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The Influence of Chinese Master Taixu on Buddhism in Vietnam

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R e s e a r c h A r t i c l e

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Abstract

From the 1920s, Vietnamese Buddhist reformers revitalized their religion, inspired in great part by the Chinese monk Taixu's blueprint to modernize and systematize sangha education and temple administration, and by his idea of *renjian fojiao*, "Buddhism for this world," emphasizing the centrality of education, modern publishing, social work, and Buddhist lay groups to Buddhism's future in the modern world. This article first discusses the Chinese Buddhist revival, then the activities of Buddhist reformers in Vietnam 1920s–60s, and the flows of Buddhist personnel and materials between Vietnam and China. This article explores how *renjian fojiao* was interpreted and realized in Vietnam, especially its influence upon Thich Nhat Hanh as he developed his ideas on "Engaged Buddhism."

Introduction

From the mid-nineteenth century, many people in Asia strove to revive and strengthen Buddhism in their country in order to answer the challenges and crises brought by modernization and imperialism, and in Chinese Buddhism, Master Taixu 太虛大師 (1890-1947) is considered to be the pre-eminent modern reformer. In Vietnam, the Buddhist Revival of the 1920s-50s called

Chan Hung Phat Giao (振興佛教) saw reform and developments in institutional Buddhism as well as the rise of lay groups such as Cao Dai, Hoa Hao, and the Tinh do cu si. (1) From the 1920s, Vietnamese Buddhist reformers revitalized their religion, inspired in great part by Taixu's blueprint to modernize and systematize sangha education and temple administration, and by his ideas on *renjian fojiao* (人間佛教, [*nhan gian phat giao*], "Buddhism for this world"), emphasizing the centrality of education, modern publishing, social work, and Buddhist lay groups to Buddhism's future in the modern world.

However, the precise details of the Buddhist Revival in Vietnam have yet to be fully studied, and so far no scholar has undertaken a specific study of Taixu's influence upon Vietnamese Buddhism in the 1920s-50s. The Taixu-Vietnam link is briefly mentioned in Woodside (1976), Marr (1981), Do (1999), and McHale (2004), but in the Chinese language, scholars in Taiwan are unaware of Taixu's influence upon Vietnam and I have not yet seen works from China that mention the link. This article, utilizing both Chinese and Vietnamese sources, aims to shed light on this important part of modern transnational Buddhist history. The article first discusses the Chinese Buddhist revival and then relates the activities of Buddhist reformers in Vietnam, and the flows of Buddhist personnel and materials between Vietnam and China. The article then traces the influence of Taixu upon Buddhism in Vietnam, primarily in two ways: First, the article gives the first account in English of Taixu's two visits to Vietnam in 1928 and 1940 and points to the importance of the overseas Chinese community in the propagation of transnational Buddhism in modern times. However, by the time Taixu visited Vietnam, his name, his ideas, and the activities of the Chinese Buddhist reform movement were already well-known there via Taixu's writings and his disciples' propagation, the focus of the next section.

This part also explores how *renjian fojiao*, "Buddhism for this world," was interpreted and realized in Vietnam, especially its influence upon Thich Nhat Hanh as he developed his ideas on "Engaged Buddhism."

It is remarkable to see how the revival of Buddhism in Sri Lanka, Burma, India, China, Vietnam, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, and Japan (whether state-directed, state-approved, or from below) was seen as the way to assert each nation's "authentic" identity; towards the goal of unifying and strengthening the nation in the face of the Western onslaught, whether colonialism or modernization or both. However, in addition to nation-centered histories of Buddhism we need more transnational studies, for Buddhism has been undergoing a process of globalization for over a century. Ashiwa and Wank (2005) have made a good start in this direction in their article about two-way transnational networks of Buddhist clergy, devotees, and resources in China, North America, and Singapore, Malaysia, and the Philippines in the modern era. Unfortunately, they did not mention the age-old history of Buddhist exchanges between China and Vietnam, including trade, Chinese immigration to Vietnam, and Buddhist interactions. In particular, Chinese Buddhist thought, institutions, practices, and material culture have influenced Vietnam for nearly two millennia. This article argues for the importance of these exchanges in modern times as well because these interactions helped establish the conceptual foundation for Vietnamese Engaged Buddhism's remarkable developments in the 1960s-70s, as well as mainstream Vietnamese Buddhism's institutional growth and influence from the 1940s to the present.

The Chinese Buddhist Revival

In China, "(t)he Buddhist revival, I believe, began as an effort by laymen to reprint the sutras destroyed in the

Taiping Rebellion [1860s]. It gathered momentum as the discovery of Western Buddhist scholarship stimulated the need for Chinese Buddhist scholarship, and as the invasion of China by Christian evangelists and missionaries led to the idea of training Buddhist evangelists and sending missionaries to India and the West. (2) Up to this point only laymen were involved...(3) But in the last years of the Ch'ing dynasty when moves were made to confiscate their property for use in secular education, the monks began to organize schools and social-welfare enterprises as a means of self-defense" (Welch 1968, p.259).

Holmes Welch believes that three threads run through the Chinese Buddhist revival: The need to secure religious identity by the laypeople; the need for economic self-preservation on part of the monastics; and the need to gain international status, by both lay and monastics (Welch 1968, pp.260-2). Speaking of the Buddhist reformers in early twentieth-century China, "The need for status—intellectual status—led to the necessity of meeting the challenges of science and Western philosophy, of Marxism, and of Christianity. It helped to bring about the revival of interest in... *weshi xue* (唯識學), 'the consciousness-only school;' the birth of Buddhist scientism, and participation in modern, Western forms of social welfare" (Welch 1968, p.261).

The major figure in the Chinese Buddhist Revival was the monk Taixu (1890-1947), with his journal *Hai Chao Yin* (海潮音, *Sound of the Tide*). His ideas about "Buddhism for human life" (*rensheng fojiao* 人生佛教), and "Buddhism for this world" (*renjian fojiao* 人間佛教) were forged in the late Qing intellectual environment of debates about religion and the relevance of Buddhism to the modern world engaged in by Kang Youwei 康有為 (1858-1927), Liang Qichao 梁啟超 (1873-1929), Zhang Taiyan 章太炎 (1868-1936), Wu Zhihui 吳稚暉 (1865-1953), Xiong Shili 熊十力 (1885-1968), Cai Yuanpei

蔡元培 (1863-1940), Ouyang Jian 歐陽漸 (1871-1943), Liang Shuming 梁漱溟 (1893-1988), and Taixu (Ma, 2001: 2-3).

Much has been written on the development of Taixu's ideas on *renjian jingtu* [creating the Pure Land in the human realm]; *rensheng fojiao*, and *renjian fojiao*, (4) and all this cannot be elaborated upon here. But it suffices to say that all three terms stress that the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha originated in the human realm [rather than the other Buddhist realms of gods, demons, animals, hungry ghosts, and hell], and while realms other than the human "...may profit from the beneficial influence of Buddhism...the human realm is the true field of its history, doctrine, and practice" (Bingenheimer 2007, p.142). By 1940, Taixu employed the term *rensheng fojiao* in his formal classification scheme of Buddhist principles, apparently because to Taixu, *rensheng* was broader than *renjian*, able "...to encompass all the lifetimes and modes of existence a practitioner has to strive through until final liberation" (Bingenheimer 2007, pp.147-148).

