UNITED NATIONS DAY OF VESAK 2019

Edited by THICH NHAT TU



BUDDHISM AROUND THE WORLD

RELIGION PUBLISHER

VIETNAM BUDDHIST UNIVERSITY SERIES

BUDDHISM AROUND THE WORLD

Editor

Most Ven. Thich Nhat Tu, *D.Phil.*,

RELIGION PUBLISHER

ADVISORY BOARD

His Holiness Thich Tri Quang
Deputy Sangharaja of Vietnam
Most Ven. Dr. Thich Thien Nhon
President of the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha
Most Ven.Prof. Brahmapundit
President of International Council for Day of Vesak

EDITORIAL BOARD

Nguyen Manh Dat, U.S.A.
Nguyen Thi Linh Da, Vietnam

CONTENTS

Preface xi
Editor's Introduction xv

AFRICA

1. Development of Buddhism in Africa: Reasons, Strategies and Impact
Jacob Waiswa Buganga 1

AUSTRALIA

2. Some Impressions of Australian Buddhists Today
Sue Erica Smith 13

3. The Soka Gakkai in Australia: Globalization of a New Japanese Religion
Daniel A. Metraux 19

ARGENTINA

3. Buddhism in Argentina
Caton Carini 47

BANGLADESH

4. Present Day Buddhism in Bangladesh
Suman Kanti Barua 62

BHUTAN

5. Mahayana Buddhism and Gross National Happiness in Bhutan
Michael Givel 79

CANADA

6. Buddhism in Canada
Mauro Peressini 105

CAMBODIA

7. Buddhism in Contemporary Cambodia
Ven. Khy Sovanratana 125

CZECH REPUBLIC

9. Development of Interest in Buddhism in the Czech Republic
Jitka Cirklová.....137

DENMARK

10. Buddhism in Denmark
Jørn Borup.....147

EUROPE

11. Buddhism in Europe: History, Current State of Affairs, and Adaptations to European Large-Scale Social Trends
Martin Baumann.....165

FRANCE

12. Reception of Buddhism in France and its Contribution to Buddhist Education and Research
Ven. Tampalawela Dhammaratana.....181

HUNGARY

13. Buddhism in Hungary: The Dharma Gate Buddhist Church and College
Tamás Agócs, Pál Farkas, Zoltán Cser and Gábor Karsai.....197

INDIA

14. Buddhism in India
K.T.S. Sarao.....211

15. Ambedkar's Perspective towards Religion
Nilima Chawhan.....243

16. The Socio-Economic Transformation of the Neo-Buddhist Community after Conversion in Modern India: With Special Reference to Gaya District Of Bihar State
Ravi Shankar Singh.....253

17. History of Buddhism in Ladakh and its Monasteries
Gurmet Dorjey.....267

INDONESIA

18. A Long Journey of Buddhism in Indonesia
Asep Yusup.....311

19. Inter-Race, Religion and Cultural Tolerance: The Spread of Buddhism Tjong Family in Medan, North Sumatra, Indonesia
Erond Litno Damanik.....329

20. Monastery without Boundary: An Emerging Paradigm in Sumatra, Indonesia
Hudaya Kandahjaya.....351

JAPAN

21. Buddhism in Modern Japan
Bhikkhu Prayudh Payutto.....371

22. Shift the Power: Building a Buddhist Temple Community as a Mechanism for Environmental and Social Change
Jonathan S. Watts.....379

KOREA

23. Characteristics of Buddhist Tradition and Transformation in Korea
Ven. Jinwol Dowon.....401

24. An Overview of Korean Buddhism
Jongmyung Kim.....427

MEXICO

25. Buddhism In Mexico
Ezer Roboam May May.....441

MYANMAR

26. Buddhism in Myanmar: A Brief Sketch
Bhikkhuni Dieu Hieu (Supetteyyā).....455

27. The Role of Monkhood in Contemporary Myanmar Society
Sylwia Gil.....471

NEPAL

28. Buddhism in Nepal
Tina Manandhar *495*

29. The Guthis: Buddhist Societal Organization for the 21St Century
Shobhit Shakya & Wolfgang Drechsler *501*

NORWAY

30. Buddhism in Norway
Ethil Gothe *531*

SOUTH AMERICA

31. Buddhism in South America: An Overview with Reference to the South American Context
Frank Usarski *537*

SOUTHEAST ASIA

32. Influence of Buddhism in South-East Asia
Bela Bhattacharya *571*

SRI LANKA

33. Theravada Buddhism and Buddhism in Sri Lanka
Walmoruwe Piyaratana 597

34. The Incorporation and Conversion of Local Gods and Hindu Deities into Buddhist Worship in Sri Lanka
Ven. Thich Dong Tam 617

THAILAND

34. Buddhism in Thailand: Its Past and its Present
Karuna Kusalasaya 631

35. Buddism in Thailand: The Role Of Wat toward Society in the Period of Sukhothai till Early Ratanakosin 1238 – 1910 A.D.
Phramaha Chakrapol Thepa 655

36. Engaged Buddhism in Modern Thailand
Nun Daria Mikheeva (Sucitta) 677

UNITED KINGDOM

37. Soka Gakkai International in the United Kingdom in the 21st Century and the Practice of Nichiren Buddhism
Jamie Cresswell, Director 689

UNITED STATES

38. American Buddhism: Looking Backward, Looking Forward
Charles S. Prebish 701

VIETNAM

39. Vietnamese Buddhism: Past and Present
Most Ven. Thich Tam Duc 731

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS 742

PREFACE

The history of mankind records how the Buddha got enlightenment and showed a path which not only leads but also guides the world till date. That is solely to emanate wisdom and offer insights which help us overcome numerous challenges and achieve the welfare of humanity.

Recognizing his pragmatic approach, values and contribution of Buddhism, the United Nations in a resolution in 1999 decided to celebrate the Triply Blessed Day of Vesak (Birth, Enlightenment and Passing Away of Gautama), falling mostly in a lunar calendar in the month of May. The first celebrations were held way back in the year 2000 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York and subsequently the day has been celebrated hugely in different countries.

Today our planet is confronted with a number of crises and unprecedented natural disasters. The imminent threat of terrorism and ethnic violence, tackling poverty, providing education and sustainable development leads us to strive for social justice. There is an urgent need for concerted and constant planning and right effort at an international level to foster permanent peace in the societies and in the lives of individuals.

Against the backdrop of such widespread misery and strife leading to complex issues and crises, Buddhism with its rich heritage of tolerance and non-violence can contribute immensely and inspire us with His message of loving-kindness, peace and harmony in today's world. The United Nations Day of Vesak (UNDV) 2019 is a testimony to this fact.

Vietnam got the chance and responsibility of hosting this international Buddhist event UNDV in 2008 and 2014 respectively. The event proved an amazing spectacle of religious and spiritual festivity, with thousands of Buddhists from around the world converging in Vietnam, to spread the Buddha's message of peace, love and har-

mony.

This is the third time that Vietnam is hosting this important international event which is viewed by Buddhists as an opportunity to spread the Buddha's message and values of love, peace, non-violence, tolerance and compassion across the world.

It is a great honor for Vietnam, the Vietnamese people, the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha and Buddhists all around the world to participate in the UNDV celebrations and spread the rich Buddhist heritage, especially its teachings of equality, social justice, respect and understanding for the benefit of all humanity. World Buddhists and particularly the Vietnamese people are excited about their country hosting this auspicious and important event for the third time. This international religious, cultural and academic event would also certainly promote interaction and exchange of Buddhist cultural and intellectual values among diverse countries.

The International Buddhist conference with the main theme of "Buddhist Approach to Global Leadership and Shared Responsibilities for Sustainable Societies" during the celebrations could not have been more relevant and timely. The present book is the outcome of one workshop representing one perspective of the conference. Other perspectives of the conference include: (i) Mindful Leadership for Sustainable Peace, (ii) Buddhist Approach to Harmonious Families, Healthcare and Sustainable Societies, (iii) Buddhist Approach to Global Education in Ethics, (iv) Buddhism and the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and (v) Buddhist Approach to Responsible Consumption and Sustainable Development. This international conference aims to foster co-operation among Buddhist communities and institutions, and to develop Buddhist solutions to the global crisis.

Papers selected for this volume are those that combine thematic relevance, familiarity with the main theme or sub-themes, significant research in primary resources, innovative theoretical perspectives, clarity of organization and accessible prose style. Acceptable articles in this volume are determined by the Academic Peer-Review Committee.

UNDV 2019 certainly is an opportunity for the world Buddhists, the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha and all the members of the international community to benefit from the rich traditions,

values and spiritual ideals of Buddhism. The pragmatic path shown by Buddha can make the world a better, safer, more peaceful and harmonious place to be cherished and enjoyed by all sentient beings.

On behalf of the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha and myself, I would like to warmly welcome President of Myanmar, H.E. Mr. U Win Myint, Prime Minister of Nepal, Right Hon. Mr. K.P. Sharma Oli, Vice President of India, H.E Mr. Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu, Chairperson of the National Council of Bhutan, H.E. Mr. Tashi Dorji, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations/ Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific, H.E. Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, Director-General of UNESCO, H.E. Ms. Audrey Azoulay, Ambassadors, and many other dignitaries.

It is my honor to warmly welcome National Assembly Chairwoman H.E. Ms. Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan, Prime Minister of Vietnam, H.E. Mr. Nguyen Xuan Phuc, President of the Vietnam Fatherland Front Central Committee H.E.Mr. Tran Thanh Man, Permanent Deputy Prime Minister H.E.Mr. Truong Hoa Binh, Deputy Prime Minister-Minister of External Affairs H.E.Mr. Pham Binh Minh, other dignitaries including former Political leaders of the Government of Vietnam.

I extend my warmest welcome to all respected Sangharajas, Sangha Leaders, Buddhist Leaders, Sangha members and 1600 Buddhist Scholars and practitioners from 115 countries and territories, participating in this international celebration and conference. Let me thank all of you for your contributions to this celebration and Conference.

My heartfelt thanks are extended to respected members of the Supreme Patriarch Council and Executive members of the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, especially 25 sub-committees for UNDV 2019 in Vietnam for their devotion and contribution.

I take this opportunity to express here my profound gratitude to Most Ven. Prof. Brahmapundit for his continuous supporting Vietnam to host this international event. I also thank profusely all members of the International Council for Day of Vesak (ICDV), Conference Committee and Editorial Board for their devotion.

I am grateful to Mr. Xuan Truong for his generosity and other

donors, sponsors, volunteers and agencies from the public sector and the private sector for their excellent contribution.

This publication and other 29 books printed for Vesak could not have been possible without the persistence, hard work, and dedication of Editorial Committee for their devotion including Most Ven. Dr. Thich Duc Thien, Prof. Le Manh That, and especially Most Ven. Dr. Thich Nhat Tu serving as the international conference coordinator.

I extend my warmest and best wishes to all the delegates and participating countries on this special occasion which strengthens our resolve to improve the world by walking on the path shown by the Lord Buddha.

Whatever merit there is in publishing this book may be transferred over to the welfare and happiness of all sentient beings. May all sentient beings be happy and released from suffering.

We wish the celebration of the United Nations Day of Vesak 2019 in Vietnam every success.

Most Ven. Thich Thien Nhon

President of the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha

Chairman of the United Nations Day of Vesak 2019 in Vietnam

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

The anthology *Buddhism Around the World* is compiled in celebration of the 16th United Nations Day of Vesak (UNDV) hosted by the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha (NVBS) for the third time from 12th to 14th May 2019 in Ha Nam Province, Vietnam. UNDV 2008 at the National Convention Center in Hanoi attracted the participation of 75 countries, whereas UNDV 2014 at Bai Dinh Buddhist Temple in Ninh Binh welcomed delegates and scholars from 85 countries. Among 108 countries participating in UNDV hosted by Vietnam this year, the book features research articles and writings on 28 selected countries and regions, offering a comprehensive outlook of Buddhism in different national and cultural contexts, while highlighting the contribution of international Buddhist communities to the fostering of peace, happiness, and well-being for all.

The path of enlightenment discovered and propagated by the historical Buddha 26 centuries ago is known as Buddhism, one among many great world religions, and is followed and practiced by at least 550-650 million people, roughly 7-9% of the world population.

As a world religion, Buddhism is present in 175 countries and regions spreading across five continents, including: (i) Asia-Pacific with approximately 480-500 million Buddhists; (ii) North America with four million Buddhists; (iii) Europe with about 1.5 million Buddhists; (iv) the Middle-East and North Africa with about 500.000 Buddhists; and (v) Latin America-the Caribbean with nearly 500.000 Buddhists. On the five continents above, China, Thailand, Myanmar, Japan, Vietnam, Cambodia, South Korea, and Malaysia are countries with the highest population of Buddhists in the world.

From the third century B.C.E, following the national policies of the Great King Asoka, the Dharma propagation delegation, led by the Prince Mahendra, brought the Dharma to the region of *Suvarnabhumi.* In the first century C.E., Buddhism took shape in a small

number of Asian countries. The Silk Road transmission of Buddhism in the first and second century extended the reach of Indian Buddhism into China's territory. A few centuries later, Buddhism had spread to Korea (fourth century), Japan (sixth-seventh century), and other countries.

At the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century, Buddhism became known to the Western world. From its creation in Asia, Buddhism had quickly grown into a world religion with three main schools of practice, including Theravada Buddhism, Mahayana Buddhism, and Vajrayana Buddhism.

Theravada Buddhism develops most strongly in Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, and Cambodia, with approximately 150-180 million followers. The Pali Tipitaka of Theravada Buddhism consists of the *Sutta Pitaka* (Discourses of the Buddha), *Vinaya Pitaka* (Collections of Monastic Rules), and the *Abhidhamma Pitaka* (Philosophical Treaties). With nine corpuses of literature, including long, middle-length, and short texts, the Pali Tipitaka comprises 38.000 discourses.

Mahayana Buddhism, with roughly 360-450 million followers, is predominantly present in Vietnam, China, Japan, North-South Korea, Malaysia, and Singapore. Much of the Sanskrit Tripitaka written in Sanskrit was lost at the end of the twelfth century when Islamic forces invaded India, destroyed Buddhist sites, temples, burned Buddhist texts and persecuted monks and nuns. In addition to the *Tripitaka of Sarvāstivāda,* that is the *Agamas,* which shares the same system of classification and counting as the Pali Tipitaka, Mahayana Buddhism uses more than 40.000 other short, middle-length, and long texts, making it among the most abundant and adaptable Buddhist traditions.

Vajrayana Buddhism has about 18 million followers in Tibet, Mongolia, and Nepal. Sutras of this branch of Buddhism are preserved and transmitted in classical Tibetan. These texts, which were faithfully translated from the Sanskrit Buddhist texts, are divided into two groups, namely Tanjur and Kanjur, that both synthesize classical Buddhist literature and contain esoteric elements.

Originated in India and through many cultural exchanges and interactions in different countries and continents in the span of 26 centuries, Buddhism, founded on the Four Noble Truths, has

engendered a great diversity of traditions and practices. Theravada Buddhism in many Theravada countries has successfully preserved the teachings and methods of practice and propagation of the Buddha's time.

To adapt Buddhism to the local traditions of philosophy, religion, and culture in each country, Mahayana Buddhism created ten main Buddhist schools in China and influenced Buddhism in neighboring countries, such as Vietnam, Japan, and North-South Korea. Overtime, the status of Buddhism in Mahayana countries had been challenged by Confucian political and ideological institutions originated in China. Consequently, throughout history, Buddhism in Mahayana Buddhist countries had experienced episodes of decline and been replaced by Confucianism. Therefore, it is difficult for Buddhism in Mahayana countries to retain the originality of the Buddhist Dharma in comparison to its counterpart in Theravada countries.

Buddhism in Theravada countries had enjoyed more support from the people since its arrival in the region and had not experienced decline and marginalization. Even though there were historical periods when the ruling monarchs favored Hinduism, Buddhism in Theravada countries continued to be a religion with the highest number of followers, unlike its Mahayana counterpart that saw a decline in followers and became marginalized.

Fundamentally, the teachings of the Buddha can be divided into 6 main groups: (i) Buddhist worldview/epistemology, (ii) Buddhist perspectives on humanities, (iii) Buddhist sociology, (iv) Buddhist approach to politics, (v) Buddhist ethics, and (vi) Buddhist view on liberation. Not only compatible with science, Buddhism is a religion of reason, promoting the role of human beings through humanism. It was not until 1826 that the concept "humanism" was discussed in the West, under the influence of the Enlightenment Era and Secularism that aimed to separate religion, particularly Christianity, from politics, society, economics, and education.

During the colonial period, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Buddhism in Asia faced many challenges, when the heads of state of many Buddhist countries were under attack by capitalist colonial regimes that promoted the proselytization of Christianity. Colonialism thus resulted in the grave decline of Buddhism in many Asian countries.

Responding to these political and religious challenges, Buddhist reformation movements began to take shape in India, China, Vietnam, etc and gave rise to different forms of intellectual Buddhism, nationalist Buddhism, and socially engaged Buddhism. These movements aimed, on the one hand, to ensure the survival of Buddhism, and on the other hand, to consolidate and develop a Buddhism dedicated to providing social services effectively to all.

Buddhist archaeological movements in India and Nepal, as well as socially engaged Buddhist movements, had contributed to the foundation of Buddhism in the West. Regarding the academic study of Buddhism, one cannot fail to mention the great contributions of scholars, such as Max Muller, Thomas William Rhys Davids, Eugene Burnouf, Hermann Oldenberg, Henry Steel Olcott, Capaski, Shunryu Suzuki, among many others, to helping the West better understand and appreciate Buddhism.

In terms of archaeology, thanks to the significant contributions of German and British archaeologists who published research confirming the existence of Shakyamuni Buddha and other Buddhist heritage sites connected to the birth of Buddhism, people in the Western world increasingly accepted Buddhism. As the result, the West begun to pay attention to Buddhism as a path of wisdom and healing of suffering that surpasses other monotheistic and polytheistic religions.

The presence of Buddhism in the West specifically and around the world more broadly in the last two centuries, through peaceful means, reflects that the fundamental values of Buddhism in its service to humanity have allowed Buddhism to become the spiritual refuge for people in the West when they cannot find any effective solution to their pain and suffering.

Sadly, as Buddhism came to be recognized in the West much later than other world religions, it has yet to have the full opportunity to contribute to changing the intellectual and spiritual life of humanity. Had Buddhism been more present in the West in centuries after the common era like other Western religions, the profound teachings of the Buddha regarding science could have advanced humankind knowledge by a few decades or even a few centuries, bringing many enlightened values to the world.

In reading this anthology, readers embark on a journey across

the land of Buddhist India and Nepal, as well as other countries across the five continents, experiencing for themselves important historical turning points, interacting with different cultures, enjoying works of arts, and having a sense of different forms of practice and propagation of various Buddhist schools, as well as practices at specific temples.

With this book, readers will not only learn the different forms of adaptation Buddhism had made to different political, social, cultural, and religious contexts in the past, but more importantly, come to discover the rightful path in their efforts to contribute to humanity, reduce sufferings, and promote happiness for all.

Most Ven. Dr. Thich Nhat Tu

AFRICA

DEVELOPMENT OF BUDDHISM IN AFRICA: REASONS, STRATEGIES AND IMPACT

by Jacob Waiswa Buganga*

ABSTRACT

Buddhism is one of the four major religious traditions in the world, with some traces in Africa. This study examines the development of Buddhism in Africa, considering the reasons, strategies, and impact. It employed historical analysis design of qualitative inquiry to understand how Buddhism evolved in Africa at its impact on the continent. It was established that Africa origination of Buddha ancestors, his life, teaching, role of King Ashoka and missionary activities. The strategies involved Buddhism branding to suit nature and individual needs, skilling of missionary work, and locally engaged Buddhism for positive community transformation. The impact was attainment of human and ecological wellbeing which were undermined by power struggles and socioeconomic influences (greed). The development of Buddhism in Africa has Africa origination and prototype which facilitates ownership of Buddhism, natural assimilation, experience and impact on the people of Africa. Unfortunately, power struggles and greed undermines its development at the same length and weight as the benefits.

*. Buddhist Mission in Africa Namugoona, Rubaga Division, Kampala, Uganda.

1. INTRODUCTION

Buddhism is considered as fourth largest religion at 7.1% of the 7.6 Billion people. It was founded by the Gautama Buddha, more than 2500 years ago (Funeralwise, 2010; Central Intelligence Agency, 2010; Population Reference Bureau, 2018). There is no standard Buddha birthdate. While some mention 2500[12], others indicate 2600 years[3] since he was born. However, the World Heritage Center[4] indicates 623 BC as the year of his birth. It is set of beliefs and practices that originated in northern Indian through the work of Gautama Buddha.

Buddhist doctrine

The Buddhist doctrine is expressed through the four and eight noble paths. While the four noble path aims were to cause understanding of truths of nature, eight noble path sought to cultivate discipline to achieve peaceful states (Wijithadhamma, 2017). The four noble paths are; 1) truth of suffering, 2) cause of suffering, 3) end of suffering, and 4) path to end suffering. And the path to end suffering is the eight noble path, which consists of; 1) right views, 2) right thoughts 3) right speech, 4) right actions, 5) right effort, 6) right livelihoods, 7) right mindful and 8) right concentration (The Canadian Encyclopedia, 2018). The doctrine and its teachings explain life and how people can find meaning, best purpose and truth out of it in order to be happy and peaceful.

Buddhism in Africa

Estimates show that 0.02% of Africans are Buddhists, which is lowest of all continent. While that is so, the practices have a lot in common that Buddhism can only utilize to gain strong ground and

1. Chosdol Kunzang, Committing suicide, having alcohol, birth control against Buddha\\'s teachings, says Rigyal Rinpo, Available at http://www.reachladakh.com/ladakh-celebrates-2562nd-birth-anniversary-of-lord-buddha/4261.html, Accessed on February 13, 2019.

2. Patheos, Buddhist origins, Buddhist history and Buddhist beliefs, Available at https://www.patheos.com/library/buddhism, Accessed on February 14, 2019.

3. Boyle Allan, Religious roots of Buddha's traced back 2600 years, Availableat https://www.nbcnews.com/sciencemain/religious-roots-buddhas-birthplace-traced-back-2-600-years-2D11648772, Accessed on February 13, 2019.

4. UNESCO WHC, Lumbini, the birthplace of the Buddha, Available at https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/666, Accessed on February 2, 2019.

contribute truthful views of life in order to create harmony among Africans. The author examines key areas on the continent for Buddhism, which includes: West Africa, East Africa, North Africa, Central Africa and Southern Africa. In each region, one African country is selected for study. The countries selected were; Ghana (no record), Uganda (no record), Egypt (no record), Democratic Republic of Congo (no record), and South Africa (no record) (CIA, 2010).

Buddhist temples exist in Africa, which marks its eminent presence on the continent. Temples are in the African countries such as; Algeria, Botswana, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Egypt, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. South Africa has the largest Buddhist population on the African continent (Chic African Culture, 2015). Rapid population growth of Buddhist population is expected in North Africa between 2010 and 2030 (Pew Research Center, 2016). However, until now the Buddhist presence in that part of Africa is not recorded anywhere in statistics of religions.

The relationship between Africa and Asia, in particular, Ancient India, where Buddha was born, dates back as early as first century. In fact earliest statues in Egypt as much as in Asia show Buddha as black, with big lips, and curly hair, typically of an African. Earliest Africans from Ethiopia migrated to India some 50,000 years ago, settled in the north (a society from which the Buddha was born) and contributed to earliest and present civilizations, respectively (Horus, 2007; Rashidi, 2008). It is from India that Buddhism later spread to other Asian countries such as China, Japan, Thailand, and etcetera. In these countries, the earliest Buddha sculpture show Buddha as entirely black. Ancestral worship is background of African traditional religions, which is also popular among other traditions. Ancestral worship asserts connect between the present and the past. Ancestors continue to play a major role in the lives of the present. And there is strong belief and respect for elders. Contravention of ancestral expectation causes ill feeling and

unhappiness, which is normalized through appeasing ancestors with food and drinks (South African History Online, 2018). This is also popular in Buddhism, where experience and knowledge of Dharma is highly respected and departed patrons are worshiped (respected) and appeased for good luck because of their good karma that continues to influence the living. However, these religious activities are popular in Buddhist religious category. The practitioners, Budhologists, and intellectual Buddhists view Buddhism as philosophy, independent of religion, which anyone can take refugee and benefit from. There is a growing non-religious Buddhism (Winfield, 2018).

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Africa is already rooted strongly in religion (Okonkwo, 2014). But the strength of beliefs and practices do not match with level of technological advancement, wellness, peace and prosperity in African people that religions serve to realize. While they sought good luck, good conduct, good health and prosperity, the opposite was most true. Moreover, people attributed to practicing Buddhism are foreigners. And evidence shows that foreign languages and beliefs are *Africanized* (Northrup, 2017). After some years of interactions Africa context In Buddhism practices is limited in spite of long history of interaction, technological and cross-cultural exchange with foreign visitors, including those from Asia (Clasquin,1997). Even with limited contextual outlook, there is no research on motivational factors (reasons), how it was achieved and impact as a consequence.

3. AIM OF THE STUDY

1.1 To examine the development of Buddhism in Africa, with specific consideration of reasons, strategies and impact of its development.

3.1. Specific objectives

1.1 To explore the reasons for the development of Buddhism in Africa.

1.2 To identify the strategies for the development of Buddhism in Africa.

1.3 To assess the impact of Buddhism development in Africa.

3.2. Research questions

1.1 What are the reasons for development of Buddhism in Africa?

1.2 What are the strategies for development of Buddhism in Africa?

1.3 Of what impact is Buddhism in Africa?

3.3. Justification of the study

Buddhism is beyond rituals and religious practices that can be used to offer tangible solutions to wide range of problems faced in the world today, such as corruption, murders, insecurity, corruption, and violence on the continent of Africa. Despite great yet interesting link between Buddhism and Africa Dharma, less has been exploited by researchers and written about in that context in order to enrich the entire world of Buddhism with Africa perspective of Buddhism. The Buddhist missions currently working in Africa have had limited considerations for African context in cultivating Dharma in favor of foreign interests (cultures and traditions). And old practitioners suffer from fluctuations in commitment towards conservations of Buddhism (International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property, 2017).

3.4. Significance of the study

The study contributes knowledge on Africa Buddhism, also called Ubuntu Dharma. It breaks the ground of conserving Africa origins of Buddhism and expanding its knowledge base to constitute the overall Universal Dharma. The study inspires and encourages Africa authorship and involvement in the development of Ubuntu Dharma, from the perspectives of their own past experiences. The study cultivates the wealth of Africa experiences (wisdom) to provide solutions appropriate for Africans without having to replace traditions with another.

3.5. Scope

The study covers four regions of Africa, namely; North Africa, East Africa, West Africa, and South Africa The study limits itself on Buddhist activities in Africa, its development and impact on Africans. It explore Buddhism within the context of Africa whose

aim is Africa rebirth and development rather than Buddhism that serves interests of expatriates and foreign traditions. This study focuses on Buddhism work for the last decade when author actively participated in its development and founding an organization to champion good and appropriate Buddhism for Africans.

3.6. Theory

Wherever Buddhism went it evolved with existing cultures to form geo-specific Buddhism. Evidence pinpoint Buddha has black and a rallying factor for Africans to celebration the greatest of human civilization with Africa at the center of it (Horus, 2007; Rashidi, 2008). It is from India that Buddhism later spread to other Asian countries such as China, Japan, Thailand, and etcetera. In these countries, the earliest Buddha sculpture show Buddha as entirely black. Buddhism took different forms where it was developed.

4. METHODS

In this section, the research discusses process used in the study. The study examines the development of Buddhism in Africa -with specific considerations for the reasons, strategies and impact of Buddhist in Africa. The methods used were one found to be appropriate to the study. *Design:* The research employed historical analysis_where both historical records and participant observations were used to evaluate and understand the development of Buddhism in Africa. The study used model Buddhist-founded organizations in selected regions of Africa where model countries in respective regions with population size between 30 million and 70 million people. The sample of this study was 50 people per model Buddhist organization. On average each organization hosted 50 people on average. Therefore, in all regions, sample is 200 people, including at least one archive resource related to them. Sample is selected using purposive techniques focusing on specific regions and countries as well as Buddhist organizations that offer the best model for Buddhist development and Africa impact. Data was collected using participant observations techniques and review of archives that captured categorical information about reasons, strategies and impact of Buddhist development in Africa. *Data analysis:* Suitable information in line with research questions have been

developed into themes and sub items and interpreted as findings. Observations have been cross validated with archival information and harmonized as well as ranked on the basis of what has been confirmed against other sources. Also information has been proof - read and verified with individual sources with more than 10 years Africa Buddhist missions. Research information has been collected using volunteer experiences gained upon requests to volunteer and work with individual missionary organizations and representatives. *Research ethics:* Knowledge of research objectives and researcher roles were made known to study participants. Limitation: It was costly traveling in three regions of Africa and information security was compromised when first edition of Buddhism in Africa on storage media was lost. Resolve was reached to hold fundraising activities and store Buddhist research information in cloud storage system where it could be kept securely.

5. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study examines the development of Buddhism in Africa with focus on the reasons, strategies and impact. It employs historical analysis design of qualitative inquiry to understand how Buddhism evolved in Africa at its impact on the continent. It was established that Africa origination of Buddha ancestors, his life, teaching, role of King Ashoka and missionary activities. The strategies involved Buddhism branding to suit nature and individual needs, skilling of missionary work, and locally engaged Buddhism for positive community transformation. The impact was attainment of human and ecological wellbeing which were undermined by power struggles and socioeconomic influences (greed).

5.1. What are reasons for development of Buddhism in Africa?

The reasons for the development of Buddhism are explained by Buddha's life, African origination of his ancestors, conversion to Buddhism of King Ashoka, role of Buddhist missionaries and globalization.

Several studies have showed Buddhism as African which encourages ownership and practice of Buddhist teaching and experience of impact. Studies show Buddha as African based on his physical features and African descend. There is evidence of

Buddhism in Africa between 525-405 BC). And there has been acclaimed source attributing Buddhism as African, with origins in Africa. This is an outcome of Ashoka roles of sending Buddhist missionaries out to other areas of the world to spread Dharma (Winters, 2016).

5.2. What are the strategies for development of Buddhism in Africa?

The strategies for the development of Buddhism were natural branding of Buddhism (permeability and people - centeredness), skills of Buddhist missionaries and locally engaging Buddhism for socioeconomic and political empowerment of communities. Power struggles

The very nature of Buddhism as one that cultivates individual qualities and benefit while placing the individual at the center of his or her destiny in truth and discipline. The Buddhist teaching of the four and eight noble truths are the foundations for that. This avoids dilutions and superstitions which characterized most traditions today. This attracted interests from psychologists, philosophers and other scientists. Other sources have showed individual responsibility in pursuit of happiness and peace. The four noble path aim was to cause understanding of truths of nature, eight noble path sought to cultivate discipline to achieve peaceful states (Wijithadhamma, 2017). The four noble paths are; 1) truth of suffering, 2) cause of suffering, 3) end of suffering, and 4) path to end suffering. And the path to end suffering is the eight noble path, which consists of; 1) right views, 2) right thoughts 3) right speech, 4) right actions, 5) right effort, 6) right livelihoods, 7) right mindful and 8) right concentration (The Canadian Encyclopedia, 2018).

5.3. Of what impact is Buddhism in Africa?

The impact of Buddhism characterized human and ecological wellbeing of all beings. However, the benefits of Buddhism are undermined power struggles among Buddhist leaders, socioeconomic influences (greed) and limited local context in their operations.

Buddhism has contributed to the general wellbeing of individuals and countries that practice it. Productivity, peacefulness

and happiness have been key to the development of Buddhism in Africa. The benefits are not only wellness related but also an impetus to be development of Buddhism in Africa. The Buddhist practice only moved further to strengthen psychotherapy technologies that many psychotherapists and renowned philosophers suggested. It was found to be a sure complimentary to healing with self as driver of the process. It informed western psychology that it can be credible tool for use in investigating ailments, giving prognosis and remedies (Aich, 2013). The quest for happiness began with finding out the cause of suffering and leading oneself to have wisdom and compassion by learning to control mind using the eight - noble truths. The practices and reflection on Buddha teachings helped to clean the mind of cravings brought relief and fills it with wisdom. And where there was wisdom, there came compassion. These attributes boosted distorted African tradition to have individuals took responsibility in their quest to become exceptional beings, to show love to one another and coexist peacefully. Buddhism in Africa has been met with competing traditions, mainly Christians and Muslims. Nevertheless, the concept of African traditions is well cemented in them and seals the foundation of their practice. And practice is done with caution not to undermine the other. And when that happens, there is experience of something unwell. African tradition continues to feature in mainstream religions whether consciously or unconsciously. There is thus no way African traditions can be displaced. Clasquin suggests that Buddhism can find its place in Africa when it identifies areas of connection within the African traditional thought to build on.

6. CONCLUSION

The study examined the development of Buddhism in Africa, considering reasons, strategies and impact in the four countries, in the four major regions of Africa. It was established that Africa origination of Buddha ancestors, his life, teaching, role of King Ashoka and missionary activities. The strategies involved Buddhism branding to suit nature and individual needs, skilling of missionary work, and locally engaged Buddhism for positive transformation of African communities, where spirituality is not just taught but

experienced.[5] The impact was attainment of human and ecological wellbeing which were undermined by power struggles and socioeconomic influences (greed). The development of Buddhism in Africa has Africa origination and prototype which facilitates ownership of Buddhism, natural assimilation, experience and impact on the people of Africa. Unfortunately, power struggles and greed undermines its development at the same length and weight as the benefits.

Recommendations

There is need to widen the scope of Africa perspective of Buddhism through further research and writing.

There is need to have common administration for all Buddhist denominations in order to cultivate discipline of its leaders.

***

5. Beyers Jaco, What is religion? An African understanding, Herv. teol. stud. vol.66 n.1, Also available at http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0259-94222010000100007, Accessed on 14 February 2019.

References

Aich T K 2013, *Buddha philosophy and western psychology*, Indian J Psychiatry, 2013 Jan; 55(Suppl 2): S165–S170. doi: [10.4103/0019-5545.105517].

Chic African Culture 2015, *African Buddhist Monk in Uganda*, Available at http://www.theafricangourmet.com/2015/12/african-buddhist-monk-in-uganda.html?m=1 Accessed on November 14, 2018.

CIA 2010, *The World Fact Book*, Available at https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2122.html, Accessed on 13, 2018.

Clasquin M 1997, *Ubuntu Dhamma: Buddhism and African Thought*, Journal for Study of Religion, 1997; 57-74, Available at https://www.jstor.org/stable/24764060?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents, Accessed on November 14, 2018.

Clasquin-Johnson 2017, *Buddhism in Africa*, Ed, Michael Jerryson, The Oxford Handbook of Contemporary Buddhism. DOI: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199362387.013.13

Dhammawikki nd, "*Buddhism in Africa*", Available at https://dhammawiki.com/index.php/Africa,_Buddhism_in, Accessed on November 14, 2018.

Horus M 2007, *Ancient Black Buddha*, Available at https://www.nairaland.com/68677/ancient-black-buddha, Accessed on November 13, 2018.

ICCROM 2017, *Asian Buddhist Heritage: Conserving the Sacred*, Eds, Gamini Wijesuriya and Sujeong Lee, Rome, Italy.

Merryman L 2018a, *Do You Know the Basics of Buddhism?* Available at https://www.imb.org/2018/04/27/know-basics-buddhism/, Accessed on November 7, 2018.

Merryman L 2018b, *The Story and Spread of Buddhism*, Available at The Story and Spread of Buddhism, Accessed on November 13, 2018.

Northrup D 2017, *African Religion and Culture,* Oxford Press, UK. DOI: 10.1093/OBO/9780199730414-0003.

Okonkwo O 2014, Top 10 Most Popular Religions In Africa, Available at https://opera.pulse.ng/communities/religion/here-they-are-top-10-most-popular-religions-in-africa-id3048509.html, Accessed on November 12, 2018.

Pew Research Center 2010, *Buddhist Population by Country*. Available at http://www.globalreligiousfutures.org/religions/buddhists, Accessed on Accessed on November 13, 2018.

PRB 2018, *2018 World Population Data Sheet,* Washington DC, USA.

Rashidi R 2008, *The Africa presence in India,* Available at https://tseday.wordpress.com/tag/origin-of-buddhism/ Accessed on November 13, 2018.

SAHO 2018, *African Traditional Religion,* Available at https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/african-traditional-religion, Accessed on November 13, 2018.

Wijithadhamma M 2017, *Noble Eightfold Path of Buddhism for an Effective Leadership,* Available at https://www.sjp.ac.lk/buddhism/noble-eightfold-path-of-buddhism-for-an-effective-leadership/, Accessed on November 12, 2018.

Winfield P 2018, *Why so many Americans think Buddhism is just a philosophy,* Available at http://theconversation.com/why-so-many-americans-think-buddhism-is-just-a-philosophy-89488, Accessed on November 13, 2018.

Winters C 2016, *Buddhism in Ancient Egypt and Meroe – Beliefs Revealed Through Ancient Script*. Available at https://www.ancient-origins.net/opinion-guest-authors/buddhism-ancient-egypt-and-meroe-beliefs-revealed-through-ancient-script-020931 Accessed on November 13, 2018.

AUSTRALIA

SOME IMPRESSIONS OF AUSTRALIAN BUDDHISTS TODAY*

by Sue Erica Smith**

The Buddhist population in Australia has reached a new highpoint in the twenty-first century, adding impetus for considered attention to education if there is to be intergenerational longevity. By 2006, the Australian Census showed that Australia's declared Buddhist population had more than doubled since the 1996 census, and growth has steadily continued. The 2011 Census reported that 2.5% of Australia's population identified as Buddhist, and Buddhism holds the second largest religious population in Australia behind Christianity.

Census data goes on to reveal that in Victoria, where this program is based, the 4% population of Buddhists is significantly above national figures. In some metropolitan Melbourne municipalities, there is an even higher concentration, such as the Melbourne Local Government Area (LGA) with 7.5% Buddhists, Maribyrnong LGA with 10.2%, Brimbank LGA 10.5% and Greater Dandenong LGA 14.9% Buddhists (VMC, 2007).

Alongside growth explained in part by the rapid expansion of migrant/ethnic Buddhism as a consequence of migration from Asia and the Indian sub-continent (particularly from the 1970s onwards) there has been a significant increase in numbers of Australian-born

*. Excerpt from: Smith, S. E. (2013). Buddhist voices in school: How a community created a Buddhist education program for state schools. Springer Science & Business Media.

**. Dr. College of Education, Charles Darwin University, Australia.

citizens who have adopted the Buddhist path (Spuler, 2000).

Rather than assuming an identifiable religious profile, Buddhist people have for the most part integrated into the society and participate in a broad range of community activities and vocations. There is much volunteer community work with economically disadvantaged people -- those in prisons, addicts, disaster relief – and education programs. Buddhist people are also involved in social justice activities and work on behalf of human rights and the rights of non-human sentient beings, both from within their cultural groups and as participants in the wider community (Sherwood, 2003).

However, given the predominance of Buddhist people and their willingness to engage in community life, it appears somewhat anomalous compared to the other major religions in Australia (Christian, Jewish and Muslim) that there is as yet no representative position on education articulated by Buddhist people, and the establishment of Buddhist schools is tentative and nascent. Even among smaller religious populations such as Hindu, Sikh and B'hai there are developed education programs and some schools. The Buddhist Council of New South Wales has the longest-standing religious education program running in Australia, which in the last couple of years has experienced unprecedented growth. In Queensland too, Buddhist Education Services for Schools Inc. has responded to community requests to offer a coordinated Buddhist program to both primary and secondary schools. The opening of the Daylesford Dharma School in 2009, the movement to open a Buddhist school in northern New South Wales and the implementation of the Buddhist Education in Victorian Schools Program and a curriculum developed to support Australian schooling described here reflect a growing impetus from within Buddhist communities to formally engage in education. With a firm commitment to ethical living and intellectual development, the Buddhist path prizes education.

However, the experiences of immigrant peoples establishing homes, families, careers, cultural networks and Buddhist centres has left systematic education of children for a later stage. Amongst refugee people with whom I have worked there is deep appreciation for the liberty afforded in Australia and for many, having survived

repressive and sometimes brutal political systems, there is uneasiness about voicing concerns and aspirations publicly. For Australian nationals who have adopted the Buddhist path, such as me, the trajectory towards Buddhist education has also taken time to mature. Initial steps have been to join with immigrant peoples in the establishment of cultural networks and Buddhist centres, and to embark upon personal study and practice of the Dharma (the Buddha's teachings). These endeavours have produced many temples, Dharma centres and retreat facilities (more than 400 nationwide) that offer a robust range of community development and awareness programs that aim to preserve and share the Dharma.

Yet it would be pre-emptive to consider that Buddhism in Australia is established, and these centres, viharas and gompas could easily become conference facilities and nursing homes in the future. Some recent closures of Dharma facilities are already indicators of this possible trend. Even if some continue, without dedicated commitment and guidance to youth it is conceivable that large temples might be artefacts in fifty years' time, perhaps only accessed a couple of times a year for new year and Vesak celebrations to commemorate Buddha's birth, enlightenment and death. As former chair of the B.C.V., Venerable Chi Kwang Sunim, pointed out back in 2006, (see http://bcv.org.au/education): "the burgeoning Buddhist population is largely middle-class and ageing and that without dedicated commitment to educating future generations the longevity of the Dharma in Australia is uncertain." Sunim suggested that Buddhist organisations dedicate a small percentage of their funds annually to educating youth. Now, some six years later, it is timely for Buddhists and Dharma people to consider how and where their children's education might be incorporated into their existing programs and structures, or into broader spheres of education. This case study about a Victorian program might help to generate further activity.

Of the 250 Buddhist organisations with membership of state Buddhist Councils, barely 14% currently offer programs for children and youth. Of these memberships of course there are monasteries, hospices, and retreat centres that would necessarily preclude children's education, and there are university youth groups that pursue this function. There are occasional family and children's

activities offered in many centres, and the language schools that often run within some centres provide a vital role combining Dharma values and materials into the delivery of their language programs. There are also websites, such as http://buddhanet.net and other authentic sites tailored for children and youth yet these can be no substitute for a comprehensive educational approach.

In the many Dharma centres of which I am aware, volunteers are invariably stretched to maintain delivery of their centre's programs and meet growing public demands. However, as Buddhist organisations in Australia appear to be moving into consolidation phases their intergenerational legacies should warrant strategic attention. Dedicated annual financial and volunteer support for the religious education programs offered via Buddhist Councils in Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland, as Sunim suggested, is a practical measure. Resourcing the programs is a challenge to the communities and, in Victoria's case, inequitably funded (i.e. none) by the state government. Yet despite much public criticism of imperfect Special Religious Education/ Instruction models, Buddhist communities in Australia struggle to meet demands for their services from school communities.

Firstly for Buddhists: how they might articulate Dharma as pedagogy, and further in a wider educational context: how ethics and values can be taught in schools, and how religious and spiritual perspectives can be authentically taught in a plural society.

For Buddhist people in Australia, the slow development of Buddhist education or public positions on education can also be attributed to various factors from within the epistemology. Firstly, Buddhism considers itself a non-proselytising religion: *"Ehipassiko,"* said the Buddha, "Come and see," so the movement to education comes with immediate tension, particularly regarding children, yet almost paradoxically Buddhist centres are places for education. These offer teaching, generally free or at operational costs, and are reluctant to advertise their services. Furthermore, there is also uneasiness amongst some Buddhist practitioners about identifying their practice of Buddhism as religious. Socially and politically, Buddhism holds the place of a religion and shares features of other religions in terms of offering methods to help understand connections between life, death and beyond, and ethical living.

However, the promotion of freedom of thought and preclusion of self-surrender that hallmark the Buddhist path (Narada, 1988, 1993) render it anathema to conventional religious constructs that are based on faith, God creation, conformity to hierarchical rules and promotion of proselytising agendas.

Secularised borrowings from Buddhism have become profligate across the world in the last twenty years, especially the many permutations of Mindfulness, Positive Psychology and Positive Education. While these movements are encouraging for Buddhist educators, it is at this stage difficult for Buddhists to enter these arenas visibly as Buddhists because, with a religion label, proselytising assumptions can be hard to avoid. With but one school, and education bodies that administer only volunteer programs, there is also but small opportunities for Buddhists to contribute substantially to religion and ethics education dialogues in Australia.

Buddhists typically are fairly reticent. Vasi observed that the willingness of Buddhist people to contribute to society comes from the Buddhist notion of interconnectedness of all beings and the empowerment of individuals and their activities through the notion of skilful action (Vasi, 2006, p. 10).

Sherwood makes a similar observation that, a distinctively Buddhist praxis arising from the Buddhist values of compassion, the linking of inner and outer transformation, and the dissolving of the artificial boundaries between I and you, between human and non-human. (Sherwood, 2003, p. 95)

These can inform what a person does, but there is no apparent need to talk about it. It appears to be an assimilated population. Buddhists overall have not drawn attention to themselves, they have not been a problematic population, nor problematised by academics. They are largely not known and hence not fully integrated into the society. For adults this may not be a problem, but it is potentially more awkward for youth to maintain this identity. It would be interesting to know how children from the Asian diaspora are faring. These children are from immigrant families, many being first or second-generation refugees, and their response to trauma and their resilience is not understood. With youth resilience now an imperative -- a societal responsibility as well as in education -- there is a real possibility to integrate inclusive and

proactive strategies known to Buddhist peoples (and elaborated further on) around a common theme of improving young people's wellbeing.

***

References

Narada, M. (1982). *Is Buddhism a religion?* Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society.

Narada, M. (1988). *The Buddha and his teachings* (revised ed.). Kandy Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society.

Narada, M. (1993). *The Dhammapada Pali text and translation with stories in brief and notes* (4 ed.). Taipei Taiwan: The Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation.

Sherwood, P. (2003). *The Buddha in the Streets: Engaged Buddhism in Australia*. Bunbury W.A.: Edith Cowan University Press

Spuler, M. (2000). *Characteristics of Buddhism in Australia*. Journal of Contemporary Religion, 15(1).

Vasi, S. (2006). Profile and Contribution of Buddhists in Victoria: A Study into selected Buddhist Communities in Victoria.

THE SOKA GAKKAI IN AUSTRALIA: GLOBALIZATION OF A NEW JAPANESE RELIGION*

by Daniel A. Metraux**

The concept of "globalization" has become a hot topic throughout academia over the past few years and many of my colleagues and I have spent hours debating about its inherent nature, extent, and even its existence. The phenomenon of certain ideas, fashions or material goods transcending national boundaries is as old as recorded history, but what is new is the extent to which this phenomenon is being conceived and organized on such a global scale. Many commentators today describe globalization as a primarily Western phenomenon, the expansion of American or Western culture(s) to the rest of the world. While there is much truth to this speculation, one must also realize the contributions of other cultures to this emerging global culture. Japanese culture and technology continue to have considerable impact on the world, especially in East and Southeast Asia. Today people on every continent feel the impact of Japan, in the cars they drive, the music they listen to and, in some cases, the religions they practice.

The goal of this paper is to study the phenomenon of the globalization of Japanese religion through an analysis of the growth of the Soka Gakkai in Australia. One may call the Soka Gakkai a global Buddhist movement because of the fact that it has built chapters in over two hundred countries and has, according to

*. Originally published in *Journal of Global Buddhism* 4 (2003): 108-143. Reprinted with permission.

**. Professor of Asian Studies at Mary Baldwin College in Staunton, VA.

Soka Gakkai International (SGI)[1] estimates, slightly more than two million foreign members. I have visited SGI chapters in over a dozen countries and have rarely seen a Japanese face present at many meetings. At the same time, however, members worldwide are practicing the same religion and are following the same ritual practices as the estimated eight million Soka Gakkai followers in Japan.

Sanda Ionescu, who has studied the SGI in Germany, raises some interesting questions about the globalization of ideologies and cultures:

"To what extent can a religion, which has arisen under specific historical and cultural circumstances, become relevant to people in entirely different social, cultural and temporal contexts. What is the exact proportion of universality to cultural specificity that a religion should have in order to gain a following beyond its national borders? And how much does a religion entering a foreign culture with proselytizing intentions have to take into account the characteristics of the host culture?"[2]

One of the most interesting characteristics of the new Japanese religions distinguishing them from more traditional religions in Japan is their "universalistic orientation and international missionary zeal."[3] Japanese immigrants a century or more ago took their more traditional religions with them to the United States and elsewhere, but these religions attracted very little interest outside the Japanese communities and faded when later generations of ethnic Japanese assimilated into the local culture. Japanese new religions like Soka Gakkai, however, are often introduced abroad by a Japanese member, but quite often later develop a largely non-Japanese following.

To succeed outside of its host culture, a religion should have certain universalistic orientations and be flexible enough to adapt

1. Soka Gakkai International administers the worldwide Soka Gakkai movement from the organization's headquarters in Tokyo.

2. Ionescu, "Adapt or Perish," p. 183.

3. Cornille, "New Japanese Religions in the West: Between Nationalism and Universalism," p. 10.

certain culture-specific aspects of its ideology to the host culture. The Soka Gakkai's success[4] stems partly from the fact that its ideology is based on "this-worldly or vitalistic, and therefore universally relevant conceptions of salvation in terms of health, harmony, happiness, wealth, etc., and have made the means of salvation accessible to all."[5] Soka Gakkai members I have interviewed in foreign chapters virtually all agree that the essential ideology of the Soka Gakkai, revealed in its interpretation of the teachings of the Lotus Sutra and in its patron Nichiren,[6] are of lasting value and are as relevant to their lives as they are to followers in Japan.

Japan's Soka Gakkai has created a rapidly growing global community of like-minded members and independent chapters with Japan as its center. Soka Gakkai members outside Japan have altered certain uniquely Japanese practices and customs[7] while

4. The term "success" is, of course, a highly debatable topic. One can say that the Soka Gakkai is "successful" because it has spread very rapidly abroad since the late 1960s, but the fact that it has only a few thousand members in such countries as Canada or Australia does not as yet make it a major force abroad.

5. Cornille, p. 28.

6. The Soka Gakkai bases its teachings on its interpretation of the teachings of Nichiren (1222-1282), the founder of Japan's only native school of Buddhism. Soka Gakkai members, like other followers of Nichiren Buddhism, base their practice on chanting the daimoku, the phrase "Namu-myoho-renge-kyo." This translates roughly as "I commit myself to the wonderful dharma," referring to the highest teachings of the Buddha found in the sacred Lotus Sutra. Nichiren (1222-82), a Japanese Buddhist monk who founded the only truly Japanese school of Buddhism and who is the spiritual patron of the Soka Gakkai, said that chanting the daimoku will release the powers of Buddhism within each believer and that this chanting will bring positive benefits to the faithful. Members daily perform the gongyo, chanting short segments of the Lotus Sutra before a copy of Nichiren's Gohonzon (mandala) on which is drawn the title of the Lotus Sutra. The Gohonzon is said to embody the teaching of the true Buddha and contains the power to bring happiness to those who worship before it.

Soka Gakkai in Japan is also a major socio-political movement. It created a political party, the Komeito, in the 1960s. The Komeito, which on average has held about 10 percent of the seats in both houses of Japan's Diet, was briefly absorbed into a coalition of opposition parties in the mid-1990s. When the coalition collapsed in the late 1990s, former-Komeito Diet members established the New Komeito (NK). At present NK is a coalition partner of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party. Soka Gakkai and NK are technically independent organizations, but virtually all NK members and leaders are Soka Gakkai members as well. Soka Gakkai chapters outside of Japan do not engage in any political activities.

7. Sandra Ionescu notes, for example, in her study of SGI in Germany that while German members were in full agreement with the aims and meaning of Japanese Buddhism, they adapted their own views on such peripheral matters as language, clothes worn at meetings,

agreeing on the universal value and applicability of the major teachings of Soka Gakkai Buddhism. The result is a rapidly growing international Soka Gakkai community with many local variations. The Soka Gakkai is thus a religious movement which matured under specific historical, geographical, and social conditions, but which today is relevant to more than two million people worldwide who do not share the same language, history, or cultural assumptions.[8] The Soka Gakkai in Melbourne may have cultural differences with the chapter in Manila or Montreal, but they are both instantly recognizable as Soka Gakkai.[9]

The goal of this research is to demonstrate how the Australian branch of the Soka Gakkai (Soka Gakkai International Australia or SGIA) represents an aspect of the center-periphery process of Japan's globalization. The spread of SGI to Australia from Japan has lead to the "deterritorializing and relativizing"[10] of the movement from an inherently Japanese faith practiced mainly by Japanese, to a much more universal movement whose followers abroad are rarely Japanese and who in many cases have no particular affinity for Japan or Japanese culture.

Research Goals and Methodology

This research is part of a broader project of this writer to examine SGI in a variety of countries. I conducted research on SGI chapters in Canada and Quebec in 1995-97 and again in 2002 and in Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, and the Philippines in 1998-99 and, very briefly, New Zealand in 2003.

I did research on SGI in Australia briefly in 2000 and 2003 and for a longer period in 2002 with an Australian scholar, Ben Dorman.[11] We conducted a nationwide survey of SGIA members

---

and the sex division of labor. See Sandra Ionescu, p. 98.

8. Ionescu, p. 104.

9. All Soka Gakkai members worldwide chant the same passages from the Lotus Sutra every day and perform identical rituals at home or in community centers. One finds fairly uniform organizational structures in most every chapter as well as small group meetings in members' homes. Members worldwide also share an apparent deep reverence for Soka Gakkai leader Ikeda Daisaku.

10. Befu, The Global Context, p. 19-20.

11. Ben Dorman, who received a doctorate from the Faculty of Asian Studies at The

and conducted a number of in-depth interviews.

We prepared a very detailed, fifty-nine question survey in April 2002 for SGIA members. Section I contained eighteen questions about the member's personal experience with SGI and SGIA — how and when one had first heard of the movement, who introduced the member to the movement, that person's religious background, etc. Section II asked questions concerning the follower's attitudes toward the practice of Nichiren's Buddhism, focusing on such issues as benefits one may have incurred from this practice and whether that person had ever chanted for a particular set of goals. Sections III and IV posed queries about the member's feelings about the SGIA organization as a whole and its peace movement in particular. The fifth section requested a significant amount of demographic information from the member.

This research was carried out with the full cooperation of the SGIA leadership. The surveys were voluntary and the respondents had the option of revealing their identity or not. There were three main methods of distribution initially. (1) The survey was sent to the SGIA headquarters in Sydney. SGIA Headquarters then sent it by fax to the main areas in which SGIA branches are located and also to members in outlying areas. The branches then distributed them through local channels. These branches collected the completed surveys and either sent them to SGIA headquarters, or sent them directly to the researchers. Of the surveys that were sent to SGAI headquarters, some were sent directly back to the researchers by SGIA and others were picked up in Sydney by us; (2) the survey was sent by the researchers via email to members who requested it, and around thirty responses came back via email; and (3) Dorman sent three hard copies of the survey directly to members who had not otherwise received copies or did not have email access.

This initial campaign brought about 160 responses, mainly

Australian National University in May 2003, has conducted extensive research on the New Religions of Japan. He has been a member of SGIA since 1982. This writer, while not a member, has conducted extensive research on Soka Gakkai since the late 1960s and was a Visiting Fellow at Soka University in Tokyo in 1992.

from middle-aged members in their thirties, forties and early fifties. Since it is clear that SGIA has a large and rapidly growing youth membership, we attended a weekend SGIA Nationwide Youth Conference in Sydney in late July 2002 where we successfully encouraged nearly a hundred younger members, most of whom were in their twenties, from all over Australia to fill out the survey. By August we had about 265 completed surveys representing perhaps 12 percent of the membership. SGIA leaders assured us that demographic patterns developed from our survey closely fit their perceived national patterns for age and ethnic distribution.

We also conducted about twenty in-depth interviews with individual or small groups of members in Canberra and the Sydney and Melbourne regions as well as shorter conversations with about thirty other members. We also interviewed a few members from across Australia at various SGIA meetings and festivals. We deliberately chose a few older members because of their ability to give us some historical perspectives about the movement, but other interviews came from people who expressed an interest in our interviewing them in their survey responses.

As expected, we received a highly favorable image of SGIA from the active members interviewed; however, we also solicited and received a high number of very frank criticisms of the movement, especially on such topics as leadership and communication between leaders and ordinary members.

It is important to note, however, that while our survey did provide very detailed information concerning just over 10 percent of SGI members, the sampling procedure itself was far from random and the results consequently are not necessarily fully representative of the whole membership. Rather, our findings probably reflect the thinking of the most committed members. A more random sample might have yielded more statistically valid results, but limits on time and resources placed certain constraints on our research.

Some of the questions addressed are why the Soka Gakkai, with its strong Japanese roots, has succeeded in establishing a solid foundation in Australia, but also why after roughly forty years it has not expanded more rapidly. We wanted to learn who joined SGIA

and why. When we discovered that a very high percentage of the ethnic Asian members were not Japanese in origin, we wanted to learn why SGIA would appeal to such a broad mixture of Asians, many of whom expressed very little interest in Japanese culture and had very little contact with Japan or its people. In other words, we were searching for evidence that the SGI had become a global movement with applicability beyond its Japanese roots and cultural ties.

The Soka Gakkai Legacy Makiguchi Tsunesaburo (1871-1944), a Japanese educator and a devout lay practitioner of the Nichiren Shoshu ("True Sect of Nichiren") sect, founded the Soka Gakkai in the early 1930s as a support group for his educational ideas. However, by the late 1930s he and his younger disciple Toda Josei (1900-1958) had transformed the organization into a lay support group for the Nichiren Shoshu sect of Japanese Buddhism. Makiguchi and Toda were imprisoned in 1943 because of their refusal to accede to the government's request that they incorporate various nationalistic Shinto practices into their group's religious observances. Makiguchi died in prison in 1944, but Toda, released in 1945, rebuilt the Soka Gakkai into a major religious movement in the 1950s. Toda's successor Ikeda Daisaku (1928--)(13) expanded the Soka Gakkai in Japan and played a key role in SGI's expansion abroad.

The realization that the Soka Gakkai had become a highly successful lay Buddhist movement with its own strong leadership and own its social and political programs independent of the sect did not sit well with Nichiren Shoshu, a conservative and very traditional Buddhist sect. The fact that the Nichiren Shoshu priesthood and the Soka Gakkai were going in different directions caused a growing schism by the late 1970s that led to the formal separation of the two organizations in the early 1990s. Today the Soka Gakkai is an independent lay religious movement dedicated to the propagation of its version of Nichiren Buddhism. The Soka Gakkai grew rapidly in the immediate postwar era because its leaders focused on Buddhist teachings that stressed the happiness of self and others in one's immediate environment. Happiness was understood in very concrete terms for millions of dispirited and hungry Japanese: food, health, finding a mate, and securing employment. Later in the 1960s and 1970s when Japan became

more affluent, happiness was redefined in more philosophical terms to include "empowerment, character formation, and socially beneficial work...".[12] The fact that the Soka Gakkai is a distinctly lay religious movement has broadened its appeal in an increasingly secular age.

