Buddhism at the End of the Colonial Period

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Historical Development of SEB:
Asian Colonial Era 16th to 20th Centuries
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
Humanistic & Socialist Movements 1910s-1930s

- **China**
  - Humanistic Buddhism 人間仏教
  - Master Tai Hsu 太虛大師 (1890-1947)
  - Master Yin Shun 印順導師 (1906-2005)
  - Criticized emphasis on spirits and ghosts and funeral services and rites

- **Japan**
  - Uchiyama Gudo 内山愚童師 (曹洞宗 Soto Zen)
  - Seno-o Giro 妹尾義郎 (日蓮宗 Nichiren)
  - Anti-imperialist and Internationalist
  - Supported Burakumin and Korean human rights
  - Thought Buddhist Sangha provided an ideal social model for communal lifestyle
Humanistic & Rights Movements

Buddhist Movement Against Caste Discrimination in India 1920s →

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar
Drafter of Indian Constitution
Fascism & Nationalism

**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 (真俗二諦 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*.

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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].
Humanistic & Socialist Movements
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 Dhammayattra
Maha Ghosananda and the Nipponzan Myohoji
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