of the Dharma, he personally wandered from one kingdom to another to teach the Dharma. For example, the *Samyutta Nikaya* records that a minister of the Kosala court said that he felt extremely sad to learn that the Buddha was leaving Kosala for other kingdoms to teach Dharma, because he would not be able to see the Buddha for a good period of time. The kingdoms included Kāśi, Malla, Magadha, Anga, Samatata, Bentara, and Kalinga.¹¹ Throughout his forty-five years' of teaching, many kings, queens, princes and nobles became the Buddha's followers, along with numerous people of low castes, from beggars to prostitutes.¹² The *Digha-nikaya* reports that six peoples in the sixteen kingdoms followed the Buddha's teachings during his lifetime.¹³

But one of the Buddha's last involvements in diplomatic affairs was tragically related to his home country, the Sakya tribe. The Kosala King Pasenadi's son Virudhaka dethroned his father and was determined to invade the Sakya people's capital city Kappilavastu to revenge the humiliation he supposedly suffered there when he was a boy. For three times the Buddha tried to stop the King and his troops on the road, but eventually the Sakyas were left to their fate.

Virudhaka's troops massacred a large number of Sakyas, destroyed the entire city, and eliminated the Sakya clan. The Buddha could only say to his disciples with great grief that no one could change the karma that was brought about by the Sakyas' past actions.¹⁴

Even right after his nirvana, the Buddha was involved in a diplomatic episode. After his body was burnt on a pyre, eight kingdoms competed to claim the Buddha's remains for worshipping purposes. Some sent troops and were ready to fight. Eventually a Brahmin named Dona addressed the crowd by citing the Buddha's spirit of Ahimsa, or non-violence. He said, "Listen, lords, to my proposal. Forbearance is the Buddha's teaching. It is not right that strife should come from sharing the best of men's remains. Let's all be joined in harmony and peace, in friendship sharing out portions eight: Let stupas far and wide be put up, that all may see—and gain in faith!" He then divided the Buddha's remains into eight portions and a potential conflict was peacefully resolved.¹⁵

Early dissemination of Buddhism from India to the world

In the first rainy season after the Buddha's nirvana (circa 543–542 BCE), the Sangha convened its First Council, sponsored by King Ajatashatru of Maghada, to review the Buddha's teachings so as to preserve them.¹⁶ This is when two of the "Three Baskets", or Tripitaka, were first formed, respectively the Vinaya-pitaka (the monastic disciplines) and the Suttas-pitaka (the Buddha's discourses).¹⁷ The Sangha operated for more than one hundred years under the disciplines the Buddha set until a dispute over interpretation of the disciplines caused it to split into the Sthaviravadins and the Mahasamghikas, or the school of orthodox elders and the school of young reformers. This is the first schism of the Sangha. The Second Council was convened at around this time to resolve the dispute. This is also the beginning of sectarian Buddhism when the Sangha started to split into many sects.¹⁸ When King Asoka (ca. 304–232 BCE), the third monarch of the Mauryan Dynasty, united the India subcontinent, he sponsored the Third Council to expel bogus monks from the Sangha. As a zealous Buddhist, he deployed nine Buddhist

missionaries to the world beyond the Indian subcontinent to spread the Dharma.¹⁹

1. Emperor Asoka's "Conquest by Dhamma"

In his campaign to unite the India subcontinent, Emperor Asoka engaged in battles against Kalinga in the year around 261 BCE. In the war, more than 100,000 people were killed.²⁰ The bloody battle prompted him to devote his life to non-violence and to “feel a strong inclination towards the Dhamma, a love for the Dhamma and for instruction in Dhamma”, as is recorded in the Edicts of King Asoka.²¹ Under the patronage of the emperor, the Third Buddhist Council was convened in about the year of 250 BCE. The Council deputed nine missionaries to today's Egypt, Syria, Macedonia, Greece, Cyprus, Afghanistan, Kashmir, the Himalayas, and Sri Lanka to spread the Buddha's teachings.²² For the first time in human history, a large-scale faith diplomacy campaign communicated Buddhist messages to three continents, namely Asia, Africa and Europe.

What motivated Emperor Asoka to promote Buddhism domestically and internationally can be found in his edicts inscribed on the pillars, boulders and cave walls that were excavated in today's India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. In these edicts, Emperor Asoka said he is “zealous toward Dhamma”,²³ and that he wished that: “[W]hen people hear these [Dhamma], they will follow them, elevate themselves and grow considerably through the promotion of the Dhamma.”²⁴

Emperor Asoka himself was initiated to become a monk in the Sangha. He believed that “progress among the people through Dhamma has been done by two means, by Dhamma regulations and by persuasion...[w]hile persuasion has much more effect.” For this purpose, the Emperor ordered to set up Dharma pillars and appointed Dharma Mahamatras, or officers in charge of Dharma. The duty of the Dharma Mahamatras was to “work among all religions for the establishment of Dhamma, for the promotion of Dhamma, and for the welfare and happiness of all who are devoted to Dhamma.”²⁵ Emperor Asoka's policy is termed *Dhammavijaya*, or “conquest by

Dhamma". Emperor Asoka believed with zeal and conviction that persuasion could bring better governance and peaceful relations with other countries, which motivated him to send out the Buddhist missionaries to the world.²⁶

2. Spread of Buddhism to Sri Lanka, Thailand, Burma, Laos, Cambodia and Theravada Buddhism

The Buddhist missionary sent by Emperor Asoka to Sri Lanka was completely successful. According to Sri Lanka's historical record, the Mahavamsa (*The Great Chronicle of Sri Lanka*), the ninth Buddhist missionary led by Emperor Asoka's son Mahinda, who was a Buddhist monk, arrived in Sri Lanka in the year of 247 BCE. They first converted the Sri Lankan King Devanampiyatissa and his ministers into Buddhism. Then the King's nephew Mahariththa and 55 other Sri Lankan young men were converted. Because monks are not allowed to bestow ordination to nuns, Mahinda's sister Samghamitta came to Sri Lanka from India to confer ordination to the queen Anula and other women. King Devanampiyatissa donated the royal garden Mahamegha-vanaya to build Mahavihara, which has since become the center for dissemination of Theravada Buddhism.²⁷ It is through Sri Lanka that Theravada Buddhism and the Pali Canons were preserved, which largely represent the words and practices of the pre-sectarian Buddhism.

Buddhism was spread to today's Thailand long before it became a national state. The eighth of the nine Buddhist missionaries sent by Emperor Asoka went to Suvannabumi, which some argue is located in today's Thailand. Others suggested it might be today's Burma and Cambodia, from where Buddhism was further spread to Thailand.²⁸ Regardless, Theravada Buddhism did not become Thailand's state religion until the 13th century during the Sukhothai Kingdom.

King Fa Ngum (1316–1374 CE) was credited with introducing Buddhism to Laos, but archeological findings show that Buddhism was well known long before him. His Khmer queen might have introduced a new Theravada school, the form that is practiced in Laos today.²⁹ There is no clear evidence of Buddhist presence in

Burma until the 5th century CE. Early Buddhism in Burma was Mahayana Buddhism rather than Theravada. Around 1075 CE, King Anawrahta Minsaw, the founder of the Pagan dynasty, requested for the Tripitaka from the king of Thaton, but he was turned down. The enraged king attacked and conquered Thaton and brought Buddhist scriptures and Theravada Buddhist clergy back to Burma. Hence Burma became a center for the orthodox Theravada Buddhism, which became the dominant state religion and played significant role in its social and political life.³⁰

The earliest known kingdom in today's Cambodia was called Funan, which appeared roughly in the 1st century CE. The kingdom was subject to both Indian Brahmanical and Buddhist influence in its early years. But Buddhism appeared to have become the dominant religion as late as the 5th century, and the kingdom had become a hub for religious exchanges between China and India. Some eminent Buddhist monks were sent along with embassies by Funan's kings to China. The successive Zhenla dynasty (550–802 CE) appears to have practiced both Hinduism and Mahayana Buddhism, and Buddhism started to spread from the court to the mass. The Mahayana influence was likely a result of the Nalanda Monastery-University complex during the Indian Pala Empire.³¹ In the early Angkor period (802–1432CE), Mahayana Buddhism gradually became the dominant faith in the kingdom as a result of royal sponsorship. King Jayavarman VII (1181-1219 CE) was extremely devoted to Buddhism. From the 13th century on, Theravada Buddhism had become the dominant religion in Angkor, probably due to the influence from Thailand's Theravada Buddhist reformation.

3. Transmission of Buddhism to Central Asia and East Asia—Mahayana Buddhism

a. Spread of Buddhism to Central Asia.