The Soka Gakkai grew as a highly exclusivist movement which in its early days attracted considerable criticism for its strong method of proselytization (shakubuku), its attacks on and harsh criticism of other sects and religions, and for its vigorous political activities and its highly partisan political party, the Komeito. Today this once highly negative image has mellowed somewhat because the Soka Gakkai has softened its methods of conversion, has quieted its criticism of others while opening dialogues with some other sects, and because the Komeito has become a highly visible political partner of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party.[13] Today's more moderate and mellow Soka Gakkai, while still subject to attacks by some elements of the Japanese media, is gradually becoming part of the Japanese media.

The Growth of Soka Gakkai International When tens of thousands of Japanese immigrated to North and South America a century ago, they built their own temples and invited Buddhist priests from Japan to tend to the needs of these entirely Japanese congregations. These older, largely Buddhist congregations have declined in recent decades as later generations became assimilated into the native population. Japan's contemporary NRMs (New Religious Movements), however, have become genuinely global or universal movements because their teachings have attracted non-ethnic Japanese faithful abroad and today survive as autonomous units. Today a number of Japanese NRMs such as SGIA, Mahikari, Zen, and Tenrikyo are growing in Australia because they have successfully adapted rituals, languages, customs and leadership to non-Japanese contexts.[14]

12. Ikeda was president of the Soka Gakkai from 1960 to 1979 when he left the day-to-day administration of the movement to other Soka Gakkai leaders. Today he is the spiritual leader and mentor for members worldwide.

13. Seager, "Soka Gakkai — The Next Ten Years," p. 94.

14. Most SGI chapters abroad have avoided a similar negative image because they have avoided

SGI in particular has succeeded in developing a strong following in many countries[15] because, as Peter Clarke notes, "though a very Japanese form of Buddhism, it appears capable of universal application: no one is obliged to abandon their native culture or nationality in order to fully participate in the spiritual and cultural life of the movement."[16] Soka Gakkai leaders, while maintaining the essential elements of their faith, have released their form of Buddhism from its inherently Japanese faith by skillfully adapting their religious practices to each culture that they seek to penetrate. They recruit local leaders who direct the foreign chapter free of any direct control from Tokyo, conduct all religious exercises and publish all documents in the native languages, and emphasize those traits that are important to the host culture. Clarke, for example, notes that SGI practices in the United States that appeal to many American members are "the absence of moralizing, the stress on individual choice and the need to take responsibility for one's own actions."[17]

My research on SGI members in Canada, the United States and throughout Southeast Asia indicates that the Soka Gakkai attracts followers because of what they perceive to be its strong message of peace, happiness, success, and self-empowerment. Many adherents interviewed or surveyed by this writer believe that the Buddhism espoused by the Soka Gakkai gives them some degree of empowerment over their personal environments, that through their hard work and devout practice they can overcome their suffering

---

any political involvement, have kept a very low profile, and have on occasion cooperated with local and even national bodies on a variety of projects. The mayor of Rotorura, New Zealand, Grahame Hall in an April 2003 interview told me that he highly respects SGI because of its many meaningful contributions to his community, including a small peace garden.

15. Bouma et al., p. 74-76.

16. According to figures provided by the SGI office in Tokyo in 2002, there are over two million members in over 200 foreign chapters including 700,000 to one million in Korea, and many thousands in many Southeast Asian countries including Malaysia and Hong Kong (40,000+ in each), Thailand, the Philippines, and Singapore. There are perhaps 150-200,000 members in both the United States and Brazil and 5,000+ in Canada.

It is difficult to determine the accuracy of these SGI-generated estimates. Various surveys of SGI USA by independent scholars suggest an American-based membership of 50,000-100,000 members; and when I questioned an SGI leader in Quebec about membership figures for Canada, he said that national membership was closer to 3,000 than 5,000.

17. Clarke, p. 281.

and find happiness here and now. They also find great satisfaction and a sense of community joining with other people who follow the same faith. The practice of having small groups of members meet together regularly to pray, discuss personal and mutual concerns, and socialize as close friends is an important social reason for the success of the Soka Gakkai not only in Japan, but abroad as well.[18]

Many of the younger SGI members in these countries are also very well educated. I was especially impressed by the large number of well-educated, upwardly mobile, ethnic Chinese members I met in Malaysia, Singapore, New Zealand, and Australia. There seems to exist a strong affinity between a religious dogma that emphasizes "mental work" (attitudes and individual focus) and the well educated who have to work very hard to attain their educational credentials. This phenomenon may well explain why this form of Buddhism is attractive to this particular social stratum and also helps address why the Japanese origin of the Soka Gakkai does not seem to matter very much to these non-Japanese converts.[19]

The Soka Gakkai in Australia The Soka Gakkai organization in Australia is one of several Buddhist organizations in Australia that follows one distinct school of Buddhism and has a multi-ethnic membership.[20] SGIA traces its origins to May 13, 1964 when a visit to Australia by Ikeda Daisaku encouraged a handful of Japanese resident members and white Australians to form a Melbourne chapter. The first leader, Dr. Tom Teitei, worked vigorously to organize the first chapters and to mold a national organization. By May 2003 there were between 2500 and 3000 members from an estimated fifty different ethnic groups spread over the major urban areas of the country.[21] The movement grew slowly in the mid-1960s

18. Clarke, p. 285.

19. This interpretation is bolstered by the work of Hammond and Machacek in the United States, and Wilson and Dobbelaere in Great Britain. Their studies related the growth of SGI in these countries to value shifts associated with growing economic well-being. In short, the idea, drawn from other cross-national studies of value change in advanced industrial societies, is that as economic security rises, so does the population's desire for intangible rewards such as happiness, self-fulfillment, and aesthetic pleasure.

20. This writer wishes to thank Mary Baldwin College Professor Brian Lowe, who has studied practitioners of Zen Buddhism in Canada, for help in developing this hypothesis.

21. The SGIA head office states that there are at least fifty ethnic groups among its members.

and through the late 1970s its largely white and ethnic Japanese membership remained small, but it grew more rapidly in the 1980s and 1990s and early 2000s when many younger ethnic Chinese immigrants and smaller numbers of Indians and Koreans joined the movement. SGIA has won and lost many members over the years, but overall membership continues to grow.

SGIA, like most other SGI chapters outside of Japan, is fairly autonomous in the management of its own day-to-day affairs, but it maintains strong links with the Soka Gakkai in Japan and is fairly responsive to requests from the Tokyo office for changes in ritual practices and the like. SGIA is fully responsible for selecting its own leaders and raising its own funds for day-to-day operations. While there were two paid employees who managed the head SGIA office in Sydney, all other leaders worked on a voluntary basis while pursuing their own careers outside of the movement. A major financial gift from Tokyo facilitated the construction of the Sydney Community Center a few years ago, but SGIA administers its activities and facilities and publishes its own journals on the roughly $US 180-190,000 it raises each year from member contributions.[22]

There is considerable communication between SGIA and the SGI Tokyo office. SGI sends study materials for foreign chapters to include in their various local publications, and once in a while an SGI leader from Japan will make a brief courtesy visit. SGIA General Director Hans van der Bent and Vice Director Yong Foo often attend meetings and SGI festivals and workshops in Japan and elsewhere in Tokyo, but they are responsible for providing organizational leadership and guidance for SGIA members.

Today more than two-thirds of SGIA members and well over 80 percent of younger faithful are ethnic Asians originating from Chinese communities in Southeast Asia and Hong Kong, as well as native immigrants from Japan, Korea, and India.[23] Our research indicates that SGIA has developed strong roots in a number

22. Growth has always been glacial. Membership levels did not reach 1,000 until the late 1980s, but accelerated somewhat to hit 2000 in 1999 and to exceed 2500 in 2002. These figures were provided upon request by the SGIA head office in Sydney.

23. Interview with General Director Hans van der Bent in Sydney, 26 July 2002.

of communities nationwide and the prognosis for its gradual expansion and long-term survival seems good.

Through our research we determined that the appeal of SGIA and its particular demographic makeup appear to result from its combination of an individualistic ethic and its emphasis on a family-like community. Other factors helping SGIA grow include its ability to offer its growing Asian membership an opportunity to be together with other Asians and the chance for members, through conversion to Buddhism, to reestablish a viable connection with their Asian heritage.

The results of our surveys and interviews often paralleled findings of other recent research done on SGI in Great Britain, the United States, and Canada.[24] The major difference between SGI in Australia and New Zealand was the fact that the membership there has become largely Asian while chapters in the United States, Britain, and Canada have a much broader ethnic mix that include many Blacks and people from Central and South America and the Caribbean as well as Asian and Caucasian members.

SGIA as a Representative Buddhist Group in Australia Australia offers a rich diversity of Buddhist sects and temples. There are now more than ninety Buddhist temples and organizations in New South Wales, sixty-five of them in Sydney. There are numerous Zen, Tibetan, Vietnamese, and other Buddhist denominations throughout Australia. Arapidly growing Taiwanese-based sect, Fokuangshan, has temples in Brisbane, Melbourne, and Perth, as well as a huge temple-complex near Wollongong.[25]

---

24. Interview with Yong Foo, SGIA leader, in Sydney, 2 May, 2003.

25. See Bryan Wilson and Karel Dobbelaere. 1994. A Time to Chant: The Soka Gakkai Buddhists in Britain. Oxford: Clarendon Press; Phillip Hammond and David Machacek. 1994. Soka Gakkai in America: Accommodation and Conversion. Oxford: Oxford University Press; David Machacek and Bryan Wilson, (eds.). 2000. Global Citizens: The Soka Gakkai Buddhist Movement in the World. Oxford: Oxford University Press; Daniel Metraux. 1996. The Lotus and the Maple Leaf: The Soka Gakkai Buddhist Movement in Canada. New York: University Press of America, and Daniel Metraux. 1997. The Soka Gakkai Buddhist Movement in Quebec. New York and London: The Edwin Mellen Press, and Daniel Metraux. 2001. The International Expansion of a Modern Buddhist Movement: The Soka Gakkai in Southeast Asia and Australia. New York: University Press of America.

While SGIA represents only a small segment of Australia's overall Buddhist population, the composition of the Soka Gakkai closely resembles that of the overall Buddhist profile in Australia, especially in terms of age (relative youth) and European-Asian membership distribution.

There were very few Buddhists in the 1960s and early 1970s and the proportion of active white Australian Buddhists to the whole Buddhist population reflects the small size of SGI and its general membership profile of the same period. SGIA's growth in the late 1970s and during the 1980s paralleled the modest increase in the number of Buddhists in Australia overall. The numbers of Buddhists and SGIA members accelerated in the early and mid-1990s and moved up even faster in the late 1990s and early 2000s.[26]

While Buddhists currently constitute only about two percent of the total Australian population today, their numbers are growing rapidly. From the 1980s until the present, immigration from Southeast Asia has been a key factor in the growth of Buddhism in Australia. By 2001, Buddhists had reached 360 000 or 1.91 percent of the population. This represents an increase in number of 158 000 in the five years since the 1996 Census, and an increase of 0.78 percent as a proportion of the total population. Thus, despite fluctuation in the early years, Buddhism is now the fastest growing religion in Australia. Many people of an Anglo-Celtic origin have shown interest in Buddhism. A survey in 1998 found that 11.5 percent of the Australian adult population had practiced a form of Eastern meditation in the last twelve months. However, comparatively few convert to Buddhism, adopting it as their religion and identifying themselves as Buddhist, according to the Census. In the 2001 Census, just under 28 000 of the total 358 000 Buddhists were Australians born of Australian parents.[27]

Buddhism has developed a very favorable and respected

26. Also Darren Nelson, "Why is Buddhism the fastest growing religion in Australia?" Available at: http://www.buddhanet.net/whybudoz.htm

27. For a broad overview of Buddhism in Australia, see Paul Croucher. 1989. A History of Buddhism in Australia 1848-1988. Kensington, NSW: New South Wales University Press. For more recent developments, see Michelle Spuler. 2003. Developments in Australian Buddhism: Facets of the Diamond. London: Routledge Curzon.

position in many Western countries, including Australia, in recent decades. Thus, when Australia opened itself to Asian immigration in the early 1970s, it is not surprising that many immigrants would bring their Buddhism with them and that they would attract some attention from white Australians. Particularly interesting is the number of second generation Asians who were born in Australia or who immigrated there as young children, who have adopted Buddhism. Their interest in Buddhism may be a part of their efforts to learn about and identify with their native cultures.[28] We found a parallel phenomenon in SGIA, wherein many younger members came from a family background that was largely Buddhist, but where the members themselves had expressed very little interest in organized religion before joining SGIA.

Recent censuses in Australia indicate that more than 70 percent of Australian Buddhists were born outside Asia, the majority in Vietnam. Less than 20 percent of Australian Buddhists were born in Australia, and even here a quarter belongs to the second generation of Asian immigrants. Many of the early waves of Asian Australians came from Vietnam, but there were also considerable numbers of ethnic Chinese from Hong Kong, Malaysia, Taiwan, and Singapore as well as immigrants from main land China, the Philippines, India, South Korea, and Cambodia.[29] The largest single ethnic group was Vietnamese, who comprise nearly one-third of Buddhists in Australia. Ethnic Chinese Buddhists came to Australia from many places including Malaysia, Hong Kong, Taiwan, main land China, and Singapore. There was a smaller group of Buddhists from Theravada countries like Sri Lanka, Burma, and Thailand. A handful of Tibetan Buddhist immigrants attracted a number of Anglo-Australians who found appeal in the mystique of the Vajrayana tradition.[30] Throughout the 1990s approximately 17 percent of Asian immigrants to Australia thought of themselves as Buddhist.[31]

28. Source: Christian Research Association of Australia. 2003. "Buddhism: Change Over Time." Available at: http://www.cra.org.au/pages/00000227.cgi

29. Source: Interview with Dr. Judith Snodgrass, a noted scholar on Buddhism in Australia, in Sydney 1 August, 2002.

30. Coughland and McNamara, p. 53. Also Darren Nelson, "Why is Buddhism the fastest growing religion in Australia?" Available at: http://www.buddhanet.net/whybudoz.htm

31. Adams and Hughes, p. 11.

Since most immigrants arrived in Australia between the ages of twenty and forty, a huge majority of Australia's Buddhists were in their twenties, thirties, and early forties (Adam and Hughes, 49). Well over 80 percent of Buddhists residing in Australia in 1991 were born elsewhere in Asia and had immigrated to Australia from their native lands. Only four percent of Australia's Buddhists were Australian-born and had both parents Australian-born, a further indication that most of Australia's Buddhists were ethnic Asians.

There are about 170 different Buddhist groups in Australia, representing all the major schools of Buddhism. Most of these groups are considered "ethnic" as their members are drawn from one of the major Asian communities. There are other generally quite small groups whose members are Anglo-Australian and are more interested in a general form of Buddhism rather than in any specific sect.[32]

One can thus reasonably conclude that much of the startling growth in the number of people practicing Buddhism since the 1970s can be attributed to the huge influx of Asians from Southeast Asia and, as Judith Snodgrass has discovered, a strong revival of interest in Buddhism by second-generation Asians or in a few cases young Asians who, having arrived in Australia with no strong religious ties, became interested in Buddhism as a way of identifying with their Asian heritage.[33] The percentage of European Australians who claimed Buddhist ties before Asian immigration began in earnest in the 1970s was quite high, but their percentage dropped to well below 10 percent by 1991 because of the major influx of ethnic Asian Buddhists.[34]

SGIA in some respects fits the pattern of at least some of the other Buddhist groups in Australia. Its increasingly Asian membership parallels the profile of other Australian Buddhists as does its general age range. Most Soka Gakkai members are in their twenties, thirties, and forties and an increasing number were born in other Asian countries and immigrated to Australia either as temporary

32. Coughlan and McNamara, p. 308.

33. Bucknell, p. 468.

34. Snodgrass interview, op. cit.

residents — in many cases as students — or to establish long-term or permanent residency. Very few of SGIA's younger followers were born in Australia and have two parents who are also Australian-born. Some younger SGIA faithful were already members in their native lands — often Malaysia, Singapore, or Hong Kong — while others came with no particular faith and adopted SGI Buddhism after their arrival.

There are, however, some factors that make SGIA rather distinct. SGIA is a very broad, multi-ethnic movement. There is an important though proportionally declining white Australian membership and a growing ethnic Chinese component from Malaysia and elsewhere in Southeast Asia, but other ethnic groups also have healthy representation, including a fair number of ethnic Japanese (about 20 percent), Koreans (about 5 percent), and Indian members (about 5 percent).

Demographics of SGIA Membership Our surveys and interviews of SGIA leaders and members in 2000, 2002, and 2003 indicated a stable and tightly knit organization which appeared more interested in the welfare of its members and the building of a healthy Buddhist community than in indiscriminately signing up members whose interest or faith was only superficial. A person is considered for membership after he or she regularly attends several meetings over a period of several months, shows genuine interest in the movement, and has studied the basic teachings and philosophy of Nichiren Buddhism. The emphasis on conversion through dialogue has meant that many new members were converted by family members and, to a lesser extent, by close friends. This development in turn has meant slow steady growth, but also less turnover of membership.

Our surveys indicated that SGIA is a largely family-oriented movement. Two-thirds of all members and three-quarters of young members had other close family members in the movement. While just over half of older members were the first members of their family to join SGIA, close to three-quarters of younger members had other members of their family in the organization when they joined. Just over half of older members were introduced to SGIA by other family members, compared to about three-quarters of younger members. Other members were introduced by close

friends. Only a tiny handful were introduced by work colleagues, fellow students, or strangers.

Overall, there are three female members to every two males in SGI. The female-male ratio is slightly higher among older members (those in their thirties and above) than among younger faithful (twenties and very early thirties). Surveyed SGIA members were also overwhelmingly urban.

More than half of those surveyed lived in suburbs of large cities while another quarter lived within big cities. Slightly more than 10 percent lived in or near medium sized cities while another ten percent resided in small towns or rural areas.

Although SGIA members who joined in the 1960s and 1970s recounted that during the early years of the SGIA, members tended to be older with a roughly even ratio between European and Asian (largely Japanese) members, today the demographic picture has changed markedly. While ethnic Japanese dominated the Asian membership in the early days of SGIA, today they constitute less than one-quarter of the Asian group. Slightly less than two-thirds of Asians are ethnic Chinese with much smaller groupings of Korean, Indian, and other Southeast Asian members. This trend toward larger proportions of Asian members is in contrast to patterns in Soka Gakkai chapters in the United States, Canada, and Great Britain, where Asian members are decreasing as a proportion of the membership, and younger members tend more to resemble the population as a whole in terms of ethnic diversity.[35]

Another important factor is that SGIA members tended to be very well educated. Older members in their thirties and forties were evenly divided between high school and university graduates, but younger members in their twenties or very early thirties were in general better educated. Well over half of the younger group said that they were university graduates, and another quarter said that they were pursuing a university degree. About 10 percent of the younger members said that they had or intended to receive some form of graduate degree.

35. Adams and Hughes, p. 40-50.

SGIA members are employed in a very diverse range of jobs and professions. A vast majority of older members were employed or self-employed, but there were also a few who had gone back to school or who were retired on a pension. There were large groups of nurses and other health care professionals, public servants, people involved in business and the financial sector, teachers at all levels, artists and musicians, secretaries, pharmacists, as well as self-employed business owners, computer specialists, and journalists. A number of the older members were back in school to complete either their undergraduate or graduate degree. Younger members included about a third still attending a university. Younger members no longer in school worked in a wide variety of jobs, but a higher percentage were involved in white-collar professions or the arts than older members. About ten percent of older members were full-time homemakers, but there were virtually none among younger members.

Roughly two-thirds of the older members were married or living with a full-time partner, while a quarter were single. Only a tiny handful had been divorced, widowed, or separated. On the other hand, about two-thirds of younger members in their twenties and early thirties were still single, with the rest either married or living with a partner. Less than ten percent were divorced or separated.

Only a minority of current SGIA members (40 percent) had any formal religious affiliation before they became members (60 percent Christian, 25 percent Buddhist, 7 percent Taoist and 7 percent Hindu), and only about 15 percent were highly committed to another religion. A third of those surveyed — including roughly a quarter of Caucasian members — had actively practiced another form of Buddhism or another East Asian faith at some point of their lives prior to joining SGI.

Another interesting find is the affiliation with and concerns about Japan by most members. Only about a third of members surveyed said that they had been persuaded to join or sponsored by an ethnic Japanese member — and most of these were themselves Japanese. The rest had been converted or sponsored by a non-ethnic Japanese member.

When asked if they had any particular interest in any aspect of

Japanese culture, only about half replied in the affirmative. Clearly, most SGIA members were not practicing this religion because of its particular affiliation with Japan.

Explanations for Patterns of Membership While SGIA originated from a Japan-based movement, most members were attracted by the fact that it was a Buddhist movement whose members appeared to be very happy and successful in their lives and whose organization exuded a sense of warmth, harmony, and a welcoming spirit to new members. A young Caucasian member noted, "SGIA is indeed a Buddhist movement from Japan, but its message and appeal is universal. I have become a Buddhist, not a follower of Japanese Buddhism."

Another probable source of SGIA's appeal, especially to the movement's increasingly Asian younger membership, is the fact that SGIA offered a place to socialize with other Asians, even if from different countries.

They could join in activities with other young people from their country or culture and develop a social base in a nation with a very different culture. SGIA membership also provided the opportunity to become acquainted with people from other cultures, including some Caucasian Australians. SGIA has demonstrated a general pattern of outsiders — immigrants, minorities, gays and lesbians — finding welcome, acceptance, and community.

Conversations with several ethnic Chinese SGI members from Malaysia and Singapore members in May 2003 revealed that while Soka Gakkai Buddhism was an important reason for joining, the social factor was critically important as well. Coming to Australia for school or a job offered a real opportunity for them to advance in life, but they had to sacrifice ties back home with friends and family. If they had Malaysian or Singaporean friends or heard of a place where they could meet fellow countrymen, they would certainly take advantage of these opportunities.

Since a number of now middle-aged ethnic Chinese SGI members from these and other Southeast Asian countries had joined SGIA, thus forming a solid group of members in SGIA, it is not surprising that other immigrants from these countries would

become familiar not only with these SGIA members, but also with the organization itself. Southeast Asian ethnic Chinese membership thus began to mushroom at a rapidly accelerating rate.

Conversion to Buddhism, for some, appeared to be a means of reconnecting with an Asian heritage. This hypothesis is supported by the fact that less than half of current membership had any formal religious affiliation before they became members, and only a third of those surveyed had actively practiced another form of Buddhism or another East Asian faith prior to joining SGI. I found a very similar phenomenon in New Zealand and in Canada (Quebec), which are also countries with rapidly growing Asian immigrant populations.[36]

Based on our interviews we discovered that SGIA meetings had what could be described as a therapeutic effect on some members.[37] Many surveyed members insisted that SGIA provided for both their religious and social needs, functioning as a support group in times of need and as the basis for a social outing. It offered a ready-made community center for the newcomer and a magnet for somebody seeking greater happiness in life. Members told us that there was something missing in their lives or that they were sad, lonely or depressed. A friend or family member suggested that they attend an SGIA meeting at a cultural center or at a member's home. The newcomer was soon attracted by the warm sense of "family" or "community" along with other members' recollections of how miserable their lives were before joining, and testimonies of how they had found true happiness in life as Buddhists, after chanting regularly, and becoming a devout member. One member noted: "What appeals to me most about SGIA is the idea of Buddhism in action — a spiritual family chanting, studying and working for others at a local level — being there for family, friends, strangers,

36. Another indication of the Asian origin of most SGIA members is that only a third of surveyed members had heard of the Soka Gakkai for the first time in Australia and only about 45 percent first joined SGIA while living in Australia. The vast majority of the faithful joining outside Australia received their formal membership in Malaysia (40 percent) or Japan (37 percent).

37. SGI in New Zealand, like Australia, started with a small white and ethnic Japanese membership, but today has a rapidly growing and youthful ethnic Asian (mainly Chinese) membership. While SGI has a rapidly growing ethnic Asian membership, its overall membership is far more diverse and less Asian than its counterparts in Australia and New Zealand.

different cultural groups and the environment — and globally when we deal with the wider issues that grow from our work at home such as world peace, education, and eliminating poverty."

This sense of community was very important for Australian members. The fact that many members found SGIA to be an open, tolerant, and caring community was especially important for immigrants new to Australian life. SGIA provided a ready-made community containing a diverse group of white Australians and Asian Australians from virtually every region or country who could extend a welcoming hand to a newcomer from Malaysia, Korea, Hong Kong, or Japan who may not have had any roots in the community. Newcomers are very welcome and very often find SGIA to be their port of entry into and social base in Australian society. I met a number of Asian exchange students whose initial contact with SGIA was with active members from their city or country. It is also interesting to note that SGIA today attracts a small but growing number of openly gay members because they feel that they are accepted and treated well by fellow members.[38]

Our surveys and interviews indicated that at least some of these members were attracted to SGIA because of the movement's doctrine that members need to take responsibility for their own lives and circumstances. They felt that the movement gave them control over their own destinies so that they could create their own happiness in life. They felt motivated by SGI leaders and study materials that told them that they can readily advance in life through their own hard work, strong faith, and discipline. I found this factor to be an important part of SGIA's appeal to white-collar professionals not only in Australia, but also in other areas where I have researched SGI chapters.

A key ingredient of SGIA success has been its ability to maximize lay participation and its ability to work as a lay religious movement. The decline in the credibility of organized religions and

38. A large proportion of members we contacted stated that a strong sense of camaraderie and community initially attracted them to the Soka Gakkai and its form of Buddhism. SGIA became an important base for friendship, community caring, and mutual help for many members, a critical reason for their joining the movement as well as for SGIA's long term growth.

increased debate over the very existence of an anthropomorphic deity have opened the way for religious organizations such as SGIA, organizations that insist that each member has a strong responsibility not only for his destiny, but also that of his fellow members.

Members were virtually unanimous in expressing that the quality of their lives had greatly improved after joining SGIA. Most said that they had become calmer, more self-confident, and happier in their work and in relationships with family, friends, and colleagues. Significant numbers related that they had become more optimistic and were better able to make clear and informed decisions about their lives. Virtually everybody surveyed said that they had they had chanted to realize a particular goal or set of goals and that they had achieved many desired results.[39]

It is also important to note that joining SGIA, while a major commitment of Buddhist faith, does not preclude the average member from leading a very ordinary Australian life. Membership does require some degree of commitment and service to the organization, but in most cases not enough to significantly affect one's social and professional life outside the movement. Indeed, the general proportion of a member's life devoted to SGIA does not seem that much different from that of members of my own church in Virginia. According to our survey, the average SGIA member attends about one meeting a week and a significant number attend two, though more active members might attend more. And, as Hammond and Machacek noted about SGI-USA members, those

39. Concerning gay members, an SGIA leader noted: "The Soka Gakkai in Australia has high tolerance for gays — we are very open to gays because of high respect for human values. There is a strong homophobic tendency in Southeast Asian culture and homophobia was once very evident in SGIA, but we are becoming more open and tolerant in the eyes of more members. People of all stripes find release and peace through chanting and as Buddhists we honestly see all people as being equal."

While this statement represents an ideal, several gay members told us that they feel at home in SGIA because of its increasingly tolerant and open atmosphere. A middle-aged ethnic Chinese Malaysian member noted in 2003:

"I left Malaysia nearly 20 years ago because there is a lack of tolerance for gays. Since I was already an SGI member, I joined SGIA and have stayed with the movement because I am accepted for who and what I am. I also enjoy the fact that I can practice my religion with my compatriots."

who joined the movement "had to give up very little of their former way of life. Conversion, apart from learning to chant, entailed only minor behavioral change; whatever tension converts experienced because of their decision to join Soka Gakkai was therefore minimized."[40] Based on our own observations, much about SGIA resembled SGI-USA in this sense at least. SGIA membership was also not very disruptive in terms of members' everyday activities. Most maintained some close friendships with non-members and had jobs and careers not at all related to SGIA.

Another factor that enhanced a stable membership is that most SGIA members simply did not have to endure the social criticism from family, friends, and colleagues that their counterparts in Japan often experience. The Soka Gakkai in Japan is a high profile multi-million member movement that is deeply involved in politics and a variety of other social programs. By contrast, many Japanese have regarded the Soka Gakkai as an extreme movement, and many members have told me that they have suffered from the criticism of family or peers. Since SGIA is quite small and not well known in Australian society, very few members have experienced any criticism at all.

CONCLUSION

Soka Gakkai is able to overcome its Japanese-based cultural baggage because its members in Australia believe that its core teachings are highly relevant to the world they live in today. They find that this religion helps them fulfill their spiritual needs and that they can "maximize their potential" through this practice. Many SGIA members state emphatically that this practice helps them increase their "creative energy" and allows them to contribute to the realization of such ideals as world peace.

Their greatest achievement, however, is the discovery of what they feel is the Buddha-nature inside themselves. They feel that this find is a common element they share with all citizens of the world

40. A vast majority of members also reported that they had also at least once chanted for a goal that had not been realized. Their explanations for these failures included the notion that the goals were unrealistic (like winning the lottery or saving a clearly doomed relationship), the timing was poor, or that they had not chanted with enough enthusiasm or sincerity.

and that this is what makes SGI a truly global movement without any particular ties to any culture. Many SGIA members relate how their religion helps them to remove the "shackles" which they believe restricted their worldview in the past. They feel that they have moved away from a very parochial way of life to a perception that they are global citizens on a quest to realize world peace. They see their Buddhism as the key to the creation of a cleaner, greener, safer, and more peaceful planet.

SGIA members also find solace in the fact that their religion gives them the opportunity to partake in activities in a highly conducive community of like-minded people. Younger Asian members in both countries, mainly in their twenties and thirties, find comfort in the company of other compatriots and in the practice of a religion (Buddhism) that was important to their parents and grandparents, but which many of them were not active in prior to joining SGIA.

Soka Gakkai Buddhism has succeeded in shedding enough of its purely Japanese elements and has enhanced enough universalistic qualities to develop at least a small following in countries like Australia and Canada and tens of thousands of members in places like South Korea and the United States. Members appreciate the universalistic message of the Soka Gakkai and have accepted those aspects they consider to be essential to Soka Gakkai Buddhism, including basic teachings, language of prayer, and its organizational structure. SGI has made enough adaptations to local cultures, such as the creation of separate French and English-language meeting groups in Quebec, to reduce complaints that the movement is "too Japanese" or "too Asian" in its orientation. This flexibility will probably allow SGI to continue its growth on a global scale in years to come.

One scholar familiar with my research on Soka Gakkai in Australia has raised an interesting question: It seems that Soka Gakkai (in Australia) attracts mainly non-Japanese Asians, and while it manages to get rid of (some of) its Japanese characteristics, it does not get rid of its Asian ones. The group transcends its national boundaries, but not the regional ones (Asia). Can we argue that it is a 'pure' Global Religion?

One may answer this question from several perspectives. In the case of Australia, the fact that so many younger members are non-Japanese Asians may well stem from the fact that the SGI has large chapters (20-40,000+ members) in Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines, Taiwan, Korea, and Hong Kong. Most members there are also young, middle-class, well educated, and quite cosmopolitan in their outlook. Many of them are eager to study or work abroad or just visit another culture; Australia and New Zealand are attractive destinations for all of these purposes. They have gone to these countries in great numbers and quite naturally join SGIA. Other Asians seeking contacts with their countrymen also attend SGIA meetings and may also join the movement.

I have corresponded with Professor David Machacek concerning his research on SGI in the United States and my work in Australia, New Zealand (43), and Canada. We both find the preponderance of Asian members in Australia and New Zealand to be at variance with our findings in North America and other researchers' findings in Britain and Germany. Ethnic Asian membership represents a considerable minority in the United States and Canada and a small minority in Quebec (and none at all in Quebec City). Similar results are to be found in Europe.

One can probably conclude that the large Asian SGI membership in Australia and New Zealand is probably unique to these countries, and that SGI membership elsewhere includes a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, with the host culture providing a large share of the membership — as is the case in Quebec. This finding can lead one to the general conclusion that SGI is becoming a religion on a global scale with broad appeal.

***

Bibliography

Adam, Enid and Philip J. Hughes. 1996. *The Buddhists in Australia*. Canberra: Australia Government Publishing Service.

Befu, Harumi. 2002. "Preface" and "The Global Context of Japan Outside Japan," in Globalizing Japan: Ethnography of the Japanese Presence in Asia, Europe and America, eds. Harumi Befu and Sylvie Guichard-Anguis. London and New York: Routledge, xix-xxi and 3-21.

Bouma, Gary D. 1992. Religion: Meaning, Transcendence and Community in Australia. Melbourne: Longman Cheshire.

Bouma, Gary D., Wendy Smith and Shiva Vasi. 2000. "Japanese Religion in Australia: Mahikari and Zen in a Multicultural Society," in Japanese New Religions in Global Perspective, ed. Peter Clarke. Richmond, Surrey, UK: Curzon Press, 74-112.

Bucknell, Roderick S. 2000. "Engaged Buddhism in Australia," in Engaged Buddhism in the West, ed. Christopher S. Queen. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 468-484.

Burke, Kelly. 2002. "While Christianity Declines, Buddhism Grows Rapidly" in The Sydney Morning Herald, 18 June 2002, 1.

Clarke, Peter B. 2002. "Success and 'Failure': Japanese New Religions Abroad," in Japanese New Religions in Global Perspective, ed. Peter Clarke. Richmond, Surrey, UK: Curzon Press, 272-311.

Cornille, Catherine. 2000. "New Japanese Religions in the West: Between Nationalism and Universalism," in Japanese New Religions in Global Perspective, ed. Peter Clark. Richmond, Surrey, UK: Curzon Press, 10-33.

Coughlan, James E. and Deborah J. McNamara, eds. 1997. Asians in Australia: Patterns of Migration and Settlement. South Melbourne: MacMillan Education Australia.

Croucher, Paul. 1989. A History of Buddhism in Australia 1848-1988. Kensington, NSW: New South Wales University Press.

Hammond, Phillip and David Machacek. 1998. Soka Gakkai in

America: Accommodation and Conversion. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ionescu, Sandra. 2000. "Adapt or Perish: The Story of Soka Gakkai in Germany," in Japanese New Religions in Global Perspective, ed. Peter Clarke. Richmond, Surrey, UK: Curzon Press, 182-197.

Machacek, David and Bryan Wilson, eds. 2000. Global Citizens: The Soka Gakkai Buddhist Movement in the World. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Metraux, Daniel. 2001 The International Expansion of a Modern Buddhist Movement: The Soka Gakkai in Southeast Asia and Australia. New York: University Press of America.

_____. 1996. The Lotus and the Maple Leaf: The Soka Gakkai Buddhist Movement in Canada. New York: University Press of America.

_____. 1997. The Soka Gakkai Buddhist Movement in Quebec: The Lotus and the Fleur de Lys. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press.

"Religion in Australia, 1996 Census." Available at: http://www.adherents. com/loc/loc_aus tralia.html

Seager, Richard Hughes. 2001. "Soka Gakkai — The Next Ten Years," in Tricycle, 11,3, 94-97.

Spuler, Michelle. 2003. Developments in Australian Buddhism: Facets of the Diamond. London: Routledge Curzon.

ARGENTINA

THE DIVERSITY OF BUDDHISM IN ARGENTINA*

by Caton Carini**

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this work is to account for the presence and diversity of Argentinian Buddhism by examining its history and the main social-cultural features of this religion's associated centers. In this way we hope to contribute to the knowledge of the dispersion of Buddhism in the West.

Although exact data on the number of Buddhists is missing, we estimate there are 30 thousand adherents. This means that, in Argentina, with a population of over 40 million inhabitants, Buddhism barely attains 0.08% of the population. However, it has undergone exponential growth, especially during Argentina's democratization period in the mid 1980's. In our case, the pluralizing of the religious sphere in recent decades manifests itself in the establishment of more than 80 Buddhist centers, attracting new members and occupying spaces previously monopolized by Catholicism.

Before the actual formation of institutionalized Buddhist groups this religion was initially characterized by an intellectual appropriation of its doctrine and worldview, outside any institutional con-

*. This article is an abbreviated and modified version of a paper published in the Encyclopedia of Latin American Religions (Berlin: Springer, 2015).

**. National Council of Scientific and Technical Research (CONICET), University of La Plata (UNLP), Argentina.

text, ritual or practice. Considered an oriental jewel which philosophers and the western literary set must rescue, it is Buddhism as "a text without context" (Baumann 2001). After this textual appropriation of Buddhism, a sector of Argentinean society became familiar with notions like illumination, satori, meditation, karma and nirvana, simultaneously becoming interested in this religion as a potential way of life. All this laid the foundations for the development of institutions for Buddhist teachings and practice in the country. In the mid 1980's things moved from a textual to a contextual stage of Buddhism, in which text (its philosophy and psychology) is inserted in matrixes composed of languages, practices, rituals and various paths of development.

As in other western countries where Buddhism is established, the religion can be subdivided into two main tendencies. The first is ethnic or immigrant Buddhism, composed of people of Asian origin or their descendents, who total approximately 5000. The second is convert Buddhism, whose membership of 25,000 followers, mainly comprises individuals with no oriental background. We will now explore the history and main features of the ethnic Buddhism institutions.

ARGENTINEAN ETHNIC BUDDHISM

Ethnic Buddhism is linked to immigration waves coming from Japan, China, Taiwan and Korea taking place in the 20th and 21st centuries (Carruitero 2012). Although the number of immigrants from the aforementioned countries totals 150,000, the majority did not practice Buddhism. However, those who did, founded the institutions we are about to describe.

The 1980's was marked by a significant Taiwanese immigration wave followed by a Chinese. In 1985, the Buddhist segment of these immigrants created the Asociación Budista China en la Argentina. Master Pu Hsien arrived from Taiwan in 1988 and founded the Tzon Kuan temple, situated in Buenos Aires' Chinatown. The congregation of about 550 is mainly of Taiwanese or Chinese origin, but there is a small number of non-oriental Argentineans who attend the community's ceremonies, celebrations, meditation sessions, text study and master Pu Hsien's lectures (Giannattasio 2003a).

Another institution linked to Chinese immigration is the Buddhist Monastery Fo Guang Shan, established in 1992 with master Hsing Yun's visit. His aim was to provide religious support and traditional ceremonies for the Chinese and Taiwanese communities' Buddhists. Chueh Kae, the current master of the Argentinean headquarters made his mark by opening this institution to Argentineans with no oriental ancestry interested in Buddhist philosophy. Alongside traditional ceremonies they teach courses in Buddhism, meditation, cuisine, martial arts, yoga and stretching.

Some Argentinean Japanese immigrants belong to Jodo Shinshu or Buddhism of the Pure Earth, founded in Japan by the monk Shinran Shonin in the 13th century. The school has its Honpa Hongwanji temple in Buenos Aires, led by a monk trained in Japan, a group of 500, which is mainly frequented by Japanese immigrants and their descendents. One of the main motives for the establishment of this religion in Buenos Aires in the 1970's was the need to gather the remains of the Japanese deceased on Argentinean soil in a single location in order to officiate the funeral rites according to Buddhist tradition (Di Risio e Irazabal 2003).

Korean Zen, which arrived together with the South Korean immigration wave in the 1980's, completes the panorama of local ethnic Buddhism. The Zen school Han Ma Um, whose spiritual leader is Master Tae Heng Se Nim, has centers in Korea the United States and Argentina. The local temple is placed in Buenos Aires and there is also a monastery in Tucuman province.

Another Buddhist centre of Korean origin is the Zen Koryosa temple, presided over by Zen masters Kyung Hyun Sunim and So Mok Sunim. In 2003 they founded the Argentinean Zen Buddhist Centre in Buenos Aires to advance the teaching and diffusion of the religion beyond the Korean immigrant community (Giannattasio e Irazabal 2003).

Although ethnic Buddhism consists of organizations linked to Asian Buddhist immigrants, in recent years it has manifested a dual character that includes Argentines with no oriental background. The mass celebration of Vesak (that commemorates the birth, enlightenment, and death of Gautama Buddha), which the Fo Guang

Shan monastery in Chinatown organizes on an annual basis not only provides proof of this dual membership, but also of the coexistence of both forms of approach to Buddhism.

ARGENTINEAN CONVERT BUDDHISM

Convert Buddhism is represented locally by four main traditions: Zen Buddhism, Tibetan, the Theravada and the Soka Gakkai. All these emerged in the last few decades of the 20th century. Their membership consists of middle or upper middle class Argentineans with no oriental background, who combine their participation in Buddhist groups with an urban secular lifestyle. Their backgrounds reveal a distancing from their inherited Catholicism and their passage through oriental groups and a wide range of disciplines linked to the New Age (yoga, reiki, martial arts and alternative therapies).

Japanese Zen Buddhism possesses seven institutions which boast around 5,000 adherents (Carini 2009, Carini 2012). One of these, the Serena Alegría ("Serene Happiness") temple, was founded by Ricardo Dokyu, an Argentinean interested in Zen, who traveled to Brazil in 1984 staying 18 months at Belo Horizonte's Zen Center and the Buddhist monastery Pico do Raios in Ouro Preto. He was ordained there in 1985 and returned to Argentina. He spent ten years in Japan training Zen from 1991 until his return in 2001. In 2002 he was given master recognition and began to spread Zen in his homeland. The group consists of around 50 adherents, several of whom have been ordained Zen monks.

The Zen group Dojo del Jardín ("Garden Dojo") came into being when the Argentinean Aurora Oshiro was allocated an area to practice Zen meditation in the Buenos Aires Japanese Garden (a public space administered by the non-profit Japanese Argentine Cultural Foundation and one of the largest gardens of its type in the World, outside of Japan) in 1987. A permanent membership core of 30 was formed and there was a large movement of new participants interested in trying meditation. In 2000 the group suffered an important setback, being evicted by the Japanese Garden's new administration. Its followers continued to meet in lent transitory locations. Now lacking the Japanese Garden link the center became known as "Zen del Sur" ("Southern Zen" or "Nanzenji"). Aurora

Oshiro lived ten years in Japan, obtained the title of Zen master and became her temple's leader. In 2005 she returned to Latin America and settled in Peru to be abbess of a Buddhist temple linked to Japanese immigrants. She occasionally visits Nanzenji.

Another group formed in the 1980's on the initiative of an Argentinean who traveled abroad to study Zen Buddhism is the Ermita de Paja ("Straw Hermit") led by Jorge Bustamante, a recognized master in his homeland. He became interested in Zen in the 1970's through the then available reading and motivated by this, traveled to France in 1984 to practice in the La Gendroniere temple, founded by Taisen Deshimaru, the charismatic master who introduced Soto in Europe and founded the International Zen Association (AZI). There he was ordained a monk and after his return in 1985 he formed a meditation group. He maintained his ties with the AZI until they were severed in 1994, due to differences with the leadership. The following year, Bustamante met his current master, Sama Tangen, who became the Ermita's figurehead. Bustamante's community possesses over a hundred non-oriental Argentinean members.

In 1995 a new group was formed linked to the Deshimaru Zen lineage led by the Frenchman Stéphane "Kosen" Thibaut, who performed missionary work in Argentina and other Latin American countries. At the beginning of the 1990's he split from the AZI and founded his own network of Zen centers in Europe. In the mid 1990's he began visiting Argentina, guiding meditation retreats and establishing the Latin American Zen Association. The organization is the biggest Zen group in the country, possessing over 20 dojos and a temple, Shobogenji, situated on Mount Uritorco in Córdoba province, besides several meditation groups in Chile, Uruguay, Bolivia and Cuba.

There are also two masters teaching in Argentina, who trained in Zen in the United States. The first is the Buddhist priest Seizan Feijoo, an Argentinean with no oriental background who lived in the United States for 40 years, studied Zen and was ordained in the Daihonzan Chozen-Ji temple in Hawaii with his master Hosokawa Sogen from the International Zen Dojo. On returning to Argentina in 2000 he established the Cambio Sutil (Subtle Change) center.

He currently runs this meditation group of around 30 people and organizes meditation sesshins in Christian retreat residences, lectures and seminars in which zen and karate are practiced. One of the features of the Zen Cambio Sutil center is that it belongs to the Zen Rinzai School, being the sole group of its kind in Argentina.

The second case of a United States Zen master is that of Augusto Alcalde, the impetus behind Diamond Sangha's first period in Argentina. Born in Cordoba, for 25 years he devoted himself to teaching Zen Buddhism to diverse groups formed during his religious leadership. It all stemmed from his interest in Zen Buddhism's development in the 1970's. He found a model in Robert Aitken, the renowned American master and founder of Diamond Sangha, to continue his study and teaching of Zen. In 1985, he organized the practice group "Sangha Vimalakirti". Aitken's visit to Argentina in 1989 was a landmark in Argentinean Buddhism's history, being the first time a Zen master of international renown had visited the country. Subsequently, the community would continue in activity for another decade. However, in 1999, Alcalde resigned as Diamond Sangha master and the local group disbanded (Carini 2013).

A few former students searched for a Diamond Sangha Zen master. Daniel Terragno, a master of Chilean origins with more than 40 years residence in the United States was invited. The ex-students invited him as he was the only Spanish speaking Diamond Sangha master and was closer culturally to the Argentineans. Since 1999, a new group has formed with old and new members. Diamond Sangha's presence acquired a new identity under the name of Viento del Sur (Southern Wind) and a new master. Terragno began to visit Argentina twice a year holding one-week sesshines in Cordoba province (in summer) and a Catholic spiritual residence in the Buenos Aires suburb of Florencia Varela (in winter). Viento del Sur is currently well established with 20 years of life and represents the culmination of Diamond Sangha's institutionalization in Argentina, a process which commenced almost 35 years ago with Sangha Vimalakirti (ibíd.).

Another Zen center locally led by a Spanish speaking foreigner is Zendo Betania, whose headquarters is in Spain. It dates back to 1929, when the Christian priest Hugo Enomiya-Lassalle was

sent as a missionary to Japan and began to study Zen with Harada Daiun. Later, he met the Catholic nun Ana María Schlüter Rodés, who, in 1985, after lengthy stays in Japan was granted permission to teach Zen in Spain. There she founded Zendo Betania. One of her disciples is Pedro Flores, a Zen master since 2002, who gives Zen introductory courses and sesshins in several Spanish cities. The group dates from 2003 when Flores commenced his annual visits to Argentina. The congregation consists of 50 members and their uniqueness lies in their style of Zen "for Christians" since they pronounce both creeds in their practices, rituals, representations and world view.

The Tibetan Buddhism groups established in recent decades show a great diversity, as each of the four big schools: Kagyu, Gelugpa, Sakya and Nyingma, are represented (Carini 2014). The Kagyu school of Tibetan Buddhism is the most important in Argentina with four local centers. The first is the Buddhist Center Camino del Diamante (Diamond Way) following the teachings of the Lama Ole Nydahl. This renowned Danish master traveled with his wife, Hannah, to the Himalayas in 1969, where he met the XVI Karmapa, Rangjung Rigpe Dorje, former leader of the Karma line of the Kagyu school. In 1972, after several years of study, he began to spread the Karma Kagyu tradition of Tibetan Buddhism worldwide. Nowadays about 600 Diamond Way centers are found in different countries and it is one of the main lay Buddhist organizations in the West. The local headquarters was established over 15 years ago in Buenos Aires downtown. In 2003, the Argentinean and Uruguayan communities acquired 57 hectares in the town of Villa Serrana, Uruguay, where they founded the Karma Dechen Ling retreat center. There, courses and meditational retreats run by the Lama Ole or one of his traveling masters are held.

Another group belonging to the Kagyu school (and Karma lineage) is the Kagyu Techen Choling institute, also known as Jardín del Budismo Mahayana (Mahayana Buddhist Garden). Founded in 1983 after renowned Lama Sherab Dorye visit to Argentina, this is the oldest Vajrayana organization in Argentina. The local resident masters are the Lama Sangye Dorye (Horacio Araujo) and Lama Rinchen Kandro (Consuelo Navarro Ocampo). Both studied

Buddhism in France in the 1980's and are direct disciples of Bokar Rinpoche and Kalu Rinpoche. The Kagyu Techen Choling institute functions in the Belgrano neighborhood, Buenos Aires and the town of San Andrés de Giles, 100 kilometres away, where there is a spiritual retreat center. The activities cover introductions to Buddhism, meditation for the new arrivals and rites peculiar to Vajrayana Buddhism for those who already took Buddhist vows. They offer classes in Tibetan language, seminars in Buddhist philosophy and Tibetan yoga.

As opposed to the previous two groups, the Dongyuling Center belongs to the Kagyu School's Drugpa line. Founded by the Lama Drubwang Dorzong Rinpoche and Lama Drugu Choegyal Rinpoche during their 1986 visit, its leader is Gerardo Abboud, an Argentinean who after graduating as an engineer in 1970 went to the Himalayas to study Buddhism for 14 years with notable Tibetan masters (including the XVI Karmapa). Abboud currently combines running Dongyuling with frequent trips working as a Spanish-English translator for many distinguished Tibetan lamas including the Dalai Lama. This group also functions in Belgrano neighborhood, holding meditation sessions followed by talks based on audience questions. Members perform their own Vajrayana rituals receiving personal guidance from Abboud. Similarly, since 1991, a Dongyuling center led by the Argentinean Michel Hanono has functioned in Bariloche, where a teaching and practice scheme akin to that of Buenos Aires exists. Furthermore, those responsible for the Dongyuling center supervised the building of two stupas. The first was consecrated in 1997 in the town of Tandil and the second in 2005 on Mount Otto, Bariloche.

Completing the local Kagyu school panorama is the Phuntsok Choling group, belonging to the Drikung lineage. Its leader is the Argentinean Jorge Luis Varela, whose religious name is Konchog Norbu. Formed in 2004, it boasts the Lama Khenpo (a spiritual degree) Phuntsok Tenzin Rinpoche's spiritual leadership. He is a Tibetan monk who in 1996 started running the Chilean Drikung centers. The center functions in an apartment in the Recoleta neighborhood of Buenos Aires and the activities include monthly courses on Buddhist philosophy, Vajrayana Buddhism ritual prac-

tices and retreats which the spiritual leader presides over on his occasional visits. Varela offers classes in Yoga and Tai Chi and also practices Chinese and Tibetan medicinal therapies.

The Gelugpa School (headed by the Dalai Lama) is present in Argentina through three different institutions. Firstly, the Argentine Buddhist Association established in 1999 by Osvaldo Puglisi, a Chan Buddhism, Taoism, and Kung Fu instructor, who learnt these disciplines from the Chinese master Chen Chin Wen. At the beginning of the 2000's, Puglisi organized Geshe (academic degree for monks and nuns) Ngawang Sherab's and Lama Gangchen Rimpoche's visits to Argentina. Both are renowned monks of the Gelugpa School. In 2004 he coordinated the first visits of the "Sacred Relics of the Venerable Buddha Shakyamuni", brought by Lama Gangchen on his world tour, an event attended by the majority of the Argentinean Buddhist groups. Puglisi is currently teaching workshops on Buddhist philosophy and Chan meditation in a centre in Villa del Parque neighborhood. Furthermore, he organizes Geshe Jampa Tenzin's Argentinean visits. He is another monk in the Gelugpa tradition who often travels from his Indian monastery to perform purification rituals, cures and initiations.

Another organization identified with the Gelugpa tradition is the Centro de Meditación Kadampa Argentina, belonging to the New Kadampa Tradition, an international network that boasts about 1200 meditation centers and groups worldwide. They were founded by Geshe Kelsang Gyatso in 1991 after his split with the Dalai Lama, Gelugpa orthodoxy and Tibetan Buddhism in general. The Argentinean Kadampa Meditation Center has its headquarters in Palermo neighborhood and five other branches in Buenos Aires. The local branches of the NKT offer a three-level study program based on over 20 books published by Geshe Kelsang Gyatso. Moreover, there are meditation courses and various tantric rituals or pujas, among which is the Dorje Shugden's controversial cult.

The third local Gelugpa center is the Yogi Saraha Tibetan Buddhism Study Group. It belongs to the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition (FPMT), a religious organization consisting of an international network of 150 branches, founded by Lama Thubten Yeshe and its present leader, Thubten Zopa Rin-

poche. The Argentinean group is led by the nun Thubten Kundrol, an Argentinean who studied Tibetan Buddhism in Japan, Italy and the United States after leaving Argentina in 1979. After her 2004 return, she began to spread her teachings in Buenos Aires.

As regards the other Tibetan Buddhism schools, since 2010 the Sakya tradition had its local center in the Grupo Palden Sakya Buenos Aires, led by the Argentinean Federico Andino (Jñāñavajra), who was authorized to teach by Lama Khenpo Pema Wangdak, a former student of the 41st Sakya Trizin and the Sakya school's current leader. Graduated in oriental studies from the Universidad del Salvador, Andino combines teaching Tibetan Buddhism classes at that establishment with resident master of the Grupo Palden Sakya, where he runs a school-like study program on Buddhist philosophy for new adherents through online lectures.

Completing the spectrum of Tibetan Buddhist groups is the Nyingma tradition represented locally by the Comunidad Dzogchen Argentina Tashigar Sur, founded by the Tibetan master Chogyal Namkhai Norbu, leader of the International Dzogchen Community, which possesses study centers in many European and Latin-American countries. Tashigar Sur has its headquarters in El Durazno, Cordoba province.

Furthermore, positioned in the Theravada Buddhist tradition is a group belonging to the Vipassana Meditation, an international organization founded by Narayan Goenka on the teachings of his master Sayagyi U Ba Khin. They carry out weekly meditation sessions at adherents' homes in various Argentine cities and offer 10-day intensive courses. The first was held in 1994 in the town of Lobos, and until recently at various rented venues in Buenos Aires, Mendoza and Córdoba provinces. In 2005 the Argentine Vipassana Association acquired 22 hectares in a rural area of the Brandsen district (Buenos Aires Province) and started building the Dhamma Sukhada Center with capacity for 120 students. Since 2013 they have held their 10-day courses there. So far, 90 Vipassana Meditation courses with 5,000 attendees have been held. In 2017 a second Vipassana meditation center was inaugurated in Argentina: Dhamma Viriya, located in the city of Capilla del Monte, Province of Córdoba.

To conclude, the Argentinean Buddhist organization with most adherents -around 15 thousand- is the Soka Gakkai Internacional de la Argentina (SGIAR), which is part of the International Soka Gakkai, a lay Buddhist organization founded by Tsunesaburo Makiguchi in 1930. It originated as a lay branch of Nichiren Buddhism, a Japanese school. From 1960 the organization spread around the world due to the efforts of its third president, Daisaku Ikeda. This Buddhist school focuses on studying the Lotus Sutra, one of the most popular and influential Mahayana text, and suggests that the recitation of the mantra Nam Myoho Renge Kyo ("Veneration of the Lotus Sutra") is the direct path to enlightenment. They hold many social and cultural events: lectures, seminars, exhibitions and festivals. SGIAR was founded in 1964 by a group of Japanese immigrants, although nowadays the majority of its members are non-oriental. Its headquarters in Buenos Aires located in Villa Urquiza neighborhood, boasts an amphitheatre of 1,000 seats. Moreover, SGIAR possesses other centers in Cordoba and Neuquén provinces (Gancedo 2012, Giannattasio 2003b).

FINAL REMARKS

Argentinean Buddhism presents variations as regards country of origin, school and lineage, which makes this universe both extensive and varied. The compact space characterized by globalization permits the existence of a variety of Buddhist schools in Argentina's largest cities. Furthermore, new groups form continuously and there is a much greater number of followers who frequent different centers who are difficult to count as their religious adherence is ephemeral, shifting or deinstitutionalized.

Within convert Buddhism, Zen and Tibetan Buddhism stand apart due to their internal heterogeneity, consisting of diverse groups belonging to different international organizations, while Soka Gakkai and Vipassana find themselves inside monolithic organizations which unite the entire membership. As regards ethnic Buddhism, it should be mentioned that the minority, but growing presence of native Argentineans in Chinese, Korean and Japanese Buddhist temples and associations, challenges the categorical distinction between immigration and convert Buddhism. These insti-

tutions increasingly take the form of parallel congregations, where the activities are divided according to the expectations of the different types of members (Numrich 1996).

To conclude, it is worth mentioning the greater influence of Buddhism outside the institutions described in this text. In the first place, many Argentinians manifest a great affinity with Buddhism and although they do not participate in any Buddhist center, they are interested in its philosophy and incorporate it into their small daily practices. Second, there is an alternative Buddhism that borrows some traditional elements to reinvent them in contexts which differ from the official Buddhist circuit. Certain cosmological elements and practices are incorporated in Christian centers, alternative therapy areas and New Age groups such as yoga and reiki centers. Finally, it should be noted that Buddhism's impact is growing in the field of the arts, literature, and general imaginary culture in Argentina.

***

Bibliography

Baumann, Martin. "Global Buddhism: Developmental Periods, Regional Histories, and a New Analytical Perspective". Journal of Global Buddhism, nº 2, p. 1-43, 2001.

Carini, Catón Eduardo. "Las nuevas tierras del Buda: globalización, medios de comunicación y descentralización en una minoría religiosa de la Argentina". Debates do NER, vol. 10, nº 16, p. 49-70, 2009.

Carini, Catón Eduardo. Etnografía del Budismo Argentino: rituales, cosmovisión e identidad. Doctoral Thesis, Universidad Nacional de La Plata, 2012.

Carini, Catón Eduardo. "Historia, poder e identidad en la conformación de una comunidad budista zen argentina: el caso de la Diamond Sangha". PLURA - Revista de Estudos de Religião, v. 4, nº 2, p. 49-70, 2013.

Carini, Catón Eduardo. La diversidad del budismo tibetano en la Argentina: un estudio etnográfico. En: Experiencias plurales de lo sagrado: La diversidad religiosa argentina en perspectiva Interdisciplinaria. Buenos Aires: Imago Mundi, p. 181-196, 2014.

Carruitero, María Valeria. "Imágenes de otros, imágenes de sí, en las voces de los migrantes". Trampas de la comunicación y la cultura, nº 70, p. 1-7, 2012.

Di Risio, Mónica y Alejandro Irazabal. "Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-Ja ('La verdadera escuela de la Tierra Pura')". In: Mallimaci, Fortunato (ed.) Guía de la diversidad religiosa en Buenos Aires. Buenos Aires: Biblos, p. 39-46, 2003.

Gancedo, Mariano. "La práctica del budismo Nichiren en la Ciudad de Buenos Aires (Argentina)". Mitológicas, vol. XXVII, p. 47-60, 2012.

Giannattasio, Natalia y Alejandro Irazabal. "Han Ma-Um". En: Mallimaci, Fortunato (ed.) Guía de la diversidad religiosa en Buenos Aires. Buenos Aires: Biblos, p. 55-59, 2003.

Giannattasio, Natalia. "Asociación Budista China en Argentina".

In: Mallimaci, Fortunato (ed.) Guía de la diversidad religiosa en Buenos Aires. Buenos Aires: Biblos, p. 60-64, 2003a.

Giannattasio, Natalia. "Soka Gakkai Internacional de la Argentina". In: Mallimaci, Fortunato (ed.) Guía de la diversidad religiosa en Buenos Aires. Buenos Aires: Biblos, p. 47-54, 2003b.

Mallimaci, Fortunato (ed.) Atlas de las creencias religiosas en la Argentina, Buenos Aires, Biblos, 2013.

Numrich, Paul. Old Wisdom in the New World. Americanization in Two Immigrant Theravada Buddhist Temples. Knoxville, University of Tennessee Press, 1996.

