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Abstracts Book

INTERNATIONAL BUDDHIST CONFERENCE (VIRTUAL)

THE SPREAD OF BUDDHIST THOUGHT

27-28 October 2021



Compiled by
PROF. CHOWDURI UPENDER RAO, JNU
Conference Director



Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi



**ABSTRACTS BOOK
OF INTERNATIONAL BUDDHIST CONFERENCE
(VIRTUAL)**

THE SPREAD OF BUDDHIST THOUGHT

ORGANIZED BY
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
IN COLLABORATION WITH THE
INDIAN COUNCIL FOR CULTURAL RELATIONS (ICCR)
GOVT. OF INDIA

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Conference Director

PREFACE



Buddhism is one of the major religions in the world today. I am proud that Buddhist thought originated in India and spread across the globe. This thought had grown in distinct streams and practices, the Theravāda in South and Southeast Asia, the Mahāyāna in East Asia, and the Vajrayāna in Tibet. Buddhism is the ancient Indian thought, born in Magadha but eventually spread in entire India.

Today, Buddhism reached several parts of Asia, like Thailand, Indonesia, China, Korea, Vietnam, and Taiwan. The great Bodhidharma had transformed the Buddhist thought in China, Guru Padmasambhava constructed the first Buddhist monastery in Tibet, and Atiśa was one of the significant figures in the spread of Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna Buddhism in Asia. Thus the Indian Ācāryas have propagated Buddhism in various regions, including East Asia and Central Asia.

Emperor Ashoka had established the Buddhist tradition on the island of Sri Lanka. By the 5th century C.E., Buddhism had spread throughout Myanmar and Thailand. By the 13th century C.E., one of the early Buddhist schools, the Theravada had become the dominant tradition of South and Southeast Asia, including Thailand, Burma, Cambodia, and Laos.

The Dharmaguptakas made efforts to spread Buddhism in Afghanistan, Central Asia, and China. The Kuśāṇa rulers under emperor Kaniṣka ruled the Buddhist region of Gāndhāra and other parts of north India, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. During this period, Gāndhāran Buddhism had spread through the trade routes protected by the Kuśāns. But unfortunately, Buddha-dharma gradually waned in its land. There are few historical reasons for this.

The foreign invaders sacked Buddhist monasteries in the northern part of India and mercilessly burnt the Buddhist Libraries in India.

Therefore the conference is being organized on this theme. I am happy to see the excellent response of the scholars. Finally, I am glad to present our conference's abstract in the form of an e-book well in advance. The conference's theme is "The spread of Buddhist thought." (27-28 October 2021), to be convened through the virtual model. Our discussion will focus on the reflections of Indian Buddhist thought worldwide, including the Indian states. The invited speakers will present their research papers on Various Buddhist ethics and philosophical traditions that have spread and grown in various parts of the world.

This conference is being held in the run-up to the Global Buddhist Conference (GBC) 2021. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) will provide a digital platform for this conference. The conference will be duly promoted on all social media handles of ICCR. This E-book of abstracts and the conference proceedings will be uploaded on the website of ICCR. Scholars will investigate the historical and cultural influence of Buddhism on the Buddhist traditions of their countries. They will focus on various practices, arts, sculptures, philosophical schools, and several other traditions of Buddhism, including its literature. I'm thankful to JNU, ICCR, and IBC for providing this opportunity to me.

Namo Buddhāya.

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The Spread of Buddhist Tradition in Bulgaria

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The paper aims to present the spread of Buddhist tradition in Bulgaria – south eastern European country, blessed with a fascinatingly rich cultural heritage dating back to around 6000 BCE (the first Bulgarian state was established in 681 CE).

Several aspects of the spreading of Buddhism in Bulgaria will be discussed. Among them are the emerging and development of Buddhist communities in the country, Buddhist Studies in Bulgarian higher education, translation of Buddhist literature into Bulgarian language and significant publications dedicated to the Buddhist thought, as well as visits and lectures of international Buddhist teachers and scholars, and holding of scientific forums, conferences, discussions, exhibitions, and concerts dedicated to Buddhism.

Buddhism is a relatively new religion in Bulgaria, and has only recently become a focus of research. After the collapse of Communism in 1989, a number of Bulgarians started practicing Theravada, Mahayana, and Japanese Zen Buddhism. At present, the most popular form of Buddhism in the country is Tibetan Buddhism.

The path of the Buddha in Bulgaria had a symbolic start in 1991 with the visit of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. His

Holiness visited Sofia, accompanied by a delegation of the Tibetan government in exile, having been invited by Georgi Svechnikov (former president of the Bulgarian-Tibetan Friendship Society) and Solomon Passy (president of the Atlantic Club of Bulgaria). During his visit, His Holiness met the former president of Bulgaria, Zhelyu Zhelev, and delivered a lecture at the University of Sofia (St. Kliment Ohridski).

In the early 1990s, various Buddhist communities began to emerge in Bulgaria. Some disappeared after only a few years, while others survived. Currently, the largest Buddhist community in Bulgaria follows the Diamond Way, which is related to the Karma Kagyu school, headed by the 17th Karmapa Trinley Thaye Dorje, and introduced to the Western world by the Danish Lama Ole Nydahl. At present, it has more than 200 followers, with centers in eight Bulgarian cities, several retreat centers across the country, and a stupa, built in 2015, near the village of Plana. The Stupa of Enlightenment has become a symbol of Buddhism in Bulgaria and is regularly visited by the representatives of various Buddhist communities. The rest of the Tibetan Buddhist Schools (Nyingma, Sakya, Gelug) are also presented in the history of the Bulgarian Buddhism, along with the Japanese Zen Buddhism.

The presentation will emphasise on the master's degree program in Buddhist studies that has started at the Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" from the academic year 2021/22. The program, "Buddhism: Languages, Literatures, and Cultures," is the first academic program in Bulgaria to offer a comprehensive exploration of the literary and cultural

heritage of Buddhism, its religious and philosophical traditions, and the specifics of its development in Asia, as well as its global spread and reception in the West. Organized by Sofia University's Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology, the program includes the study of Eastern languages related to Buddhist culture. Students graduating from the program acquire or improve their competencies in one of the modern languages of Buddhist culture—Chinese, Korean, and Japanese—and develop skills for critical thinking, analysis, and translation of ancient Buddhist texts in Pali, Sanskrit and Tibetan. The master's program is designed for students with an undergraduate degree in Indology, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, or other specialties in philology, as well as undergraduate students in other professional fields in the humanities, social sciences, and nature and mathematical sciences, who have an interest in Buddhism and Buddhist studies.

Dhamma: The Greatest Contribution of the Buddha to Humanity

Prof. Ravindra Panth

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The Conflict-ridden society of the present day is indeed, in need of a tool, in order to live a Happy, Peaceful and Harmonious living. No doubt, with the scientific and modern material advancement we may be living a life of ease and comfort on one hand but on the other hand we have so much got submerged in materialism that our lust and desire for material wealth, power and pleasure has made us greedy and devoid of the ethical values. Further, there is no empirical evidence to support the assumption that social and economic progress based on a materialistic conception of life can ensure the happiness and well-being of humanity. With the modern material advancement, present day Society has become more complex with the multifarious contemporary issues creating conflict in every sphere.

This led to the degradation of the moral values in the present-day Society. As a result, we are facing Social, Economic, Political, Religious and even Ecological problems. The so-called 'Modern Man' is under tremendous stress, mental anxiety and the psychological problems and now for the last one and a half years situation has become graver due to Covid Pandemic.

Buddhism provides the answer for such issues and prescribes the practice of the Middle Path, which the Buddha calls as the Dhamma in Pali or Dharma in Sanskrit. According to the Buddha, Dhamma is the only panacea and the Practice

of Dhamma is the Right approach for Peace and Harmonious living. There is no alternative to 'Dhamma'. This is the eternal truth – *Esa Dhammo sanantano*. This can be experienced, if we understand the real meaning of the term 'Dhamma' as given in our ancient Buddhist texts and practice it.

In my presentation I will mainly focus on the term and concept of "Dhamma" as explained by the Buddha in the Pali literature, especially in his first Discourse known as *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta* or the Turning of the Wheel of the Dhamma discussing the Four Noble Truth and the Eight-fold Path and how it works as the scheme of Buddhist training consisting of the three sections: Ethical or Moral Conduct - *Sīla*, Mental Discipline - *Samādhi* and Insight or Wisdom - *Paññā*; as referred to in the *Pāli Tipitaka* as the "Three-fold Training, *Tividha Sikkhā*" It is on this system that the theory of Buddhist meditation is based and its practice has been developed into two methods : *Samatha* and *Vipassanā*. *Samatha* sharpens the consciousness and makes it one-pointed and calm. Whereas, *Vipassanā* uproots all the defilements and totally purifies the mind from all type of craving, leading to *vimutti*.