Buddhism started to spread to Northwestern India during the Buddha's lifetime (see SA.35.88). The government officials in charge of Dharma affairs during Emperor Asoka's reign worked among "the Gandharas", "Yonas" and "Kambojas", which lay in

today's Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Pamir.³² Their presence is still felt today with the heavy influence of Buddhism in the region. The overland trade networks that connected the Indian subcontinent and Western and Central Asia further helped spread Buddhism to today's Afghanistan, Western and Central Asia.³³ As in other parts of Asia, rulers of various kingdoms played significant roles as patrons of Buddhism in West and Central Asia. For example, King Menander (circa 90–85 BCE) of one of the Greco-Bactrian kingdoms, the legacies of Alexander the Great's military campaign, actively supported Buddhism. As the Sakas and the Kushans entered the Indian subcontinent from the North between the 1st century BCE and the 3rd century CE, their kings were also patron to the Buddhist Sangha. The most famous among these rulers was King Kanishka (127–151 CE), whose Kushan empire covered a large area of central and western Asia and northwestern India. In the Mahayana Buddhist tradition, he was believed to have convened the Fourth Buddhist Council.³⁴ The Kushan Empire played central role in transmitting Buddhism and the Greco-Ghandara Buddhist art from India to China.

b. Spread of Buddhism to China.

Although there is no record in China's official history texts, Chinese Buddhist writings *Fo Zu Tong Ji*³⁵ report that a Buddhist missionary group consisting of 18 monks and led by a monk named Shi Li Fang (likely a Chinese translation of a non-Chinese name) paid a visit to the then Qin Empire's capital, Xian Yang. Suspicious of their motives, the Qin emperor Shi Huang Di (259–210 BCE), who founded the first Chinese empire, had the monks detained but later released. The Buddhist missionary might not be one of those sent by Emperor Asoka because he died 12 years before Qin Shi Huang became the king. But if the record is historically factual, then this was the earliest intercourse between China and Buddhism. China's official history documents that Emperor Ming of the Han Empire (28–75 CE) dreamed of a golden man, and his minister explained that he probably dreamt of the Buddha. Emperor Ming sent a delegation of 18 people to the "Western Region" to seek Buddhism. The delegation brought back images of the Buddha,

Buddhist scriptures, and monks. The Emperor then ordered Buddhist temples built in the empire's capital Luo Yang (See *Mouzi li huo lun*, or *Mouzi on the Settling of Doubts*).

c. Spread of Buddhism to Korea and Japan.

According to Korea's Buddhist record *Hai Dong Gao Sen Zhuan* (*Biographies of Eminent Monks to the East of Ocean*), Pu Jian (338–385CE), the ruler of China's Former Qin Kingdom, sent the Chinese monk Shundao with Buddhist texts and icons to the royal court of the Koguryo Kingdom on the Korean Peninsula in the year of 372 CE. Buddhism was widely accepted by the royalty and the subjects of the kingdom. The royalty of another kingdom on the peninsula, Paekje, also accepted Buddhism at around the same time. One of its kings proclaimed that his people should believe in Buddhism and seek happiness. In the sixth century, Korean King Syong-myong of Paekche presented Buddhist icons and ritual objects to the Japanese royal court. Under Prince Shotoku Taishi's (572–621 CE) patronage, Buddhism rapidly developed in Japan.³⁶ In the following centuries, Japanese monks went to China during the Sui Dynasty and the Tang Dynasty and brought back Buddhist texts and images. Chinese monks also sailed to Japan and established various Buddhist sects there. Prince Shotoku (547–622 BCE) played a significant role in promoting Buddhism in Japan. He dispatched Buddhist missionaries to China and introduced Buddhist and Confucius values into Japanese politics by drafting the 17-Article Constitution. At his order, many major Buddhist temples were built and Buddhism saw rapid dissemination in Japan.³⁷

4. *Spread of Buddhism to Tibet and Mongolia—Esoteric (Tantric) Buddhism*

Buddhism was first spread to Tibet in the 7th century when King Srong-tsangam-po united the warring clans in Tibet. The king married a Nepalese princess and a Chinese princess, both of whom were Buddhists and brought the faith to Tibet. King Srong-tsangam-po was soon converted to Buddhism by his queens. He built

Buddhist temples in Lhasa and made codes to convert his subjects to Buddhism.³⁸ However, definitive introduction of Buddhism into Tibet was during King Khri srong Ide'u btsan's reign (742–797 CE) when he invited Indian monks to Tibet.³⁹ One of the monks was the Tantric master Padmasambhava, who laid the foundation for the development of esoteric Buddhism in Tibet. In the 10th century, many Buddhist monks and translators traveled to Tibet, including Atisa, and a monastic tradition was established in Tibet.⁴⁰

The Mongolians also adopted Tibetan Buddhism. In the year of 1244, Genghis Khan's (1162–1227 CE) grandson Godan Khan (1206–1251 CE) invited Sakya Pandita, the patriarch of the Sakya sect of Tibetan Buddhism, to his camp and thus became the patron of the Sakya sect.⁴¹ Sakya Pandita's nephew Phags-pa converted Khublai Khan (1215–1294 CE) to Tibetan Buddhism and became his spiritual advisor and the Mongolian Yuan Empire (1271–1368 CE) formally adopt Buddhism.⁴² After the Yuan Empire collapsed, Altan Khan, a Mongolian military leader who harbored ambition to rebuild the empire, formed an alliance with the Yellow Sect of Tibetan Buddhism. He gave Sonam Gyatso, the Yellow Sect's leader, the title Dalai Lama in 1578. Buddhism has since become the dominant religion of the Mongolians.⁴³

5. Influence of Buddhism in the West

Although Buddhism was primarily transmitted to the South, Southeast, Central, and East Asia, there is evidence that it also influenced the religions in the Middle East and eventually Western religions. Buddhist influences can be found in Neo-Platonism, Gnosticism, and Manichaeism.⁴⁴ For example, Plotinus (205–270 CE), who greatly influenced Christian theology and philosophy of the Middle Ages, participated in Emperor Gordianus' campaign against Persia in order to study the religion and philosophy of India, where Buddhism prospered at the time.⁴⁵ Before converting to Christianity, Augustine de Hippo, whose writings significantly influenced the formation of Christianity, was a professor of Manichaen thought for nine years.⁴⁶ It is a known fact that Buddhism significantly influenced

the formation of Manichaeism.⁴⁷ The Buddhist influence among the Western faiths likely occurred through its monastic-University complexes that attracted students from Greece, Persia and other parts of the world. Mani (216–276 CE), the founder of Manichaeism, visited the Kushan Empire, where Mahayana Buddhism prospered.⁴⁸

Factors conducive to effective Buddhist diplomacy in the ancient world

The history of Buddhist diplomacy shows that a number of factors contributed to its wide spread in the ancient world. These factors include the salient messages of Buddhism as a philosophical, ethical and practical system, the Sangha as disciplined and trained messengers, establishment of monasteries and universities as propagation institutions, translation of the Tripitaka, spread of Buddhist paraphernalia, conversion of opinion leaders such as kings and princes, and localization. The following is an elaboration on some of these factors.

1. The universality of the Buddhist messages:

In human history, Buddhism is perhaps the first sophisticated faith system that was not linked to blood, racial, ethnic, or national groups. This was a revolutionary idea for societies that worshiped local gods and where only elites had access to sacred knowledge. Such features make it a universal religion that welcomes all who believe.⁴⁹ Besides its fundamental teachings such as the Four Noble Truths, The Eightfold Path, and its highly individualized teaching style, some of the key messages of Buddhism, such as equality, non-violence, and idealized rulers, as well as its dialogical approach are particularly conducive to its spread across different societies, cultures, and civilizations. The principles of Buddhism include the following:

a. Equality—For Buddhism, all living beings are equal and should be respected. The Buddha indiscriminately preached to kings, queens, and princess, prostitutes⁵⁰ and beggars.⁵¹ He rejected the idea that the Brahmans are the superior caste and any other

caste is inferior.⁵² An associated concept is loving kindness (*metta*), cultivation of which is crucial for Theravada Buddhism. Such practice motivates one to take care of others selflessly.⁵³ Equality and loving kindness are ideals that appeal to most human beings across different civilizations and cultures. Such messages probably helped make Buddhism the first universal religion.

b. Non-violence (*Ahimsa*)—Non-violence is a fundamental teaching of the Buddha. For the Buddha, the goal of the Dharma is to achieve the attainment of “cessation, peace, the higher spiritual knowledge, enlightenment and *nibbana*”.⁵⁴ When Monk Punna told the Buddha that he wanted to go to a country called Sunaparanta to teach the Dharma. The Buddha asked, “Punna, the Sunaparanta people are fierce. They are rough. If they insult and ridicule you, what will you think?” Punna answered as such, “If they insult and ridicule me, I will think, ‘These Sunaparanta people are civilized, very civilized, in that they don’t hit me with their hands.’ That is what I will think, O Blessed One...”. When the Buddha asked, “But if they take your life with a sharp knife...?” “If they take my life with a sharp knife, I will think, ‘There are disciples of the Blessed One who—horrified, humiliated, and disgusted by the body and by life—have sought for an assassin, but here I have met my assassin without searching for him.’” The Buddha approved such answers by saying that “Good, Punna, very good. Possessing such calm and self-control you are fit to dwell among the Sunaparantans. Now it is time to do as you see fit.”⁵⁵ Tolerance and peace taught by the Buddha certainly helped the spread of Buddhism in the ancient world.

c. The Wheel-turning Emperor (*ckravartin*), an idealized ruler—In the Pali canon, the Wheel-turning emperor is an idealized benevolent universal ruler, who is still not freed from the possibility of going to hell and the bad destinations.⁵⁶ However, since the first century CE, the Mahayana Buddhism School’s promotion of the concepts of the *Bodhisattva* and their reincarnation made itself particularly attractive to foreign kings and aristocrats because the possibility for the latter of being declared or declaring themselves to be the reincarnation of *Bodhisattva*.⁵⁷ For example, during China’s

Tang dynasty, the emperors used concepts of Mahayana Buddhism to legitimize their rule and even usurp others by declaring Buddhism as the state religion, distributing Buddhist relics, building stupas, and sponsoring translation of Buddhist scriptures. Some visiting Indian monks aided Chinese emperors' political propaganda efforts by interpolating Indian texts when they translated Buddhist scriptures by fabricating Buddha's prediction that a Chinese king will be the ckravartin.⁵⁸ Baumann and Prebish⁵⁹ rightly observed that the spread of Buddhism in Asia adopts a top-down approach: kings and rulers first adopt Buddhism, then invite foreign monks and set Buddhism as state religion. Such a pattern certainly had to do with the idealized ckravartin in the religion.