BANGLADESH

PRESENT DAY BUDDHISM IN BANGLADESH*

by Suman Kanti Barua**

INTRODUCTION

Bangladesh is a land of glorious cultural heritage and multi-religion. The name of `Bangladesh' has designated in 1971 as an independent and sovereign country at the cost of innumerable lives and violation of chastity of women. Its ancient name was Bengal. Bengal had two wings. They are east Bengal and West Bengal. Especially the area of present Bangladesh was called East Bengal. In the regime of Pakistan it was known as East Pakistan (1947-1971). Prior to this, it was ruled (1765-1947) by the British as colonial state. Apart from this, the rulers of various religious faiths had ruled this country in various periods. Some of those were very mentionable, such as the Gupta dynasties (4th – 6th A.D.) who were followers of Hinduism, the Pale dynasty (750-1161) of Buddhist rulers and the Bakhtiar Khilji (from 12th A.D.) and the Mughal dynasty of Muslim rulers consecutively ruled this country. So then, a vast and multifarious socio culture has formed in here. It is the heritage of Bangladesh. Every religious society can observe its own religion

*. Originally published on http://www.buddhismreligiousminorities.org/present-day-buddhism-in-bangladesh/. Reprinted with permission.

**. Professor, Dr., Department of Pali & Buddhist Studies University of Dhaka, Bangladesh.

and customs with dignity in Bangladesh.

Buddhists are the small community in present Bangladesh, considering the number of people. Buddhism is the third among the four major religions in Bangladesh. Mainly the Pala dynasty had enhanced the Buddhism in ancient Bangladesh (Bengal).[i] They also introduced some inclusive moral rules for the country. The first Pala king was Gopala. He was a unanimously selected king.[ii] The Pala dynasty established democratic system in Bengal and they were the first independent and sovereign ruler in Bengal. It is said to be the golden age of Buddhism in Bengal or present Bangladesh during Pala rulers. Among all glorious heritages of Bangladesh, the Buddhist heritage is considered as most significant. So, Buddhism and Buddhist heritage and culture are inseparably related to Bengal or Bangladesh for last few centuries. Ancient Buddhism of Bengal passed through generations to the present Buddhism in Bangladesh. According to history, the Pala dynasty was ruled in Bengal about four hundred and fifty years.

Historically and traditionally Bangladesh is a land of religious harmony and co-existence. Four major different religious followers such as Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim and Christian ruled this country at different periods in the past. Inter-community or inter-religious harmony and friendship is an inherent characteristic of this soil. Now Bangladesh is well known as a moderate Muslim state. But people of other religions are also living here with their dignity and social rights. State constitution also approves these rights. It is very mentionable that constitutionally Bangladesh is a secular state, though Islam is the state religion. In this circumstance the members of Buddhist community are leading their lives as other minority communities in this country.

Indeed Government is very sympathetic to the minorities. Despite of the fact that some unexpected incidents are often happened here like other countries. Actually our religious intolerance, illiteracy and immodesty are responsible for that. So, we have to take initiative henceforth to build the modern, progressive, well educated and ethical society. These can be the remedies of this situation because without awakening the consciousness in society, this problem would not be removed. As a whole, we can say that as

a democratic state of South-east Asia, the Buddhists of Bangladesh are leading their lives in a very favourable atmosphere and proper religious fervor.

HOW BUDDHISM INTRODUCED IN BANGLADESH

There are two types of opinion prevailing in the society about the introduction of Buddhism in Bangladesh. Among those opinions, one is myth and another is history or legendary. According to history, Buddhism was introduced in Bangladesh during Emperor Asoka's period in 3rd Century B. C.. As we know from Buddhist scriptures such as Mahavamsa[iii] and Dipavamsa[iv] Emperor Asoka sent Dhammadutas to nine places for propagating Buddha's welfare message. It was called Asoka's Dhamma Mission led by the then most senior monk Ven. Moggaliputta Thera.[v] Under this Dhamma Mission two prominent monks named Ven. Sona Thera and Ven. Uttara Thera was sent to Suvarnabhumi that indicates modern Thailand, Myanmar and their attached area. It is said that on way to Myanmar the two noble Theras stayed in Bangladesh for some days and they played pioneering role to introduce Buddhism in this land, it was the inception of Buddhism in Bangladesh.

According to Myth, there are some historical places in Bangladesh where Lord Buddha visited. According to Chronicle of Sri Lanka the Lord Buddha visited the then Bengal thrice. Similarly, it is mentioned in the traditions of Arakan and Myanmar that Buddha visited the lands two times. It is also known that Buddha sojourned at Cakrasala of Patiya Police Station of Chittagong, while He went to Arakan and Myanmar.[vi] It is said that, Lord Buddha had a short rest at `Chakrashala, the present Haidgaon union of Patiya, Chittagong while he was visiting the different places of `Jambudvipa (ancient greater India). In the travel account of Hiuen Tsang, [vii] an illustrious tourist from China, mentions that Buddha stayed seven days at Karnasuvarna, Pundravardhana for three months and seven days at Samatata. The name of Pundrabardan (now Bogra district of Bangladesh) is very worth-mentioned in this fact, that Lord Buddha came here on an invitation by a pious lady named Sumagada, daughter of well known Sresti Anathapindika of Sravasti (now in Uttar Pradesh of India). Sresti Anathapindika

was prominently a notable figure in the history of Buddhism for his benevolence. His daughter Sumagada was married to a Sresti of Pundrabardana. This is revealed from Avadanasataka [viii] and Divyavadana [ix], the renowned book of Buddhist legendary. This sort of perception approves that Buddhism flourished in this soil in the life time Lord Buddha. Emperor Ashok had enhanced this flow of Buddhisn to some extent. So, it may be said that Emperor Ashok had revived Buddhism in this country. Emperor Kanishka, the great king Harshabardhana, King Gopal, Dharmapala and Devapala patronized Buddhism successively.[x]

THE FOLLOWERS OF BUDDHISM IN BANGLADESH

There are many different communities among the Bangladeshi Buddhists. It happens due to dwelling environment of the Buddhists of Bangladesh. They are Barua, Chakma, Tanchangya, Marma, Rakhain communities etc. Buddhists are mainly living in Dhaka, Chittagong, Comilla, Cox'sbazar and Chittagong Hill Tracts. In fact majority of Buddhists live in the three hill-district of Chittagong. Basically Barua Buddhists are called plain Buddhists, bearing the title Barua, Chowdhury, Mutsuddhi, Talukder, Singha who generally live in the plain areas of Bangladesh. Chakma and Tanchangya communities live in Rangamati and Bandharban of hill district. Marma and Rakhain communities live in Khagrachari and Bandharban of hill district, Cox'sbazar, Barisal, Patuakhali and in some parts in the plain districts of Bangladesh.

Now-a-days some ethnic society members such as Tappa, Khappa, Khiyang from northern side of Bangladesh have been added with the Buddhist Community. They are known as new Buddhists. They are from Naogaon, Rangpur, Dinajpur district etc. It may be mentioned here that, they are not at all converted Buddhists, in fact they were the latent practitioners of Buddhism. Now they joined in their desired society and have had the opportunity to perform the living Buddhism of Bangladesh.

NATURE OF BANGLADESHI BUDDHISM

Bangladeshi Buddhist Followers belong to Theravada Buddhist culture and philosophy from its very inception. Though Mahayana and Tantrayana Buddhism entered into this country long time ago,

their followers, patronization and existence are not to be found now-a-days due to the flourishing waves of Theravada doctrine here. Especially from 7th – to 12th century many streams of Buddhist culture were practiced in this country. The Siddhachariyas (Saint Scholars) like Luipa, Kanupa, Tilupa, Haripa are the pride of ancient Bengal. Through their literary practicing, Bengali language was gradually invented. This was their extraordinary contribution towards the Bengali nation. The Siddhachariyas used to practice the esoteric Buddhism, which was based onTantrayana, Mantrayana, Sahajyana and Kalacakrayana steams of Buddhism. This sort of mixed Buddhist faith was called Buddhist mysticism by many scholars. Though, the main stream of Buddhism was Theravada, some other attachment of practicing was prevailed. These did not cause any interruption for the main stream of Buddhism, but inspired to practice Buddhism properly.

The great glorious Buddhist scholars of ancient Bangladesh like pandit Santarakshita, pandit Atisha Dipankara Srijñana, pandit Silabhadra and pandit Chandragomi were competent to practice in all the branches of Buddhism including school of Theravada and Mahayana because, they were the teachers of Buddhism. But, generally Theravada Buddhism was always practiced by the people. So, Theravada school of Buddhism is the root of Bangladeshi Buddhism. Lord Buddha said-

Maggan atthngika settho – saccanam caturro pada,
Virago settho dhammanam- dipadanan ca cakkhuma.
Eso'va maggo natth' anno- dassanassa visuddhiya,
Etamhi tumhe patipajjatha- marassa etam pamohanam. [xi]

It means- The best path is the Eightfold Path, the best truths are the Four Noble truths, Non-attachment is the best of states. The best of bipeds is the Dhamma that are the rules of Lord Buddha. This is the only way. There is no other way for the purity of vision, which follows this path and for the bewilderment of Mara. Bangladeshi Buddhists have been cultivating those basic rules of Buddhism from the very early period of Buddhism in Bangladesh. Till today they follow the school of Theravada Buddhism.

VARIATION OF BUDDHIST RITUALISTIC CULTURE IN BANGLADESH

With the accommodation of modern time and situation the rites and ritualistic culture have turned to variations from one area to another in Bangladesh. According to heritage and cultural point of view there are two kinds of Buddhist religious culture running in Bangladesh. Both are based on Theravada school of Buddhism. One is 'Plain Buddhist culture' and another is 'Tribal Buddhist culture'. But, both the religious scripts are same, only rituals and language are different to some extent. Especially marriage and funeral ceremonies are quite different between plain Buddhists and Tribal Buddhists. The Tribal Buddhists are known as 'adivasi' or indigenous. They used to perform some traditional activities like Bamboo-dance and dance with the bier before the cremation. On the other hand the Plain Buddhists have no any such kind of exclusive culture. In fact, it is the influence of local culture because, the adivasi Buddhists are living in hilly areas. They have to perform some traditional culture according to their belief and heritage. So, sometimes some religious and social customary rules made difference between plain and tribal Buddhists. It is a matter of great satisfaction that, now-a-days the Plain and the Tribal Buddhists are jointly performing many Buddhist religious programs. It is a good sign for religious unity and social development. Lord Buddha said, -`Sammaganam tapa sukha' [xii] which means happiness lies in peaceful co-existence.



Tribal Buddhists observing `Biju'(new year) Festival by sprinkling water to each other



Tribal girls offering Puja during New Year Festival

COMMON ASPECTS IN BUDDHIST RITUAL

Buddhists of plain area and adivasi both are have some common ritual aspects. They usually start their any socio-religious ceremony with receiving the five-precepts. It is very common custom in Buddhist society whatever the program. Although in purnima day

many Buddhists devotees observe the uposatha with receiving eight precepts (Attasila). But prior to commence any program they receive the five precepts with the refuge in Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha, which is very common in Buddhist society. So this is the assimilative chapter in Buddhist ritualistic world. It is very mentionable that, to be committed to precepts, refuge to Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha is compulsory. Here Buddha is Samma Sambuddha, which means `Perfect Enlightened One'. Dhamma or Dharma means Doctrine of the lord Buddha and the Sangha means Community of Buddhist Monks. As a whole, to recall the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha, means to acknowledge the Buddha and his teachings and ideals.

Apart from this, it is customary for every Buddhist to accept the life of Pabbajja once in whole life time. Pabbajja is admission to Buddhist Monastic discipline as novices. The recipient of Pabbajja is known as `Samanera'. Ten precepts are prescribed for Samanera as per `Monks' Book law i.e. Vinaya.



Bhikkhu (Monks)



Ordination as Samaneras (Novice)



Monks are performing their Kamma Vaca in special enclosure called Sima Ghar



The Monks are on the way to begging Alms from laities

PURNIMA FESTIVAL IN BUDDHIST SOCIETY

Purnima means full moon or lunar day. Traditionally Buddhists are used to observe many Purnimas, especially the Purnima related to the main events of the Lord Buddha's life. Not only in Bangladesh, but also in the Theravada Buddhists society across the world usually observe many Purnimas. Although Buddhist festivals vary from country to country with tradition and culture, some Purnimas are observed with the very festive mood. They are Buddha Purnima, Asalha Purnima (Ashari Purnima or Dhamma Day), Magha Purnima (Maghi Purnima or Sangha Day), Madhu Purnima (Bhadra Purnima), Pravarana Purnima (Ashvini Purnima).



The devotees are listening to Dhamma



The devotees are seen carrying various Puja articles on their heads to the place of Puja on the pedestal



Sanghadana Festival at Kamalapur Buddhist Temple, Dhaka



Flying `Fanus' during Pabarana Purnima

Among these purnimas the impact of Buddha Purnima is very highest and greatest in the Buddhist society because this Purnima coincides with three important events of Lord Buddha's life. Those are birth, enlightenment and mahaparinibbana (demise) of the Buddha. Bangladeshi Plain and 'Tribal Buddhists observe this auspicious day on the same day with their local culture. They celebrate this occasion with deep reverence and sanctity. It is usually held in Bangladesh in the month of May. Similarly others Purnima festivals are also observed with due solemnity. Buddhists are used

to practice the Uposatha in every Purnima day. Uposatha is very important factor in Buddhist religion and culture.

Uposatha: According to Buddhist terminology Uposatha means to live fasting with behavioral purity. That is to maintain purity in body and mind. We take food regularly every day, without thinking what it means to us. By fasting, Buddhists try to realize the weakness of body, which is the basic cause of desire. Desire means in Buddhist terminology 'Tanha'. The 'Tanha' is the main source of all unwholesome activities. Uposatha raises consciousness. Uposatha is considered as a means of developing good morals and justice. Certain days of a few months are fixed for the fasting by the lay Buddhists community.

According to Buddhist script Mahavamsa, one who wants to observe the Uposatha has to maintain eight- precepts. So, it is not merely fasting. On the day of Uposatha Buddhists go to the local monastery; worship the Buddha with flowers, foods and various fragrances. They take refuge in three Jewels, that are the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, thereafter take vow of eight noble precepts, and offer charity and entertain the monks with foods. Usually, they spend the whole day at monastery and take part in various religious discussions and meditation. The eight precepts or 'Atta-Sila' is those – 1) abstaining from killing any living being. 2) Abstaining from stealing. 3) Abstaining from sexual abuse. 4) Abstaining from lying. 5) Abstaining from the use of any intoxicants. 6) Abstaining from eating after midday. 7) Abstaining from dancing, singing, music, shows and use of garlands, scent, cosmetics and adornment etc. 8) Abstaining from luxurious beds.

The Uposatha day generally observed on full and new moon days, and on the first and last quarter of the moon of the month. According to Pali commentary a year is divided into three seasons' winter, rain and summer, each of four months duration. In every month there are four Uposathas which fall on the days of dark and bright fortnights of the month. In all, there are forty-eight (4 x 12=48) Uposathas in a year. Most of the Buddhists are observed Uposatha ceremoniously during the rainy season, while Buddhist monks observe their three months long holy 'Vassabasa'. Though, Upasatha is the regular procedure of Buddhist householders.

Particularly aged persons who are free from domestic works or professional duties observe Upasatha days with enthusiasm and zeal.

Apart from this, the Theravada Buddhist community is used to observe the Kathina Cibar Dana (yellow robe offering ceremony) and New Year as per their local calendar.

KATHINA CIBAR DANA FESTIVAL IN BUDDHIST SOCIETY

It is a common annual Buddhist festival in Bangladesh. Cibar means the yellow robe which is used as the wearing apparels of the Buddhist monk. It is offered to the Buddhist monks ceremonially and is called `Cibar Dana Festivals'. Later the Council of monks uses to make it `Kathina' according to the rules of Vinaya. This sanctification program is absolutely the monks' program. But the devotees offer the Cibar with the intention to make it kathina. The whole program is called `Kathin Cibar Dana'.

Hence, the Kathina Cibar Dana is very much related with some others sanctioned factors or religious customs. This cibar offering program has to be completed by the period of one month, that is Prabarana Purnima(Full moon day of October) to Kartik Purnima (Full moon day of November). Now-a-days the Cibar Dana occasion has occupied a distinctive position in socio-religious perspective. According to Buddhist scriptures the ultimate result of the merit of offering Kathin Cibara cannot be expressed in words, cannot be measured by imagination, it is so uncommon, unusual, invaluable and it is also beyond in any form of expression. Such a sublime and excellence which is the impact behind Kathin Cibar offering.



Weaving the Cibar (Yellow robes for monks) for Yellow Robes offering ceremony



Offering Cibar (Robes of monks) to the monks during Kathin Cibar Dana Festival



Scenes from Kathin Cibar Offering Ritual



Cibar being carried for offering to monks

The merits of the Kathina Cibar Dana cannot be compared with other sacrifices or Danas. On the part of the donor too, the Kathina Cibar Dana is the best of sacrifice. It is mentioned in the scriptures that all other sacrifices or offerings, including all kinds of valuable ornaments and kingdom cannot have one sixteenth of the merits that acquire from the Kathina Cibar Dana . It is also known that the donor and receiver acquire five special boons in this life and in the afterlife. Another noteworthy aspect of this Kathina Cibar Dana is that, this must be done on a particular day in a particular month, though other robes may be offered on any day of the year.



Monks abode adjoining Monastery Wall Of the Salban Vihar 8th – 9th Century A.D. at Mainamati, Camilla

THE BUDDHIST HISTORICAL PLACES

There are many historical places of Buddhist heritage in Bangladesh. Many of them were designated by World Heritage Site of UNESCO in 1985. Sompura Mahavihar in Paharpur, Naogaon district of Bangladesh is one of them. It is a Buddhist historical place which was discovered for the first time in Bangladesh. It is one of the most important archeological sites in the Subcontinent. Vasu Vihar of Mahastangar, Bogra, Salbana Vihar in Comilla, Sitakot Vihar in Dinajpur are other famous Buddhist heritage and archaeological sites in this country. Apart from this, there are many small and non-popular Buddhist archaeological sites also have in this country. These valuable archaeological sites bear ample pride, glory and honour not only for the Buddhist community of Bangladesh, but for the entire nation as a whole. Every year many visitors from home and abroad come to see these places. Government also earns revenue through historical sites . These are the witnesses of ancient Buddhist places, where Buddhist culture would be practiced.



Arial view of Sompur Mahavihara Greatest University of the World at Pahapur, Rajshahi, 9th Centurt A.D.

CONCLUSION

The present-day Buddhism in Bangladesh is the consecutive flow of Theravada Buddhism. The present-day Buddhist rites and rituals are the cultural wave of ancient Theravada Buddhism. It is

mentionable here that, from time to time some religious cultures or religious activities have been associated with the main stream of Buddhism of Bangladesh. But these could not deteriorate Theravada Buddhist culture; they were conducive to the main stream of Theravada Buddhism.

In the age of gradual development of science, free market economy system and globalization, human beings used to practice logic and reality in every aspects of life. In this perspective we can consider Buddhism a very useful religion or philosophy or culture in the present age. Bangladeshi Buddhists are habituated with this logical thought of Buddhism as belongs to Theravada Buddhist heritage.

Finally, we can say that, the present-day Buddhist religious thoughts and culture in Bangladesh is quite wholesome and befitting with the society and nation.

***

Endnotes:

i. Majumder, R. C.(ed.): *History of Bengal* Vol. 1, P-416, Bharatiya Vidyabhavan, Bombay,1955.

ii. Chowdhury, *Abdul Momin: Dynastic History of Bengal*, The Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Dacca,1967, p- 9.

iii. Geiger, W. (ed.): *Mahavamsa*, Pali Text Society of London, 1980, p-26-50.

iv. Law, B. C. (ed.): *Dipavamsa*, Ceylon, 1959, p-164.

v. Barua, Beni Madhab, *Asoka And His Inscriptions*, New Age Publications , Calcutta,1968, Part – 1, p- 301.

vi. Sbithavir, *Badanta Prajnananda: Pascim Banger Bauddha Dharma o Sanskriti*, Calcutta, 1987, p- 15.

vii. Beal, S.: *Buddhist Western Record of the World*, Vol: ii,London, 1906, p-194.

viii. Mitra. R. L.: *The Sanskrit Buddhist Literature of Nepal*, Delhi,1981, p-73 and 237.

ix. Vaidya, Dr. P. L. (ed.): *Divyavadana*, Bihar, 1956, p-257.

x. The Gazetteer of India, Vol. 2, Ministry of Education, Government of India, p – 97, 1973.

xi. *Dhammapada – Verse*, 73-74.

xii. Mahaparinibbana Sutta, Digha Nikaya.

xiii. Mahavamsa (Book of Vinay Pitaka series of Holy Tripitaka.), Upasatha Addaya.

xiv. Kankhavitarani (A commentary of the Vinaya Pitaka), p- 3.

xv. *ibid*. p- 37.

xvi. Bangladesh Archaeological Report – 2001.

a. Photo 1, 2, 11, 12, 14- Anisuzzaman, khan, Shamsuzzaman and Islam,Syed Manzorul (Ed.), Festivals of Bangladesh, Nymphea Publication, Dhaka, 2005, P. 83, 84, 85, 90.

b. Photo 3, 4, 5, 7, 10, 13,15, 16- Taher, M.A.,Buddhism of Bangladesh, Oitijjhya, 2010, p. 48, 49, 61, 67, 72, 74.

c. Photo 6, 8, 9- Md. Hamidur Rahman, Bangladesh National Museum.

BHUTAN

MAHAYANA BUDDHISM AND GROSS NATIONAL HAPPINESS IN BHUTAN*

by Michael Givel**

ABSTRACT

In 1972, the fourth King of Bhutan announced that Gross National Happiness was more important than Gross Domestic Product. In this paper, the basic conceptual features of Mahayana Buddhism are discussed particularly as they relate to the Mahayana Buddhist view of happiness. The primary purpose of Mahayana Buddhism is to spread happiness and compassion to everyone in the world. This includes that by awakening to the Ultimate Truth, one obtains greater clarity and insight about the true nature of the universe, leading to internal peace and happiness. As this paper shows, the goal of modern Gross National Happiness is also based on Mahayana Buddhist principles to increase happiness for everyone. This occurs through governmental policies and programs that promote material needs balanced with becoming enlightened.

1. INTRODUCTION

Mahayana Buddhism, which was the state religion of Bhutan

---

*. Originally published in *International Journal of Wellbeing* 5 (2), 2015, pp. 14-27. Reprinted with permission.

**. Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Oklahoma, U.S.A.

in the early 1970s and still has a substantial influence today, has been intricately entwined with culture and politics, including Gross National Happiness (GNH), in Bhutan. In this paper, I will provide an overview of the Mahayana Buddhist view of happiness and how it impacts GNH. A deep understanding of Mahayana Buddhism provides an important basis to understand why and how GNH operates as a primary policy influence in modern Bhutan. When Shakyamuni Buddha (formerly Prince Siddhartha) found Enlightenment around or after 400 B.C.E. after six years of striving and one night of meditating under the Bodhi tree in what is now northeastern India, the new religion of Buddhism emerged.[1] Buddha's awakening brought forth a religious movement that was grounded in the principal belief that profound suffering exists in the world. This suffering can be resolved by following Buddhist dharma or law that facilitates happiness and bliss (Armstrong 2004; Assavavirulhakarn 2010; Batchelor 2010; Keown 2013; Leighton 2012; McGovern 1922; Mitchell 2008; Morgan 2010; Smith & Novak 2003; D. T. Suzuki 1968).

In Buddha's first sermon, he identified suffering as all-pervasive in life (Morgan 2010). He saw the fundamental bases of suffering as the need to survive day-to-day existence, illness, aging, and death. As it was written in the Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta, which is Buddha's first sermon after finding Enlightenment:

> *Suffering, as a noble truth, is this: Birth is suffering, aging is suffering, sickness is suffering, death is suffering, sorrow and lamentation, pain, grief and despair are suffering; association with the loathed is suffering, dissociation from the loved is suffering, not to get what one wants is suffering — in short, suffering is the five categories of clinging objects.*

Buddhists believe that suffering also occurs through the selfish and mindless craving of sensual pleasure and material wealth and power by individual egos, which may cause evil deeds (Armstrong

1. There is no general scholarly consensus on the exact date that the Buddha found Enlightenment. A number of scholars, though, regard the date of Enlightenment to be near his death, approaching 400 B.C.E. See also: Gethin, Foundations of Buddhism, 1998, 13-14 and Gombrich, 1988, 32 for general comments. To get the details see Heinz Bechert 1982, "The Date of the Buddha Reconsidered" Indologia Taurinensia 10, pp. 29-36.

2004; Batchelor 2010; Keown 2013; Leighton 2012; Mitchell 2008; Smith & Novak 2003). Buddhists have further identified additional reasons suffering continues, including past conditioning to expect suffering and ignorance of the ultimate reality of existence or the Ultimate Truth. The Ultimate Truth, which has also been referred to as Nirvana (which means "to extinguish desire"), Enlightenment, or the Awakening, is a state of transcendent metaphysical reality, and the attainment of this state of happiness is the ultimate goal of Buddhism (French 2002).

In Buddhism, the Ultimate Truth cannot be described, but may be understood only through direct insights, which may come through meditation approaches. Only the Ultimate Truth is permanent. The Ultimate Truth is the realm beyond death and is the infinite nature of the ultimate reality of the cosmic universe. There is no ultimate reality in the cosmic universe except cosmic emptiness or Shunyta.[2] By awakening to the Ultimate Truth, Buddhists believe every sentient being can possess peace, bliss, joy, and happiness (Gethin 1998; Leighton 2012). The understanding of the Ultimate Truth is, in a general sense, a move toward significant comprehension of the true nature of the universe (Gethin 1998; Leighton 2012). For all Buddhists, the Ultimate Truth is beyond syllogistic logic and meaning, and within the Ultimate Truth, all space-time limitations disappear as they are ordinarily experienced by humans (Gethin 1998; Leighton 2012). Paradoxically, however, the rigorous use and traditions of logic and argumentation in some Mahayana Buddhism is required to obtain the Ultimate Truth and happiness.

In the universe all matter, energy, and time is interrelated and in constant fluid fluctuation (Gethin 1998; Keown 2013; Leighton 2012). Within Mahayana Buddhism, a metaphor of the ocean is an important illustration of this principle. The ocean is absolute, stable and changeless, but the waves are always changing. In much the same

2. In Mahayana and Tibetan Buddhism, one major position by Mipham and others holds that the nature of emptiness and ultimate reality is not knowable. But elements of reality, such as matter and energy, do exist and can be grasped by humans. In contrast, the Gelupka school in Mahayana Buddhism believed that reality is unknowable and encompasses a negation of all worldly corporeality (Phuntsho 2013).

way, reality in the here-and-now appears to be based on a unified and observable universe. However, this seemingly unified nature of the universe can also be compared with modern theories of physics, such as Einstein's Special Theory of Relativity or quantum physics, where there are underlying and complex interactions between space, matter, and time that reflect a complex and ever-changing universe. When a sentient being experiences the Ultimate Truth of the ever-changing universe even paradoxically through rationalist logic, they have liberated themselves from all causes of suffering, including greed, hatred, and delusion, and they enter into a state of clarity, happiness, and peace. By perceiving Ultimate Truth and eliminating egotism in the form of greed, hatred, and delusion, happiness and Enlightenment ensues (Goodman 2008).

Karma, in Buddhism, which means willful actions or the fruits of actions, is the everlasting law of cause and effect that is an essential ingredient in knowing the Ultimate Truth (Williams 2008). Karma pertains to happiness in the following ways. Ultimate happiness is obtained through Enlightenment. Positive Karma results in higher rebirth, bringing one closer to Nirvana. The Vipaka (result) ripening of Karma (deeds) leads to greater happiness, joy, and bliss when a person is reborn.

In part, Buddhism acquired the Karma idea from Vedic Hinduism, but endowed it with further ethical constructs (Morgan 2010). Adherents of Vedic Hinduism, particularly the Upanishads, as early as the first century B.C.E. believed that good moral actions by humans turned a person into a good being in the next life while bad moral actions turned a person into a bad person in the next life. Under Karmic law, which functions as a natural law in the changing and interdependent universe, good or bad deeds have consequences for rebirth and nature, including the happiness of sentient beings (Mitchell 2008).

Karma's impact in Buddhism is not rigid, as it responds on a continual basis to a sentient being's good or bad deeds (Morgan 2010). A sentient being's present character cannot nullify the consequences of an individual's misdeeds in past lives but creates better Karma to offset bad Karma. In particular, four acts that counter past bad Karma are remorsefulness, the resolve not to commit an

action again, actions to restore justice for past bad actions, and acts of holding another in loving-kindness (Morgan 2010). Mindfulness of one's actions can have an important positive effect on future rebirth as a sentient being, including greater happiness.

As explained in 2007 by Dasho Karma Ura, President of the Centre for Bhutan Studies in Thimphu:

> *Because of the discursive nature of Karma, all are part of an intricate web. Karma is simultaneous and is constantly being revised in all of our interactions with one another. Such a view of interdependence sufficiently motivates us to forget our own narrow existence, changing us such that we begin to engage meaningfully with others and pursue collective happiness. By recognizing the true nature of interdependence, one can see that all Karma is collective, that all enlightenment is collective, and therefore that happiness and the policies required to promote it must be oriented toward collective achievement* (Ura 2012).

According to Buddhists, without awakening to the Ultimate Truth and happiness and bliss, humans remain on the ever-moving Wheel of Life (Gethin 2004; Snelling 1998). Additionally, the cravings for sensual pleasure and material wealth and power represented by the Wheel of Life, are not permanent fixtures of human existence and doing good karmic acts will increase happiness and wellbeing (French 2002). The Wheel of Life pushes us from one moment of our life to the next, and from one lifetime to the next, within the realms of human, animals, asura or jealous gods, hungry ghosts, and ultimately Heaven and Hell. Yama, the deity of death, holds the Wheel of Life (Gethin 2004; Snelling 1998).

The outer wheel is divided into a 12-fold chain of dependent origination (pratityasamutpada), which represents the causes and effects of Karma that does not bring greater happiness (Gethin 2004; Snelling 1998). At the top of the Wheel is a blind man who represents ignorance. Moving clockwise, the potter represents action. Next is the monkey, which is symbolic of a consciousness unable or unwilling to comprehend the Ultimate Truth. Three men in a boat represent a vehicle that can carry a sentient being across a body of water of growing consciousness of the Ultimate Truth

and through life. Houses with doors and windows are symbolic of the ability to sense reality. Lovers represent the ability to engage in sensual impressions of reality. A man with an arrow stabbing his eye is representative of blindness to feeling itself or the feelings accompanying sensing the reality of the Ultimate Truth. Alcoholic drinking represents the non-productive thirst for sensual pleasure. Similarly, the monkey in the tree is illustrative of a consciousness fixated on ego-oriented desires. A pregnant woman indicates that the birth of a child and eventual old age will bear Karma's burden of good and bad throughout a lifetime.

Contained in and connected with the outer Wheel of Life is the second wheel, which represents the six realms of existence. These include heavenly, asura, animal, hell, hungry ghosts and human realms (Gethin 2004; Snelling 1998). The six realms are metaphorical representations of conditioned existence or samsara. These realms are classified as dukkha or suffering being temporary and not perfect. Entry into one of the six realms is based on karmic deeds, good or bad. Bad deeds and decreased happiness, upon rebirth, means entry into the asura realm, where there is envy and greed for power. Bad deeds also lead to the animal realm in which a sentient being is hunted or slaughtered; the hell realm where suffering is harsh and very long; and hungry ghosts, due to past transgressions, are doomed to suffer insatiable hunger and thirst that cannot be quenched due to past unrelenting material greed. Good deeds lead to the heavenly realm where there is continual happiness, pleasure, and no suffering. Entry into the human realm is based on both past good and bad deeds, which reflect a sentient being's current human condition including, for instance, their social prestige and status. All of these realms are inhabited by sentient beings upon rebirth based on their past record of Karma. From the Buddhist perspective, being caught on the Wheel of Life means to continue to exist in the everyday realm without realizing or awakening to the Ultimate Truth (Snelling 1998). However, in each of the six realms there is a bodhisattva shown to assist all sentient beings toward obtaining the Ultimate Truth and happiness. In Mahayana Buddhism, who remains in this world works to enlighten all and spread happiness and bliss (Gethin 1998; Keown 2013; Leighton 2012). A bodhisattva is not yet a Buddha and not yet

awakened. Bodhisattvas are bodhicitta or the "mind of awakening" with a goal of achieving Buddhahood.

Finally, the third, innermost wheel represents the core reasons for negative karmic designations and decreased happiness. These are known as the Three Venoms: greed, hatred, and delusion. The poison of those trapped in everyday existence rather than knowing the Ultimate Truth energizes each of these Venoms. This is represented by sentient beings caught within the six realms in the second wheel. Ultimately, humans can exit the Wheel of Life including the third wheel and find bliss and happiness by becoming enlightened.

1.1. The Eightfold Path

The Eightfold Path is followed in order to lead an ethical life and thus to end ones' suffering, leading to happiness and the Ultimate Truth. The Eightfold Path is the ongoing condition of obtaining increasing bliss and happiness (Gethin 2004; Snelling 1998). The Path is divided into three parts (Gethin 2004; Snelling 1998). Sila encompasses proper physical actions and refraining from improper deeds of body and speech. Samadhi focuses on meditation practices, which help to gain the mastery over ones' own mind necessary to achieve the Ultimate Truth. Prajña offers insight into the true nature of the Ultimate Truth.

Contained within Sila are Right Speech, Right Action, and Right Livelihood (Gethin 2004; Snelling 1998). Right Speech is required because words have an impact on others, and also influence spiritual development. It is important to speak charitable words that are truthful, pleasant and benefit others (Morgan 2010). For the Buddha, this meant avoiding falsehoods, slander, harsh words, or gossip (Morgan 2010). Abstaining from false speech is important to happiness because lies are motivated either by greed, by which the suffering of material attachments is increased; hatred, by which it is intended for other people to suffer; or delusion, as in an exaggeration or joke, and by which rationality is abandoned and replaced by ignorance. Abstaining from slanderous speech is important because such speech is meant only to foster ill feelings and alienating division. Either the motivation to hurt another's

reputation or to win favor for your own ego is perverse and should be quelled. Happiness comes through cooperation, not self-interest and denigration. Abstaining from harsh language is important because it is born of anger, and aims to cause pain of some kind. A person who has controlled his own mind has no need for such expressions of enmity. Gentle words foster understanding, cooperation, and ultimately, happiness. Abstaining from idle chatter is important because if people talk of things, which have no depth or importance, they are more likely to find their minds wander into areas which are perverse or undesirable, which the mind will then feed on in unhealthy fantasy. Words should be chosen carefully in order to not diminish their meaning. Followers of this tenet should also try to avoid useless information in order to keep their minds unclouded in their path to understanding. The overarching goal of speaking Right Words is to create a foundation to establish peaceful relationships with all sentient beings (Mitchell 2008; Morgan 2010; Smith & Novak 2003).

Right Action means moral action that avoids causing harm to any sentient being in whatever one does (Gethin 2004; Snelling 1998). Right Actions are not only what actions a person should not do, but also what actions a person should do. Exhibiting compassion for all embodies this. Incorporated in Right Action is the moral code of the Five Precepts, which call for people to respect and cherish life and respect others (Mitchell 2008; Morgan 2010; Smith & Novak 2003). Buddhism places a heavy emphasis on the need to end destructive acts and to end dissatisfaction in the world through action. Abstaining from the taking of life is important because, aside from the obvious suffering that comes from the act of killing (the harm to the being itself, the emotional weight of the act of killing, and the grief of those who knew the victim), killing, like lying, comes from greed, hatred, or delusion, all of which hinder one's ability to find personal contentment. The opposite of the inclination to kill is deep compassion and sympathy for other sentient beings, and this type of love leads to widespread happiness. Abstaining from taking what is not given (through stealing or deceit) is important because Buddhism values contentment with what one has, and giving up ties to the material world. Theft in any form comes from greed or hatred, both of which

diminish happiness. Abstaining from sexual misconduct (having relations with a married or engaged person, a convict, one who is underage, those under a vow of celibacy, or close relations, or any intercourse which occurs by force) is important because according to the guidelines given in Buddhism partnerships, which constitute misconduct directly, this hurts someone in the process. In its most extreme form, the celibacy of nuns and monks represents the purity of thought required to reach Enlightenment, which should not be clouded with distracting sexual thoughts.

Right Livelihood includes engaging in occupations that do not cause harm, pain, or injustice for others (Gethin 2004; Snelling 1998). The Buddha included engaging in the sale of weapons, harming animals, and producing intoxicants as examples of harmful types of livelihood. Also, one should not make more money than one needs, as this could lead to deception and exploitation of others (Mitchell 2008; Morgan 2010; Smith & Novak 2003). The promotion of economic equality under GNH allows for people who may otherwise, due to their poverty, feel the need to resort to dishonest or directly harmful livelihoods to branch out into other facets of the economy, and to make an honest and productive living, while being able to support themselves and their family. The work one does should ultimately spread compassion to all sentient beings.

Within Samadhi are another three parts of the Noble Eightfold Path: Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration. Right Effort includes making use of meditation practices, which overcome negative or unwholesome states of mind. These meditation efforts should occur on an ongoing basis (Mitchell 2008; Morgan 2010; Smith & Novak 2003). Right Effort also includes ridding oneself of the desire to commit unwholesome acts (Mitchell 2008). Right effort involves the release of energy, which can be used in pursuit of "desire, aggression, violence, and ambition on the one hand, and generosity, self-discipline, kindness, concentration, and understanding on the other" (Access to Insight). This means that, specifically, when energy is focused on the elimination of suffering, it promotes happiness, and this concentration is Right Effort.

Right Mindfulness is having a keen sense of awareness about

what is happening in the present (Gethin 2004; Snelling 1998). This includes focusing on feelings, the body, current consciousness, and unwholesome thoughts through meditation practices (Morgan 2010). Meditation is essential for the mind to stay on the Eightfold Path because it focuses on feelings and thoughts from the past and idealizes what might happen in the future (Mitchell 2008; Morgan 2010; Smith & Novak 2003). Mindfulness through meditation is the kind of objective awareness that allows one to see into the true nature of the universe as well as to gain understanding of Buddhist teaching in the present. This stage of focus is closely tied to experiencing Enlightenment, the ultimate happiness. Right Mindfulness is "the only way," to indicate that a positive range of experiences are nothing without the insight granted through Right Mindfulness, and it is thus the key to sustaining one's earthly happiness.

Right Concentration requires that the focus of the mind is free of distraction so it will be clear and sharp enough to reach full realization of the Ultimate Truth. This process requires great patience and focus, and requires continual meditation. Key approaches to training the mind in Right Concentration are mastering tranquility and insights into reality (Mitchell 2008). This stage unifies the other mental factors in becoming Enlightened. It blocks out all distractions and focuses the mind on a single point for the greatest level of comprehension, given that the absence of ignorance and the presence of intense self-knowledge lead ultimately to happiness. Right Concentration is necessary to sharpen the ability of the other elements to the point at which they are able to penetrate into the true meaning of things. This understanding is where happiness comes from, either from the knowledge that the material world holds no bearing on personal satisfaction, or from the acceptance and application of the Four Noble Truths. Through Right Concentration, mental and emotional peacefulness ensue, which foster realization of the Ultimate Truth (Mitchell 2008; Morgan 2010; Smith & Novak 2003).

Prajña is the wisdom, which purifies the mind and allows awakening to the Ultimate Truth. Within Prajña are the final two parts of the Eightfold Path, Right Understanding and Right

Thought. Right Understanding is obtaining clear insight into the impermanence of the world, understanding how ego leads to greed and even evil, and comprehending every aspect of the Dharma, or Law, of the Buddha (Mitchell 2008; Morgan 2010; Smith & Novak 2003). Right Understanding includes agreement with the Four Noble Truths and the development of a deep awareness of dissatisfaction in the world (Mitchell 2008). Acceptance of the Four Noble Truths leads to the understanding and elimination of suffering, which in turn leads to happiness.

Right Thought includes developing freedom from states of mind that include greed and desire to harm others. Right Thought also focuses on refraining from unwholesome thoughts. Conversely, Right Thought also focuses on concern for the suffering of others (Mitchell 2008; Morgan 2010; Smith & Novak 2003). Renunciation of the material world fosters happiness in oneself by eliminating personal suffering due to desire and ego. Kindness and compassion foster happiness in others. Refusing to harm others limits the amount of suffering allowed to thrive in a society. By faithfully practicing the Eightfold Path, a person moves towards greater happiness, compassion, and joy.

1.2. Buddhism after the lifetime of the Buddha

A number of scholars believe about three months before the Buddha died at the age of 80 and entered paranirvana, or final liberation, the First Buddhist Council convened in Rajgir, then capital of the Kingdom of Magadha, to maintain Buddha's teachings (Harvey 2013). Most of Magadha is located in the modern Indian state of Bihar, which also includes Bodh Gaya where the Buddha found Enlightenment and happiness (Harvey 2013). After the Buddha reached parinirvana or final nirvana, his body was cremated, and his ashes were buried under eight stupas, or chortens, as they are called in Tibet and Bhutan. Stupas or chortens symbolize Buddha and his passage into Nirvana upon his death (Harvey 2013). Two other stupas contained the urn and ashes of the Buddha. Stupas depict a crowned Buddha sitting in a meditation position on a lion throne and are an important icon in Buddhism.

During the First Buddhist Council, the conveners divided

Buddha's teachings into Three Baskets, known as the Tripitaka (Mitchell 2008). The Sutra Pitaka or the Basket of Discourses provides advice by the Buddha on meditation techniques and requirements and contains instruction by the Buddha on training the mind. Another set of teachings is the Basket of Discipline, which contains more than 225 rules of conduct for monks and nuns. Finally, like many Buddhist teachings, the Basket of Higher Knowledge contains Buddha's insights into the nature of reality, including obtaining Enlightenment and happiness (Morgan 2010).

During the Second Buddhist Council, which was held about 100 years after the First Buddhist Council, simmering divisions in the monastic community reached a boiling point, which initiated a process that resulted in a schism in Buddhism (Assavavirulhakarn 2010; Morgan 2010; B. Suzuki 1948; D. T. Suzuki 1968).While there is not complete scholarly consensus as to what caused the schism, a number of scholars believe that the dispute between the Sthaviras and the Mahāsāṃghikas centered on the nature of what was the Vinaya. Vinaya, which is the path out of suffering by becoming, enlightened and happy, is the regulatory framework for the sangha or Buddhist religious community.

The Third Buddhist Council is thought to have been convened in Pataliputra by King Ashka in 250 B.C.E. Not all scholars believe the Third Buddhist Council actually happened, as there are no written records of the proceedings (Morgan 2010). However, oral Buddhist traditions affirm that it did occur. The primary purpose of the Third Buddhist Council was to purge "unworthy monks"(Mitchell 2008; Morgan 2010). Subsequently, Theravada Buddhism originated in Sri Lanka in the First Century C.E. and became firmly established by the Third Century C.E. (Lopez 2001; Snelling 1998). Mahayana Buddhism developed in China and India in the First Century C.E. and was firmly established by the Fourth Century C.E. (Lopez 2001; Snelling 1998; B. Suzuki 1948). Theravada Buddhism is primarily practiced in modern day Southeast Asia and Sri Lanka. Mahayana Buddhism is predominantly in Central and East Asia, including Bhutan, Tibet, and China as well as Korea, Japan, and Vietnam (Morgan 2010).

2. THE MAHAYANA WORLDVIEW

The core beliefs of Mahayana Buddhism deal with the impermanence of reality, non-dualistic reality, egoless reality, Karma, transmigration or rebirth, and the Ultimate Truth. The Mahayana view of impermanence includes fluidity of all spirit and matter (Gethin 1998; Keown 2013; Leighton 2012; Williams 2008). Impermanence is essential, as it represents how matter and energy are formed, endure, and decay in the universe (Gethin 1998; Keown 2013; Leighton 2012; Williams 2008). Like all forms of Buddhism, Mahayana also focuses on the process of uncovering insight into the Ultimate Truth (Kakol 2002).

From the perspective of Mahayana Buddhism, the Ultimate Truth of the universe is based on the non-duality of reality (Gethin 1998; Keown 2013; Leighton 2012; Williams, 2008), meaning that all in the universe is interconnected. Non-duality also means that all binary opposites will or can be eliminated. Any perceived dualities are based on illusions or doubts about the ultimate nature of the universe. Dualities must be eliminated in order to obtain Enlightenment, or knowledge of the Ultimate Truth (C. T. Dorji 2008).

Mahayana Buddhists also believe that all of reality is egoless. There is no rigidity in personalities, as they are subject to complex changes. Nor does Mahayana recognize the Judeo-Christian concept of the soul (Williams 2008). In Mahayana Buddhism all reality is impermanent. From this perspective, humans also have no permanent self or soul as they go from rebirth to rebirth (Harvey 2013). By contrast, in Judeo-Christian beliefs, the soul is the spiritual part of a human that is immortal and is often thought to survive beyond death (Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica 2010).

Additionally, in Mahayana, those that possess an ego are subject to suffering in the form of greed, craving for unnecessary things, undue political power, and even evil, all of which prevent them from obtaining Enlightenment. Thus, one of the goals of Mahayana Buddhism is to counter and eliminate egoism.

Transmigration in Mahayana reflects the Karma that sentient beings have obtained in past lives. Under transmigration, there is a causal link between the deeds of the current life and the quality of

the next one. The accumulation of good and bad acts in a lifetime provides the condition for a future birth (Snelling 1998). If a being's life is filled with bad Karma, they may be reborn in a hellish realm. Ultimately, positive Karma is an important end goal of Mahayana Buddhism, and it is embodied in all aspects of the Eightfold Path. When a sentient being comprehends the Ultimate Truth, there is a cessation of suffering and a destruction of the seeds of future rebirth based on good or bad karmic deeds (Lopez 2001).

2.1. Differences between Mahayana and Theravada worldviews

Beyond the core values of Buddhism, there are a few key fundamental differences between Mahayana and Theravada Buddhism. A major expectation of Mahayana Buddhism is an existence based on compassion and improving happiness and social wellbeing in the here-and-now for all sentient beings (Keown 2013). Instead of achieving Enlightenment for oneself, bodhisattvas seek to bring compassion, happiness, and wellbeing to everyone else. Service to others is central to being a bodhisattva. This contrasts with Theravada belief where the primary emphasis is on each individual seeking and obtaining awareness of the Ultimate Truth (Keown 2013).

Mahayana Buddhists also view the Buddha in Trikaya Doctrine as a benevolent supernatural entity, in contrast to the historical Buddha (Keown 2013; Leighton 2012). In Trikaya, Buddha has three bodies: his Nirmanakaya or body in this world; his Dharma body, in which he is eternal beyond all dualities in reality; and Sambhogaya, in which his body manifests itself for bodhisattvas in a celestial domain (Snelling 1998). Theravada does not have the Trikaya concept, viewing the Buddha as a historical figure (Leighton 2012). This belief in a supernatural Buddha eventually led to a new Mahayana worldview, where the Buddha contained three bodies. These are Dharmakaya, or the Buddha being the same as the ultimate truth; Sambohogakaya, where the Buddha who is transcendent exists in a heavenly paradise; and Nirmanakaya, where the Buddha has a mortal body on earth (Keown 2013).

2.2. Mahayana Buddhism and Gross National Happiness

The mission of Bodhisattvas in Mahayana Buddhism is to spread

happiness to the world. By awakening to the Ultimate Truth, one obtains clarity and insight about the true nature of the universe, as well as internal peace and happiness (Gethin 1998). This happiness results in joy in human relations. Through obtainment of the Ultimate Truth, greater and positive potentialities of the enlightened beings are unlocked. All laypeople have the inner Buddha nature, and thus can obtain this happiness (Leighton 2012).

2.2.1. Modern Gross National Happiness

In 1972 His Majesty King Jigme Singye Wangchuck announced that: "Gross National Happiness (GNH) is more important than Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (L. Dorji 2008)." This pronouncement by the fourth King of Bhutan has become in subsequent years a primary public policy to balance the growing pressures of modern capitalism and modernization with Bhutan's ancient Mahayana Buddhist traditions and culture (C. T. Dorji 1997; L. Dorji 2008; Mathou 1999, 2001; Ramakant & Misra 1996; Rose 1977; Sinha 2001; Voice of America News 2005; Wangchuk 2004). Under GNH, GDP is considered an inadequate measure of wellbeing and happiness (C. T. Dorji 1997; L. Dorji 2008; T. Dorji 2004; Mathou 1999, 2001; Ramakant & Misra 1996; Rose 1977; Sinha 2001; Voice of America News 2005; Wangchuk 2004). In one sense, a person can be happy while they are performing atrocious acts, as when a dysfunctional narcissistic person inflicts emotional pain on others for self-gratification, with no remorse. In addition, happiness and wellbeing can be defined as a current happy mood. On the other hand, wellbeing or happiness as described in GNH and Mahayana Buddhism includes current satisfaction with ones' entire life or a satisfaction with a fulfilling life. Each of these definitions of happiness and satisfaction are based on the meeting of human needs, environmental protection, cultural protection, and democratic or good governance including the protection of political and civil rights. Recently, these four pillars have been reclassified into nine domains. The domains include: psychological wellbeing, health, education, time use, cultural diversity and resilience, good governance, community vitality, ecological diversity and resilience, and living standards (Centre for Bhutan Studies, 2011a). Each

domain represents an essential part of national wellbeing and happiness. Happiness is defined as governmental action to create the conditions for a "good life" including meeting material needs, being in ecological harmony with the planet, and providing the basis for Bhutanese citizens to become Enlightened. For instance psychological wellbeing is defined, in part as a citizen's spirituality level and employment of good Karma (Centre for Bhutan Studies, 2011b).

In 2008 Bhutan adopted its first written Constitution, which contains several provisions that link GNH to Mahayana Buddhism (Royal Government of Bhutan 2008). Article 3, Section 1 declared that: "(Mahayana) Buddhism is the spiritual heritage of Bhutan, which promotes the principles and values of peace, non-violence, compassion, and tolerance." In Article 2, Section 2 related to the constitutional monarchy: Bhutan's King is required under the Chhoe-sid-nyi or dual system of religion and politics to promote Mahayana Buddhism as the state religion. Article 3, Section 4 empowers "religious institutions and personalities" to promote the spiritual heritage of the nation "…while also ensuring that religion remains separate from politics in Bhutan." Under Article 3, Section 3, the King also appoints the Je Khenpo (head monk) with training in the Drukpa School of Mahayana Buddhism. The Je Khenpo must be a highly skilled spiritual master in Mahayana Buddhism and be accomplished in ked-dzog or spiritual development. In turn, under Article 3, Section 5, the Je Khenpo appoints, with the recommendation of the Dratshang Lhentshog (Commissioner of Monastic Affairs), five lopons or masters of Mahayana Buddhism to serve on the central Buddhist Monk Council. Article 4, Section 1 requires that:

> *The state preserve, protect, and promote the cultural heritage of the country, including monuments, places and objects of artistic or historic interest, Dzongs (ancient Buddhist religious and civil fortresses), Lhakhangs (Buddhist temples), Goendeys (Buddhist monastic communities), Ten-sum (Buddhist images, scriptures, and stupas), Nyes (Buddhist pilgrimage sites), language, literature, music, visual arts and religion to enrich society and the cultural life of citizens.*

In tandem with this mandate to preserve and promote Mahayana

Buddhism as a state religion and policy, Article 9, Section 2 states, "The State shall strive to promote those conditions that will enable the pursuit of Gross National Happiness." As provided by the GNH Commission:

> *GNH is a multi-dimensional development approach that seeks to achieve a harmonious balance between material wellbeing and the spiritual, emotional and cultural needs of our society* (Gross National Happiness Commission 2015).

The GNH Commission further explains relative to spiritual happiness and GNH:

> *We have now clearly distinguished the 'happiness'… in GNH from the fleeting, pleasurable 'feel good' moods so often associated with that term. We know that true abiding happiness cannot exist while others suffer, and comes only from serving others, living in harmony with nature, and realizing our innate wisdom and the true and brilliant nature of our own minds* (Gross National Happiness Commission 2015).

This statement reflects the primary goal of seeking Enlightenment under Mahayana Buddhism. In Mahayana, overcoming suffering and becoming Enlightened and happy through the Fourth Noble Truth or Eightfold Path occurs by becoming aware of the nature of reality including good Karma by serving others and being in harmony with nature.

2.2.2. Implementation of Gross National Happiness

The GNH Commission is the key national planning agency in Bhutan that operationalizes and evaluates GNH's incorporation in all government programs (Gross National Happiness Commission 2015). In furtherance of this policy objective, the GNH Commission uses the Thimphu, Bhutan-based Centre for Bhutan Studies' GNH Index, which measures four pillars of GNH: economic growth or materialism, cultural preservation, ecological protection, and good governance (Centre for Bhutan Studies 2011a, 2011c). For the purposes of further analysis of GNH in Bhutanese society the four pillars have been expanded into nine domains (Centre for Bhutan Studies 2011a, 2011c; Thinley 2009). The nine domains

include: standard of living, good governance, time use and balance, community vitality, cultural vitality and diversity, ecosystem vitality and diversity, health of the population, education, and psychological wellbeing (Centre for Bhutan Studies 2011a, 2011c; Thinley 2009).

The Centre for Bhutan Studies has recently developed 33 measures based on national public opinion surveys to assess progress toward national wellbeing as reflected in the nine domains (Centre for Bhutan Studies 2011a, 2011c; Thinley 2009). The psychological wellbeing domain in particular and especially as it relates to government promotion of Mahayana Buddhism, measures the degree of spiritual happiness of Bhutanese citizens in the areas of: spirituality level, prayer recitation, meditation, and consideration of Karma (Centre for Bhutan Studies 2015). Ultimately, at the center of all development efforts under GNH is a focus on the material and spiritual welfare and wellbeing of each individual in Bhutan (Centre for Bhutan Studies 2011a, 2011c). As the GNH Commission indicates "The GNH paradigm concludes that 'economic growth is not an end in itself, but rather a means to achieve more important ends …happiness'" (Gross National Happiness Commission 2015).

GNH in Bhutan as implemented by governmental agencies is based on the Mahayana idea that Enlightenment can be obtained by everyone. Compassionate Mahayana public policies based on GNH can increase the likelihood of citizens becoming Enlightened, blissful, and happy. While there is no universally accepted definition of happiness, the specific religious-based Mahayana view of Enlightenment and happiness implemented through governmental action and public policies contrasts with several prominent modern western and secular views.

Utilitarianism, for instance, holds that the role of government is maximizing total benefits for many while reducing the suffering or negatives for as many as possible (Bentham 2007). The maximization of utility includes enhancing hedonistic pleasure, economic prosperity, and a lack of suffering or pain. This approach to material happiness relies on government, but focuses on promoting secular happiness for as many citizens as possible. Utilitarian

happiness in significant part contrasts with the Mahayana religious view of happiness contained in the Second Noble Truth, which calls for overcoming suffering related to unwarranted ego-cravings including seeking an undue amount of material things.

Another modern western view of happiness is contained in the Enlightenment-based idea of liberty, such as the "liberty, equality, fraternity" of France, "unity, justice and liberty" in Germany, "life, liberty, security of the person" in the Canadian Charter of Rights, and "life liberty and the pursuit of happiness" in the US Declaration of Independence. Liberty in each case is considered an inherent and inalienable right for human happiness by which governments are required to protect, in some combination, citizens' life, their liberty from political abuses by government, and private property. This contrasts, in part, with the GNH and Mahayana view of happiness, in which the Bhutanese state has a duty to promote conditions for citizens to individually and actively obtain Enlightenment and happiness. Here, the emphasis is not solely on government protecting rights, but also on citizens having a duty to practice compassion and seek Enlightenment and happiness.

A third example of a western view of happiness is Rawlsian happiness (Rawls 2005). From Rawl's perspective, people are made happy when they are successfully executing a rational plan in life, based on favorable conditions, and their expectations are good that the plan will succeed based on justice (Rawls 2005). Rawlsian justice includes every person simultaneously having the right to civil liberties, equality of opportunity, and distributive state policies that meet basic human needs. Again, the focus here is on secular governmental action to meet secular requirements for happiness for citizens. By contrast, the Mahayana view of happiness is focused on the religious goal of all citizens seeking and becoming Enlightened. However, in Mahayana Buddhism, as in Rawlsian justice, there is a goal of compassion for others by working to alleviate human suffering through such approaches as meeting basic human needs, through individual or government actions as in Bhutan, and respecting the sanctity and integrity of all sentient beings, including humans.

Unlike a number of western and secular approaches to happiness,

such as these three examples, in which the state provides basic needs or checks governmental abuses, Mahayana-oriented GNH includes governmental action to provide suitable conditions for religious happiness. This is in tandem with individual citizen responsibility to become enlightened.

3. CONCLUSION

Obtaining happiness is a central focus of Mahayana Buddhism doctrine, and in seeking the Ultimate Truth sentient beings look to reach a holistic balancing of material, emotional, and spiritual needs (Bhutan Broadcasting Service 2008; Tashi 2004; Thinley 2007). GNH means government facilitating the achievement of the collective happiness of society (Bhutan Broadcasting Service 2008; Tashi 2004). According to Mahayana Buddhist beliefs, happiness and compassion arise from awareness of suffering in the self and in others (achieved by removing the distraction of immediate suffering and through education).

While the 2008 Bhutanese Constitution explicitly calls for Mahayana Buddhism to be the state religion in Bhutan, the Constitution in Article 3, Section 2 requires that the King protect all religions in Bhutan. Article 7, Section 4 provides for freedom of religious practice with no person required to belong to another faith by means of "…coercion and inducement." As written in Article 7, Section 1, all Bhutanese citizens are accorded equal protection of the law and are not discriminated against based on religion. Moreover, Article 8, Section 3 requires that Bhutanese citizens promote tolerance regardless of "…religious, linguistic, regional or sectional diversities." Given that Mahayana Buddhism is the state religion in Bhutan and about 22% of the population is Hindu, these Constitutional provisions in a legal sense provide important requirements on the right to practice a religion other than Mahayana Buddhism (United States Central Intelligence Agency 2015). However, modern legal requirements since 2008 and reality as it occurs in societal practices in promoting freedom of religion may not always be 'in sync'. While GNH is a policy that explicitly promotes Mahayana Buddhism, a key question remains how GNH will bridge religious differences in its promotion of wellbeing. Will

non-Buddhists in Bhutan even be marginalized within GNH? The answer is not yet known, but is certain to be tested within the framework of the recent Constitutional provisions that afford human rights in the practice of religion while making Mahayana Buddhism a state religion.

The relief of material needs sponsored and promoted by the government, in tandem with the spiritual and emotional needs of individuals, are a primary goal of Bhutan in a Mahayana Buddhist context of compassion for all in this world. Moreover, Bodhisattvas can facilitate the development of a GNH society by spreading compassion and countering ignorance. Oppositely from GDP, GNH focuses on the individuals who make up society and their wellbeing, rather than external economic phenomena. Buddhist canons indicate that focusing only on ego-driven cravings and the illusion of material wealth will lead to unhappiness, making GNH an appropriate Buddhist response to the worldwide use of economic indexes as indicators of success.

