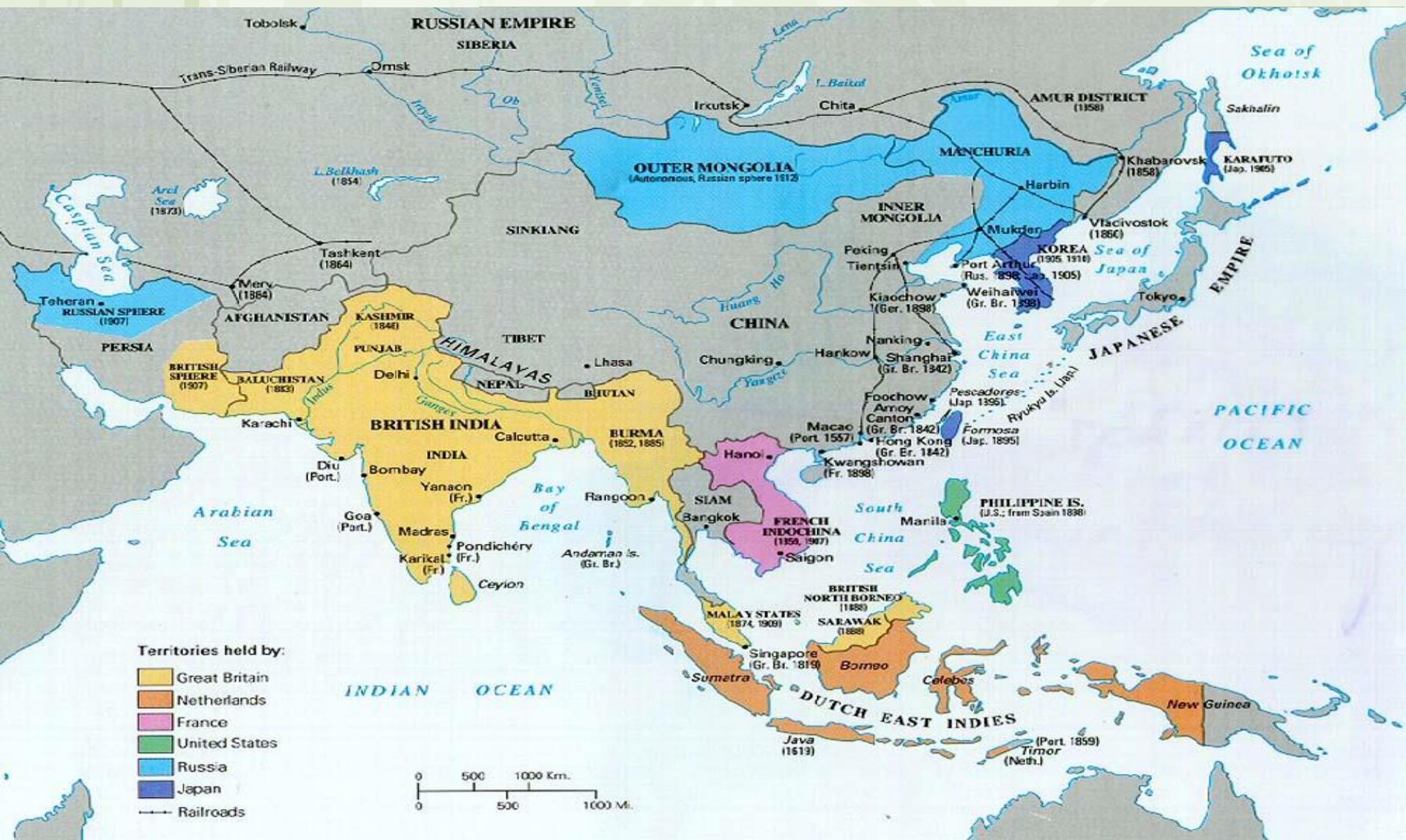


Buddhism at the End of the Colonial Period

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Historical Development of SEB: Asian Colonial Era 16th to 20th Centuries



4 Responses to Modernity

- ❖ **Buddhist Nationalism:** Modern Nationalism is most often characterized by the fusing together of a specific ethnic group and their religious heritage to a nation-state with specifically defined borders. Buddhist Nationalism was initially part of the anti-colonial struggle against the West, but after Asian emancipation, it became a force against minority groups and cultural diversity as part of the complex renegotiation of national borders and identities in the Post WWII Era.
- ❖ **Socially Engaged Buddhism (SEB):** SEB also arose as a response to the colonial domination of the West. However, it has been a more open minded movement that has not allied itself with the state and sought solutions to social problems through pan-Asian solidarity, inter-religious cooperation, and alliances with progressive forces in the West.