However, used in a normative and instrumental sense, all three terms promote a world-engaging Buddhism that "...reforms society, helps humankind to progress, and improves the whole world" (Shi Taixu, 1933). The Chinese Buddhist Revival promoted such activities as growth of lay organizations and lay teachers of the Dharma; building Buddhist clinics, orphanages, and schools; a radio station in Shanghai; proselytizing in prisons; and the effort to start an ecumenical movement with Buddhists abroad. Also, the modern revival saw Buddhist publishing houses, reorganized seminaries for Buddhist monastics, and national Buddhist associations. All of the above innovations were directly or indirectly indebted to the vision and reforms of Taixu (Welch 1968, pp.262-264).

Taixu wrote that his political views were formed during the tumultuous years of the 1911 revolution and his friends and colleagues included revolutionaries and anarchists. By the mid-1920s, his political stance became situated "right of center" (Welch 1968, pp.182, 192) partly for pragmatic reasons (to obtain political imprimatur for his plans to reform and modernize Buddhism, to gain some government funding, and to gain the means and support to proselytize abroad) and partly for ideological reasons. Although he never lost his conviction that Sun Yat-sen's Nationalist program was the best solution to build a modern China, by 1924-5 Taixu realized that the Nationalists were stymied by political infighting and struggle with the Communists and warlords. Furthermore, he held that all political ideologies, whether socialist, Fascist, or democratic, were motivated by self-interest and tended toward the exploitation of others, inevitably leading to struggle and war. Thus, Taixu concluded that Buddhism is the way to attain peace and stability in China and the world by effecting fundamental changes in thinking on the individual and national levels: to know that all creation is inter-related and that one benefits oneself by first benefitting others (Shi Taixu, 1940).

In other writings, using the typical language of the "clash of civilizations East and West" debates of the first half of the twentieth century, Taixu wrote that Western civilizations were sick, due to their overly individualistic and aggressive orientation of *zongwo*, *zhiwu* (縱我, 制物 "an unrestrained self, conquering nature"), that has led to imperialism and war. He held that other colonized Asian nations cannot offer effective means to deal with these calamities, and he concludes that Buddhism, together with the Chinese spirit of *keji*, *chongren* (克己, 崇仁 "overcoming the self, respecting others"), are the best remedies for this civilizational sickness (Shi Miaozheng 1947. pp.90-91). As for Japan, he despaired that this great civilization with a rich

Buddhist heritage had, in its rush to modernize in blind emulation of the West, had become but another imperialist aggressor. Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, Taixu appealed many times in *Hai Chao Yin* to the millions of Buddhists in Japan, Korea, and Taiwan to unite and oppose Japanese military rule and imperialist aggression. (5)

It is vital to note that on the one hand, Taixu was a Nationalist, an ardent follower of Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kai-shek, and a fierce Chinese patriot during WWII who called on Buddhists to help in various ways in the war effort and to even take up arms against the Japanese invaders of China. (6) Yet, Taixu's relationship with the Nationalist party-state was fraught with contradictions: Taixu liberally borrowed from Nationalist vocabulary and ideological categories, and received material support: money, means of transport, use of diplomatic channels and state-related associations abroad. But whenever the Nationalists made one of their numerous attempts to confiscate temple properties, then Taixu and others publicly opposed the government. And, a national-level Chinese Buddhist Association, one of Taixu's life-long goals, was finally permitted to convene in May 1947, two months after Taixu's death (Chen 2003, pp.256, 259-60, 266-8, 271).

Unfortunately Taixu was unable to fully realize his plans and ideals for Chinese Buddhism: Taixu died from a stroke in March 1947 and, from 1946-49, the chaos of civil war and collapse of the central government in Nanjing and its retreat to the island of Taiwan halted further developments in China. (7) A decade earlier, Taixu had already deemed his attempts to inspire "a revolution in Buddhism" to be a failure, due to both his own "weaknesses and failures" as well as the strength of his opponents (Shi Taixu, 2005 [1937]). He was too self-critical.

Though the socio-political and economic environment of the early twentieth century placed severe limits on the Buddhist Revival within China, Taixu spent much time and energy attempting to transform Buddhism into a global movement that would transcend the limits of nation, political faction, and Buddhist school. Towards this end, Taixu traveled to Taiwan, Japan and Hong Kong (1917-1925); then to France, England, Belgium, Germany, and the United States (1928-9), as well as to Burma, Sri Lanka, India, and Malaysia (1939-40). (8) In Sri Lanka, homeland of the great Buddhist revivalist Dharmapala, Taixu spoke at length with the Buddhist scholar G. P. Malalasekera about forming a world Buddhist federation; in 1950 this plan came to fruition when Dr. Malalasekera founded the World Fellowship of Buddhists. (9)

The contemporary term "globalization" in Chinese is *quanqiu*hua (全球化), too recent for Taixu's *Complete Works*; rather we find *quanqiu* (全球 the whole world) as a noun; *shijie*hua (世界化 globalization) and *shijie*zhuyi (世界主義 world-ism). As we have mentioned, Taixu was a strong nationalist and patriot, but he was also a staunch proponent of globalization and world-ism as those terms were understood earlier in the twentieth century, especially at the close of WWII, when many people hoped that transnational bodies such as the United Nations could transcend petty nationalist interests and conflicts and prevent future wars. But even more fundamentally when Taixu spoke of *shijie*hua and *shijie* zhuyi he was referring to the potential of Buddhism and the need to propagate Buddhism worldwide. Taixu believed that Buddhism was the one international force, of all religions, "isms," and socio-political systems that could lead to true one-world-ism, a broad and tolerant world-view, and true world peace. (10)

Indeed, the Vietnamese monk Tri Quang (b. 1924), a leader in the 1960s Buddhist Struggle Movement, praised Taixu as "the first person to promote Buddhist integration and standardization... (he) organized many conferences for Buddhists all over the world to come together, he drafted a charter for Buddhists in the whole world, he proposed meetings for Buddhists all over the world. He's the first person to say, in order to standardize and integrate Buddhism, we should spread Buddhism to Europe and America. (11)

Taixu, in addition to being the inspiration for several leading Taiwanese Buddhist organizations in contemporary Taiwan via his student Ven. Yinshun 印順 (1906-2005) (See Jones, 1999 and Pittman, 2001), he (unbeknownst to both him and modern Chinese scholars) had a great influence on Vietnamese Buddhist Revival, which set the stage for its remarkable developments in the 1960-70s and beyond.

The Buddhist Revival in Vietnam, 1920s-50s

In the 1860s, there already were anti-French risings by rural-based lay Buddhist millenarian groups, and the period 1885-1898 saw not only lay group resistance but armed revolutionary risings by Buddhist monks, as in the 1898 "Monks' War" in central Vietnam (Do 1999, pp.259-250; Thich Nhat Hanh 1967, pp.21-4). The French authorities thus intensified their suppression of Buddhism and stepped up their promotion of Catholicism to solidify their colonial rule. "This was the beginning of religious discrimination, an idea that cannot be separated from the whole complex drive toward national independence" (Thich Nhat Hanh 1967, p.24). French repression did not stop but on the contrary stimulated the Vietnamese resistance movements; many Buddhist participants, lay and monastic, sought to propagate Buddhism and make Buddhism institutions stronger throughout Vietnam.