***

References

Armstrong, K. (2004). *Buddha*. New York: Penguin Books.

Assavavirulhakarn, P. (2010). *The Ascendancy of Theravada Buddhism in Southeast Asia*. Chiang Mai, Thaliand: Silkworm Books.

Batchelor, M. (2010). *The Spirit of the Buddha*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Bechert , H. (1982). *The Date of the Buddha Reconsidered.*

Bentham, J. (2007). *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation (First Published in 1789)*. Dover Publications.

Bhutan Broadcasting Service. (2008). *Understanding the Development Philosophy of Gross National Happiness: Interview With Dasho Karma Ura, President of the Centre for Bhutan Studies*. Bhutan: Bhutan Broadcasting Service.

Centre for Bhutan Studies. (2011a). *Bhutan GNH Index*. http://www.grossnationalhappiness.com/articles/ Centre for Bhutan Studies. (2011b). *Explanation of GNH Index*. http://www.grossnationalhappiness.com/gnhIndex/intruductionGNH.aspx

Centre for Bhutan Studies. (2011c). *Results of the Second Nationwide 2010 Survey on Gross National Happiness.* http://www.grossnationalhappiness.com/

Centre for Bhutan Studies. (2015). *GNH 2010 Index, part I*. http://www.grossnationalhappiness.com/ Dorji, C. T. (1997). *Blue Annals of Bhutan*. Delhi: Vikas Publishing House Pvt, Ltd. Dorji, C. T. (2008). *A Concise Religious History of Bhutan*. Delhi: Prominent Publishers.

Dorji, L. (2008). *The Wangchuck Dynasty: 100 Years of Enlightened Monarchy*. Thimphu: Centre for Bhutan Studies.

Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica. (2010). *Soul.* Encyclopedia Britannica. http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/555149/soul

French, R. (2002). *The Golden Yoke: The Legal Cosmology of Buddhist Tibet*. Boulder, Colorado: Snow Lion Publications.

Gethin, R. (1998). *The Foundations of Buddhism*. London: Oxford University Press.

Gethin, R. (2004). *Cosmology Encylopedia of Buddhism* (Vol. A-L, Volume 1, pp. 183-187). New York: Macmillan Reference USA/Thomson/Gale

Gombrich, R. (1988). *Theravada Buddhism: A Social History from Ancient Benares to Modern Colombo*. London and New York: Psychology Press.

Goodman, C. (2008). Consequentialism, Agent-Neutrality, and Mahayana Ethics. *Philosophy East and West, 58*(1), 17-35. http://dx.doi.org/10.1353/pew.2008.0013

Gross National Happiness Commission. (2015). *FAQs On GNH*. http://www.gnhc.gov.bt/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/GNH-FAQs-pdf.pdf

Harvey, P. (2013). *An Introduction to Buddhism: Teachings, History and Practices*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kakol, P. (2002). A General Theory of Worldviews Based on Madhyamika and Process Philosophies. *Philosophy East and West, 52*(2), 207-223. http://dx.doi.org/10.1353/pew.2002.0027

Keown, D. (2013). *Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press. http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/actrade/9780199663835.001.0001

Leighton, T. D. (2012). *Faces of Compassion: Classic Bodhisattva Archetypes and Their Modern Expression*. Somerville, Massachusetts: Wisdom Publications.

Lopez, D. (2001). *The Story of Buddhism: A Concise Guide to Its History and Teachings*. New York: HarperOne.

Mathou, T. (1999). Political Reform in Bhutan. *Asian Survey, XXXIX*(4), 613-632. http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/3021241

Mathou, T. (2001). Bhutan in 2000. *Asian Survey, XLI*(1), 613-632.

McGovern, W. (1922). *An Introduction to Mahayana Buddhism*. New York: AMS Press.

Mitchell, D. (2008). *Buddhism: Introducing the Buddhist Experience*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Morgan, D. (2010). *Essential Buddhism: A Comprehensive Guide to Belief and Practice*. Santa Barbara, California: Prager.

Phuntsho, K. (2013). *Mipham's Dialectics and the Debates on Emptiness: To Be, Or Not To Be Or Neither*. Thimphu, Bhutan: Riyang Books.

Ramakant, & Misra, R. C. (1996). Buddhism in Bhutan and Sri Lanka: A Comparative Study. *Bhutan: Society and Policy*. New Delhi: Indus Publishing Company.

Rawls, J. (2005). *A Theory of Justice*. Belknap Press.

Rose, L. (1977). *The Politics of Bhutan*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press.

Royal Government of Bhutan. (2008). *The Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan*. http://www.bhutanaudit.gov.bt/About%20Us/Mandates/Constitution%20of%20Bhutan%202008.pdf

Sinha, A. C. (2001). *Himalayan Kingdom, Bhutan, Tradition, Transition, and Transformation*. New Delhi: Indus Publications.

Smith, H., & Novak, P. (2003). *Buddhism*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco.

Snelling, J. (1998). *The Buddhist Handbook: The Complete Guide to Buddhist Schools, Teaching, Practice, and History*. Rochester, Vermont: InnerTraditions.

Suzuki, B. (1948). *Mahayana Buddhism*. London: David Marlowe Limited.

Suzuki, D. T. (1968). *On Indian Mahayana Buddhism*. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers.

Tashi, K. (2004). The Role Of Buddhism in Achieving Gross National Happiness. In K. Ura & K. Galay (Eds.), *Gross National Happiness and Development*. Thimphu, Bhutan: Centre for Bhutan Studies.

Thinley, J. (2007). What is Gross National Happiness? In Centre for Bhutan Studies (Ed.), *Rethinking Development: Proceedings of the Second International Conference on Gross National Happiness*. Thimphu: Centre for Bhutan Studies.

Thinley, J. (29 August, 2009). *Keynote Address by the Honorable Jigmi Thinley, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bhutan on the Relevance of Gross National Happiness (GNH) Paradigm to Japan.* Paper presented at the Junior Chamber of Commerce of Japan, Fukuoka, Japan.

United States Central Intelligence Agency. (2015). *The World Factbook: Bhutan*. https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bt.html

Ura, D. K. (2012). Gross National Happiness and Buddhism. (October-December 2007). http://www.kosei-shuppan.co.jp/english/text/mag/2007/07_101112_10.html

Voice of America News. (April 29, 2005). Bhutan Experiments in Democracy, *Voice of America News*. http://www.voanews.com/content/a-13-2005-04-20-voa51/397244.html

Wangchuk, T. (2004). The Middle Path to Democracy in the Kingdom of Bhutan. *Asian Survey, 44*(6), 836-http://dx.doi.org/10.1525/as.2004.44.6.836

Williams, P. (2008). *Mahāyāna Buddhism: The Doctrinal Foundation*. London: Routledge.

CANADA

BUDDHISM IN CANADA*

Mauro Peressini**



Buddha statue, Gampo Abbey, Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia.

*. This chapter was originally published in *Choosing Buddhism : The Life Stories of Eight Canadians*, 2016, edited by Mauro Peressini, a copublication by the Canadian Museum of History and the University of Ottawa Press. Reprinted with permission.

**. Dr., Curator of Social History, Canadian Museum of History, Quebec, Canada

Even though publications on various aspects of Buddhism in Canada have become more common in recent years,[1] and Buddhism has been present in Canada for over one hundred years, a detailed history has yet to be written for each region and the country as a whole. Despite this gap, it is generally agreed that there are at least two major phases in the history of Buddhism in Canada: the period preceding 1967 and the period after.

BEFORE 1967

The introduction of Buddhism before 1967 was essentially associated with two groups: Chinese immigrants and, to an even greater extent, Japanese immigrants.[2] Chinese immi-grants, who began to arrive in British Columbia in the 1880s, came mainly to work in mines and on the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway. The Buddhist traditions they brought with them often had elements of Confucianism and Taoism.[3] As for the Japanese, they brought mainly Jodo Shinshu, a Japanese school related to

1. See, for example, the many regional articles in Bruce Matthews, ed., Buddhism in Canada (New York: Routledge, 2006), as well as the articles published in Harding et al., Wild Geese, and in John. S. Harding,Victor. S. Hori and Alexander Soucy, eds., Flowers on the Rock: Global and Local Buddhisms in Canada (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014). See also Suwanda Sugunasiri, "Buddhism in Metropolitan Toronto: A Preliminary Overview," Canadian Ethnic Studies 21, no. 2 (1989): 83–103; Terry Watada, Bukkyo Tozen: A History of Jodo Shin-shu Buddhism in Canada, 1905–1995 (Toronto: HpF Press and the Toronto Buddhist Church, 1996); Janet McLellan, Many Petals of the Lotus: Five Asian Buddhist Communities in Toronto (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999); Angie Danyluk, "To Be or Not to Be: Buddhist Selves in Toronto," Contemporary Buddhism 4, no. 2 (2003): 128–141; Mathieu Boisvert, "Buddhists in Canada: Impermanence in a Land of Change," in Religion and Ethnicity in Canada, ed. Paul Bramadat and David Seldjak (Toronto: Pearson, 2005), 69–88; Henry C. H. Shiu, "Buddhist Studies in Ontario," Canadian Journal of Buddhist Studies 1 (2005): 73–86; Lynn Eldershaw, "Collective Identity and the Postcharismatic Fate of Shambhala International," Nova Religio 10, no. 4 (2007): 72–102; John Harding, "Jo¯do Shin-shu¯ Buddhism in Southern Alberta," Our Diverse Cities 3 (2007): 140–144; Suwanda Sugunasiri, Thus Spake the Sangha: Early Buddhist Leadership in Toronto (Toronto: Nalanda Publishing Canada, 2008).

2. Beyer, "Buddhism in Canada: A Statistical Overview from Canadian Censuses, 1981–2001," 113; Boisvert, "Buddhists in Canada: Impermanence in a Land of Change," 72.

3. Bruce Matthews, "Buddhism in Canada," in Westward Dharma: Buddhism Beyond Asia, eds. Charles S. Prebish and Martin Baumann (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 121.

Pure Land Buddhism. That school's first Canadian temple was built in Vancouver in 1905. Others were subsequently founded further east, as Japanese communities spread: in Alberta in the late 1920s, Toronto in the 1940s, Manitoba in the 1950s, and Quebec in the 1960s.[4] As Chinese and Japanese immigrants moved eastward, they carried their faith with them across the country.

Census figures for the period of 1901 to 1971 show that, throughout those decades, the number of Canadians who declared that they were Buddhist remained small, as Canada was still religiously monolithic, largely dominated by Christian denominations. Indeed, the number of Buddhists increased from about 8,000 to about 16,000 over those seventy years.[5] The census records also show that Buddhism in Canada was predominantly Japanese throughout that period. In the 1971 census, for example, about two-thirds of Canadians who stated that they were Buddhist were still of Japanese origin.[6]

AFTER 1967[7]

In the history of Buddhism in Canada, 1967 was a turning point. Until then, Canadian immigration legislation was based on the notion of race. It granted preference to immigrants of European origin and made it difficult for those who were considered to be of "undesir-able races" to enter the country. People of Asian origin were in the latter category. In 1967, Canada revised its legislation and began to assess immigrants' applications on a point system that no longer took race into account. Other criteria were used when giving potential newcomers points, including level of education, knowledge of the official languages and type of occupation. In addition, when Canada adopted its multiculturalism policy in the 1970s, it officially

4. Harding et al., Wild Geese, 4. For more information on the presence of the Japanese school of Jo¯do Shinshu¯ in Canada, see Terry Watada, "Looking East: Japanese Canadians and Jodo Shinshu Buddhism, 1905–1970," (ibid., 62–83) and John S. Harding, "Jodo Shinshu in Southern Alberta: From Rural Raymond to Amalgamation," (ibid., 134–167).

5. Beyer, "Buddhism in Canada," 114.

6. Ibid., 115.

7. For an in-depth review of part of this period, see, in particular, Henry C. H. Shiu, "Buddhism after the Seventies," in Wild Geese, Harding et al., 84–110.

opened its doors to people of different cultures and encouraged the preservation of those cultures on Canadian soil.

Those changes led to a huge increase in the number of immigrants from non-European countries and especially from various regions in Asia: Tibet, China, Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand, Singapore, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Korea and Japan.[8] Consequently, Buddhism, and many of its schools and traditions, became more widely established throughout the country: the schools of Theravada Buddhism from Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand, Laos and Cambodia; Ch'an from China; the Japanese, Korean and Vietnamese schools of Zen; the schools of Pure Land Buddhism from China, Japan and Vietnam; the schools of Tibetan Vajraya¯na Buddhism, and so on.[9] Moreover, the diversity of Canada's Buddhist landscape was accentuated since each Buddhist community tended to place emphasis on certain doctrines and practices to the detriment of others, leading to a wide variety of rituals, ceremonies and feasts throughout the country. Those practices became even more diversified because each group had to adapt them to meet the needs of the respective communities in a sociocultural context that was different from those of the countries of origin.[10]

An analysis of census figures for the period from 1971 to 2001 shows that the number of Canadians who stated that they were Buddhist increased from about 16,000 in 1971 to close to 52,000 in 1981 (a 225% increase for the decade), to over 163,000 in 1991 (a 213% increase), and to more than 300,000 in 2001 (a 84% increase).[11] In other words, the number of Canadians who declared that they were Buddhist skyrocketed, particularily during the 1970s and 1980s. The results of the National Household Survey conducted by Statistics Canada in 2011 appear to indicate that the slowing down of this trend noticeable in the 1990s continued in

8. For an overview of immigration to Canada from some of those countries and its distribution in Canada, see Boisvert, "Buddhists in Canada," 73–75.

9. For an overview of the diversification of Buddhist schools and traditions as Buddhism spread in Asia, see Mathieu Boisvert, "Buddhists in Canada: Impermanence in a Land of Change," 70–72.

10 . Ibid., 75–78.

11. Beyer, "Buddhism in Canada," 114.

the first decade of the 2000s, since the 366,830 Canadians who declared that they were Buddhist in 2011 represent an increase of only 22% compared with 2001. However, since Statistics Canada changed its methodology for the 2011 census, it is impossible to do a reliable comparison of the 2011 figures and those of the previous censuses.[12] In what follows, therefore, the Statistics Canada figures for 2011 should be considered mere estimates.

In 2001, in a Canadian religious landscape that was becoming more diversified, Buddhism was ranked fourth among the main religions, behind Christianity, Islam and Judaism, and was followed closely by Hinduism and Sikhism.[13] In 2011, according to Statistics Canada estimates, Buddhism was ranked fifth, behind Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism, but it now preceded Judaism. However that may be, the huge influx of Buddhist immigrants starting in the 1970s led to a proportional increase in the number of Buddhist temples and centres throughout the country and an upsurge in their membership over the decades.

Today, Buddhism is fully a part of Canada's religious landscape. In 2015, for example, 600 Buddhist organizations, centres and temples, catering to both Asians and non-Asians, were listed on the Sumeru Guide to Canadian Buddhism website, taking all traditions and schools into account. Their distribution was as follows: Prince Edward Island, 3; Nova Scotia, 25; New Brunswick, 7; Newfoundland and Labrador, 3; Quebec, 73; Ontario, 242; Manitoba, 12; Saskatchewan, 12; Alberta, 57; British Columbia, 163; Yukon, 2; and Nunavut, 1. Some temples began to gain architectural prominence in the urban landscape of Canada's cities. In Toronto, for example, there were about forty Buddhist temples

12. The question on religious affiliation appeared only every ten years, in the census taken at the beginning of each decade. Until 2001, it was asked in the mandatory general census, based on a random sampling. Since 2011, the question has been asked in the National Household Survey, which is not mandatory; people participate on a voluntary basis. Despite the efforts Statistics Canada has made to overcome the resulting problems, the possibility of random sampling is lost, so any comparison of the survey data and the data of the censuses is unreliable. Peter Beyer also shares this opinion (email, August 28, 2014).

13. Lorne L. Dawson and Joel Thiessen, The Sociology of Religion, a Canadian Perspective (Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press, 2014), 188.

in 2004, some of them as imposing as the city's Christian churches or synagogues, and with the same type of religious presence in their neighbourhoods.

From 1971 to 2001, the significant increase in the number of Canadian Buddhists was, to a great extent, the result of massive immigration from Asia. Indeed, the Canadians who stated that they were both Buddhist and of Asian origin accounted for almost 80% of Canadian Buddhists in 1971, over 90% in 1981, over 95% in 1991, and over 96% in 2001.[14]The percentage for 2011 was 90%.[15]

The origins of the Canadians who stated that they were Buddhist also became more diversified. People of Japanese origin accounted for only 20% of Canadian Buddhists in 1981; that proportion dropped to 8% in 1991 and to 4.5% in 2001 (3.6% in 2011).[16] Buddhists of Vietnamese origin (over a third of Canadian Buddhists in 1981, 1991 and 2001, and 27% in 2011) or Chinese origin (30%, 46% and 55% in 1981, 1991 and 2001 respectively, and 47% in 2011) were the most numerous at the time.[17]

THE APPEAL OF BUDDHISM IN CANADIAN SOCIETY

Taking into consideration Canadian society as a whole, Buddhism has been one of the religions that has found favour with a growing number of Canadians since the late 1960s. An Angus Reid poll conducted in 2009, for example, revealed that 57% of Canadians had a favourable opinion of Buddhism, versus 53% for Judaism, 41% for Hinduism, 30% for Sikhism, and 28% for Islam, placing Buddhism first among the non-Christian religions.[18] Many other facts indicate how well this spirituality has been received in Canadian society. Those include the attention the media has devoted to major figures

14. Beyer, "Buddhism in Canada," 115. It should be noted that the percentage for 1971 is probably higher because the number of Canadians who stated that they were Buddhist and originally from Southeast Asia or Korea is not available. It should also be noted that for the 1991 and 2001 censuses, respondents could specify more than one ethnic identity.

15. Statistics Canada, personalized table from the 2011 National Household Survey.

16. Beyer, "Buddhism in Canada," 115; Statistics Canada, personalized table from the 2011 National Household Survey.

17. Ibid.

18. Dawson and Thiessen, The Sociology of Religion, 198

such as the Dalai Lama and the Vietnamese Zen master Thich Nhat Hanh; the growing number of radio and television programs about Buddhism or Tibet;[19] the many documentaries and fiction films shown in theatres and on television;[20] the showbusiness personalities who have declared themselves as Buddhist; and the introduction of courses on Buddhism at several postsecond-ary institutions.

As for the number of Canadians who have converted to Buddhism over the decades, it is almost impossible to get exact figures. Even though studies have been conducted recently on that group[21] no one has ever established the precise number of Canadians who have converted to Buddhism from another religion, atheism or agnosticism. Statistics Canada censuses obviously do not contain any questions on religious conversion. We must also bear in mind that responses to census questions related to religious affiliation (and to ethnic origin as well) are subjective in nature, which raises problems. One example is that of people who practise Buddhism—sometimes very seriously—but refuse to define themselves as Buddhists because they feel that the term "Buddhism," created in the West, transforms the Buddha's teachings into a theology, metaphysics, philosophy or dogmatism that is not in tune with their initial spirit and nature. In addition, it is impossible to know what proportion of Asian Canadians converted to Buddhism after arriving in Canada with a non-Buddhist religion or having grown up in a non-Buddhist family. This could be important to know since a significant number of people who immigrated to Canada from Asia practised a religion other than Buddhism. For example, according

19. There were several in 2004 alone; for example, the radio series "Intuitions du bouddhisme," created by Sion Assouline and broadcast as five episodes of Radio-Canada's D'un horizon à l'autre, as well as the television documentary series Pursuit of Happiness, broadcast on CBC, and "Le bouddhisme," an episode of Télé-Québec's Des nouvelles de Dieu.

20. For example, Little Buddha (1993), Seven Years in Tibet (1997), Kundun (1997), The Cup (1999), and Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter… and Spring (2003).

21. See, for example, Angie Danyluk, "To Be or Not to Be: Buddhist Selves in Toronto"; Lynn Eldershaw, "Collective Identity and the Postcharismatic Fate of Shambhala International"; Patricia Campbell, Knowing Body, Moving Mind: Ritualizing and Learning at Two Buddhist Centers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Patricia Campbell, "Transforming Ordinary Life: Coming to Zen Buddhism in Toronto," in Wild Geese, Harding et al., 187–209.

to census figures, in 2001 a large proportion of Asian Canadians stated that they were Christian: 15.7% of those who came from the People's Republic of China, 34.3% of those from Hong Kong, 20.1% of those from Taiwan, 13.5% of those from Japan, 25.3% of those from Southeast Asia, 75% of those from Korea, and 31.7% of people of Chinese origin who arrived from Southeast Asia.[22] Moreover, the Canadians who stated that they were Buddhist and that their ethnic origin was Canadian pose another problem. There were sixty-five such cases in 1971, 105 in 1981, 1,570 in 1991 and 15,685 in 2001 (13,520 in 2011).[23] Since this ethnic category could legitimately be used by everyone who felt Canadian, regardless of where they came from and their family's origin, it is not possible to ascertain what proportion of those "Canadian Buddhists" were Buddhist converts and not Asians who arrived in Canada as Buddhists or whose families practised that religion. As Peter Beyer notes, the significant increase in their number over the past decades is probably due to the fact that this ethnic category— Canadian— has become more popular in Canadian society in general.[24]

Although it is impossible to know exactly how many Canadians have converted to Buddhism over the decades, we can get an idea of how appealing Buddhism was to Canadians who were not initially Buddhist by looking at the figures for a specific ethno-cultural group, provided it is reasonable to believe that the vast majority of its members were not originally Buddhist. This may be the case for Canadians who stated that they were Buddhist and of Western European origin, even though some of them may have converted to Buddhism before immigrating to Canada. There is a significant progression in this group, with the numbers doubling every ten years between 1971 and 2001: 2,210 Canadians of Western European origin stated that they were Buddhist in 1971, 4,040 did so in 1981, increasing to 10,795 in 1991, and to 22,215 in 2001.[25] Despite the

22 . Beyer,"Buddhism in Canada," 117.

23. Ibid., 115; Statistics Canada, personalized table from the 2011 National Household Survey.

24. Beyer,"Buddhism in Canada," 114.

25. Ibid., 115. Beyer counted only the Canadians who stated that they were from a Western European country or region.

reservations expressed above regarding the accuracy of census figures, the data for 2001 led Beyer to state that "a conservative estimate of the number of Western Buddhists in Canada in 2001 would be somewhere in the low 20,000s," and that this seems to indicate that Buddhism appeals more to Canadians of Western origin than other non-Christian religions.[26] But even though the number of Canadians who have converted to Buddhism remains uncertain, the significant progression in those who stated that they were both of Western European origin and Buddhist shows that the Buddha's teachings definitely attracted a rapidly increasing number of Canadians of Western origin. Indeed, the results of the National Household Survey conducted by Statistics Canada in 2011 seem to show that this progression has accelerated over the last decade, since 63,770 Canadians declared that they were both of Western European origin and Buddhist—almost triple the number in 2001.[27] Therefore, everything seems to indicate that, even though they represent a minority among all Canadians who declared that they were Buddhist (7.4% in 2001 and 17.4% in 2011), the rate of conversion is growing rapidly.

A FAVOURABLE CONTEXT

In the life stories featured in this book, readers will discover how, in the concrete course of each person's life, a complex and unique set of factors (values, specific experiences, predisposition, opportunities, encounters, crises and more) played a role in the decision to convert to Buddhism and make it a way of life. For the moment, let us set aside the complexity that is specific to all concrete lives and look at the more general context within which each of

26. Ibid., 126–127. According to Beyer, 20,000 Canadians of Western origin converted to Buddhism is proportionately greater than the figures for other religions, such as Islam, Sikhism and Hinduism. See his Note 11 on p. 130.

27. Statistics Canada, personalized table from the 2011 National Household Survey. As previously mentioned (see Note 12), it is difficult to compare the figures for 2011 with those from the previous censuses. The ethnic origins considered are those Beyer took into account for 2001: English, Irish, Scottish, Welsh, Other British Islands n.i.e, Breton, French, Austrian, Belgian, Dutch (Netherlands), Flemish, German, Luxembourger, Swiss, Frisian, Finnish, Danish, Icelandic, Norwegian, Swedish, Northern Europe Origins n.i.e, Cypriot, Greek, Italian, Maltese, Portuguese, Sicilian, Spanish, Basque.

those individual journeys was set. From this broader perspective, the obvious appeal of Buddhism in Canada may be explained by a context that has been favourable to it since the late 1960s. Certain elements of this favourable context can be clearly identified.

The most important element is the accessibility of the Buddhist teachings themselves, which allowed a growing number of Canadians to gain access to the teachings of various Buddhist schools and traditions, often established side-by-side in the same city or region—a situation without precedent in the history of Buddhism.

This accessibility was in part due to the arrival of Asian Buddhist masters, who spent time in North America or settled here to give teachings and open centres for Westerners. Examples of such Asian masters include the Japanese Zen master Shunryu Suzuki Roshi, who founded the San Francisco Zen Center in 1962; the Japanese Zen master Joshu Sasaki Roshi, who founded the Cimarron Zen Center in Los Angeles in 1968 (now called the Rinzai-ji Zent Center), and many other centres, including, in Canada, the Zen Centre of Vancouver and the Centre Zen de la Main in Montreal (now called Enpuku-ji); the Korean monk Samu Sunim, who arrived in North America in 1968 and founded Zen temples in Toronto and several cities in the United States; the Tibetan master Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche, who arrived in the United States in 1970 and founded the vast network of Shambhala International centres (whose head office, initially in Boulder, Colorado, was moved to Halifax, Nova Scotia, in 1986), and Gampo Abbey on Cape Breton Island; the Tibetan master Kalu Rinpoche, who made frequent trips to the United States and Canada from 1971 to 1989, where he founded several study, practice and retreat centres; and the Tibetan master Geshé Khenrab Gajam, who arrived in Montreal in 1972 and not only served the Tibetan community in the Montreal region, but also taught Westerners before and after founding the Tibetan Buddhist Temple in Montreal, in 1980.

The accessibility of Buddhist teachings was also made possible by the fact that many centres with motherhouses in Asia and elsewhere opened their doors in Canada. They include the Vipassana Meditation Movement, founded by Indian master Satya Narayan

Goenka; the Soka Gakkai International, based in Japan; the New Kadampa Tradition, founded by Tibetan master Geshé Kelsang Gyatso and based in England; and the Order of Interbeing, which was established by Vietnamese Zen master Thich Nhat Hanh and whose principal centre is located in France.

Another phenomenon that facilitated the study and practice of Buddhist teachings by Canadians was the number of North Americans who studied Buddhism in Asia and sub-sequently returned to North America to teach. One example is Roshi Philip Kapleau, who studied Zen in Japan with Daiun Sogaku Harada Roshi (1871–1961) and Hakuun Yasutani Roshi (1885–1973) before becoming director of the Rochester Zen Center and establishing other centres, such as the Toronto Zen Centre and the Montreal Zen Group, which later became the Montreal Zen Center. Other similar cases are Jack Kornfield (who studied in Thailand and Burma), Sharon Salzberg (who studied in India) and Joseph Goldstein (who studied in Thailand, India, Burma and Tibet), all three of whom co-founded the Insight Meditation Society in Barre, Massachusetts, in 1976. The society is associated with Theravada Buddhism and has centres in the United States, Canada and elsewhere. Ajahn Viradhammo, who is featured in this book, is another example of an Asia-trained Western teacher who subsequently contributed to the diffusion of Buddhism in Canada and North America. After studying in Thailand with Ajahn Chah, Viradhammo returned to Canada and founded the Tisarana Buddhist Monastery, near Ottawa, in the early 2000s.

As a result of all this, the number of centres and temples where non-Asian Canadians could practise quickly grew. Thus Henry Shiu compiled a list of Buddhist temples and meditation centres in some major Canadian centres—eighty-one in the Vancouver area, sixty-seven in central Toronto and fifty-four in the Montreal region. According to Shiu's estimates, in at least half of them the principal teacher is a Westerner, the audience is Western, and the language used is English or French.[28]

In addition to the presence of its teachings in North America

28. Shiu, "Buddhism after the Seventies," 108.

and Canada, Buddhism also benefitted from the diversification of Canada's religious landscape, which began in the late 1960s and led to the presence of a multitude of beliefs, values and religious practices in the country. Throughout the nineteenth century and until the mid-twentieth century, Canada's religious landscape was largely monolithic; the great majority of Canadians identified with one of the five main Christian denominations (Methodism, Presbyterianism, Anglicanism, the Baptist Church and Roman Catholicism).[29] Various factors changed all that. Because of the revision of Canada's immigration legislation, noted above, and massive post-war immigration from every part of the world, the religious traditions present in Canada became more diverse, both within Christianity, which remained dominant (diversity of Catholic practices, depending on the country people came from, and diversity of Protestant denominations, and Orthodox Christianity), and outside of it (Jewish traditions, the Shia and Sunni branches of Islam, Hinduism, various traditions of Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism, Sikhism, and others). In the 1950s, only 500,000 Canadians identified with non-Christian religions, but by 2000 that number had grown to close to two million.[30]Access to this religious diversity and the alternative world views that accompanied it was furthered by an increase in the level of education of the Canadian population, greater geographic mobility, the development of communications media with the dawn of the information era, the development of the Internet, and globalization. The modernization of Canadian society also led to significant changes and modernization movements within several religions to adapt to the new realities (changes in the liturgy, the standards of behaviour imposed and the role of women, policies related to gay marriage and the like), thereby contributing to the diversification of Canada's religious landscape. Lastly, since the 1960s, a multitude

29. Dawson and Thiessen, The Sociology of Religion, 159.

30. Reginald Bibby, Restless Gods: The Renaissance of Religion in Canada (Toronto: Stoddart, 2002), cited by Dawson and Thiessen in The sociology of Religion, 165. For the 2001 census, Dawson and Thiessen (188) provide the following figures on the most important non-Christian religions: 579,640 Canadians stated that they were Muslim; 329,995 said that they were Jewish; 300,345 declared that they were Buddhist; 297,200 stated that they were Hindu; and 278,415 said that they were Sikh.

of new religions have appeared,[31] and although they have often been labelled cults or sects, they have also contributed to religious diversity in Canada.

This phenomenal diversification of Canada's religious landscape introduced an unprecedented degree of choice and relativism with regard to beliefs, values, religious practices, and ways of behaving and acting. Ideas and beliefs that had until then been taken for granted were becoming less and less accepted by all, and were thus subject to questioning by other individuals or groups. Many Canadians became open to other religious universes, such as Buddhism, and questioned the world view specific to the traditional positions adopted by the religion they had grown up with, a religion that no longer seemed to be the only possible truth, or necessarily the truest.[32]

In addition, in the 1970s and the years that followed, a growing number of Canadians changed their relationships with their religious institutions. As shown by the drop in regular attendance at religious services over that period,[33] the decreased membership of the traditional Churches and denominations,[34] and the decline in the socialization of children in their parents' religions, many Canadians loosened their exclusive ties to their original religious institutions. Social or family obligations also became less and less of a reason to adhere to religious traditions. In keeping with the values of tolerance, individualism and freedom of expression, for a growing number of people, religion became an increasingly private matter, an area where personal choice was claimed, as well as the right to independently create one's own spirituality and

31. The Children of God/The Family, Krishna Consciousness, the Divine Light Mission, the Unification Church, Scientology, Transcendental Meditation, the Process, Eckankar, the Rajneesh movement, the Raelians, etc.

32. Dawson and Thiessen, The Sociology of Religion, 142.

33. In 1957, 53% of Canadians attended religious services on a weekly basis, but that figure fell to 31% in 1975 and to 23% in 1990. Reginald Bibby, Unknown Gods: The Ongoing Story of Religion in Canada (Toronto: Stoddart, 1993), cited by Dawson and Thiessen in The Sociology of Religion, 161.

34. Ibid. In 1957, 82% of Canadians stated that they were members of a local religious congregation, but that figure dropped to 48% in 1975 and to 29% in 1990.

belief system by drawing upon several sources, based on one's aspirations, needs, preferences, feelings and individual experiences. A new standard emerged: people had to choose for themselves the beliefs they identified with, rather than rely on the authority of experts and the traditional religious representatives. For example, reading books on spirituality while choosing alternative medicine, and practising yoga or a form of Buddhist meditation became an acceptable alternative way of meeting one's immediate spiritual needs. Or, as Dawson and Thiessen state, a growing number of people have come to see little inconsistency in identifying with Christ, practising Buddhist meditation, respecting the wisdom of the Qur'an, and using Ayurvedic medicine to treat their ills. Their focus is on the perceived similarities between traditions, which they see as essential, and not the historical differences, which they think are accidental. They are not concerned with keeping the traditions pure and favour creatively borrowing whatever ideas ring true.[35]

Buddhism did not just benefit from an unprecedented openness to religious diversity; it also gained in esteem for reasons that are specific to it. First of all, the late 1960s and the 1970s were marked by countercultural movements spearheaded by many young people who questioned various aspects of society's conformism. In the area of spirituality, those young people were looking for alternative lifestyles and world views, and that led many to take an interest in mystical and philosophical thought from India (yoga, for example) and the Far East (Zen Buddhism, for example). They viewed these traditions as highly evolved spiritual systems capable of countering the excessive materialism and militarism of Western societies, and the religious conformism of the traditional Christian Churches as practised in the modern Western world. For many who were at odds with the rigid moral codes of the dominant traditional religions, for example, Buddhism appeared to be less moralistic and to allow greater moral freedom. Others saw Buddhism as a teaching devoid of proselytism and profoundly tolerant and respectful of

35. Dawson and Thiessen, The Sociology of Religion, 145. Dawson and Thiessen offer a more in-depth discussion of the points just mentioned. See, in particular, the sections titled "Religion in the Late Modern World" and "The New Religious Consciousness" in Chapter 6, "Religion in Canada since the 1960s" in Chapter 7, and the concluding remarks in Chapter 9.

individual spiritual convictions and traditions. And to those who were searching for a more holistic and less analytical understanding of the world, Buddhism seemed to be a spirituality that placed emphasis on the interrelated nature of all beings and things, on harmony between body and spirit, the human world and nature, the spiritual and the material, and the subjective and the objective. Obviously, all these attitudes were not limited to the 1960s and 1970s; they have prevailed in various ways since then.

Moreover, for many people who were immersed in the triumphant individualism of the 1970s and the decades that followed, for whom individual autonomy was a cardinal value, there was certainly an aspect of Buddhism that was particularly appealing: its experiential nature. Indeed, in the eyes of many Westerners, Buddhism appeared to be an indi-vidual quest for happiness through an interior journey and the discovery of the truths Buddhism teaches about suffering. What's more, to undertake that quest it was not necessary to request the intervention of a transcendent power or god, or to have blind faith in dogma, truths and beliefs that were imposed. Indeed, according to a widespread interpretation of a passage from the Kalama Sutta, one of the Buddha's discourses, the Buddha warned people against all tendency to accept teachings and beliefs, including his own, strictly on the basis of rumours, hearsay, accepted traditions, authoritative religious texts, mere logic, appearances, speculative opinions, the plausibility of certain possibilities or the authority granted to a teacher. He apparently pointed out, on the contrary, that the only valid reason to follow teachings, including his own, is personal experience, putting those teachings to the test in one's personal practice, in order to assess their benefits or disadvantages in terms of happiness or suffering.[36]

---

36. The Kalama Sutta is a discourse that the Buddha is said to have delivered to the Kalamas, a clan of nobles who lived in Kosala, a former state in northern India. There are various translations of that discourse. The passage discussed here was translated as follows by the monk Thanissaro Bhikkhu (see: http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/an/an03/an03.065.than.html). The Buddha apparently said:

So, as I said, Kalamas: Don't go by reports, by legends, by traditions, by scripture, by logical conjecture, by inference, by analogies, by agreement through pondering views, by probability, or by the thought, "This contemplative is our teacher." When you know for yourselves that, "These qualities are unskilful; these qualities are blameworthy; these qualities are criticized by

By empowering individuals on their spiritual journey and giving them a sense of agency, this interpretation—that the Buddhist path is an experiential one—certainly attracted many people in the 1970s and the years that followed, a time when a growing number of Canadians and other Westerners turned to forms of spiritual quests that were more individualistic and based on first-hand experience of what was taught.[37]

We must also bear in mind that the countercultural movements of the late 1960s had a social and political dimension that continued into the decades that followed in various forms. They gave rise to pacifist demonstrations against the Vietnam War, the feminist struggle for gender equality, the fight for the equality and civil rights of blacks, environ-mental protection movements and demands for greater democratization of society. In such a context, Buddhism may have seemed particularly appealing to many people, not only because it is inherently pacifist, egalitarian[38] and respectful of all

---

the wise; these qualities, when adopted & carried out, lead to harm & to suffering"—then you should abandon them....

Now, Kalamas, don't go by reports, by legends, by traditions, by scripture, by logical conjecture, by inference, by analogies, by agreement through pondering views, by probability, or by the thought, "This contemplative is our teacher." When you know for yourselves that, "These qualities are skillful; these qualities are blameless; these qualities are praised by the wise; these qualities, when adopted & carried out, lead to welfare & to happiness"—then you should enter & remain in them.

37. Dawson and Thiessen, The Sociology of Religion, 131–156. That is also what Lorne Dawson concluded in a journal article, when he stated, in the late 1990s, "There is an emphasis on religious experience. Faith and personal, essentially transformative, experiences are valued more than belief and doctrine." Lorne L. Dawson, "Anti-Modernism, Modernism, and Post-modernism:

Struggling with the Cultural Significance of New Religious Movements," Sociology of Religion 59, no. 2: 139. It should be noted that Patricia Campbell came to a similar conclusion in a study on Westerners who converted to Zen Buddhism. The fact that Buddhism is perceived as non-theistic and, therefore, does not include an external paternal figure, the fact that it allows for an individual's capacity to act without depending on an external authority or power, and the fact that it acknowledges that individuals have "a sense of agency and direct religious experience" were all reasons provided by the people Campbell met with to explain their conversion. Patricia Campbell, "Transforming Ordinary Life: Turning to Zen Buddhism in Toronto," in Wild Geese, Harding et al., 187.

38. We must not forget that the historical Buddha rose up against the caste system in India and accepted men and women from all social classes as disciples. In the history of Buddhism,

forms of life, but also because, as Henry Shiu points out, starting in the 1970s, in both Asia and the West, Buddhism experienced a revival and was modernized, leading to Buddhist movements that included social and political activism.[39] These trends, often grouped under the heading of "engaged Buddhism" popularized as early as 1963 by Vietnamese Zen master Thich Nhat Hanh, led to action for the protection of the environment; the promotion of a society that was more just, more democratic and less violent; and calls for social action and aid for society's most vulnerable groups. Engaged Buddhists worked in prisons, as well as with patients in hospitals and with victims of natural disasters. Those Buddhist movements that focused on the concrete needs of contemporary societies were probably also among the reasons Buddhism appealed to Canadians.

Finally, one other factor needs to be mentioned, a factor that may also explain the appeal of Buddhism in recent decades and that is at the heart of Buddhism: human suffering. It is clear that despite the often extraordinary progress the modern world has known in areas such as material well-being, science (medicine in particular), social issues (for example, in the field of education) and politics (democratization of society, for example), human suffering has not been eradicated from our societies. It could even be said that, in many respects, it has increased or at least taken new forms. Physical or psychological suffering of all sorts—stress, depression, anxiety, anguish, fear and frustration, often aggravated by our model of unrestrained production and consumption—continue to pose a daily challenge for many people. It is therefore easy to see why a spiritual tradition such as Buddhism, which places suffering at the forefront of its teachings and practice while affirming that everyone can face it through a process of internal discovery, immediately interested many of our contemporaries. Some of life stories presented in this book offer evidence of this.

THE MULTIPLE WAYS OF BEING "BUDDHIST"

The appeal of Buddhism in Canadian society is obviously

---

there are in fact several figures of humble origin who had little education, or were even illiterate, but reached the highest level of spiritual achievement.

39. Shiu, "Buddhism after the Seventies," 97–101.

reflected in a wide variety of behaviours associated with the adoption of Buddhist principles and the practice of Buddhism in daily life. This variety is also found among Asian immigrants who brought Buddhism with them. In addition to the people who have made a total commitment over the long term to the Buddhist teachings through in-depth study of a specific tradition, by belonging to a temple or a centre, and by developing a special relationship with a teacher, there is a whole range of other situations. For example, there are sympathizers—Thomas Tweed calls them "night-stand Buddhists"[40]—people who express a certain interest in Buddhism (reading, presence of Buddhist objects in their homes, participation in online discussions on Buddhism, occasional meditation) without practising it exclusively and fully, and without necessarily considering themselves Buddhists. Other situations include people who practise some form of Buddhist meditation but are not affiliated with a temple or centre, and do not declare that they are fully and completely committed to this religious tradition; people who practise Buddhism but accept only some of the beliefs and practices associated with it; people who combine elements of Buddhism and other religions or spiritualities in their practice; people whose commitment to Buddhism is only evident in the influence it has on their way of life; lukewarm followers who identify consciously with Buddhism but do not practise it intensively or regularly; people who, following a crisis (death of a loved one, illness, divorce and the like), start going to a temple or centre, practising to deal with their suffering, but, once the crisis is over, practise less intensively; and people who are on an eternal spiritual quest and go from temple to temple, centre to centre, trying one Buddhist and non-Buddhist tradition after another, tirelessly looking for the path that suits them.

These scenarios and several others are the concrete facets of the complex and varied landscape of Buddhism in Canada. They represent the multiple ways this spirituality is integrated into, and influences, Canadian society.

40. Tweed, "Who Is a Buddhist?: Night-Stand Buddhists and Other Creatures," 17–33.

CAMBODIA

BUDDHISM IN CONTEMPORARY CAMBODIA

by Ven. Prof. Dr. Khy Sovanratana*

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

It is generally accepted that Buddhism was introduced to Southeast Asia in the 3rd century BCE by the two elders Sona and Uttara. These two learned monks were sent to *Suvannabhūmi* after the Third Buddhist Council, which was held at *Pātaliputra*, the capital of Magadha, North-East India, patronized by Emperor Asoka (r.268–232 BCE), under the leadership of the elder *Moggaliputta Tissa*[1]. *Suvannabhūmi*, "Land of Gold", was one of the nine regions selected to receive Buddhist missions. *Suvannabhūmi* was a name given to South East Asia by Indians, and present Cambodia is a part of it. However, according to archaeological finds, the early existence of Buddhism in the country was in the first century ACE. The Sanskrit stone inscription dated to the early third century found at *Vokanh* in South Vietnam, which was a part of *Funan* kingom, records that King Sri Mara[2] of *Funan* was a follower of the nectar-like teaching of

*. Acting Rector, Preah Sihanoukrāja , Buddhist University.

1. This event is recorded in the Mahavamsa, a chronicle of Sri Lanka, and in Samantapasadika, the commentary to Vinaya Pitaka, Basket of Discipline.

2. He is known as Fan Che Man in Chinese. Funan is the Chinese name for the first Kingdom of Cambodia (From the first to sixth centuries). Later it was called Chenla by the Chinese (from the sixth to eighth centuries). Then came Angkor (802-1432).

the Buddha and he orders that his successors follow the same.

Since the first century AC., several schools of Buddhism had found their ways into Cambodia. From the scanty sources available, we may not be over-opinionated to say that during the *Funan* period, *Sārvastivāda* which enjoyed the patronage of King Kaniska of North India was introduced to *Funan* and it was accepted by the local people. *Sammittiya* and *Mūlasarvastivāda* were also in existence in Cambodia. All the three schools belonged to the Hinayāna tradition[3] but used Sanskrit as their medium. During *Chenla* period, Buddhism met with a very lean period as the kings were followers of Brahmanism, not Buddhism. But Buddhism did not disappear from the land.

During Angkor period, especially in the reign of king Jayavarman VII (1181-1220), Mahāyāna Buddhism was widespread and became flourished in Cambodia. The king himself was an ardent follower of this Buddhist school. He built many Buddhist temples and monuments of which the ruins still remain today. Surprisingly, after the reign of king Jayavarman VII, Mahāyāna Buddhism started declining and disappeared abruptly, and was superseded by Brahmanism, which was patronized by Jayavaraman VII's successors.

Towards the late thirteenth century, another school of Buddhism called Theravada was introduced to Cambodia. It was accepted by the Cambodian masses, while the rulers were still following Brahmanism. This Buddhist school soon took root in Cambodia, becoming the religion of the Cambodian people up until the present. Theravāda Buddhism is also predominant in Sri Lanka, Thailand, Myanmar and Laos.

Cambodian Theravāda Buddhism may have come from and have been influenced by three sources, namely, Thailand, Sri Lanka and Mon of Myanmar. Being a neighbor of Cambodia, Thailand has naturally had influence on Cambodia, especially from the early fifteenth century in which Thailand captured several parts

3. There are accepted two Buddhist traditions i.e. Hinayana (*Lesser Vehicle*) or the preferred Theravada (*Word of the Elders*) and Mahayana (*Greater Vehicle*). Some writers include Vajrayana (*Diamond Vehicle*) as the third.

of Cambodia, and also invaded the capital of Angkor[4]. There are evidently striking similarities between Thai Buddhism and Cambodian one. Sri Lankan monks also helped spread the Theravada Buddhism to Cambodia after Buddhism was purified and reunified during the reign of King Parākramabahu the Great (1153-1186). Tāmalinda, a son of Jayavaraman VII, went to Sri Lanka and received ordination and education at Mahavihara monastery. Unfortunately, we have no further evidence of his activities with regard to the spread of Theravāda Buddhism in Cambodia. The Mon who had practiced Theravāda Buddhism since the fifth century, also spread it to Cambodia, while they were fleeing from the Burmese invasion. According to Robert C. Lester, it was the Mon who introduced the Khmer Theravāda Buddhism[5].

In its history of existence in Cambodia, Theravada Buddhism has gone through several intermittent periods. From the fourteenth century onward, it had spread very fast and before long the kings and the nobles all accepted it and they gradually abandoned Brahmanical practices. When the country regained national independence from France, Buddhism was inscribed in the constitution as the State religion. During 1950s and 1960s, it was in a very flourishing condition under the patronage of the Kings and the State.

During the Khmer Rouge regime (1975-1979), Buddhism experienced the darkest period of its history. Buddhist practices were banned, monks were killed or were forced to disrobe, temples and Buddhist places of worship were plundered and destroyed. It is said that 21,667 monks were killed during the Khmer Rouge's brutal rule[6].

The present Buddhism was revived in 1979 by the Peoples' Republic of Kampuchea (1979-1989). This revived Buddhism largely follows the structure which had been in existence before 1970s. From the time of revival, Buddhism has been growing

4. Thai attacked Angkor in 1431, captured hundreds of learned scholars and took religious scriptures and valuables to Thailand. From then onward, Angkor was on the declining spiral and finally was abandoned in 1432

5. Lester, Robert C. Theravada Buddhism in South East Asia, Silk Books, Bangkok, p. 75.

6. Speech of Samdech Tep Vong, Buddhist Supreme Patriarch of Cambodia, at Mahamontrey monastery, Phnom Penh, May 20, 2007.

exceptionally well, given the short period of time, particularly after 1988, the year in which young men were again authorized to receive ordination[7].

THE CURRENT STATE OF BUDDHISM

The 1993 Constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia says, "Buddhism is the State religion"[8]. Buddhism currently practiced in Cambodia is Theravada. Out of the total population of some 14 millions, about 95 percents are Buddhist[9]. Cambodian Theravada Buddhism consists of two orders i.e. *Mahānikāya* and *Dhammayut*. *Mahānikāya* is the traditional form of Buddhism which came into existence in Cambodia probably since *Theravāda* Buddhism was first introduced to the country in late thirteenth century. *Dhammayut* was brought to Cambodia from Thailand in 1854 by a Cambodian monk named Pan, who had earlier received his education in Bangkok. Later he was appointed the Supreme Patriarch of *Dhammayut* Order of Cambodia by King Ang Duong (1840-1959) who ruled the country with Udong as his capital. Unfortunately, Buddhism was virtually destroyed by the Khmer Rouge regime (1975-1979).

It should be mentioned that from 1979 until 1991, there was only one order of monks and all monks belonged to the Kampuchean United Front for National Salvation (KUFNS). They were known as "*Front Monks*". Upon his repatriation to Cambodia in December 1991, former King Norodom Sihanouk appointed Venerable Tep Vong as the Supreme Patriarch of the *Mahānikāya* Buddhist Order, and Venerable Bour Kry as the Supreme Patriarch of the *Dhammayut* Order on December 7, 1991[10]. This effectively reestablished the two sects of Cambodian Buddhism.

By 2018, there were 4,985 monasteries and 70,853 monks and

7. From 1979 up untill 1988, only men over 50 years were lawfully allowed to become monks. Yet, the writer saw some young monks leading clandestine monastic life in some temples in Kompom Thom province before 1988.

8. Article 43.

9. The exact statistic is not available, for a census has not been done yet since 1998.

10. Tep Vong, *Supreme Patriarch of Cambodia*, Speech at the 14th Annual Conference of High-Dignitary Buddhist Monks, 12 September 2005, Ministry of Cults and Religions, Phnom Penh.

novices of both Orders in the whole country. Of this number, 4,744 monasteries and 66,036 monks and novices belong to the *Mahānikāya* Order, while the *Dhammayut* Order has 241 monasteries and 4,817 monks and novices[11].

As both of these orders are within the Theravada tradition, there are no major differences among them. They both follow the Pāli canonical texts called Tipiṭaka, and uphold the same tenets of Buddhism.

The most remarkable difference is in the pronunciation of Pāli chants. The monks of *Dhammayut* tend to pronounce it in heavy accent similar to the way Sri Lankan monks chant; whereas *Mahānikāya* monks use a light accent in accordance with Khmer language. Another difference is the use of monk's alms-bowl. The monks of *Mahānikāya* use alms-bowl with cover and string, while monks of *Dhammayut* use it without them. Nowadays, there is a difference in using the color of robe. Monks of *Dhammayut* prefer somewhat green color robe alone, while *Mahānikāya* monks tend to use two or three varying colors depending on the choice of each individual monk. The three are saffron orange, dark brown and goldish.

In the past, *Dhammayut* order claimed stricter adherence to the original doctrine and discipline found in the *Pāli Tipitaka*. But today the practices of both orders are almost identical.

SANGHA ADMINISTRATION

Formerly, Cambodian Sangha[12] administration was under the sole leadership of the Supreme Patriarch (*Sangharāja*), assisted by his Secretary and assistants of senior monks called Rajagana (high-dignity monks with royal title). This system had been in existence prior to the Khmer Rouge regime and was again followed since 1979. In 2006, a royal decree was issued to establish the "Supreme Sangha Council of Cambodia" to run the Buddhist affairs in the country. This Supreme Sangha Council is headed by the *Sanghanāyaka*

11. Statistic obtained from Ministry of Cult and Religion, on 31st December, 2018.

12. Sangha means "community of monks" referring to the congregation of Buddhist monks in the whole country.

(Head of the *Sangha*) and three deputies.

Under this national level, there is a provincial ecclesiastical governor (*mekun*) to oversee the Buddhist affairs in each province with his five assistants. At district level, there is a district ecclesiastical governor (*anukun*). Then at the grass root level, there are temples (*wat*). To run each temple, there is an abbot and his two deputies called "Right Deputy" and "Left Deputy". The abbot is further helped by an "Assistant for Disciplinary Rules" (*vineythor*) and a Secretary. In a large monastery, there is another "Assistant for Doctrinal Instructions" (*thammathor*). This structure of administration is very similar to that of the secular administration.

Besides, there is the Ministry of Cults and Religion to facilitate and regulate the Buddhist affairs as well as the affairs of all religions in the country. The Ministry has its Departments at provincial level and Offices at district level. The Departments and Offices of Cults and Religion generally work in tandem with the ecclesiastical governors.

BUDDHIST EDUCATION

1. Formal Pāli Schools

Since the ancient time, men who enter the monk-hood are not only to practice meditation with the sole aim to attain the bliss of Nirvana, but also to continue their education. In Cambodia, as in other predominant Buddhist countries, young men become monks and then take the opportunity to further their studies.

The present Buddhist education in Cambodia began with the official re-opening of a Buddhist primary school on December 2, 1989, by Chea Sim, then a member of the Central Bureau of the Communist Party, President of the National Assembly and Chairman of the Kampuchean United Front for National Salvation, at Wat Toul Tum Poung in Phnom Penh[13].

Since the official opening of the first Buddhist primary school, many such schools have followed suit, both in the capital and in the

13. A report of the Official Opening Ceremony of The Buddhist Primary School obtained from Toul Tum Poung monastery, Phnom Penh.

provinces. Currently, in the whole country there are 772 Buddhist primary schools, attended by 16, 760 monk-students , 35 Buddhist secondary schools, 4815 monk-students including a small number of lay students, and 554 teachers of which only 59 are permanent teachers of Buddhist education. For Buddhist upper-secondary education, there are 17 Buddhist high schools with 1,673 students – mostly monks, 370 teachers of which 22 are permanent[14].

In 1992, Buddhist secondary education began with the re-establishment of Suramrith Buddhist High School in the premises of the former Preah Sihanoukraj Buddhist University. In 2004, it was shifted to its original, pre-1975 location, across the street. In 1999, when the first batch of monk-students had completed their Buddhist upper-secondary education, the Preah Sihanoukraj Buddhist University was re-opened at its former location in Phnom Penh to provide them with higher Buddhist education. At the moment, this university has three branches at two provinces namely, Kompong Chhnang and Battambang.

In 2006, Preah Sihanmoniraja Buddhist University was established in the premises of Svay Popé monastery. This university is under the leadership of the Supreme Patriarch of Dhammayut Order, yet most of the monk-students are from the Mahanikaya. Therefore, there are currently two Buddhist Universities in Cambodia.

In 2013, Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Hun Sen Buddhist University - *Kompong* Cham or shortened as Samdech Hun Sen Buddhist University- Kampong Cham (HSBU), the third Buddhist university in the country, was set up in the provincial capital of Kompong Cham, with obvious motif to honor the birthplace of Hun Sen, the current Prime Minister of Cambodia[15].

The present system of Buddhist education largely follows the structure that was in place prior to 1975. The curriculum, which consists of both religious and secular subjects, has been reproduced,

14. Khy Sovanratana, *Contours of the Reconstruction of Buddhist Education in Cambodia after the Fall of the Khmer Rouge*, PhD Thesis submitted to University of Delhi, Delhi, pp. 201-219.

15. Sub-decree on the *Establishment of Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Hun Sen Buddhist University-Kompon Cham*, No. 192/2011, obtained from the Ministry of Cult and Religions; Phnom Penh, 2014, p. 2.

with some adaptations to modern conditions.

Buddhist monastic education is divided into four levels of studies:

1. Buddhist Primary Education: 3 years
2. Buddhist Secondary Education: 3 years
3. Buddhist Upper Secondary Education: 3 years
4. Buddhist Higher Education:
    - Bachelor of Arts degree: 4 years
    - Master of Arts degree: 2 years
    - PhD: 3-5 years

2. The Dhamma-vinaya Schools

In addition to the four levels of Buddhist education (*buddhika siksā*) described above, there is another separate system of monastic education called 'the study of dhamma-vinaya or doctrine and discipline'. This system consists of three levels which may be completed within three years if a student could consecutively pass the annual national examinations organized by the Ministry of Cult and Religions and the Supreme Saṅgha Council of Cambodia. The three levels are known as Thnak Trey (level I), Thnak Toa (level II), and Thnak Ek (level I). Being a traditional way of studying Buddhism, it have never had proper schools or officially appointed teachers. Candidates are eligible to take the annual examination for one level at a time only. If they failed, they might retake the examinations the following years as many times as they wish.

BUDDHIST LAY FOLLOWERS

A part from monks, there are *Donchis*[16] and lay followers of Buddhism. Lay followers may be broadly classified into two categories. Firstly, those who have taken refuge in the triple gem-the Buddha, the *Dhamma* and the *Sangha*, and are committed to always following the five precepts. They are called "*Upāsaka*" for male, and "Upasika" for female. They come to the temple four times a month

16. Women, mostly elderly, who wear white clothes and live in the same temple premises with monks. They follow ten precepts and other ethical rules.

and observe eight precepts. Secondly, those are Buddhist by birth and they are yet to take vow to follow to all the five precepts. They tend to practice generosity rather than rules and precepts. They occasionally come to the temple, particularly on festival days. The majority of Cambodian Buddhists belong to the second category.

CONCLUSION

In her long history, Cambodia has been fortunate to receive many schools of Buddhism. The one which is now predominant in the country is Theravada. It was brought there in late thirteenth century. Since then Cambodian Theravada Buddhism has experienced ups and downs. During the eighteenth, nineteenth centuries and first half of twentieth century, it had been in a flourishing condition. From 1975-1979, it was destroyed and banned by the Khmer Rouge regime. It was revived in late 1979 and in 1980s it was growing though at a slow pace.

In early 1990s, Buddhism took a big leap. Monastic education for young monks took a huge turn with the re-opening of Suramrith Buddhist College in 1993. During this period, the number of temples and monks jumped almost ten-fold. But since 2005, the number of Buddhist monks has slowly decreased year on year, for the monks who leave the order are more than those who become monks. However, more lay Buddhists become interested in studying Buddhism and the activities of propagating the Buddha's teaching are more widespread in the country.

***

References

Buddhist Institute, 2006. *Pravat Buddhika Siksa* (A History of Buddhist Education). Phnom Penh.

Chay Yi Heang, 2004. *Buddhism and Problems of Education* (In Khmer). In the Kampuja Suriya Journal, Year 58, No.1-2. Phnom Penh: Buddhist Institute.

Chhorn Iem. 2000. *The Curriculum of the Preah Sihanouk Raja Buddhist University* (Unpublished). Phnom Penh.

_____ 2000. *Kroeus Oprum Robos Buddhasasana* (Fundamentals of Buddhist Education). In the Third National Socio-Cultural Research Congress on Cambodia. Phnom Penh: Royal University of Phnom Penh.

Harris, Ian. 2005. *Cambodian Buddhism: History and Practice*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Hean Sokhom. 2001. *Rehabilitation of Monk Education in Cambodia* (In Khmer). In the Fourth Socio-Cultural Research Congress on Cambodia. Phnom Penh: Royal University of Phnom Penh.

Huot Tath. 1968. *L'Enseignement du Buddhisme: Des Origines à Nos Jours*. Phnom Penh.

_____ 1959. *History of Preah Sihanouk Raja Buddhist University* (In Khmer). In *Buddhika Seksa* (Journal of Buddhist Studies). Phnom Penh: Preah Sihanouk Raja Buddhist University.

_____ 1970. *Buddhism in Cambodia: A Short History* (In Khmer). Phnom Penh: Buddhist Institute.

Khy Sovanratana. 1999. *Buddhism in Cambodia: The Past and Present* (Unpublished). Essay submitted to the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka.

_____ 2016. *Contours of the Reconstruction of Buddhist Education in Cambodia after the Fall of the Khmer Rouge*, PhD Thesis submitted to University of Delhi, Delhi.

Lester, Rober C. 1985. Theravada Buddhism in South-East Asia. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.

Ly Sovy. 2004. *History of Cambodian Monks In 8th, 9th and 10th*

Decades of 20th Century (In Khmer). Phnom Penh: Ecole Française D'Extreme-Orient.