2. The Sangha as trained and disciplined messengers

When the first five monks were ready to teach Dharma, the Buddha told them, "For the benefit and happiness of the largest number of people, for the world, no two of you should travel to the same place."⁶⁰ This command for the Sangha became the first push for the active dissemination of Buddhist messages. The Sangha was formed on the principles of celibacy, simple livelihood, brotherhood, honesty, and self-responsibility.⁶¹ They are required to follow numerous strict rules (vinaya) to live in the Sangha, such as developing reverence and suaveness towards co-associates, being respectful, avoiding loose talking, etc. The vinaya served as controls imposed by the Sangha.⁶²

In history, numerous dedicated monks trekked long distances and overcame extreme geographical, political, and cultural barriers to learn and propagate the Buddhist faith. Members of monastic communities between India, China, and other countries made frequent exchanges across borders. For example, Kuchean monk Kumarajiva (344–413 CE) was brought to China by military generals where he translated numerous Buddhist texts from Sanskrit into Chinese.⁶³ Chinese monks Fa Xian traveled to Sri Lanka in 410 CE, Xuan Zang to India in 629 CE, and Yi Jing to India in 671CE. They studied in famous Indian monasteries and brought back to China Buddhist texts of different sects.

3. *The dialogical approach*

The fundamental belief in non-violence and peace predicates dialogical approach in the interaction and competition between Buddhism and other belief systems. During the Buddha's lifetime, there were many schools of thought in India. The Nikaya-pitaka records many instances when the Buddha and his followers visited or were visited by other faith groups such as Jainists and engaged in debate with them.⁶⁴ Such dialogical approaches helped the transmission of Buddhism without causing a confrontation with other beliefs. It is noteworthy that (Esoteric) Buddhism gained the status of Yuan Empire's state religion through two rounds of debate in 1255 and 1258 with Taoism, the previously dominant religion in Shang Du (today's Kaiping, Inner Mongolia, China). The debates were presided over by Kublai at the encouragement of his brother Mongke.⁶⁵

4. *Symbiotic relationship with long-distance trade work*

Land-borne and seafaring traders played a significant role in spreading Buddhism from South Asia to other parts of the world. There was a symbiotic relationship between the Buddhist Sangha and traders from the beginning. Anathapindika, who invited the Buddha to Kosala and donated a monastery to the Sangha, was a rich banker.⁶⁶ In the long history of Buddhist dissemination, numerous patrons and donors were businessmen, who were often very involved in long-distance trading and were in need of patron saints to protect them from risks and disasters. They donated to the Sangha to accumulate religious merit for themselves and their families; while the Sangha developed its own transmission network along the trade network.⁶⁷ In the history of Buddhist transmission from India to China, the Sogdian merchants from Central Asia played a significant role.⁶⁸

5. *Establishment of propagation institutions*

In the Buddha's lifetime, generous believers donated monasteries to the Sangha. For example, King Bimbisara donated the famous Bamboo Grove (Veluvana) Monastery.⁶⁹ These monasteries

became important learning centers and propagation institutions of Buddhism. As Buddhism became increasingly influential, some of the monasteries developed into large-scale monastic-university complexes that attracted students from different parts of the world. For example, during the Pala Empire (750–1174 CE) some state-funded monasteries in East India attracted monks, scholars, and students from such diverse locations as China, Tibet, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Korea, Greece, and Persia. It also attracted donations from foreign kings.⁷⁰ These monastic universities taught different schools of Buddhist thought and other disciplines such as medicine, and trained missionaries in the skills of transmitting Buddhism.⁷¹ They are considered among the earliest universities in the world. The largest ones included Nalanda, Odantapuri and Vikramasila. Historians recorded that Odantapuri permanently housed a thousand monks and sometimes “twelve thousand monks congregated there”.⁷² Chinese Monk Xuan Zang recorded that the Nalanda University had more than 1,500 teachers to look after and guide 10,000 students.⁷³ These monasteries continued to train monks until they were destroyed by invading Muslim troops in the 12th century.

6. Influence of opinion leaders.

The history of Buddhism’s transmission shows that opinion leaders in a society were usually the first influenced by the new faith. When kings, queens, princes, princesses, literati and artists became Buddhist followers, other members of society would more likely to accept the new faith. This is particularly true in the ancient times when a foreign idea could be easily perceived as a heresy and threat to the traditional beliefs. For example, when Buddhism was first introduced to China and Tibet, it was initially resisted by aboriginal faiths. With the effort of leaders in the societies, it went through a process of localization and was eventually accepted.

7. Translation of Buddhist texts and gifting in diplomacy

Perhaps the most important means of Buddhist transmission across borders is the translation of Buddhist texts as the faith entered into different countries and cultures. The Buddha’s teachings were

initially memorized and orally transmitted by his followers in Prakrit, a vernacular of ancient Maghada. Around the first century BCE, they were put into texts in Sri Lanka, known as the Pali Canon, which were translated into Burmese, Thai, and Cambodian languages. Around the same time, the Buddha's discourses were also written in Kharosthi, a written language for Ghandiri, which is another Prakrit language spoken in Ghandhara.⁷⁴ As Mahayana Buddhism prospered, the Buddhist texts in the second tradition were gradually written into Sanskrit, the liturgical language of Hinduism, probably because the kings and the monks found that Sanskrit better transmitted Buddhism to a larger area. Most of the Buddhist texts in China and Tibet were translated from Sanskrit.

Translation of Buddhist texts was often a joint effort by monks across different countries, sponsored by governments and private believers. For example, numerous Buddhist monks from India, Central Asia, Sri Lanka, and Funan (Cambodia) went to China in history, bringing with them Buddhist texts in Sanskrit and other languages which were translated into Chinese with the help of Chinese monks. Chinese royal courts also sent monks and embassies to India to obtain Buddhist texts and bring them back to be translated. For example, in 966 CE, the Song Emperor Taizu sent 157 Chinese monks to the "Western Region" on a Buddhist mission, who invited to China 80 foreign monks.⁷⁵ China's Sui Dynasty, Tang Dynasty, and Song Dynasty had set up governmental institutions and appointed officials in charge of translating Buddhist texts. The Chinese Tripitaka (*Da Zang Jing*) translated and compiled by the Song Court in total consisted of 6,620 volumes. Gifting of translated texts became an important diplomatic tool in the ancient world. During the Northern Song Dynasty, Japan, Korea, the Jurchens (Nüzhen) and the Tangut Empire (Western Xia) (1038–1227 CE) sent monks and embassies to request for block-printed copies of the Tripitaka compiled by the Song Dynasty, which were approved by the latter.⁷⁶

8. *Buddhist paraphernalia and art as a propagation vehicle*

Buddhist paraphernalia (caitya), which include remains of the Buddha's body, items he used, and objects built to commemorate

the Buddha, were important means of dissemination of Buddhism across countries.⁷⁷ Seedlings of the Bodhi tree under which the Buddha attained enlightenment were taken to Sri Lanka when Buddhism was first introduced there.⁷⁸ Chinese history book *Nan Qi Shu*⁷⁹ records that in the 6th century, the Funanese (Cambodian) king sent Buddhist presents to the Chinese emperor, including ivory stupas and a coral Buddha image. In response, the Chinese Court sent the monk Yunbao on a return visit to Funan, who brought back a 12-foot-long strand of hair claimed to be the Buddha's. Such relic veneration "sustained the establishment of a Buddhist world in a foreign land." For a period of time Buddhist paraphernalia even became an important export from India to China, which eventually led to the booming of regular trade.⁸⁰

Art, primarily sculptures, architecture, and paintings, was another major non-verbal cue that helped transmission of Buddhism across borders. In particular, Greco-Buddhist art, a syncretism between Hellenistic culture and Buddhist elements as a result of Alexander the Great's military campaign, prospered during the Kushan Empire in Gandhara. It greatly facilitated transmission of Buddhism. The artistic style influenced Indian Mathura art and the art of the Gupta Empire, which further influenced Buddhist art in Central Asia, China, Japan, and Korea. It also had influence in South Asia. For example, a Gandhara-style Buddha head, dated between 5-6th century, was found in Wat Compong Luong, Cambodia.⁸¹

9. *Localization of Buddhism*

Localization through assimilating indigenous culture was an important way for Buddhism to be transmitted from India to foreign lands. When Buddhist texts were first translated into Chinese, the translators used indigenous Chinese Taoist concepts and terms to help the intellectual circles better assimilate to the new faith. Another example of localization is the translation of the term *naga*, which in Buddhist texts referred to cobra. But in Chinese texts it was translated into dragon, the totem worshipped in China.⁸² By the Tang dynasty, Buddhism showed a move from introduction to absorption and creative internalization.⁸³ Numerous localized Buddhist

schools, such as Huayan, Tiantai, and Chan, have prospered. In Tibet, Buddhism interacted with the indigenous Bon religion and eventually gained dominance.