Due to the scarcity of extant materials on Buddhist anti-colonial activities in nineteenth century Vietnam, scholars as yet do not know the exact relationship between these earlier Buddhist activists and the actors and events of the subsequent *Chan Hung Phat Giao* movement of the 1920s-50s. *Chan hung* is the Vietnamese for the Chinese term *zhenxing*, to promote, to develop, to make prosper, used by Chinese Buddhist reformers in the term *zhenxing fojiao*. (12) Calls for enlightenment, restoration, revival, and awakening resounded across Asia in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when individual awakening was considered a prerequisite to national awakening (McHale 2004, p.5-6). Vietnamese nationalists, revolutionaries, and Buddhist reformers were well informed about the Meiji reformers in Japan, and the 1911 Revolution and the "New Culture Movement" in China. When Buddhist reformers in both China and Vietnam used the terms "enlightenment" and "revival," they purposively tapped into the transnational current found in both Asian nationalist independence movements, and in Buddhist "modernization" or reform movements in Thailand, Burma, Ceylon (Sri Lanka), India, and Japan.

However, the Chinese Buddhist "Revival" was the primary model for the Vietnamese Buddhist reformers because of the long history of interactions between Chinese and Vietnamese Mahayana Buddhists; because most Buddhist texts in Vietnam were written in Chinese, and because many monastics, up to the first half of the twentieth-century, had received a Chinese classical education. (13)

Chan Hung Phat Giao as a historical movement is translated in English by Nhat Hanh (1967), Woodside (1976), and McHale (2004) as "the Buddhist Revival." For the Vietnamese Buddhist reformers, there was a conscious political message in the term *Chan Hung*,

because many reformists envisioned a revival and restoration of Vietnamese Buddhism to its former glory during the so-called Golden Age of Vietnamese Buddhism from the eleventh through the fourteenth centuries, when Buddhism supposedly flourished in all quarters, from the imperial court to the village level, when Buddhists participated in national-level politics and policy-making, and when Vietnam and its people enjoyed peace and prosperity. "When Buddhism flourishes, the nation flourishes..." as a prosperous, peaceful, and independent Vietnam, a nationalist vision compelling to those Vietnamese Buddhists silenced and suppressed due to harsh French colonial rule (Duong 1938, pp.94-8; Pham 1932, pp.17-21).

However, despite this suppression, it is very difficult to reach an absolute verdict of "decline" in Vietnamese Buddhism at the time of "the Revival," because, first, Vietnamese kings and officials and their households (including both men and women, and also the eunuchs) continued as active patrons of Buddhism until 1945. (14) And even before 1920 and the subsequent Revival period, "...there were high-ranking monks maintaining the pulse of Buddhism," holding well-attended dharma talks for monastics and lay in the south, center, and north, as well as reprinting Chinese sutras and translating some into *quoc ngu*. (15) During the nineteenth century Buddhist temples in the north, center, and south had published Buddhist works which "...probably formed a significant proportion of all texts published" at that time (McHale 2004, p.13). Not surprisingly, Buddhist reformers and "revivalists" often belonged to younger generation with little or no voice or rank in the highly-patriarchal monastic power structure. For example when the young monk Tri Hai (1906-1979) began to promote reformist ideas in the 1920s, senior monks in his northern province of Ha Nam as well as Hanoi dismissed him as a mere child, saying there is nothing wrong with Buddhism, we are building

and restoring temples, repainting statues, recasting bells, visitors are flocking to the pagodas, why the need to revive or rebuild Buddhism? (16) However to Tri Hai and other reformist monastics and lay supporters, although Buddhism flourished in some regions of Vietnam, evidenced by well-attended dharma talks, translation and publishing of Buddhist texts, and temple-(re)building projects, there remained fundamental problems with the structure, organization, content, and direction of Buddhism in Vietnam. Larger realities were that Buddhism was not perceived by would-be reformers as responding to the crises of "Westernization" and colonial rule, especially if compared with the nationalist/revolutionary platform. And, Buddhist temples were also losing supporters and resources to new lay sects or Catholicism.

The reformers criticized pagodas' increasing focus on income-generating sutra chanting and funeral services and many monks' supposed indifference to the crises and challenges of the present day. Also, in accordance with the general "anti-superstition" movement of the times, the reformers censured such practices as burning spirit money and other ritual objects, exorcism and shamans, and worship of local animal cults. Furthermore, the reformers hoped to educate monastics and laypeople in Buddhist doctrines and texts, for reformers perceived many practitioners as "illiterate" and/or solely dedicated to "blind performance" of rituals. To both Chinese and Vietnamese Buddhist reformers, the elitist privileging of text-based knowledge was the key to both individual enlightenment and national salvation.

One might assume that the Buddhist Revival began in the north Vietnam, with a long history of trans-border exchanges with China including importing Chinese books and newspapers, but "(t)he origins of this movement are to be found in and around Saigon,"

(Nguyen, ed. 1992, p.388) inspired by the plethora of information and publications emanating from Saigon in Chinese, *quoc ngu*, and French. (17) Pioneer Buddhist reformers such as the monks Khanh Hoa (1877-1947) and Thien Chieu (1898-1974) looked directly to China for guidance in modernizing Buddhism, due to the shared language of Chinese, the centuries-old historical connections between Vietnamese and Chinese Buddhism, and because Taixu provided an in-depth and ready blueprint for reforms regarding Buddhist institutions, Buddhist monastic and lay education, and modern proselytization methods; in sum, an interpretation of "Buddhism for this world" for both individual cultivation and modern nation-building. In 1923 at the renowned Long Hoa Pagoda in Tra Vinh, the monks Khanh Hoa, Thien Chieu, and others founded the Lục Hoa Alliance to promote the Buddhist revival and establish links with Chinese Buddhist circles. (18) The two monks transmitted Taixu's and other Chinese Buddhist reform writings throughout Vietnam, and published many works on the Buddhist revival (Nguyen, 1994: 51-54).

Of particular importance is that Thien Chieu propagated Taixu's *Zhengli sengjia zhidu lun* (整理僧伽制度論 "The Reorganization of the Sangha System" [1915]) among monks in north Vietnam (Marr 1984, p.304, n. 57). This bold plan "called for Chinese Buddhism to be reshaped institutionally with new model monasteries, benevolent organizations, and educational ventures" (Pittman 2001, p.95). This was a key document, with Taixu's periodical *Hai Chao Yin* (also introduced by Thien Chieu to Hanoi in 1927) and the publications of Shanghai Buddhist organizations, inspiring the Buddhist Revival taking place in Vietnam (McHale 2004, p.158; Do 1999, p.279, n. 19). Thien Chieu's 1929 work *Phat hoc tong yeu* (*A General Summary of Buddhism*) that included translations of Chinese sutras, important articles from Taixu's *Hai Chao Yin*, and his own essays, was widely circulated and

debated in Buddhist circles of the time (Nguyen 1994, pp.21-22; Nguyen 1992, pp.390-1). Khanh Hoa worked his whole life for Buddhist Revival, and the historiography of modern Buddhism in Vietnam, Thien Chieu is the archetype of the "engaged" Buddhist monk because he, a learned and prolific writer as well, was also a revolutionary (Tran 1975; Nguyen 1994; and Thich Dong Bon 1995).

In addition Taixu's Vietnamese monastic disciples such as Tri Hai (1906-1979) and others influenced by Taixu's writings, built temples, wrote articles, published journals, wrote a variety of pedagogical tools, translated Chinese writings into *quoc ngu*, and developed networks of lay supporters. The reformists also founded schools for monks and nuns, attempted to reform property and economic administration of monasteries, called for stricter standards for recruitment and evaluation of monastics, offered lectures and classes (on Buddhism and other topics like family life) for laypeople, and promoted "Buddhism for this world," thus building the organizational and conceptual foundation for Vietnamese national Buddhism.