To conclude we may say that the Greatest Contribution of the Buddha to Humanity is the preaching of Dhamma to suffering humanity which is no doubt the tool for Global Harmony and helps in Conflict Avoidance, thereby, fostering Peace, Well-being and Harmony at the Global sphere. As the Dhamma helped people to come out of suffering at the time of the Buddha, so also the Dhamma, if practiced now gives the same result.

Post 10th Century spread of Buddhism in the *Theravāda* Countries and a role of *Śāstric* Literature

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Post 10th Century spread and development of Buddhism has many unique dimensions. One of them is the importance given to the study of various Indian *Śāstras* such as grammar, lexicography, poetics, metrics, medicine, and astrology. Besides the moral purity and advancement in meditation, scholarship of a monk in these different *Śāstras* was considered important and even a mandatory quality of a good monk. The knowledge of *Śāstras* was considered essential not only for their own sake, but also complimentary to the correct understanding of scriptures and their commentaries. *Śāstras* were treated as means to the attainment of liberation which is the ultimate goal of every traveler walking on the Buddhist path. Thus, the study of *Śāstras* gained the status of *tipitakaṅga* or *vimokkhamukha* in a same manner as the *vedāṅgas* in the Vedic tradition. The development of *Śāstras* in the *Theravāda* tradition also established Pali as an independent language in which all subjects of mundane and super mundane domain could be discussed. In this way, it became at par with Sanskrit, the language used to compose religious scriptures (*āgamas*), scientific literatures (*Śāstras*), literatures (*kāvya*). With the composition of *Śāstra* literature and *Kāvya* (though limited to Buddhist theme) Pali became an accomplished language and

even the linguafranka of the *Theravāda* world. Thus it did not remain confined to *Buddhavacanas* and their explanation.

We find similar development of Buddhism in Tibet, where the *Pañcavidyās* (five lores) developed side by side the study of the Buddhist canon. The development of the Buddhist *Śāstra*trans formed Buddhist monasteries into knowledge centers and universities, and turned Buddhist monks into fine scholars. Using the base of scholarship, argumentative skills, and sharpen intellect developed due to the study of *Śāstras* these monk scholars established Buddhism as a sound philosophy and a complete knowledge system.

In the proposed paper I will discuss the motive behind the origin and development of *Śāstra* literature, its impact on the nature of Pali language and the new scholastic form of *Theravāda* Buddhism. I will try to show how the development of *Śāstric* literature in *Theravāda* Buddhism helped its spread and development in the world.

Constructing Otherness: On the Early Perception of Buddhism in the West

Prof. Dr. Audrius Beinorius

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The India is rich with Western fantasies being the time and again described with all the qualities of a dream. The existence of a world religion known as 'Buddhism' has been a largely unquestioned assumption both in academic scholarship and in popular conceptions of 'religion'. However, 'Buddhism' is the term for which there is no direct equivalent in Asian languages. Nevertheless, the knowledge of Buddhism was very much limited and the study of Buddhism in the Europe came rather late on the scene in comparison to the study of other Indian and Asian philosophical-religious tradition. It took sometime before scholars were even able to conceive the congeries of seemingly desperate phenomena under the common rubric "Buddhism". Inspite of more recent advances of the modern scholarship in the field of the perception of Buddhism in the West, it seems we face a lack of critical reflections on the immensely complex cross-cultural problems associated with the transfer of a system of knowledge form one culture to another. Not by chance, Buddhism has profoundly touched the Western imagination in a surprisingly widespread way and has done so for well over a several hundred years, evoking a sustained fascination. The Western 'imagination' is, of course, a sweeping term and the social routes of fantasies are much more complex.

In my historical presentation I shall try to look at the early period of the perception and reception of Buddhism in the Europe starting with the Greco-Roman world till early Christian missionaries and by trying to reveal the approaches and imaginations it unfolds. My intention is to turn to discussion of those peculiar forms in which the knowledge of Buddhism was presented, emphasizing early period of the encounter and those initial imaginative constructions and early discourses that shaped the nascency of the scholarly discipline.

Conclusion is made that the factual knowledge of Buddhist religion in ancient Greece was very limited, just a set of rather stereotyped ideas and associations emerges. It seems that Greeks never studied Indian languages and had no access to scriptures and literary documents of the Indian Buddhist religious tradition. During the early Christian missionary meetings Buddhism was perceived through the Christian doctrinal glasses and the religion of optimism- Christianity – was effectively contrasted with the philosophy of pessimism – Buddhism. An exclusive truth of Christianity was contrasted with their redeemably false nature of Buddhism, which, however, was considered as a divinely ordained preparation for the Christian fulness of revelation. Much of the West's perception of the Buddhism may have been clouded by fantasy and wishful thinking; there presentations of the East by Western thinkers often tell us more about the minds of the latter than of the former.

Teachings of Buddhist Masters in Latvia in the 21st Century (2000 to 2020)

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Since the restoration of independence of the Republic of Latvia in 1991, restrictions regarding religious beliefs were lifted, and different religious and spiritual practices began to flourish and develop. Several Buddhist centers were opened in the capital city Riga, such as Soto Zen Buddhism, One Drop Rinzai Zen, Diamond Way Karma Kagyu, Buddhist Meditation Center Ganden (member of FPMT), Riga Drikung Ngaden Choling, Sorig Center, Meditation Center Vihara etc. In year 2016 Latvia Buddhist Association was established, and now it includes 14 Buddhist organizations. Every year many Buddhist masters visit our country, holding lectures, explaining Dharma texts, guiding ritual practices and giving empowerments. His Holiness the 14th. Dalai Lama has paid several visits (in 1991, 2001, 2013, 2014, 2016, 2017 and 2018). Also other Buddhist masters from Eastern and Western countries come to Latvia. The most wide-spread Buddhist tradition in Latvia is Tibetan Buddhism; therefore Vajrayana masters constitute the largest part (e.g. Lama Zopa Rinpoche, Nubpa Rinpoche, Drupon Kunsang Rinpoche, Khenchen Konchog Gjaltsen Rinpoche etc.). Teachings of Theravada Buddhism are also represented (by such teachers as Pa-Auk Tawya Sayadaw, Ayya Piyadassī, John Paramai Dhanissaro, Ajahn Viradhammo, Ajahn Brahmali etc.). Mahayana Buddhist masters (such as Shodo Harada Roshi, Chong An Sunim, Bo Haeng Sunim, Elga Brigin Rusin etc.) represent Japanese and Korean Buddhist schools. The

research refers only to those teachers who have taken full ordination as monks, lay scholars and researchers will not be included.

Latvia is a small country, and has opened up and started a direct cooperation with other countries only some decades ago, after the fall of Soviet Union. Therefore, many may not know how widespread the Buddha Dharma here really is. The objective of this research is to show chronological statistics of Buddhist masters who have visited Latvia in the 21stCentury, starting from year 2000 until 2020 (when, due to Covid restrictions, personal visits were discontinued). Topics of teachings and ritual practices will be enlisted, as well. In the conclusion one would gain an overview of Latvia's historical relations with Buddha Dharma. Besides, one will be able to see which philosophical ideas and practices of Buddhism have had most impact on the people of Latvia. The method used in this research is a quantitative field study based on documental reports about visiting Buddhist masters in mass media and on data provided by Latvian Buddhist centers. The author has also developed personal contacts and a close cooperation with Latvian Buddhist centers, has organized lectures and events related to Buddhism, as well published translations of several Buddhist texts from Tibetan, Chinese and Sanskrit languages.

Development of Thoughts Inpālinissaya Literature

Prof. Bimalendra Kumar

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The word '*nissaya*' is derived from the word '*Ni*' and '*saya*'. Here "*Ni*" is *upasagga*, by which the meaning of the '*dhātu*' is forcefully taken far away in the case of food, destruction, monastery, present, breakfast etc. The word '*saya*' is that which 'leans on'. Therefore, the '*nissaya*' may be defined as that which 'leans on' Pali texts. *Nissayas* were just that--supports or guides written by a teacher for one or a small group of students to guide their translations and study of Pali texts and thus enable them to not only lean how to read and write Pali and vernacular texts, but also enable them to explain Pali concepts for the purpose of a sermon to a monk or laity. *Nissayas* are not conducive to reading as a connected narrative, because they are interspersed with Pali words because of their definitions and short explanations of their grammatical forms.

Beginning as early as 15th Century, monks began to translate Pali texts in local vernacular languages using a variety of scripts. These *nissaya* texts quickly became a popular medium to express doctrinal teachings, ritual practices, and daily monastic and lay obligations. *Nissaya* texts consist of Pali words or phrases followed by vernacular translations, usually with numerous commentarial additions by the translator. Many *nissaya* texts were based on canonical Buddhist scriptures, originally composed in Sri Lanka in Pali.