Decline of Buddhism in Asia

Buddhism started to decline in India during the latter half of the Gupta Empire when Brahmanism saw a revival (320–550 CE). At the end of the 5th century CE, the Huna invaded Northwestern India, destroying many monasteries and killing numerous monks. In the 7th century, Bengal King Sasanka invaded the Ganges plain and destroyed many Buddhist sites, including the Bodhi tree at Gaya, under which the Buddha reached his enlightenment.⁸⁴ The emergence of Vajrayana Buddhism (Tantric Buddhism), for which rituals, magic power, and sex are essential, in the 8th century also greatly caused the decline of Buddhism.⁸⁵ In the 12th century, the invading Muslim troops dealt a lasting heavy blow to Buddhism by destroying numerous monasteries, including the famous Nalanda Monastery. Since then Buddhism gradually died out in the Indian subcontinent.

In East and Southeast Asia, Buddhism rooted itself and underwent a long period of localization, but its dissemination was mostly stagnated within the region. The 19th century saw a massive colonization of Asia by European powers: the British colonized the Indian subcontinent. The French colonized Indochina. The Chinese empire was reduced to chaos by foreign invasions and civil wars. Japan westernized itself while colonizing Korea. As a result, Buddhism drastically declined in East Asia, Southeast Asia, and Central Asia, long after it became extinct in its native land of India. Buddhism lost state patronage in many nations, and it had to face pressure from Christianity first and later Communism. For example, Christian missionaries tried to convert Sri Lankan people to Christianity since the 16th century. In Burma, Buddhism was demoted as a state religion by the British.⁸⁶ Communists in Soviet Union and Mongolia banned Buddhism altogether until the 1960s.⁸⁷ Buddhists were persecuted in China for several decades.

Revival of Buddhism after the WWII

After WWII, Buddhism saw a revival when the formerly colonized Asian countries became independent. In 1950, the famous Sri Lankan Pali scholar Dr. Malalasekera initiated a world Buddhist conference in Colombo, which was attended by 129 delegates from 27 countries. The meeting was the first in Buddhist history that was attended by nearly all sects of Buddhism. At the meeting, the World Fellowship of Buddhists was founded, whose mission included propagating the doctrine of the Buddha and securing unity among Buddhists.⁸⁸

In 1954, the Sixth Buddhist Council was convened in Burma, attended by 2,500 monks from eight Theravada Buddhist countries. The event lasted until 1956, the 2500th anniversary of the Buddha's nirvana, which was another major Buddhist event celebrated by worldwide Buddhists with great religious fervor. The anniversary marked an awakening of Buddhism in South and Southeast Asia.⁸⁹ In 1966, Buddhist delegates from more than a dozen countries assembled at Colombo, Sri Lanka, and established the World Buddhist Sangha Council. Its missions include promoting exchanges of Sangha and different Buddhist traditions worldwide.⁹⁰

In East Asia, Japanese Buddhism first saw a revival and started its overseas expansion as the country's economy took off in the 1960s. In China, Buddhists began to see more freedom in 1978, after several decades of restrictions and persecution. As the Soviet Union disintegrated in 1991, Buddhism revived in Kalmyk, Buryatia, and Tuva. A similar revival occurred in Mongolia in the 1990s. Since the 1990s, there has been an explosion of academic students researching Buddhism in North and South America, Europe, Australia, and South Africa.⁹¹ At the turn of the 21st century, Asian countries, such as India, China, Japan, and South Korea, have launched a new wave of Buddhist diplomacy to project their soft power in the international arena. The United States has also been inextricably involved in Buddhist diplomacy in its engagement in Asian Pacific affairs.

Indian Buddhist diplomacy

After it was virtually extinct in India for centuries, Buddhism saw a modest revival in the country in the 19th century when Anagarika Dhammapala of Sri Lanka founded the Maha Bodhi Society of India.⁹² However, a large scale revival did not occur until the 1950s when Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, the drafter of Indian Constitution and a social activist, converted to Buddhism in 1956 along with many thousands of followers. There are nearly 8 million Buddhists in India today, making Buddhism the fifth largest religion in the country. Still, Buddhism constitutes less than one percent of the population.⁹³

India has become the ninth largest economy in the world in terms of its nominal GDP,⁹⁴ one of the fastest growing emerging economies, and a member of BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) emerging nations. In tandem with its economic growth it has sought to boost its soft power in the global arena. China's aggressive public diplomacy employing Buddhism has also drawn India into a competition to assert its place as the center of Buddhism.⁹⁵ As one Indian diplomat put it, "China has sought to keep India out of regional arrangements in Southeast Asia by portraying India as an outsider. By underlining the multi-millennia-old bond of Buddhism that it shares with these regions, India is quietly clarifying that it is not a gatecrasher."⁹⁶ India's governmental and non-governmental Buddhist diplomacy initiatives focus on the following aspects.

1. Hosting the 14th Dalai Lama and the Tibetan refugees

When the 14th Dalai Lama fled Tibet in 1959 after a botched uprising, Indian Prime Minister Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru allowed him and his followers to settle in Dharamsala in northern India. This to an extent has helped build India's international image as a humane protector of the Tibetans and a preserver of Tibetan culture and identity. In addition, it helped strengthen India-U.S. relations during the Cold War, when Nehru secretly aligned India with the United States on the Tibetan issue.⁹⁷ On the other hand, the Dalai Lama's

residence in India helped revival of Buddhism in the country and contributed to its recent push of Buddhist diplomacy. In 2007, for example, the Dalai Lama presided over a Buddhist ritual to convert more than half a million people to Buddhism at Mumbai's Mahalaxmi Racecourse. It was considered the largest religious conversion in India's history.⁹⁸ At the 2011 Global Buddhist Congregation in Delhi, a major event in India's soft power campaigns in recent years, the Dalai Lama was invited to deliver a keynote speech.

2. Sponsoring international Buddhist conferences on Nalanda University

The Asoka Mission, which was founded by the eminent Cambodian monk Ven. Dharmavara Mahathera in India in 1948 with support from Indian Prime Minister Nehru, organized a series of international Buddhist conferences, including the Meaning of Sri Nalanda in April 2003 and the Heritage of Nalanda in February, 2006 to commemorate the ancient Buddhist University's contributions to the world. Both conferences were attended by distinguished scholars and monks from Bhutan, China, India, Japan, Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam. The Dalai Lama inaugurated the conference.⁹⁹

3. Leading pan-Asian initiatives to revive Nalanda University

The idea of reviving Nalanda University was first initiated in the late 1990s. However, pan-Asian momentum to revive the ancient Buddhist center did not occur until 2006.¹⁰⁰ Major Asian nations, including India, China, Japan, South Korea, Thailand, and Singapore have actively engaged in the effort as part of their soft power diplomacy.¹⁰¹ The Indian government set up a Nalanda Mentor Group (NMG) as an interim governing board for the multi-million dollar effort, with the Nobel Laureate and Harvard University professor Amartya Sen as the chairman. Asian leaders such as former Singapore Foreign Minister George Yeo served as members of the board, who labeled the project as "the icon of Asian renaissance".¹⁰² The Nalanda Mentor Group held its first meeting

in Singapore in 2007. The Group agreed that “in a period which is witnessing the re-emergence of Asia as an economic hub, Nalanda has the potential of becoming a beacon of global understanding and world peace”.¹⁰³ The Indian parliament passed a bill in August 2010 approving plans to rebuild the university. The Indian government has committed US\$10 million to the project’s launch.¹⁰⁴

4. The 2011 Global Buddhist Congregation in Delhi

To commemorate the 2600th year of the Enlightenment of Buddha, the Asoka Mission organized a four-day Global Buddhist Congregation in November 2011 in New Delhi with the support from the Indian government. The Congregation, which aimed to become an international forum to promote peace, stability and prosperity in the world, invited 800 scholars, delegates and observers from 32 countries, with the Dalai Lama as chief guest. The event had strong diplomatic implications given that many participants were top government officials, such as prime ministers from Mongolia, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, and diplomats from the Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR).¹⁰⁵ As part of the effort to reach out to the youth, the Congregation held a Buddhist Cultural Heritage Festival that included stage performances, film shows and art, photography and book exhibitions from various countries. It is noteworthy that some see the event as India’s reaction to China’s the First World Buddhist Forum in 2006.¹⁰⁶

