

Chapter 1

Why Buddhist Inclusivism?

Here in the West, the Dalai Lama's books are constantly on the *New York Times* bestseller lists, and you can take meditation classes in even the most out of the way places. The market for all types of Buddhist materials beyond Asia is thriving, indicating that members of non-Buddhist religions, whether casually or seriously, are hungry to learn about and from Buddhism. Indeed, many Christians make no bones about their eagerness to incorporate aspects of Buddhist thought and practice into their own religious cultures.

In the Academy, scholars who ponder such matters on a theoretical level continue to produce much-discussed literature on Christian inclusivism towards Buddhism and other religions. But in our excitement to search Buddhism for treasures to import, and amidst Christian theologians' efforts to formulate justifications for inclusive stances, have we forgotten something obvious? Clearly, many want to include Buddhists, but do Buddhists want to be included? Reciprocally, do they want to do any including themselves, absorbing Christian and other non-Buddhist beliefs or practices? What are the prevailing Buddhist attitudes towards and methods of inclusivism, and might not studying them help Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike?

Each religious community that is aware of the existence of other, different religious communities must reckon with the fact that its religious tradition is but one of many such forms of life. Each religious community must face and decide how best to respond to the situation of religious plurality. Common terms designating three options for responding to others include exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism.

What is meant by "inclusivism"? How does it compare to related terms? As I will show, the category of inclusivism has been used variously, but nevertheless there is a common thread. Simply put, the name "inclusivism" comes from the idea of including, so an inclusivistic approach towards others has to do with willingness to include the other or something of the other's. One might, for example, accept as true or good a doctrine or practice (or many doctrines/practices) from a foreign religious system. Or, one might believe that a religious other could attain ultimate fulfillment or salvation as conceived by the home tradition, despite (or even through) membership in an alien tradition. An inclusivist is open to the presence of truth and value in other traditions, feeling that there is overlap between the foreign and the home faith and/or that there is something distinct that the other can contribute and teach to the home community. In this general usage, the term covers, of course, many possible methods and justifications for such an attitude. It

allows that the other tradition might be accepted as a whole or only in part, so that one may be inclusivistic with respect to one thing, such as the truth of doctrinal claims, but not with respect to something else, such as the possibility of salvation. In fact, one may be inclusivistic in my sense while still rejecting numerous or even central aspects of alien religious systems. Thus, different degrees and kinds of inclusivism will need to be specified.

Inclusivism is normally used in contrast to exclusivism, which has to do with excluding the other or something from the other. An exclusivist thinks that the home community is in sole possession of all important truths and that it is only through membership in the home community that one can attain salvation or ultimate fulfillment. Exclusivism in the strict sense with respect to truth must be rare, for it commits the home group to the problematic claim that no other community teaches or practices anything that the home group does.

A third option that often accompanies discussion of these two is pluralism, which picks out the practice of accepting several traditions as equals. Therein lies a key difference between pluralism and inclusivism: an inclusivist privileges one tradition, keeping it primary, and absorbs something foreign into that tradition. Pluralism, in contrast, is more of a “separate but equal” or “different strokes for different folks” position. Pluralists with respect to salvation “think that all religions are equally effective in bringing salvation about.”¹

Of these three main options for responding to others (i.e., exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism), inclusivism is currently enjoying widespread popularity. Many religious people want to justify inclusivistic attitudes and behaviors using the resources of their respective traditions. However, although a few articles and books can be found on such topics as “Buddhism and dialogue” or “Buddhism and toleration,” unfortunately rigorous philosophical work utilizing the categories of exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism from a Buddhist perspective is extremely rare. Comparative studies on particular topics are available, as are historical studies of the relations between Buddhism and other faiths, but theoretical work analogous to Christian philosophical and theological arguments for certain approaches to religious others is not. Unlike their Christian counterparts, Buddhists and scholars of Buddhism have not yet analyzed what the term *inclusivism* might mean in Buddhist contexts. They have not collected for reflection evidence of Buddhist expressions and behaviors that might reasonably be labeled inclusivistic, nor have they asked whether inclusivism is philosophically and doctrinally justifiable according to Buddhist resources. As the late German Indologist Paul Hacker wrote regarding inclusivism in the Indian context, Indians (or, better, thinkers whose religious roots stem from India) seem to have no term for inclusivism, they have not reflected on it very much, and they tend not to

¹ Paul J. Griffiths, *Problems of Religious Diversity*, ed. Michael L. Peterson, *Exploring the Philosophy of Religion* (Malden: Blackwell Publishers, Inc., 2001) xv.

justify their inclusivistic moves.² I aim, therefore, to begin to remedy this situation by exploring inclusivism in Buddhist contexts, in order to encourage Buddhists and scholars of Buddhism to develop more theoretical work on Buddhist responses to religious diversity.