Pang Khat. 1970. Buddhism in Cambodia. *Série de Culture et Civilization Khmères*. Tome 8. Phnom Penh: Buddhist Institute.

_____ 2001. *Pravat Buddhasasna Nov Prades Khmer* (History of Buddhism in Cambodia). In *Buddhasasana 2500*; Third Reprint. Phnom Penh: Buddhist Institute.

Ray Pok. 1957. *Preah Buddhasasana Khmer* (Cambodian Buddhism). Phnom Penh: Buddhist Institute.

Saddhatissa, Hammalawa. 1990. Pali Literature of South-East Asia. Singapore: Singapore Buddhist Meditation Centre.

CZECH REPUBLIC

DEVELOPMENT OF INTEREST IN BUDDHISM IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC*

by Jitka Cirklová**

Buddhism has been a subject of study for scholars of Indology, religious studies, theology, or sinology at the Czech universities since the end of the nineteenth century. But until the 1990s, there were fewer Buddhist centres on the Czech Buddhist scene than individual Buddhists. The early period of development of interest in Buddhism was influenced by the national perception of the Catholic Church as the church of the Hapsburg empire. After Czechoslovakia gained independence from the Hapsburg monarchy in 1918, Czech intellectuals viewed Buddhism as an individual spiritual pilgrimage, which they preferred to passive membership in rigidly hierarchical religious institutions and churches (Rozehnalova, 2008), and consequently the practice of individual meditation became popular among thinkers and intellectuals.

Many well-known historical personalities influenced the formation of the Czech Buddhist scene. František Drtikol, an art photographer and painter, translated some basic texts of Mahaayaana

*. Originally published in *Journal of Global Buddhism* 10 (2009): 5-16. Reprinted with permission.

**. Lecturer, Charles University of Prague, Faculty of Social Science, Department of Sociology, Czech Republic

Buddhism for his own use and for a group of his disciples. In his practice of meditation he combined different directions and schools. Kvetoslav Minařík, also a teacher of meditation, wrote many texts to popularize Buddhist ideas, aiming to disseminate Buddhism in a European and Christian context.

From the 1970s until the end of the 1990s, academic texts were used and studied in Czech Buddhist circles; an example worth mentioning is the book *Buddha* (a biography of Buddha) published by the philosopher Egon Bondy in 1968. It was the only book on Buddhism published under the Communist regime. These texts point to the fact that, even before centres were set up, Buddhism in Czechoslovakia engaged the interest of a certain circle of thinkers, yoga instructors, academics and artists, even though the boom of interest in Eastern thought of the 1960s and the 1970s largely passed the Czechs by.

In the Czech Republic the first meditation groups started to emerge in the 1990s. According to Baumann (2001: this is the period in which centres emerged throughout Western Europe. Baumann states (ibid.) that more than 60 per cent of the Buddhist centres in the West have been founded within the last twelve years, and that these represent more than the total number of centres established within the first eighty-five years of the twentieth century. This supports the assumption that the establishment of centres in the Czech Republic was not due only to the social changes that took place there. Moreover, it would be simplistic to associate developments in the Czech Republic only with the social changes that took place in 1989. In 1990 only fourteen meditation groups existed; in 2007 there were fifty-seven active centres (Buddhanet.net). It is also worth comparing the number of centres in the Czech Republic (fifty-seven centres in a population of 10.3 million), with that in countries such as Ireland (twenty-six centres in a population of 4.2 million), Poland (eighty-four centres in a population of 38.1 million) and Slovakia (twelve centres in a population of 5.3 million), all of which are countries in which traditional religion – in their case the Catholic Church – has a significantly stronger social impact than in the Czech Republic, which is by contrast one of the least religious countries in Europe. I would suggest that the

widespread secularism in the Czech Republic helped the expansion of Buddhism. This corresponds with the "strictness" hypothesis that Wuthnow (2004: 366) presents in his article. He concludes that Buddhism is more attractive to people who are not affiliated to another religion. The strict belief system of some churches functions, according to Wuthnow, as a barrier to the rate and extent of the spread of Buddhist teaching in a social setting. He extends this hypothesis by suggesting that the teachings of Buddhism are more attractive to those who, though not already affiliated to a religion, are searching for some ethical framework or for certainty about an afterlife (Wuthnow, 2004).

From the 1990s until very recently, Buddhism began to be presented by the media and perceived by Czech society as a variant of a universal humanistic philosophy of human rights and equality. The media picture of Buddhism in the Czech Republic as well as in other European countries was (and to some degree still is) influenced by the nineteenth-century European intellectual stress on the rational and pragmatic aspect of Buddhist thought, and on its universal humanist values in harmony with science, in contrast with religions based on revelation and dogma (Baumann, 2001). In the presentation of Buddhism in Czech society we can also trace the notion of "Protestant Buddhism" (Baumann, 1997), which emphasizes personal responsibility and moral autonomy, and rejects ritualism.

MAPPING THE FORM OF BUDDHISM IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC – OUTLINING THE METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

The goal of this phase of my doctoral research was to determine which lines of Buddhism are active in the Czech Republic, and whether these groups emerged autonomously in the local environment rather than being a part of the global network of Buddhist organizations operating in Europe and the US. A questionnaire comprising thirteen questions dealing with different subjects was sent to all eighty-seven centres listed on the Internet. Of the eighty-seven questionnaires sent out, ten of them (11.5 per cent) were returned as undeliverable, and a further twenty centres (23 per cent) failed to reply even after a repeated mailing. Thus

fifty-seven centres (65.5 per cent), representing different schools of Buddhism, participated. It is possible to say that the character of Buddhism represented in the Czech Republic corresponds to that of Buddhist schools in other European countries, where Tibetan Buddhism is also the variety represented most often (Lenoir, 1999).

The majority of Buddhist centres in the Czech Republic follow the lines of global Buddhism. One of these is the "Diamond Way" Buddhism of the Karma Kagju lineage, registered with the Czech Ministry of Culture in June 2007 as a religious association or church. With the growth of Diamond Way Buddhist centres, local meditation groups have emerged, belonging to the same Buddhist stream of the Kagju lineage. However, for various reasons, they are unwilling to be members of this global Buddhist organization. In addition, there are local groups practising engaged Buddhism. In the case of Theravada Buddhism, there is a marked tendency to work directly with spiritual teachers and organizations from Asian countries rather than to co-operate with Western centres.

In each centre that responded in the Czech Republic we can identify different degrees of activity among the participants and sympathizers, from "active" to "anonymous" or "passive". Tweed (1999) introduced the term "*dharma*-shoppers" to designate those who do not take an active part in any particular Buddhist community, but are influenced by the public and media presentation of Buddhism. My respondents also indicated that besides the reported number of active members (1,547 in all the participating centres) there can be traced a group of persons characterized by the respondents as "meditating", "sympathizing" or "co-operating", and their number in some cases exceeds the number of those attending regularly. To this peripheral group also belong the remaining 7,000 people who registered as Buddhists in the population census in 2001.

Furthermore, according to the records of the Czech-Vietnamese Society in the Czech Republic, there are more than 55,000 Vietnamese immigrants legally resident in the country, 90 per cent of whom are Buddhists. Obtaining Czech citizenship is a lengthy process which can take decades, and therefore these Buddhists do not appear in the population census records. Nevertheless we can expect some changes as the first generation of Czech citizens of

Vietnamese background comes to age. In 2008, the first Buddhist temple in the country was opened in the town of Varnsdorf by the Vietnamese community. Like in many othere countries, the Buddhist communities of Czech converts and of Vietnamese immigrants have separate practices, because the Vietnamese Buddhist temples also serve cultural and educational needs other than spiritual ones.

In Buddhist centres established by Czech converts, occasional events are preferred to regular weekly meetings by all groups. Such occasional, but intense, activities are designed to help and develop individual spiritual practice. Buddhist centres are not perceived as temples or as hubs of the community, but as centres of information. This corresponds to the activities they offer, providing instructions for the practice of meditation, and information about Buddhist doctrines. The centres also present their activities to new adherents in strictly informational terms. Despite the evident efforts made by all centres to appeal to outsiders, all respondents reported that they do not actively aim at recruiting new members. These findings correspond with the analysis of Obadia (2001: 96), of the intellectual resistance to the term "mission" in referring to the spread of Buddhism in the West.

The age range of the Czech Buddhist groups proved to be different from the average age reported in polls in European countries and the United States (Smith 2007, Henry 2006). The age range (80 per cent of answers) in the Czech Republic is between twenty-five and thirty-five. Smith (2007:313) conducted a survey of the American Buddhist Organizations, where he found that the most frequently declared age of its members (60.3 per cent of all responses) fell within the range of forty to fifty-nine. Smith (2007: 313) shows that the youngest respondents in the US range between twenty and thirty-nine, but this represents only 10 per cent of the responses he received. A similar study carried out in the UK showed the most frequently indicated average age of members as forty-eight (Henry 2006: 12). When we compare the average ages of members with the division of time reported by each centre between meditation and lectures, we can see that the lower age range of Czech Buddhists (twenty-five to thirty) prefers less meditation and more lectures on

Buddhism or other activities.

Besides their age ranges, particular communities are characterized by the proportional representation of men and women. An analysis published by the Czech Statistical Office (CSO), "Compositions of population by religion, gender and by age" (www.czso.cz), states that women represent 56.7 per cent of all believers, and that women predominate in established traditional churches. Also according to the CSO data, in most of the "new" religions the proportion is reversed: more men than women adhere to Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism. My findings correspond with the data of the CSO, reporting a majority of male members of Buddhist groups. A more specific division taking the type of Buddhism into account suggests trends in which women and men prefer particular Buddhist lines: in descending sequencing, the results show that the choice depends on the extent of the social engagement of the groups and on the techniques employed for meditation.

On the basis of data previously recorded, I infer that women are more active in groups which are socially engaged to a greater degree. Groups with a higher representation of women (e.g. Tibetan Buddhist groups, with 52 per cent of women, Socially Engaged Buddhism and Diamond Way Buddhism, with 47 per cent) seek to locate Buddhism in the cultural context of the West; their primary focus is not only to provide guidelines for individual spiritual experience, but also to concentrate on social engagement – whether at a local level or at a global level. Furthermore, they are active in specific charitable projects (such as organizing long-distance adoptions, or setting up Buddhist kindergartens in Sri Lanka). By contrast, in schools of Buddhism such as Theravada (32 per cent women) or Zen (Kwan Um Zen 41 per cent, Soto Zen 25 per cent women), women form a minority in both of these groups, although in Zen schools women hold senior positions both in local groups and in the national Sangha leadership. Why there is such a division between women and men in the Czech Republic would require further qualitative research in the field.

SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT AND NON-ENGAGEMENT, AND SPIRITUAL ORIENTATION, OF BUDDHISM IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

In Western Europe social commitment quite significantly affects the form of the Buddhism presented in Western Europe. For this reason, the questionnaire included a question about the areas in which Czech centres are active. Unless groups are established primarily for engaging in human rights issues in Tibet or Burma, a very low degree of social activities is a common feature for all the Buddhist groups studied. From the responses it is very clear that each group has an interest in increasing the number of its centres; publishing was often mentioned. Participation in inter-religious dialogue was mentioned in only two cases. Buddhism in the Czech cultural setting, therefore, cannot be defined as engaged Buddhism, as it makes no attempt to engage with the environment outside its centres.

Although centres do not always present themselves as religious, it can be concluded that all of them focus primarily on spiritual practice, carrying out activities that the members perceive as religious rituals. The respondents perceive the recitation of Buddhist texts and *mantras*, and in some cases meditation, as religious rituals. Different Buddhist schools and directions are not combined in Czech centres, nor is Buddhism combined with any other spiritual practices. According to their responses, the members see the present fixed form of Buddhist thought in a very positive light as they prefer to be labeled as Buddhists and not followers of some form of a New Age amorphous movement.

CONCLUSION

In the Czech Republic Buddhism is becoming the object of interest to a growing number of people who have created groups for meditation. Also it has become subject to a process of institutionalization, as one of the Buddhist groups (Diamond Way Buddhism) has been registered by the state, and has the same legal status as traditional churches. The evolution of a Buddhist group into a centre for meditation and then into a state-registered religious association enables us to understand the ways in which contemporary religious groups are formed and differentiated, with their members actively taking part in shaping their own forms of religious character and practice. Despite their fluid organization, some characteristics of local Buddhist groups can be established on

the basis of available studies. Their age range is significantly lower than that of groups in other countries, they exhibit a substantially lower rate of social engagement, and their focus is on purely religious and spiritual activities. It is also clear that their members are aware of the different characteristics offered by specific directions.

This article is based on research undertaken within the research plan of MSM 0021620841 "Czech Society Development within the EU: Challenges and Risks" at the Faculty of Social Science of the Charles University in Prague.

***

References

Batchelor, Stephen. 1994. *The Awakening of the West.* The Encounter of Buddhism and Western Culture. Parallax Press, Berkeley, California, pp. xv-xvi.

Baumann, Martin. 1997. "Culture Contact and Valuation: Early German Buddhists and the Creation of a 'Buddhism in Protestant Shape'". *Numen,* Vol. 44, No. 3, (Sep. 1997) pp. 280-281.

Baumann, Martin. 2001. "Global Buddhism: Developmental Periods, Regional Histories, and New Analytical Perspectives". *Journal of Global Buddhism*, pp. 1- 43.

The Czech Statistical Office, Český statistický úřad. http://www.czso.cz/csu/2003edicniplan.nsf/o/4110 -03-skladba_obyvatelstva_podle_nabozenskeho_vyznani ,_pohlavi_a_podle_veku.

The Czech-Vietnamese Society, Česko-Vietnamská společnost Praha, www.cvs-praha.cz.

Henry, Phil. 2006. ¨The Sociological Implications for Contemporary Buddhism in the United Kingdom: Socially Engaged Buddhism, a Case Study¨. *Journal of Buddhist Ethics, Vol. 13.*

Lenoir, Frederic. 1999. *Setkání Buddhismu se Západem*. (Czech translation) Volvox Globator, pp. 9-37, 169.

Obadia, Lionel. 2001. ¨Tibetan Buddhism in France: A Missionary Religion? ¨ *Journal of Global Buddhism,* Vol. 2, pp. 92-123.

Rozehnalová, Jana. 2008. Czech Perspectives on Buddhism, 1860-1989¨, *Journal of Religion in Europe,* Vol. 1, pp. 159, 160.

Smith, Buster G., 2007. ¨Research Note, Variety in the Sangha: A Survey of Buddhist Organizations in America. *Review of Religious Research,* Vol. 48 (3): p. 313.

Tweed, Thomas. 1999. Nightstand Buddhists and Other Creatures: Sympathizers, Adherents, and the Study of Religion. In *American*

Buddhism, Methods and Findings in Recent Scholarship, edited by D. R. Williams and C. Queen. Richmond, UK: Curzon Press, p. 71-90.

Wuthnow, Robert. 2004. Buddhists and Buddhism in the United States: The Scope of Influence. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion,* Vol. 43 (3), p. 366.

DENMARK

BUDDHISM IN DENMARK*

by Jørn Borup**

There are about 34,000 Buddhists in Denmark, comprising 0.5 % of the population. This number has been steadily increasing with 60 % in the last 10 years, and just 50 years ago, this exotic religion from the East had only a few handfuls of practitioners.[1] There are more than 40 Buddhist groups, some of which belong to the 17 groups having status as officially recognized religious communities. Asian immigrants and their descendants make up around 90 per cent of Buddhists, primarily with origin in Vietnam and Thailand. The remaining groups, primarily affiliated to the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, are almost entirely of ethnic Danish origin, typically having only few members. Apart from organized religion, Buddhism is also popular as inspiration for sympathizers and postmodern individualistic spirituality. It is a trendy brand for commercials, the object of good storytelling in the media, and well represented in the body and mind sections in the bookstores. This article will give a short overview of the history and demography of Buddhism in Denmark.

*. This is an updated, revised and extended version of my article published in *Journal of Global Buddhism* (2008 9: 27-37). Permission has been granted to reuse the material.

**. Associate Professor and Head, Department of the Study of Religion, Aarhus University, Denmark

1. This dramatic increase of Buddhists is mainly due to the fact that the number of Asian immigrants and descendants have increased – and because the always challenging methods of measuring religious demography (especially Buddhism) since first count has changed.

From intellectuals to practitioners: a historical view

"I too say, the more I learn to know Buddha, the more I admire him, and the sooner all mankind shall have been made acquainted with his doctrines the better it will be, for he is certainly one of the heroes of humanity" (Fausbøll 1872, VIII).

When Michael Viggo Fausbøll (1821-1908) became professor at Copenhagen University in 1878, as one of the founding fathers of European Buddhology he could introduce Pali studies as an academic discipline also in Denmark. Fausböll had already in 1855 translated Dhammapada and a seven volume edition of the Jataka came out in the following years. Although primarily a true and gifted orientalist interested primarily in textualizing the Orient, he was aware of his indebtedness to contemporary Asian Buddhists, with whom he corresponded. Fausbøll's predecessors had paved the way, both internationally and domestically, where the 'Oriental renaissance' had shown its effect. The multi-linguist Rasmus Rask (1787-1832) had already brought palm-leaf manuscripts from his journeys to Asia, and his early paving of the roads lead a few other distinguished scholars to the task of contributing to early Buddhology. Niels Ludwig Westergaard (1815-1878) was the first Danish professor in Indology, and apart from Sanskrit dictionaries he made a three years journey to India in 1841-44. Abovementioned Fausböll was his successor, and the contributions of Vilhelm Trenckner and Dines Andersen to early Buddhist studies have often been internationally credited, first of all as originators of the ambitious project *A Critical Pali Dictionary*.[2] The primarily philological research has continued with later generations of Buddhist scholars, and Buddhism as a field of study within religious studies has become a natural outcome of a long research history.[3]

2. The Pāli Text Society is not continuing to compile and edit new fascicles of the Critical Pali Dictionary. They are however committed to keep the CPD available online and improve the online edition (https://tei-c.org/).

3. Poul Tuxen (1880-1955) was another Indologist interested in Buddhism, a scholarly tradition followed also by later Buddhologists (Christian Lindtner, Ole Holten Pind, Henrik Hjort Sørensen), by historians of religion (Edvard Lehmann, Erik Haarh, Jørn Borup) and anthopologists (Jørgen Østergaard Andersen, Michael Gravers, Martijn van Beek, Cameron Warner).

This literary interest in Buddhism also had its repercussions outside the academic environment. Authors Valdemar Rørdam (1872-1946) and Ernesto Dalgas (1871-1899) were clearly inspired by Buddhism, and Nobel laureate Karl Gjellerup (1857-1919) at least once identified himself as a Buddhist. He wrote several India inspired books, one of them, *Pilgrimmen Kamanita* (*The Pilgrim Kamanita*) from 1906, has been printed several times for American audiences and even translated to Thai to be used as a college textbook. Though the Theosophists never really had a direct impact on Buddhism in Denmark, a general theosophically inspired romantization of the mystical and spiritually purified East did influence people interested in occult sciences and alternative spirituality. A missionary describing the "half mad Buddha admiring philosophical bookworms in Europe" knowing only philosophy and not the real, living religion, and if they did, they might "feel so sick and tired of it, that they do not wish to hear its name mentioned" (Knudsen 1893, 82-83) probably hinted at such intellectualized Theosophists. Like other missionaries, he actually stayed in the foreign countries, having a firsthand knowledge of the living religion, and although a certain Christian and Eurocentric bias pervaded his and his fellow missionaries' writings, his book from 1891 *På Budda's veje* (*On Buddha's Roads*) was written with insight and respect. Another missionary with a respectful tone and attitude, was the later Norwegian missionary Karl Ludwig Reichelt. His religious dialogues with Buddhism not only invited criticism from his homeland, he also succeeded in establishing the largest Scandinavian organisation dealing with mission and dialogue between Christianity and Buddhism, The Nordic Christian Buddhist Mission, which still exists today under the name of Areopagos. One of those being involved in this mission was the Danish architect Johannes Prip-Møller (1889-1943). Apart from designing the main centre of the organization, Tao Fong Shan in Hong Kong, he wrote one of the most influential books ever on pre-communist Chinese Buddhism (Prip-Møller 1937).

Chistian F. Melbye (?-1953) was a doctor and psychiatric specialist, and probably the first 'real' Danish Buddhist. He had been interested in philosophy and psychology of religion for many

years and knew quite well about contemporary studies on (especially Theravada) Buddhism. He corresponded with D. T. Suzuki and Anagarika Dharmapala, and he was the Danish representative of two of the influential international Buddhist organizations, the Bund für Buddhistische Leben and the Mahabodhi Society. Melbye established the Buddhist Society in Denmark in 1921, and apart from writing a book (Melbye 1926) and a small booklet on Buddhism, he personally was behind the publication of the groups' journals, which under different names were published from 1921 to 1950. Melbye was an intellectual, and concerned about transplanting what he acknowledged to be too exotic to most of his contemporary countrymen:

> Buddhism on Danish soil — well, much could stir one's hope of it having good prospects. But as we see the moorland covered by heather in full bloom, we may also see Buddha's exalted thoughts spreading amongst a large number of people in the midst of our dry Danish spiritual soil (quoted in Borup 2007: 38; my translation).

It was rather symptomatic that the Buddhist Society only had a handful of members who never met to actually practice Buddhism. This corresponds very well with general trends of the first phases of Buddhism in the West (Baumann 2001, 5-22), continuing its literary appeal throughout the 1950s with the literary genre of Beat Zen in America, giving percussions also to European and Danish contexts. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, well known Danish authors such as Hans-Jørgen Nielsen, Torben Ulrich and Dan Turèll could enlarge their intellectual wardrobe with Danish translations of cult books such as Herrigel's *Zen and Martial Arts*, Pirsig's *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* or re-issues of Hesse's *Siddhartha* and *Steppenwolf*. Zen Buddhism in the West was to a large extent created and activated by such literary constructions, starting with the 'D. T. Suzuki-effect' and being continued for also other participating segments. Also in Denmark, Zen in new age symbolism, ladies magazines and commercials has become a concept identical to 'spirit' and 'quality'. Though Beat Zen and the 'Zen and the Art of'-genre has had enormous intellectual impact, only a few seriously interested practitioners from the 1960s onward went to Japan for monastic experiences, and Zen Buddhism is still amongst

the minority Buddhisms in Denmark.

Following the general trends in the history of Buddhisms' coming to the West, the Tibetan tradition was the last of the imported Three Wheels. This final step in the development also marks the transition from literary to living Buddhism as a practised religion for more than a minority. The political issues (Tibet as a politically correct case to defend), the logistical possibilities (the accessibility of and cheaper flights to the Himalayan region), the continued production of literary and commercial visions and versions of mythic Shangri-La and the coming of lamas to the West all contributed to the success of this trend. It might have come sooner or later, but the Danish case was triggered by a couple of hippies, Ole and Hannah Nydahl, backpacking to the spiritual East through their own mental and physical journeys on their honeymoon to Nepal in 1968. Here they met the Tibetan lamas, the magic and mystery of Himalaya, and the spiritual encounters with themselves that were to follow them the rest of their lives. As true hippies they experienced with drugs, but later found that intensified practise and commitment to lamas and Buddhist teachings were superior means of encountering spiritual and existential depths. Ole Nydahl was later by the 16th Karmapa of the Kagyu lineage appointed the title of lama himself, and, despite his rather controversial personality and modern interpretation of Buddhism, in many ways has been the living icon of living Buddhism in Denmark. With Ole and Hannah Nydahl's establishment of the Buddhist Centre Copenhagen in 1972, the gates finally were opened for later Buddhists, and many of those later going to other Buddhist traditions started their religious carriers in the centre (see also below).[4]

However, as it is the case in the rest of the Western world, the majority of Buddhists in Denmark is of Asian origin. When the 'boat people' from Vietnam arrived in the late 1970s, it also signalled a new phase of immigration from another part of the world. Like the growing number of Thais, Sri Lankans and Burmese, they needed centres as places to live their religious and cultural identity as immigrants in a foreign country. These 'immigrant Buddhists' are

4. On Nydahl and his life, see Nydahl 1985 and 1992.

by far the most numerous in the country. With the Danish-born converts they have contributed to the multi-religious palette and the environment of Buddhism-pluralism of Denmark, embracing all Buddhist wheels, several countries of Buddhist origin, many Buddhist groups, lines, traditions and types of practice. (On immigrant Buddhists, see below).

Besides the members of Buddhist groups (or affiliates with Buddhist temples and centers), there are many individual practitioners of some kind of Buddhism (e.g. Vipassana or Zen), not necessarily identifying as Buddhists or calling themselves 'secular Buddhists'. Some practice occasionally or are just deeply inspired by Buddhism as 'a way of life' or as 'a spiritual path'. The spectrum or more-or-less engaged believers, practitioners, sympathizers and postmodern individuals is broad, and in Denmark there are also those who "believe without belonging, belong without believing, practice without believing or belonging or simply somehow identify as Buddhists without believing, belonging or practicing" (Borup 2016a: 91). Non-membership based, Buddhist-derived beliefs (e.g. karma, rebirth, spiritual development), values (e.g. interdependence, equanimity, peace) and practices (meditation) have been on the rise for the last three decades, and the many groups and tendencies within the broad fields of spirituality and new age are often directly inspired by Buddhism. In recent years, mindfulness has gained significant popularity. In 2015, 144 mindfulness providers were found in the (country's second largest) city of Aarhus (Borup 2015), a significant increase of 74% in four years since a previous investigation (Gottfredsen 2014). 75% of the providers and 14 out of the 16 interviewees were women, and the majority of both instructors and users are mainly attracted to the practice as a therapeutic tool, very few identifying it as Buddhism per se.[5] In general, Buddhism in Denmark is popular as a religion, as spirituality and as therapy, but mainly as a narrative and symbol. A Danish survey showed that the Dalai Lama ranked highest as a religious role model, and also many

5. In one survey, none of the 83 instructors identified their service as 'Buddhist' Gottfredsen (2014), and in another survey from 2015 only three percent referred to Buddhism on their homepages (Borup 2015).

Christians are inspired by and practice Buddhism.[6] Buddhism is portrayed positively in the media, in bookshops[7] and in visual media such as films, commercials and ads, where Buddha is used as a marketing symbol for ideas and products (Borup 2016b).

Danish Buddhist Demography

Theravada Buddhism is represented by migrants and descendants from mainly Thailand, Sri Lanka and Myanmar and small groups practising vipassana meditation. Up to 90-95 % Thais are Buddhists, 80 % of the migrants being women married to Danish men. There are four Thai Buddhist temples in the country, one being Mahanikaya, another Thammayut and two belonging to the Dhammakaya tradition. Watpa Copenhagen was established in 1991 by Phra Ajahn Yantra Amaro Bhikkhu, whose ascetic lifestyle and inspiration from Phra Buddhadasa in the 1970s transformed his hippie mentality into a respected, yet controversial monk. After some public scandals in the 90s, Phra Yantra was officially disrobed, and to distinguish the Danish *wat* from its original sister wat, Sunnataram Forests Monastery (having branches in Thailand, USA, Australia, New Zealand and Hongkong), the Watpa Sunnataram Copenhagen changed to Watpa Copenhagen, being the only representative of the reformist Thammayut order in Denmark with the permanently residing monk Phra Somsak as caretaker. Wat Thai Denmark Brahmavihara Buddhist Monastery is from the majority monastic order, the Mahanikaya. The wat was established in 1990 by Phra Soodhiwangso on requests from the Buddhist Thai Organization (Buddhistisk Thai Forening). Though rebuilt in traditional Danish farm houses, both wats appear 'typically Thai' with roof wood carvings, ordination hall (*ubosot*), Buddha statues and kitch-

6. Both Zen and mindfulness have been used as inspirational practices in some Christian churches, and a Christian minister has even introduced a Christian version of mindfulness, called 'Christfulness'.

7. Buddhism-related books are often to be found in bookshops under the category 'Body and Mind' alongside books about popular psychology, new age, spirituality, and healthy living. In recent years books containing 'mindfulness' in their title seem to have taken over the parts of the 'Zen and the art of' genre. While some of the 140 Danish books (in 2016) about mindful or mindfulness (60% of which were published from 2012 to 2015) are academic, the majority are related to spiritual self-development and (secular) wellbeing, often written as guidebooks on how to live more 'mindfully' in different aspects of daily life (Borup 2016b).

ens for some of the visitors, whose relationship with the monastic grounds, the permanently residing monks and 5-10 visiting guest monks are only formalized by actual membership by half of the Danish Thai population. In 2009, Dhammakaya achieved the status of being officially recognized religious community. Dhammakaya has two monasteries, one in Jutland (Juelsminde) and one in Zealand (Korsør), with both permanently residing and visiting monks. Apart from celebrating Thai Buddhist rituals (including alms gathering) for the Thai communities, both temples have also attracted ethnic Danes for meditation sessions.

While the majority of the 12.000 residents with Sri Lankan origin are Tamil refugees and reunited families, an estimated 1.500 of these are Singhalese, and 1.200 of whom are Buddhists.[8] Up to 70 % of the immigrant arriving in the 1970s and 1980s were women, most of whom being married to Danish men. The Siam Nikaya order temple with the name Copenhagen Buddhist Vihara is related to the larger Swedish temple, the Stockholm Buddhist Vihara. It was established in 2002 in an apartment in Copenhagen, but has moved into another apartment outside of Copenhagen. There are plans to build a permanent and more 'temple like' building for the one monk and the members of the Sri Lankan Danish Buddhist Religious and Cultural Organization (Den Sri Lankansk-Danske Buddhistiske Religiøse og Kulturelle Forening) which was founded in 1998 and in 2014 got the official approval of being a recognized religious community.

In 2008, another Theravada community was founded, with immigrants originating in Myanmar. The Burmese Theravada Buddhist Association Buddha Ramsi (Den Burmesiske Theravada Buddhistforening Buddha Ramsi) has fewer than 100 members, but attracts growing numbers of affiliates among the ethnic Myanmar community. In 2010 it got the official approval of being a recognized religious organization.

East Asian Mahayana Buddhists in general are more problem-

8. These figures are especially vulnerable. Only statistics of immigrants from Sri Lanka are available, whereas both the numbers of Singhalese and Buddhists are based on more or less qualified (but often very different) guesses from different Sri Lankan informants.

atic to count, identify and categorize,[9] and this also is the case with the majority of Asian immigrants in Denmark, the Vietnamese, most of whom came as refugees (and their children and reunited family). The arrival of the 'boat people' from Vietnam in the late 1970s signaled a new phase of Buddhism, with immigration from an Asian context. Some were Catholics, some Buddhists and some not religious at all, but their presence produced a distinct cultural landscape.[10] As they grew in number and family reunions were made possible, the Vietnamese started building their own temples and inviting monks from abroad as religious guides and ritual specialists. In 2019, nearly 16,000 people of Vietnamese origin live in Denmark. Estimating the number of Buddhists to be 60-70 per cent, there are thus nearly 10,000 who may attend two monastic communities (one in Aarhus and one in Odense, each with a permanently residing monk) and four smaller temples. The Vietnamese Buddhist Organization in Denmark is closely related to the much larger Vietnamese pagoda in Hannover, Vien Giac. Though also highly respected by the Vietnamese, Thich Nhat Hanh and his modern and universal Buddhism mostly caters to ethnic Danes, small groups of whom meet periodically to meditate and discuss his teaching.

Neither the Japanese or (South) Koreans have Buddhist temples or organizations in the country. The remaining Mahayana Buddhists are mainly convert Buddhists from groups with primarily Japanese origin. Zen Buddhism has long been known in the west, but the number of actual practitioners in Denmark is rather limited. Lay practitioner Tim Pallis and *rōshi* John Denko Mortensen were two of the early adventurers going to Japan for monastic experiences, both being leaders of two Danish Zen communities. Mortensen was the leader of Pine Hill Zendō and vice-abbot of the Dai Bosatsu Zendō in the USA, and eventually returned to his homeland to establish a Zen Buddhist monastery (Taikyoji) on a small island, ordaining the first monk in 2007. Since then, several retreats have

9. The insecurity of worldwide statistics on religious adherents is especially symptomatic when counting Buddhists, the whole result being sensitive especially to the numbers given to China, ranging in different kinds of statistics from some millions to a billion.

10. On the Vietnamese Buddhists and Catholics in Denmark, see Borup 2014.

been held at the monastery, the name of which has changed to Buddhist Society (the name of also the first Buddhist community in Denmark), and which has moved to the central part of the mainland. Despite its popular brand, Zen Buddhism, however, is still amongst the smallest schools of Buddhism in Denmark, with only five groups and a total of no more than 100 affiliated people meeting periodically for Zen meditation (*zazen*).

The other main school of Japanese origin in Denmark is Soka Gakkai. The founder of the Japanese group, Makiguchi Tsunesaburo (1871-1944), had studied the Danish 19th century educational reformers N.F.S. Grundtvig and Christen Cold at Tokyo University. As a young guy, Masaaki Kamio followed in his steps in 1966 when travelling and coincidentally ending up in Denmark. There he learned about N.F.S. Grundtvig and Christen Cold at Askov Højskole and through them he deepened his Soka Gakkai identity, finding and embracing his own roots, establishing Soka Gakkai Denmark in 1983. In 2019, there are 1,300 members and a similar estimated number of affiliated persons showing up for meetings and activities in the main center in Copenhagen (Nordic Culture Center), its six main regions, and almost 70 local groups. Soka Gakkai is known to attract artists and actors, and contributing to the group's symbolic capital is the fact that president of Soka Gakkai International, Ikeda Daisaku, holds an honorary doctorate at University of Southern Denmark.

Vajrayana is represented in Denmark by three of the four traditional Tibetan Buddhist lines; Kagyu, Nyingma and Gelug. Apart from Lakha Lama, the deceased (in 2004) Tarab Tulku and periodically visiting guest lamas, the Danish Tibetan Buddhism consists exclusively of ethnic Danes. Though this kind of Buddhism is often based on private religiosity and mixed with other new age- and spiritual self development practices, there is also a high degree of institutional affiliation as lamas and Buddhist lines often play an important part for the individual practitioner. Also ethnic Danes have been bestowed with a lama title. The most well-known is the aforementioned Ole Nydahl, whose charismatic personality has been object of both respect and conflict. His group, Karma Kagyu Skolen, has its main centre in Copenhagen, another centre in Lol-

land and eight local study centres around the country. Approximately 300 members join the group, which is much more powerful abroad, where it - known as Diamond Way Buddhism - has 650 centres worldwide. Many more join the group as occasional visitors and practitioners, and the group is active in inviting schools and promoting their practice online. In all, I have estimated that there are around 3-4.000 persons in Denmark practising Tibetan Buddhism, and around 2.500 have taken the Buddhist refuges by lamas from these groups. [11]

11. There are, however, certain points of uncertainty with these figures. "Dharma shopping" seems to be higher in this Buddhist line, which has relatively few practitioners compared to number of groups. Many users are or have been members or users in other groups, e.g. many participants at the summer courses at Rangjung Yeshe Gomde are part of other Tibetan groups, just like Phendeling attracts persons from different groups. The only permanent split is between Ole Nydahl's Karma Kagyu Skolen and all the other groups. Some lamas and groups put more emphasis on refuge ceremony than others. Ole Nydahl offers this at each public appearance, and a former homepage declared that he had given half a million refugees worldwide. Though such figures are perhaps more expressive of the lack of registration at such arrangements than actual figures, it does give a clue to the popularity also of ritually becoming a Buddhist. Taking refuge is usually only a single action, despite change of Buddhist institutional orientation. The number will thus typically be less than the gross number of members and users which can cover several institutional references in the common activity of "dharma shopping". On the other hand, among convert Buddhists in general it is known – and my interviews with many Danish converts confirm this tendency – that ritual confirmation with a Buddhist master does not guarantee any long lasting institutional relationship. The number of people having taken refuge does not say anything definite about the number of Buddhists.

Table 1. Number of Immigrant Buddhists (Denmark 2019)

Country of origin	Number of immigrants and descendants	Percentage Buddhists	Number of Buddhists (rounded off)
Bhutan	939	80	750
Cambodia	384	90	350
China	14587	20	2900
Japan	1987	30	600
Myanmar	2551	50	1300
Nepal	4868	10	500
Singapore	609	40	250
South Korea	1677	20	350
Sri Lanka	11925	10	1200
Taiwan	468	40	200
Thailand	12757	90	11500
Vietnam	15578	60	9350
Total			29250

Acknowledging the extreme cautiousness with which to approach religious demographics, an overview of estimated number of immigrant Buddhists in Denmark is seen below. The number of immigrants and descendants are from Statistics Denmark, defining a person as an immigrant if he/she is born abroad and has no parent who is both born in Denmark and has Danish citizenship and a descendant if he/she is born in Denmark and has no parent who is both born in Denmark and has Danish citizenship. Percentages of Buddhists are based on statistics and surveys (Pew Forum, World Religion Database, World Value Survey, modified according to each concrete country of origin's migration history to Denmark) and own research (individual and as part of the Danish Pluralism Project. See Borup 2016a on counting immigrant Buddhism).

With an estimated number of 4-5.000 ethnic Danish Buddhists, the figure in 2019 is estimated at around 34,000. This figure does

not include the many individuals being inspired by, interested in or combining own religion, spirituality, therapy or life philosophy with Buddhism. In a broader sense, there are probably more people practicing, valuing and living Buddhism than people who identify themselves as Buddhists or who are members of Buddhist groups. Denmark is not the only country in which Buddhism has a relatively *low level of institutional affiliation* but a *high level of religious brand value*.

Buddhist belief and practice among convert and immigrant Buddhists

The Vietnamese, Thai and Sri Lankan Buddhist communities have nothing in common, and only very occasionally mingle with the ethnic Danish 'convert Buddhists'. The majority of them live their religion as most Danes do as 'cultural Christians'. Whereas convert Buddhists have chosen their religious and spiritual identity and practice, and therefore have a higher rate of attendance, ethnic Buddhists have mainly brought their religion with them as 'baggage' and part of their tradition. Only about 2 per cent of ethnic Buddhists regularly visit the temple, while 10-25 per cent attend religious festivals such as celebration of *wesak* and the rain retreat, cultural and national holidays or calendar rituals such as the Thai light festival *loy kratong*, the Vietnamese 'Mother's Day' (*vu lan*) or New Year (*tet*). Rites of passage focus on taking Buddhist refuges (though only an estimated 60-70 per cent have done so), and a few monks have been ordained in Denmark. Characteristically, only very few ethnic Buddhists have yet used the only Buddhist columbarium in Copenhagen, catering mainly for ethnic Danes from the Tibetan groups. Some are buried in Christian cemeteries, others have their ashes sent to their homeland. Apart from the monks, only few meditate; many are not interested in institutional relations or doctrinal knowledge, but are mainly concerned about bringing up children with the ideals of honoring ancestors and respecting the family in a highly individualistic Western country..

To affirm the Buddhist precepts is also a key to affirming cultural and ethical codes of behaving well, of trying to — as many have expressed it — 'live a good life', and such an ideal can be achieved without necessarily going to the temple. 'Ethnicizing religion', in

which religion is practiced as an ethnic and cultural identity marker (e.g. when large photos of the royal family hang next to Buddha in Thai temples), is structurally parallel to theologically Buddhicizing local cultural elements (for example, celebrating the birthday of Maitreya at the Vietnamese New Year or making the Thai New Year a Buddhist calendrical ritual), a practice also found in the convert Buddhist environment (for example, in celebrating Christmas or New Year at Buddhist centers. Even the Dhammakaya group in Jutland, known in Thailand and internationally for re-introducing a spiritualized and meditation-based form of Buddhism, to a large extent embodies traditional Thai culture.

Whereas a few (especially young Buddhists) have voiced an interest in de-ethnicizing their religion, the process of spiritualizing and universalizing Buddhism is, however, most commonly found among convert Buddhists. As has often been objected, there are both theoretical and empirical challenges in insisting on the relevance in using is two-fold typology of the 'two Buddhisms' (e. g. 'immigrant' and 'convert').[12] One interesting aspect worthwhile studying is the apparent overlap and changes in developments. Clearly, the purely 'Protestant' and intellectualized Buddhism seem to be decreasing, giving space to a living and practiced Buddhism whose religious elements are often not significantly different from the religious immigrant and Asian Buddhism (for example, belief in miracles, magical rituals etc.). On the other hand, young generations of immigrant Buddhists learn about 'doctrinal Buddhism' in schools and about the Dalai Lama, meditation and 'spiritual Buddhism' in the popular media. 'It is cool to be a Buddhist', as a young Vietnamese once explained me, signifying the symbolic capital deriving both from being part of a group of 'model immigrants' and belonging to a tradition signaling spiritual quality in a postmodern society. Future contexts will probably change structural character-

12. The concepts 'convert' and 'immigrant' are naturally problematic. Many ethnic Danes who practice Buddhism are not necessarily converts, but might be 'culture Christians' and/or members of the Danish Folk Church. 'Immigrant' is a relevant category for the first generation of immigrants, but later generations of descendants are properly speaking not immigrants, but simply Danish. The concepts tend to be blurred over time, but do still have some explanatory value in terms of analyzing different religious and Buddhist communities in Denmark and the West.

istics, and more research still needs to be done on many aspects of Buddhism in Denmark and generally in the global world.

***

References

Baumann, Martin

2001 "Global Buddhism" in Journal of Global Buddhism, 2: 1-43.

Borup, Jørn

2005 Dansk dharma. Buddhisme og buddhister i Danmark. Højbjerg: Forlaget Univers.

2007 Danske Verdensreligioner: Buddhisme. Cph: Gyldendal.

2008 "Buddhism in Denmark". Journal of Global Buddhism 9, pp. 27-37.

2014 "Religiosity and Ethnicity: Vietnamese Immigrant Religion in Denmark". Helena Vilaca et. al. (eds.) The Changing Soul of Europe. Religions and Migrations in Northern and Southern Europe. Ashgate: 231-250.

2015 "Mindfulness as a religious and post-religious phenomenon - mapping and analysing mindfulness in the city of Aarhus". Religion i Danmark http://samtidsreligion.au.dk/religion-i-danmark/2016/

2016a "Who are these Buddhists and How Many of Them are There? Theoretical and Methodological Challenges in Counting Immigrant Buddhists: A Danish Case Study". Journal of Contemporary Religion 31, 1, pp. 85-100.

2016b "Branding Buddha – Mediatized and Commodified Buddhism as Cultural Narrative". Journal of Global Buddhism 17: 41-53.

Fausbøll, Viggo

1872 Ten Jatakas. The Original Pali Text with a Translation. Copenhagen: Louis Klien.

Gjellerup, Karl

1906 Pilgrimmen Kamanita. Copenhagen: Gyldendal.

Gottfredsen, Rikke

2014. "Mindfulness – en religionssociologisk analyse. Religionsvidenskabeligt Tidsskrift 61, pp. 55.73.

Karmapo Khenno

1993 A Sikkimese point of view. Gangtok: Kesangi House.

Knudsen, Jens Chr.

1891 På Budda's veje. Oplevelser og meddelelser fra Burma. Copenhagen: V. Pontoppidans Boghandel.

1883 "Lidt burmesisk buddhisme" in Højskolebladet 18: 82-83.

Melbye, Cristian F.

1926 Buddhareligionen. Copenhagen: V. Pios Boghandel.

Nesterenko, Michael (ed.)

1992 Karmapa Papers. PB NO. 128.16, F-75763. Paris: Cedex.

Nydahl, Ole

1985 Entering the Diamond Way: My Path among the Lamas. Nevada City, Calif: Blue Dolphin Publ.

1992 Riding the Tiger. Twenty Years on the Road: Risks and Joys of bringing Tibetan Buddhism to the West. Nevada City, Calif: Blue Dolphin Publ.

Prip-Møller, Johannes

1937 Chinese Buddhist Monasteries. Copenhagen: Gad.

Scherer, Bee

(n.d.) "Neo-Orthodox Tradition and Transition: Lama Ole Nydahl and the Diamond Way". https://info-buddhism.com/Ole_Nydahl_and_Diamond_Way_B_Scherer.html

EUROPE

BUDDHISM IN EUROPE
HISTORY, CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS, AND ADAPTATIONS TO EUROPEAN LARGE-SCALE SOCIAL TRENDS

by Martin Baumann*

In Europe, a multitude of different Buddhist traditions and schools have firmly settled during the past 50 years. The various *sanghas* of Theravāda, Mahāyāna, and Tibetan Buddhism as well as newly formed Western Buddhist *sanghas* are present and most have established important monasteries and centres. While for a long time, most Buddhist places of practice remained invisible and hardly known to the wider public, the last thirty years saw the building of impressive Thai temples, Vietnamese pagodas, Tibetan monasteries, numerous Buddhist stupas, and much more. In Western Europe, Buddhism is on its way of reaching mainstream people in three different ways: the positive public image has established Buddhism as a viable and accessible alternative to other religions, leading to a tremendous growth in terms of the number of centres and members. Second, *vipassanā* meditation and its various secular forms have become increasingly practiced as a trendy form of stress-reduction and developing awareness. Finally, the capitalist market turned the widespread projections of Buddhism as peaceful, tolerant, and basically positive in different products such as Buddhist figures, *thankas*, sound bowls, and much more. These products are readily available for purchase in numerous furniture and garden shops. Buddha figures have become decorative objects in the family

*. Professor and Head, Department for the Study of Religions, University of Lucerne, Switzerland.

room and garden, symbolising calmness and modern spirituality. Buddhism has such taken numerous forms in Europe, shaped by the large-scale social trends of pluralisation, secularisation, and commodification.

In its first part, the chapter will provide an overview of the beginnings of receiving Buddhist ideas and texts by European colonial officers, philosophers and scholars and sketch the initial steps of establishing Buddhist groups and organisations. Part two reconstructs the tremendous changes in terms of the arrival of teacher, teachings, and practices of Japanese Zen, Tibetan, and Theravāda Buddhism since the 1960s. Furthermore, migrants and refugees from various Asian countries started coming in larger numbers from the 1980s onward, multiplying the number of Buddhist people in most Western European countries. The third part discusses the adaptation of Buddhist ideas, practices, and objects to the large-scale social trends of individualisation, secularisation, and commodification prevalent in Europe. A brief conclusion rounds up the chapter. The contribution argues that Buddhist ideas, teachings, and practices were interpreted by European scholars and practitioners according to their knowledge, projection, and hope of the time. Each interpretation represents an adaptation to cultural and religious preferences of the very time. Despite all changes of interpreting Buddhism, the idea that original religious inspirations derive from the East has continued over a time-span of two to three hundred years in Europe.

1. EARLY ENCOUNTER AND RECEPTION

The first reception of Buddhist ideas in Europe was based on missionary reports and selected text translations. From the mid-16th century onwards, fragmented impressions about a false god named Bod reached European countries through the reports of Jesuits from China and Japan. Importantly, from their European bias, the missionaries interpreted the Buddhist doctrines of 'impermanence' and 'no-self' as denoting a nihilistic nature. Relying on the interpretations of the Jesuits, German Philosopher Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716) construed in his famous *Théodizée* (1710) that the teaching of this so far unknown Eastern faith was characterised by 'nothingness' as the first principle of all things.

Leibniz's (mis)interpretation of the attributed core of Buddhist teachings influenced the understanding of subsequent important writers and poets, be this Johann G. Herder, Arthur Schopenhauer, and Friedrich Nietzsche (Halbfass 1988).

While Leibniz and the philosopher of enlightenment, Voltaire, praised the assumed practical and rational philosophy of Chinese culture, the Romantic Movement at the turn of the 19th century favoured emotions, the nature, and inner experience. The interest among European scholars and philosophers thus shifted towards India and its assumed pure and innocent cultures and religions. Noticeably, increasing numbers of translations of Sanskrit and Nepali texts by British colonial officers brought novel first-hand knowledge of Buddhist teachings to the European learned world. Based on these translations, German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860) became very interested in those teachings and later called himself a 'Buddhaist'. Schopenhauer thought of himself less an interpreter of the Indian Buddhist scripts and more an original thinker, to whom Buddhist ideas were a confirmation of his philosophy. His important book *The World as Will and Representation* (1819) stimulated a wide interest in Buddhist philosophy and ethics among artists, academics, and philosophers in German speaking parts. Schopenhauer's portrayal of the Buddhist teachings of *nirvāṇa* as pessimism became very influential and coined presentations about Buddhism in the 19th and long into the 20th century (Halbfass 1988, Lussier 2011).

Schopenhauer's philosophy and additional Buddhist texts from India and Nepal brought off a boom of new translations, studies and portrayals of Buddhism in the 1850s. Important scholars Thomas W. Rhys Davids (1843-1922), founder of the Pāli Text Society in 1881, and Hermann Oldenberg (1854-1920) served to spread Buddhist concepts through their widely read translations and treatises. Both scholars clearly favoured the so-called pure and original teachings of the Pāli canon. While the Romantic interpreters praised Buddhism for virtues of world-withdrawal and unspoiled inspiration, Rhys Davids admired Buddhism as a" science of mind" and an "ethical psychology" (McMahan 2008: 52). While interpretations of Buddhism differed strongly, the interpreters praised the assumed

unspoiled Eastern teaching as a cure to attributed crises of Europe. During the 17th to 19th century, overall Buddhism was imported from within by European Orientalists and philosophers, treating the newly discovered Asian religion essentially as a textual object and kept save in Oriental libraries and publications. In contrast to texts and concepts, religious practices of rites and devotion were not of interest and were beyond the horizon of European perception (Halbfass 1988, Schwab 1984).

In late 19th century, a different form of reception emerged. First self-converted followers of the Buddhist teachings appeared in Austria and Germany, being learned men from the expanding middle-classes. In accordance with the dominance of Pāli Buddhist ideas, also a few young men from England, Germany, and Ireland became monks in the Theravāda tradition in Burma and Ceylon. The Briton Allan Bennett McGregor (1872-1923) was ordained as Ananda Metteyya in 1902, and German musician Anton W. F. Gueth (1878-1957), ordained as Nyānatiloka in 1904, became widely known and praised for his numerous translations from the Pāli canon and his Buddhist writings. In contrast to these learned monks, U Dhammaloka, the previously poor Irish working-class person, remained unknown until recently. Staying several years in Burma, U Dhammaloka vigorously opposed Christian missionaries and called on the local people to defend their Buddhism. Whereas the activities of learned European monks such as Nyānatiloka were directed towards the learned European Buddhist circles, U Dhammaloka focused his engagement on the colonized Buddhists in South Asia and the protection of the *dharma* (Bocking et al. 2014).

In Europe the ethical and intellectual interests in the teachings of Theravāda Buddhism gained organizational momentum with the founding of first Buddhist societies. The start was done by the Society for the Buddhist Mission in Germany formed by the Indologist Karl Seidenstücker (1876-1936) in Leipzig in 1903. In lectures, pamphlets and books, the first professed Buddhists tried to win members from the educated middle and upper social strata of society. This and other, often only short-lived, societies praised Buddhism as the "religion of reason", the religion which rested on insight and knowledge alone (Baumann 1995).

After World War I, interest in Buddhist teachings and practices grew. In Germany, leading Buddhists Georg Grimm (1868-1945) and Paul Dahlke (1865-1928) founded so-called Buddhist 'parishes' with the intention of not only reading but practising the religion. In 1924, Dahlke built his famous Buddhist House near Berlin in which he lived a monk-like life (Baumann 2006). In Britain, with the support of the famous Ceylonese reformer Anagārika Dharmapāla (1864-1933) and his 1891 founded Mahā Bodhi Society, a Buddhist *viharā* (monastery) was established in 1928 in London. While until then almost exclusively Buddhist laymen acted as spokespersons of Buddhism, the settlement of three Theravāda *bhikkhus* (monks) for the first time marked the taking root of the Buddhist *sangha* (order) in Europe (Humphreys 1968, Baumann 2012). In contrast to Buddhist activities in Britain and Germany, only few organizational developments had occurred in other European countries until the 1950s.

2. BUDDHIST BOOM AND PLURALISATION

After World War II and from the 1960s in particular, the reception of Buddhism grew to a boom. From the 1950s onwards, for the first time Mahāyāna traditions from Japan such as Jōdō Shinshū and Nichiren Buddhism as well as the literate reception of Zen Buddhism through the writings of Daisetz T. Suzuki were brought to Europe. Furthermore, the Ceylonese Lanka Dhammadūta Society renovated the 1924 built Buddhist House by Paul Dahlke in Berlin and sent several Theravāda *bhikkhus* to spread the *dharma* in Europe.

From the 1960s onwards, the pluralisation of Buddhism in different countries such as France, Italy, Sweden and numerous more countries took off. Different to the previous preference of Pāli Canon-based Buddhism and interests in cognitive aspects of Buddhist ideas, now practice-based, bodily dimensions gained priority and popularity. *Vipassanā* and Zen meditation were discovered and became popular as new practices to search for mystical, inner experiences. Numerous local groups and societies emerged as Zen teachers started to tour Europe, lecturing and conducting courses on a regular basis. The Zen boom was followed

by a growing interest in Tibetan Buddhism. Tibetan teachers (the *lamas*) had first come to England, France and Switzerland in the late 1960s and had established small centres. From the mid-1970s, however, as further high-ranking *lamas* conducted preaching tours in Europe, Western fellowship in Tibetan Buddhism took off. The new followers perceived the *lamas* as teachers of the attributed original, mystical teachings, practices, and rituals of uncolonised Tibet. Within only two decades, converts to Tibetan Buddhism founded a multitude of centres and groups, at times outnumbering all other Buddhist traditions in a country.

This rapid increase led to a considerable rise in the number of Buddhist groups and centres. In Britain, for example, within only two decades, the number of organizations quintupled from 74 to some 400 groups and centres (1979-2000). In Germany, interest in Buddhism resulted in an exponential increase in the number of institutions, from some 40 groups to more than 500 meditation circles, groups, centres, and societies (1975-1999). Comparable explosive growth rates occurred in other European countries, such as Italy, Austria, Switzerland, France, the Netherlands, or Denmark. The growth has continued in the first two decades of the 21st century, tremendously multiplying the number of Buddhist organisations and members in a country. Likewise, Buddhist institutions stepped out into public visibility with at times newly built grand monasteries and centres, publicly held Buddhist festivals and gatherings.

Furthermore, Eastern European countries witnessed a growing interest in Buddhism following the political changes since 1989. Tibetan and Zen groups in particular were founded in Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary and western parts of the Russian Federation. Visits by European and North American Buddhist teachers as well as a longing for spiritual alternatives to the established Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church brought about a steady growth of Buddhism in Eastern Europe.

In addition to the strand of western people who took up Buddhist ideas and practices, since the 1960s considerable numbers of Buddhists from Asian countries have come to Western Europe. In particular France, as former colonial power in Southeast Asia, numerically strong communities of refugees from Vietnam,

Laos and Cambodia have emerged. Paris has become the central place for Southeast Asian Buddhist migrants. While Vietnamese shops, cultural associations, and Buddhist pagodas emerged in numerous places in France, the huge pagoda Khánh Anh near Paris became the central representational place since 2004 (Gidoin 2017). In addition to Vietnamese Buddhism and its *sangha*, also Thai Buddhism and its *sangha* became established with, on the one hand, the Western monks of the Forest Traditions of Ajahn Chah in Britain, Italy and elsewhere. On the other hand, monks coming from Thailand reside in various monasteries such as in Frankfurt, Gretzenbach (Switzerland), and Copenhagen. The Thai population in Europe is primarily made up of Thai women who came as wives of British, German or Danish men. In addition, several thousand Tibetan people who came as refugees from the 1960s onward live in Switzerland, Germany, and other countries. The in Western media highly acclaimed 14. Dalai Lama visits them regularly and gives teachings and ritual initiations in the 1968 built monastic Tibet Institute Rikon (Switzerland) and other places. Finally, Japanese professionals and students who came in the 1960s brought Pure Land Buddhism and the new Japanese Buddhist tradition of Sōka Gakkai. Sōka Gakkai which was disputed for is missionary activities in the 1980s, claims more than 100,000 members in Europe.

In the process of the Buddhist migrant populations settling down, numerous religious and cultural institutions were founded with the aim to preserve the religious-cultural identity and heritage. By visiting pagodas and temples, performing customary acts of devotional worship, and jointly celebrating Buddhist festivals, the Buddhists from Thailand, Tibet or Vietnam regain a home away from home. However, with the growing up of a second and third generation, attitudes towards Buddhist practices and monasteries have started to change. Young Vietnamese and young Tibetan Buddhists having grown up in France, Britain or Switzerland wish to understand the meanings of the concepts and ask for explanations of rituals and precepts. Increasingly, for them Buddhism is less centred on ritual practices and visits to monasteries. Rather it has become more an attitude of life and a philosophy. Buddhist ideas and mediational practices, not devotional acts, are interpreted in

individual terms with a focus on intellectually comprehending the Buddhist teachings. In this regard the understanding of Buddhism by young Tibetans and Vietnamese highly complies with general trends of an individualised and intellectualised religiosity in Western Europe (Schlieter et al. 2018, Khaliefi 2019).

In addition to established forms and interpretations of Theravāda Buddhism from South Asia, Mahāyāna Buddhism from Japan, Korea, Vietnam, and China as well as the different schools of Tibetan Buddhism, also newly created western Buddhist groups were founded. While the Order Arya Maitrey Mandala, founded by the German Lama Govinda (1898-1985) in 1933, has remained small, the 1967 founded Friends of the Western Buddhist Order witnessed a strong growth in particular in Great Britain. Its founder Sangharakshita, the British Dennis Lingwood (1925-2018) ordained as a Theravāda monk in 1950, set up a Buddhist movement independent from established traditions. Renamed Triratna in 2010, the Buddhist organisation claimed some 100 centres, 61 local groups, and more than 2000 order members in 2016. In its reformistic approach back to the 'spiritual' experience of awakening of the Buddha, Triratna encompasses Buddhist centres, living communities, and economic co-operatives (Vajragupta 2010). Furthermore, the Vietnamese monk, poet, and peace activist Thich Nhat Hanh (b. 1926) living in South France has won a large fellowship among Westerners with his 'Order of Inter Being' and the focus on meditation and practices of mindfulness. In addition, other new orders and organisations could be named, such as the Diamond Buddhism by Lama Ole Nydahl (b. 1941) and the 16th and 17th Karmapas as well as the Insight Meditation Society and its interpreters of *vipassanā* meditation.

Overall, the US Pew Research Institute calculated the number of Buddhists in Europe to be 1.35 million in 2010 and estimates a grow to 2.5 million by 2050 (Pew 2015). Table 1 provides a break down for the number of Buddhists in selected European countries in 2000/2001 and 2010/2014 (Baumann 2018: 439-440).