5. Promotion of Buddhist tourism

Although the Buddha was born in today’s Lumbini, Nepal, his enlightenment, first sermon, nirvana, and most of his teaching activities took place in India. There are many Buddhist sites in India and they constitute tourist destinations for world Buddhists. The Indian government has been actively tapping the Buddhist tourist resources as part of its nation branding campaign. In 2002, the Mahabodhi Temple Complex in Bodhgaya was declared a UNESCO World Heritage site, which set in motion many proposals to rehabilitate and recreate the Buddhist mecca.¹⁰⁷ The Indian government sponsored an “International Conclave on Buddhism

and Spiritual Tourism” in New Delhi in 2004, inaugurated by the President of India and attended by the Dalai Lama. The conclave recommended measures to rehabilitate the Buddhist sites. The Indian government has increased efforts to upgrade its infrastructure for such tourism.¹⁰⁸

China’s Buddhist diplomacy

The Chinese government has seen the benefits of faith diplomacy in boosting its soft power through setting up Confucius Institutes worldwide. It also has shown increasing interest in tapping Buddhism as a diplomatic resource. This probably has to do with the following facts: first, there are more than 100 million Buddhists in China. Promoting Buddhism internationally would have strong domestic political appeal for Buddhist followers, which is conducive to the Chinese government’s campaign of “building a harmonious society.” Second, historically Buddhism has been more deeply rooted in China (for more than two thousand years) than Islam and Christianity, and is largely a localized religion. Its doctrines and teachings have become a part of China’s national mentality and thus bear strong “Chineseness” in cultural diplomacy. Third, promoting its version of Buddhism and symbolic figures such as the Panchen Lama help to counterbalance the world influence of the Dalai Lama. Fourth, it is a convenient resource given that many Asian countries have a large number of Buddhists and are historically influenced by Buddhism. Finally, Buddhism was seldom associated with major upheavals and social conflicts in Chinese history and is thus deemed relatively harmless to the regime.

China’s Buddhist diplomacy has focused on the following aspects:

1. Sponsoring international Buddhist conferences

The Chinese government hosted two World Buddhism Forums in 2006 and 2009, respectively. The theme of the first forum was, “A harmonious world begins in the mind,” held in Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, with more than 1,000 Buddhist monks and

scholars from thirty-seven countries and regions invited. The forum naturally did not invite the Dalai Lama. The second forum, themed, “A harmonious world; A synergy of conditions,” brought in 1,700 monks and scholars from over fifty countries and regions.

The Chinese government’s intention to use these events to showcase its soft power was clearly articulated by the Panchen Lama, a Tibetan Buddhist leader who is believed to have been elevated to a high-profile political role by the Chinese government to help build influence among the world’s Buddhists as a counterbalance to the Dalai Lama. He said, “This event fully demonstrates that today’s China enjoys social harmony, stability and religious freedom. It also shows China is a nation that safeguards and promotes world peace”.¹⁰⁹

During the post-Mao era, China first employed Buddhism for diplomacy with South Korea and Japan in 1995, when Buddhist monks from three countries met for the first time in Beijing. The China-South Korea-Japan Buddhist Friendly Interaction Conference has since been held thirteen times. Senior Chinese religious leaders expressed hopes that such conferences should “promote friendship among the three countries in generations to come”.¹¹⁰

2. Joining in pan-Asian initiatives to revive Nalanda University

Chinese monk Xuan Zang trekked to Nalanda in 627CE and lived there for 13 years to study and teach Buddhism. He brought back many Buddhist texts to China and translated them into Chinese. Since the Indian government initiated the project to revive the ancient Buddhist propagation center in 2006, China has showed strong interest in it. In 2006, China donated US\$1 million to build a Chinese studies library for the planned university.¹¹¹ Professor Wang Bangwei of Beijing University was a member of the planning board to revive the university. In a joint declaration by the Indian government and the Chinese government, the two agreed to collaborate in the digitalization of Buddhist manuscripts available in China as well as the re-development of Nalanda as a major center of learning with the

establishment of an international university.¹¹² In February 2007, the then Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing inaugurated a memorial to Xuan Zang near the university's ruins in Bihar, India. The Chinese government sent truckloads of material to build the memorial hall, which houses a Chinese-made 10 meter tall statue of Xuan Zang. China's State Bureau of Religious Affairs also organized two monks, one from Chinese mainland and one from Taiwan, to travel on foot from China's Shaanxi to Nalanda.¹¹³

Relating to the Nalanda project, the Chinese government also showed interest in a project proposed by the Nepalese government to build a Buddhist circuit around the birthplace of the Buddha in Lumbini to attract Buddhist tourists to Nepal. A Chinese minister visited Lumbini to inspect the prospects.¹¹⁴ China is reportedly considering extending its Tibetan railway network to Nepalese capital Kathmandu, and eventually Lumbini.¹¹⁵ This will greatly boost Buddhist tourism in the region if realized.

3. Organizing exhibitions of Buddhist paraphernalia and art in other countries

The People's Republic of China first used Buddhist relics for diplomacy in 1955, when a sarira (Buddhist relic) of the Buddha's tooth was brought from China to Myanmar for display. The tooth was again sent to Myanmar in 1994 and 1996, which attracted hundreds of thousands of worshippers. In 1956, when the 14th Dalai Lama went to India to take part in the 2500th anniversary of the Buddha's nirvana, China's then Premier Zhou Enlai entrusted him to dispatch a piece of the Chinese monk Xuan Zang's skull relic to Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru as part of the plan to build a Xuan Zang memorial in India. But the plan was suspended after the Sino-Indian border conflict in 1962.¹¹⁶ The Chinese government lent the remains of the Buddha's tooth to Thailand in 2003 to honor the 75th birthday of the Thai King.¹¹⁷ Early in 1994, China lent the remains of finger bone of the Buddha to Thailand, which attracted numerous worshippers.

China has also used Buddhist art for diplomatic purposes. The country's National Museum held an exhibition of ancient Chinese sculptures of bodhisattva Guanyin (Avalokitasvara) in Mexican City. The Mexican Foreign Ministry organized a foreign diplomatic missions to Mexico for a tour of the exhibition.¹¹⁸ In April 2010, the Chinese government sent a 160-member Buddhist Orchestra Group to India to celebrate the 60th anniversary of Indo-China diplomatic ties. The group has also been sent to South Korea, Singapore, Indonesia, and Malaysia.

4. Training of Buddhist monks and scholars for better international exchange

The Chinese government realized that China's Buddhist sects as a whole have far less influence than Theravada Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhism in the world. In addition, Buddhist monks from the Chinese mainland in general lack language skills, particularly English, for the purposes of faith diplomacy. In 2008, China's State Bureau of Religious Affairs sponsored English language training classes for Chinese Buddhist monks. In 2010, a Buddhist temple in Guangdong, in collaboration with a university in South China and Lumbini Buddha University of Nepal, held a training seminar in English for Chinese Buddhist monks taught by Buddhist scholars and monks from Nepal and the United States.¹¹⁹

5. Engaging in power competition with the Dalai Lama in the international arena

The Chinese government insists that there is not a "Tibetan issue," and if there is one, it is only a matter of Chinese sovereignty and foreign conspiracy to split the nation.¹²⁰ But given that the Dalai Lama is the leader of Tibetan Buddhism, a laureate of Nobel Peace Prize with wide international influence and support, and a spiritual leader of the Tibetan government-in-exile, the Chinese government repetitively engaged in disputes with foreign governments over the Dalai Lama. Whenever the Dalai Lama is received as a guest by a foreign government the Chinese Foreign Ministry habitually

denounces it. In addition, the Chinese government has to defend its religious policy and practices in Tibet. Since 2011, a series of self-immolation by Tibetan lamas and nuns to call for international attention to their cause has brought the Chinese government into a face-to-face conflict with the Dalai Lama, Western governments and NGOs. The Chinese government accused the Dalai Lama and his associates of instigating the immolation. The Dalai Lama rejects such accusations.¹²¹

Japan's Buddhist diplomacy

As the first Asian country to successfully industrialize itself, Japan is also one of the first to employ Buddhism for diplomatic purposes among modern Asian countries. Japan started to introduce Zen Buddhism, which is primarily based on the Soto and Rinzai schools, to the West in the 19th century.¹²² During World War II, Japanese Buddhist sects, including Zen Buddhism, supported the country's militarism, nationalism and racism in its brutal invasion of other countries. Buddhist monks were sent to occupied areas as part of the government's colonization and international propaganda program.¹²³

1. Overseas expansion by Japanese Buddhist sects

After the World War Two, separation of church and state in the new constitution prompted resurgence, modernization, and overseas expansion of Japanese Buddhism.¹²⁴ D.T. Suzuki (1870–1966), along with many Zen teachers who emigrated to the United States and Europe, “repackaged” Japanese Zen Buddhism for the West.¹²⁵ Suzuki's effort was reportedly funded by the Japanese government.¹²⁶ Jodo Shinshu, or Shin Buddhism, which started to spread to North America in the 19th century, also increased its westward expansion after the War. Its affiliated organization, the Buddhist Church of America, currently has over 60 independent temples and a number of Fellowships and Sanghas with approximately 16,000 members throughout the United States.¹²⁷ Nichiren Shoshu Buddhism built a worldwide network along with its lay organization Soka Gakkai.