4 Responses to Modernity

- ❖ **Buddhist Socialism:** The early development of socialism and communism in Europe had an important impact on Asians as a modern but anti-colonial and liberative ideology. Many Buddhists found socialist concepts to be in line with Buddhist teachings and the rules of the monastic order.
- ❖ **Market Buddhist:** In Asian nations that did not embrace communism, some Buddhist groups have tried to align Buddhist teachings with capitalist values of economic growth and enjoying a prosperous life as a sign of virtue.

Anti Colonial Movements 1890-1949



❖ Sri Lanka
Anagarika Dharmapala 1864-1933
Anti-ritual, promoted Buddhist schools
Mahabodhi Movement

❖ Burma
Burmese non-violent activism
U Ottama 1889 & U Wisara 1929
generation of monks studied socialism
and Gandianism in India



Buddhist Liberalism

Rev. Kaikyoku
Watanabe
(1872–1933)
Jodo Pure
Land sect



Monk Tai Hsu (Tai Hsu Fa Shi)

太虛法師

- ❖ In Japan, the Buddhist Enlightenment Movement (1880s) & the New Buddhist Movement (1890-1900s) tried to show the modern characteristics of Buddhism and its suitability for the nation state by combining Western liberal and scientific thought with Buddhism.
- ❖ In China, Humanistic Buddhism 人間佛教 criticized ritualism for funerals and the afterlife while promoting humanism, altruism, spiritual practices as part of daily life, joyfulness, timeliness and the universality of saving all beings.

Humanistic & Rights Movements

Buddhist Movement Against Caste Discrimination
in India 1920s →



Dr. B.R. Ambedkar
Drafter of
Indian Constitution



Buddhist Socialism



Gudo Uchiyama
From “Taigyaku
Incident” by
Maruki Iri

- ❖ Japanese Buddhists were the first in Asia to seek a fusion of Marxism and socialism
- ❖ Rev. Gudo Uchiyama (1874-1911)
Soto Zen sect priest who advocated “anarcho-communist evolution”
- ❖ Rev. Giro Seno-o (1889-1961)
Nichiren sect priest who advocated “popular Buddhism”
- ❖ Rev. Kenmyo Takagi (1864–1914) Jodo Shin Pure Land Otani sect priest who was anti-imperialist and advocated for

Fascism & Nationalism



Harada Daiun Sogaku

[If ordered to] march: tramp, tramp, or shoot: bang, bang. This is the manifestation of the highest Wisdom [of Enlightenment]. The unity of Zen and war of which I speak extends to the farthest reaches of the holy war [now under way]

❖ JAPAN

- ❖ Priests were drafted into the military as common foot soldiers and not just as chaplains
- ❖ East Asian Buddhist teaching of “repaying benefits” (報恩 *ho-on*) to parents and all sentient beings was shifted to emperor and state.
- ❖ Zen teachings were fused with Bushido (武士道) to teach giving up one’s life in battle; there is no-self that kills; and meditative fearlessness in the face of death.
- ❖ Doctrine of Two Truths (眞俗二諦 *shinzoku nitai*), key to Pure Land, Buddhists was twisted to say that the absolute truth of the Buddha was expressed in the relative truth of the Emperor in this world.
- ❖ Nichiren Buddhists developed “Nichiren-ism” which raised the law of the emperor to the level of the universal law of the *Lotus Sutra*.

Buddhist Socialism 1950s-60s



❖ Burma

U Nu (Prime Minister 3x 1948-1962)
1960 Buddhist Socialism policy
Based on Ashokan statecraft

❖ Thailand

Buddhadasa
Dhammic Socialism
Clarified cooperative socialism vs.
Revenge of the underclass
in Vietnam War Era

Democracy & Peace Movements

Vietnam 1960s

Engaged Buddhism • Le Bouddhisme Engagé

Violence vs. Non-Violence Thich Nhat Hanh



Democracy & Peace Movements

Cambodia 1980s:
The Dhammayatra
Maha Ghosananda and the Nipponzan



Democracy & Peace Movements

Korea 1980s →

The Jungto Society & Ven. Pomnyun Sunim



Democracy & Peace Movements

The Saffron Revolution
2007



Aung San Suu Kyi
Nobel Peace Prize 1991



Independence & Rights Movement

- ❖ Non-violent resistance & Politicized Buddhism in Tibet & China 1959 →