Ironically, despite the lack of scholarship on the subject, there is a romanticized perception of Buddhism as an exceptionally tolerant and inclusivistic religion. Although my work helps to complicate this stereotype, this reputation has attracted many to the faith and thus underscores the importance of the project at hand. On the other side, scholars within the Critical Buddhism movement, among others, have *berated* Buddhists for being too accommodating in their approach to others, at the risk of diluting their traditions. Hakamaya Noriaki has argued that “Buddhists should not give in to a compromising and mushy ‘tolerance’ that uncritically accepts all things...” Similarly, Hans Küng has proposed the “problem of an easy, cheap tolerance in Buddhism.” “There is a danger,” he says in agreement with Hakamaya, “of uncritical assimilation, of an opportunistic attitude of compromise, of a dangerous lack of discrimination and insufficient resistance to some highly dubious Western ‘achievements’.”³ M. Monier-Williams said that primitive Buddhism was too “tolerant, liberal, and eclectic” to survive intact, and Sir Charles Eliot found that Buddhists are prone to corrupt their faith. He wrote that “their courteous acquiescence in other creeds enfeebles...their own,” and that Buddhism is “dangerously tolerant.”⁴ This criticism also supports my work here, for the underlying assumption motivating this book is that Buddhists and scholars have yet to articulate, develop, and defend their inclusivistic positions adequately, lagging behind the Christian scholarship.

One matter to address initially is how Buddhists have, in fact, demonstrated inclusivism. Thus in one section of this work I gather examples of inclusive Buddhist behaviors and attitudes, categorizing the patterns identified. But I stress that, although I purposefully offer cases from a wide range of time periods, schools, and regions, I do not aspire to comprehensiveness. Nor do I mean in any way to suggest that Buddhists as a whole have been or mostly are inclusivists. There is, of course, no singular Buddhism. The complexities and varieties of Buddhism, like those of Christianity, make it possible to support a range of positions towards religious others, all in the name of “Buddhism”. In any case, at

² Paul Hacker, *Inklusivismus: Eine Indische Denkform* (Vienna: De Nobili Research Library, 1983) 12,14.

³ Paul L. Swanson, “Why They Say Zen Is Not Buddhism,” in *Pruning the Bodhi Tree: The Storm over Critical Buddhism*, ed. Jamie Hubbard and Paul L. Swanson (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1997) 17. See also Hans Kung, ed., *Christianity and the World Religions: Paths of Dialogue with Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism* (Garden City: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1986) 353-4.

⁴ As quoted by Collins. See Steven Collins, *Selfless Persons* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982) 13-4.

bottom, my principal interests are not historical but rather critical. The provided instances of inclusivistic argumentation serve mostly as a jumping off point for constructive analysis, for critique and comment.

My work here, therefore, is modeled not on descriptive studies of the intermingling of Buddhism with Hinduism, Christianity, and so forth, and not on historical narratives of Buddhism's gradual assimilation in the lands to which it has spread. I provide only minimal historical contextualization and idealize types, but that is because I am concerned with the question of whether a certain stance in response to other religions is philosophically and doctrinally justifiable, not with historical questions and explanations of Buddhist behavior. I write having been heavily influenced by the work of certain Christian thinkers who, though referencing historical examples, focus their efforts mostly on supporting theologically a particular approach towards non-Christians. I am trying to jumpstart the parallel work in Buddhist thought. My goal is to provide a more systematic treatment of the possibility of a tenable Buddhist inclusivist position than has yet been provided either by scholars or by contemporary Buddhists.

