

journal of global buddhism

དྲ་གླ་བ་

Research Article

The Meeting of Traditions:
Inter-Buddhist and Inter-Religious Relations in the West.

By Oliver Freiberger



Copyright Notice

Digital copies of this work may be made and distributed provided no charge is made and no alteration is made to the content. Reproduction in any other format with the exception of a single copy for private study requires the written permission of the author.

All enquiries to jgb-general@jgb.la.psu.edu.

<http://jgb.la.psu.edu>

**The Meeting of Traditions:
Inter-Buddhist and Inter-Religious Relations in the West**

By

Oliver Freiberger

Department for the Study of Religion

University of Bayreuth, Germany

oliver.freiberger@uni-bayreuth.de

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: BUDDHIST MODERNISM

From the very beginning of Buddhism, the doctrine of the Buddha, or Dharma, was interpreted and developed in various ways. Certain schools with different views of the discipline of the *sangha*, of philosophical issues, or of religious practices emerged in the course of time. While spreading over Asia, new alliances were formed with other religious and cultural elements, and new shapes of Buddhism came into being. Unlike (Western) Christianity, Buddhism did not establish a centrally organized institution and authority, and so the various forms of Buddhism were free to develop independently. Thus in “traditional” Buddhism (in pre-modern times)¹, there was little “official” contact between Buddhists of different schools or institutions.

The situation changed in the nineteenth century with the Buddhist revival movement, when a new form of Buddhism emerged under the condition of the confrontation with Christian missionaries and Western colonialism: the so-called “Buddhist modernism.”² In this movement, an awareness of the unity of all Buddhists emerged. This was observable already in 1889, when the leading figure of the revival movement in Ceylon, Anagārika Dharmapāla, and his American mentor, theosophist Henry Steel Olcott, visited Japan in order to establish a connection between the “two great divisions of the Buddhist world” with the hope “that the Buddhists of Asia would unite for the good of the whole Eastern world.”³ In the first half of the twentieth century, a number of organizations were established with the intention of supporting a closer cooperation between the various forms of Buddhism.⁴ These organizations, however, often tended to present their respective traditions as the true and embracing form of Buddhism.⁵

Finally, in 1950, the first worldwide all-Buddhist organization was established: the World Fellowship of Buddhists (WFB). The driving force in this process and founder-

president of the WFB was the Ceylonese G. P. Malalasekera, a well-known scholar of Pāli and Buddhist studies⁶ At the first conference of the WFB, representatives from most Buddhist countries in Asia, and also some from the West (including, among others, the United States, Britain, France, and Germany), assembled and laid down a number of resolutions. These contained the acceptance of the eight-spoked wheel and the six-colored Buddhist flag as international Buddhist symbols, and agreement on an international “Buddha Day” in May (*Visakha/Vesakh*). Furthermore, the term *Hīnayāna* was officially replaced by *Theravāda*.

A number of committees were established, and fifteen motions were proposed for their consideration, out of which one (number thirteen) is most important for inter-Buddhist relations: “That this Conference is of opinion that all the different Buddhist countries of Asia should unite together into an economic, political and cultural federation to stand out as a bastion of peace in East Asia and to lead the world on the path of peace, brotherliness, and universal love as indicated by the Great Master; and it sends out an appeal to the different Buddhist countries to evolve a machinery on the model of the United Nations Organization for the aforesaid purpose.”⁷ Two features in this statement are characteristic of Buddhist modernism: the conviction that Buddhism is the religion that fulfills the needs of modern times and leads to peace and harmony (the aim of unification); and the propagation of democracy manifested in an organization modeled after a secular, democratic Western organization, and not after a hierarchical institution like the Roman Catholic Church (the *form* of unification).⁸ Both features have been maintained in inter-Buddhist relations in the West as well: joint social engagement and a democratic attitude.