Country	Buddhists in 2000/2001	Buddhists in 2010/2014	Population 2000/2001 and 2010/14	Percentage of Population 2000/1 and 2010/4	Source
England and Wales	144.500	247.700	52 / 56 Mio.	0,28 / 0,44	Office of National Statistics, Religion
Germany	160.000	270.000	8 2 / 81 Mio.	0,2 / 0,33	Federal Office of Statistics, estimate
Swiss	22.300	34.700	6,3 / 6,6 Mio.	0,29 / 0,52	Federal Office of Statistics, from 2014 persons older than 15 years only
Austria	10.400	25.000	8 / 8,5 Mio.	0,1 / 0,29	Federal Office of Statistics, Austria
France	?	770.000	- / 64,7 Mio.	- / 1,2	Figure by the Union Boudhiste de France for 2010
Spain	30.000	50.000	46 / 48,8 Mio.	0,06 / 0,1	Instituto Nacional de Estadistica, estimate
Italy	?	257.000	69 / 60,8 Mio.	- / 0,42	Cesnur, estimate

In addition to the numerous local groups, Buddhist centres, and monasteries, in many countries national umbrella societies had evolved. These non-affiliated Buddhist societies strongly enhance forms of intra-Buddhist dialogue and activities. In Austria, Germany, Britain, the Netherlands, and Italy, such national societies have become well respected representatives of Buddhism. On an international level, the 1975 founded European Buddhist Union remains of low impact and importance, however. Importantly, in Austria, in 1983 the state officially recognised Buddhism as an incorporated religion entitled to special rights such as school teaching and broadcasting time. In 1985, the German Buddhist Union strove to follow the Austrian success. Representatives of the various Buddhist traditions adopted a commonly accepted

'Buddhist Confession' (a self-designation). The hope for official state recognition failed, however. A new attempt to apply for the privileged status is on its way currently. Generally, so-called ecumenic and intra-Buddhist activities are very strong compared to endeavours in the United States. In cosmopolitan cities like Vienna, Rome, and Hamburg, the Buddhist *Vesakh* festival is jointly celebrated by numerous Buddhist centres and different traditions. Buddhists themselves appreciate the joint meetings as a symbol of the unity of Buddhism despite traditionally evolved differences.

3. ADAPTATION OF BUDDHIST IDEAS AND PRACTICES TO LARGE-SCALE SOCIAL TRENDS

The rise of interest in Buddhism during the last 50 years is not only due to arrival of Zen *rōshis*, Tibetan *lamas*, Theravāda *bhikkhus*, and Western disciples returning back from Asia to teach in Europe. Of importance was also the social process of value change in the 1960s. In contrast to the pre-war time and 1950s, due to the cultural revolution of the 1960s individuals gained more liberties to choose their profession, their place of living, and their religious preference, practice, and membership. In Western Europe, the large-scale social trend of individualisation was reflected in the rapidly increasing interest in the new form of meditational practices. From the 1970s onward, numerous new Zen and *vipassanā* groups evolved, paralleled by the growth of Tibetan groups and centres. While the social trend of individualisation strongly promoted the increase of setting up new groups and centres, it also caused the so-called 'shopping around', i.e. visiting different religious groups and traditions. As the biographies and autobiographies of various current Buddhist teachers evidence, their choice had led them along different directions such as yoga, theosophy, and Sufism to finally stay with Buddhism (Waskönig 2003).

Furthermore, the process individualisation shows up as choices and preferences of young Vietnamese and Tibetans in favouring an intellectual understanding of Buddhist values and concepts. Rather than engaging in rituals, prayer, and visits to the monastery, the young people perceive Buddhism as a philosophy of life. Their way of lived religiosity is strongly ethicised, individualised, and

privatised. However, Buddhism is not 'lost' as some members of the older immigrant generation lament, but the young people interpret Buddhist ideas and concepts in fresh ways, in close alignment to general trends of the society.

In similar line, the large-scale social trend of secularisation has a bearing on the interpretation of Buddhist ideas and practices. Secularisation denotes social processes of a diminishing of the importance of religion in society and for the individual. It is accompanied also by a strengthening of rational, scientific explanations. In late 19th century already, Buddhist reformers such as Dharmapāla diminished the importance of Buddhist devotion and ritual and in contrast presented Buddhist teachings as scientific and rational. In similar line, pioneer Buddhists in Europe interpreted the *dharma* as a rational teaching of insight, a "science of mind" and "ethical psychology" as Rhys Davids held (McMahan 2008: 52). In current times, foremost Buddhist writer and meditation teacher Stephen Batchelor (b. 1953) interprets Buddhist teachings in secular terms. He argues that the Buddha proclaimed "an existential, therapeutic, and liberating agnosticism" which should be turned into practice (Batchelor 1997: 15). Batchelor argues for a 'secular Buddhism' or 'Buddhism 2.0' which claims to distil the liberating potentials of Buddha's teachings in rational speech (Batchelor 2012). Other Buddhists, however, criticise this approach and hold that the spiritual and superior teachings of the dharma surpass rational arguments.

While Batchelor's approach remains limited to an elite discussion so far, the secular interpretations of the Buddhist meditational practice of mindfulness (*Pāli sammā sati*) is far more popular. The practice of 'right meditation' forms the seventh part of the Buddhist 'Nobel Eightfold Path' and commonly should be based on Buddhist wisdom and ethical norms. In the United States of America and in increasingly in Europe, mindfulness in the interpretations of the influential Insight Meditation Society and teachers such as Satya N. Goenka and Thich Nhat Hanh is taught as a universal technique of personal experience and spiritual growth. In modern, middle-class circles, mindfulness meditation has become chic and trendy, a fitting practice for stressed persons to regain strength and balance

(Wilson 2014).

Based on these secular understandings, Jon Kabat-Zinn (b. 1944), former practitioner of Zen and *vipassanā* meditation, turned mindfulness meditation into therapeutic practice. He developed a training program called 'mindfulness-based-stress-reduction' (MBSR) and calls mindfulness a "moment-to-moment awareness" (Kabat-Zinn 1990: 2). His training program is backed by clinical studies which attest a benefit in coping with chronic pain, dealing with stress, and improvement of health. As such, the MBSR training program is taught in courses of eight weeks in public institutions such as prisons, hospitals, working places, and other areas (Wilson 2014: 84-101). As such, in the West the Buddhist practice of mindfulness meditation which formerly was practised by Buddhist monastics only has become a lay-based mass movement for therapeutic means and personal balancing.

Finally, the large-scale social trend of commercialisation and commodification has also influenced the reception and representation of Buddhism. Commodification denotes the process of turning immaterial objects, cultural values and images, religious ideas and practices, and much more into purchasable products for an economic market. In Europe, during the past two decades, a million-Euro market has evolved with offering numerous products such as Buddhist books and Buddha figures, Tibetan sound bowls and Japanese seat cushions for meditation (the *zafus*), and much more. In Buddhist journals, the number of advertisements has strongly increased. They promote Buddhist lectures and Buddhist centres, meditation courses for beginners and topical seminars, multiannual Buddhist study and meditation courses, books of current Buddhist teachers, and much more. Overall, in the general public Asian artefacts such as a Buddha figure or a miniature Japanese fountain, have become popular accessories of the garden arrangement or living room. Furthermore, online shops offer all kinds of sound bowls, Buddha figures, Japanese balloons, and numerous more Asiatic. The market-ready products are associated with images of personal wellness and modern spirituality. In this large-scale social trend of commodification, critical voices such as those by scholars Jeremy Carrette and Richard King are hardly

heard. They critique the "prosperity-oriented spiritualities" and argue that the commercialisation of Asian images, artefacts, and practices "stand in a long tradition of European colonialist attitude towards Asia" (Carrette and King 2005: 89). So far, European Buddhists and Buddhist umbrella organisations have not developed a clear position to the processes of commodification of Buddhism. However, a discussion has started.

CONCLUSION

Buddhism in Europe looks back on a three hundred years of the history of reception and a hundred years of the history of institutionalisation. The longing for unspoiled, original religious inspirations from the East has found expression in different interpretations and preferences from the early 19th century to current days. In Europe, Buddhism is in no way uniform. Due to the rapid growth of the past fifty years, it is made up of different Buddhist *sanghas* and traditions, hundreds of local groups and centres, and a great number of monasteries. In addition, Buddhist cooperatives, living communities, hospices, cemeteries, and much more can be found. In the 21st century, a firm and enduring infrastructure for teaching and practising Buddhism exists. Notwithstanding the rapidly increased interest in things Buddhist, Buddhism will certainly remain a minority tradition in Europe during the 21st century. Buddhists hope, however, that being a Buddhist in Europe will be less regarded as a trendy affair, romantic exoticism or clinging to Asian roots. Rather, Buddhism, in whatever shape, should become a non-sensational and accepted part of Europe's landscape of religions. And indeed, Buddhism has become a visible and appreciated religion in the spectrum of religious options in multi-faith Europe.

***

Works Cited

Batchelor, Stephen. 2012. A Secular Buddhism. in: *Journal of Global Buddhism* 13, 87-107.

Batchelor, Stephen. 1997. *Buddhism Without Beliefs. A Contemporary Guide to Awakening*. New York: Riverhead Books.

Baumann, Martin. 2018. Buddhismus im Westen [Buddhism in the West]. In: Manfred Hutter (ed.), *Buddhismus III. Ostasiatischer Buddhismus und Buddhismus im Westen* [Buddhism III. East Asian Buddhism and Buddhism in the West]. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 379-462.

Baumann, Martin. 2012. Modernist interpretations of Buddhism in Europe. In: David McMahan (ed.), *Buddhism in the Modern World*. London: Routledge, 113-135.

Baumann, Martin. 2006. Creating a Focal Point for Buddhism in the West. The German Buddhist Pioneer Paul Dahlke. In: Damien Keown (ed.), *Buddhist Studies from Ancient India to Modern America: Essays in Honor of Charles S. Prebish*. London: Routledge Curzon, 175-190.

Baumann, Martin. 1995. *Deutsche Buddhisten. Geschichte und Gemeinschaften* [German Buddhists. History and Communities]. 2nd, updated edition. Marburg: diagonal.

Bocking, Brian et al. 2014. *A Buddhist Crossroads. Pioneer Western Buddhists and Asian Networks 1860-1960*. London: Routledge.

Carrette, Jeremy and Richard King. 2005. *Selling Spirituality. The Silent Takeover of Religion*. London: Routledge:

Gidoin, Jérôme. 2017. *Les défunts à la pagode: la bouddhisation du culte des ancêtres chez les Vietnamiens de la région Parisienne* [The ancestors at the pagoda. The Buddhification of the ancestors' rite by the Vietnamese in the Paris region]. Paris: L'Harmattan.

Halbfass, Wilhelm. 1988. *India and Europe: An Essay in Understanding*. Albany: State University of New York Press. Translation from the edition German 1981.

Humphreys, Christmas. 1968. *Sixty Years of Buddhism in England*

(1907-1967). London: Buddhist Society.

Kabat-Zinn, Jon. 1994. *Wherever You Go, There You Are. Mindfulness Meditation in Everyday Life.* New York: Hyperion.

Kabat-Zinn, Jon. 1990. *Full Catastrophe Living. Using the Wisdom of your Body and Mind to face Stress, Pain, and Illness*, New York: Delacorte Press.

Kaliefi, Rebekka C. 2019. Karma. Konfuzius und K-Pop. Die Bedeutung des Buddhismus bei der Identitätsaushandlung junger Erwachsener mit vietnameseischen Wurzeln in der Schweiz und Deutschland [Karma, Confucius, and k-pop. The meaning of Buddhism for identity processes of young Vietnamese adults in Switzerland and Germany]. In: Katharina Limacher et al. (eds.) *Prayer, Popo and Politics. Researching Religious Youth in Migration Society*. Vienna: Vienna University Press, 207-230.

Lussier, Mark S. 2011. *Romantic Dharma. The Emergence of Buddhism into Nineteenth-Century Europe*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

McMahan, David L. 2008. *The Making of Buddhist Modernism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Pew Research Center. 2015. The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections, 2010-2050. 16.01.2019. http://www.pewforum.org/2015/04/02/religious-projections-2010-2050/.

Schlieter, Jens et al. (eds.). 2014. *Die zweite Generation der Tibeter in der Schweiz: Identitätsaushandlungen und Formen buddhistischer Religiosität* [The second generation of Tibetan people in Switzerland. Identity processes and forms of Buddhist religiosity]. Zürich: Seismo.

Schwab, Raymond. 1984. *The Oriental Renaissance. Europe's Rediscovery of India and the East, 1680-1880*. New York: Columbia University Press. First published in French 1950.

Vajragupta. 2010. *The Triratna Story. Behind the Scenes of a New Buddhist Movement*. Cambridge: Windhorse Publications.

Waskönig, Dagmar Doko. 2003. *Mein Weg zum Buddhismus. Deutsche*

Buddhisten erzählen ihre Geschichte [My way to Buddhism. German Buddhist recount their stories]. Bern: Barth.

Wilson, Jeff. 2014. *Mindful America. The Mutual Transformation of Buddhist Meditation and American Culture.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

FRANCE

RECEPTION OF BUDDHISM IN FRANCE AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO BUDDHIST EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

by Ven. Tampalawela Dhammaratana*

I. INTRODUCTION

Buddhism as one of the main philosophical and spiritual traditions in the World has been contributing in the promotion of humanity, since its inception more than last twenty six centuries. The teachings of the Buddha, not only encourage in achieving one's own final emancipation (*nibbāna*), but also entrust in the areas of philosophy, culture, human dignity, tolerance and sustainable world peace. As we most aware, the history witnessed, that the Buddhism had faced many challenges for its survivals in various occasions in different parts of the world. Sometimes, it went through ups and down as reasons of political, cultural and religious threats. But as results of its universal values such as freedom of thoughts, critical investigation of doctrine, openness to other traditions, scientifically answers to the questions of modern man, to promotion of cultural and religious harmony, peace and tolerance, the attachment to non-violence, the Buddhism became a universally accepted spiritual tradition and a philosophy in the dawn of the 21st century.

*. Dr., Vice-Chair, International Council of the United Nations Day of Vesak; President, Director General of the International Institute of Buddhist Studies of Paris

In this presentation, we discuss the history of Buddhism in France, in focusing special attention to Buddhist scientific contributions to French higher academic institutions and its cultural impact to French society. Besides that we also propose some rare information in regards to some speculative contributions which have made by some outstanding scholars in France, Buddhism as one of the ancient philosophical traditions of humanity, which help to understand some fundamental questions of human life. Even though, Buddhism became a very popular in France among free thinkers, we will not discuss here the development of Buddhist monastic culture and popular Buddhism, but we will bring out some information on Buddhist scholastic contribution and its impact to deeply enrich the philosophy and message of *Śākyamuni* in French Academic institutions. .

2. EARLY CONTACTS AND THE BEGINNINGS OF BUDDHIST SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH IN FRANCE

The historical record reveals that two early French publications, where mentioned about the word of 'Buddha' and 'Buddhism' as the first time in French language. We find that these two references were extremely important, as very early records which have available to know about Buddhism in France. The first record has made by Simon de la Loubère, who was the French Ambassador to the Kingdom of Siam, present Thailand, sent by Louis XIV, the King of France. The Ambassador Loubère had exercised his diplomatic carrier in the Kingdom of Siam from 1687-1688, and he has observed this Asian religion- known as Buddhism and he wrote an interesting information on Buddhism, as the first time in French language. This important historical record known as '*A Description du Royaume de Siam'* has published in 1691.[1] The second equally important information has

1. By writing an Article on 'Buddhism in France', Ananda Guruge refers to above information of Simmon de la Loubère and says ' It was Du Royaume de Siam by Simon de la Boubere who was the Ambassador of Louis XIV to the Kingdom of Siam (presently Thailand) from 1687-1688). He gives an account of the monastic life with special reference to rules of Patimokkha and the Vinaya in a section entitled in English translation as "an explication of the Patimouc or Text of the Vianc-the principal Maxims of the Talapoins of Siam".(Encyclopaedia of Buddhism, Vol.5, p.265). But there was another information given by Bhikkhu Pāsādika as follows: " ccording to Burnouf the first to mention Pali was Simon de La Loubère who

given by Pierre Bayle (1647-1706), who has published a Dictionary, in French language entitled '*Dictionaire historique et critique*' in 1697. In his work Pierre Bayle not only clearly mentioned about historical Buddha, but also he noted on the Buddhist teachings of '*Karma'* and '*Sūnyatā*'.[2] According to above two information we can understand that the Buddhism came to known in France more than three hundred and twenty six years ago.

In addition to that at the end of the 17th century, some French intellectuals have shown keen interest to learn Asian studies. As a result of that teaching and learning of Asian languages became a part of the work at French academic institutions. Then by encouraging young scholars to learn more and more about Asian philosophies, cultures, languages and civilizations, the French authority was generous to establish an institute to teach Oriental Languages in Paris 1795. And then as a rapid motivation of learning Asian languages including Buddhism, the Collège de France has established two prestigious chairs in 1894. These two Chairs at the Collège de France mainly focused to teach both Sanskrit and Chinese languages and its literatures. As available information above two Chairs at the College de France, were occupied by Antoine- Leonard de Chézy, as the first Sanskrit Professor, while Abel-Remusat was the first Chinese Professor. It is no any doubt that such initiative of French authority by granting highest privilege to Asian Studies at French institutions has opened more opportunity to progress not only Asian languages but also to learn Buddhist philosophy, its culture and tradition as well. Then, after began to teach Sanskrit and Chinese at the Collège de France, and also to learn language at Language Institute, scholars found that it was a necessity to establish an Association for Asian Studies, in

visited Siam in 1687-1688 as envoy of King Louis XIV. In 1691 he published a Description du royaume de Siam. La Loubère's book contains a translation of the life of Devadatta (La vie de Thevetat, le frère de Sommona-Codom, traduite du Bali, t.II, pp.35-37), (Buddhist Monasticism in European Culture with Special Reference to France, by Bhikkhu Pāsādika, Dhammakāya Foundation, Bangkok, 2000, p. 132). Even though we have above two different information, we have failed to read the original work of Simon de la Loubère.

2. This was published in 1697 and then expanded in subsequent editions, the last of which was published in 1820- 4 and ran to 16 volumes. A Complete English translation appeared in 1734-8 in 5 volumes. In later Richard H. Popkin has published a new translation of selected entries: Historical and Critical Dictionary: Selections (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1991.

France in order to have their regular academic discussions and also to publish their new discoveries and research on Asian Studies. By fulfilling such necessity, a new academic association was founded in 1822, under the name of the "*Société Asiatique de Paris"* and also its academic Journal was introduced as "*Journal Asiatique*'. Since very beginning this journal has been reserved only to the members of the Society in order to publish their academic research on Asian Studies including Buddhism, and it seems even today this tradition is still remain as one of the policies of the Society.

3. ROYAL PATRONAGE TO DEVELOP ASIAN STUDIES IN FRANCE

It is also worthy to mention here the French Academy was founded by Cardinal Richelieu in 1635, as the Chief Minister to King Louis XIII. Then by encouraging to develop more and more Asian studies in French education system, the French Academy supported to increase the knowledge on Asian Studies by directly linking this special unit to '*Academies des Inscription de Belle Lettre*'[3] Then, by becoming familiar to Asian Culture, language and civilization, some scholars had shown their deep interest particularly to learn Indian languages and philosophies. By recognizing the necessity and also extremely important value of Indian culture, philosophy and civilization, the French Academy has endorsed favorably for this new initiative and supported by offering more privileges to young scholars to develop knowledge in Indian studies which has unknown to France. Therefore, it was encouraged by French authority to better integrate Indian studies into French academic institutions in order to crystallize Asian wisdom, culture and civilizations in France.

In his article Roland Lardinois emphasized this new orientation to learn and introduce Indian culture and civilization to French academic institutions as follows:

"Ces transformations peuvent être comprises comme un travail social d'innovation opéré par un petit groupe de spécialistes dotés de compétences linguistiques rares et occupant déjà dans l'univers savant

3. This Prestigious institute was suppressed in 1793, during the French Revolution, and i twas restored in 1803 by Napoleon Bonaparte. It is the oldest of the five Academies of the Institut de France.

des positions privilégiées leur donnant accès aux savoirs orientalistes accumulés antérieurement. Les modes de légitimation de ces innovations mobilisent, de manière complémentaire, deux types de stratégie : il s'agit, soit de valoriser intellectuellement des découvertes récentes ou des disciplines nouvelles dont l'importance est soulignée auprès des instances de tutelle, soit de valoriser les critères d'utilité sociale et politique que ces nouveaux savoirs peuvent représenter pour les autorités de l'Etat. Ce travail d'innovation a été favorisé, en outre, par les effets de deux conjonctures distinctes: d'une part, l'échec autour des années 1770 de la politique coloniale par la France dans le monde indien et, d'autre part, la redéfinition du champ des possibles sociaux et institutionnels ouverte dans l'espace national par la Révolution française[4]*."*

4. EUGÈNE BURNOUF THE PIONEER OF INDIAN STUDIES AND BUDDHISM IN FRANCE

It is not any argument, that many scholars unanimously endorsed that Professor Eugène Burnouf (1801-1852), was the pioneering figure at the very first time of academic research on Sanskrit, Pali and Buddhism in France. Since very young age Burnouf has shown his keen interest in learning Indian languages[5] and later he became proficiency in Pali, Sanskrit , Bengali, Marathi, and Gujarati. As some

4. L'invention de l'Inde, par Roland Lardinois, CNRS Edition, Paris, 2007, p. 40.

5. As a young scholar E. Burnouf wrote to his colleague Christian Lassen the important of developing Indian Studies in France as follows: " Voyez en effet, mon cher Lassen, combien ma position à Paris, comme indianiste, est précaire. Il n'ya absolument en France que trois personnes qui s'occupent de cette partie de la littérature orientale, deux sont mes ennemis et je suis le troisième ». Again he wrote to A.G. Schlegel in 1830 as follows : « (…) le sanscrit, qui joue maintenant un certain rôle en Allemagne, n'est nullement représenté en France. Je dis nullement, car le seul homme qui le sache passablement n'a ni la capacité, ni le courage nécessaire pour faire valoir ses connaissances. Quant à quelques jeunes gens, qui ont plutôt des intentions de savoir que du savoir proprement dit, d'abord ils sont en très petit nombre, il n'y en a en tout que trois ou quatre seulement à Paris, et , de plus, ces étude sont sin infructueuses en France, elles sont si complètement inutiles pour se faire une carrière qu'on ne s'y livre que quand on a pourvu par d'autres moyens à son existence. Nous tous, tant que nous sommes, qui étudions le sanscrit, nous avons un état fort différent qui nous fait vivre, et c'est pendant les moments que nous dérobons à cet état que nous nous occupons de cette belle étude de l'Inde, qui cultivée seul, nous mènerait directement à l'hôpital. Quelle différence de ces études tronquées, interrompues, solitaire (car le sanscrit n'est pas enseigne en France), avec ces travaux consciencieux, suivi, perpétuels, qu'entreprennent des jeunes gens sous la direction d'un maître tel que vous». (quoted from L'invention de l'Inde, par Roland Lardinois, CNRS, 2007, p. 58).

other information, that Prof. Burnouf has learned Buddhism with the consultation of Sinhala and Burmese translations and commentaries. In becoming specialist on Indian Studies and Buddhism, he has published a number of works by introducing this new area of study to French learning institutions. Among many other brilliant works of Burnouf, the very first Pali Grammar Book *"l'Essai sur le pali"*, was published in 1826 with the collaboration of Christian Lassen.[6] By becoming a specialist on Indian studies, Burnouf has continued his untiring work by introducing Buddhism to French intellectuals. His two substantial works on Buddhism such as ' *Introduction à l'histoire du Bouddhisme indien*[7] (*History of Indian Buddhism*) ' and ' *Le Lotus de la Bonne Loi*'[8] (*Saddharmapundarīkasūtra*) one of the main teachings of *Mahāyāna* Buddhism published in 1844 and 1852 respectively. It is not any exaggeration to note that Prof. Burnouf has done much too deeply rooted Buddhism in French soil by his writing, translations, teachings and guiding a galaxy of young scholars to continue his discovery from Indian civilization in French higher academic system in France. Regarding Burnouf's monumental and pioneering work for Buddhism, in his article a German Buddhist scholar Bhikkhū Pāsādika writes as follows:

"The huge amount of Buddhological research, lexicography and translations of works pertaining to Indian, Central Asian and Far Eastern Buddhism that has been done so far and his being done by scholars all over the world is really impressive, and it is largely due to French-speaking scholars that the soil for appreciation and reception of Buddhism in western countries has been well prepared."[9]

In further offering credits to Burnouf's impressive works, by writing an Article on 'Buddhism in France' Ananda Guruge, says that Burnouf has also translated a well-known Sri Lankan Chronicle

6. Eugene Burnouf et Christian Lassen, Essai sur le pali ou langue sacree de la presqu'ile au dela du Gange avec six planches lithographiees et la notice des manuscripts palis de la Bibliotheque du Roi, Paris, la Societe asiatique, Librairie orientale de Dondey-Dupre pere et fils, 1826.

7. Eugene Burnouf, Introduction a l'histoire du Buddhisme indien, Paris, Imprimerie royale, 1844, (2eme edition, 1876).

8. Eugene Burnouf, Le Lotus de la Bonne Loi, traduit du sanscrit, accompagne d'un commentaire et de vingt et un memoires relatifs au Bouddhisme, Paris, Imprimerie nationale, 1852.

9. Bhikkhū Pāsādika, p. 133.

the '*Mahāvamsa*' into French, and the latter mentions that the publication was not appeared as some other reasons.[10] We have not found anywhere above information of Guruge, but we certainly believe that the foundation laid down by Bournouf to learn on Buddhism and Asian languages in France, has been continued by his colleague and students. Among them, a very few people who has taken courage and leadership to continue the mission of their mentor in France were J.P. Abel-Remusat, Ph.E. Foucaux and L. Feer and others. Thanks to the great effort of above scholars by introducing different areas of Buddhist studies to this non-Buddhist country which has certainly crystallized to introduce the teaching of the Buddha and its very rich art, architecture, philosophy and culture.

5. SYLVAIN LÉVY THE PROMOTER OF BUDDHISM IN FRANCE

It is worthy to note here that another important figure who has done much work to strengthen Buddhism in France was Sylvain Lévi (1863-1935). Sylvain Lévi, by becoming Buddhist historian has learned Buddhist doctrine, history and culture. His main study was Buddhist history in *Kuśhāna* period of ancient India. But he never stopped his desire to learn more about Buddhism in Central and South-East Asia. Having gained knowledge on *Pali,* Sanskrit, Tibetan, and Chinese, Sylvain Levy visited several Asian countries including India, Indonesia and even Japan in order to learn the diversity and rich ancient Buddhist culture. His visit to Japan in the years of 1926 and 1928 largely resulted. Because succeeded to establish international institute of Buddhist studies in Hobogirin in Japan. He never stopped his courage only setting up above prestigious institute for Buddhist studies, but he continued his untiring work in making a monumental work of critical edition of a Buddhist Dictionary known today as '*Hobogirin Dictionary'*.[11] Lévy became a specialist not only in Buddhism but also Indian studies. He has published significant works in the collection of Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Journal Asiatique, and the Bulletin de

10. *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism*, Vol.V, p. 265.

11. See: Sylvain Levy (1863-1935), Etudes Indiennes Histoire Sociale, sous la direction de Lyne Bansat-Boudon et Roland Lardinois, Bibliotheque de l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes Sciences Religieuses, no. 130, Paris, p.177.

l' Ecole Française d'Extrême Orient etc. In summarizing numerous works of Levy on Buddhism Cristina Scherrer-Schaub says:

"Resumer l'ouvre de Sylvain Levi reviendrait a dresser un catalogue de tout ce qui continue de se faire de nos jours, en sorte que il n'est certes pas exagère de dire que son œuvre fonda les études bouddhiques telles que nous les connaissons aujourd'hui. Levi aborde un nombre impressionnant de sujet, dont l'un ou l'autre font également l'objet d'études de ses collègues boudhisants en France et a l'étranger et a la même époque : histoire de la formation des écriture, étude de la transmission des textes, études parallèles des versions sanskrites, palies, tibétaines et chinoise, ainsi que celles de la transmission indirecte des textes, dans le cas des version ouighours ou sogdiennes par exemple, mise sur pied d'instruments de travail : index, édition, critiques, encyclopédies'.[12]

Above all when we read the writing of Levy, it is very clear that he had knowledge on Buddhist *Vinaya*, especially on *Mūlasarvāstivāda, jātaka, Avadāna,* as well as *Gandhavyūha* the celebrated *Mahāyānasūtra* etc. which has crystallize in introducing Buddhism in France. In his distinction, Lévy was very much enthusiastic on Buddhist art. He has published a Sanskrit manuscript on Touen-houang in Journal Asiatique in 1910, which has announced the universal value of Buddhist art and its cultural heritage in China, which has classified as World Cultural heritage of UNESCO in 1987. It is noteworthy that Levi's other substantial work on Buddhism was edition and translation of Sanskrit text of Buddhism known as *Mahāyānasūtrālankāra* of Asanga, which he has published as two volumes in 1907 and 1911, by editing the original Sanskrit manuscript which he bought from Nepal in 1897 and 1898 and also he edited and translated *Vimsatikā* and *Trimsatikā* in 1925 to 1932.

6. CREATION OF THE INSTITUTE OF INDIAN CIVILIZATION

In consideration of vast contribution of Levy in the promotion of Buddhology and Indian studies in France, one cannot forget his great initiative in creating of Institute of Indian Civilization (L'Institut de civilization indienne) in 1927. This newly established

12. *Ibid*. 177.

institute for Indian studies has received more privilege to promote not only Indian studies but also officially recognition of Buddhist studies at French higher education system. The Institute of Indian Civilization (L'Institut de civilization indienne) was directly attached at that time to the faculty of Arts of the University of Paris, until 1972, and then it has joined with the Collège de France from the 1st January 1973, and again in the year 2000, it was re-named as the Institute of Indian Civilization (L'institut d'etudes indiennes). In addition to creation of above prestigious Institute for Indian Studies in Paris, Levy has developed international relation in order to strengthen Indian studies and Buddhism in France by establishing the French Japanese House (La maison franco-japonaise) in Tokyo in 1926. Levy in opening many avenues and granting great privilege to Indian Studies and Buddhism has made a very strong foundation to sustain Buddhism at French Universities. This new orientation at French Universities to study Asian culture, philosophy, and religions strongly influenced to some young researches such as Marcel Mauss,[13] Henry Hubert and others who followed the vision and mission of Levy in working hard to make more visibility of Indian Philosophy and Buddhism which has less known to the people of France and other European countries.

7. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FRENCH SCHOOL OF FAR-EAST

In consideration of Buddhist studies in France, another land mark initiatives to be noted here the creation of French School of Far-East (L'Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient), which also to be credited as a great work of Sylvain Levy in 1898. The reason to create above school in France, as some believe that Lévy was not satisfied only learning Buddhist texts and Indian philosophy but also to explore other Asian religions, culture, architecture, language, literature, monuments, ethnology, philosophy, political studies of colonial system etc. In further realization of that vision, he has expanded a branch of French school of Far –East (L'Ecole Française d'Extrême

13. The deep attachment to Buddhism has expressed by Marcel Mauss as follows: ' On a le droit de parler de "civilization bouddhique" plus exactement de bouddhisme civilisateur-quand on sait comment il rythme toute une partie de la vie morale et esthetique de l'Indo-chine, de la Chine et du Japon et de la Coree et presque toutes la vie, meme politique, des Tibetains et des Bouriates'.

Orient) in Hanoi, Vietnam the new capital of Indochinese Union in 1902. The newly created Hanoi Institute was more independently exercised to continue its mission by implementing programs in Malaysia, Japan and even China by offering more opportunities to young scholars to approach Asian cultural and scientific studies. Then later occasion the Bulletin of French School of Far-East (Bulletin de l'Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient (EFEO)', came to appear to publishes on new discoveries of Asian Studies. This journal becomes one of the leading scientific research journal in France and better known to scientific international community.

In consideration of scientific contribution on Buddhism in France, It is worthy to note that a well-known missionary priest known as Noel Peri (1865-1922), who has sent to Japan in 1888 in order to diffuse the message of the church. In spite of his church mission, father Peri learnt Japanese language and Japanese Buddhism and began his scientific carrier as a member of EFEO in 1907. By admiration of him to Japanese Buddhist culture and civilization, father Peri published 5 excellent scientific works on the 'History of Indian and Chinese Buddhist mythology' which has appeared in BEFEO, in 1909, 1911, 1916, and 1918.

By following the footsteps of Lévy, Alfred Foucher (1865-1952), became the second Director of EFEO, and has played an important role to develop Buddhism in France through French School of Far-East (Ecole Française d'Extreme Orient). Foucher sacrificed his entire life time to study on Buddhist archeology and he published a remarkable work entitled *L'art greco-bouddhique du Gandhāra, Etude sur les origines de l'influence classique dans l'art bouddhique de l'Inde et de l'Extrême Orient*, in 1905 and other 3 volumes on the same studies appeared in 1918, 1922 and 1951 respectively. Besides, that Foucher, also published another work by witnessing his commitment to Buddhism under the title of '*La vie du Bouddha d'après les texts et les monuments de l'Inde* in 1949.

By following a great tradition of scientific research on Buddhism in France, L. Finot translated and published other two important works such as *Les Questions de Milinda* in 1923, and *Marche a la lumiere* (*Bodhicaryāvatāra*) in 1920. Then, another specialist on Buddhist legend and history known as Jean Przyluski who

published two equally important works known as *La legende de l'empereur Aśoka,* in 1923, and *Le concile de Rājagaha* in 1928. Above two publications brings some clarity of ancient Buddhist councils and also the great mission of Emperor Aśoka in the propagation of Buddhism in 3rd century BCE.

It is to be noted that another important leading figure in France was Jean Filliozat, who made a monumental work to develop Indian studies. Jean Filliozat, was the successor of Jules Bloch at the Collége de France and published one of his very important works on Indian Studies known as *L'Inde classique. Manuel des etudes indiennes* in 1953 and Henri de Lubac has published *La rencontre du bouddhisme et de l'Occident* in 1952 in better understanding of Buddhist archeological history, especially in Afghanistan and Pakistan and with consultation of the information given by Chinese Buddhist master Xuanzang (7th century A.D.). In addition to that David Seyfort, a specialist on indian Buddhism, by learning on 'Absolute' in *Mahāyāna* Buddhism through Tibetain sources has published *La Theorie du tathāgatagarbha et du gotra: etudes sur la sotériologie et la gnoséologie du bouddhisme* in 1969 and *Le Traité du tathâgatagarbha* in 1973. It is clear that many scholars of Ecole Française d'Extreme Orient, have contributed to *Mahāyāna* Buddhism, (especially to Chinese Buddhism) than *Theravāda* tradition. Amongst many Sinologue of French higher academic institutions, Edouard Chavannes (1865-1918), who had played an important role in this area of study. By becoming a specialist on Chinese language and literature and also a scholar of Collége de France, he visited several times to China and stayed there in order to learn the method of Buddhist Chinese archeology. As a result of that Chavanne has published a series of works on *Cinq cents contes et apologues tires du canon bouddhique chinoise* in 1911. Then surprisingly another new discovery has presented by Paul Pelliot, who visited one of the very important Chinese Buddhist caves known as Dunhuang. According to his information that there were several thousands of manuscripts were written in Chinese as well as central Asian languages, in ancient paper and silk cloths from 5th to 10 Century A.D. This exceptionally important Buddhist library was belonged to Buddhist monks (no doubt Chinese Buddhist monks). Some scholars refers to above

collection and says that a part of Dunhuang manuscripts is keep at Musée du Guimet and national library in France.[14] But we do not have any solid information to confirm this news.

In this study, it is also important to mention here another specialist in Asian and Buddhist studies is Paul Demiéville (1894-1979), who recognize one of the direct followers of Chavannes. Paul Demieville, has shown his gratitude for his master by completing some remaining works on Buddhist sinology. Since he had a thorough knowledge on Chinese language as well as both traditions of Buddhism, Indian and Chinese, he drafted the famous debate between the Greek King Manendra and Nāgasena, (the Indian Buddhist monk) in 1924. In addition to that Paul Demieville has published *Le Concile de de Lhasa, Une controverse sur le quiétisme entre bouddhistes de l'Inde et de la Chine au VIIIème siècle de l'ère chrétienne* in 1952. Besides his above impressive works, he emphasized his vast knowledge by publishing the second volume of *L'Inde Classique, Manuel des etudes indiennes*. In his work Demiéville rightly stressed that the intellectual tradition of Indian Buddhism as well as the development of Buddhism in China in the first century A.D. Then many other scholars in France have been studying on Dunhuang and been publishing some interesting works by bringing out immense valuable information of Buddhist cultural heritage in China.[15] By following the mentors at French higher academic system, in very recent times many young scholars have shown keen interest to more and more continue their scientific works on Asian studies and Buddhism in France. Among them, Michel Soymie, Antonino Forte, Bernard Faure, Kuo Liying, Françoise Wang Toutain, Claude Eugène Maître, Noël Peri, Jacques May, Hubert Durt, Robert Duquenne, Frederic Girard, Suzanne Karpelès and many others immensely contributed in bringing all areas of scientific interest of Buddhism, its culture in Central Asia as well as South - East and Far East Asia.

14. Un Siècle pour l'Asie (L'Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient, 1898-2000), (ed. by Catherine Clémentin-Ojha and Pierre-Yves Manguin), Edition de EFEO, 2001, p. 160.

15. *Ibid*. p. 161.

8. BUDDHIST CHAIR AT THE COLLÈGE DE FRANCE

When we discuss Buddhist development in France, it is another unforgettable figure in recent time was André Bareau (1921-1993), who contributed to enrich Buddhist studies in France and worked in the same direction until his last breath. André Bareau deeply admired the works and thoughts of Paul Demiéville and Jean Filliozat, and then he utilized his all energies and time to study Indian studies, *Theravāda* Buddhism, Pali, Sanskrit and classical Chinese and became heir to the Chair of Buddhist Studies at Collége de France in 1971. Prof. André Bareau taught Buddhism at the Collège de France by passing his vast and deep knowledge of Buddhism to many brilliant students who followed his instructions and guidance to deepen the knowledge on Asian wisdom. As we many believe, that Bareau had a great sympathy to Buddhism especially to ancient tradition known as early Buddhism. When he get little time free from his academic responsibility he travelled to Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Thailand and other neighbor countries where the Buddhism was glorified and practiced at the same time Buddhism has recognized as the religion of states. He wrote a lot on different subjects of Buddhism and published his works in various leading University journals and Encyclopaedias.[16] Among his works *Présence du Bouddhisme* in 1959, *Bouddha. Presentation, choix de texts, bibliographie* in 1962, *En suivant Bouddha*, 1985, *L'Absolu en philosophie bouddhique, Evolution de la notion d'asamskṛata* and *Dhammasanganī,* a translation and an annotation in 1951, etc. to be considered as leading works of André Bareau. In addition to that Bareau has published other important works in different journals such as Annales du Musée Guimet, and the Bulletin of EFEO. Among them '*Les premiers conciles bouddhique', Les sectes bouddhiques du Petit Véhicule, Recherches sur la biographie du Buddha dans les Sūtrapiṭaka et les Vinayapiṭaka anciens* to be considered. It is also worthy to note here besides, André Bareau, another Buddhist scholar who taught at the University of Sorbonne and published his remarkable works on Buddhist philosophy and *Mahāyāna* Buddhism (especially on *Mādhyamaka* philosophy) was

16. See: Encyclopédie de la Pléiade, "Le bouddhisme à Ceylan et dans l'Asie du sud-est", 1976 ; Encyclopaedia Universalis, "Le Bouddha", "Littérature et écoles bouddhique", "Célibat religieux", "La sainteté dans le bouddhisme", "Nirvāna et samsāra". See also : Journal Asiatique, 1993, p. 231ff.

Guy Bugault (1917-2002). As one of the disciple of Bugault, and also present Chair of the Comparative Indian Philosophy, at Sorbonne, François Chenet, has recorded the important works of Bugault and introduced him as a specialist on Nāgārjuna.[17] Bugault has published one of the very important another work known as *La notion de Prajñā ou de Sapience selon les perspectives du Mahāyāna* in 1982. Then, becoming a specialist on Nāgārjuna philosophy, Bugault made an excellent translation with an annotation to *Mūlamādhyamaka-kārikā*, one of the important work of Nāgārjuna, under the title of *Les Stances du milieu par excellence (Mūlamādhyamaka-kārikā),* in 2002. As one of the leading Buddhist philosopher at Sorbonne, Guy Bugault has contributed many other subjects of Buddhist interest and published in different journals.[18]

It is also unforgettable to mention here some Sri Lankan scholars who had privilege to study and reside in France in recent times and their contribution of Buddhist academic interest. Among them Walpola Rahula, who was very closely worked with Paul Demiéville, and under his instruction Rahula has translated and published one of the important works of Asanga, (one of the great Indian Buddhist scholar and brother of Vasubandhu). This important work appeared under the title of *Le Compendium de la Super doctrine (Philosophie) (Abhidharmasamuccaya) d'Asanga* in 1980, in the series of the BEFEO. Further more Rahula also published *What the Buddha Taught* in 1959 and Mohan Wijayaratna has translated some discourses from the original Pali texts to French language and he published *Sermons du Bouddha* and *La Philosophies du Bouddha* in 1988 and 1995 is respectively. In addition to above all information there are some other scholars, at French University circle have wrote and published many subjects on Buddhist interest, which those have not included to this paper.

9. FRENCH BUDDHIST INFLUENCE TO NEIGHBOR COUNTRIES IN EUROPE

It is important to note here that when French scholars had seriously embraced on Buddhism and Indian studies, Belgium,

17. See: Bulletin d'Etudes Indiennes, No.20.1, Paris, 2002, p. 7ff.
18. *Ibid.*

Switzerland, and other neighbor countries in Europe have certainly influenced to this new horizon of Asian studies. Then, in Belgium there were two prominent scholars have contributed to Buddhism. They are Louis de La Vallée Poussin (1869-1938) and Etienne La motte (1903-1983). By profession Louis de La Vallee Poussin was a Catholic priest, learned Asian languages from the University of Catholic in Louvain, Belgium and in the years of 1891-1893, he was followed the teachings of Sylvain Levi, Victor Henry and Auguste Barth and Emile Senart in Paris in order to proficiency of his knowledge on Pali, Sanskrit, Tibetain and Chinese. In the very beginning Louis de La Vallée Poussin shown much interest to learn Buddhist history, and while he was teaching at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes and l'Institut d'etudes Chinoise in Bruxelles, then later on he has established 'La Societe Belge d'etudes orientale' in 1921. Louis de la Valéé Poussin by becoming specialist on Buddhism, studied main Buddhist traditions such as *Theravāda, Mahāyāna*, and *Tantrayāna* and made two monumental works on Buddhism are the translation, and annotation of *Abhidharmakośa* of Vasubandhu and his commentaries altogether six volumes came out from the press between 1923-1931 and the *Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi* in 1928-1948. Besides above monumental contribution to Buddhist academic world, Vallée Poussin also contributed to Buddhist Studies by writing 'Bouddhisme etudes et materiaux' in 1898, 'Bouddhisme', 'l'opinions sur l'histoire de la dogmatique' in 1909, 'La morale bouddhique' in 1927, 'Le dogme et la philosophies du Bouddhisme' in 1930, and other several important research articles are still very valuable contributions in different subject of Buddhist interest. By following the same path Etienne La Motte, the disciple of Vallée Poussin, completed remaining many works on *Mahāyāna* Buddhism by translating and editing from Tibetain and Chinese sources. His valuable scientific works to be mentioned here as *Le Samdhinirmocanasūtra* in 1935, *La Somme du Grand Vehicule d'Asanga* in 1938-1939, and translation of *Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse de Nāgārjuna* in 1944-1949, and also the first volume of the *Histoire du Bouddhisme Indien*, in 1958. It is worthy to note that by following the same tradition of studies Marcel Hofinger, the disciple of La Motte published on *Etude sur le concile de Vaiśali* in 1946, and *Le congrès du lac Anavatapta* in 1954.

The development of Buddhological studies France and Belgium directly influenced to Switzerland too. It is interesting to mention here that in Switzerland, Paul Oltramare, who becoming Buddhist specialist first time published *La théosophie bouddhique* in 1923. In further development of Buddhist research in Switzerland a very interesting work on Buddhist doctrine has made by Constantin Regamey who published his work in Pologne entitled *Bibliographie de la Buddhistische Philosophie* in 1950. Then following the tradition of their masters, Jacques May attributed as author of the work of Candrakīrti *La Prasannapadā* which appeared in 1959 and he had continued to write many other subjects on Buddhist interest in Switzerland. Above development of Buddhist studies in this country, has been continuing even today by Cristina Scherrer-Schamb and other many young scholars at the University of Lausanne, besides many other teachers who continue to teach Buddhism in order to answer the desire of learning and practicing Buddhism by peace loving people.

10: CONCLUSION

Thanks to the pioneers who with full of devoted heart and mind to the Asian wisdom have contributed their whole energies, time, knowledge and life time of work to deeply rooted the teachings and philosophy of the Buddha, to this historical nation of France. France and its humanistic tradition as well as the attachment to the wisdom, and universal knowledge have recorded in the history of Humanity. Today, Buddhism in France is well respected rapidly increasing one of the spiritual traditions, which has won several hundreds and thousands of people's mind and heart due to its teachings of Universal value, and openness and freedom of scientific investigation. In addition to our study of historical investigation of Buddhism in France, it is to be noted that there are well established multi-cultural and multi ethnic Buddhist monastic institutions, centers and learning places have been increasing each and every corners in France by healing of mind and heart of uncountable people in this highly industrialized nation. There are still remains some spiritual and scientific vacuums which those are to be fulfilled in order to create a new humanistic society. Therefore, we certainly believe that the Buddhism has much more to offer to this globalized world community in heeling human illness and sufferings.

HUNGARY

BUDDHISM IN HUNGARY: THE DHARMA GATE BUDDHIST CHURCH AND COLLEGE

by Tamás Agócs*, Pál Farkas**, Zoltán Cser*** and Gábor Karsai****

1. HUNGARY: INTRODUCTION

A Short History



Hungary: a Country in the Heart of Europe

Hungary is a small country in the middle of Europe. It covers

*. Associate Prof., Dharma Gate Buddhist College
**. Managing Director, Dharma Gate Buddhist College
***. Vice-Dean, Dharma Gate Buddhist College
****. Rector, Dharma Gate Buddhist College

ninety-three thousands square kilometres and has just over ten million inhabitants. For eleven hundred years, since the Hungarian people occupied the land, it has been constantly changing shape and population due to never ending wars and migration. Though there are different theories concerning the ancient homeland of the Hungarians, it is generally accepted that they originally come from the East. The legend of an Asian origin is attested by the oldest chronicles and a unique Hungarian folk culture. Hungarian is one of the few languages in Europe which does not belong to the Indo-European group.

The Hungarian tribes are said to have entered the Carpathian Basin and settled there at the end of the 9th century CE. One hundred years later, King István (Stephan) converted to Christianity and established the Hungarian State. The Kingdom of Hungary became a major economic and political power in Central Europe under the dynasty of Árpád. Lying at the door of Eastern-Europe, the country was repeatedly overrun and devastated by foreign invaders, and was even dominated by the Turkish (Ottoman) Empire for 150 years. After repeated wars of independence, the nation achieved a measure of sovereignty within the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in 1867. In the 20th century it suffered extreme losses, when it lost more than two thirds of its territory and approximately one third of its population in the two World Wars. It was in 1989, after the withdrawal of the Soviet Red Army, that a new period began with the change to democracy, culminating in Hungary's accession to the European Union in 2004.

RELIGIONS

Evidence gathered from linguistics, ethnography, archaeological excavations and a few scriptural sources suggest that the ancient religion of the Hungarians was a kind of Central Asian Shamanism. Hungary's first king, Saint Stephen, took up Western Christianity, but the conversion of the people was a long and painful process. Hungary remained predominantly Catholic until the 16th century, when the Reformation took place and, as a result, first Lutheranism, then soon afterwards Calvinism became the religion of almost the entire population. In the second half of the 16th century, Jesuits led a successful campaign of counterreformation and by the 17th

century, once again, Hungary became predominantly Catholic. Atheism became widespread in the 20th century, especially in the Communist Era, when people with religious convictions were disadvantaged. After the collapse of the Soviet system Hungary saw a revival of religions, although a large percentage of the people still claim themselves unreligious.

According to a recent poll, 44% of Hungarian citizens responded that "they believe there is a God". 31% answered that "they believe there is some sort of spirit or life force" and 19% answered that "they do not believe there is any sort of spirit, God, or life force" (Eurobarometer Poll, 2005).

2. BUDDHISM IN HUNGARY

The Appearance of the Buddha-Dharma

The growth of interest in Buddhism in Europe dates back to the mid-19th century. The first translations of Buddhist texts into Western languages were soon followed by books on the Buddha, his Teaching (Dharma), and his Community (Sangha). The first accounts of Buddhism were published by Christian authors from 1890 onwards. The first book that dealt exclusively with Buddhism was the Buddhist Catechism written by Subhadra Bhiksu (alias Friedrich Zimmermann), a German follower of the Buddha, published in the Transylvanian town of Máramarossziget (now in Romania) in 1893. The first monograph on Buddhism: Dhammo, an Introduction to the Teaching of the Buddho, a thorough and well-documented two-volume book with sutta sections and excerpts translated into Hungarian, was written by Jenő Lénárd. First published in 1911–13, it became a basic source of information on Buddhism for several subsequent decades.



Alexander Csoma de Kőrös

Though reliable information on Buddhism came to Hungary relatively late, Hungary also boasts one of the first Buddhist scholars in Europe. Alexander Csoma de Kőrös was born in the Eastern part of Transylvania (now Romania) and dedicated his life to finding the ancient homeland of the Hungarian people. In 1819 he set out to Asia on foot. Between 1822 and 1830 he spent several years in Tibet (Ladakh) studying the Tibetan scriptures under the guidance of lama-scholars. He compiled a Tibetan-English Dictionary and a Tibetan Grammar, which – along with his studies of the life of the Buddha and an analysis of the Tibetan Buddhist Canon – were published by the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1834–36. Renewing his search for the ancient homeland he set out to Lhasa in 1842, but died on the way. His example inspired many subsequent generations of Oriental scholars and Buddhist seekers.

20th Century Developments



Dharmakīrti Padmavajra

From 1893 onwards there were some short-lived attempts to establish a lay Buddhist community. The first long-lasting result was achieved by Dr. Ernő Hetényi (*Dharmakīrti Padmavajra*). In 1951, at the height of Communist oppression, he founded the Hungarian Buddhist Mission. One year later he joined the Ārya Maitreya Mandala Order founded by the German Lama Anagārika Govinda, whose lineage represents a unique blend of Theravāda and Tibetan Buddhism. In order to spread the Buddha Dharma in Eastern Europe, the two orders established the "Alexander Csoma de Kőrös Institute of Buddhology" in 1956. Through their public courses and publications, teachers and students of the Institute made significant contributions to the dissemination of the Dharma in Hungary. The Institute ended in 1991 when its teachers founded the Dharma Gate Buddhist College. The Buddhist Mission built the first stūpa in Hungary in 1982. Dr. Hetényi passed away in 1999, but the Buddhist Mission continues to function as the Hungarian Ārya Maitreya Mandala.

In 1990, just one year after the change to democracy, the Houses of Parliament passed an Act on Religion which granted recognition of all religious communities regardless of their size or membership. This gave a unique opportunity to smaller communities of different religions to become officially recognized denominations. (Some of these new establishments decided to call themselves "churches", a term claiming universality.) In the liberal atmosphere of the 1990s, among a plethora of new "churches", several new Buddhist communities were founded. These new formations mostly belong to one or another school of Tibetan Buddhism, though Chinese, Korean and Japanese Chan or Zen lineages, as well as Theravāda Buddhism, are also represented.

Largest or most significant communities include the Dharma Gate Buddhist Church (see below), the Diamond Way Community, the Buddhist Mission, the Hungarian Karma Kagyüpa Community and the Chinese Chan Buddhist Church. It is difficult to guess the number of followers of the Buddha-Dhamma in Hungary, but 40.000 seems to be a reliable estimation. Most Hungarian Buddhists, however, are lay people, and no Buddhist monastery has yet been planted on Hungarian soil.

The Dharma Gate Buddhist Church

The Dharma Gate Buddhist Church was officially founded on the full moon of May 1991 (2535 AN) as an umbrella organization for different Hungarian Buddhist communities. Founding members numbered 108 professed Buddhists. Founding communities include the Ārya Tantra Mandala Order (or Ātama Noble Tantric Circle of the Western Disciple), the Hungarian Nyingmapa Community, the Dharma Gate Zen Community and the Heavenly Throne Five Elements Order (a Chinese Buddhist School of Medicine and Martial Arts). These were later joined by the TeKiKaGyü (or Golden Siddhartha Order), the Mokusho Zen House, the Buddhist Vipassanā Society, the Dhammadīpa Community, the Dzogchen Community and the Hungarian Bönpo Community.

The Church was established with a double purpose: one, to join efforts in the founding of an institute of higher education in order to integrate the Buddha's teaching into the Hungarian educational system; and two, to create a multi-traditional Buddhist community to represent Dharma values and teachings more prominently among the religious traditions of Europe. Founding members started the Dharma Gate Buddhist College in September 1991. The College brought together under its roof not only teachers of the founding communities, but also philosophers, cultural anthropologists and scholars of oriental linguistics – tibetologists, indologists and sinologists – coming from different academic institutions. Thus the curriculum, from the very outset, has not only embraced a wide range of Buddhist subjects, but also included courses in Western philosophy, comparative religion and the sacred languages of Buddhism (see below). In 2003 the Church founded the Dharma Gate Buddhist High School in the south-western area of Hungary with a high gipsy population living under extremely poor conditions, in order to offer them the opportunity of secondary education. It has also started a project to found a Buddhist primary school.

Presently the Church has almost 17.000 donating members, it is the largest non-Christian organisation in Hungary, 6th among the 31 established (state-recognised) churches based on the total amount of support offered by the Hungarian citizens.

Situated in the middle of a leafy ex-communist bloc in the 9th district of Budapest, its main building functions as the headquarter of its operations together with its College, a centre for communal life, where member organisations hold communal gatherings, celebrations, meditations, rituals, public lectures or seminars, and exhibitions. Visiting teachers from all traditions also lecture regularly in the main shrine-room. In 2004 the Dharma Gate Buddhist Church joined the European Buddhist Union, a network of Buddhist Communities and Organizations in Europe.

3. THE DHARMA GATE BUDDHIST COLLEGE

Founding History and Main Principles

The Dharma Gate Buddhist College is a unique Buddhist institution of higher education that is recognised, accredited and financed by a Western government. It was founded in 1991 by the Dharma Gate Buddhist Church, a multi-traditional umbrella organization for Theravāda and Mahāyāna groups representing a wide spectrum of Dharma lineages and inspirations. Its general principles were laid down in a foundation letter, which stated "The Dharma Gate Buddhist College shall propagate the teachings of the universal Buddhist tradition. It shall not represent any particular school but shall provide opportunity for the study of the Buddhist teachings of all schools. It will realize that goal as applicable to the present age with its conditions and specifically in order to clarify a common spiritual background for all Buddhist traditions and help them to work together."

The Buddhist College started in a rented apartment in the downtown of Budapest with nine volunteer lecturers and sixty students. Three years later it moved into an ex-office building in the 9th district, where it is still situated now. The size of the institution grew gradually over the years. Today there are fifteen full-time and eight part-time teachers instructing about two hundred and thirty students within its walls. Teaching staff consists of Dharma teachers, Buddhist scholars, philosophers and language teachers. Their common vision of education was articulated in a Mission Statement, an extended version of the founding letter, in 1994. It specifies the "opening up of a gateway to the Dharma", i.e. the



facilitation of spiritual education in Buddhism, as the main mission of the College. It insists that no hierarchical distinction should be made between the Buddhist schools on religious or spiritual grounds, and it also ensures a harmonious co-operation between academic scholars and dharma-teachers (see entire text appended).

Accreditation

The initial curriculum of the Buddhist College was based on the teaching programme of the three original founders: Antal Dobosy, László Mireisz and László Takács, former teachers of the Buddhist Mission at the "Alexander Csoma de Kőrös Institute of Buddhology". Their courses on the histories and doctrines of Buddhism came to be augmented by language and philosophy classes offered by young scholars: linguists, orientalists, cultural anthropologists and philosophers. The three strands of study – Buddhist doctrines, languages, and comparative religion and philosophy – were gradually woven together into a unique blend of Oriental wisdom and Western scholarship offering a wide range of knowledge and perspective.

When the Buddhist College started its work, no established system of accreditation in Hungary yet existed. Soon, however, in order to protect higher education standards, accreditation laws were passed and every institution had to go through an authentication procedure. Due to its standing as a religious school of higher education, the Buddhist College was entitled to run its programme under the rubric of "theology", but an accreditation committee comprised of Christian Theologians was clearly incompetent. Finally a committee of Oriental scholars was set up headed by Dr.

Erich Steinkellner, Director of Buddhist and Tibetan Studies at the University of Vienna, as a guest. Accreditation was preceded by a long process of curriculum development and re-structuring and was finally granted in 1999. On fulfilling a number of additional criteria set by the Hungarian Accreditation Committee, accreditation was finally reconfirmed in 2001.

Following upon the introduction of the new law of higher education in 2005, the Buddhist College joined the Bologna process[1] and was one of the first Hungarian institutions of higher education to be re-accredited in the new educational system. This was achieved by a thorough reworking and expansion of the curriculum. A new 3-year BA programme was started in September 2006 and a 2-year MA programme launched in September 2007. The length of the training was thus extended from four to five years and in effect the Buddhist College developed into a university meeting European standards in 2007. The third accreditation of the College took place in 2014, and the fourth round was initiated in February 2019.

Programmes

The Dharma Gate Buddhist College offers BA and MA programmes in Buddhist Theory and Practice (or Buddhist Theology).[2] The language of education is Hungarian.

BA degree in Buddhist Theory and Practice is offered to (1) Buddhists who would like to gain an overall view of Buddhism, study the evolvement of the Dharma in its original Indian context with the history of the main schools and practice lineages, and learn some comparative ideas with Western disciplines, (2) non-Buddhists who want to gain good theoretical and experiential knowledge of Buddhism, and (3) Academic scholars of Buddhism who wish to enhance their professional skills or gain experience in meditation.

The BA programme consists of a mandatory core curriculum

1. The purpose of the Bologna process is to create the European higher education area by making academic standards and quality assurance standards more comparable and compatible within Europe.

2. The term "theology" is not felt appropriate for Buddhism, a non-theistic religion.

and a chosen study track (called a specialization). These include Dharma teaching, Comparative Religion and Philosophy, Indic language and Indian culture, and Tibetan language and culture.

The Core curriculum consists of six modules. (A module is a set of interlinking courses distributed over several semesters). The backbone of the curriculum is comprised of a double set of courses on Buddhist philosophy – covering the historical development of Buddhist ideas in India – and Buddhist meditation, offering insight into the truth or experiential value of those ideas. These are supplemented by modules on Indian Philosophy (as background to the development of Buddhist thought and practice), Buddhist culture and history (focussing on the historical aspects of that development in India and other main Buddhist cultural areas), Buddhist scriptures (studies in Buddhist canonical literature) and a module called "Foundations of Religion and Philosophy" consisting of several courses to set the Buddhist teaching in context for the Western student.

Specialization in Dharma teaching is meant to deepen and supplement the Buddhist core curriculum both in practice and theory. It consists of a general programme and a more specialized training in one of the major Buddhist traditions: Theravāda, Zen, or Tibetan Buddhism. The general part offers courses on Buddhist ethics and sciences (such as Cosmology and Symbology), as well as additional training in the practice and theory of Buddhist meditation. Theravāda, Zen and Tibetan Buddhist tracks offer in-depth study of a particular Buddhist tradition augmented by a basic knowledge of the original language of that tradition (e.g. Pali, Chinese/Japanese or Tibetan).