And, influenced by developments in Chinese Buddhism, this period saw the formation of Buddhist Associations in Vietnam: of North (Tonkin, 1934) Central (Annam, 1932) and South (Cochinchina, 1931) Vietnam. Each region's Buddhist circle had their own history, personnel, publications, and political stances vis-à-vis the French, though there was interaction (and competition among) all three throughout the 1920s-1940s. As for Central Vietnam, monks and laypeople in Hue and its environs, inspired in part by Taixu, launched new Buddhist Institutes to train monks and nuns, Buddhist primary and secondary schools, and the lay organization called the Buddhist Youth-Family, which has continued until the present day (Nguyen 1994, pp.91-125). The pioneering nun Dieu Khong

(1905-1997) was a key figure in Central Vietnam's Buddhist revival (19) and Central Vietnam produced many leaders of the 1960s Buddhist Struggle Movement, including Nhat Hanh (b. 1926) and Tri Quang (b. 1924).

Moreover, following a long historical tradition, Chinese monks during the Revival period continued to come to Vietnam either for pilgrimages, to work in temples located in Chinese communities, and to build new temples (GHPGVN 1993, 2001, p.113; Tran 2002, pp.18-20). Chinese monks who visited Vietnam included Ven. Cuihui from Qingliang Temple (清涼寺) in Hebei. While undertaking a pilgrimage of eight months, he stayed at Tri Hai's Quan Su Pagoda in Hanoi, June 12-14, 1937 and was impressed by the quality of monks at Quan Su, reported the journal *Duoc Tue*. And in November 1945, Vens. Tongliang and Qingchuan came from China for a groundbreaking ceremony for Nam Pho Da Temple, in Saigon (GHPGVN 1993, 2001, p.113). Interchange of Buddhist personnel, publications, artifacts, and ideas between China and Vietnam (and more recently, Taiwan) has continued virtually uninterrupted, from the third century to the present day (Purcell 1951, p.13, Tran, 2002).

The Impact of Taixu on Buddhism in Vietnam I

Taixu's two visits to Vietnam, though ignored in English scholarship, are an important part of this historical interchange between China and Vietnam. In Taixu's *Complete Works*, the term "Nanyang 南洋" in the broadest sense meant Annam (Vietnam), but rarely mentioning Laos and Cambodia, Thailand, Burma, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines and even India. Most often, Nanyang meant the countries Taixu traveled to during his lecture tours: India, Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand, Vietnam, and the city of Singapore. A few times, Nanyang narrowly referred to the Chinese

Buddhist traditions in Vietnam, Malaysia, and Indonesia.

The accounts of Taixu's trips to Vietnam in the *Complete Works of Taixu* do not speak specifically of Taixu's influence upon modern Vietnamese Buddhism but seem to take for granted that Vietnam, for centuries deeply influenced by Chinese culture, would "naturally" follow developments in Chinese Buddhism. Taixu's degree of cultural pride and nationalism made him sound at times like a Han chauvinist, as he expected that China would become the leader of the Buddhist nations in Asia, since Buddhism in India was too weak: "Buddhism is the interconnecting thread for the various peoples in East Asia. China is the second homeland of Buddhism [after India]...the Buddhisms of Korea, Japan, and Nanyang all belong to the Chinese [cultural] system. Burma, Thailand, Sri Lanka, are totally Buddhist cultures, and have deep connections with Chinese Buddhist history and overseas Chinese business connections" (Shi Taixu 1945, p.448-9).

Taixu realized that great possibilities lay in mobilizing Chinese Buddhists overseas: Chinese in Nanyang with economic means gave donations to Buddhist temples and organizations, published and disseminated sutras and other Buddhist literature, reported on Buddhist news in their media, built and/or repaired pagodas, and collected Buddhist art and artifacts. On three occasions in Singapore (1926, 1928, and 1940) Taixu spoke on his plans to establish a Nanyang Buddhist Association to promote Buddhism and pan-Asian unity among the native peoples as well as the overseas Chinese of Southeast Asia. (20)

Leaving Shanghai August 11, 1928, bound for Europe, the US, and Japan, Taixu and his entourage stopped in Saigon from Aug. 17-19, 1928: the Cochinchina Times chief editor Chen Zhaoqi 陳肇琪 (also an

administrator in the Chinese-French School) came to interview them for a special issue on Buddhism, (Cochinchina had two Chinese newspapers at that time). The group also met with the Chinese General Merchants' Association, toured Saigon and its parks, and met with Chinese-French School's headmaster, a former French army officer interested in Buddhism, Taixu was asked to give a public lecture but there was not enough time.

The Taixu group was briefed on the colonial situation in Vietnam and learned that of 700,000 overseas Chinese in Vietnam, 400,000 resided in the South, 100,000 living in Saigon, mostly businessmen involved in the transport of rice. The Chinese divided themselves into five groups according to place of origin in China, plus two Cantonese groups; each had their own *huiguan*, native-place associations. However, the KMT in Vietnam only had 1000 members because "property owners were afraid of interference from the authorities" (Shi Taixu, 1928.) The group continued to Singapore and then on to Europe, the US, and Japan. They returned to Shanghai on April 19, 1929. (21)

The next time Taixu's contingent visited Vietnam was in 1940 on their way from Singapore returning to Kunming, as they completed their tour of Burma, Sri Lanka, India, and Malaysia, Nov. 1939–May 1940. This tour, sponsored and funded by the Nationalist government, had two goals: To gain support in Southeast Asia for the Chinese war of resistance against Japan, and second, to promote Taixu's dream of world Buddhism. (22)

Taixu's group visited Saigon and Hanoi from April 28 to May 4, 1940. Their visit was arranged by the overseas Chinese community, the Nationalist consulate, and the China Travel Service. On April 28 the group met with Cai Zinan 蔡子南 (who worked in the Saigon Municipal

government and also was the Nationalist Foreign Affairs Association representative), Zhu Jixing 朱繼興, and other leaders of the overseas Chinese in Saigon, as well as Cai Xuetian 蔡削天, editor of the Far East Times who interviewed them, as did other papers, including the China Times, the All-People Times, and the South China Times; a special issue of the *Minbao* reported on Taixu's visit. (23)

The next day the overseas Chinese leaders brought the group to visit the Le Van Duyet temple and the Giac Vien pagoda. On the 30th a number of Chinese business leaders visited the group and asked to be Taixu's disciples. The Nationalist consul in Saigon hoped that the group could stay longer and visit Laos and Cambodia, but the group had to leave for Hanoi the evening of the 30th. They arrived in Hanoi on May 2, and met with members of the Tonkin Buddhist Association, including Ven. Tri Hai, Nguyen Neng Quoc, Ven. Thanh Hanh, Tran Van Co, and honorary head Hoang Trong Phu. Tri Hai asked the group to stay longer in Hanoi but they were eager to return to Kunming. Though not mentioned in the Chinese *Diary of the Buddhist Mission*, during Taixu's visit to Quan Su Temple in Hanoi he wrote a couplet, now engraved on the central twin pillars of the Main Hall:

法輪似地東西轉
佛道逢源左右通

The dharma wheel, like the earth, is ever-revolving and never stops;
The teachings of the Buddha can reach everyone, everywhere.