The motivation of Malalasekera and his cooperators was also based on the conviction that most of the differences between Buddhist schools and traditions “were due to misunderstanding and that unanimity about many of them, too, could be reached by friendly discussion and mutual exchange of views.”⁹ This idea of exchange among different views has also become a feature of inter-Buddhist activities in the West. While preparing the first WFB conference, however, Malalasekera went one step further. Through reading the sources and through personal contacts, he came to the conclusion “that all Buddhists whether they be Mahayana or Theravada believed in and accepted the same fundamental doctrines,” which were, in short, the acceptance of Buddha Śākyamuni as the teacher supreme, the Four Noble Truths, the concept of dependent origination, the three characteristic marks of existence (impermanence, suffering, and selflessness), and the rejection of the idea of a supreme creator.¹⁰ Leaving aside the last point that is, of course, a sideswipe at

Christianity, it is telling that such general doctrines are emphasized and not, for example, religious practice (including rituals and veneration), sacred texts (including the question of a common canon), or the structure and role of the *sangha* (including phenomena like married *bhikkhus* and hereditary temple offices). Apart from the fact that it would not have been easy to agree on these topics, it is again characteristic for Buddhist modernists to emphasize doctrines and to leave out more popular practices. This is also part of the “Protestant” character of Buddhist modernism, resembling Christian Protestantism in its rather intellectual approach.¹¹ The support of Western scholars with a Protestant background and the confrontation with Christian missionaries, furthermore, had stimulated the modernists to a certain extent already in the nineteenth century.¹² Early Buddhist converts in the West interpreted Buddhism just like Buddhist modernists in Asia, and although in the second half of the twentieth century more emphasis was laid on religious practice, a certain sense of superiority against alleged degenerate devotional practice of popular Buddhism remained among many Western Buddhists.¹³

In those early developments of inter-Buddhist relations in Asia, we can already observe two important aspects of religious globalization. One is the worldwide spread of certain global issues (democracy; peace for the whole world; equality; responsibility for the earth, the poor and starving people), supported by the modern media of communication. The other is the act of presenting these issues as part of the very core of the preferred (here, the Buddhist) tradition and pointing out that this tradition is ideal for solving global problems. The global attitude of the World Fellowship of Buddhists is, therefore, an expression of Buddhist modernism as well as an early example of religious globalization.¹⁴ The spread of the Buddhist (modernist) interpretation of global issues into the West is a third aspect that is discussed in the second part of this chapter.

DIMENSIONS OF INTERACTION

In order to categorize inter-Buddhist and inter-religious relations in the West, one might distinguish three dimensions of interaction: the *institutional*, the *ethnic*, and the *religious* dimension. I will sketch each dimension briefly and give a few examples.

The Institutional Dimension

The most apparent dimension of inter-Buddhist encounter appears to be the dimension of institutions. Similar to the pluralism of Buddhist schools in the whole of Asia, a colorful pluralistic situation exists in each of the Western countries. Umbrella organizations were

established in a number of Western countries in order to bring together Buddhist groups and provide a forum for exchange. The emergence of these organizations is similar to the emergence of the World Fellowship of Buddhists. Due to the given space, I present only one of these umbrella organizations although it would be challenging to compare such associations across different Western countries.¹⁵

The *Deutsche Buddhistische Union* (German Buddhist Union, DBU) was established in 1955 and given this name in 1958. Since then, it has served as a forum for an increasing number of German Buddhist groups and centers of almost all traditions and schools.¹⁶ In the 1980s, the attempt was made to gain legal acceptance as a public corporation (like the main Christian churches), which would have allowed more public recognition.¹⁷ For this act, certain legal prerequisites were needed: a community of individuals and an organizational structure similar to the churches, including a common confession. In order to meet these requirements, the *Buddhistische Religionsgemeinschaft in Deutschland* (Buddhist Religious Community of Germany, BRG; now formally in association with the DBU) was established in 1985, and a commonly accepted “Buddhist Confession” was laid down, two events spoken very highly of by the Buddhists involved.¹⁸ Indeed, for the first time individual membership in a purely “inter-Buddhist community” was possible, which is in itself a religious manifestation of the pluralistic situation in Germany—an interesting development for inter-Buddhist relations in the West.¹⁹

German Buddhists themselves regard the commonly accepted “confession” as a great effort in inter-Buddhist encounter.²⁰ It contains well-known Buddhist universals: the profession of loyalty to Buddha, *Dharma*, and *Sangha*²¹; the Four Noble Truths; the unity of all Buddhists; the five *sīlas*; and the four *brahmavihāras*. Compared to the “fundamental doctrines of all Buddhists” worked out by Malalasekera in 1950, we can observe an interesting development: the rather philosophical doctrines of dependent origination and three characteristic marks of existence have been dropped in favor of ethics (*sīlas*) and meditation (*brahmavihāras*). Furthermore, the unity of all Buddhists is explicitly professed—a fact that is strongly suggestive of the Christian creed.