Scholars are of the opinion that these vernacular texts (*nissayas*) either drew directly from the Pali Canon and its commentaries or created new texts, reflecting a creative engagement between local literary tropes and themes and Buddhist Characters and Pali literary structures. There are also some *nissaya* manuscripts, which are drawn from the *Abhidhamma*, probably for the purpose of teaching Pali grammar.

In this proposed paper, there will be an endeavor to discuss the aspects of development of Buddhist thoughts in Nissaya literature based upon the canonical and commentarial literature.

Bhuddism in Bali Island Indonesia

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In the 13th Century Islam entered the archipelago, and began gaining foothold in coastal port towns. The fall of Hindu-Buddhist Majapahit empire in late 15th Century marked the end of dharmic civilization dominance in Indonesia. By the end of the 16th Century, Islam had supplanted Hinduism and Buddhism as the dominant religion of Java and Sumatra. After that for 450 years, there is no significant Buddhist adherence and practice in Indonesia. Many of Buddhist sites, stupas, temples, and manuscripts are lost or forgotten, as the region has become more predominantly Muslim. During this era of decline, there were only small numbers of people practicing Buddhism,

The collapse of the Buddhist kingdom in Indonesia was not the collapse of Buddhist teachings in Indonesia, Buddhism in Indonesia took a new form, but philosophically, Buddhist teachings were still strong. In the philosophy of life of the Indonesian people such as Pancasila which is the basis of the state with the motto Bhineka Tunggal Ika which is taken from the teachings of Buddhism written by a Buddhist priest. The teachings of Buddhist in Indonesia has its own characteristics according to with the presence of the people in Bali, Indonesia There are many historical figures or other personal role models who have devoted themselves to the field of Tantrayana religion. No one will deny the king Krtanegara (1268-1292 AD), the last king of the Singhasari

dynasty who was even worshiped during his lifetime as a Shiva-Buddhist follower of Bhairawateachings. In the text Negarakrtagama composed by Mpu Prapanca, a poet-priest of the royal court of Hayam Wuruk in the Majapahit kingdom, Kertanegara is called “mokteng Shiva-Buddhist loka” free in the Shiva-Buddhist world. In the Singhasari inscription of 1273 Saka, it is said that Krtanegara “returned to Shiva-Buddha” (return to Shiva-Buddha). The poet who is a follower of Mahayana Buddhism worships his idol god as Shiva-Buddha. Bhairawa sect developed to Bali. This sect once flourished here and its traces are still being felt today.

Keyword: Buddhism, Mahayana, Bali island, Singaraja, Gedong Kirtya.

Spread of Buddhist Studies in Ukraine with the Focus to the Modern Approaches of Ukrainian Academicians

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The development of the Buddhist Studies in Ukraine is impossible to imagine without the study and research of the Indian spiritual treasure - the Sanskrit language. Therefore, I want to begin my report with the respect to the famous Ukrainian Sanskritologist Pavel Ritter (1872-1939), the 150th anniversary of whose birth we will celebrate in 2022. In his anthology of ancient Indian literature "Voices of Ancient India", P. Ritter demonstrates not only the special interest in epic works (*Mahābhārata*, *Rāmāyaṇa*), Upanishads (*Kathopaniṣad*), hymns of *R̥gveda* and *Atharvaveda*, but also in Buddhist literature (*Dhammapada*, *Sutta Nipāta*, *Milinda Panho*, etc.). P. Ritter also conducted program courses in Sanskrit. And now preserved careful notes of students of these courses are evidences to the depth of teaching and systematic study of Sanskrit by Ritter.

It should be noted here that the essential interest in Indian Buddhism as a spiritual evolution of the human intelligence has a clear justification in Ukraine: that is the great Ukrainian philosopher, educator and humanist Grigory Skovoroda (1722-1794), who initiated the so-called "philosophy of the heart" as a special means of healing the human spirit by thoughts that come from the heart. According to Skovoroda, only truth gives life to the human

heart. Besides, Skovoroda recognized the visible and invisible nature of things as temporary and eternal, respectively. And he accounted that all three worlds are imbued with these two natures: the great world of the Universe, the small world of Human Being and the symbolic world of the God's word, that is, the word of Truth. In this case, a human being becomes the unifying key force of such a worldview, and his/her self-knowledge becomes the basis of any knowledge and the basis of human happiness. So, in Skovorodian philosophy, which has become a sign of the authentic Ukrainian wisdom, we notice many motives that are in tune with Indian philosophical thought - wisdom that does not rationalize the world, throwing it into the chaos of inanimate forms, but that animates life in the hearts of people by its spiritual light. No wonder, researchers of Skovoroda's legacy consider his philosophy, which based on the single Indo-European core (Karivets I.), and also had certain ideological overlaps with Buddhism (particularly, when they come across the Skovoroda's phrase about the illusory nature of the material universe: "The whole World is asleep").

And if we pay attention to the current state of the Buddhist Studies in Ukraine, it is worth remembering that they unfold against the background of deep spiritual kinship of the cultures of Ukraine and India, the cradle of Buddhist philosophy. Currently, Buddhist research in Ukraine is also due to the close cultural and scientific communicates with India. This is especially true of studies of the Indian era of Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhism, which has found its refuge in India in XX cen. Our dear professor, Dr. Ogneva Olena Dmytrivna, who was a student of the well-known orientalist

Kuznetsov B.I., is the Ukrainian luminary in researches of this direction. However, the new generation of researchers is not far behind. There are several academic societies in Ukraine, whose activities are aimed at active collaboration with Indian colleagues. These are the Society of Researchers of Oriental Philosophies, with its the Oriental Studies Seminar, and the Oriental Studies Circle. Recently, the Buddhological Laboratory, which was established as a non-profit academic community of scientific experts, held the seminar on “Bodhicharya-avatara” with the renowned Indian Professor Dr. C. Upender Rao from the Jawaharlal Nehru University. Recognizing the importance of meaningful translation of Buddhist terms, the Buddhological Laboratory has launched the series of seminars on Buddhist terminology, to which bearers of tradition, foreign and own experienced experts in the field of Buddhist Studies are invited.

Summarizing what was said, Buddhist Studies in Ukraine not only have deep cultural roots and are actively developed in academia in collaboration with Indian colleagues and Tibetan Buddhist monks from the historical homeland of their Great Master Buddha Shakyamuni, but they are also in line with modern Western Buddhist Studies.

Impact of Buddhism on Culture of Bengal

Prof. Mahua Mukherjee

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Bengal embraced Buddhism from pre - Christian era. Buddhist Samrat Asoka sent his son Mahendra and daughter Sanghamitra with Bodhibriksha to Simhala (Shrilanka) from Tamralipta port (southern Bengal present day Tamluk) to spread Buddhism. In Christian era Imperial Pala Kings (8th - 12th cent. AD) were the ardent followers of Mahayana Buddhism, it was the Golden Period of Bengal. Thousands of dancers, musicians, artists, authors, sculptors, painters etc were born on the soil of Bengal of this Golden Period.

Bengal was regarded as the 'Land of Dance & Music'. We find the genuine evidence of culture, like Raga - Sangita in that period, Buddhist Monks and Yogis composed the CHARYAGEETIs & VAJRAGEETIs on the occasions of religious celebrations and secret functions of Mandala - Chakra. During the time king Mahipala (978 - 1030 AD) the practice of Buddhist Tantric Magic and Mysticism were in full swing. Different Viharas and Mahaviharas were constructed and artists like Dhimana, Bitopala, missionaries, pandits, Atish Dipankara and the scholars like Chakrapani, Sandhyakara Nandi flourished during that period's patronization. There were many Buddhist institutions during Pala period, where the students used to learn dance, painting, sculpture, music along with regular academic activities. Institutions were - Bhasuvihara of Paudravardhana, Jagaddal Vihara of Ramavati, Pandit Vihara of Pattikera, Sompura or Paharpura of Rajshahi, Raktamrittika Vihar of Murshidabad, Kanaka Stupa Vihara of Comilla and many others.

During the time of king Ramapala some specific tunes like - Vangala, Gadaba, Gaudi, Suhoi, Tirota - Dhaneshri were most popular.

The Bauddha Viharas had the department of Gandharva Vidya (dance & music). After gaining the degree from these universities, shramanas (young monk) went all over the then India. They not only preached religion but carried with them their dance - music and other cultures also. Kashmir poet Kalhana's 'Rajatangini' praised kings who not only built Viharas and Chaityas but also patronized visual arts(specially sculpture & painting), music and dance, which were of a high standard.