The group toured Hanoi and noticed that overseas Chinese were very few compared to the south, although the overall number of overseas Chinese in Vietnam had risen since the outbreak of WWII. On the evening of May 2, representatives from the Tonkin Buddhist Association

paid them a call; it was decided that the group leave as scheduled by train on May 3 but Taixu stayed an extra day in Hanoi, in order to give a public lecture on the war against the Japanese, on "our struggle against violent invaders" and then fly back to Kunming (Shi Weifang, 1940). The Vietnamese account of Taixu's 1940 visit described Taixu as a leader in Buddhism and famous all over the world, and outlined his itinerary similar to that of the Chinese account. In addition, the *Duy Tam* article adds that on May 28, the layman Lam Tu Doan urged Taixu to visit the Luong Xuyen Buddhist Association (24) but with no time to travel to Tra Vinh in the Mekong Delta, Taixu wrote a phrase for the Association, and looked forward to future cooperation:

The Light of the Buddha shines in the south 佛光南照
 ("Phat Quang Nam Chieu").

This article also mentions that Taixu gave a well-attended public talk at a "hot restaurant" about the purpose of his recent tour in India and Southeast Asia: to propagate Buddhism and garner overseas support for the anti-Japanese resistance. He mentioned that during the tour, he heard many calls to forge alliances between all the Mahayana and Theravada Buddhist traditions. He then gave a dharma talk on the Five Precepts, and four people asked to be his disciples (N.A., "Thai Hu Phap Su den Viet Nam: lan thu nhi," June 1940, pp.161-165).

The Impact of Taixu on Buddhism in Vietnam II

As discussed earlier in this article, Taixu influenced the Vietnamese Buddhist Revivalists through his writings and his journal, *Hai Chao Yin*, especially his proposals for reforming *sangha* education, Buddhist organizational management, and temple administration. Even before Taixu visited Vietnam (in 1928 and 1940) his activities and those of the Chinese Buddhist Revival were already known to Vietnamese reformist monks. Besides

reformers in south and central Vietnam as mentioned above, another monk who directly propagated Taixu's reforms was Tri Hai. Born in Ha Nam in 1906, he was founder of the Tonkin Buddhist Association and the Quan Su Pagoda in Hanoi, published the Buddhist journal *Duoc Tue* [Torch of Wisdom] and many other works, established a strong lay association in the north, founded schools for monks and nuns, and engaged in charity and relief works (Thich Tri Hai, 2004 [1965]).

In early 1937 the Tonkin Buddhist Association sent Tri Hai, Mat The, and three others to Hong Kong where they stayed for two weeks and then to Shanghai to find Taixu at the Jing'an Temple (靜安寺) who arranged for their study at Jiaoshan (焦山), Jiangsu Province. They stayed for five months studying Buddhism, Chinese, and Chinese medicine, but the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War forced the group to return to Hanoi, sutras in hand. On the way back, the group also visited Taixu's headquarters in Wuhan, as well as temples in Henan and Guangdong (Thich Tri Hai, 2004 [1965]: 39-46). From the 1950s on, Quan Su became the center of institutional Buddhism in Hanoi, and is now the headquarters of the Vietnamese National Buddhist Congregation.

Taixu's ideas also moved the monk Khanh Anh (1895-1961) in 1949 to publish his translation of essays by Taixu (first published in *Hai Chao Yin*), including such topics as the Republic and Buddhism; Buddhist education for the youth; the modern woman and Buddhism; Buddhism and science, Buddhism and Confucianism, Buddhism and philosophy; Buddhist critiques of socialism; democracy and Buddhism; Buddhism and evolution; Buddhism and the salvation of the world; the movement to save the *sangha*; how laypeople should study Buddhism; biographies of famous monks; businessmen and Buddhism; discussion of burning paper money and paper funerary objects; the

Pure Land in the human realm; as well as lectures on basic Buddhist principles. (25)

The book also includes a brief biography of Taixu written in 1928 by his disciple Chen Weidong 陳維東, and a preface and introduction by Khanh Anh who writes that Vietnam's Buddhist revivalists have been working to carry out Taixu's call for a revolution in Buddhism, to reform Buddhism to fit the times and to enlighten humankind.

Khanh Anh also remarked that "Buddhists should fight invaders," referring to Taixu's call for both monks and laypeople to take up arms to fight [the Japanese]. Though Vietnamese monks had participated in armed risings at least since the French colonial period, the activist and anti-colonial monk Thien Chieu's group, *Phat Hoc Kiem Te* (Buddhist Studies and Welfare Action Association) had also "praised Chinese monks for joining the Nationalist army to fight against the Japanese invaders" (Pham 2001, p. 144). When the Japanese occupied Manchuria in 1931, Taixu organized the Buddhist Youth Protect-the-Nation Corps," comprised of monks, nuns, and lay youth who participated in ambulance and medical care teams, burial teams, consolation and prayer teams, propaganda, transport, care of refugees and orphans, and helping with economic production work (Chen 2003, p. 242). With the full-scale Japanese invasion into China in the summer of 1937, the unprecedented degree of destruction and atrocities caused Taixu and other Buddhists to reconsider the Buddhist precept on non-harming and non-violence. Some Buddhists considered whether they should "put down Buddhist implements and take up the butcher knife" (Li 2001, p. 171).

Taixu argued that such actions were not only the duty of all Chinese citizens, but are fully sanctioned for

Buddhists by the *Renwang huguo ban'nuo boluomi jing* (仁王護國般若波羅蜜經 *Scripture for Humane Kings*), a Chinese apocryphal sutra, written in the eighth century by the Chinese Tantric monk Bukong (不空) (Shi Taixu, [1933] 2005; Shi Taixu, 1939; Shi Tianhui, 1945). This "Scripture for Humane Kings," addressed not to the *sangha* or lay believers but to state rulers, "became the standard model text in [China, Korea, and Japan] for Buddhist-based state protection and statecraft. (26) Thus, the words and actions of Taixu and Chinese Buddhists during the Japanese invasion further inspired some Vietnamese Buddhist groups like Thien Chieu's to carry out anti-colonial resistance against the French.

Of the "Twenty-five Lectures by Taixu," another topic deserves special note, that of "the modern woman and Buddhism." Vietnam had a long tradition of Buddhist nuns since the twelfth century, along with laywomen as believers and donors, but new trends from the West such as education of women and women's rights entered Vietnam in the early twentieth century, closely intertwined with the "making of the modern nation" discourse. "By the 1920s, 'women and society' had become something of a focal point around which other issues often revolved." (27) Influenced by Taixu and *Hai Chao Yin*, there were new schools and temples for nuns, (28) speeches in Vietnamese Buddhist circles on "the woman question" and "Buddhism and women" such as the public lecture on "Buddhist Studies for Women," April 8, 1935, organized by the Annam Buddhist Association; and journal articles such as the 1936 series on women's issues in *Tu Bi Am* by nun Dieu Ngon and other nuns. (29) As nuns obtained education and training, the numbers of nuns as teachers, writers, and administrators has increased. One source claims that today the number of nuns is ten times that of monks (Dien 2004, p.48).

Renjian fojiao/ nhan gian phat giao: "Buddhism for this world"

How was Taixu's *renjian fojiao* received and interpreted by Vietnamese Buddhist reformers? As mentioned earlier, Taixu used both *rensheng fojiao* and *renjian fojiao* when he made his arguments and offered plans "...to adapt Buddhism to the times, solving concrete problems in society and promoting Buddhist education" (Bingenheimer 2007, p.150). But *renjian fojiao/ nhan gian phat giao* became the term known and used in Vietnam, most likely because the Feb. 15, 1937 issue of the Tonkin Buddhist Association's *Duoc Tue* (Torch of Wisdom) introduced the ideas of *renjian fojiao* and Buddhist revival presented in the Jan. 1934 special issue of *Hai Chao Yin*. (30)

This issue of *Duoc Tue* highlighted Taixu's 1933 essay, "How to establish Buddhism for this world." The *Duoc Tue* editor, following Taixu, stressed that the original message of the Buddha was to relieve human suffering of the world; egalitarianism and compassion are the dominant teachings of Buddhism; and this is *renjian fojiao*. It means to make this world into the Pure Land, not wait until the Western Paradise after death. Buddhism is not secret, mystical, or ghostly but is entered into humanity and society. The editor concluded by saying that though the Tonkin Buddhist Association heretofore had not talked specifically about *nhan gian phat giao*, they had already been practicing it. "Our Buddhist Revival is not different from that in China and we agree with what the Chinese revivalists are doing...we agree with *renjian fojiao*..." (Do, 1937: 3-9).