In the Christian literature, scholars have recently argued that some forms of inclusivism are not as nice or as friendly as they appear but rather mask polemicism or disrespect for the other, and thus are disingenuous. Also, there are methods of inclusivism that so massively reinterpret what is supposedly included that one may question whether anything *other* has really been accepted or absorbed, whether anything has been understood in its distinctiveness, on the other's own terms, before being gobbled up by the including tradition. Such methods do violence to others' teachings and practices by distorting them for the benefit of the home community. Having distinguished various methods of going about inclusivism, Christian scholars have convincingly argued that some inclusivist strategies have more integrity in these matters than others.

While Christian writers have already distinguished and separately evaluated various methods of inclusivism with these concerns in mind, the time is at hand for Buddhists and scholars of Buddhism to consider these sorts of arguments. We must mine Buddhist cases for the light that they shed on inclusivism in general, and reflect with more rigor and precision on the desirability of specific inclusivistic moves for Buddhists. In this project, I get the ball rolling by recommending one particular form of inclusivism that I judge to minimize the problems just mentioned. I argue for this type and against other forms using both tradition-neutral and specifically Buddhist resources.

Before I can begin, however, I must clarify further the concept *inclusivism* that is in play here. A look at some sample usages of the term *inclusivism* may help in getting a sense of this category and in defending the reasonableness of my own broad definition. S. Mark Heim, for example, has referred to a "widely accepted typology" that is often discussed in Christian contexts but has been applied as well in a parallel fashion to other faiths:

Exclusivists believe the Christian tradition is in sole possession of effective religious truth and offers the only path to salvation. Inclusivists affirm that salvation is available through other traditions because the God most decisively acting and most fully revealed in Christ is also redemptively available within or through those traditions. Pluralists maintain that various religious traditions are independently valid paths to salvation.⁵

Commonly, then, the category of inclusivism is used to refer only to inclusivism with respect to salvation. This counts as inclusivism with my terminology, too, but it is not the only (nor a necessary) way for a stance towards others to qualify as inclusivist.

Similarly, in the passage that follows J. A. DiNoia also focuses solely on inclusivism with respect to salvation with his use of the term, although he goes further to specify particular moves that inclusivists typically use in order to explain how others might be saved. He writes,

Generally speaking, inclusivists are those who espouse some version of the view that all religious communities implicitly aim at the salvation that the Christian community most adequately commends, or at least that salvation is a present possibility for the members of non-Christian communities...Theories about the universality of the experience of grace, the possibility of implicit faith, the structure of general revelation, the sources of moral uprightness, and the ubiquity of broadly christological and soteriological motifs figure prominently in the articulation of most inclusivist positions.⁶

Again, such techniques qualify as inclusivism for me, too, but they do not exhaust all possible inclusivistic maneuvers.

Karl Rahner's "anonymous Christian" model is a famous example of inclusivism that fits in here. Rahner judges that salvation is necessarily available universally and that all humans are always related to God. But since he feels that salvation is achieved only through Christ, and not everyone has exposure to Christian teachings, it must be possible to be saved by living implicit or "anonymous"—even if not explicit—Christianity. Insofar as salvation is possible in non-Christian communities, it comes only through Christ, even if the religious others are unaware of this. The salvation described by other communities is not genuine salvation, which is properly understood only as Christians know it.

⁵ S. Mark Heim, *Salvations: Truth and Difference in Religion* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1997) 4.

⁶ J. A. DiNoia, *The Diversity of Religions: A Christian Perspective* (Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1992) 37-8.

For Rahner, insofar as other religious forms of life help and do not obstruct Christian teaching, they can help their adherents attain salvation and be included, but insofar as they contradict Christian teachings, they are not salvific and cannot be incorporated. In this way, inclusivism may mean selective acceptance of aspects of other traditions, so that it is not an all-or-nothing acceptance of others. And while Rahner discusses inclusivism with respect to salvation, he acknowledges inclusivism with respect to truth, too. This is clear especially in his writing on Vatican II, documents from which he interprets to say that Catholics ought to acknowledge and learn from the truths present in non-Christian communities and engage in dialogue with them.⁷

Other scholars have used inclusivism, as I do, to cover a wider range of moves. For example, “Inklusivismus in Neuen Religiösen Bewegungen (Inclusivism in New Religious Movements)” by Johann Figl distinguishes three types of inclusivism. One he calls the “essentialist-mystical” type, which interprets a central thrust from the foreign religion to be identical with something central in the home religion. Figl adds that sometimes inclusivists of this stripe justify their assertions of commonality among religions by asserting that there was an original Urreligion from which differing forms of religion have all derived.