Soka Gakkai International disassociated itself from the Nichiren church in 1991. It is largely comprised of non-Japanese, including many African and Hispanic followers.¹²⁸ The organization claims that it links more than 12 million people around the world.¹²⁹

2. Japanese government's involvement in Buddhist diplomacy

The Japanese government has been actively involved in Buddhist diplomacy. It has funded many projects restoring world Buddhist relics, promoting Japanese Buddhist heritage to the world, engaging in international affairs that have to do with Buddhism, and using Buddhism as a means to promote bilateral political relations with other countries.

The Japanese government created the Japan Foundation and the Japanese Trust Fund for the Preservation of World Cultural Heritage to fund international cultural exchange programs and restoration of cultural and heritage sites. It has funded preservation and restoration of Buddhist relics in many countries such as China, Myanmar, Uzbekistan, Thailand, India, and Cambodia. The Japanese government has also showed strong interest in the multinational effort to revive the Nalanda University in India. Japanese Foreign Ministers met with the Mentor Group of the planned university and Indian Prime Minister in 2007 and 2010, respectively, to discuss Japan's support for the project.¹³⁰ As part of the Japan-Indian Global Partnership signed in 2006, the Japanese government has agreed to invest \$100 million for the university.¹³¹ In addition, with the support of Japan's "Grant Assistance for Gross Projects", the Japanese government built 42 tube wells in villages in Nalanda to help the local people.¹³²

The Japanese government has also actively promoted Japanese Buddhist Heritage to the world. For example, the government nominated two of Japan's Buddhist sites, Hiraizumi temples, gardens and archaeological sites representing the Buddhist Pure Land and Buddhist buildings in the Horyu-ji area, to be inscribed on the World Heritage List. When Japan hosted the 2010 APEC conference, it

scheduled events such as a photo session in front of the Great Buddha of Kamakura at the Kotoku-in Temple, a demonstration of Zen meditation, and a Buddhist vegetarian meal. As part of the festival to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the first Japanese planting of cherry trees in Washington, D.C. the Japanese government built a zen rock garden in the United States capital.¹³³

Japan is quick to align itself with Buddhists in its international affairs. For example, when the Taliban threatened in 2001 to destruct the Pamiyan Buddha statue in Afghanistan, the Japanese government engaged in active shuttle diplomacy trying to prevent the destruction.¹³⁴ When Myanmar monks took to the streets protesting the country's military junta in 2007, Japanese officials called on the Myanmar government to engage in "genuine dialogue" with the Buddhist monks.¹³⁵

Buddhism also serves as means to strengthen bilateral relations in Japan's diplomacy. For example, when Mongolian President Nanbaryn Enkhbayar visited Japan, his schedule included visiting two Buddhist temples; one in Fujisawa, the other in Yokohama.¹³⁶ When the newly wed Bhutanese King and Queen visited Japan in 2011, they used a chisel to make a cut in a carving of the Buddha made from a pine log washed away in the tsunami and offered it as a prayer for its victims.¹³⁷

South Korea: Efforts to globalize Korean Buddhism

The Korean Peninsula was split into two countries after the WWII, and for decades Korean Buddhism was isolated due to the situation on the peninsula, with factional strife in South Korea's Buddhist community and draconian control of monks and temples by the government in North Korea.¹³⁸ However, as South Korea has become a major player in the global economy in the past two decades, the country sees the need to boost its soft power.¹³⁹ South Korea's Buddhist diplomacy is conducted through government and non-government collaborations.

1. The Jogye Order's Buddhist diplomacy initiatives

Since 2011, South Korea's largest Buddhist sect Jogye Order has been actively globalizing Korean Buddhism through overseas visits and the establishment of administrative networks in the world. Its leader Ven. Jaseung consciously related Korea's Buddhist diplomacy to South Korea's nation branding. He said, "if Korean Buddhism was known to the world, the national brand and status could be spontaneously uplifted together".¹⁴⁰ He told the media at a press conference in Paris that the Order would concentrate on promoting Korean Buddhism to the world through a long-term plan to come to fruition either 10 to 20 years or 40 to 50 years later.¹⁴¹

The Jogye Order attempts to differentiate Korean Buddhism from Japanese Zen and Chinese Chan by promoting Korea's Seon Buddhism (Zen).¹⁴² One of Korea's eminent monks argued that "Korean Seon Buddhism preserves the original form of the traditional Buddhism more than any other.... Now it is the right time to promote our Seon culture to the world".¹⁴³ The Jogye Order aspires to the success of Tibetan Buddhism and is trying to adopt its propagation model. For example, Dharma talks by the masters of the Order have been translated and published in English, edited by English speaking monks and Korean experts.¹⁴⁴

According to the *Korea Times*, the Jogye Order has provided as much as \$100,000 in grants to attract foreign students majoring in Korean studies and foreign monks to practice Korean Buddhism. Other programs include setting up a school of Zen named after an eminent Korean monk, assimilating and training foreign-born monks, meeting with UNESCO officials to promote Korean Buddhist cultural heritage such as the lotus lantern festival, performing Korean Buddhist rituals and music on foreign university campuses, and founding a temple led by non-Korean monks with the purpose to serve as a bridge between Korean Buddhism and the West.¹⁴⁵ The Order also plans to open the first temple food restaurant on the rooftop at Galleries Lafayette in Paris to globalize Korean Buddhist temple cuisine. It has held seminars on temple food in the U.S.

and Germany.¹⁴⁶ The International Dharma Instructors Association (IDIA), which is affiliated to the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism, opened up English classes on Buddhism.¹⁴⁷ In 2010, Dongguk University of South Korea held a conference titled “Ganhwaseon, Illuminating the World”. The conference invited international scholars so they could experience practice of ganhwaseon, which is a method of meditation.¹⁴⁸ The University plans to hold another international conference on Buddhist studies that will invite scholars from Harvard University, UCLA, Toronto University and Hawaii University.¹⁴⁹

As early as 2007, the Korean Buddhists opened the Buddhist English Library of Seoul (BELS) in preparation to globalize Korean Buddhism.¹⁵⁰ In 2009, Korean Buddhists held a conference titled “Outlook and Meaning of the Globalization of ‘Ganhwa Seon’.” The participants agreed that great efforts should be made to translate Korean Buddhist works into English.¹⁵¹ Soon after, the Korea Buddhism Promotion Foundation published a book in English titled “The Colors of Korean Buddhism: 30 Icons and Their Stories” to introduce Korean Buddhism to foreigners.¹⁵² The Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism launched a multilingual website on its temple-stay programs to attract foreign visitors to experience Korean Buddhist temples, which also incorporated social media such as Twitter and Facebook.¹⁵³ Another master of the Order, Ven. Jinje, visited the United States in 2002 at the invitation of the U.S. Congress along with world religious leaders from 140 countries. He took the opportunity to hold several Dharma talks in the U.S. and to promote his English language book on Korean Buddhism.¹⁵⁴

In June 2012, the Jogye Order and its Central Council of the Laity organized the 26th World Fellowship of Buddhists Conference in Yeosu city of South Korea. About 400 delegates from 30 countries attended the conference. However, a dispute occurred when the Chinese delegation abruptly returned home in protest against Tibetan participation of the conference. The Jogye Order accused the Chinese delegates of “lacking the least respect and consideration” by politicizing a religious event and demanded an apology. It also

claimed that would “seriously reconsider” its relations with Chinese Buddhists.¹⁵⁵

2. The South Korean government's Buddhist diplomacy

The South Korean government has been actively involved in Buddhist diplomacy. In December 2011, South Korea's National Gugak Center, which is affiliated with the Ministry of Culture with the mission to promote Korean culture in the world, sponsored a Korean Buddhist music performance in France and Germany.¹⁵⁶ Buddhist diplomacy plays a role in South Korea's relations with North Korea. The Jogye Order's motto is to “live along with the North”. For the Buddha's Birthday in 2012, the Order invited the president of North Korea's Buddhist federation to join the ceremony in Seoul.¹⁵⁷ Top Buddhist monks visited North Korea at the invitation of the North's Korean Council of Religionists in 2011 as part of the effort to bring the two Koreas back onto a path of reconciliation and cooperation.¹⁵⁸ Buddhists in the two Koreas have collaborated in seeking Korean cultural relics from the U.S. and Japan.¹⁵⁹ However, a Jogye Order group scheduled to visit North Korea to discuss expanding Buddhist exchanges between the two Koreas was rejected in 2010 by Pyongyang after the South Korea's Unification Ministry approved the trip.¹⁶⁰ The South Korean government also showed interest in the international effort to revive the Nalanda University. South Korea President Lee Myung-bak promised that his country would examine possible ways to contribute.¹⁶¹

During the 2010 G20 Seoul Summit, Won Buddhism of Manhattan, a U.N.-accredited NGO and a modern branch of Korean Buddhism, held a religion and culture summit on ethics and global leadership.¹⁶² In 2009, as part of its diplomatic initiatives with Burma, the Korea Broadcasting Institute (KBI) signed an agreement with the Myanmar Ministry of Information on shooting documentary film on Myanmar's Buddhism.¹⁶³

The Dalai Lama's Buddhist diplomacy

The first sign of a sour relationship between the Dalai Lama and the Chinese government emerged in 1956 when he went to India to attend the 2500th anniversary of the Buddha's nirvana. The Dalai Lama was reportedly planning to settle in India after the event. The then Chinese premier Zhou Enlai went to India, with help from Prime Minister Nehru, and persuaded him to return to Tibet. Three years later, in 1959, the Dalai Lama fled to India after a failed Tibetan uprising. Since then, he has gradually shifted from a symbol of Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism to a symbol of the Tibetan cause and, eventually, to a symbol of Buddhism in the world.¹⁶⁴ Throughout the years, Tibetan Buddhism has become a fundamental venue through which the Dalai Lama and his associates have gained international sympathy and support for their political cause.