There were many renowned sculptors during Pala period, especially during reign of Dharmapala and Devapala. During their reign Dhimana and his son Bitopala of North Bengal were the most famous sculptors. They introduced a beautiful technique in sculpture which became famous as 'Eastern Indian Style'. The other famous sculptors of Pala period were - Subhota, Tatata etc. In this period Bengal's age old classical dance GaudiyaNritya occupied a distinct position which was reflected in the Devadasi dance tradition. Devadasis were also known as Devabaranita. Name of one famous Devadasi was - Kamala. Since art and religion go hand in hand so one can say that there were great impact of Mahayana Buddhism on Culture during Pala period.

Spread of Buddhist Thought in Odisha and South East India: An Archaeological Perspective

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A large number of Buddhist sites in clusters have been explored and excavated in recent years in South East India in between the rivers, the Ganges in north to the Godavari in the south encompassing Kalinga empire of Ancient India, comprising modern Odisha and Northern Andhra Pradesh, which was the crux of Buddhism in post-Ashokan period in 3rd century BCE. The major Buddhist settlements developed in this geographical orbit such as Tamralipti-Mogulmari (W.B.), Radhanagar-Langudi-Kayama, Lalitgiri-Udayagiri-Ratnagiri, Dhauli-Aragarah, (Odisha) Dantavartanikota (Dantapura)-Salihundam-Kalingaptna, Ramatirtham-Sankaram-Bhajinikonda, Thatkonda-Bhavikonda, and Guntupali-Nagarjunikonda- Amaravati (Andhra Pradesh). All these Buddhist settlement sites are in contiguous in the east coast and preserves the cultural ethos in the form of material remains which comes from archaeology. Although, a host of scholars have shed light on Buddhist Settlements of Godavari valley (Burgess 1882, Swell 1880, Rea 1907-1908, Ramachandran 1953, Sarkar 1966, Ray 1982, Schopen 1997, Foglin, 2015,) but the spread of Buddhist thought that originated from the land of Kalinga, soon after Kalinga War in 261 BCE has not yet discussed at length. With the discovery of Asokan Stupas at Langudi, Aragada, Lalitgiri having relic caskets and a complete Buddhist urban center at Radhanagara excavated by the authors, propounded several

historical paradigms about the spread of Buddhist thought in ancient Kalinga region or modern Odisha. The discovery 3rd - 2nd century seals inscribed with *Sadbhu Tissa, Devaya Nagara*, from Radhanagar and appearance of images of Buddha in first century C.E. transformed from symbols 'Lotus and Lily' carved in the early rock-cut stupas at Langudi and finding of large number of early Buddha images seated in Bhumisprsa Mudra from Lalitgiri and Udayagiri are the evidences which show how Buddhist thought was deep rooted in the Odishan region. Further, the early monastic remains discovered at Radhanagar, Lalitgiri, Udayagiri, Langudi, (Odisha), Salihundam, Sankaram and Ramtirtham(Andhra Pradesh) with Stupas and Chaityas of both Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism points to existence of several sects among the Buddhist monks who were living for quite a long time from 3rd-2nd century BCE to 6th-7th century C.E. in the said hill settlements. A number of inscriptions, seals and sealings inscribed with Dharini mantras, *Pratityasamutpada Sutras* are also reported from most of these sites. Some images reported from Lalitgiri and Udayagiri contain *Mahavairochana Sutra* too.

This Paper intends to present the recent explored and excavated Buddhist sites and discoveries made in South East India, more so in Odisha and how Buddhist thought is deep rooted. In the later phase Vajrayana Buddhism gained ground in Odisha towards 7th century C.E. which is also be discussed.

Keywords: Buddhist Settlements, Archaeology, Theravada, Mahayana, Vajrayana, Mantras, Mandals and Mudra, Odisha, South East Asia.

Kumārajīva's Meditation Manuals: Confluence of Śrāvaka and Bodhisattva Practices

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Kumārajīva (350-409? C.E.), is famous for his translations of a large corpus of Buddhist texts that cut across school affiliations, attesting to his mastery of Sanskrit and Chinese, as well as of the Dharma. He was born to an Indian father and a Kuchean princess, who chose to become a nun when Kumārajīva was seven years old. They travelled to Kaśmīr when he was nine, where he trained under in the Sarvāstivādatradition. On his way back to Kucha three years later, he encountered a teacher of Madhyamaka and from then on, Kumārajīva went on to study and teach the doctrine of emptiness. His students later founded a school based on Madhyamaka texts, called the Sanlun School, which did not survive in China for any great length of time.

In addition to translations of texts such as the Pañcavimśatisāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra (Ch. Dapin Banre Boluomi Jing 大品般若波羅蜜經, T.223), the Vimalakīrtinirdeśa-sūtra (Ch. Weimojiesuoshuojing, 維摩詰所說經, T.475) Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra (Ch. Miaofalianhuajing, 妙法蓮華經, T.262) and Harivarman's Tattvasiddhi-sāstra (Ch. Chengshilun 成實論, T.1646), there are three meditation manuals that are ascribed to Kumārajīva in the Chinese catalogues. Two of them have been

translated into English: the Siweilüeyao fa, (思惟略要, T.617), has been translated by Charles Willemen as “Outlining the Way to Reflect”. The Zuochansanmeijing, (禪秘要法經, T.614) has been translated by two Japanese scholars, Nobuyoshi Yamabe and Fumihiko Sueki, as “The Sutra on the Concentration of Sitting Meditation”. The third work is called Chanfayaojie (禪法要解, T.616), Brief Explanations of Meditation Methods and is currently being translated by Ven. Dhammadipa, a Czech monk.

As we know, sectarian tendencies in Buddhism arose early and by the beginning of the first millennium, Mahāyāna ideas had resulted in the compilation of the *Prajñāpāramitā* and *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtras*. The Sarvāstivāda school and their large corpus of Abhidharma texts played an important role in the development of Mahāyāna, both by contributing ideas and also by their materials which became grounds for dispute and refutation.

Several scholars have identified texts that reflect the transition period to Mahāyāna, such as the *Ugrapariprcchā Sūtra*, which include the Bodhisattva ideal without any of the opposition and divisive tendencies between the Śrāvakayāna and Mahāyāna, which became a dominant feature of later discourses. This paper will examine the meditation manuals for the impact these philosophical developments had on meditation practice, particularly as Kumārajīva himself made a transition from Sarvāstivāda to Mahāyāna.

Conceptualising Buddhism through the Writings of Sylvain Lévi

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The influence of Buddha and related thought processes have touched upon various cultures and civilizations since last two thousand years. The extant of Buddhist influence has been from India to Japan in the east, through Tibet, China and various parts of the South-East Asian regions. In modern times, i.e. after 18th Century, Buddhism and similar texts from the Indian intellectual traditions have fascinated several European scholars who evolved a full discipline of Indology in the European Universities. Towards the second half of the Nineteenth Century, a lot of scholars in Europe got engaged with profound studies on the Buddhist texts as available in India and other parts of the large 'orient' and 'far orient', as the Europeans called them. Sylvain Lévi is one such scholar from the French traditions of Indology, who got involved in understanding the roots of Buddhism in India and in the study of the extant of Buddhism and other Indic origin cultures in various parts of the Indian subcontinent and other parts of Asia. His works include study of the inscriptions and textual traditions of Nepal, some parts of India, Buddhist texts in Japan and China, Tocharian languages and the interpretations of the findings related to this language – all these studies in various ways approach the extant of Buddhism in various ways in various stages of the history of Buddhism. Along with this historical

understanding proposed by Lévi, often in collaboration with other scholars, has also an important implication for the twentieth century societies across the world. The Europeans and the Americans established a contact with a historically important intellectual tradition which left indelible marks on their ways of thinking and on their world view. A lot of people got attracted to understand Buddhist texts, and the in the Indian or Indic traditions which remain involved in the recension and maintenance of the texts along with vivifying examples of the belief system presented by these texts. Sylvain Lévi attempted to study such cultures, along with the texts, and edited and prepared several volumes on the knowledge available in these cultural traditions. Consequently Buddhism and its doctrines, though book based and yet open for vast interpretations, unlike the European book based monotheism, appealed the contemporary European mind. Another factor, in the European quest of Secular ideals and credentials, which make the works of scholars like Lévi relevant in our times, is that Buddhism in various phases of history remained apolitical militarily while remaining an integral part of the social systems. Perhaps the European mind wanted to find similar models for its governance as they wanted to deny the religio-military aspects of the Christianity in the governance of the society. Such a quest of the European mind has naturally attracted them towards the Buddhist thought and cultural processes. The proposed paper will attempt to present the works of Sylvain Lévi and will further conjecture upon the possible implications of his works in the context of the French traditions of Indological studies.