Specialization in Comparative Religion and Philosophy offers comprehensive knowledge of the history of the different world religions, their basic teachings and scriptures, the fundamental issues of cultural anthropology, the main traditions of Eastern and Western philosophy and their most prominent thinkers with their main works and ideas. Training in the specialization thus concentrates on the different religions and philosophical systems. Its primary aim is to put Buddhist religious and philosophical ideas into a wider context, thus encouraging comparative and

interdisciplinary scholarship between Buddhism and the different Western disciplines.

Specializations in Buddhist Languages and Culture (mainly Indian and Tibetan) offer in-depth study of a particular Buddhist tradition along with its language, history, literature and other cultural aspects. Students taking up these specializations may become Buddhist translators from the language of their choice, or they may want to utilize their language skills in other areas.

MA in Buddhist Theory and Practice is offered to (1) Students holding BA in Buddhist studies who wish to deepen their knowledge and skills, (2) Buddhist students or teachers who are trained in a contemporary practice lineage and would like to learn more about the over-all Buddhist tradition, particularly the development of Buddhist thought in India. They may want to pursue this in order to put their own tradition into perspective and see its interconnections with other philosophical schools and lineages. (3) Buddhist or non-Buddhists who have some prior knowledge of the Dharma and are interested in the practical application of the Buddha Dharma in modern life. These categories are not meant to be exclusive as there may be many more reasons why one would want to pursue a degree in Buddhist theory and practice.

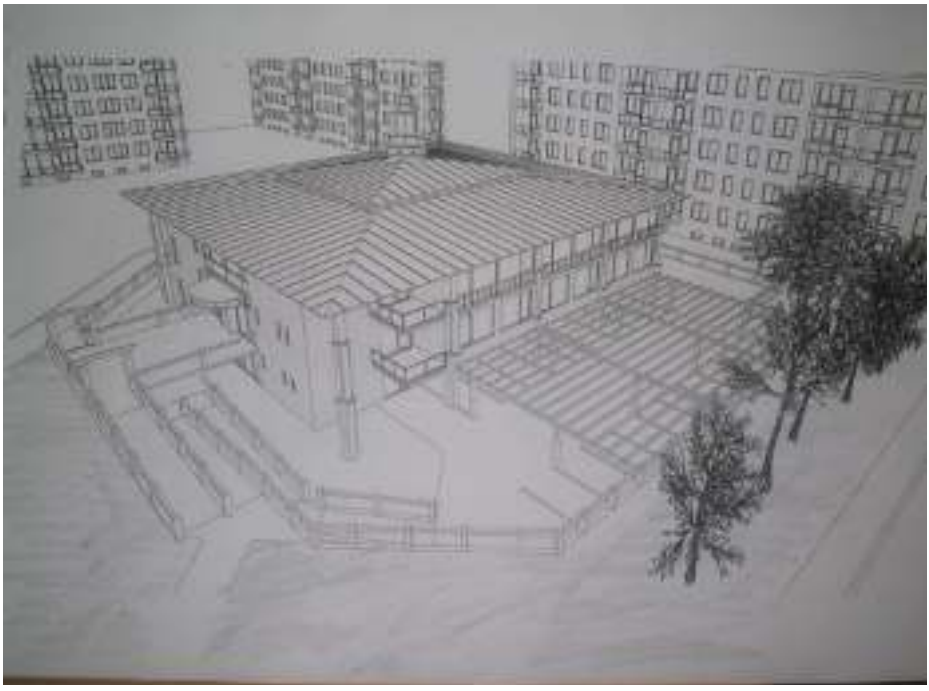
The MA programme seeks to deepen and widen the scope of theoretical and practical skills acquired in the BA study programme. The core curriculum is composed of modules in Buddhist philosophy, meditation practice, scriptural studies and engaged Buddhist studies, which offers a selection of courses on the practical applications of Buddhist theory and practice in the West. These include a range of interdisciplinary subjects and courses in comparative religion. Students specializing in Dharma Teaching will be offered further modules in Buddhist ethics and psychology, Buddhist education, comparative philosophy and the sacred languages of Buddhism. Training in Buddhist languages and cultures and Comparative Religion and Philosophy also continues on the MA level. (For a full course list you may refer to the Dharma Gate Buddhist College website at www.tkbf.hu).

Plans for the Future

The Buddhist College has developed steadily throughout the 28 years of its existence. The library is a good example to the point. Founded with just a few books donated by Church members, now with over 30,000 entries it is probably the best collection on Buddhism in the country (though it is still located in a rented apartment adjacent to the College building). The first ten years of the College was mainly a period of internal capacity development and little energy or attention was dedicated to research or international communication. In 2005, however, the Dharma Gate Buddhist Church and College founded the East-West Research Institute to promote scientific research into Buddhism, its interdisciplinary areas and applications, as well as to develop external relations with academic institutions and Buddhist study centres worldwide. As members of the European Buddhist Union, we initiated a project for the co-operation of Buddhist institutions of higher education all over the continent. A great step in developing international relations was achieved in 2007, when we joined the ranks of the newly established International Association of Buddhist Universities (IABU). In 2018 the governments of Hungary and the Kingdom of Thailand signed an interstate agreement to foster co-operation between the Dharma Gate Buddhist College in Hungary and the Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University (MCU) in Thailand.

In our interaction with fellow Buddhists abroad we have met with a lot of sympathetic interest in our programmes and appreciation of our achievements. They made us realise the true uniqueness of the "Dharma Gate" as an accredited and multi-traditional Buddhist College with an eye towards the practical application of the ancient Buddhist wisdom in our present age. In the years to come we would like to preserve this unique quality and extend its benefits even further. First, we would like to start a PhD programme within a few years, and second, we are planning to offer degrees in English. In order to achieve both goals, we are seeking to further develop our international connections. In the long run we would like to develop into an international centre of Buddhist higher education. Expanding and developing further programmes on such a large scale also necessitates increasing our infrastructural facilities. The

College building purchased more than 20 years ago is too small for our ever-growing activities. In 2006 the Dharma Gate Buddhist Church managed to buy a piece of land (0.5 acre) with a building, which was previously rented for dormitory purposes. The dormitories were converted into classrooms but even this does not provide enough space. There are no communal areas, for instance, and there are only two small-size teachers' rooms. For this reason, we would like to build a new university building and now we are at the stage of planning. Funds for the new building are still non-existent, but we pray that with the help of the Buddhas we will be able to realise our aspirations to the benefit of all sentient beings.



Plan of the new university building

Appendix: Mission Statement

The Dharma Gate Buddhist College is a religious school of higher education. The designation "Dharma Gate" metaphorically refers to its main mission: to open a gateway to the Buddhist Teaching, or Dharma. This symbolic gesture manifests in the realisation and transmission of the Teaching.

The Dharma (or Buddhist teaching) may take manifold forms, but is chiefly found within ourselves. It is discovered by the individual on the spiritual path of awakening.

Teachers shall do their utmost to help students study and practice the Dharma. The Community shall consider all teachers and students equally as the Buddha's disciples.

Keeping true to the 2.500 years of history of Buddhism, we shall realise the living Dharma under the present circumstances, in our own day and language and in a way that fits our own mentality.

We shall not consider any Buddhist school superior to any other. Rather, we shall recognise their equal validity and effectiveness for people with different aptitudes. We shall endeavour to study all Buddhist traditions and facilitate growth of a characteristically Hungarian (or European) tradition.

The College shall provide venue to Buddhist teachers of all traditions as well as academic scholars without any hierarchical distinction.

The College shall implement the above principles in its curriculum, teaching methods and examination system.

On top of regular classes, in order to deepen their understanding, students shall be given opportunity to engage in individual studies based on personal teacher-disciple relationships.

Training methods shall combine the transmission of factual information with developing practical skills needed for the inner realisation of the Teaching and emphasize spiritual autonomy.

We shall be open to dialogue with all religions and spiritual traditions that share the same open attitude with us.

It is our conviction that all religious traditions contribute significantly to the alleviation of suffering. With this consideration we shall do our best to serve and benefit humankind and each individual.

***

India

BUDDHISM IN INDIA

by K.T.S. Sarao*

INTRODUCTION

The founder of Buddhism, Siddhattha Gotama (Sk: *Siddhārtha Gautama*), the Buddha, was born in Lumbinī garden near Kapilavastu (Pāli: *Kapilavatthu*). He belonged to the Gotama (Sk: *Gautama*) gotra of the Sakiyan (Sk: *Śākyan*) clan. The Pāli texts use various epithets for him such as *Tathāgata*, **Ādiccabandhu**, *Anatajina, Angirasa/Angīrasa, Aggapuggalathe, Atideva, Atidevadeva, Devātideva,* and *Anomasatta*. Most probably, his clansmen, the Sākiyans, were subjects of the state of Kosala (Sk: *Kośala*) as the Buddha occasionally called himself a Kosalan. His father, Suddhodana (Sk: *Śuddhodana*) was the chief of a very small kingdom of the Sākyans at Kapilavatthu. Different commentaries of the Pāli Tipiṭaka and the Sanskrit texts refer to the Buddha as the son of a king who descended from a long line of famous ancestors. His mother Māyā (also *Mahāmāyā*) was Suddhodana's chief consort. She was the daughter of either Sākiyan Añjana or Mahāsuppabuddha of Devadaha. She had two brothers called Daṇḍapāni and Suppabuddha as well as a sister called Pajāpatī/ Mahāpajāpatī (Sk: *Prajāpatī/Mahāprajāpatī*). Both Māyā and Pajāpatī were married to Śuddhodana in their youth, but it was not until Māyā was between forty and fifty that she gave birth to the

*. Professor., Head, Department of Buddhist Studies University of Delhi, Delhi-110007, INDIA.

Buddha. The town of Kapilavastu is identified either with Piprahwā-Ganwārīā located in the Basti district of Uttar Pradesh (India) or with Tilaurākoṭ located a few kilometres away to the west of Lumbinī in Nepal. Though the Buddha is said to have lived for eighty years (in all probability it is a rounded of figure), there is not much consensus among historians about the year of his death, known as the Mahāparinirvāṇa (the Great Decease). Whereas some scholars place his death in the year circa 483 BCE, others have suggested that it took place within a few years of 400 BCE.

INDIA ON THE EVE OF THE BIRTH OF BUDDHISM

In the history of ancient India, sixth-fifth century BCE is known not only for the emergence of numerous new religious orders such as Buddhism and Jainism, it also marked the end of the *age* of the Vedas. By the time of the Buddha, caste system with its gross inequalities had become both functional and hereditary. This period was also marked by the emergence of urbanization and the appearance of a new material milieu. The new mercantile and artisan classes that came into origin in the new material milieu undermined the traditional social order prescribed by the *varṇa* system of four castes dictated by the Brāhmaṇical rituals. This new social transformation also opened new roles for women and low-caste people who could now choose, explore, and express their religious preferences.

BIOGRAPHY OF THE BUDDHA AND EARLY BUDDHISM

Early canonical texts suggest that in order to give birth to a buddha, a woman must have certain qualities such as: she must not be too compassionate, had never consumed intoxicants, had practiced the *pañcaśīlas* (five ethical virtues) since her birth, and above all, had practiced the *pāramitās* (Pāli: *pāramī* i.e., perfect virtues) for one hundred thousand *kappas* (Sk: *kalpas*). Māyā possessed all these qualities. On the night of the conception she had a dream in which the bodhisatta (Sk: bodhisattva), the Buddha-to-be, in the form of a white elephant, holding a white lotus in his gleaming trunk, entered into her right side. This conception took place on the full-moon day of Āsāḷha (Sk: Āṣāḍha). In some of the Buddhist traditions, this incident is known as *Māyā's Dream*.

Different legends in the Pāli texts mention extraordinary events relating to his conception and birth where it has been pointed out that before his conception the would-be-buddha lived in the Tusita (Sk: *Tuśita*) heaven where he was waiting for the opportune time to be born for the last time. After having made the five inquiries (*pañcamahāvilokanāni*) regarding the *kāla* (right or wrong time), *deśa/desa* (country), *dvīpa/dīpa* (continent), *kula* (family or clan), and *mātā* (mother), he bid farewell to his companions and descended to earth. From the day of the conception Māyā was guarded by the four regent deities (*cattāro mahārājāno*); she did not feel any desire for male company, and the child in her womb was visible from the outside. At the end of the ten months, on the day of the full moon of Visākha (Sk: Vaiśākha), she was travelling to her parental home in Devadaha. On the way in the Lumbinī Grove she gave birth to the bodhisatta as she stood holding on to the branch of a sāla tree. Instead of being born through the vagina, the bodhisatta appeared from her rib. As suggested by John Strong, the "lack of passage through the birth canal is often said to reflect a concern for purity, but it may also be connected to a pan-Indian tradition that asserts that the trauma of vaginal birth is what wipes out the memory of previous lives." On emerging from his mother's side, the bodhisatta took seven steps to the north and, contemplating the four cardinal directions, declared that this would be his last birth and uttered a lion's roar (*sīhanāda*): "I am the chief in the world." According to the legend, on the same day seven other beings were also born: the Bodhi-tree, Rāhulamātā (his future wife), the four Treasure-Troves: his elephant, his horse Kanthaka, his charioteer Channa, and his childhood playmate Kāludāyī. Instead of travelling on to Devadaha, Māya returned the same day to Kapilavatthu along with her newly born child.

His father had him inspected by different diviners, who on examining his body, found on it thirty-two physiognomic signs of a *mahāpurisa* (great man) and prophesied for the boy either of the two possible careers: (a) staying at home, inheriting the throne, and becoming a *cakkavatti* (Sk: *cakravartin* i.e., universal) king; (b) leaving home, adopting the life of a wandering mendicant, and becoming a *sammāsambuddha* (fully-awakened one). Some

of these physiognomic signs that have drawn particular attention of scholars included *uṣṇīṣa* (protrusion on the top of the head), ūrṇā (tuft of hair between the eyebrows), sexual organ enclosed in a sheath, and webbed hands and feet. Of all the diviners who predicted two possibilities for the child, Koṇḍañña, the youngest, declared, quite decisively, that he will become a buddha. On the same day, the ascetic Asita (also known as Kāḷadevala), meditating in the Himālaya, learnt from the Tāvatiṃsa devas of the birth of the future-buddha and paid a visit to Suddhodana to see the child. He also declared that the child will become a Buddha. According to the legend, Asita wept for sorrow that he would not live to see the child's buddhahood. Queen Māyā died seven days after his birth and his step-mother Gautamī Prajāpatī took on the responsibility to take care of him. The mothers of all buddhas must die soon after giving birth to a would-be-buddha, because no other child is to be conceived in the same womb as a buddha. Māyā was reborn as a male deity in the Tusita heaven.

Even though Suddhodana was painfully conscious of the declaration of Koṇḍañña and Asita that the bodhisatta would eventually leave home and become the Buddha, Suddhodana still hoped that his son would succeed him to the throne and become a *cakkavatti* king. Keeping this in mind, he is said to have kept him away from all those distractions that might act as catalysts to make him leave worldly life. Thus, he was provided with the surroundings of a quintessential prince. However, an important incident reported in various accounts of the bodhisatta's childhood is that of his accomplishment of the first *jhāna* (Sk: *dhyāna*) under a jambu-tree. Once on the occasion of the state ploughing festival when king Suddhodana himself was ploughing with a golden plough with other farmers, the bodhisatta's nurses, drawn by the celebrations, left the child unattended under a jambu-tree. Later, when the nurses and the others returned, they found him seated, cross-legged, in a trance. It was this very experience that later turned out to be a turning point when the bodhisatta found severe austerities unhelpful. At that time, according to the *Mūlasarvāstivādin Vinaya*, [the bodhisattva thought]: "That must be the way, that must be the path that will lead to knowledge, seeing, and unsurpassed total Enlightenment."

It has been mentioned in the Pāli texts that the bodhisattva lived a life of excessive luxury and ease as a young prince. For instance, his father is said to have provided him for three different seasons three different palaces- Ramma, Suramma and Subha. In fact, all the sources are in agreement in underlining the luxuries that were available to the bodhisatta which, in turn, as suggested by John Strong, clearly "serve the purpose of emphasizing how great was the turning away that impelled him ultimately to give it all up." At the age of sixteen, he performed various feats and won a martial arts competition. According to the *Nidānakathā,* one of the feats that he performed with a bow needed the strength of one thousand men. The Sākyans were so impressed by this that each of the forty thousand of them offered a daughter in marriage to the young prince. The Bodhisatta married all the forty thousand girls and appointed as his chief wife the daughter of Suppabuddha, who, later, became known as Rāhulamātā. In the Pāli tradition, she is variously known as Yaśodharā, Bhaddakaccānā/Bhaddakaccā, Bimbāsundarī, or Bimbādevī. Other sources point out that the bodhisatta acquired three wives one after the other in somewhat different situations: Yaśodharā, Gopikā, and Mṛgajā.

Though some texts mention that the bodhisatta left home at the age of nineteen, according to the commonly accepted version, Gotama was twenty-nine when the incidents took place which culminated in his renunciation of the life of a householder. Legends mention that following the prophecy of the diviners, Suddhodana had taken every possible precaution to ensure that his son did not come across any sign of old age, sickness, or death. However, when he was twenty-nine, the gods instilled a longing in his heart to go to the park and on the way, they put before him an oldman showing signs of extreme age, and the bodhisatta returned, expressing his wish to leave home. When Suddhodana learnt of this, he surrounded the prince with even bigger attractions, but on the next three days came across a sick man, a dead body, and a mendicant. However, according to some versions, the four omens took place on a single day. Different passages in the *Tipiṭaka* seem to indicate that the process was much more gradual and that the incidents culminating in the Great Renunciation (Pāli: *Mahābhinikkhamana*.

Sk: *Mahābhiniṣkramaṇa*) were not as dramatic as given in the *Nidānakathā*. When on seeing the mendicant, his charioteer Channa praised ascetical life, the bodhisatta felt very happy. On way to the palace, Gotama received the news that he had been blessed with a son. According to the *Nidānakathā*, on hearing the news, he commented, "Rāhula has been born; a bond has been born" ("*rāhulajāto, bandhanaṃ jātaṃ*"). It was the full-moon day of Āsāḷha. He woke up in the middle of the night to find his female musicians sleeping in attitudes which filled him with loathing for the worldly life, and he decided to leave it. In some versions the Great Renunciation took place seven days after the birth of Rāhula. He ordered Channa to saddle his favourite horse, Kanthaka (also Kaṇṭhaka), and entered his wife's chamber for a last look at her and Rāhula. Then he went away. It has been suggested that in all probability the dangers faced by his clan at the hands of Kosala and the sensitivity of the young Gotama to the probable fate of his clan may have further added to his decision to leave home. The decision that lay before him was whether to become a great emperor, having repelled the military threats of other states, or a spiritual master, having abandoned all worldly concerns. As suggested by Nakamura, "If it was impossible for him to deal with the political situation .... His state of mind in abandoning his home and position and becoming a wandering ascetic may be understandable."

Apart from the *Nidānakathā*, the *Ariyapariyasenā Sutta*, the *Mahāsaccaka Sutta*, and the *Mahāsaccaka Sutta* provide details of the bodhisatta's life till he attained Enlightenment at the age of thirty-five. After leaving home, he cut his hair, shaved his beard, put on a mendicant's robe, and went in search of different teachers. Initially, he spent some time with Bhaggava and then began to study under Āḷāra Kālāma (Sk: Ārāḍa Kālāma). Under Āḷāra Kālāma he mastered the realization of the meditative stage of nothingness (*akiñcaññayatana*). However, he was not satisfied and concluded that this was not conducive to Enlightenment. So he sought out another teacher, Uddaka Rāmaputta (Sk: *Udraka Rāmaputra*), and under him he was able to reach a higher stage of meditative awareness, the plane of neither-perception-nor-nonperception (*nevasaññi-nāsaññin*). He was not satisfied with this either as it

did not lead to the desired goal. So he left Uddaka. Thereafter, he travelled to Senānīgāma in Uruvelā. Over there in the company of five companions (who became known as *pañcavaggiya* bhikkhus) of the Sākya tribe whom his father had chosen to follow him and take care of his needs, he undertook extreme austerities of two types: extreme breath-control, and extreme fasting. He fasted until he was nothing but skin and bones. The *Nidānakathā* describes that he "spent six years undergoing austerities; it was time spent [meaninglessly], as if trying to tie a knot in the air. However, he realized that such extreme asceticism only caused extreme pain. Having realised the folly of extreme asceticism, he decided to abandon it, and started again to take normal food. Thereupon the Pañcavaggiya bhikkhus, disappointed, left him and returned to Isipatana".

Popular legends relate that after this event Gotama received an offering of milk porridge from a young woman named Sujāta who lived in a nearby village. Gotama's desire for normal food is satisfied by an offering brought by Sujātā to the Ajapāla banyan tree under which he was seated. She had made a vow to the tree, and her wish having been granted, she took her maid, Punnā, and went to the tree prepared to fulfill her promise. They took the bodhisatta to be the tree-god who had come in person to accept the offering of milk-rice. However, according to the *Divyāvadāna* and the *Mūlasarvāstivādin Vinaya*, two women (Nandā and Nandabalā) made an offering of milk-rice to the bodhisatta and this figure goes up to nine in the case of the *Lalitavistara*. As suggested by Strong, this offering of milk-rice was important as it marked the beginning of the actual Enlightenment process. It was a special meal that is said to have sustained the bodhisattva for the next forty-nine days. Thus nourished, the bodhisattva approached the Bodhi tree, the site of his Enlightenment. It was the full-moon day of the month of Visākha. There a grass-cutter called Sotthiya gave him eight handfuls of grass which the latter spread on the eastern side of the tree and sat on it cross-legged with a resolve not to get up till he had attained Enlightenment. It is at this point that his final trial and temptation took place. Māra, the god of evil, who had been watching the bodhisattva ever since he had left home, tried for the last time to thwart his Enlightenment. However, Māra was utterly defeated

and the bodhisattva's Enlightenment took place during the night itself. The Enlightenment, called full and perfect (*abhisaṃbodhi*), is generally described as consisting of the acquisition of three successive knowledges (*vidyā*), one in each of the three watches of the night: during the first watch he attained the knowledge of his former existences; during the middle watch he attained the divine eye (*dibbacakkhu*); and during the last watch he unravelled the Dependent Arising (*paṭiccasamuppāda*). The realization of Buddhahood was thus not exactly a single experience but a set of interconnected experiences, a result of many years of endeavour.

The Buddha remained under and in the vicinity of the Bodhi-tree for seven weeks after attaining Enlightenment. During those seven weeks and before moving away, he sorted out various issues relating to Enlightenment and his future plans. It was also during this period that Māra and his daughters made their last ditch attempt to shake his resolution. The biggest issue that he had to deal with was as to whether he should preach to the world or not his doctrine that was complex and hard to understand. After due consideration and on assurance from Brahmā Sahampati himself that there are many beings who would be able to derive benefit from his teaching, he decided to teach the Dhamma. It was also during this period that the conversion of Tapussa and Bhallika took place, though the Buddha did not give them any instructions.

After taking a decision to preach the dhamma, the Buddha decided to preach first to the Pañcavaggiyas at Isipatana (Sārnāth) near Vārāṇasī. On the way to Bārāṇasī he met the Ājīvaka Upaka and on enquiry from the latter told him that he was *Jina*. At Isipatana the Pañcavaggiyas were, initially, reluctant to acknowledge his claim to be the Tathāgata, but ultimately he was able to win them over to his side. This happened on the full-moon day of Āsāḷha when the Buddha preached to them the sermon that became known as the *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta* (*Discourse on Setting the Wheel of Dharma in Motion*). This discourse was followed five days later by the *Anattalakkhaṇa Sutta*, in which he delivered his teaching of *anattā* (no-self) and *aniccā* (impermanence). On hearing this discourse, all the Pañcavaggiyas became arahants. The next day the Buddha ordained Yasa who also became an arahant. Later during

the day, Yasa's father became a disciple of the Buddha and invited him to a meal at his house. After the lunch, Yasa's mother and one of his former wives became the first two *upāsikās* (female devotees) of the Buddha. Then four friends of Yasa and, afterwards, fifty more, took ordination and became arahants. Now apart from the Buddha, there were sixty arahants, and they were all sent in different directions to preach the Dhamma. They brought with them many persons seeking ordination, and the Buddha, who up till now had ordained men with the "*ehi bhikkhu*" formula, authorized monks with the power of ordination.

After spending the *vassāvāsa* at Vārāṇasī, the Buddha headed back to Uruvelā and on the way ordained a group of thirty men known as the *Bhaddavaggiyās*. At Uruvelā, with the use of magical powers, the Buddha ordained the three Kassapa brothers (known as the Tebhātika Jaṭilā) along with their thousand followers. With these followers the Buddha travelled to Rājagaha where he stayed for two months. During this stay two important events that took place were Bimbisāra's gift of the Veḷuvana to the Buddha and the Saṃgha, and the entry of Sāriputta and Moggallāna into the Saṃgha. Most probably, it was also during this year that at the beginning of the *vassāvāsa* the Buddha paid a visit to Vesālī which was suffering from starvation and pestilence. The Buddha preached the *Ratana Sutta* and dispelled all dangers. The pace at which people were now taking shelter in the Triple Gem (*Tisaraṇa*) as well as joining the Saṃgha rapidly increased. The people of the state of Magadha accused the Buddha of causing chidlessness and widowhood. However, the Buddha dispelled their concerns.

Next important event that took place in the life of the Buddha was his visit to Kapilavatthu at the request of his father. Here, he stayed at the Nigrodhārāma. As the Buddha's kinsmen doubted his powers, he performed the *Yamakapātihāriya* (Miracle of the Double Appearances) to convince them. The next day, he went on a begging round in the city as no one had invited him to a meal. At this Suddhodana was deeply embarrassed and grieved. However, later on learning that it was the practice of all buddhas, he became a *sotāpanna* (stream-winner) and invited the Buddha and his monks to a meal to the palace. Pajāpatī became a *sotāpanna* and

Suddhodana a *sakadāgāmi* (once-returner). The Buddha went to see Rāhulamātā in her own quarters as she had not come to see him. Later, she sent Rāhula to the Buddha telling him to ask his father for his inheritance. He followed the Buddha everywhere and finally Sāriputta ordained him at the Buddha's request. Suddhodana protested severely. Consequently, the Buddha declared that no person shall be admitted to the Saṃgha without the consent of his parents. During this visit to Kapilavatthu, the Buddha ordained a large number of Sākyans and with them he returned to Rājagaha. On the way, the Buddha ordained Anuruddha, Bhaddiya, Ānanda, Bhagu, Kimbila, Devadatta, and the barber Upāli. While the Buddha was at Rājagaha, Anāthapiṇḍika paid him a visit and became his disciple. From here, the Buddha travelled to Sāvatthi on an invitation from Anāthapiṇḍika and received the Jetavana from him as a gift.

During the fifth year of his ministry, the Buddha travelled from Vesāli to Kapilavatthu to preach to his father on his death-bed Suddhodana. It was at this time that the Buddha persuaded the Sākyans and the Koḷiyans to make peace who had declared war on each other over sharing the waters of the river Rohinī. It was also during this visit of the Buddha to Kapilavatthu that Pajāpatī Gotamī requested to be allowed to join the Saṃgha. After refusing to accede to Pajāpatī's demand, the Buddha returned to Vesāli. However, Pajāpatī and the other women followed the Buddha to Vesālī where the latter was successfully persuaded by Ānanda to allow women to enter the Saṃgha. In Buddha spent the seventh *vassāvāsa* in Tāvatimsa where he had ascended to preach the Abhidhamma to his mother who was born there as a deva. The Buddha spent his eighth year near Suṃsumāragiri in the country of the Bhaggas. In the ninth year, the Buddha visited Kosambī and Kururaṭṭha. It was during this visit to Kururaṭṭha that the Buddha turned down the offer of brāhmaṇa Māgandiyā to marry his daughter as a result of which Māgandiyā developed intense hatred for the Buddha.

In the tenth year, a schism among the monks at Kosambī took place and as despite many attempts by the Buddha the monks did not reconcile their differences, the Buddha retired into the Pārileyyaka forest and after spending his *vassāvāsa* there returned to Sāvathī.

However, by this time the Kosambī monks realized their mistake, apologized to the Buddha and the dispute was settled. In the eleventh year the Buddha resides at the brāhmaṇa village of Ekanālā and converts Kasi-Bhāradvāja. He spent his twelfth *vassāvāsa* at Verañjā where five hundred horse-merchants supplied the monks with food as Verañjā had been suffering from famine. The thirteenth *vassāvāsa* was spent at Cālikapabbata. The Buddha spent the fourteenth year of his ministry at Sāvatthi where Rāhula received the *upasampadā* ordination. In the fifteenth year the Buddha revisited Kapilavatthu when his father-in-law, Suppabuddha, refused to let the Buddha pass through Devadaha. The chief event of the sixteenth year was the conversion of the yakkha Āḷavaka at Āḷavī. The Buddha spent the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth years of his ministry at Sāvatthi, Āḷavī, and Rājagaha. In the twentieth year he converted the robber Aṅgulimāla. During this year he also appointed Ānanda as his permanent attendant. After about twenty years of the Buddha's ministry, the Saṃgha appears to have turned from a wandering to a sedentary community. From now onwards, the Buddha largely stayed at Sāvatthi which had by now become the headquarters of Buddhism though during the dry season he went on tours of different places within the Majjhimadesa (Sk: Madhyadeśa). Sedentary nature of the Saṃgha must have also meant that as majority of the members of the Saṃgha were staying together in fixed monastic residences, rules of discipline in the Saṃgha must have become necessary. Towards the end of the Buddha's ministry, Devadatta made an effort to take over the leadership of the Saṃgha, but was unsuccessful and parted ways with the Buddha. Pāli texts relate different incidents whereby Devadatta apparently tried to murder the Buddha but fails. It has been suggested that Devadatta was not as bad as portrayed in the texts.

The *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*, the *Mahāsudassana Sutta*, and the *Janavasabha Sutta* provide a more or less continuous account of the last year of the Buddha's life. He began his last journey from Gijjhakūṭa, near Rājagaha. Just before his departure he was visited by Vassākāra who enquired from him, indirectly, if in his view, there was any chance of Ajātasattu defeating the Vajjians in a battle. The Buddha told Vassākāra that as long as the Vajjians followed seven things (frequent assemblies, concord, honouring of tradition and

convention, respect for elders, courtesy towards women, homage paid to places of worship, and protection of holy men in their midst) no one could defeat them. From Rājagaha, the Buddha proceded Nālandā, where Sāriputta uttered his lion's roar (*sīhanāda*) declaring his complete faith in the Buddha and took his leave to die. From Nālandā, the Buddha travelled to Pāṭaligāma, where he predicted the future greatness of Pāṭaliputta and then to Vesālī via Ñātika and Koṭigāma. At Vesālī, he stayed in Ambapālī's park and accepted an invitation to a meal from her, turning down a similar offer from the Licchavis. After accepting Ambapālī's park as a gift for the Saṃgha, the Buddha travelled to Beluvā to spend the *vassāvāsa* whereas the accompanying monks stayed behind in Vesālī. He fell grievously ill at Beluva and told Ānanda that his mission was over and that after his death the Saṃgha must maintain itself by taking the Dhamma (Sk: Dharma) as the only refuge. Though with great determination he fought his illness and recovered somewhat, he nevertheless made an announcement of his impending death in the assembly of monks at Vesālī. Thereafter he travelled to Pāvā via Bhaṇḍagāma, Hatthigāma, Ambagāma, Jambugama, and Bhoganagara. At Pāvā he stayed in the mango-grove of Cunda, the smith. The Buddha had his last meal at Cunda's house. This meal is mentioned as *sūkaramaddava* in the Pāli texts. Scholars disagree on the meaning of the word *sūkaramaddava* though majority of them now believe that this meal consisted of some sort of stale mushrooms and not pork. After eating this meal, the Buddha fell seriously sick but still continued with his onward journey towards Kusinārā. But his strength ebbed away and he had to stop at twenty-five places while covering a distance of three *gāvutas* from Pāvā to Kusināra.

Finally, he and Ānanda reached Kusinārā where the latter prepared a bed for him in the Upavattana sāla-grove. Then Ānanda asked him for instructions as to how the funeral rites be performed and began to cry bitterly. The Buddha consoled him and thanked him for what he had done. And spoke his last words: "Decay is inherent in all component things; work out your salvation with diligence." Passing back and forth through various phases of trance, he died. He was in his eightieth year. This event which took place on the full-moon day of the month of Visākha is known as the *Mahāparinibbāna* (*The Great Decease*).

The next day Ānanda informed the Mallas of Kusinārā of the Buddha's death and they declared that they shall be the sole heir of the Buddha's relics. However, there appeared several other claimants for the Buddha's relics. But the Mallas of Kusinārā refused to share the relics with the others and were prepared to wage a war over them. But Dona, the brāhmaṇa, counselled all the parties and finally the relics were divided into eight equal parts among the eight claimants: Ajātasattu, the Licchavis of Vesāli, the Sākiyans of Kapilavatthu, the Bulis of Allakappa, the Koḷiyas of Rāmagāma, a brāhmaṇa of Veṭhadīpa, the Mallas of Pāvā, and the Mallas of Kusinārā. Dona took for himself the measuring vessel and the Moriyas of Pipphalivana, who arrived late, carried off the ashes. All the claimants built stūpas over their shares of remains.

A typical follower of the Buddha referred to him/herself *Saugata, Sākyan/Śākyan, Sākyabhikkhu/Śākyabhikṣu, Sākyabhikkhunī/Śākyabhikṣuṇī Sakyaputtiya/Śākyaputra, Sakyadhītā/Śākyadhītā, Ariyasāvaka/Āryaśrāvaka,* and *Jinaputta/Jinaputra*. The followers of the Buddha were called *Bauddha* by those who were critics of the Buddha. The elders initially considered the *Buddhavacana* (the Buddha's words) the primary source of the Dharma and the Vinaya (discipline), and took great pains to formulate and transmit his teachings accurately. However, historians generally agree that his true teaching has not survived. The various versions of the canon (accepted scripture) extant in Pāli, Sanskrit, Chinese, and Tibetan are sectarian variants of a corpus that grew and took shape during the over three centuries of oral transmission.

Early Buddhism remained centered around the Gaṅgā valley, spreading gradually from there to different parts of the Indian subcontinent. The canonical sources record different councils where the monastic saṃgha established the textual collections based on the Buddha's teachings and sorted out certain issues relating to discipline within the saṃgha. The Buddha threw the doors of his saṃgha open to both men and women of all castes making no distinction in the imparting of knowledge. However, as the saṃgha had to depend upon the society for material support, it was continuously tuned to the wider sentiments of its supporters. For instance, even though the Buddha accepted women into the

saṃgha, eight special rules were imposed upon them resulting in their complete subordination to the monks.

THE COUNCILS AND SCHISMS

The history of the saṃgha presents a tug-of-war between, on the one hand, individuals or groups seeking to conserve what they considered the core of the *Buddhavacana*, and on the other hand, the continuing need to conform to changing social, economic, and political institutions. The first example of such a struggle comes from the stories of the Buddha's own life, when his cousin, Devadatta, tried to replace him as the leader of the saṃgha. The sources suggest that this rebellion was quickly put down by Śāriputra (Pāli: Sāriputta) and Mahāmaudgalāyana (Pāli: Mahāmoggallāna), chief disciples of the Buddha. After the Buddha's death, however, a more comprehensive strategy was needed to keep the saṃgha together and to codify the *Buddhavacana*. That strategy is contained in the legend of the First Council which took place at Rājagṛha (Pāli: Rājagaha) three months after the Buddha's death. It has been suggested that it would have been impossible to think that two huge parts of the *Tripiṭaka* (Pāli: *Tipiṭaka;* Three Baskets/Collections), i.e. the *Sūtra* (Pāli: *Sutta*) and the *Vinaya*, were finally composed and settled within a short period of two or three months. The nature of the work done at the First Council remains uncertain and if, at all, the *Sūtra* and the *Vinaya* were recited at the First Council, they were certainly not identical to the ones that exist now.

As time went by, the saṃgha got split into numerous disparate sects (*nikāyas*), each claiming to faithfully preserve the Buddha's Dharma and Vinaya. It is difficult to give a precise account of the Second Council as different sects relate its history from their own points of view. This council is said to have taken place at Vaiśālī (Pāli: Vesālī), one hundred years after the Buddha's death. It led to a schism in the Buddhist saṃgha and the secession of the Mahāsāṃghikas (the *Majorityists*). This parting of ways between the Mahāsāṃghika and the Theravāda (Sk: S*thaviravāda*) is generally accepted within the tradition as the first real schism in the saṃgha. All the sects that later appeared within Indian Buddhism arose out of either of these two main groups. Whereas some of these sects were different from others because they were simply located in a different part of the

Indian subcontinent, there were others which were different due to their unique doctrines, and still others were different in terms of their ritual practices. Each of these sects possessed its own canon. However, except the Pāli canon of the Theravāda, and scattered fragments from other sects, not much of this vast literary corpus has survived.

As the Buddha had allowed the members of the saṃgha to use their own speech for the purposes of preaching, with the spread of Buddhism into different regions of the Indian subcontinent, different sects embraced different languages for their canons. Whereas Theravāda (also known as Ā*cariyavāda*) adopted Pāli as its sacred language, its most important branch Sarvāstivāda and some of its sub-sects embraced Sanskrit. The Saṃmitīyas often associated with the Vātsīputrīyas, adopted Apabhraṃśa as their language. Prakrit became the language of the Mahāsāṃghikas. As this happened, these sects carved out their own geographical spheres of influence. Ujjayinī and Kauśāmbī became the main centres of activity of Theravāda. Sarvāstivāda acquired predominance in Mathurā, Gandhāra, and Kaśmīra. The earliest centre of the Mahāsāṃghika sect was at Vaiśālī. Later, this sect gained more popularity in the Andhra region and consequently came to be known as Andhaka. The Sautrāntika school of Hīnayāna Buddhism originated in Kaśmīra and Gandhāra. The different sects also adopted different texts as more authoritative than others. For instance, the Vaibhāṣikas declared that the *Vaibhāṣas* or *aṭṭhakathās* (commentaries) on *Jñānaprasthānasūtra* were more authoritative than the original *sūtras*. In sharp contrast to this, the Sautrāntikas considered the *sūtras* more important than their commentaries. Furthermore, these sects began to differ from each in matters such as discipline. Regarding the First Council, Mahākassapa and Pūraṇa of Dhakkhinagiri had disagreement on seven rules which were later incorporated in the Vinayas of the Mahīśāsakas and the Dharmaguptakas. The dispute pertaining to the Ten Extravagances (*dasavatthūni*) at the Second Council is well-known. One of the main causes for the convening of the Third Council was that the monks of different sects were not holding jointly the Pātimokkha assembly, as one group of these monks regarded the other as *apariśuddha* (unclean) according to its disciplinary code of conduct. According to the Chinese

pilgrim Yijing who visited India in the seventh century, the Vinaya of the Saṃmitīyas had special rules pertaining to the use of the undergarments, girdles, medicines, and beds. With the passage of time, the different sects also began to differ regarding the manner of the Buddha's birth, his relationship with the saṃgha, and above all, interpretation of various aspects of the *Buddhavacana*. The Sarvāstivādins (Vaibhāśikas) held that a being is made up of five dharmas, in turn sub-divided into seventy-five elements which are permanent in nature. According to them, when the Buddha spoke of impermanence, he meant the composite of elements and not the elements themselves. The Sautrāntikas considered the phenomenal objects as only appearances (*prajñapti*) whose existence could be known only by inference (*bāhyārthānumeya*). They acknowledged the transmission of the *skandhamātras* from one existence to another ceasing only in nirvāṇa. The Mahāsāṃghika sect declared that the Buddha was supra-mundane (*lokottara*) so that Siddhārtha Gautama was only an apparition of the *lokottara* Buddha. They also declared that as Arahanthood was not the fully emancipated state one should seek Buddhahood instead of Arahanthood. The Śailas, the Caityakas, and the Vaitulyakas even held the view that the Bodhisattvas possess supra-mundane qualities and are not average beings. They also declared that mind (*vijñāna*) is pure in origin and becomes impure only on contact with impurities. Whereas, according to the Sarvāstivādins, *antarabhāva* provided a link between one existence and another, the Theravādins, Mahīśāsakas, and the Śailas denied the existence of *antarābhava*. The Saṃmitīyas (Vātsīputrīyas) believed that there is a *pudgala* (Pāli: *puggala*. person) apart from the five elements (*skandhas*) constituting a being. According to them, this *pudgala* is neither identical to nor different from the *skandhas* and passes from one existence to another till the attainment of nirvāṇa.

INSTITUTIONALIZATION, WORSHIP OF STŪPAS, AND BEGINNING OF BUDDHIST PILGRIMAGE

It has been mentioned in the traditional legends of the Buddha's biography that the mortal remains of the Buddha were divided into equal eight shares. Thereafter memorial stūpas were built over each of these portions. These stūpas along with many *caityas* (Buddhist

shrines) developed into centers of pilgrimage where devotees came and made offerings to earn merit. In the *Mahāparinibbāna Suttanta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya* the Buddha is mentioned as telling his chief disciple, Ānanda, that there are four places which "a devout person should visit and look upon with reverence." These four places, which became known as the *Caturamahāprātihārya*s (the Four Great Wonders), are Lumbinī, Bodhagayā, Sārnāth, and Kusinārā. In the later commentarial tradition, four other sites are also raised to a special status because the Buddha had performed a certain miracle at each of these places. All the eight sites are collectively known as the *Aṣṭamahāprātihārya*s (the Eight Great Wonders). The last four of these eight places where certain miraculous events are reported to have occurred are: Sāvatthī, Rājagaha, Saṃkissā, and Vesālī. Sāvatthī (Sk: Śrāvastī) was the place of the "Wonder of the Twins" (*yamakaprātihārya*) or the "Great Wonder" (*mahāprātihārya*) where at the Jetavana monastery the Buddha had shown his supernatural abilities in the performance of miracles. The Buddha had also spent most of his monastic life in Śrāvastī and it was the place where he spent most of his rainy retreats (*vassāvāsas*), delivered majority of his sermons and engaged in debates. Rājagaha (Sk: Rājagṛha, present day Rājgīr) is the place where the Buddha had subdued the wild elephant, Nāḷāgiri, through friendliness when Devadatta had plotted to get him killed. The Buddha spent several months meditating and preaching at Rājgīr, converting Bimbisāra, the king of Magadha and many others to Buddhism including Jīvaka (the king's physician), Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana who were to become important and influential disciples. Saṃkissā (Sk: Sāṃkāśya) is the place where the Buddha descended to earth from the Tāvatiṃsa (Sk: Trāyastriṃśa) heaven (*devārohaṇa*) where he stayed for three months teaching his mother the Abhidhamma (Sk: *Abhidharma*). Vesālī (Sk: *Vaiśālī*) is the place where the Buddha had received an offering of honey from a monkey at the Monkey's Pond.

AŚOKA

Aśoka (third century BCE) was an important early patron of the saṃgha, and he is considered in the traditional Buddhist writings as having greatly contributed to the growth and development of Buddhism. It has been mentioned in the legends that Aśoka opened

the original group of stūpas for the purposes of redistributing the Buddha's relics into 84,000 stūpas that he is said to have built all over his kingdom. Perhaps the finest example of these is the Great Stūpa at Sāñcī. Aśoka is also credited with having held the Third Buddhist Council in c. 250 BCE at Pāṭaliputra in order to 'cleanse' the saṃgha. Over 10,000 "false" monks are said to have been disrobed as a result of this council. Another momentous result of this council was the despatch of missionaries to different countries of the world for the propagation of Buddhism. He also made pilgrimages to the various places important to the Buddha's life. Among the many edicts Aśoka incised on pillars and boulders, many refer to his interest in Buddhism. For instance, the Bhābrā edict recommends to Buddhist monks and laity a set of seven texts to read. The Kauśāmbī edict decries dissent in the saṃgha, telling schismatic monks to return to lay life. The Niglivā inscription mentions that Aśoka doubled the size of a stūpa dedicated to Konāgamana, a past Buddha. The Rummindei inscription talks of Aśoka reducing the revenue by one-eighth of Lumbinī village because the Buddha was born here. Buddhism became a pan-Indian religion during the time of Aśoka.

ŚUṄGAS, GRECO-BACTRIANS, AND THE KUṢĀṆAS

The Mauryan Empire did not last long after King Aśoka. The succeeding five centuries of political competition and social diversification fostered new doctrinal and institutional expressions. During this period, monastic disputes increased the number of sects to eighteen, or more. The Mauryas were succeeded in north India by the Śuṅga dynasty (185-73 BCE) about 50 years after Aśoka's death. Buddhist religious scriptures such as the *Aśokāvadāna* allege that Puṣyamitra (187-151 BCE), who was an orthodox Brāhmaṇa), indulged in unfriendly activities against the Buddhists and persecuted the Buddhist faith. Though royal patronage may have been withdrawn to Buddhist institutions during the reign of some of the Śuṅga kings but there is not any credible evidence of active persecution of the Buddhists. The activities of the first Śuṅga ruler, Puṣyamitra, who is said to have taken keen interest in the Vedic rituals and ran the affairs of the state with the help of Vedic Brāhmaṇas, do not appear to have caused the decline of Buddhism.

King Menander (reigned c. 160-135 BCE), the most famous Greco-Bactrian king, is presented in the Mahāyāna tradition as a great Buddhist and a benefactor of the faith. Interaction between the Greek and Buddhist cultures appears to have provided some impetus to the growth and development of Mahāyāna. It is also around this time that the images of the Buddha began to appear, in the Gandhāra region (NW Indian subcontinent) in realistic GrecoBuddhist style and in Mathurā with indigenous features.

The Kuṣāṇa king Kaniṣka I (first or second century CE) emulated Aśoka and promoted Buddhism like him. The Fourth Council took place in c.100 CE during his reign. The venue of the council was either Jālaṃdhara (Punjab) or near Srīnagara in Gandhāra-Kaśmīra. It was at this council that commentaries on each of the *piṭakas* were written, each of the commentaries consisting of 100,000 verses. The newly composed *Vibhāṣā* treatises are said to have been inscribed on copper plates, incased in stone boxes, and buried in a stūpa. The council is said to have taken twelve years to accomplish the task it had undertaken. One of the most significant decisions taken at this council was the settlement of dissidence within the Buddhist saṃgha. The council accorded recognition to all the eighteen sects as the repositories of genuine *Buddhavacana*. It appears that the monks of the Sarvāstivāda School were most predominant at this council and there is no evidence to indicate that Mahāyāna Buddhism was represented here. The Theravādins do not recognize this council and there is no reference to this council in the Sri Lankan chronicles. It has been suggested that it was also around this time that an important change took place in the language of the Sarvāstivādin canon which appears to have been converted into Sanskrit from an earlier Prakrit version. Such a change had long term consequences for Buddhism as Sanskrit was the sacred language of not only Brāhmaṇical-Hinduism and but was also being used by various thinkers who did not have any specific religious or philosophical loyalties. Such a development, which enabled a much bigger audience to have access to Buddhist ideas and practices, may have contributed towards the ultimate assimilation and acculturation of Buddhism into Brāhmaṇical-Hinduism.

RISE OF MAHĀYĀNA

The rise of Mahāyāna Buddhism around the first century BCE was accompanied by intricate political developments in northwestern India. The IndoGreek kingdoms were gradually overcome, and their culture assimilated by the IndoScythians, and then the Kuṣāṇas towards the beginning of the Common Era. The chief characteristic of this new form of Buddhism was the notion that all beings have a Buddhanature and should aspire to Buddhahood. Mahāyāna popularized the concept of a Bodhisattva (literally "an enlightened being" or "a would-be-Buddha") whose key attributes are compassion and kindness and also promoted the pūjā of different bodhisattvas, particularly Mañjuśrī, Avalokiteśvara, and Maitreya. These bodhisattvas became the focus of popular devotional worship Mahāyāna. Mahāyāna Buddhism includes the Mādhyamaka/Mādhyamika (*Middle Way*) School promoted by Nāgārjuna and Aśvaghoṣa; and Yogācāra (*Consciousness Only*) School founded by Asaṅga and Vasubandhu.

The institutionalization of Indian Mahāyāna Buddhism reached its pinnacle at the Nālandā Mahāvihāra, where students from all over Asia came for higher studies. As described by the Chinese pilgrim Xuanzang (ca. 614-629), the endowments of Nālandā Mahāvihāra consisted of over two hundred villages and its dormitories housed several thousand students who, apart from Mahāyāna literature, studied secular and non-Buddhist subjects such as the Vedas, art, and medicine. During the following centuries, two other prominent Mahāyāna universities, Odantapurī and Vikramaśilā, were established by the Pāla kings (ca. 750-1150 CE) who ruled in India's northeast.

EMERGENCE OF THE VAJRAYĀNA

Vajrayāna, also called Tantric Buddhism– an esoteric tradition, originated in eastern India between the fifth and seventh centuries CE. A distinctive feature of Vajrayāna Buddhism is the rituals which are skillful means (*upāya*) used as substitutes for the earlier abstract meditations. Initiation rites of Vajrayāna consist of entry into a maṇḍala, a mystic map of the spiritual universe. The use of *mudrās* and *mantras* is also central to Vajrayāna. Though the initial

practitioners of Vajrayāna were forestdwelling *mahāsiddhas* but by about the ninth century Vajrayāna took over the curriculum of monastic universities at Nālandā and Vikramaśilā.

DECLINE OF BUDDHISM IN INDIA

The first symptoms of crisis in monastic Buddhism made their appearance during the post-Kuṣāṇa period when derelict monasteries in or near decaying urban centres begin to appear in the archaeological remains. The signs of this decline became quite pronounced when Faxian (399-414 CE) paid a visit to India. When Xuanzang (629-645 CE) arrived, Buddhism had become somewhat of a spent force in most parts of India. While appearing global the decline of Buddhism in India had distinctive regional features and no period can be delimited as marking the commencement of a *general* decline of Buddhism all over India. While one comes across Buddhism flourishing at one place, at the same time one can see it in decline at another place. For instance, when some well-endowed Buddhist monasteries existed under the Pālas in eastern India, Buddhism had already met its worst fate in Sind. However, wherever it survived, it seems to have fallen into a state of complete disarray and collapsed rather quickly and comprehensively towards the end of the twelfth century.

Yet, even after the twelfth century traces of the survival of Buddhism could be found in most parts of India. For instance, it continued to exist in a variety of forms of popular worship, rites, and rituals such as Dharma Thakur pūjā or the pūjā of Jagannātha in Bengal and Orissa. Arthur Waley has comprehensively shown that Buddhism survived till the fourteenth century not only in Bengal, Orissa, and Bihar but also in other parts of India including Kāñcipura (Tamilnadu), Coḷa kingdom (Coromandal Coast), Dvāravatī (Gujarat), and Jālaṃdhara (the Punjab). At least till the fourteenth century, Buddhist monks from India are known to have travelled to Tibet and China. A Javanese poet mentions Buddhist monks as residing in six vihāras in Kāñcīpura in the year 1362 CE. There is at the University of Cambridge a manuscript of the Kālacakra, copied by a Kāyastha of Magadha for two monks in the year 1446 CE. When Abul Fazal visited Kashmir in the company of

Akbar at the end of the sixteenth century, he mentions having met some old men who professed their faith in Buddhism, though he could not find any Buddhist scholars. In 1777, the Panchen Lama is known to have sent an embassy to Bodhagayā and on its way this embassy is said to have established a Tibetan Buddhist monastery on the banks of the Gaṅgā at Howrah, Kolkata. As per the Census of 1911 as many as 1833 persons in Orissa declared Buddhism to be their faith. Apart from the districts of Chittagong and the Chittagong hill tracts in southeastern Bangladesh, Buddhism has also continued uninterrupted in the Himalayas. Thus, it is not at all correct to use expressions such as "disappearance" or "extinction" for Indian Buddhism.

It has been suggested that Indian Buddhism was the creation of an urban milieu, found favor primarily with an urban society, and its lay supporters were almost entirely urbanites consisting of merchants, traders, bankers, financiers, artisans, and members of the ruling authority. Thus, the inclination of the Buddhist monasteries to be elitist rather than mass-based and aversion to serve the rural communities and lack of interest in winning supporters among them, turned these monasteries into some sort of islands. Moreover, considering that only a tiny portion of the Indian society was urban, in numerical terms Buddhist support-base was indeed very small. However, when urbanization began to decline in India, Buddhism found its narrow support-base further shrunk. After urban centers began to decline, dispersal of urban occupational groups, leading to loss of material support, made the existence of the saṃgha very precarious. The emergent situation resulted in majority of the small monasteries, which formally existed inside or within the vicinity of urban settlements, becoming derelict. The few monasteries which managed to survive did so either by receiving land endowments or eked out an existence within or on the periphery of the surviving urban settlements especially in the coastal regions of peninsular India. In order to survive in a situation of dwindling traditional support, the monasteries began to accept grants of land for religious purposes from the ruling authorities. To sustain support and compete with Brāhmaṇical-Hindu temples, learning was liberalized and the doors of the monasteries were opened to secular education. Consequently,

from the fifth century onwards these monasteries began to grow out of their conventional character into centres of laicized academic learning as well as scholarship. Some of these monasteries became metamorphosed into mahāvihāras and managed not only to attain self-sufficiency but were also able to successfully exploit their niche for extending their power and influence in their respective localities through the ownership of villages, land, and cattle etc. As these newly sprung mahāvihāras had to manage large pieces of land and a whole lot of the associated paraphernalia, the character of Buddhist monastic institutions underwent a revolutionary change. This phenomenon helped these few mahāvihāras to survive and even prosper for a while. However, ultimately they turned out to be poor competitors to their Brāhmaṇical-Hindu counterparts as the latter had many advantages over Buddhist mahāvihāras in the management of landed estates. However, systematically and steadily, the Brāhmaṇical-Hindu temples, through their better knowledge of agriculture (especially rice cultivation) and seasons, and their ingenuity in constructing origin myths and enormous capacity for legitimation, and thus wider socio-political functions, obtained an advantage over Buddhist mahāvihāras. Consequently, Brāhmaṇical-Hinduism with its institutional base in the temple-centered agrarian settlements grew into a dynamic and progressive force. In other words, the ascendance of the agrarian class and its alliance with the Brāhmaṇas during the heydays of the Bhakti movement appears to have tilted the scales against Buddhism. From the eighth century onwards, this advantage of the Bhakti inspired brāhmaṇa-peasant alliance can be viewed as manifested in the shift of the royal patronage from Buddhism to Brāhmaṇical-Hindu sects.

Archaeological, epigraphic, and literary evidence clearly indicates towards to a link between Buddhist vihāras and long-distance trade networks of the Northern Highway (*Uttarāpatha*) and the Southern Highway (*Dakkhiṇāpatha*) which incorporated regional and local micro-networks of individual regions and were connected to overland and maritime routes. The spirit of commerce which cut across social boundaries, dissolved social distinctions, and created new social realities, found its supreme ideological expression in Buddhism and hence facilitating both its spread and sustenance.

Thus, it is no surprise that Buddhism retained an enduring appeal to mercantile communities. Symbiotic relationship that existed between Buddhist monastic institutions and trade networks is proved by the fact that these monasteries worked not only as rest-houses for the merchants and traders but also participated in commercial activities including banking, manufacture of goods and their storage. In other words, monastic establishments which were central to the survival of Indian Buddhism remained inalienably dependent on the highly organized mercantile communities which not only constructed most of the stūpas and provided material support to Buddhist monasteries but also contributed towards accumulation of wealth in the monasteries. With the decline in trade and the onset of feudalism, agrarian communities gained in socio-political importance. From about the eighth century CE onwards, Hindu-Brāhmaṇical temple building activity resulting from the alliance of Bhakti Movement and agrarian classes, led to the Buddha being elbowed out by Viṣṇu and Śiva as the favorite deities of the royalty.

Indian Buddhism was highly intellectual, elitist, and urban. Consequently, it was wary of those who lacked education and sophistication. Moreover, it was merely a monastic religion and in reality signified only those who had become monks and nuns by renouncing the lives of householders. There was no complementarity between the Buddhist saṃgha and its lay supporters. In fact, the conversion of the lay supporters of Buddhism was never either complete or effective. There was absolutely nothing in Buddhism that ever barred its supporters from extending financial or other support to other religious orders or for that matter from paying respect to the holy persons of those religious orders which from time to time competed with Buddhism for space. It has been correctly suggested that to a typical lay supporter, the saṃgha was nothing more than a mere adult education class with voluntary attendance. The Buddha was not interested in cultivating a community of lay-followers for whom his monks and nuns would have to act as priests and preside over their life-cycle rituals. Thus, Buddhism had neither any aficionado nor was it meant to have any bigoted following. What Buddhism had created, at best, were fickle-minded

lay supporters, a floating element in the vast population which conformed to the Brāhmaṇical caste system. The lay supporters of Buddhism did not have particularly much at stake in its survival and thus, such followers did not have any guilty conscience while switching loyalties in favor of one of the Brāhmaṇical-Hindu sects.

The theme of an inevitable end of the dharma appears to have played an *avant garde* role in the formation of the Buddhist psyche. References are not wanting in Buddhist literature indicating the belief entertained by Buddhists that their faith was neither aeternum nor aeonic and that the impending end to their faith was unavoidable. In fact, the prophecy of "*decline*" forms a recurrent theme in Indian Buddhism and there appeared to have been a sort of death-wish in Buddhism, so to say. The *Vinaya Piṭaka* refers, for instance, to the decline of moral life resulting in the anticipated collapse of the religion. The Buddha himself is said to have expressed the view that his religion would last only one thousand years and that the entry of women would further cut its life-span to half. Both the *Cakkavatti-Sīhanāda Suttanta* and the *Aggañña Suttanta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya* refer to the idea of imminent decline as part of the cosmic cycle of evolution and devolution spanning vast expanses of time. The Indian Buddhists themselves believed that they were living in the valley of decline and were in fear of an approaching cataclysm. Such a mind-set must have contributed towards the saṃgha not thinking or acting in terms of working towards a perennial survival of the dharma.

Though Buddhism had opened its doors to all irrespective of caste, creed, or gender, yet highly educated brāhmaṇas and rich merchants remained the most favoured candidates, the former for membership of the saṃgha and the latter as providers of material support. Over a quarter of all the Buddhist monks and nuns, came from brāhmaṇa families and carried with them their Brāhmaṇical-notions into the very core of Buddhism. The infiltration of such elements in huge numbers, most of whom were never fully converted to the ideals set forth by the Buddha, contributed greatly towards sabotaging the saṃgha from within.