Despite the differences, both are attempts to present the core of Buddhist doctrine, the essence of Buddhism as a whole—an attempt that is, of course, reductionist in nature. Just like Malalasekera, the DBU did not mention the popular side of Buddhism that is present also in the West. Some German Buddhists point out that there is a difference between the essential features of the *Dharma* and the cultural Asian accessories, and that it is necessary to sift out the essentials in order to link these to Western culture and form

a (new) European or Western Buddhism. It is obvious that both Malalasekera's and the DBU's efforts are based on the aforementioned attitude of Buddhist modernism, which represents, however, neither in Asia nor in the West *all* Buddhists, but only a small, well-educated elite.

In the institutional dimension, inter-religious encounter is also observable. In institutional forms like the UN-affiliated World Conference on Religions and Peace or the Monastic Interreligious Dialogue, a dialogue between representatives of religious traditions takes place about certain aspects of religious action.²²

It is apparent that, in this dimension, the interaction is altogether characterized by a conciliatory approach. This approach is based on a pluralist model wherein an organization "respects and encourages the uniqueness of each Buddhist group while seeking common ground upon which all can agree as a basis for united efforts."²³

The Ethnic Dimension

Scholars writing about Buddhism in America distinguish roughly between two personal backgrounds of Buddhists, or "two Buddhisms" (Prebish), a distinction that seems to be appropriate for Buddhism in many Western countries. One Buddhism consists of the ethnic-Asian communities that practice a form of traditional Buddhism brought by immigrants from Asia. The other Buddhism contains Western converts, "white" or "elite" Buddhists, often depending on a certain charismatic Asian master.²⁴ Between the two groups, very little communication and interaction exists, due to completely different attitudes: while ethnic-Asian Buddhists in their practice mostly carry out traditional rituals (less meditation)—also in order to preserve their religious and cultural heritage—the convert Buddhists emphasize meditation practice and tend to consider this as the "original" Buddhism.²⁵ Thus at local temples, two parallel congregations of ethnic-Asian communities on the one hand and Western convert groups on the other are observable, following separate agendas and rarely meeting or practicing together.²⁶

Notwithstanding the lack of interaction between the groups, their presence at one and the same temple in some cases appears to have a mutual impact. The converts symbolize the cultural environment for the ethnic-Asian communities and serve as a connecting link to that environment, for example, as spokespersons for the temples,²⁷ and the converts have begun to reflect upon their attitude towards the ethnic-Asian Buddhists and appreciate their forms of community.²⁸ All in all, however, the interaction in this dimension appears to take place in a rather indifferent mode.

The Religious Dimension

As we have seen, there is a horizontal plurality of traditions and schools living and practicing side by side in Western society. On the other hand, however, there are also vertical connections for the individual Buddhist. One Buddhist, for example, might say she was a Mahāyāna Buddhist or a Zen Buddhist. Or, she might declare that she practices in the tradition of Shunryū Suzuki Rōshi, or in that of Richard Baker Rōshi. Or she might explain that her master and local teacher was a pupil of Richard Baker. The vertical connection is apparent in this case: for this individual Buddhist, the tradition of Richard Baker Rōshi *is* Zen tradition, it *is* Mahāyāna tradition, and it *is* Buddhism, of course. The same person could give any or all of those answers without contradicting herself; they point to different levels of her religious identity.

The encounter with other persons (horizontal) can take place on several levels (vertical). Another Buddhist she meets, for example, might describe his identity in agreement with her on the level of being Buddhist, but he might declare that he is not Mahāyānist, but Theravādin (emphasizing the difference of vehicles). However, it is possible that on another level, both are sitting side by side in a meditation retreat guided by the Mahāyānist Thich Nhat Hanh, or the Theravādin S. N. Goenka. (The same could be said of a hypothetical Vajrayāna Buddhist, of course.)

It seems useful to distinguish four levels of Buddhist identity that are relevant in inter-Buddhist and inter-religious relations. When traditions meet, it depends on the context whether the individual is representing *lineage*, *school*, *vehicle*, or Buddhism in general (the *inter-religious* level). Although the other dimensions have a rather conciliatory or indifferent character, respectively, this dimension appears to be prone to conflict, obviously because personal religious identity is concerned.