Another type of inclusivism Figl describes as “historical-revelatory.” This kind asserts that the home tradition is the last and most ultimate of a series of historical revelations, so that other religions are judged as good but provisional and surpassed by the superior home religion. With respect to this type, he cites Islam as a classic example because Islam presents Mohammed as the last and most ultimate of a series of prophets. Traditions centered around previous prophets are accorded some value by the Islamic tradition but at the same time are subordinated to it.

Figl finds a third distinct form among new religious movements originating since the 19th century. Like the essentialist-mystical type, this form of inclusivism seeks a common essence among the religions in question, but the difference is that no one previously existing religion serves as the frame of reference for inclusion; rather in this kind of inclusivism, all traditions are supposedly relativized and transcended in favor of a newly articulated, mystical spirituality. He names this the “inclusivistic universalism” of new religious movements and categorizes it as a specifically modern form.⁸

⁷ Karl Rahner, “Christianity and Non-Christian Religions,” in *Theological Investigations* (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1966); “Anonymous Christians” and “Anonymous Christianity and the Missionary Task of the Church,” in *Theological Investigations* (New York: Seaburg Press, 1974); “Observations on the Problem of the ‘Anonymous Christian,’” in *Theological Investigations* (New York: Seaburg Press, 1976); “Towards a Fundamental Theological Interpretation of Vatican II,” *Theological Studies* 40 (1979); “On the Importance of the Non-Christian Religions for Salvation,” in *Theological Investigations* (New York: Crossroad, 1983).

Indologist Paul Hacker's writing on inclusivism, however, is better known than Figl's. He is one of the very few scholars to have written on inclusivism in the Indian context. In fact, he asserts that inclusivism is a particularly Indian form of thought, although that claim has been decisively refuted by many scholars. He explores several examples from Hinduism and a couple from Buddhism.

Hacker writes that inclusivism is seeing the central portion of a foreign worldview as identical to the central representation of the group to which one belongs oneself. To paraphrase, as Hacker says later, it is telling the other, "What you mean when you say x is what we mean when we say y, and y is a better way to understand it." Furthermore, he writes that these identifications are typically asserted without proof or justification and "without consideration for the fact that this led to contradiction." (Later, however, he does qualify that not absolutely every case directly involves an identification.) Hacker feels that inclusivism is a method of argument (*Auseinandersetzung*) in which one polemicizes against the opponent indirectly, on the one hand accepting the other's concepts and, on the other, subordinating them to one's own view. The context for inclusivism, Hacker thinks, tends to be a situation in which a weak, minority tradition or one with an inferiority complex (*Unterlegenheitsgefühl*) asserts itself against a stronger or majority tradition—although, again, there are exceptions to this. Inclusivism, that is, tends to be a compensation for a frustration.⁹

Hacker's classic case is the "tat tvam asi," or "you are that" of *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*. Here the text is saying, according to Hacker, "What you mean when you speak about satya (truth), what you mean when you speak to others about ātman (self), this is precisely what I have in mind and what I here assert more precisely as Being (Seiende), as an intangible subtlety in all things." Expanding on the implication of this in light of the category of inclusivism, Hacker says that we can interpret the text to be saying, "You can continue your speculation about the self or about truth, they are completely right, but bear in mind that the truth and the self (that you speak of) are included in Being (or Brahman)." Hacker explains that this accepts others' ātman and satya, but through inclusivism places Being or Brahman above them. Another similar example is from the *Bhagavadgītā* 9, 23, where Kṛṣṇa tells those who honor other gods that in reality they are offering only to him, even if they do not realize this.¹⁰

Hacker's additional case studies offer further insight into his use of the term *inclusivism* and widen the possible variations of it. One variation is seen in the thought of Vivekananda and Radhakrishnan. They are unusual, Hacker claims, in

⁸ Johann Figl, "Inklusivismus in Neuen Religiösen Bewegungen," in *Inklusivismus: Eine indische Denkform*, ed. Gerhard Oberhammer (Vienna: De Nobili Research Library, 1983).