Suvarnabhumi Civilization: Indo-Asian Way of Shared Value for Harmonizing in Life

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The academic article entitled “Suvarnabhumi Civilization: Indo-Asian Way of Shared Value for Harmonizingin Life” has two objectives: 1) to promote the foundation of Suvarnbhumi Civilization based on Buddhist doctrines spread from India to Asian and throughout the world, and 2) to encourage the Indo-Asian way of shared value for harmonizing the interfaith to increase cooperation development of multi-growths in life. The content analysis of relevant documents and in-depth interviews were conducted as the article methodology. The interpretation was presented by inductive analytical description.

The results were found that the word “Suvarnabhumi” can be viewed both spatial and civilized aspects. In term of area, it refers to the entire Southeast Asia region as a center of trade and pursuit of success in various fields of life. The abundance in the area is full of a source of crops, grains, herbs, silver and gemstones. Suvarnabhumi is not only prosperous in term of the settlement but also in term of government type and fine arts. Based on a good strategic location linking between the West and the East, both by land and by sea, thus Suvarnabhumi was an important destination for travel, both trading and exchanging arts, culture and sciences. In the past, about the 3rd B.C, King Asoka the Great sent a group of

Buddhist Missionaries to the Suvarnabhumi, as the 8th routeled by Ven. Sona and Uttara Thera to propagate Buddhism in this land. The results of the propagation caused the Suvarnabhumi still practiced and established Buddhism until today. Though the Suvarnabhumi legacy in the previous ideal has slightly declined, the Suvarnabhumi in the present is named as the international airport in Thailand to bring back the great legacy. It is the important airport as an aviation hub connecting Asian, Asia and the world.

In term of civilization, the Suvarnabhumi is a great symbol of prosperity particular religion in which the Indo-Suvarnabhumi closely connected. Buddhism and Hinduism flourished in this region from the past to the present. The religious interfaith has been harmonized in the form of Mahayana Buddhism established in the Suvarnabhumi. Even though now Theravada Buddhism is settled as the core tradition, the interfaith is already intermingled perfectly. The people of Suvarnabhumi have received and taken the refuge in Buddhism with a high shared value. They follow the principles as the way of life. It becomes the Suvarnabhumi culture. The uniqueness of civilizations plays the dominant roles on the Suvarnabhumi way of life. Due to the civilization of Suvarnabhumi derived from the Indian foundation of religion, it is therefore, regarded as a great valuable cultural capital to increase and enhance wealth both secularly and religiously.

In the partial of utilization, the natural resources are based on the Dhammic ecosystem in term of the sufficiency. Settlement and administration are dominated by the principle of 10 virtues of the king (Dasabidharajadhamma).

The Dhamma is able to increase the leadership into governors based on the civilization in Buddhist way. The social system is a unity society based on the states of conciliation (Saraniyadhamma). Arts and sciences are also expressed by the religious philosophy as a symbolic ideal to cultivate beliefs, trust and confidence. The civilization is based on the Dhammic empower. Really speaking, the way of Suvarnabhumi follow three principles of the accumulating merit, giving, moral conduct and Buddhist meditation. In order to develop oneself to become a noble one, the five principles of noble growth are practiced, namely belief, morality, learning, liberality, and wisdom as a whole.

The ideation of wealth enhancement model that mixed in life of the Suvarnabhumi people can create a peaceful society. The sufficiency and middle way that is generally found in the Suvarnabhumi people can be upgraded to be a centrum of innovative inspiration. It is the proper way to understand the core of life, and to live peacefully with each other by encouraging the Suvarnabhumi philosophy to people. Lastly speaking, human always requires happiness. The noble civilization of the Suvarnabhumi legacy leads to awakening, promoting peace, and sharing valuable benefits together. Do not hesitate to change ideology to be the Suvarnabhumi citizen. No matter where you are, what you become, who you belong do try to follow the middle path surely make your life happy.

Keywords: Suvarnabhumi civilization, Indo-Buddha, way of assimilation, wealth in life

A Compassionate Vegan Lifestyle is Imperative for 21st Century Bauddhasangha

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The time has come for the Bauddhasangha to be fully and completely, on all levels, a pure, living example of the Buddha's compassionate teaching. The Buddha encourages all followers to be kind, to show mercy and compassion in all thoughts, words and actions; and to extend pure love equally to all sentient beings. How then, can the Bauddhasangha be excused for consuming the flesh of sentient beings, allowing those creatures to be horribly mistreated and brutally slaughtered just to satisfy the Bauddhasangha's desire and craving? There is no reason now that we live in a time when there are healthy and fresh alternatives readily available that will cause no harm, and will nourish the body fully. Unlike during the time when the Buddha lived, now the majority of buddhist monks and nuns no longer go for alms for their meals; rather they are supported and served by the lay devotees which today have access to many food choices that do not require harming any sentient being. The total Buddhist population today is about 535 million around the world. Less than one-third of them depend on alms. More than two-thirds of them are consuming animal products. A non-vegan diet is not ethical; it is not in alignment with the Buddha's teaching. Animals raised for food are brutally treated and killed. In Buddhist countries like Thailand, Cambodia, Myanmar, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Tibet, Laos, Vietnam, Japan, Macau, China and Taiwan a majority of the Buddha sangha cook food in the viharas, or purchase and consume food in the restaurants, or request lay devotees purchase

specific food for them. During Buddha's time all the monks had to depend on alms for their meals; only occasionally were monks invited for a dāna (food offering) in the palace or in the devotees house. However, this is not the case today. Today the Bauddha sangha is well supported by lay devotees. Accepting and eating non-vegan food that is offered, however, is indirectly encouraging lay devotees to continue to support animal cruelty as if it is acceptable. The Bauddhasangha bears full responsibility for upholding, teaching and being a living example of the Bauddhadhamma. The Noble Eightfold Path requires a completely ethical lifestyle. If the Bauddhasangha is teaching loving kindness and compassion to others, but accepting and eating the flesh of animals at their dining table, they are completely unethical and a poor example of the Buddha's teaching. With so many choices of foods available, why does a Bauddha sangha still choose food which has been tortured, abused physically and mentally, brutally killed, tail docked, nose pierced, seriously injured, brutally burned alive, beheaded, chopped, slaughtered and its flesh burned? As a Buddhist monk or nun, one has to contemplate thoroughly all acts and intentions from all perspectives. If the Bauddha sangha continues with a non-vegan diet without thinking or caring about another living creature's treatment, happiness, and freedom, they are living against the Buddha's teaching. They are eating with desire and craving. They are attached with the flesh of other sentient beings, and selfishly making excuses to justify their behavior. The Bauddha sangha must change their diet to an ethical, vegan one; and they must stop attempting to support their current choices with references from the tipiṭaka, or from the Buddha's time. Buddhism's primary message is compassion and today's world is substantially different than during his time.

Important role of Sanskrit to spread of Buddhist Thought

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It is generally believed that the transmission of Buddhist Thought is Pali language. Lord Buddha forbade to keep his words safe in the Chhandas in order to keep in Sakāyaniruttiya..... meaning to collect the Buddha's words in their own language.

As a result the Buddha teachings were collected in the vernacular (Jan Bhasha) which was first called Māgādhi, then it came to be known as Pali. But the literature written in Pali language, is only the literature of Theravadi tradition.

It is certain that the monks in the Sangha were well-versed in the chhandas, only then few of the monks wished to preserve the Buddha's teachings in Sanskrit. On the occasion of Sanghbheda in second Buddhist council, the Mahasanghikās decided to store the Buddha's words in Sanskrit.

After the second council, the Sangh was divided into 18 sects till the third council. During the time of Ashoka king, the third council was presided over by Moggaliputta Tissa. Considering Theravada as the main one, its Tripitaka was collected which was in Māgadhi language and was sent to the monks in different places.

In the Third Sangeeti, other sects were neglected except Theravada, as a result of which the developed form of the

neglected sects can be called Sarvastivadi Sangeeti in the fourth Sangeeti. It was under the leadership of Upagupta and Ashvaghosha. In this, Buddhavachans were compiled completely in Sanskrit. From here Sanskrit was officially accepted in the Buddhist Sangha.

The way Buddha's words were propagated and disseminated through Māgadhi language in the third council. Similarly in the Fourth Council, an organized effort was made to propagate and spread the teachings of the Buddha through Sanskrit. Considered from the point of view of authenticity, the Mahayana tradition holds that Lord Buddha turned the wheel of Dharma three times. The first turning of the wheel is related to the Theravada Pali tradition, the second and third turning of the wheel is related to the Mahayana tradition.

The entire literature of the Mahayana tradition is in Sanskrit. Some is in pure Sanskrit and others are BHS or Gatha Sanskrit.