A year earlier in fact, layman Pham Tai Luyen stressed that the work of Buddhist revival in Vietnam included the following, each of which Taixu had already proposed: the organization of public lectures on Buddhism (which could coincide with the traditional

bimonthly worship services), a structure of public spaces for such lectures and meditation for laypeople, institutes for monks and nuns, unification and standardization of the monastic system, founding hospitals and charity projects, and publication of newspapers (Pham 1932, pp.18-20).

Nhan gian phat giao as interpreted in layman Tran Van Dai's thirty-five poems refers to Buddhist doctrines and practice made simple, integrated into daily life, Buddhism for this world. His poems fall into three categories: regarding one's self (the Five Precepts; cultivating Buddhist virtues and ridding oneself of afflictions in thought, speech, and work); regarding others (relationship between parents and children; between teacher and student; between husband and wife; friendship, etc.); dealing with the world (Buddhist values such as compassion, joyful giving, equality, charity, enlightening the self and others, saving yourself and others, Buddhism's influence on national affairs, co-dependent origination, and worship) (Tran, 1951).

In 1967, Nhat Hanh wrote: "In the 1930s, the Buddhist scholars had already discussed the engagement of Buddhism in the modern society and called it *Nhan Gian Phat Giao* or engaged Buddhism" (Thich Nhat Hanh, 1967: 42). Nhat Hanh spoke approvingly of the earlier reformists' desire to "mang đạo Phat di vao trong cuoc doi" (bring Buddhism into the current of life, or day-by-day world); that Buddhism is of and for life, "dem dao Phat vao cuoc song hang ngay," and not to avoid or renounce the world. (31) Nhat Hanh here acknowledged the direct influence of "the great Chinese monk" Taixu on Buddhist reformers in Vietnam early twentieth century (Thich Nhat Hanh 1967, p.40).

But in fact, Vietnamese Buddhist reformers in the 1920s-40s did not yet use the term "Engaged," which most likely originated with Sartre.(32) More research is

needed to know how Vietnamese intellectuals in France and Vietnam first interpreted and disseminated the works of Sartre and Camus, but according to my investigation, by the 1960s, existentialism was a frequently discussed topic in the Buddhist journals and books of South Vietnam, including those of Thich Nhat Hanh. (33) In the 1960s, two Vietnamese renderings of Sartre's term *engagé* were *nhap cuoc* [to take part in, be an insider] and *dan than*, [lit, to move/plunge the body forward] but Nhat Hanh coined his own term, *Tiep Hien*, Inter-being; *Tiep* [to receive, be in touch with], *Hien* [to achieve, to make here and now] to describe his new order of socially-engaged monastics (34).

Besides references to the Chinese and Vietnamese Buddhist reform movements of the early twentieth century and to French existentialism, Buddhist publications (including those of Nhat Hanh) in South Vietnam of the 1960s also made detailed reference to the activities of Gandhi and his successor Vinoba Bhave and the Indian *Sarvodaya*-inspired bhoodan (gifts of land by wealthy landlords to poorer castes) and gramdan (pooling community resources) movements. (35)

On the first page of Nhat Hanh's 1964 book *Dao phat di vao cuoc doi* translated into English in 1965 by Trinh Van Du as *Engaged Buddhism*, Nhat Hanh asserts that Buddhist teachings at once speak of transcendence beyond life and engagement in life, but due to humans' lack of awareness, Buddhism loses its true nature and only the dead and dry forms of Buddhism are left. "Therefore, to engage Buddhism into life means to realize Buddhist principles in life, by methods which are suitable to real situations of life to transform it into a good and beautiful one. Only when Buddhist energies are clearly seen in every form of life, can we be able to say that Buddhism is really present in life." (Nhat Hanh, 1965a: 1-2) These are similar to statements Taixu made in his championing of *renjian fojiao*. But Thich Nhat

Hanh goes beyond Taixu in the instrumental meaning of an "engaged Buddhism." "In short, activities of Buddhists in social life must spring up from *thuc chung* [self-consciousness], aim at solving urgent and painful problems in man, as poverty, hunger, diseases, slavery, death, not at developing powers and fame of the Church." (Nhat Hanh 1965a, p.21) Nhat Hanh calls on Buddhists in Vietnam to lead a social revolution, pointing to Vinoba Bhave's gramdan movement in India as a successful non-violent social revolution:

When [can Buddhism] be able to participate in the movement of just distribution of interests, to raise confidence in the masses in an economic, humanistic and moral direction based on the idea of [the Four Noble Truths]? And when do social activities escape from their small realm of charitable works and drop their tiny efforts into the boundless pains of the suffered to lead a social revolution based on love and non-violence? (Nhat Hanh 1965a, pp.14, 26-7)

He stresses the importance of practical education and training for Buddhist monastics, such as training in psychology and family life issues, child education, health care, rural reconstruction, pedagogy at all levels, and Buddhist music, chanting, and other rituals updated for the modern world. (1965a, pp.19-29) In his 1967 book *Vietnam: Lotus in a Sea of Fire*, Nhat Hanh employed the English term "Engaged Buddhism" to describe his and his colleagues' and students' many activities during Vietnam's Buddhist Struggle Movement, such as the School of Youth for Social Service, his new Buddhist "Order of Inter-Being," his group's non-violent resistance efforts during to the war, and his efforts in peace negotiations abroad.

So, in a fundamental sense, Nhat Hanh's Engaged Buddhism directly continues the spirit of Taixu's *renjian*

fojiao, as well as the earlier Vietnamese reformers' ideas, that Buddhism is of and for this world; Buddhists can and should make this world into a Pure Land. Yet the earlier generation's *nhan gian phat giao* and Nhat Hanh's Engaged Buddhism differ in the instrumental sense of the terms, due to different historical circumstances after 1954 (division of Vietnam into North and South and suppression of Buddhism in both areas; full-scale war throughout the country) and new transnational influences (French existentialism, Gandhi's and Vinoba Bhave's rural development ideas, and Gandhian [and Martin L. King's] non-violent resistance tactics and global struggles for social equality, peace, and justice).

In comparison, Taixu argued against "struggling" for social justice (36) and was an avid supporter of the Nationalist party-state, unless Buddhist interests were threatened. He did exhort Chinese Buddhists to resist the Japanese invaders, even at the expense of the Buddhist doctrine of non-violence. As for the earlier generation of Vietnamese Buddhist reformers, all, like Taixu, worked to provide better education for monastics and laypeople, and encouraged Buddhist charity and relief efforts; some like Thien Chieu actively participated in anti-colonial resistance, while other Buddhist reformers cooperated with the French in order to secure legal status for their Buddhist activities.

