**Academic Study**

Academic interest in Buddhism developed during the colonial period, as European officials -- many of them proficient amateur scholars -- were posted to different parts of Asia. The earliest Buddhist texts to be studied were Mahāyāna Sanskrit manuscripts collected in Nepal by the British Resident, B. H. Hodgson. Another British civil servant who made an outstanding contribution to the study of Theravāda Buddhism was T. W. Rhys Davids ( 1843- 1922). Rhys Davids became interested in Buddhism during his residence in Sri Lanka and went on to found the Pali Text Society in 1881. The Society remains to this day the most important outlet for the publication of texts and translations of Pali Buddhist literature. Professional scholars from many countries played an important role in the transmission of Buddhism to the West. In 1845 the Frenchman Eugène Burnouf published his Introduction to the History of Indian Buddhism and followed this seven years later with a translation of the Lotus Sūtra. Interest in Buddhism in Germany was stimulated by the publication of Herman Oldenberg The Buddha, His Life, His Doctrine, His Community in 1881. Close to the end of the century the American Henry Clarke Warren published his Buddhism in Translations ( 1896) a fine anthology of material from the Pali Canon which has remained popular to the present day. Around this time the first Parliament of the World's Religions was held in Chicago in 1893, an event designed to bring representatives of the different world faiths together to explore the common ground they shared. The Buddhist representatives included Anagarika Dharmapala ( 18641933), a Sri Lankan who made a great impression in his speeches and public meetings. He made two further visits within the next ten years and founded an American branch of the recently established Maha Bodhi Society, the first international Buddhist association which had its headquarters in Calcutta. The American offshoot of the Society was the first Buddhist organization in the West. Shortly after the turn of the century attention broadened from south Asian Buddhism to include the study of Mahāyāna Buddhism through Tibetan and Chinese sources. The great Belgian scholars Louis de La Vallée Poussin and (later) Étienne Lamotte made an enormous contribution in this field. Mention must also be made of D. T. Suzuki ( 1870-1966), a Japanese Buddhist who promoted awareness of Zen Buddhism through his lectures and influential books.

**Philosophy, Culture, and the Arts**

The second way Buddhism has entered Western culture is through philosophy, culture, and the arts. The German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer ( 1788-1860) was the first major Western thinker to take an interest in Buddhism. Due to the absence of reliable sources, Schopenhauer had only an imperfect knowledge of Buddhism, and saw it as confirming his own somewhat pessimistic philosophy. Of all the world religions Buddhism seemed to him the most rational and ethically evolved, and the frequent references to Buddhism in his writings brought it to the attention of Western intellectuals in the latter part of the nineteenth century. In England, Sir Edwin Arnold ( 1832-1904) published his famous poem The Light of Asia in 1879. The poem describes the life and teachings of the Buddha in a melodramatic style which made it very popular with middle-class Victorian audiences on both sides of the Atlantic. Arnold was a Christian who saw much in common in the teachings of Jesus and the Buddha. He visited the site of the Buddha's enlightenment at Bodh Gayā in 1885 and campaigned for funds to restore it from its dilapidated condition. Around this time interest in the supernatural among the Victorians was at its height, and in 1875 Colonel Henry Olcott ( 18321907) and Madame Blavatsky ( 1831-91) founded the Theosophical Society which was devoted to uncovering the esoteric truth believed to lie at the heart of all religions. Attention was focused mainly on the religions of the East, and Buddhism in particular became a popular subject of study and discussion in salons and drawing-rooms. The German novelist Herman Hesse often alluded to Buddhist themes in his writings, notably in his 1922 novel Siddhartha, which has been translated into many languages. In the post-war years Jack Kerouac novels The Dharma Bums and On the Road were popular with the 'Beat' generation and provided inspiration for the counter-cultures of subsequent decades. The eclectic thinker and philosopher Alan Watts wrote a number of books on Zen which attracted a popular readership, but perhaps more than any other single work Robert M. Persig Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance ( 1974) -- although more concerned with Western philosophy than Zen -- has ensured that this school of Buddhism is widely known in the West, at least by name. The cinema, too, has played its part Schopenhauer ( 1788-1860) was the first major Western thinker to take an interest in Buddhism. Due to the absence of reliable sources, Schopenhauer had only an imperfect knowledge of Buddhism, and saw it as confirming his own somewhat pessimistic philosophy. Of all the world religions Buddhism seemed to him the most rational and ethically evolved, and the frequent references to Buddhism in his writings brought it to the attention of Western intellectuals in the latter part of the nineteenth century. 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More recently, the plot of Bertolucci Little Buddha, shot partly in India and partly in America, illustrates the extent to which Buddhism is becoming part of Western culture. The plot interweaves the life stow of the Buddha with the quest for a Tibetan lama who has been reborn in Seattle to American parents. Other recent contributions include Scorsese Kundun ( 1997) and Annaud Seven Years in Tibet ( 1997).

**Buddhist Immigration**

The third channel for the introduction of Buddhism to the West has been immigration. This is a phenomenon which has affected the United States and Europe in different ways. The majority of Buddhist immigration has been to the United States, and began as early as the 1860s when Chinese labourers arrived to work on the railroads and in the gold mines. Immigrants from both China and Japan settled in Hawaii before it was formally annexed by the United States in 1898. Recent decades have seen an influx of immigrants from Indo-China in the wake of the Vietnam war, and perhaps half a million Buddhists from South-East Asia have settled in the USA. The tendency has been for immigrant communities to establish their own local temples as a means of preserving their distinctive cultural identity rather than for proselytizing purposes. Only after the first or second generation does a pattern of interaction with the host community develop such that individuals from different cultural backgrounds meet as 'Buddhists' rather than as members of a particular ethnic group. Although the United Kingdom has received large numbers of Asian immigrants these have come mainly from the Indian subcontinent and are mostly Hindus or Muslims. There are some 19,000 refugees from IndoChina in Britain, 22,000 in Germany, and 97,000 in France. The majority of Buddhists in Europe are Caucasians who have converted to Buddhism rather than immigrants who brought their beliefs with them. Although accurate numbers are difficult to come by, in the UK there are around a hundred Tibetan centres, about ninety Theravāda centres, and some forty Zen centres, together with a further hundred or so other groups including the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order. Converts to Buddhism in both Europe and the United States come predominantly from the middle classes. All the major forms of Buddhism are now represented in the West, but statistics on the rate of growth of Buddhism are difficult to come by, and there are wide variations in the figures quoted. In his pioneering study American Buddhism, Charles Prebish estimated the number of Buddhists in the United States in 1979 as something in the order of a few hundred thousand. Less than ten years later in 1987 the American Buddhist Congress, a body founded in the same year with forty-five affiliated groups, put the figure at 3-5 million. NO census of Buddhist groups and organizations in the United States has been undertaken, but Prebish estimates there are now about a thousand such groups. The increase in the popularity of Buddhism can also be seen elsewhere in the West, although the growth has generally been less spectacular in Europe than in the USA. Estimates suggest there are over a million Buddhists in Europe, with about 200,000 in the UK and an equivalent number in France.