The Sutra literature of Mahayana is vast. Among these nine Vaipulya Sutras have special recognition. The literature of Sarvastivadis who are called Hinayani is also in Sanskrit. In the Sanskrit texts the main Acharyas who promoted Buddhism are-Harsha, Ashvaghosha, Nagarjuna, Buddhapalita, Bhavaviveka, Asanga, Vasubandhu, Dignaga and Dharmkirti. There is a great tradition of their commentators. Their texts are in standard Sanskrit. These Acharyas spread the thoughts of Buddha in all four directions through Sanskrit. Ashvaghosha, a contemporary of Kanishka, was a great Buddhist poet and philosopher. His teachings

were studied and respected in India. It was on the basis of Buddhavans that the public was familiar with Buddha.

Nagarjuna, who was a contemporary and friend of the Satavahana king Yajnasree Gotamiputra (166-196 AD), introduced Madhyamik philosophy. There is a Madhyamika Karika text of twenty-seven chapters and four hundred karikas was very popular in India and Tibet. HuanChawang has mentioned four suns—Ashvaghosha, Kumaralat, Nagarjuna and Aryadeva. Twenty of his works are translated in Chinese language. Itsig has also mentioned that their compositions were memorised by the people. Buddhapalit and Bhavvivek are among his interpreters.

Asanga and Vasubandhu who belonged to Peshawar in the fourth century A.D. were educated in Kashmir. At first they became followers of Sarvastivād and later followed Vigyanvāda. In addition to these, the teachers who have mastered in Buddhist logic have been very influential in the promotion of Buddhism. The works of Dignag, Dharmakirti, Dharmatottara and Shantarakshita etc. of their tradition spread the ideas of Buddha in Tibet and India.

The Buddhist ideas have been promoted worldwide in the public domain due to the vastness of the Buddhist Sanskrit literature. As essential as English is in the present day, similarly was Sanskrit acknowledged globally.

The Spread of Indian Thought in South East Asia (SEA) with Special Reference to Pāli Language and Literature

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In the development of the religion, culture, language and literature of the SEA, the Indian knowledge traditions, whether Buddhist or non-Buddhist, certainly have a distinctive place. In three forms the Indian knowledge traditions have penetrated this land. The first had been as the Theravāda Dhamma with the Pāli language, the second as the Vedic Dharma with the Sanskrit language and the third as the Mahāyāna or other branch of the Śrāvakayāna with the Sanskrit Buddhist language and literature. When the Theravāda was officially established as a state religion in Burma, Siam, etc., Sanskrit literature (affiliated to Buddhist and non-Buddhist) which existed there already, were transmitted or translated into Pāli or with the help of such Sanskrit texts various branches of secular Pāli literature developed. This type of secular literature can be marked such as Pāli Cosmological Literature (hereafter, PCL) and Pāli Nīti Literature (hereafter, PNL). While the PCL was developed with the influence of Buddhist Sanskrit literature, the non-Buddhist Sanskrit literature was used as a source in the PNL. These secular literature of Pāli is a vast repository. Under the PCL following texts are found in Pāli –

1. the Lokapaññatti, 2. the Lokadīpakaśāra, 3. the Lokadīpanī,
4. the Candasūriyagatidīpanī, 5. the Cakkavālaśādīpanī, 6. the

lokuppati, 7. the Okāsadīpanī, 8. the Saṅkhyāpakāsaka, 9. the Lokajotikā or Lokasaṅthānajotaratatanaganāṇṭhi, 10. the **Chagatidīpanī/ Pañcagatidīpanī** (hereafter, Pañca).

Under the PNL following texts are available in Pāli –

1. the **Lokanīti** (hereafter, Ln), 2. the Dhammanīti, 3. the Mahārahanīti, 4. the Rājanīti, 5. the Sutavaḍḍhananīti, 6. the Lokasāra, 7. the Cāṇakyanīti, 8. the Kāmandakīyanītisāra, 9. the Gihivinayasaṅgahanīti, 10. the Kavidappaṇanīti, 11. the Nītimañjarī, 12. the Suttantanīti, 13. the Naradakkhadīpanī, 14. the Caturakkhadīpanī, 15. the Lokaneyyappakaraṇa.

In the present paper, the Pañca, a treatise of PCL, will be discussed to show the influence of Buddhist Sanskrit literature. Similarly, the Ln, a treatise related to PNL, will be discussed to show the influence of non-Buddhist Sanskrit literature.

About the Texts: The development journey of the Pañca which we get at present in Pāli is a wonderful example of the process of translation, editing and inclusion of a text in the Theravāda Buddhism. Originally this text was found in Sanskrit in India by the name of *Ṣadgatikārikā*. According to tradition, Aśvaghosha was its author. Later this text was translated into Chinese, Tibetan and Pāli. In Pāli this text was found in Burma by the name of *Chagatidīpani*. Subsequently, the *Chagatidīpani* was amended and edited in Cambodia as the Pañca and thus this text was included in Theravāda tradition.

The Ln was composed in Burma around 14th century. In this book, there are 164 gāthā-s related to nīti (didactic). Apart

from the Pāli sources this text had borrowed materials from the text related to non-Buddhist tradition such as the *Cāṇakya-nīti*, the *Garuḍapurāṇa*, the *Vyāsa-subhāṣita-samgraha*, the *Pañcatantra* etc.

Spread of Buddhism in Pangi Valley of Chamba district in Himachal Pradesh

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It is a known fact that Buddhism is a rich treasure, spiritual path, intellectual science, cultural heritage, and valuable thought and practice of India. It spreads very gradually but steadily and peacefully in every Indian Himalayan state and territory as well as in other countries of the world. All it was happened right after its systematic foundation and spread through the great Dharma missionaries, great righteous kings, prosperous and powerful patrons, Buddhist scholars and saints, aged-old teaching lineage masters etc., from time to time in the past and present as well. As a result, still all forms of Buddhism and its prominent schools along with their profound and extensive thought, welfare behavior and pure practices are existed not only in its birth land but also across the world today. Consequently, the Buddhist followers are dwelling in the sacred abode of different Himalayan territories of India. Hence, **Pangi valley** in the district Chamba, Himachal Pradesh is also a remote and tribal region, where the Buddhism, particularly the **Tibetan form of Buddhism** is alive and socially very active too. Of course, its past is bit unclear and untraceable in the mentioned valley due to lack of reliable sources but present situation is quite noteworthy.

Pangi is an unexplored and peaceful valley from the perspective of Buddhism while Hindu population is in the majority and the next followed the Buddhist (Bodh/Bhot/Bot) population. Many **Buddhists great teachers**,

yogis or Tibetan highly learned incarnated lamas had also visited this region. They also blessed the land and its people for the better propagation and practice of Buddhist extraordinary way of thought, conduct and meditation. So, the Buddhists are following the teachings of the Buddha like non-violence, generosity, loving-kindness, peace and compassion etc., as considering an indispensable teaching-essence of Him in their daily life and actions more than last 5 hundred years.

The headquarter of district Chamba is a famous and an ancient town of the state Himachal Pradesh. The entire land area of Pangi Tehsil or Sub-Division spreads in 1601 square kilometer in the Chamba district. Killard (Killar) is the headquarter of Pangi tehsil and it is 173 kilometers far away from the district Chamba. As per 2011census report, Buddhist total population is 882. But this figure is much more in the present time. All the Buddhists are belonged to schedule tribe category in the region and are residing in upper part of the different valleys which are more than 6 thousand meters from the sea-level and in a very harsh weather and climate. Indeed, they are peace lover and have sincere faith on the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha, the three Jewels of the Buddhism.

The present paper will focus on the past and present history of the spread of Buddhism in Pangi valley. It also thoroughly lights on some of the important points as noted below in the key words.