⁹ Paul Hacker, *Inklusivismus: Eine Indische Denkform* (Vienna: De Nobili Research Library, 1983) 12.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

providing a justification (i.e., monism) for their inclusivistic moves. According to them, all religious acts and divine representations are useful, but only as relative truth or preliminary stages on the way to their form of Vedāntism. This deeper unity among all religions may not be realized or articulated explicitly among adherents of other religions, but it is the case nonetheless. And, as Radhakrishnan made clear, “Hinduism really had the leadership in this alleged unity.”¹¹

When Hacker turns to Theravāda Buddhism’s *Dīghanikāya*, however, he sees a different type of inclusivism, one that reflects a superiority-complex (Überlegenheitsbewusstsein) and is an inclusivism of power or strength (Kraft). These Buddhist texts interpret Brahmanical concepts in a new way, ethicizing them; they reconceive tapas (penance or self-mortification) as spiritual striving and no longer as physical or outwardly painful; and they reform sacrifice to be something non-violent. The Buddhists take what they can use from the others’ concepts, do what they like with them, and then discard the inessential things. In the process they thereby assert themselves.

Hacker concludes that the most important thing is that with inclusivism the foreign items remain unchanged for the most part, except in the case of the inclusivism of strength, which might be seen as reinterpretation. Hacker prefers to classify this still within the category of inclusivism, but as a special type.¹² But just as most scholars find unconvincing Hacker’s claim that inclusivism is particularly Indian, I find unconvincing his claim that this last form of inclusivism is particularly Buddhist. The work to follow, which provides more extensive variety among Buddhist cases of inclusivism, supports my case.

In accord with my broad usage, Paul J. Griffiths’s *Problems of Religious Diversity* specifies clearly many formal possibilities under the umbrella term *inclusivism*. He writes that inclusivists think it possible that alien religious systems contain truths among their doctrines and teachings, while at the same time they think that “the home religion teaches more religious truths, or teaches them more fully, than does any alien religion.” “These views together,” he adds, “yield the characteristic inclusivist response to the question of truth, which is that the home religion is at the top of a hierarchy of truth-teaching religions; it includes their truths, if they teach any, in its truths...” Inclusivism with respect to truth, Griffiths notes, may come in different forms. Closed inclusivism refers to the view that “all alien truths are already taught by the home religion,” whereas open inclusivism means that some alien truths may not exist already in the home system. Inclusivism may also be asserted in different modes—that is, as necessarily true or as possibly true.

Inclusivists with respect to salvation, on the other hand, “think that while belonging to the home religion is advantageous for salvation, belonging to an alien religion may sometimes suffice.” Two subtypes are restrictivist inclusivism and

¹¹ *Ibid.* The translation is mine.

¹² *Ibid.*

universalist inclusivism. Restrictivists believe that not everyone will attain the ultimate end, while universalists think that all will.¹³

To summarize, then, for my purposes a view will qualify as inclusivistic if it self-consciously recognizes a provisional, subordinate, or supplementary place within the home religious system for some element(s) from one or more alien traditions. Inclusivists are those who attempt to recognize the potentially valuable contributions of religious others and at the same time uphold a sense of superiority for their own traditions. They hold to their own system loyally and use it as a filter or measure for selective adoption or acceptance of something from the outside, concerned to maintain a coherent self-identity and reject what is incompatible or hindering with regard to it. This is a theoretical, conscious approach to others and thus differs from forced or unconscious influencing, although some tensions may remain unrecognized without falling beyond the bounds of inclusivism. Inclusivism is a stance teaching that the thing to do in response to aliens and their religious systems is to learn about them and listen carefully to them with the hope of finding common ground and/or new resources for the home group's use. It is a view, growing out of the particular theology, moral teachings, reasoning, etc. of each tradition practicing it, about how others and their views are to be treated.

Admittedly, the fact that the home tradition is privileged means that other traditions, if they do not overlap completely with the home group, are deemed inferior. Yet the spirit of inclusivism is not to criticize or put down the other, but rather, proceeding with some degree of humility, to treat the others with respect in hopes of learning from them. Chapter 2 will discuss some of the details of this balancing act.

To contrast inclusivism with related terms, tolerance connotes a sense of putting up with something, not liking it but not stopping it or actively opposing it either. Inclusivism, in contrast, is more active and positive with regard to the other. It not only allows the foreign thing in question but embraces it as good (though sometimes with qualification) and incorporates it into the home worldview in some capacity.