--*Lineage Level*

Western Buddhists often tend to link their religious identity to a certain teacher, usually from Asia, whom they regard as representative of a tradition that goes back to the Buddha. Furthermore, however, the teachers themselves establish (purposely or not) lineages in the West—a term used here for describing a sense of belonging to a certain way of practicing and interpreting Buddhism that is taught by that teacher or by his or her pupils in local contexts.

One famous teacher is the Vietnamese Zen monk Thich Nhat Hanh, who was forced to leave Vietnam because of his peace engagement during the war and since 1982 has been

living in exile in the south of France, where he has established the “spiritual center” Plum Village and his own “Order of Interbeing.” Thich Nhat Hanh’s books are very popular in Western countries, and many Buddhists are affected by his interpretation of Buddhism and his way of practicing. In Buddhist magazines, we find adverts for local groups claiming to practice “in the tradition (or lineage) of Thich Nhat Hanh.” This applies to other Asian teachers as well (for example, Chögyam Trungpa, Taisen Deshimaru, S. N. Goenka, Mahāsi Sayādaw, Shunryū Suzuki, and Sogyal Rinpoche), some of whom have established centers they, being the “spiritual heads” of the centers, regularly visit to instruct the practitioners.

Nowadays, Western teachers are also regarded as spiritual heads of centers or communities, who are either the successors of their Asian masters or have brought their qualifications directly from Asia. Some of these can therefore be counted as founders of lineages as well (for example, Robert Aitken, Fred von Allmen, Richard Baker, Joseph Goldstein, Philip Kapleau, Ayya Khema, Jack Kornfield).²⁹ Apart from that, a number of centers claim to be “open” in the sense that meditation courses of several lineages and traditions are taught, for example, *vipassanā* and Zen. Especially in single retreats, many Buddhists feel free to practice with teachers from different lineages. The interaction on this lineage level is therefore often casual.

However, there are also examples of conflicts. One is the ongoing controversy about the Danish Lama Ole Nydahl, who makes statements and takes part in activities that offend a number of Buddhists who claim that his conduct is not appropriate for a Buddhist teacher.³⁰ His followers, however, are equally upset and emotional about these accusations, emphasizing the spiritual strength they receive from his instructions.³¹ Furthermore, this Western lineage controversy is intertwined with a dispute at the school level in Asia, namely the controversy about the seventeenth Karmapa who has been recognized in two boys, one of whom Ole Nydahl and his followers support strongly (see below).

--School Level

The term *school* is used here, more generally than lineage, for the several schools of Tibetan Buddhism, the Mahāyāna schools of Rinzai Zen, Sōtō Zen, etc. In many cases, school affiliation seems to be a more important aspect of Buddhist identity for the individual than lineage or vehicle affiliation. School identity, however, is dependent on connections with Asia, and certain conflicts between schools over there have an effect on the situation in the West.

One striking example is the controversy about the practice of the protector-deity Dorje Shugden (*rDo rje 'sugs ldan*) within the Gelugpa (*dGe lugs pa*) school of Tibetan Buddhism. David Kay³² has shown how this historical conflict between a more inclusive tendency within the school (represented today by the Dalai Lama and his followers) and a more exclusive tendency (represented by the Dorje Shugden adherents) has had a strong effect on Western Buddhists. The influential Tibetan teacher Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, who has been teaching in Britain since the late 1970s, departed from the official Gelugpa tradition by emphasizing reliance on Dorje Shugden. Although this deity is claimed to be an enlightened being by his adherents, the Dalai Lama regards it as being in conflict with the Tibetan State protector and with the protective goddess of the Gelugpa tradition. Geshe Kelsang Gyatso has accused the Gelugpa school of being “degenerated and mixed with others,” and established in 1991 the New Kadampa Tradition (NKT) by uniting a number of Tibetan centers in Britain. This name refers to the discipline and purity of the early Tibetan *bKa' gdams pa* masters. The climax of the dispute was probably the campaign against the Dalai Lama’s “suppression of their spiritual traditions and human rights” prior to his visit to Britain in 1996. Although the schismatic event³³ of establishing the NKT has its roots in Tibet, it took place in the West,³⁴ and it has effects on interactions among “Tibetan Buddhists” in Britain. The ongoing conflict becomes obvious from the fact that in 1998, when the NKT joined the British Network of Buddhist Organizations, about thirty percent of the other Tibetan Buddhist groups left.³⁵