Since 1959, the Dalai Lama has made extensive travels and met with many celebrities in the world. He has received numerous awards and honors, the highest of which is the 1989 Nobel Peace Prize. His autobiographies in English and the Hollywood movies based on his life, such as *Kundun* and *Seven Years in Tibet*, helped in the projection of his globally popular image. He has delivered numerous speeches on Buddhism, compassion, environment, the middle-way approach, world peace, religious harmony, and Tibet to a worldwide audience. He has hosted numerous Tibetan Buddhist rituals such as "kalachakra" in many countries. All these have been powerful marketing instruments for Tibetan Buddhism.¹⁶⁵ Tibetan monks have set up many monasteries and centers of Tibetan Buddhism in the West. Their missions focused on the universality of Buddhist teaching, and as a result the Tibetans have successfully portrayed themselves to Westerners as a deeply religious and non-violent people and the hapless victims of Chinese oppression.¹⁶⁶

A number of issues concerning the Dalai Lama's Buddhist diplomacy are noteworthy. First, the Dalai Lama's Buddhist diplomacy has been deeply entangled in real world power relations from its start. His cause and diplomacy has received support from

the United States since the Cold War era.¹⁶⁷ In 1991, as the Soviet Union was disintegrating, the Dalai Lama made a historic visit to the Russian Buddhist republics of Buryatia, Aginski and Kalmykia. However, when he planned to make another visit in 2010, the Russian government assured the Chinese government that he would not be granted a visa.¹⁶⁸ In 2011, the South African government denied the Dalai Lama's request for a visa allegedly under China's pressure.¹⁶⁹ Second, some of the Dalai Lama's followers, including monks and nuns in Tibet, have showed signs of radicalizing their cause by engaging in riots (including the 2008 Lhasa unrest) and by committing a series of self-immolations since 2011, which have gained sympathy for their cause but may stray away from the middle-approach that the Dalai Lama advocates. It is likely that some activist groups of Tibetan monks and nuns may give up the non-violent approach, which will pose great challenges to both the Dalai Lama and the Chinese government. Lastly, the 14th Dalai Lama's reincarnation will almost certainly become an issue for the major powers' diplomacy. As the Chinese government insists that a reincarnated 15th Dalai Lama must get its approval, the 14th Dalai Lama has claimed that his successor could be female or found outside Tibet.¹⁷⁰ Foreseeably, if the 15th Dalai Lama is found in the United States, India, Mongolia, or Russia, he or she would certainly become a flashpoint between China and the concerning countries.

U.S. Buddhist diplomacy

Although the U.S. Constitution dictates separation of church and state, in foreign affairs it has engaged in religious affairs and the politics associated with it. The U.S. government's engagement with Buddhism primarily has focused on supporting the Dalai Lama, promoting religious freedom worldwide, and dealing with political issues that have to do with Buddhism.

1. U.S. support of the Dalai Lama

The U.S. first became involved with Buddhist diplomacy and the Tibetan Dalai Lama regime when President Franklin Roosevelt wrote to the fourteenth Dalai Lama in 1943 asking him to assist two

U.S. officers in Tibet. The letter was addressed to the Dalai Lama “in his religious capacity, ‘rather than in his capacity of secular leader of Tibet, so as not to offend the Chinese Government which includes Tibet in the territory of the Republic of China’”.¹⁷¹ In the 1950s and 1960s, the U.S. government provided financial and military aid to Tibetan guerrilla forces as part of its effort to contain Chinese communists, but it cut official contact with the Tibetan government-in-exile in the 1970s and 1980s when it established diplomatic relations with China.¹⁷²

In 1991, former U.S. president George H. W. Bush met with the Dalai Lama as a religious leader. It was the first time a Western head of state had met with the Dalai Lama. The Voice of America started its Tibetan broadcasting service in the same year. From 1991 to 2011, all U.S. Presidents, including President Bill Clinton, President George W. Bush, and President Barack Obama, have met with the Dalai Lama.¹⁷³ In 2007, President Bush presented to the Dalai Lama the Congressional Medal of Honor, the highest civilian award bestowed by American lawmakers. Bush said, “I have consistently told the Chinese that religious freedom is in their nation’s interest. I’ve also told them that I think it’s in their interest to meet with the Dalai Lama”.¹⁷⁴ In 2001, the U.S. government appointed a special coordinator to encourage the Dalai Lama and China’s talks.¹⁷⁵ The U.S. Congress passed the Tibetan Policy Act (TPA) in the following year, which established U.S. principles with respect to religious freedom, human rights, political prisoners, and economic development projects in Tibet.

2. Annual International Religious Freedom Report by the Department of State

The U.S. Department of State has issued an International Religious Freedom Report annually in compliance with the International Religious Freedom Act (IRFA) of 1998. Part of United States national interest is to promote religious freedom in the world, Buddhism and issues associated with it are part of the report’s focus. For example, the 2001 report accused Myanmar of exercising

religious intolerance by “coercively promoting Buddhism over other religions”. The report accused the Chinese government of restricting Tibetan Buddhism.¹⁷⁶ The United States also showed its concern over China’s pressure on Nepal to restrict Tibetan monks’ activities in the country.¹⁷⁷

3. U.S. support of Myanmar Buddhist monks’ “Saffron Revolution” (2007)

In August 2009, Myanmar Buddhist monks took to street to protest against the military junta’s mismanagement of the country. The protest movement became known as “the Saffron Revolution”, named after the color of the Buddhist monks’ outer garments. As the military junta cracked down on the protests, the United States and the European Union issued a joint statement and called on the junta to stop the violence and open discussions with political prisoner Aung San Suu Kyi. The United States and the EU also called on China, Indonesia and India to use their influence to reduce tensions between the government and the people. In 2012, as Myanmar was experiencing significant political transformation, the U.S. government urged the Myanmar government to release a prominent Buddhist monk who was one of the leaders of a 2007 anti-government uprising.¹⁷⁸

Buddhist churches and lay Buddhist organizations within the United States have engaged in active international exchanges across the border. Buddhism was first brought to the United States by Chinese and Japanese immigrants in the 19th century and is still practiced by many Asian immigrants. Since the 1950s, there have emerged a number of distinct Americanized (or convert) Buddhist communities, namely Zen Buddhism inspired by Japanese Buddhism, Tibetan Buddhism, the Theravada-inspired Insight Meditation Movement, and Soka Gakkai International, an American Branch of Soka Gakkai Japan.¹⁷⁹ Some of these communities, in particular the Tibetan Buddhist community, have actively engaged in international affairs. A study by the Pew Research Center shows that as of 2010, there are about 1.7 million Buddhist immigrants

living in the United States,¹⁸⁰ and the country is the top destination for Buddhist immigrants.¹⁸¹ Such immigrant Buddhists may help forge enduring religious, cultural, and political links to their Asian homelands.¹⁸²

Discussions and conclusion

In its 2,600 years of development and dissemination, Buddhism experienced numerous ups and downs. But it has managed to extend its reach to the entire globe in a very peaceful manner. Beyond Asia, Buddhism has rooted itself in Europe, North America, Australia, Africa, Middle East (Israel), and Latin America.¹⁸³ As of the turn of the 21st century, as is shown above, Buddhism is undergoing a new wave of international expansion.

The early spread of Buddhism was closely intertwined with the pan-Eurasian trade networks and greatly promoted cross-civilization communications. The ongoing globalization in today's world posed another great opportunity for further expansion of the faith. New communication technologies, primarily the Internet, and English as a global language, made it possible for Buddhist clergy and laity worldwide to access almost all of the Buddhist resources—such as texts, art and studies—which were formerly confined by geographical, lingual, and sectarian bounds. Historically, the dissemination of Buddhism has received great support from royalties of various countries, which is both a boon and a bane for the faith because very often the faith has been alienated from the teachings of the Buddha as a result of political influence. There were even cases where Buddhist texts were interpolated for political purposes. The democratization of politics in modern era and dissociation of Buddhism from state sponsorship will ensure the development of the faith continues on a less politicized course. In addition, the abundant experience of international NGOs and the lessons of the dissemination of other faiths, such as Christianity, will be valuable resources for Buddhist dissemination. Lastly, the perpetual themes of Buddhism, including peace, tolerance, nonviolence, and loving-kindness, still have contemporary value and appeal to the worldwide population.