Another related term, syncretism, is a broader category than inclusivism. It includes all ways that religious traditions have mixed and influenced each other, all ways that the boundaries of traditions have been fluid historically. Inclusivism is just one subtype of syncretism marked by selective and principled absorptions and recognitions that meet the characteristics specified above. Another subtype is eclecticism, which for me will refer to uncritical or arbitrary mixing that does not respect one tradition as primary, uphold communal standards of orthodoxy, or harmonize well the accepted pieces into a unified, coherent system.

My category of inclusivism may seem hopelessly broad. Does it really make sense to call an attitude inclusivistic, for example, if all of the other's central teachings are deemed contradictory to or impeding of the home group's teachings

¹³Griffiths, *Problems of Religious Diversity* xiv-xv, 57,160-1.

but some peripheral, minor teaching is applauded and borrowed? As my argument progresses, the reader will see that the particular form of inclusivism that I champion—i.e., alternative-ends-recognizing inclusivism—is one that insists on recognizing the possibility of real differences among traditions' ultimate ends and weighting heavily the others' self-descriptions of their ends. It need not be, but if it is found that an other's end pulls its adherents in an opposite direction from the home end, then the home group will have no choice but to reject all aspects of the other's tradition that relate directly to that end.

What makes the home group inclusivistic in such a case is mostly the *a priori* openness to finding value among other communities. Yet one of the inclusivists' other important traits, their loyalty to their home way of life, prevents acceptance of anything threatening that home way of life once incompatibilities are discovered. The only way an inclusivist can accept something is to see agreement, compatibility, or complementarity between it and commitment to the home end, and with alternative-ends-recognizing inclusivism, one should refrain from distorting the distinctiveness of others in order to concoct compatibility. If this type of inclusivism that I recommend is to be adopted as a stance at all, there must be resources among the home tradition for affirming diversity and recognizing the potential value of the other. Probably, too, some measure of humility must be taught at home. But, if these are the case, then for inclusivists to doctor something foreign in order to be able to include it is hardly consistent with the intentions behind their inclusivism. In any case, the degree of inclusivism possible in each case depends on the nature of the other's end in relation to the home system's and on the home tradition's specific theological (or dharmalogical) resources for grounding inclusions. Depending on these, inclusivism may range from the very weak sort described above to subsuming (as subordinate, provisional, or complementary) an entire alien way of life.

Having thus established the need for this work and defined what will qualify as inclusivism, in conclusion let me lay out the project's organization. I begin in the next chapter with a discussion of why inclusivism, whether Buddhist or not, is a defensible religious option. If inclusivism itself, in its formal features, is inherently flawed, then the question of any tradition-specific form of it is moot. After explaining why inclusivism is viable and a particular form of it is preferable, in the third chapter I then survey with selected examples evidence of inclusivism in Buddhist history, in order to identify a range of moves and categorize patterns of reasoning.

By Chapter 4, I am ready to evaluate forms of inclusivism found in Buddhist contexts. Combining the philosophical arguments of the second chapter with the findings of the third, and adding a few additional arguments, I criticize some Buddhist thinkers' approaches to inclusivism. I propose an alternative, ideal form of Buddhist inclusivism and gesture towards Buddhist-specific resources (i.e., doctrines, concepts, symbols) for its defense.

In order to explore a couple of examples in more depth and reiterate my argument, the fifth chapter turns to two case studies: the inclusivistic thought of

Vietnamese monk Thich Nhat Hanh and of Japanese Zen scholar-practitioner Masao Abe. Each of these Buddhists, in different ways, demonstrates reasoning that concerns me, and I criticize their thought in terms of my established categories and in light of my recommended position. Finally, my argument would not be complete without looking at the most obvious alternative to my ideal form of inclusivism: Buddhist exclusivism. Thus, in Chapter 6 I explore anti-inclusivism in Buddhist contexts, looking especially at the exclusivistic work of Gunapala Dharmasiri. I will not dispute his arguments regarding some basic incompatibilities between Christianity and Buddhism. I think, in fact, that he properly recognizes important differences, but at the same time I judge that his arguments do not rule out the possibility of a qualified form of Buddhist inclusivism.