Another example is the dispute about the identity of the seventeenth Karmapa, the head of the Karma Kagyü (*bKa rgyud*) school of Tibetan Buddhism. Two boys have been recognized as the Karmapa by different factions within the school, and this tension and the perceived necessity to opt for one of the candidates have caused serious problems of authority and identity for local communities and individual Buddhists.³⁶

--*Vehicle Level*

On this level, the three vehicles of Buddhism are interacting: Theravāda, Mahāyāna, and Vajrayāna. Although this distinction of vehicles appears to be very rough and general (compared to the other dimensions), it is regarded as important for ecumenical efforts. As we have already seen in the cases of the World Fellowship of Buddhists and the *Deutsche Buddhistische Union*, Buddhist modernists tend to emphasize the unity of Buddhism, especially of the three vehicles. The organizers of inter-Buddhist meetings usually pay attention to maintaining a balance of the three.³⁷

Apart from this conciliatory interaction, certain approaches have developed in the West that try to merge the teachings of the three vehicles into an integrative Buddhism.³⁸ This has led to the formation of new religious movements like the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order and the *Arya Maitreya Mandala*. Both movements were established by Westerners (Englishman Bhikshu Sangharakshita, and Lama Anāgārika Govinda, a German), and both founders were instructed and initiated in several traditions. They explicitly state that their interpretation of Buddhism unites the teachings of the three vehicles in order to create a new, essential Buddhism for the West that does not depend on a certain tradition and that meets the requirements of modern times.³⁹ Paul David Numrich has labeled this as a “fusionist” model of interaction.⁴⁰

Another type of interaction on the vehicle level is to be found in so-called Engaged Buddhism. Cooperation in certain areas of social engagement (such as peace, ecology, women rights, education, and social justice) has been manifested in the establishment of international and inter-Buddhist organizations like the International Network of Engaged Buddhists or the Buddhist Peace Fellowship. The arguments of the activists for engagement and their religious justification are often identical, no matter what tradition and vehicle they belong to (cf. the writings of Sulak Sivaraksa, Thich Nhat Hanh, and the Dalai Lama).

--Inter-Religious Level

This level is yet more abstract than the preceding one because the individual Buddhist has to represent Buddhism in general—facing representatives of other religions. Apart from the institutional encounter (see above), there is also an encounter in the religious dimension that is strongly determined by the way the individual interprets Buddhism.

One example of potential for conflict is the use of Zen meditation practice within Christian circles. We find supporters as well as opponents of “Christian Zen” among Buddhists and among Christians. Although supporters in both religions emphasize the spiritual level of meditation (which is thought to be independent of terms like “Christian” or “Buddhist”) and speak of a transfer of spirituality, opponents regard it as an absurd and dangerous mixing of completely different religious paths, a syncretism that threatens the pure essence of the respective religions.⁴¹

This is only one of a number of issues in which the line between religions is ambiguous, and remarkable alliances between certain Buddhist and certain Christian circles are observable. Just as at any other time in the history of religions, supporting and

opposing positions concerning inter-religious encounter are apparent also in Western Buddhism, and these interactions will also, in the future, contribute to the development and shaping of Buddhism in the West.