Key Words: Pangi Valley, Tibetan Buddhism, Gonpas (monasteries), Important masters, their Contributions in the valley

Myanmar Buddhism : A Hybrid of Indic and Indigenous cults

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Buddhism, which originated in the 6th century B.C. on Indian soil, remained mostly confined to the different regions of India for the first few centuries of its emergence, but, the dispatch of *Dhammadūtas* (Buddhist missionaries) in the 2nd BCE by the Mauryan King Asoka, the Great beyond the natural geographical boundaries of India to disseminate Buddhism internationalized the *dhamma* (the essence of Buddhism), propound by Gautama the Buddha. Numerous countries including Myanmar (which was earlier known as Burma, and divided into the principalities like Pegu, Pagan, Ramaññadeśa and etc.) adopted it as the way of life (religion) for their societies. Prior to this, the people of Myanmar had come in contact with various components of Indian culture including Buddhism through the traders who used to trade between India and Myanmar at that time. But, it the Buddhist Missionary sent after the completion of the third Buddhist Council that put deep impact on Myanmar society. Consequently, at present about 90% population of Myanmar profess Buddhism. It is, however, notable that the impact of Buddhism on the life Myanmar people was gradual. As the Buddhist tradition maintains, the Buddhist missionaries under the leadership of Soṇa and Uttara are credited with dissemination and propagation of Buddhism in Myanmar. This delegation is also credited with converting 60,000 people into Buddhism on that occasion. Since then Buddhism

has been playing a major role in shaping the Myanmar Culture, and acting as a life-line in the life of Myanmar-people (Mram). The day of the people of Myanmar begins with the salutation “Minglar Ba” that clearly shows how the Buddhism has deeply impacted the life of Myanmar-people. In fact, the deep and subtle perusal of the present form of Myanmar Culture reflects it as an amalgam of Buddhism (particularly Theravāda), some of the Indic, and indigenous (nat worship) cults. The imprint of certain aspects of the fusion of these cultures could easily be traced in the different festivals, rites and rituals observed by the Myanmar Society. In this context, the importance of certain deities (God and Goddess) and Indian religious practices could also be underlined in the religious practices of Myanmar People. Revering and worshipping the Goddess Saraswati, as the custodian of *Tipiṭaka*, the canon (religious text) of Theravāda Buddhism is one of the brilliant examples of such impact of Indic Culture on Myanmar society. Even the literary trend of Myanmar could not remain untouched from Indic literary trends, as could be seen in the literary and proverbial works, composed in Myanmar. In fact, Myanmar Buddhism is an epitome of the fusion of Theravāda Buddhism, Indic, and Indigenous (Myamar) cultures. Hence, in this background, the present paper intends to discuss as to how the Myanmar Buddhism represents the syncretism of Indic and Indigenous cult along with the fundamentals of Buddhism.

Key word: Buddhism, Myanmar Culture, Dhammadūta, Nat worship, Indic cult, Indigenous cult, Dhamma etc.

Buddhism and Spread of Religion through the Inner Nuances of Caves – A case study of Western India

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Caves in India not only show extraordinary examples of architectural skill and a fascinating cultural heritage from that era, but they are also significant to our knowledge since they include some important historical facts and legends. Caves have served several important purposes in various cultures across the world, from being a place of shelter to being a place of solitude or burial. Buddhists in Asia adopted these high, often distant burrows into temples, converting them into temples in remote locations. There are several amazing caves in India, each with a unique storey to tell about how it came to be. Every cave has exquisite sculptures and/or paintings that may be found inside. For generations, craftsmen had chiselled into the rock and used the black walls as their canvas, transforming these previously ugly spaces into beautiful places for contemplation, devotion, and group spiritual gatherings. Many Buddhist cave systems are located throughout Asia, especially in India, China, Myanmar, and other areas. Religious importance and historical significance add to the draw of these caverns. Some caves in India are popular for their mystical experiences because of their religious links. There is also magnificent rock-cut cave art and architecture associated with the religion's enduring affection for caverns. Over the span of 800 years, these caves were developed incrementally by local kings. Creative

residential buildings and chapels were created by carpenters by digging them into the hillside. It was chiselled out of the rock to make the intricately carved pillars, statues, and reliefs. In archaeological surveys, ancient ruins, and historical memoirs, caves are used for shelter, meditation, art, graves, and religion. Buddhism's perennial fixation on caves is seen in India, among all religions, in the impressive rock-cut cave art and architecture. Caves gave monks from the Buddhist faith with excellent solitude for meditation, strict abstinence, and inexpensive life. Vast numbers of Buddhist caves can be found in the western ghats. The basalt rocks and rough terrain provided the right conditions for cave building. During the 2nd century BCE through the 4th century C.E., the Hinayana Buddhist caves found in India began to appear. They include the caves of Kanheri, Karla, Bhaja, and Bedse. One of India's most famous Buddhist cave complexes, Ajanta, is situated in the western state of Maharashtra. This is estimated to be around 2,000 years ago, with the Waghora River carving the first caves at Ajanta along a rock face. Scholars think the buildings were in use for centuries until the collapse of Buddhism in India led to their abandonment. Their rediscovery took place in the nineteenth Century, and to this day, the ruins of these ancient monuments play a significant role in unravelling the cultural history of India's Buddhists. This paper deliberates on the spread of Buddhism in India with specific reference to the caves as the intangible dissemination point.

The Journey of Tripitaka Translation to Vietnamese through Sanskrit in 3rd C.E.

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The sacred Triple Basket of Scriptures is the gateway to all understandings of the Dharma, a great source of knowledge for practice, as well as for study. The VinayaPitaka (The Basket of Discipline) and the Sutra Pitaka (The Basket of Sayings), a comprehensive collection of Dharma and Vinaya (Truth & Laws) that the Buddha had actually demonstrated and regulated, are the substantial ground for the Holy Disciples to learn and practice aiming at the ultimate goal of attaining the perfection of wisdom and virtue. These two Baskets also contained the interpretive explanations of the Great Disciples who heard the teachings directly from the Lord Buddha. The last of the Tripitakas, the Abhidharma Pitaka, according to the traditions of the Theravadin School in the South, and those of the Sarvastivada in the North, also came from the golden words of the Buddha. But there are some great Buddhist philosophers like Vasubandhu, along with most of the world's well known academic authorities on the Buddhist Canon of the present time, who don't acknowledge that the Abhidharma directly came from the Buddha Himself but rather these works are a collection of varieties of analyses, studies, interpretations, and systematization of what was taught by the Buddha from the first two Baskets seems as the Basket of Sayings and the

Basket of Discipline. The Sutras and the Vinayas were construed during a determined period of time, gathered directly or indirectly from the golden words (verbatim) of the Buddha, and are the principal foundation for all schools of Buddhism, including the Mahayana school, regardless of the differences caused by the oral transmission in the course of time, affected by the diverse dialectical accents.

The Abhidharma is the part of the Holy Scriptures that reflects the historical development of Buddhism in all aspects, including the religious beliefs, philosophical thinking, scientific researches, and the jurisprudential, socio-political and cultural developments. Generally speaking, this Basket comprised not just the historical advancement within Buddhism itself, but also depicted the entire cultural change of the localities that the Buddha's teachings have reached. This same change was also substantially proven in the history of Vietnam. This massive literature continuously evolved across many diverse geographical zones. Not until the significant spread of Islam into India was Buddhism getting gradually eliminated. One part of this Buddhist literature was transferred to Tibet, by means of the Tibetan translations from the Sanskrit scriptures, and a great number of the Sanskrit originals were well preserved until today. The other part of the historical literature the largest and most comprehensive was translated into Chinese and contained almost all of the different thought processes of Buddhism in the history of India, from the Primitive, Scholastics, Mahayana, and Mysticism.

Xuanzang and the Fragrance of Nalanda in the Land of China

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The spread of Buddhism in China in the sixth Century inspired numerous Chinese monks to undertake visits to the geographical region of India to explore the roots of original Buddhism and the texts of Buddhism. They also had the objective of collecting and translating the original Buddhist sutras. Xuanzang, who visited India during the seventh Century, was one of the prominent travelers from China. He was keen to see the land of the Buddha and study the scripture in depth. Xuanzang traversed several Asian cities through the famous silk route. Xuanzang's historical and adventurous journey through the silk road is well documented in his work '*Si-Yu-Ki*'. Xuanzang's life at the Nalanda University takes pride of place in the book, besides descriptions of Buddhist monasteries, kingdoms and a riveting account of the historical evolution of Buddhism in China and India. *Si-Yu-Ki* serves as a ready reference for generations to study the historical, geographical, cultural, social, political and religious aspects of a bygone era. Xuanzang's interactions with thousands of monks and scholars at Nalanda helped him gain a better perspective on Buddhism. He also had the privilege of visiting almost all parts of Buddhist India. Xuanzang's translations of Buddhist works into the Chinese language facilitated increased communication between the two geographical entities of India and China. Years spent studying and teaching in

Nalanda made Xuanzang proficient in Buddhism. Mastery of grammar, logic and Sanskrit helped him translate many Buddhist scriptures into Chinese language after his return to his home country. Patronage from the then Chinese ruler Taizang is especially noteworthy as he offered the services of twelve monks and nine grammarians to help in translation work. They translated seventy-four Buddhist texts into Chinese from Sanskrit, a work of two decades. After his return to China, Xuanzang also founded a new school of Buddhism - named *Fa- Tsang* - based on the knowledge he imbibed from his teacher in Nalanda, Silabadra. Xuanzang's journey to India helped foster a closer intellectual relationship as several Indian monks from Nalanda and other Buddhist monasteries were invited to visit China. Even after he left India, Xuanzang maintained good relations with monks in India. Regular correspondence continued through exchange of letters by monks who visited India from China and vice versa. Xuanzang's visit to India marked the beginning of a new chapter in the study of Buddhism in China.. Xuanzang's close relationship with Chinese rulers was instrumental in making Buddhist teachings an integral part of education in China. He also laid the foundation for greater cultural and religious ties between China and India, thanks to his elaborate interactions with Chinese and Indian emperors. He was able to show the deep and valuable cultural consciousness of both the nations. Xuanzang is a symbol of spirituality, enthusiasm and scholarship. Xuanzang holds a special place in history as the cultural ambassador who helped build an intellectual passage between India and China, a contribution particularly relevant in the present context.