Writing in the 1960s, Nhat Hanh was fully aware of the enormous efforts of the earlier generation of Buddhist reformers to establish modern Vietnamese institutional Buddhism, but he felt some institutions and practices in Vietnamese Buddhism required further reformation to meet the challenges of the times. (37) However, neither the government nor the Buddhist establishment in South Vietnam could tolerate his proposals and activities and Nhat Hanh was forced into exile from his homeland from 1967 to 2005. (38)

Concluding Remarks

Although Taixu died in 1947, his works have continued to be translated and published until today in Vietnam. Besides the "Twenty-five Lectures on Buddhism by Master Taixu" mentioned above, in 1954, An Quang Pagoda published translations of Taixu's lectures on the *Thap thien nghiep dao* [The Ten Wholesome Ways of Action Sutra] (1932) and the *Bat Dai Nhan Giac* [The Eight Enlightenment Sutra] (1934), while translations of Taixu's "Chinese Buddhism" and other articles are included in *Phat Giao Viet Nam*, Issues 1-24, published by the United Buddhist Congregation (Saigon) in the late 1950s.

In 1951 when Buddhists from all over Vietnam met in Hue to form the United Buddhist Congregation, they could review several decades of accomplishments behind them: education initiatives for both monastics and youth, Buddhist publications, translations, reorganizing temple life and economy, organizing the talent and resources of lay believers, using modern methods to propagate Buddhism in society, advancing the roles of nuns and laywomen, and a record of social welfare provision (Pham 2001, p.144; Thich Tri Hai 2004, (1965), pp.60-70; GHPGVN 1993, 2001, pp.99-100). The Buddhist Revival also produced examples of politically-engaged Buddhist monks in anti-French activism such as Thien Chieu, inspired by Chinese monks who resisted the Japanese during WWII. Pham Van Minh writes that hundreds of Vietnamese monks were imprisoned, tortured, and killed by the French (Pham 2001, pp.144-6).

The Revival of the 1920s-50s also engendered several generations of monastics who played important roles in the making of modern Vietnam in the 1950-60s, such as Tri Hai, Tri Quang, Thien Hoa, Minh Chau, Huyen Quang, and Nhat Hanh (Pham 2001, pp.144-6). In 1949 Nhat

Hanh (b. 1926) received full ordination at the Bao Quoc school in Hue, one of the modern Buddhist institutes involved in the Vietnamese Buddhist Revival. Tri Quang, one the most active leaders in the 1960s Buddhist Struggle Movement, graduated from the Annam Buddhist Institute, founded in 1933. Many other examples could be cited.

Of course, much in the contemporary Buddhist landscape in Vietnam was shaped by people and events after 1975 (a complex subject for a separate study, as is the 1960s Buddhist Struggle Movement). But we do see the legacy of the Buddhist Revival and the influence of Taixu's reforms, taken for granted today: Senior monks and nuns trained in the earlier period's Buddhist Institutes now lead the Buddhist establishment; nuns, not only monks, receive education and training and now outnumber monks; global Buddhist information circulate in many media. The Vietnamese Buddhist Youth Association is a nation-wide and transnational organization, and all pagodas participate in charity works to one degree or another. Vietnam's economy works to one degree or another. Vietnam's economy continues to improve, Vietnam's Buddhism is reforging international Buddhist links, and Vietnamese Buddhists are found across the globe in diasporic communities.

Thus far, scholarship on the history of modern Buddhism tends to be nation-oriented but could also benefit from a transnational approach. The Taixu-Vietnam link was little known outside of Vietnam until recently, and works on modern and engaged Buddhism do not explore this connection. The "revival" in modern Buddhism began in a transnational context from the nineteenth through the twentieth century and will continue to evolve in an ever-more connected globe.

To close, here are two Vietnamese monks' views of Taixu. Tri Quang, a major figure in the 1960s Buddhist

Struggle Movement in Vietnam, credited Taixu "...for promoting *nhan gian phat giao*, to say that Buddhists were born to serve human beings, that monastics should not only pray for themselves but to join society; not only think of the dead, but think of the future, to sacrifice for and serve humanity." (Thich Tri Quang, 1972: 149-151) To Tri Quang, Taixu was a revolutionary: "With his call for 'a revolution in religious doctrine, a revolution in religious administration, and a revolution in religious property,' Master Taixu is the model for the modern *sangha* in the twentieth century." (Thich Tri Quang, 1972: 152)

And Ven. Bich Phong (1901-1968) wrote a Chinese poem for Master Taixu upon his death in 1947, equating Taixu with the universe and comparing him with Sakyamuni himself:

中國太虛法師圓寂日恭悼
法師曾遊化于歐,亞,美,諸洲:

昔年是日證無餘
爐熱名香望太虛
化範未忘他世界
法身常在此全書
試觀我佛當時事
寧忍金臺九品居
西沒東升還法爾
照臨日月本無私。(39)

(Translated into English by Elise A. DeVido)

"In Reverent Memory of Chinese Master Taixu, The Master who traveled and taught in Europe, Asia, and America all continents":

Before that year and day of his death he had already reached Nirvana

The burner is hot: we are offering incense to him, the vast universe...

He taught his disciples norms and standards

Yet didn't forget other worlds
The dharma-body remains in his writings.
Let's look at the time of Sakyamuni:
He willingly forsook it all, prince-hood, riches, a
luxurious life...
The sun sets in the West and rises in the East
The laws of the universe unceasing
The sun and the moon enlighten all
Without selfishness.

Notes

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1. See Werner, 1981; Oliver, 1997; Ho Tai, 1983; Taylor, 2001a; Nguyen, 2004; and Do, 1998. For more explanation about the term "Revival," see discussion below.

2. Xiao Ping stresses the role of Japan as well in the Chinese Buddhist revival of the late Qing and early Republican periods. Interchange between the two Buddhist worlds included: reprinting of sutras in China that influenced the same in Japan, a revival of Buddhist studies in both countries; Japanese Buddhist priests proselytizing in China, a revival of interest in Tibetan Buddhism in both China and Japan, Chinese Buddhist monks and nuns to Japan for study and touring, and Japanese Buddhist monastics and laypeople to China for study and touring. Xiao 2001, pp.1-4.

3. A pivotal figure in this early phase of Buddhist revival was Yang Wenhui 楊文會(1837-1911) of Nanjing whose pioneering projects included reprinting the Chinese sutras at his Jinling 金陵 Scriptural Press; a Buddhist Research Association that sponsored weekly lectures on Buddhism; and the founding of the Jetavana Vihara 祇洹精舍, a school for monks offering both Buddhist studies and modern academic subjects. The school, whose teachers included both monks and laypeople, made a deep impression on Taixu who studied there in 1909. Pittman, 2001:40-45.

4. As far as can be ascertained, Taixu first used the terms *renjian jingtu* in 1926, *rensheng fojiao* [Buddhism for human life] in 1928, and *renjian fojiao* [Buddhism for this world] in 1933. See Hong, 1999; Li, 2000; Chen, 2003; and Bingenheimer, 2007.

5. See for example, Taixu's appeals to Japanese Buddhists, Shi Taixu (July 1937) and (July 1945). But Taixu did not specify how Buddhists might effectively oppose Japan's powerful military dictatorship. It is well known that many Zen leaders and monks supported Japanese militarism and imperialism, some willingly, some through coercion. Buddhists and others who opposed the regime were imprisoned and killed. See Hesig and Maraldo (1995) and Victoria (2006).