NOTES

1. See Heinz Bechert, "Buddhistic Modernism: Its Emergence, Impact and New Trends," *Business & Economic Review* 14 (1990), 93-104.
2. Heinz Bechert, *Buddhismus, Staat und Gesellschaft in den Ländern des Theravāda-Buddhismus* (vol.1, 2nd ed.; Göttingen: Seminar für Indologie und Buddhismuskunde, 1988), 37.
3. Bhikshu Sangharakshita, "Anagarika Dharmapala: A Biographical Sketch," in *Diamond Jubilee Souvenir 1891-1951*, ed. Mahabodhi Society of India (Calcutta: Maha Bodhi Society, 1952), 30-32.
4. For example, the International Buddhist Young Men's Association in Tokyo (1903), the International Buddhist Society in Rangoon (1903), the International Buddhist Union in Ceylon (1928), the General Conferences of the Pan-Pacific Young Buddhist Association in Hawaii and in Japan (since 1930), and the European Buddhist Congresses in London (1934) and Paris (1937). See Bechert, *Buddhismus*, 95-100.
5. This is true also for European Buddhists of that time. See Bechert, *Buddhismus*, 97.
6. See N.A. Jayawickrama and W.G. Weeraratne, *The World Fellowship of Buddhists and Its President G.P. Malalasekera* (Colombo: The World Fellowship of Buddhists, 1982), 9-16.
7. World Fellowship of Buddhists. Report of the Inaugural Conference (Columbo: Peramuna, 1950), 86. See the similar statement of Nugawela Dissawe, the chief lay custodian of the Tooth Relic in Kandy in 1950, cited in Jayawickrama and Weeraratne, *The World Fellowship of Buddhists*, 4f.
8. See Heinz Bechert, "Buddhistic Modernism: Its Emergence, Impact and New Trends," *Business & Economic Review* 14 (1990), 97f. Nevertheless, the WFB is intended to represent all Buddhists of the world and is in this sense comparable with, e.g., the Roman Catholic Church. Furthermore, it would be an interesting task to view the establishment of the WFB on the background of a certain development within Christianity: the establishment of the World Council of Churches in 1948.
9. Jayawickrama and Weeraratne, *The World Fellowship of Buddhists*, 4.
10. *Ibid.*, 3.
11. Although emphasizing different aspects, the terms "Buddhist modernism" and "Protestant Buddhism" refer to the same phenomenon. See Richard Gombrich, *Theravāda Buddhism* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1988), 172-174.
12. *Ibid.*, 172-174, 194-197.
13. Jan Nattier, "Buddhism Comes to Main Street," *Wilson Quarterly* 21 (Spring 1997), 75, 78.
14. See Ellen Goldberg, "The Re-Orienting of Buddhism in North America," *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 11 (1999), 340-356, for an interesting approach linking this with the issue of Orientalism.

15. Points of departure for this task could be the illuminating studies by Paul David Numrich on the Buddhist Council of the Midwest in the United States (See Paul Numrich, "Local Inter-Buddhist Associations in North America," in *American Buddhism: Methods and Findings in Recent Scholarship*, ed. Duncan Ryūken Williams and Christopher S. Queen [Surrey, UK: Curzon Press, 1999], 117-142) and by Jamie Cresswell on the British Network of Buddhist Organisations (See Jamie Cresswell, "Representation of Diversity within British Buddhism: The Network of Buddhist Organisations-UK," unpublished manuscript). Furthermore, the relations between such national associations and international organizations (e.g., the European Buddhist Union, or the World Fellowship of Buddhists) could be examined.
16. At its establishment in 1955, the DBU contained seven groups. In 1991, 27 groups were members, and within ten years, the number has almost doubled (49 groups in summer 2000). (See Martin Baumann, *Deutsche Buddhisten: Geschichte und Gemeinschaften* [2nd ed.; Marburg: Diagonal, 1995], 202f.), and *Lotusblätter* 14, no. 3 (2000), 70-80. The DBU meets once a year to discuss topics of common interest, and publishes the magazine *Lotusblätter* ("lotus leaves") four times a year; this publication's number of subscribers has been increasing continually. Interestingly, the Sōka Gakkai Germany has not been a member of the DBU, probably because of certain prejudices on both sides and because the Sōka Gakkai has not yet been willing to accept the common confession.
17. In the end, the attempt was not successful because of formal reasons: the lack of a sufficient financial backing, a sufficient number of members, and the guarantee of duration. See Martin Baumann, "The Transplantation of Buddhism to Germany: Processive Modes and Strategies of Adaptation," *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 6, no. 1 (1994), 43.
18. Baumann, *Deutsche Buddhisten*, 194-199.
19. This community, however, is rather virtual. Many members of the BRG are either members of another group at the same time or persons that practice on their own. The main reason to join the BRG appears to be the wish to contribute (with the fees) to a process of exchange between Buddhists and to support the activities of Buddhism in Germany in general. Currently, the BRG consists of about 1,900 members (according to personal information from the DBU office).
20. See Baumann, "The Transplantation of Buddhism to Germany," 43. The text of this confession is published in *Lotusblätter* 1 (1987), 7, and reprinted in Baumann, *Deutsche Buddhisten*, 444.
21. It was a point of discussion whether only fully ordained persons are referred to by the term *Sangha*, and at the end it was defined as "community of the disciples of the Buddha," which is somewhat ambivalent.
22. See the web sites <http://www.wcrp.org> and <http://www.monasticdialog.com>.
23. See Numrich, "Local Inter-Buddhist Associations in North America," 122.
24. See Charles S. Prebish, "Two Buddhisms Reconsidered," *Buddhist Studies Review* 10, 2 (1993), 187-206; Rick Fields, "Divided Dharma: White Buddhists, Ethnic Buddhists, and Racism," in *The Faces of Buddhism in America*, eds. Charles S. Prebish and Kenneth K. Tanaka (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998, 196-206); and Nattier, "Buddhism Comes to Main Street." Being very rough, of course, this distinction ignores all the special cases of ethnic Asians practicing within Western convert groups and vice versa. Nattier distinguishes three forms, adding the "export, evangelical" Buddhism