The Previous Indian Buddhist Missionaries in Vietnam 1st-3rd A.D.

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Vietnam has naturally been influenced by both Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism. The Vietnamese acquisition of Buddhism was thought to be unexceptional. Nevertheless, contrary to what has been previously thought, historical evidence indicates Indians first brought Buddhism to Vietnam. Indeed, Indian Buddhist monks probably came to northern Vietnam after first transmitting Buddhism to southern China. Vietnam's geography presented several meritorious points to link trade with India. The Indochinese peninsula includes countries along the Mekong River such as China, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam. The history of the prosperous maritime trade in the 1st century was seen as the thread between India and Vietnam as the sea route between the countries was traveled and goods were exchanged for business which also expanded to culture, arts and religions.

Buddhism was presumably delivered to Vietnam firstly by Indian Buddhist monks and revered contemporaries. It is also true; several of their names weren't written down and have been lost to history. The few mentioned are those fortunate to have had their names passed down from generation to generation. They actually weren't likely the first ones; however, they were among the first be recorded in historical records i.e. Mahajivaka (Ma-ha-ky-vuc) and

Kalacarya (Khau-da-la) in the 1st AD., Kang-senghui (Khuong-Tang-Hoi) and Kalaruci (Chi-Cuong-Luong) in the 3rd AD.

Indian Buddhism had the most influence on the native people because it adapts better to the national characteristics of Vietnam. The temples have monks, who are close to the people and for the development of a center of the community. Even though Buddhism came from China once the Vietnamese people were exposed to it, it helped them to enhance consciousness in their nation. It appears that temples in the countryside have often become the center of uprising against the Chinese government, the Chinese has tried to place strict control systems on temples and Buddhist places. Indian Buddhism Compositions Revealed to the World details early Indian Buddhism evolution and movement of engaged Indian religions in the early period around 2th B.C. Buddhism was successfully adopted by Vietnam as new religion because, the teachings of the Buddha's touched on the values and spirituality found in local Vietnamese life. The study found that in the 1st century Buddhist literature and texts were spread in the North of Vietnam by missionary monks from China and India.

Historical background of Buddhism in North-East India

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North-East India is the home to a number of ethnic groups which are geographically and culturally diverse. Different religions like Shaivism, Shaktism, Tantricism, Vaishnavism, Buddhism, Jainism, etc. is followed by different ethnic groups of the region. Among the eight states of North-East India, Buddhism has a strong hold in Sikkim and parts of Arunachal Pradesh. Other states like Assam, Tripura, Mizoram, etc. have a very few number of people who follows Buddhism.

It is interesting to know that Buddhism never reached the region of North-East India even in the days of Buddha or till it went to countries like China, Tibet, Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, Java and Sri Lanka. Instead it came to this part of India from countries like Tibet and Burma. Buddhism first came to parts of Western Assam in the first century A.D. from Burma and its effect was minimal and confined within the region. In states like Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh Buddhism was introduced in the medieval times and it became one of the dominating religions of those states.

Even though it was introduced in Assam centuries before it was introduced in states like Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh still its influence remained confined in the Goalpara region of Western Assam. Other group of Buddhist followers came to Assam in the thirteenth as well as in the eighteenth Century but its influence was seen among their own tribes only. But in neighboring states like Arunachal Pradesh the same

groups of Buddhist followers were able to convert the indigenous people to followers of Buddhism.

In Sikkim the spread of Mahayana Buddhism started from the seventeenth Century and today it is among one of the dominating religions of the state. Buddhism entered in Sikkim from Tibet and started spreading with the influence of the Buddhist monks who entered Sikkim with the intention to spread Buddhist thought among the people of the region. There are several factors contributing towards the growth of Buddhism in States like Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh of North-East India.

North-East India is dwelt by more than hundreds of major tribes and sub tribes. The Tai Shan tribes who came to the region in the thirteenth Century were followers of Theravada Buddhism. On the other hand other groups like Monpas, Sherpas, Khambas, Sherdukpens, Membas, Meyors, etc. are followers of Mahayana Buddhism. This difference can be seen among the people because the people belonging to the Tai Shan groups like Tai Khamtis, Tai Aitons, Singphos, Boruahs, Moghs, etc. were immigrants from Burma. The other groups were mostly influenced by the Buddhist monks from the Tibet region.

This paper shall discuss the origin and spread of Buddhism in North-East India. It shall discuss the reasons for Buddhism becoming a dominant religion in some states of North-East India and its impact among the local people. It shall also discuss why its influence remained minimal in other states of North-East India.

Keywords: Buddhism, North-East India, religion, spread, region.

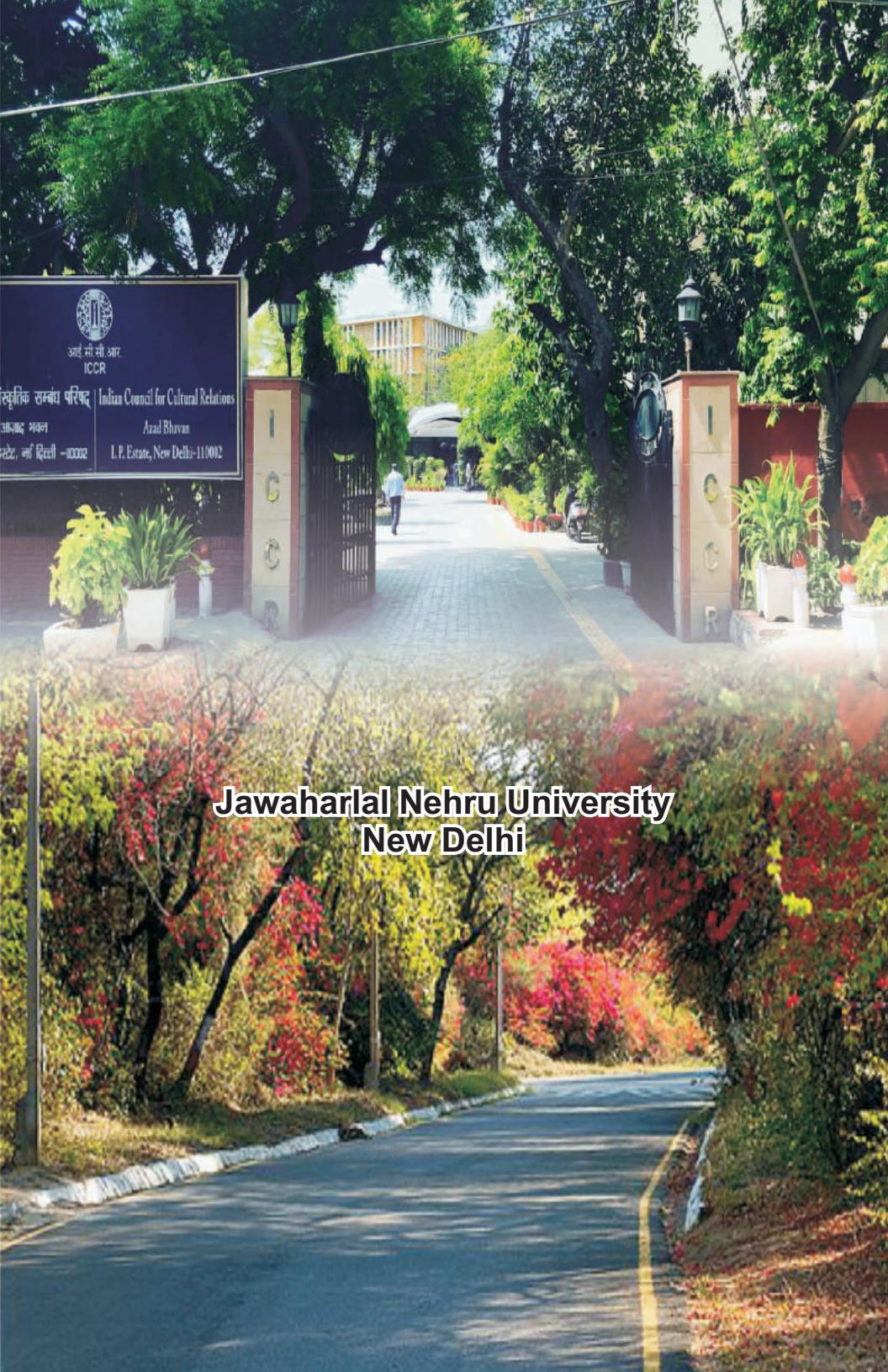
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