6. See the further discussion below.

7. Buddhists such as Taixu's student Ven. Juzan 巨贊 (1908-1984) who remained in China formed a new Chinese Buddhist Association in 1953, firmly under the aegis of the Communist Party-State. Please see Xue Yu's article in this special issue. Scholars in China are currently interested in Taixu and the Chinese Buddhist Revival, see the series called *Zhong'guo fojiao xueshu lundian* (Academic Theses on Chinese Buddhism), such as Vols. 41-43, by Foguangshan, Taiwan, and also Li (2000) and Chen (2003). The mainland Chinese monk Jinghui 淨慧禪師 (b. 1933) promotes "Buddhism for this world" but this is not the mainstream. Deng, 2005: L38-9. Ven. Jinghui and his Bolin Temple 柏林禪寺 were integral to Thich Nhat Hanh's twenty-day trip to China that included dharma talks and retreats at Bolin Temple, in May-June 1999.

8. Pittman, 2001: 105-114; 118-130; 139-143. Pittman did not mention that Taixu also stopped in Saigon in 1928, and Saigon and Hanoi from April 28-May 4, 1940, to be discussed below.

9. Pittman, 2001:142-143. Holmes Welch notes that "Dharmapala's ideal of a world Buddhist movement took root in China, first under the [efforts of layman] Yang Wenhui and later under Taixu." Welch 1968, p.180.

10. This is a summary of points made by Taixu in a number of articles in his *Complete Works*.

11. Shi Tri Quang 1972, p.149. Tri Quang did not mention the earlier efforts to bridge Buddhist traditions and/or propagate Buddhism worldwide by activists such as Dharmapala, Yang Wenhui, and the Japanese Buddhists;

however it was Taixu who traveled and lectured most widely in Asia, Europe, and the US.

12. See for example Shi Taixu, 1940.

13. This article concentrates on the predominant Mahayana tradition of Buddhism in Vietnam and ethnic Vietnamese monastic and lay followers of Mahayana Buddhism. Ethnic groups in Vietnam such as the Khmer have followed the Theravada tradition, while increasing numbers of ethnic Vietnamese have been practicing in the Theravada tradition from the mid-twentieth century on.

14. To take but one example, see Thich Quang Duc's efforts to obtain an imperial charter for Thien An Pagoda (Khanh Hoa Province) in the 1930s. Le, ed. 2005, pp.15-21. The support and patronage of Buddhism throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries by the Nguyen kings, their families, and their officials deserves serious study, see Le and Ho, eds. 2009, pp.1-94.

15. This is the romanization system used to write Vietnamese. Nguyen 1994, pp.17-19.

16. See Thich Tri Hai [1965] 2004, pp.3-12. Senior monks' reluctance to support Tri Hai and his colleagues had another dimension besides patriarchal power games or philosophical differences: Forming new associations of any kind was a life-threatening undertaking due to French authorities' fear of anti-colonial resistance, and some monks told this outright to Tri Hai. Thich Tri Hai [1965] 2004, pp.7-20.

17. There was a network of Chinese and Vietnamese merchant contacts among Cholon, Saigon, and its satellite areas, as well as connections to Shanghai, where the majority of Chinese Buddhist publications, including Taixu's, were published and distributed. Cholon had been a major importer of books from South China since the nineteenth century. McHale 2004, p.13, and see Meng 2003.

18. Both Thich Nhat Hanh 1994, and the GHPGVN 1993, 2001, give 1923 as the founding date of the Luc Hoa Alliance but Nguyen 1992, says 1920.

19. Among Dieu Khong's many talents and achievements, she was a skilled poet and wrote a memorial poem in Chinese for Taixu upon his death, praising his writings and his selfless proselytizing of Buddhism East and West. Thich Nu Dieu Khong 2007, p.157.

20. See Shi Taixu, 2005 (1940). It is unclear what became of this Association.

21. See Pittman 2001, pp.118-129 for details.

22. See Pittman 2001, pp.139-143, though he does not mention this or the 1928 Vietnam trip.

23. I am now trying to locate these Chinese newspapers.

24. The Luong Xuyen Buddhist Association (1934), very active in the Revival, promoted Buddhism through its journal *Duy Tam*, translated sutras, and established elementary and college-prep Buddhist schools in Tra Vinh with both Vietnamese and Chinese students. N.A. "Yuenan fojiao yu xuexiao," July 1, 1940, p.23.

25. Quan Su Temple in Hanoi sells the *25 Bai Thuyet Phap Cua Thai Hu Dai Su* [Twenty-five Lectures on Buddhism by Master Taixu] 1993 (1949), translated and edited by Khanh Anh. Born in Quang Ngai Province, Khanh Anh was very accomplished in Chinese and Buddhist studies. Inspired by Buddhist revivals in China and Japan, he was active in the Vietnamese Buddhist Revival, particularly in Saigon and the Mekong Delta region. Thich Dong Bon 1995, pp.303-308.

26. Available from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scripture_for_Humane_Kings [accessed on June 15, 2009].

27. See David Marr's discussion in Marr 1981, pp.190-251, however, Buddhist women are not mentioned.

28. See Thich Nu Dong Anh 2004, p.52, for a list of the "Revival Generation" nun pioneers from the south, center, and north. Also see Van 1975, pp.535-539.

29. References to nuns and laywomen can be found in Thich Tri Hai, 2004 (1965), and GHPGVN, 1993, 2001. Le Tam Dac of the Institute for Religious Studies, Academy of Social Sciences, Hanoi, told me that the topic of "women and Buddhism" originated from Taixu. Interview, Feb. 14, 2006.

30. Shi Daxing, ed. (Jan. 1934). The "Introduction" by Ven. Daxing, states that "...Since this journal's inception [in 1920], we have consistently advocated *renjian fojiao*..." The eighteen articles overall explore four major subjects: definitions of *renjian fojiao*; research about the history of *renjian fojiao*; practical measures to establish

renjian fojiao; and, the subject of the Pure Land in the human realm.

31. In the 1960s, besides many journal articles, Thich Nhat Hanh developed his ideas on a world-engaged and modernized Buddhism in three books published in Saigon: *Dao phat di vao cuoc doi* 1964 [Engaged Buddhism]; *Dao phat ngay nay* 1965b [Buddhism Today]; and *Dao phat hien dai hoa* 1965c [Modernization of Buddhism].

32. Jean-Paul Sartre had developed his ideas on the politically engaged intellectual in *La nausée* 1938, and especially in his 1947 essay "Qu'est-ce que la littérature?" as well as the plays *Les Mains Sales* (1948) and *Saint Genet* (1952).

33. According to Vo Phien, from the late 1950s, translations of books by Sartre, Greene, Hesse, Tolstoy, and other "Western" writers were available in Saigon bookstores. Vo, 1992:143.

34. Thich Nhat Hanh 1965a, pp.8-10; 27-29. At present, Nhat Hanh and his followers also use the term *dan than* for engaged, see <http://www.deerparkmonastery.org/engaged-buddhism> [accessed June 10, 2009].

35. These Buddhist publications reported in depth, for example, on Vinoba Bhave winning of the first Ramon Magsaysay Award for Community Leadership in 1958, and Sartre's opposition to the Vietnam war and his refusal of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1964. Nhat Hanh commends Vinoba Bhave's gramdan movement in India as a non-violent social revolution. Nhat Hanh 1965a, p.27.

36. He believed fundamental change will occur only if the root (the mind) is reformed, see for example Shi Taixu, 1940.

37 See his three books 1964, 1965b and 1965c.

38 In his books and lectures, Thich Nhat Hanh's "Engaged Buddhism" focuses on meditation, healing, and communication practices rather than on the social activism of his younger years and of others who call themselves Engaged Buddhists. See Christopher Queen, Charles S. Prebish, and Damien Keown, eds., 2003.

39. Chinese version published in Le 2004, pp.209, 551.

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