This being said, a number of factors may hinder the constructive role of Buddhism in global affairs. First, although in most countries church and state are separated, the latter seems to always have an urge to employ the faith for its political purpose. This is very clear in China and India's cases, where the faith is considered to be a tool to project their "soft power". As history has shown, this is not always beneficial to Buddhism. Second, although all Buddhist sects regard the Buddha as the ultimate root of their faith, in reality, Buddhism is not a one-god religion like Christianity and Buddha is not worshipped as a god. As a result, there are numerous Buddhist sects, many of which use different texts and practice and worship very different things, and often there is little communication between the sects. This inevitably results in inconsistent messages and can cause confusion among the world audience, in particular in regions that are newly exposed to Buddhism. Third, the management of different Buddhist sects represents very different power relations within the sects. In some there are Western-style committees, but in others the masters, teachers, and founding members have the final say.¹⁸⁴ This could become problematic because a number of scandals surrounding Buddhism in the West have to do with the temples' unique management styles.¹⁸⁵ Last but not least, English has become a global language and Buddhists have to master the language to improve their communication. Many Buddhist temples have faced language problems in engaging in international communication.

As the world's only superpower, the United States has been the top destination of Buddhist immigrants. Although the predominant religion in the United States is Christianity, ironically it may be the only country in the world where all sects of Buddhism could be found. In the past decades, many eminent Buddhist monks have immigrated to the United States, founded temples and taught Dharma. Top universities in the United States, such as Harvard University, the University of Chicago, Yale University, and Columbia University, have hosted the best academic programs and prominent scholars on Buddhist research. In this sense, the United States boasts very rich Buddhist resources. Some even argued that an indigenous American form of the Dharma, or "American Buddhism", will emerge.¹⁸⁶ With

English being a global lingua franca, it is not unimaginable that the United States will one day become another center of Buddhist teaching and dissemination. Such a possibility will certainly enhance U.S. faith diplomacy in its international affairs, in particular its relations with Asian countries.

Endnotes

1. This research uses “Dharma” (translation from Sanskrit), except when citing directly from text translated from the Pali tradition, which uses “Dhamma.”
2. Majjhima Nikaya.26; also see The Mahavagga. 5
3. Some argue that this number is grossly underestimated. Statistics on the Buddhist population in the world vary depending on the definition of being a Buddhist. The Asoka Mission, an NGO devoted to Buddhism research and propagation, states that “a fifth of the world population devotedly follow” the Buddha’s teaching (<http://asokamission.in/sites/default/files/Brochure%20-%20GBC.pdf>). Some estimate the number to be as high as 1.2 billion (See “Buddhists around the world” at http://www.thedhamma.com/buddhists_in_the_world.htm.)
4. Johnson & Johnson, 2007, p.6
5. Mahavagga.22; Zhong Ahan Jing. 62
6. MN.87; Zhong Ahan Jing. 216
7. AN. 5.49, AN. 10.30, SA. 3
8. Chang Ahan Jing. 17.27; DN. 2
9. SA.3.2.5
10. AN.4.17; DN.2.72; Zeng Yi Ahan Jing.40.2
11. SN. 55.6
12. see Zeng Yi Ahan Jing, 6.3
13. DN.15.22
14. Zen Yi Ahan Jing. 34.2
15. DN.16
16. Cullavagga. 11.12
17. Mahavamsa. 3
18. Mahavamsa. 4
19. Mahavamsa.5
20. Sen, 1999, p. 150
21. Dhammika, 1993
22. Bhikku Pesala, 1991
23. Minor Rock Edicts

24. Dhammika, 1993
25. Rock Edict V
26. Sen, 1999, p. 150
27. Mahavamsa.14
28. Jing Hai, 2002; Bhikku Mahinda, 2005
29. Stuart-Fox, 1997
30. Jing Hai, 2002
31. Harris, 2005
32. Sen, 1999, p. 144
33. Neelis, 2004
34. The Theravada tradition had its own Fourth Council, which took place in the 1st century BCE in Sri Lanka. The Pali canon was for the first time committed to writing on palm leaves during the Council.
35. *Chronicles of the History of Buddhism.* 53
36. Murthy, 1989
37. Lee, 2007
38. Murthy, 1989
39. Williams, 2009, p. 187
40. Sen, 2004
41. Goldstein, 1997
42. Murthy, 1989
43. Harris, 1999; Rahul, 1968
44. Bary, 1972
45. Runes, 1955
46. Puri, 1993; Timothy, 2011
47. Foltz, 2010
48. Sinor, 1995
49. Johnson & Johnson, 2009
50. AN.42.9
51. DN.16
52. MN. 93
53. Bhikkhu Mettanando, 2002

54. DN.21
55. SA.35.88
56. see SN.55.1; also see Zeng Yi Ahan Jing 39.8
57. Williams, 2009, p. 11
58. Sen, 2004, p.62, 80
59. 2002, p. 2
60. Vinaya. 1.21, cited from Mettanando, 2000
61. Mettanando, 2000
62. Hirakawa, 1990; MN.69
63. *Gao Sen Zhuan*, or *Biographical Collection of Eminent Monks*. 2
64. see AN.8.12; MN.101; AN.4.195
65. Shi Xiang Mai, 2002
66. SN.10.8
67. Neelis, 2011
68. Sinor, 1995
69. Mahavagga.22
70. Sen, 2004, p. 106
71. Williams, 2009, p. 84
72. Sen, 2004, p.108
73. Asoka Mission, 2011
74. Hinuber, 2004, 2010; Salomon, 1995; Sinor, 1995
75. Xiu Ming, 2000
76. Xiu Ming, 2000
77. Sharf, 2011
78. Mahavamsa.18
79. *The History of the Qi Dynasty*.39
80. Sen, 2004, p. 57
81. Harris, 2005, p. 5
82. Tong, 2010
83. Tong, 2010
84. Sen, 1999, p. 88
85. Barua, 1999; Eliot, 1962

86. Spiro, 1982
87. Lovgren, 2008
88. WFBHQ [World Fellowship of Buddhist Headquarters], 2012
89. Weeraratna, 2011
90. World Buddhist Sangha Council, 2012
91. Baumann & Prebish, 2002, p. 5, 6
92. Lama Lobzang, 2011
93. Lennon, 2011, September 13
94. IMF, 2011
95. Overdorf, 2012, January 19
96. Ramachandran, 2007
97. Wales, 2003
98. Loudon, 2007, May 12
99. Asoka Mission, 2012
100. Noi, 2006
101. Shekhar, 2007
102. The Nation [Thailand], 2011, November 24; Lee, 2007, June 20
103. Singh, 2007, July 22.
104. The Nation [Thailand], 2011
105. Asoka Mission, 2011
106. Jacob, 2011, December 8
107. Geary, 2008
108. Agrawal , Choudhary & Tripathi, 2010
109. Xinhua News Agency, 2009, March 28
110. Xinhua News Agency, 2010, 19 October
111. The Nation [Thailand], 2011
112. People Daily, 2006, November 22
113. Abdi, 2007
114. Giri, 2010
115. Pradhan, 2012
116. Abdi, 2007
117. People Daily, 2002, December 16

118. Chinese Embassy to Mexico, 2008
119. Huang, 2011
120. Xinhua News Agency, 2009, March 3
121. The Telegraph, 2012, April 6
122. McMahan, 2002; Snodgrass, 2003
123. He, 2006; Victoria, 2006
124. Kawanami, 1999
125. McMahan, 2002
126. Nan, 2002
127. Buddhist Church of America, 2012
128. Wallace, 2002
129. Soka Gakkai International, 2012
130. MOFA, 2007, December 14
131. Shekhar, 2007
132. Nadim, 2012
133. The New Zealand Herald, 2012
134. MOFA, 2001, March 21
135. Monten, 2007
136. MOFA, 2007, Feb. 27
137. MOFA, 2011, November 21
138. Sorensen, 1999
139. Nye, 2009
140. Do, 2011, December 27
141. Chung, 2011, October 2
142. Do, 2011, December 27
143. Chung, 2011, April 13
144. Do, 2011, October 4
145. Chung, 2011, April 13; Do, 2011, December 27
146. Cho, 2012, February 8
147. *Korea Times*, 2012, January 2
148. Chung, 2011, May 9
149. Chung, 2011, April 13

150. Han, 2009, April 29
151. Han, 2009, November 23
152. Han, 2010, November 21
153. Lee, 2011, January 3
154. Do, 2012, January 18
155. AFP, 2012, June 14
156. Lee, 2011, December 4
157. Lee, 2012, January 17
158. Song, 2011, September 21
159. Lee, 2010, March 30
160. BBC Worldwide Monitoring, 2010, March 13
161. Nalanda University, 2012
162. Min, 2010, November 5
163. BBC Worldwide Monitoring, 2009, August 23
164. Bentz, 2012
165. Bentz, 2012
166. Schwartz, 1999
167. Conboy & Morrison, 2002; Goldstein, 2006
168. Tsering, 2010
169. Polgreen, 2011
170. Wong, 2010
171. Goldstein, 1999, p.39
172. Goldstein, 1995
173. International Campaign for Tibet, 2012
174. Naylor, 2007
175. Pal, 2006
176. U.S. Department of State, 2001
177. U.S. Department of State, 2011
178. The Asian Age, 2012
179. Seager, 2002
180. The number does not include American converts.
181. Audi, 2012

182. Seager, 2002
183. Baumann & Prebish, 2002
184. Clasquin, 2002
185. Bell, 2002
186. Seager, 2002

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