70 *Research Article*

- represented only by Sōka Gakkai. Although this category is very useful for analysis, the “evangelical” Buddhism of Sōka Gakkai seems to be more of an (no doubt, very successful) exception in the Western Buddhist scene. Adherents remain, however, either ethnic-Asians (for example, missionaries from Japan or other Japanese living in the West) or Western converts.
25. See Nattier, “Buddhism Comes to Main Street,” 78f., and Fields, “Divided Dharma,” 203.
 26. See Paul David Numrich, *Old Wisdom in the New World: Americanization in Two Immigrant Theravada Buddhist Temples* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1996), 63-65.
 27. *Ibid.*, 74f.
 28. Fields, “Divided Dharma,” 203f.
 29. See, for example, Don Morreale (ed.), *Buddhist America: Centers, Retreats, Practices* (Santa Fe: John Muir, 1988); and *Lotusblätter* 14, no. 2 (2000), 77-87. For an examination of how Western Buddhists deal with two kinds of authority of their teachers (i.e., traditional legitimation and/or authenticity through personal experience), see Helen Waterhouse, “Who Says So? Legitimacy and Authority in British Buddhism,” *Scottish Journal of Religious Studies* 20, no. 1 (1999), 19-36.
 30. Nydahl has been accused not only of speaking in a conceited and militaristic way, but also of being right wing, racist, sexist, and hostile to foreigners. His unusual activities (e.g., bungee jumping) also annoy Buddhists who are not his followers—be they other adherents of the Karma Kagyū school or not (see the statement by the DBU in *Lotusblätter* 13, no. 4, [1999], 64f., and *Lotusblätter* 14, no. 1, [2000], 56-61).
 31. See *Lotusblätter* 14, no. 1 (2000), 56-61.
 32. See David Kay, “The New Kadampa Tradition and the Continuity of Tibetan Buddhism in Transition,” *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 12, no. 3 (1997), 277-293.
 33. *Ibid.*, 286.
 34. *Ibid.*, 286: “Since 1991, the NKT has declared its total independence from the ‘degenerate’ religio-political world of ‘Tibetan’ dGe lugs Buddhism, and proclaimed itself to be an autonomous, modern and ‘Western’ tradition.”
 35. See Cresswell, “Representation and Diversity within British Buddhism.”
 36. See Helen Waterhouse, “Who is the Karmapa? Western Buddhist Responses to a Challenge to Traditional Religious Authority,” *Diskus* 3, no. 2 (1995), 59-73.
 37. The report on a congress of the European Buddhist Association in 1992, for example, states that in the opening ceremony, representatives of the three vehicles were reciting prayers and sutras one after the other (*Lotusblätter* 4 [1992], 20).
 38. See Martin Baumann, “Buddhism in the West: Phases, Orders and the Creation of an Integrative Buddhism,” *Internationales Asienforum* 27, nos. 3-4 (1996), 345-362.
 39. *Ibid.*, 357-362. On the lineage level, however, Sangharakshita’s personal claims and behavior have been subject of controversy. See Andrew Rawlinson, *The Book of Enlightened Masters: Western Teachers in Eastern Traditions* (Chicago: Open Court, 1997), 501-508.
 40. Numrich distinguishes this model from assimilationist and pluralist approaches. See Numrich, “Local Inter-Buddhist Associations in North America,” 122f.

41. For the German scene, see *Lotusblätter* 9, no. 1 (1995), 48ff.; 12, no. 2 (1998), 54; Reinhart Hummel, *Religiöser Pluralismus oder christliches Abendland?* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1994) 94-97; *Meditation* 25, no. 1 (1999), 28-32.