The Buddha had advised the monks and nuns to stay away from performing the life-cycle rituals of householders which were left entirely to the brāhmaṇas. Thus, even the most regular supporters

of Buddhism followed not only Brāhmaṇical rites but also frequently conformed to Brāhmaṇical-Hindu caste regulations. Moreover, Brāhmaṇical-Hindu declaration of the Buddha as an incarnation of Viṣṇu was allowed to go uncontested unlike the Jainas who countered every move of Brāhmaṇical-Hinduism. Buddhism had no mechanism in place to thwart Brāhmaṇical assimilative onslaught. On the contrary, Buddhism continued to play second fiddle to Brāhmaṇical-Hinduism and continued to make appeasing accommodations with it at every stage. Adoption of Sanskrit must also be seen as a step taken in this direction. It brought Buddhism not only nearer to the Brāhmaṇical embrace, but also turned Buddhism into a religion for academic study, and took it further away from the common man who did not understand Sanskrit. Mutual exchange and adoption of different deities with Brāhmaṇical-Hinduism should also be seen as part of the wider scheme of things whereby Buddhism succumbed to Brāhmaṇical-Hindu strategy of ultimately bringing the Buddha home as a minor player. The rise of Mahāyāna-Vajrayāna in Buddhism and the growing strength of Bhakti Movement in Brāhmaṇical-Hinduism did away with any of the remaining walls that had kept Buddhism apart from Brāhmaṇical-Hinduism. In the end, with the assumption of a queer form whereby it had turned into an arcane and cabbalistic cult controlled by *nāthas* and *yogis*, it was left with no internal justification to survive as a distinct creed.

THE REVIVAL OF BUDDHISM IN MODERN INDIA

The revival of Buddhism in modern India owes its origins to the Indological research during the past 200 years or so. The archaeological discoveries and the recovery and translation of ancient texts by the nineteenth century European scholars gave an impetus to the study of India's Buddhist heritage. However, most of the credit must be given to Anagārika Dhammapāla (1864-1933) of Sri Lanka and a group of Buddhist monks of Chittagong (Bangladesh) for providing practical shape to the revival of Buddhism in India. When Anagārika Dhammapāla visited Bodhagayā in 1891, he found the Mahābodhi Temple in a state of utter neglect and founded the Mahābodhi Society with the purpose of not only restoring the temple but also to make provisions for the

food and shelter at Bodhagayā of the Buddhist monks from different Buddhist countries as well as the publication of Buddhist literature in English and Indian languages. He also expected the renovated Mahābodhi Temple to serve as a center for the spread of Buddhism. In May 1892, Dhammapāla launched two journals entitled the *Mahābodhi* and the *United Buddhist World*. Now the Mahābodhi Society has branches at Gayā, Chennai, Kushinagar, Sarnath, New Delhi, Lucknow, Mumbai, Chennai, Ajmer, and Kolkata. It goes to the credit of the Mahābodhi Society that now pilgrimage centres such as Bodhagayā, Kushinagar, Sarnath, and Vaishali are teaming with guest houses and monastic institutions catering to the needs of pilgrims from all over the world.

In 1949, the Government of Bihar passed the Buddha Gayā Temple Act for the management of the Mahābodhi Temple. Under this act, a committee called the *Buddha Gay*ā *Temple Management Committee,* consisting of four Buddhists and four Hindus, was constituted. In 1949, the relics of Śāriputra (Pāli: *Sāriputta*) and Maudgalyāyana (Pāli: *Moggallāna*), chief disciples of the Buddha, were brought to India from the Victoria and Albert Museum, London and re-enshrined in a newly built vihāra at Sāñchī. In 1956, the 2500th anniversary of the Buddha's Mahāparinibbāna was celebrated. On this occasion, a chair of Buddhist Studies was established at Delhi University and a complete set of the Pāli *Tipiṭaka* was published in Devanāgarī script by the Nava Nālandā Mahāvihāra.

B.R. Ambedkar (1891-1956) provided a new strength and direction to Buddhism in India. As a leader of the untouchables, he renounced Hinduism in favor of Buddhism and laid the foundations of India's neo-Buddhist movement. Ambedkar and a large number of people of the mahar community of Maharashtra adopted Buddhism with the aim of getting "equal status, equal rights and fair treatment" to untouchables. He wrote *The Buddha and His Dhamma* to fulfill this need. Some scholars have termed the Nagpur conversions of mahars that took place on 14 October 1956 as the new *Dhammacakkapavattana* (Turning of the Wheel of Dharma).

The arrival of Tenzin Gyatso, the fourteenth Dalai Lama, to India from Tibet along with thousands of Tibetan people in 1959 also

gave another boost to Buddhism in India. Majority of the Tibetans in exile, have remained energetic followers and patrons of Tibetan form of Buddhism in India. Central University of Tibetan Studies, Sarnath, has been established by the Government of India with the aim of promoting and preserving Tibetan culture and Buddhism. The Dalai Lama says that he is active in spreading India's message of non-violence and religious harmony throughout the world.

VIPASSANĀ MOVEMENT

Satya Narayan Goenka, of Indian origin but born and brought up in Myanmar, is a leading lay teacher of vipassanā meditation. A leading industrialist in Myanmar after the Second World War, he began teaching vipassanā in India in 1969. Since then the Vipassanā Movement has been growing in popularity and now vipassanā meditation centres exist in almost all the major cities of India. About 1000 assistant teachers have been trained by him and they supervise over 100,000 people every year in the Goenka led vipassanā courses. Many governmental as well as private institutions also make courses on vipassanā available to their personnel.

Goenka's emphasis on the non-sectarian, self-dependent, and result-oriented nature of vipassanā has become quite popular among people looking for a practical solution to stress and suffering. He calls vipassanā meditation an experiential scientific practice which consists of adherence to a moral code and the observation of sensations. To pacify the mind during vipassanā courses, students are not allowed to have any contact either with the outside world or the other students. However, they may contact an assistant teacher regarding queries concerning the procedure or a student manager for any material problems. Mere observation of breath allows the mind to become naturally concentrated leading to preparation for the central part of the vipassanā practice: non-attached observation of the manifestation of reality in one's own mind and body in the present moment. This is the vipassanā practice itself which involves carefully observing the surface of the body and discerning the sensations with equanimity, becoming gradually more and more mindful of their ever-changing nature.

According to Goenka, the practice of vipassanā is the essence

of the path of Dhamma. Goenka claims that an authentic tradition survived in Myanmar, passing from teacher to student in a long lineage from the time of the Buddha to his teacher, U Ba Khin, and now through himself, to the students. In his courses and lectures Goenka describes vipassanā meditation as a scientific investigation of the mind-matter phenomenon. The vipassanā meditation centers that he has helped to establish offer 10-day courses that provide a thorough and guided introduction to the practice of vipassanā meditation. These courses are supported by voluntary donations and there are no charges for either the course or the lodging and boarding during the course. All the centers are self-sufficient and their management is de-centralized. For the sake of uniformity, all public instruction during the retreat in all the centers is provided by video and audio tapes of Goenka. In November 2008 the Global Vipassanā Pagoda, world's largest pillar-less stone dome structure, was inaugurated on the outskirts of Mumbai. This pagoda is expected to attract hundreds of thousands of visitors from all over the world wanting to learn more about vipassanā.

Believing that theory and practice should go side-by-side in vipassanā, Goenka established the Vipassanā Research Institute at Igatpuri to investigate and publish literature on vipassanā and its effects. Goenka also brought successfully the vipassanā meditation into prisons. One notable example was in 1993 when Kiran Bedi, a reformist Inspector General of Prisons, heard of the success of vipassanā in a jail in Jaipur. A ten-day retreat involving both prison-officials and prisoners was then organized in India's largest prison Tihar Jail near New Delhi. This program was said to have led to dramatic changes in the attitude of prisoners and jailers alike. Prisoners who completed the ten-day course were less violent and there was a lower rate of recidivism among them than the other prisoners. The documentary film *Doing Time, Doing Vipassanā* is based on this experiment.

***

References

Ahir, D C (1989) *The Pioneers of Buddhist Revival in India.* Sri Satguru, Delhi.

Allchin, F R (1995) *The Archaeology of Early Historic South Asia: The Emergence of Cities and States.* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK.

Almond, Philip C (1988) *The British Discovery of Buddhism.* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK.

Bapat, PV (1956) *2500 Years of Buddhism*, Government of India Publications Division, New Delhi.

Bareau, André (1955) *Les sectes bouddhiques du petit véhicule.*: Ecole Française d'Extrāme-Orient, Saigon, South Vietnam.

Bechert, Heinz, and Gombrich, Richard, eds. (1984) *The World of Buddhism: Buddhist Monks and Nuns in Society and Culture.* Thames and Hudson, London.

Chakravarti, Uma (1987) *The Social Dimensions of Early Buddhism.* Oxford University Press, Delhi.

Dutt, Sukumar (1962) *Buddhist Monks and Monasteries of India: Their History and Their Contribution to Indian Culture,* Allen and Unwin, London.

Gokhale, Jayashree (1990) *From Concessions to Confrontation: The Politics of an Indian Untouchable Community*, Popular Prakashan, Bombay.

Hart, William (1987) *The Art of Living: Vipassana Meditation: As Taught by S. N. Goenka*. HarperOne.

Hirakawa, Akira (1990) *A History of Indian Buddhism: From Śākyamuni to Early Mahāyāna*, tr. Paul Groner. University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu.

Joshi, Lal Mani (1967) *Studies in the Buddhistic Culture of India, during the Seventh and Eighth Centuries A.D.* Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi.

Lamotte, Etienne (1988) *History of Indian Buddhism: From the Origins to the āāka Era,* tr. Sara Webb-Boin. Peeters Press, Louvain, Belgium.

Legge, James (1965) (trans) *A Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms: Being an Account by the Chinese Monk Fa-Hien of His Travels in India and Ceylon (A.D. 399-414) in Search of the Buddhist Books of Discipline.* Dover, New York.

Masefield, Peter (1986) *Divine Revelation in Pali Buddhism.* Sri Lanka Institute of Traditional Studies, Colomb.

Mitra, Debala (1971) *Buddhist Monuments.* Sahitya Samsad, Calcutt.

Mitra, RC (1954) *The Decline of Buddhism in India,* Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan, Birbhum.

Nakamura, Hajime (1980) *Indian Buddhism: A Survey With Bibliographical Notes,* Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi.

Omvedt Gail (1994) *Dalits and the Democratic Revolution: Dr Ambedkar and the Dalit Movement in Colonial India,* Sage, Delhi.

Ray, Reginald A (1994) *Buddhist Saints in India: A Study in Buddhist Values and Orientations.* Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York.

Sarao, K T S (2009) *Origin and Nature of Ancient Indian Buddhism,* 3rd rev. edition, Munishiram Manoharlal, New Delhi.

Sarao, K T S (2011) *The Decline of Indian Buddhism: A New Perspective,* Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi.

Schopen, Gregory (1997) *Bones, Stones, and Buddhist Monks: Collected Papers on the Archaeology, Epigraphy, and Texts of Monastic Buddhism in India.* University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu.

Snellgrove, David L (1987) *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism: Indian Buddhists and Their Tibetan Successors.* Shambala, Boston.

Stein, Burton (1998) *A History of India.* Blackwell Publishers, Oxford.

Strong, John S (1983) *The Legend of King Aśoka: A Study and*

*Translation of the Aśok*ā vadāna. Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ.

Strong, John, S. (1995). *The Experience of Buddhism: Sources and Interpretations*. Wadsworth Publishing, Belmont.

Strong, John S. (2001). *The Buddha: A Short Biography*, Oneworld, Oxford.

Thapar, Romila (1983) *Aśoka and the Decline of the Mauryas.* Oxford University Press, Delhi.

Warder, A K (1970) *Indian Buddhism.* Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi.

Wilkinson, T S and Thomas, MM (eds.) (1972) *Ambedkar and the Neo-Buddhist Movement*, Christian Literature Society, Madras.

Xuanzang (1996) *The Great Tang Dynasty Record of the Western Regions,* tr. Li Rongxi. Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, Berkeley, CA.

Yijing. (2000) *Buddhist Monastic Traditions of Southern Asia: A Record of the Inner Law Sent Home from the South Seas,* tr. Li Rongxi. Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, Berkeley, CA.

Zelliot, Eleanor (1992) *From Untouchable to Dalit: Essays on the Ambedkar Movement.* Manohar, New Delhi.

AMBEDKAR'S PERSPECTIVE TOWARDS RELIGION

by Nilima Chawhan

The purpose of religion is to explain the origin of the world. The purpose of dhamma is to reconstruct the world. With these words, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the famous leader of India's untouchable, interpreted Buddhism as a world-transforming religion. This meant a threefold challenge to Brahmanism, the main exploiting system of traditional Indian society, to Marxism the main social ideology opposing exploitation, and to the existing interpretation of Buddhism itself. The Hindu conception of religion is derivative. The pivotal point in religion starts with the belief that there exists some power which causes these phenomena which primitive man did not know and could not understand. But Dr. Ambedkar says that Buddha's Dhamma differs fundamentally from religion. The content of religion consist of god, soul, prayers, worship, rituals, ceremonies and sacrifices. Morality comes in only wherein man comes in relation to man. Buddha's Dhamma means, morality is dhamma and dhamma is morality. In dhamma morality takes the place of God although there is no god in dhamma.

Dr. Ambedkar interpreted the concept of dhamma that, "what the Buddha calls dhamma is analogous to what European theologians call religion. But there is no greater affinity between the two. On the other hand, the differences between the two are very great. On this account some European theologians refuse to recognize

*. Dr., Associate Professor, Samrat Ashok Subharti School of Buddhist Studies, Swami Vivekanand Subharti University, Meerut(U.P.), M.No.-09423111353.

the Buddha's Dhamma as religion. Religion it is said, is personal and one must keep it to oneself. One must not let it play its part in public life. Dhamma is social. It is fundamentally and essentially so. It is righteousness, which means right relations between man and man in all spheres of life. From this it is evident that one man if he is alone does not need dhamma but when there are two men living in relation to each other must find a place for dhamma whether they like it or not. Neither can escape it. In other words, society cannot do without dhamma." This is a very clear that foundation of religion is relationship between man and man. According to Lord Buddha dhamma consists of Prajna and Karuna. Prajna is understanding and Karuna is love. Because without it society can neither live nor grow, that is why the Buddha made it the second corner stone of his Dhamma.

When Ambedkar led thousands of Dalits for a mass vow-taking of Buddhism in 1956 in Nagpur, he did not simply propose to instill Buddhism in India fold as the already existing organisational and ideological structure. While Buddhism attracted him as a teaching that was equalitarian, Universalist and rationalist, many of its existing expressions made him very uncomfortable.

INTERPRITATION OF DR. AMBEDKAR'S CONCEPT REGARDING 'BUDDHA AND HIS DHAMMA'

1950 he was describing himself as 'on the way' to embracing Buddhism. An article that year in the *Journal of the Mahabodhi Society* entitled 'The Buddha and the Future of His Religion' argued that Buddhism was a religion for the whole world: 'If the new world – which be it realized is very different from the old – must have a religion – and the new world needs a religion far more than the old world did – then it can only be the religion of the Buddha'.[1] This was, as he was to make clear in *The Buddha and His Dhamma*, because morality was central to Buddhism, in contrast to other religions which made morality secondary to beliefs in God and cosmic principles.

Dr. Ambedkar knew he would not be around for long to lead

1. Sanghrakshita, (1987), *A Survey of Buddhism, Triratna Granthmala*, pg. no.36.

the movement and wanted to provide his followers with a 'bible' a simple but comprehensive text of Buddhism, based on what he felt were the most important passages of the Pali canon. Thus, he took up, as his last work, the apparently audacious task of rewriting Buddhist scriptures. The book he laboured to produce was The Buddha and his Dhamma. In it he attempted to bring Buddhism to the world of social action and social change. Buddhism, as we shall see, was not simply spirituality for Ambedkar, but a rational and psychologically oriented 'Dhamma' designed to help humans live in the world and transform that world into one free from sorrow or dukkha. Most of the passages of the text are taken from various sections of the Pali canon. He dominates the revival of Buddhism in the land of its birth. His interpretation of the Dhamma, Not Dhamma and Saddhamma is thus not to be ignored.[2] It provides an important entry into the question of what Buddhism is, what its impact on past Indian society was, and what its role in a future, modernised Indian society could be.

He interpreted Dhamma, Not Dhamma and Saddhamma very scholarly. He says that purity is life is dhamma, to reach perfection in life in dhamma, to live in nibbana is dhamma, to give up craving is dhamma, to belive that all compound things are impermanent is dhamma, to believe that karma is the instrument of moral order is dhamma.[3] Next is interpreted what is Not Dhamma – belief in the supernatural, god, brahma, soul is not dhamma. Belief in sacrifices and based on speculation is not dhamma. Belief in the infallibility of books of dhamma is not dhamma.[4] What is saddhamma ? Dhamma is saddhamma when it makes learning open to all, dhamma is saddhamma when it teaches that what is needed is pradnya, dhamma to be saddhamma must promote Maitri, dhamma is saddhamma only when it teaches that mere pradnya is not enough, it must be accompanied by sila and karuna, dhamma to be saddhamma must pull down all social barriers and break down barriers between man

2. Omvedt Gail, (2003), *Buddhism In India, Challenging Brahmanism and Caste*, Sage Publication New Delhi, Thousand Oaks, London, pg. no. 3.

3. Dr. Ambedkar B.R, (1997), *The Buddha and His Dhamma*, What is Dhamma, Part III, Buddhabhoomi Publication, Nagpur, pg. no. 227.

4. *Ibid*, What is Not Dhamma, Part IV, pg. no. 247.

and man and promote equality between man and man.[5]

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was using the term 'religion' in two ways. When he declared that Buddhism was not a religion, he was referring to the common sense (and dictionary) meaning, which included a belief in God or divine forces as central. This was also the sense used by many early sociologists, including Marx. In this sense, Buddhism was not a religion; it did not encourage faith; nor awe and trembling before the 'holy'. But in sociology, Emile Durkheim, whose research focused on religion and society, had given a broader definition focusing on the element of the 'sacred' in religion and its role in providing a binding force for social relationships. In this sense, Buddhism was a religion. It was not simply a morality, but a 'sacred morality', and Ambedkar's expounding of this in *The Buddha and His Dhamma* almost echoed Durkheim: 'In every human society, primitive or advanced, there are some things or beliefs which it regards as sacred and the rest as profane … . The sacred is something holy. To transgress it is a sacrilege.' This was necessary, Ambedkar goes on to argue, like Durkheim, because without sacredness no common rules of morality will exist. He then concludes that in a society not bound by a common morality protecting individual rights, exploitation will remain: This means there can be liberty for some but not for all. This means that there can be equality for a few but none for the majority. What is the remedy? The only remedy lies in making fraternity universally effective. What is fraternity? It is nothing but another name for brotherhood of men which is another name for morality. This is why the Buddha preached that Dhamma is morality and as Dhamma is sacred so is morality.[6] The 'new world', as he noted, needed religion-as-morality just as the tumultuous society of the first millennium BCE had needed it.

This is a very unique and clear interpretation by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, before that three important parts of Buddha's Dhamma which is there was no such interpretation of the easy to understand. So he played a very important role in revival of Buddhism in modern world.

---

5. *Ibid*, What is Saddhamma, Part V, pg. no. 279.

6. Dr. Ambedkar, B.R. (1992), Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writing and Speeches, Vol.11,pg. no.325.

DIFFERENT TRENDS IN INDIA REGARDING PROPAGATION OF BUDDHISM

The modern revival of buddhism in India began in the late 19th century, led by Buddhist modernist institutions such as Maha Bodhi Society, The Buddhist Society Of India, Triratna Bouddha Maha Sangha and Vipassana Researh Institute. Everyone giving contribution to propagate the Buddhism. These are the important organizations to dominating the Buddhist society. Now a days every buddhist person wants to give a contribution to the society according to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. Follower's of Ambedkar's ideology always wants to share their knowledge to the society. All over the world Ambedkar's followers are doing religious and social works through different organizations and giving pay back to society but there are some divisions according to the ideology of Dr. Ambedkar. They assume that the Buddhism, according to Dr. Ambedkar is the righteous way. So new trends arose in the society.

1. Mahabodhi Society:

Mahabodhi Society founded by the Anagarika Dhammapala. This organization take efforts for the reconstruction of Buddhism in India and restoring the ancient Buddhist Shrines at bouddhagaya, sarnath and kushinara.

2. The Buddhist Society of India:

A national organization in India was founded by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar in 1955 in Mumbai, Maharashtra. His establish this organization for the promotion of Buddhism in India. This is the first and only organization the organizes the ordination programmes for novice and lay people too. This organization maintains the record of Buddhist people who converted to Buddhism and issues the conversion certificate for converted people from this organization. They have branches all over the India through them they promote buddhist education, pali chanting, dhamma talks,seminars and meditation camp. In India TBSI is engaged in many religious programme and 'Bouddhacharaya' is the official preacher of this organization. So many monks and lay people join TBSI and propagate Buddhism.

3. Vipassana Research Institute:

Vipassana Research Institute is founded by S. N. Goenka and has 170 centres all over the world 170 centres. This organization organizes ten days meditation courses, children meditation courses, teenager's courses, prisons courses, courses for executive, courses for old students through their network.

The Vippasana Movement is a modern tradition of Buddhist meditation practice. In India. Vippassana organization is worldwide who promotes Buddhist vippasana meditation in a modern and non-sectarian manner. Goenka's network of mediation centres offeres ten days retreats. Many institutions both government and private sector now conduct officer courses for their employees through vipassana. This form is mainly practiced by elite and middle class Indians. This movement has spread to many other countries in Europe, America and Asia.

4. Triratna Bouddha Maha Sangha:

Sangharakshita was a british Buddhist teacher and writer. He was a the founder of the Triratna Bouddh Maha Sangha in UK in 1967.Triratna Buddhist Community is an international fellowship of Buddhist and other who aspire to its path of mindfulness under the leadership of triratna Buddhist Order. Triratna Bouddha and Community is worldwide movement of people who try to engage with the Buddha's teachings in the conditions of the modern world. Buddhist centre running activities in 27 countries around the world. TBMS various branches situated in different places in India. But in Maharashtra's various branches is very active. They running various retreat centres and classes. They run a variety of activities to introduce people to meditation, as well as other courses and classes for there interested in exploring Buddhism. Through retreat centres, right livelihood context and going for refuse they are reaching the people in society. They promote Buddhism by Dhamma Chari and Dhamma Mitra.

These organizations have their own ideology. They spread and promote Buddhism to their own perspective. They don't have co-ordination regarding to Buddhism so people divert elsewhere. That kind of ideology emphasis the new dimensions of buddhism.

Because of these Ambedkarite peoples are changing their views and follows only his new buddhist ideology.

DIVERSION OF AMBEDKARITE FOLLOWERS

Dalit Buddhist Movement is most successful in the Indian states of Maharashtra, which saw large scale conversions. Ambedkar's 'Neo Buddhism' included a strong element of social and political protest against Hinduism and Indian caste system. All over the world Ambedkarite followers working in different govt. organizations and NGO who contributed to the societies to promote Buddhism. They contributed their time, knowledge, money and ideology of Ambedkar to establish equality, liberty, fraternity, casteless society and social justice for everyone. They worked for various aspect like social, educational, economics and religious reforms for society. Some Buddhist organizations are also working with others collaboration to promote Buddhism because their aims and objectives are same but organizationally they have their own ideology and they don't want to interfere in each other's ideology. This difference in ideologies of different organization and their member is leading to various interpretation of Dr. Ambedkars views which are at times deviated upon as per the organization's thinking. This leads to difference appearing in the follower's and society creating harmful groups. Because they cannot understand the proper meaning of the movement. Dr. Ambedkar gave the slogan 'Educate, Agitate and organize'. Peoples got education but they have not organized and not agitate for their rights and social problems. Some always wants to apart from the religious and social movement. Dr. Ambedkar says that yours earning's twentieth part should be spent for the welfare of society. Everyone knows the important of Ambedkar's ideology for the development of society but mentally they divert from such kind of issues. Everyone wants to get personal credit for their efforts because of this personal greed thus diversity mentally and physically from Ambedkarite follwers.

CONVERSION MOVEMENT

Dr. B.R.Ambedkar led thousands of dalits for a mass vow-taking of Buddhism in 1956 in Nagpur. While Buddhism attracted him as a teaching that was equalitarian, universalist and rationalist.

He dominates the revival of Buddhism in the land of its birth. His interpretation of the Dhamma is thus not to be ignored. It provides an important entry into the question of what Buddhism is, what its impact on past Indian society was, and what its role in a future, modernised Indian society could be.

Dr. Ambedkar gave new dimension to the conversion movement. Because of propagation of Buddhism, awareness is increasing day by day. Remote areas are now connected with urban areas and they think about their empowerment. Some Scheduled caste and scheduled tribe people are victims of upper class people so they want equality and opportunity in the society. Because of this situation now a days conversion programmes are increasing. A mass conversion programme was organized in Gujrat before a five years ago and one lac peoples took their vows. Couple of years ago on the land of Nagpur's Dikshabhumi twenty five thousand nomadic caste people converted into Buddhism. Now every year mass conversions are increasing. OBC in their thousands have been campaigning for years and are ready to convert to Buddhism. They already running a campaign from last ten years. Every year in India SC, ST and OBC conversion programmes are organized in different regions.

IMPACT ON POLITICAL PARTIES ON BUDDHISM

Politics play a major role in societies. Dr. Ambedkar says that social and political part is inter-related, without this we can't survive. In north India Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) is a main and third national party in India. The BSP primary focus is on the uplifting of nation's downtrodden groups. It self-proclaimed ideology is 'social transformation and economic emancipation of the bahujan samaj'. The bahujan samaj to them, includes the lower caste groups in India like the scheduled caste, scheduled tribe and other backward classes it also religious minorities'. They see these groups as having been victims of the 'manuvadi' system for millennia, a system which benefited upper caste hindus only. They hold B.R. Ambedkar as one of their key icons and ideological inspirations. They also believe in egalitarianism and hold a strong emphasis on social justice. Dalit intellectuals supported by dalits using local heroes, histories, myths and legends found a wealth of resources in the oral history of the religions of UP.

There are majority of scheduled caste people who followed the Dr. Ambdkar's Buddhism. Shakya, Kushwaha, Mourya these castes comes from downtrodden peoples.They are believes in Buddhism. Former CM Mayawati, in her political power supported the preservation of Buddhism. As CM she constructed statues of social reformers, parks and established institution and universities. She also changed names of cities and places to Buddhist perspective thus contributing to propagate of Buddhism in 21th century. In future of thus was very positive and strongly trend is changing and Buddhist culture is propagating.

Now dalit youngsters have come out in limelight and they want to change the social, economic, educational and political condition. Young dalit leadership is arising which believes in Buddhism and Dr. Ambedkar. This generation is very smart, aware and intellectual. In future they should get so many opportunities in every sector. This generation follows the Dr. Ambedkat's ideology and they believe in Buddhism. So in future shortly we will see the rising stars in the Ambedkarite followers. Slowly Buddhist practices and Symbolic change is a part of our life. It is giving new dimensions to the society and this cultural, social, political and educational changing trends are the fruits of Dr. Ambedkar's movement.

***

References

Sanghrakshita, (1987), *A Survey of Buddhism*, Triratna Granthmala, pg. no.36.

Omvedt Gail, (2003), *Buddhism In India*, Challenging Brahmanism and Caste, Sage Publication New Delhi, Thousand Oaks, London, pg. no. 3.

Dr. Ambedkar B.R, (1997), *The Buddha and His Dhamma*, What is Dhamma ,Part III, Buddhabhoomi Publication, Nagpur, pg. no. 227.

Ibid, What is Not Dhamma, Part IV, pg. no. 247

Ibid, What is Saddhamma, Part V, pg. no. 279

Dr. Ambedkar, B.R. (1992), Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writing and Speeches, Vol.11,pg. no.325

THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION OF THE NEO-BUDDHIST COMMUNITY AFTER CONVERSION IN MODERN INDIA: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO GAYA DISTRICT OF BIHAR STATE

by Ravi Shankar Singh*

Indian society is classified in a hierarchical social order. In many respects it is a closed system as compared to the open system of western societies. Stratification necessarily implies a graded scale of inequalities. The higher the stratification in society, the greater is the hierarchical inequalities in the social system. In such social system vertical mobility becomes very difficult. An individual bom in a lower stratum encounters heavy odds in the task of self-advancement. An individual's social status is fixed by his birth. The individuals who are socially higher in the stratum maintain their distance from those lower in the hierarchy. Added to social inequality is the practice of untouchability in the social system of Hindu society.

To emancipate themselves from the clutches of the practice of untouchability the scheduled castes initially started a religious movement under the leadership of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in 1956. The scheduled caste followers of Buddhism as mentioned earlier are called the "Neo-Buddhists". It means the followers of Neo-Buddhism were en masse converts following the footsteps of Dr.

*. Assistant Professor, Dr., Department of Buddhist Studies, Satyawati College, University of Delhi, New Delhi, India.

Ambedkar, who was the only one among the all belonging to his community to know for sure which religion he is embracing and why. The rest, a majority being illiterate, did not know the rational superiority of Buddhism as compared to their ancestral religion - Hinduism. At the time of Ambedkar's conversion to Buddhism a majority of the scheduled castes converted having a blind faith in the path of Buddhism and a blind faith in their leader, Dr. Ambedkar, who had informed them that Buddhism is the only way for their emancipation from the inhuman practice of untouchability.

It would not an exaggeration to say that Dr. Ambedkar and Neo-Buddhism are Synonymous. When Ambedkar returned from the USA he plunged into the activities for the alleviation of the entire untouchable communities as a whole and not just for his community, the Maharas. Therefore, his activities brought about the solidarity of all the untouchables from all over the country. After the Yeola Declaration, the outcastes were rechristened, Harijanas by Gandhiji in his effort to obliterate untouchablity. Under his guidance many out castes, especially, Babu Jagjivan Ram, the foremost among them, opted to remain within the Hindu fold. But one outcaste community, the Mahars to which Ambedkar belonged, was solidly behind him. He had sway over them. It was blind hero-worship. When Dr. Ambedkar finally decided to convert into Buddhism, only the illiterates of Mahar community were with him. Even among the Mahars, some of his own semi literate lieutenants tried to dissuade him from taking *Dikshā* on the scheduled day. But the mass conversion in 1956 was virtually a blind faith reposed in Dr. Ambedkar by the Mahars, without knowing any thing deeply about the religious tenants of Buddhism. Ambedkar was always said that Buddhism gave enormous satisfaction and pleasure unimaginable. He was advising his fellow Maharas to embrace Buddhism for social upliftment and for its spiritual satisfaction.

He always used to say that he did not want any blind followers. It means he did not like sheep mentality. For Dr. Ambedkar, Buddhism was the only religion, which did not recognise caste and affords full scope for progress. Renouncing Hinduism and following the path of the Buddha was the only hope for the scheduled castes. As

a result the vast majority of the Mahars who took the initiation, did so, because they had immense faith in their beloved leader.

The first converts at Nagpur mostly were untaught on the principal tenets of Buddhism. Therefore, we may state that unlike the first sermon of the Buddha at Saranath, when he convinced the five disciples by penetrative discourse, the first ever mass conversion was a childlike faith in Buddhism. This faith in Buddhism is the corollary of the unshakable faith in the leadership of Dr. Ambedkar. The faith was consequent to the struggle for self respect, social equality and justice which the untouchables had been fighting for from the past three decades under Dr. Ambedkar. The culmination of this struggle was in renouncing Hinduism and embracing Buddhism. The first batch of converts did not take long time to realise that it ensures human dignity. Embracing the path of the Buddha was the best they could do under the circumstances. That is why Ambedkar was eulogised by the outcastes in general and by the Maharas in particular. The second generation when grew up as Neo-Buddhists realised the wisdom of their parents.

These second generation of Neo-Buddhists are fairly well placed in life. By and large, Neo-Buddhism has shown the path to progress and prosperity. It is not a mere guide-post. It is a dynamic force which has not let the converts to remain idle. The dynamism inherent in Neo-Buddhism is rare in the sense that probably this is the first among religions to provide a comprehensive package of economic welfare, social progress and spiritual satisfaction which are its threefold objective. The post-Ambedkar period has seen this movement gathering momentum and spreading far and wide in modern India.

For these reasons the conversion to Buddhism is on the increase. The present generation is keen to embrace Buddhism. It is often noticed that the second generation of Neo-Buddhist especially are trying to persuade other scheduled caste people to become Neo-Buddhist. Social inequality and the pernicious system of untouchability are a part of Hinduism. The practice of untouchability is still prevailing in some villages even today, through which they are being exploited by upper caste Hindus. To avoid this mass conversion to Buddhism was started.

TRANSFORMATION AFTER CONVERSION

Dr. Ambedkar's conviction was that religion is an important foundation of human life. This is the conviction of all those who feel the need to have a religion as the purpose of their very existence. Deeply religious by nature, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar wanted to live within the realm of a religion, but it was to be a religion that would assure liberty, equality and justice for every adherent. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, along with millions of ex-untouchables was deeply frustrated by the evils of castism which existed for centuries within the frame work of Hinduism. In course of time this frustration successfully turned into a rebellion against Hinduism and ultimately conversion to Buddhism.

Buddhism has an element of flexibility which is not seen in any other religion. What we see in Neo-Buddhism is that one's spiritual satisfaction and bliss are as important as change in social status, economic prosperity, academic progress and political awareness. It is a total development of each individual. The main purpose of conversion to Buddhism was of course liberation from castism which is a part of Hinduism.

Neo-Buddhism was a means to overcome the problems of untouchability and social ostracism, gross exploitation and a degraded social status. Neo-Buddhism was seen as an antidote to this sad state of being consigned to the lowest strata forever. In this sense Neo-Buddhism is unique and perhaps unparalleled in the history of world religions. This was reason why Dr. Ambedkar chose this religion for the downtrodden.

Ambedkar's foremost concern was human dignity which had been denied to him even after returning from overseas with many degrees, relinquishing many good career offers that came his way; he fought for human dignity and honor, not only for himself but also for his fellow downtrodden people.

Within the frame of caste-ridden society, it was all along a struggle, it was a struggle to draw water from the common source, struggle for temple entry, struggle for equality in education and many others. Some could be secured, some not but whatever they secured was not without, struggle. As a result many deprived castes

of South India embraced Christianity only to get out of this rut. But Dr. B.R. Ambedkar embraced Buddhism along with millions of his fellowmen of his own caste as well as other sub scheduled castes. By becoming Buddhists they were within the framework of a religion. Theoretically speaking even if the ex-untouchables were to do menial work, it was with dignity and honour. The untouchables felt that conversion was as liberation from exploitation and the evil system of untouchability, from which they could be delivered, and to which they had been condemned for centuries.

Conversion to Buddhism brings about the inner change of a person from a low moral conduct an attempt to bring about the best. It is a social change for person from a low status to high status. Hence when the scheduled caste people or ex-untouchables became Buddhists, the social stigma attached or associated with their former castes was considered to be obliterated. With conversion the untouchables feel that they have achieved social equality in general and that along with it economic prosperity also takes place. It is felt that a change from a hereditary profession to one of choice of the individual takes place. If we find many scholars, engineers, doctors, businessmen and others today who due to their education are leading a better life as Neo-Buddhists. It is because the conversion of their parents has removed the stigma of untouchability.

The conversion to another religion may also bring about a political awareness. This is happening among Neo-Buddhists. While some of them have taken to politics as a vocation, the vast majority of them are politically conscious of their responsibilities as citizen. Some of them have opted to remain within the scheduled castes, so that they can contest the elections in the reserved constituencies. Now the rise of Bahujan Samaj Party (B.S.P.) under the leadership of Mr. Kanshi Ram bears testimony to this. Thus it may be mentioned here that Neo-Buddhism is not only a religious movement but also a political one. The Neo-Buddhists were the political achievements of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

The conversion to Buddhism has a tremendous impact on the scheduled castes, which has developed unity. They are trying to establish a casteless society on the principles of Buddhism. They are extremely proud of Buddhism and want to lead a dignified and

honorable life in the society. The Neo-Buddhists aspire to rid their inferiority complex, a new fresh identity and a newly acquired confidence. They have shed superstitions. There is new cultural and social renaissance which has transformed the youth.

So far as economic status is concerned there occurs only a gradual and a marginal change among Neo-Buddhists. At the same time the transition from blind faith to rationalism has given rise to an aspiration for education and knowledge among the Buddhists youth. Education holds the key to their economic progress. A change in cultural and social life also leads to economic betterment. Neo-Buddhism has created new outlook towards life. Increasing awareness towards education is observed among Neo-Buddhists. The Neo-Buddhists have achieved more in terms of self-respect, freedom from the bondage of rituals and raised their social status, because the principles of Buddhism help to lead good and better daily life. This has happened more in the case of the second generation Neo-Buddhists.

Thus the present study shows that due to conversion and the influence of Dr. Ambedkar and due to free movement without any fear and hesitation, it has made them they feel have achieved higher status than upper castes in general. However, it may be noted that even among upper castes there is no such pure equality, where there is discrimination in the form of economic equality. Among the same caste, class consciousness makes them to exploit one other. This is not observed among Neo-Buddhists. Thus a change in religion has made a deep impact on the Neo-Buddhists socially, culturally and economically with religion giving them a new identity. An attempt is made in this paper to discuss the data collected from the Neo-Buddhist respondents in respect of change experienced by them after conversion.

Table- 1: Opinion regarding changes in status after conversion

Sl.No.	Changes in the field of	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Economic	11	20.66
2.	Educational	14	28.00
3.	Social	16	32.66

4.	Political	09	18.66
	Grand total	50	100.00

Table.1. provides information pertaining to the change they feel has occurred in their status after conversion. The field in which more change has taken place is made clear through this table.

Conversion brings about a feeling of change in the life of the converted. Those converted to Buddhism attempt to bring about changes in their life. Prior to conversion the untouchables were an exploited class of people. It is this which made them to convert to achieve an equal status with the exploiting classes and castes of the society.

Among all respondents a majority of 16 (32.66%) respondents feel that their social status has changed enormously and that they are enjoying a higher status in the society than before. Buddhism seems to have liberated them from a feeling of chains and fetters. They feel that exploitation has come to an end. Even the women seemed to have got better social status. They are now opposing the way the untouchables were projected in the *vedas, sruitis, smritis, puranas* and other Hindu sacred books, and by the Hindu leader. The treatment given to untouchables was inhuman. Therefore to achieve social equality they embraced Buddhism inspired by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

Education was the monopoly of Brahmins in India. The non Brahmin was not allowed to receive any type of learning. Sanskrit was the language of Brahmins. But for the first time under the rule of the British the scheduled castes were allowed to be educated. As a result many non-Brahmin castes, including Dr. Ambedkar became educated. In the context of the present study, the data reveals that 14 (28.00%) Neo-Buddhist respondents opined that they are educationally better and this has help to achieve equal status in the society. The educational revolution among the majority of untouchables due reservation system has helped greatly to improve social status.

Economically the ex-untouchables are very poor even today. They are still engaged many unclean menial work and also work

as coolies on other's lands. Even today, they are working as bonded labors in many places of the country. There was *Balutedari* system, which means the performance of traditional duties by the different castes. Occupations were strictly hereditary. Free choice of occupation was prohibited. Most of the people were dependent on the big local landholders for work in agriculture. Sometimes they did it for cash, sometimes for a traditional gift of grain and sometimes for both. But today after conversion their economic conditions seems to have changed. The systems of bonded labor are almost declining, men and women of the Neo-Buddhists class and are engaged in different occupations which have provided them both economic stability and social dignity. Therefore the present study reveals that the economic conditions of Neo-Buddhists are on the increase. 11 (20.66%) respondents opined that they have achieved a better status in the society from the economic point of view.

Politically also the untouchables were kept away from administration. Political participation was a distant dream for them. But today after Independence and also due to reservation, policy making and political participation for all the people belonging to all the castes and religions has become a reality. The Neo-Buddhists are participation at all levels of politics from *Gram Panchayata* to Parliament. Therefore 09 (18.66%) respondents are of the opinion that they are now taking actual participation in politics. But filed data shows that some low caste political leaders are also working for others leaders as puppets in the hands of many local leaders and upper castes. Exploitation in political field seems to be prevailing in the study area.

Thus the present study shows that the Neo-Buddhists respondents are gradually improving their status in fields such as economic, educational, social and political view point. Hence it may be said that there are significant changes occurring in educational, economic, social and political fields of the Neo-Buddhists.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Change is the law of nature. Society with its potential aspects is changing. The only unchanging law of nature is "social change". So many factors held responsible to bring about change in every aspect

of society. In the present research study "conversion" studied as a means of bringing social and religious change in general and among scheduled caste Neo-Buddhists in particular. Almost all the Neo-Buddhists belong to scheduled castes. They were the downtrodden sections of the society and who suffered a lot in Indian history.

Dr. Ambedkar's conversion to Buddhism was for a purpose and intent. It was to provide a way to liberate himself and his people from the misery of untouchability and thereby bring about a social change. It was not for the liberation of just one individual but of a people seeking equality and self-respect.

Dr. Ambedkar believed that untouchability was boom out of the struggle between Buddhism and Brahmanism. According to him the untouchables were originally Buddhists and their untouchability was a punishment for taking up Buddhism. He called them 'Broken men' or those who were forced to live outside the village from the very beginning.

According to Ambedkar, in Hinduism inequality is a religious doctrine adopted and conscientiously preached as a sacred dogma. It is an official creed and nobody is ashamed to profess it openly. Inequality for the Hindus is a divinely prescribed way of life, as a religious doctrine and as a prescribed way of life. It has become incarnated in the Hindu society and is shaped and mounded by it in its thoughts and in its doings.

Religion has been always a very sensitive and delicate issue. Holy wars have been fought throughout the history of mankind in several parts of the world. The tendency to appreciate one's religion and denounce the religions of the others is always fraught with danger. Though all religions ultimately mean the same thing and act as agents of social control in practice different situations exist which make some join one religion as against the other. This happened in case of Dr. Ambedkar and his followers It is because the scheduled castes were a condemned people. They were arbitrarily assigned the lowest position in the Hindu caste system. They remained sunk in poverty, steeped in misery and had become totally defenseless.

The religion of Lord Buddha is an excellent expression of humanism and humanitarianism. That is why it has attracted a

large mass of people to tried the path as shown by the Enlightened. One who had always promoted the ideals of love, harmony and goodwill for enriching the human life without intolerance, injustice and exploitation? His philosophy is mainly concerned with the liberation of man from sufferings. The Buddhist religion is based on the ethical insight of man and at the same time is rooted in individuality oriented social system, which persists and endures on its own principles of compassion and brotherhood.

The Buddhist philosophy as a theory of humanism has no god, no immortal soul, no creation, and no last judgment like other theistic religions. Buddhist philosophy therefore has attracted the downtrodden. This has brought the process of conversion. Conversion has been viewed as a social political breakthrough after which the scheduled castes can make a business like beginning for their career as citizens of a free and secular India.

Buddhist humanism is of higher and qualitative type which consists of genuinely humane relations. It cultivates mutual respect between human beings. Buddhism constantly reminds the people to enter a new society based on the behalf that man is not fundamentally a material being, driven by the instincts of production and reproduction. This qualitative type of humanism combines respect, love for man and concern for his physical and spiritual welfare. It is another morphed religion. It is this quality that led Babasaheb Ambedkar to adopt it in preferred to Islam, Sikhism or Christianity. All these principles of humanism of Buddhism have made the scheduled caste people with their leader Dr. B.R. Ambedkar decided to embrace Buddhism.

The religion of Lord Buddha is a great social doctrine, which has to be understood in the context of man and society. Buddhist religion obviously puts forth a humanist social order in which the right relations between man and man play a significant role. Ambedkar was not against the existence of groups in society. He was against the exclusivism of groups. For Ambedkar religion had significance only in so far as it helped to establish a moral order characterized by equality freedom and fraternity. Hence he decided to embrace Buddhism, with his followers.

In 1936, he announced his resolve to abandon Hinduism. However after his announcement he did not immediately convert to Buddhism, He only repeated his resolve to leave Hinduism, but gave no indication of the faith to which he wished to embrace. Ambedkar was confident that conversion was the only means to redeem the untouchables. The conversion was as important to him as the *Swaraj*. There was possibility of the facilities to the untouchables being affected by the conversion. But Ambedkar also knew that the facilities were not of a permanent character. The real strength of the untouchables was in their social organization. He felt imperative to emphasis the social movement. Therefore, he opined that for untouchables the conversion was important for the sake of spiritual as well as material good. Moreover Ambedkar was careful in choosing only such a religion which had its origin in India, which appears derogatory to the concept of composite Indian culture.

Ambedkar made a formal declaration of the decision to embrace Buddhism in May 1950. The decision was not sudden because he had been reading works on Buddhism for many years. There is no doubt that Ambedkar was not thinking of conversion only for himself. He was conceiving of it as an act in which a substantial number of his followers would join him. The choice of Buddhism would mean the loss of any marginal gain might that have resulted from increasing the relative size of one of the existing minorities. At the same time, Ambedkar was equally certain that the adoption of Buddhism as their religion was likely to meet with the least opposition from the Hindu majority.

In September, 1950 Ambedkar made the first open plea to his people to embrace Buddhism as a way out of their sufferings and declared that he would devote the rest of his life to the revival and spread of Buddhism and ultimately embraced Buddhism on 14th October, 1956 with his millions of followers. At the same time Ambedkar preached twenty to vows for the Neo-Buddhists, which should follow them in his life. After that the process of conversion is on progress from day to day. The conversion ceremonies held in various place in between 1969-1972 and in 1990 more than 10 lakh *Harijans* embraced Buddhism in U.P., Bihar and other states.

The conversion to Buddhism bears tremendous impact on the

scheduled castes. It has united and developed a sense of oneness. They are trying to establish a casteless society on the principles of Buddhism they are extremely proud of Buddhism and they are attempting to lead a dignified and honorable life in the society. The neo-Buddhists have got rid of their inferiority complex by obtaining a fresh identity and a newly acquired confidence. They have completely shed superstitions. There is a new cultural and social renaissance which has transformed the youth. Only hard work, education and a rational approach would bring progress, they believe.

The conversion from one religion to another makes one to feel that something different from that the original religion has been achieved. To the downtrodden convert conversion is the only hope that society gives equal treatment, feel better and breath freely. The present study shows that the neo-Buddhists feel a sense of liberation from the bindings the castism. It gives them a sense satisfaction in their decision at a proper time. They feel that still there is new experience in future and would achieve still better statuses and positions in coming days. They are in the good mood about their future life, where the social, economic, cultural, political and religious circumstances are moving in a positive direction so far as the future life of the neo-Buddhists is concerned.

Conversion has brought about changes in the life of the people The changes have taken place in the social, educational, economic, political and religious fields. They are enjoying high social status. The higher education is more acquainted with them. Some have changed their occupations and engaged in other, which proved the economic achievement. Politically some neo-Buddhists are working as members of Gram Panchayats. Religiously speaking they have faith only in Buddha Jayanti and forgotten the old family gods and Goddesses. Hence the number of festivals is very less.

Thus the present study revealed that there are so many changes occurred so far as social and religious life of the Neo-Buddhists is concerned. By embracing Neo-Buddhism the downtrodden untouchables did and do reduce the sociological problems of India considerably, though it tends to lead to law and order problems, sometimes.

References

Ahir, D.C. *Buddhism in India after Dr. Ambedkar* (1956 - 2002). Delhi: Blumoon Books, 2003.

Ambedkar,B.R. *Anihilation of Caste*. Aligarh: Anand Sahitya Sadan, 1989.

Ambedkar, B.R. *The untouchables*.Bombay: Government of Maharashtra, 1990.

Ambedkar, B.R. *Writings and Speeches* (ed) Vasnat moon, Vol.7. Bombay : EdGM, 1990.

Anderson, J.N.D (ed)., *The world's Religion.* Michigan: Erdman's publication, 1968.

Bikshu, S. *A Survey of Buddhism.* Bangalore: Indian Institute of world culture, 1966.

Davids, R. T W. *Buddhist India.* Delhi: Low price publications, 2010.

Jaideva, P. *Dalits in Early Buddhism.* Delhi: Kalpaz Publications, 2002.

Darquhar, J.N. *Modern Religious movements in India.* Delhi: Low price publications, 1903.

Ghurye, G.S. C*aste and race in India.* Bombay: Popular prakashan, 1969.

Keer, D. *Dr. Ambedkar: Life and Mission.* Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1995.

Ramteke D.L. *Revival of Buddhism in Modern India*. New Delhi: Deep and Deep Publications, 1983.

Ramchandra and Sangh Mitra. *Dalits and Their Future.* New Delhi: Common Wealth Publication, 2003.

HISTORY OF BUDDHISM IN LADAKH AND ITS MONASTERIES

by Gurmet Dorjey*

Ladakh, situated in the Himalayas on the far northern frontier of India, is one of the coldest regions of the world. Ladakh has been known by many names: - Maryul, Moonland, Broken moon, La-dags and last Shangri-la. As suggested by its names it is not easily accessible, relatively being isolated among its mountains and often politically closed off particularly between October and June next year. During ancient times many nomadic tribes like mons and Dards migrated through Himalayan regions. It was during this time that the mons and Dards constructed many of the castles and patronized the artisans.

Although Leh, the capital, was at the crossroads of the Central Asian and Far East trade routes, the regional economy remained dominated by subsistence level agriculture. Traditional agricultural crops include barley, buckwheat, and peas, which were combined with animal husbandry, notably of Yak, Dzo, goats, and sheep. Basic requirements were endogenously produced self-sufficient village communities with trade providing a few luxuries such as tea. In addition to the peasantry, social strata included nobles, monks, merchants, and caravan mainly centered in Leh

According to the popular belief, Aśoka's missionaries are believed to have penetrated into Ladakh and propagated Buddhism in about 3rd century BCE and later Buddhism is said to have been firmly rooted in Ladakh[1] from 1st century CE Kaniṣka sent five hundred

*. Assistant Professor, Dr., School of Buddhist studies and Civilization Gautam Buddha University, Greater Noida, UP. India.

1. Nawang Tsering. *Buddhism in Ladakh*. Sterling. New Delhi. 1979, p-7.

Buddhist missionaries to Tibet and Ladakh for the propagation of the faith. Fa-Hien the Chinese pilgrim makes mention of the flourishing condition of the religion in Ladakh in 400 CE. According to him, the doctrine of Hīnayāna Hīnayāna form or lesser vehicle of Buddhism prevailed in Ladakh. However, Mahāyāna form of Buddhism was also introduced later. Lotsava Rinchen Zangpo was one of the great religious figures and translators. He was primarily responsible for the revival of Buddhism in Tibet and Ladakh. He is still remembered as the great founder of the Stūpas and monasteries both in Ladakh and the ancient kingdom of Guge.

Ladakh a Buddhist wonderful land, has preserved a glorious heritage apparently concealed among different forgotten monasteries, which are located in rugged mountainous valleys Monasteries served as an epicenter of Buddhist society where students used to get education and religious enlightenment. Besides these, monasteries served as repositories of the valuable records of antiquity. Religious fervor and a flawless dedication of the medieval northwestern Tibetan Kings was another factor, which fervently tried to nature Buddhism and ultimately paved the way for its proliferation. The chronicles also preserved treasures of antique manuscripts and works of high art quality like frescoes/ murals, sculptures and stuccos. Thus, a lot much can be associated with art as prevalent in Ladakh.

After the decline of Tibetan Empire, Tibet was divided among the three prince brothers in 1020 CE One of them moved to Ladakh and founded the first royal dynasty of Ladakh. When Tibetan Buddhism experienced a new height of popularity in the eastern neighboring kingdom of Guge, this rejuvenation affected Ladakh too. Its Temples, monasteries and the way the religion sharply pervaded the people's way of life, gave clear evidence of this phenomenon. In many cases, the old shrines of the earlier Bon religion were transformed into Buddhist monasteries. In the following centuries, Ladakhi kings extended the ruling territory. Lhanchen Utpala (1080 CE to 1110 CE) expanded his kingdom up to the realm of the related dynasties of Purang and Mustang (in present day Nepal). New importance was attached to the culture of the Ladakhi monks, when the reformed sect of Gelugpa created

by Tsongkhapa led to the establishment of monasteries in the 15th century. Family feuds ended by the beginning of the 15th century leading to division of the empire. Lhachen Bhagan unified Ladakh in 1470 CE and founded a new dynasty, called Namgyal. His successor was able to stand against an invasion from east Turkistan, but over the years Ladakh was to be plagued repeatedly by plundering, and ravaging Islamic armies. During the reign of powerful kings like Sengge Namgyal (1570 CE to 1620 CE) and Deldan Namgyal (1620 CE to 1660 CE) the empire was not only further extended, but also blossomed a new culture in Ladakh However, it came to an end when the fifth Dalai Lama of Tibet (Nawang Lobzang Gyatso 1617-82 CE) convinced the Mongolians, whom he had converted to Buddhism, to initiate a military campaign against West Tibet and Ladakh. Their king, Delegs Namgyal, turned to Kashmir for help. In the Battle of Basgo (CE 1685) the Tibetan Mongolian army was stopped. However, from then onwards Ladakh remained under the rule of the Islamic Empire of great Moguls. Its history remained unalterably tied with Moguls history of Jammu and Kashmir, but the country did not forfeit its Buddhist Tradition and even today despite being inhabited by Islam, Christianity, etc Ladakh is successfully exhibiting Buddhist culture with its fever and fragrance.

BUDDHISM IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

A number of early texts affirm that the emperor Aśoka himself had sent missionaries to Kashmir[2] (Gandhāra, 3rd century CE) and introduce here. The town of Srinagar itself is supposed to have been established by Aśoka[3], who is said to have built many Vihāras and Stūpas there. There is a strong probability that Asoka became instrumental in taking Buddhism.

In the book Rājatańgiṇī by Kalhaṇa on the history of Kashmir, religious endowments to Buddhists were attributed to king Kşemendra, Whose son Surendra erected the first Vihāras[4] in the second century BC. Kashmir is said to have had relations with Magadha and other Buddhist states of Gangetic India Since From an

2. *Ibid*. P-20.
3. *Ibid*. P-22.
4. Stein, M.A. *Kalhana's Rajatarangini*. Constable. London. 1900. P-17.

early date. One of Surendra's Vihāras was at Sauraka, near the Suru valley beyond the Zoji-la and hence on the doorstep of Zanskar. It was called Narendra Bhavana. Buddhism of this time would have resembled that of the contemporary Theravāda because it antedates the development of the Mahāyāna sects[5].

The earliest monuments in Zanskar date back to the Kuşāṇa period (1-2nd Centuries CE) Kaniṣka, the great Kuşāṇa emperor, ruled over northern India and central Asia during the first century CE. Kuşāṇa patronage of Buddhism made Gandhara, as this area of n was called, into a second Magadha. Francke, the great Moravian missionary and scholar[6] who visited Ladakh thrice in the year -1906, 1914,1926 CE found a Kharoşţhī inscription near Khalatse in Ladakh and rock carving in relief at Dras, Mulbhek and at Changspa near Leh as well as other sites. These testify to extensive Buddhist penetration into Ladakh in the 7th-10th centuries. At Kartse or Karche-Khar and in Suru valleys are huge monumental carvings of Maitreya over 25 feet high. A huge bronze statue had been erected by king Lalitāditya of Kashmir in his capital but the less affluent Buddhists of Ladakh apparently developed sculpture in stone, which has proven more resistant to time's ravages[7]. Such monumental sculpture in Kashmiri style is found only in western Ladakh. Groups or single figures of the Buddha's and Bodhisattva's of the early Mahāyāna carved on the stone in surface relief are also found within the whole Ladakh region at Chanspa, S Thiksey, S Padum, Stongde, Karsha and Mune testifying to the immense antiquity of these places of Buddhist worship. At Sani too is the famous Kanika Chorten (Stūpa) which may well belong to the earlier Kuşāṇa period[8]. To the north of Zanskar at Sumda[9], has recently located a Maitreya statue in wood, a remarkable survival

5. Ganhar, J.N. and Ganhar, P.N. *Buddhism in Kashmir and Ladakh*. Shri Ganhar, P.N. New Delhi. 1956. P-46.

6. Francke, A.H. *Antiquities of Indian Tibet, I and II*. Calcutta. 1914, 1926. P-65.

7. Fontwin, J. *A rock sculpture of Maitreya in the Suru valley, Ladakh*. Artibus Asiae-41. 1979. P-5-6.

8. Snellgrove , D.L. and Skorupski, T. *The Cultural Heritage of Ladakh, I and II*. Aris and Philips Warminster. 1980. P-142.

9. Maylon, T. *Chilling Reality*. Crafts. March, 1985.

probably of this period[10] carbon dated by Vohra as 8th century (Buddha wood relief of the mid 8th century on the Southern arteries of the silk route: archaeology before excavation.).

Although the only evidence rests with a few inscriptions and a number of impressive rock carvings, we can safely assume that Buddhism was established throughout Ladakh before the Tibetan influx began. We further observe, the influence of Kashmiri Buddhism continuing well beyond the time of their arrival. Additional evidence comes from the records of the great Chinese traveler Fa-Hien, who, in spite of some argument about the interpretation of his text, is generally believed to have visited Ladakh around 400CE and recorded two recognizable relics of the Buddha there[11] and a thousand monks in one of the monasteries possibly in Dras.[12]

EVOLUTION OF MAHĀVIHĀRAS OR GOMPAS

Mahāvihāras of India provided the organizational framework for the Gompas, which were suitably modified in Tibet keeping in view the local specifications, leading to a typological difference in the monastic organization during the period called the second diffusion of Buddhism when monasticism really took off. Large monasteries dealing with specialized functions like education, medicine, art, politics and above all managements of the economy, which was the base, necessitated formal organizations and subgroups within the Gompa's to perform these specialized functions. The collectivities of inmates within the Gompas were formally grouped according to procedures taken from the Vinaya and hierarchy of officials was created to render ritual services and other services. This was one of the important reasons for the laity to patronize the Gompa. Earlier studies have overlooked these points as their area of concentration was on the textual literature which did not take into account the contextual realities leading to such as a mistaken conclusion that

10. Maylon, T and Denwood P. *The oldest wooden statue in India*. New Scientist. 1986. P-34-35.

11. DREW, F. The Jammu and Kashmir territories, a geographical account Stanford: London. 1875.

12. Ganhar, J.N. and Ganhar, P.N. *Buddhism in Kashmir and Ladakh*. Shri Ganhar, P.N. New Delhi. 1956.

the Tibetans were people obsessed with mysticism. Vast areas of Ladakh were integrated socially and culturally by the Gompas which consciously perpetuated the great tradition in art, literature and religion providing the Ladakhi cultural area network. It can thus be summarized that the Gompa and the entire Ladakhi society should not be seen from a textual point of view only but also based on the typology of organizational structures. From this point, we come to know that, and the average Ladakhi was not a mystic but was very much mundane or worldly. In contrast to Theravāda, societies where we find forest monks who are total recluses from the society, in Tibtan Buddhism the majority of the people had pragmatic orientations and since the Gompa served as a rational instrument to implement these pragmatic day to day life needs and also as an instrument to implement what the Buddhist ideal prescribed. It became a major institution occupying a central role in the socio-religious and politico-economic life of Ladakh throughout the major part of Ladakhi history.

Further the Gompa should not be seen just as a religious institution for it performed many socio-cultural and politico economic functions as well and in the absence of any other institution of the state, it was the Gompa that emerged as the super ordinate institution.

Buddhism is basically a monastic religious faith and household life is somewhat a hurdle in the way of spiritual progress. There are references of a number of monastic establishments even during the life time of the Buddha. A monastery is indeed a dwelling place where recluses live with discipline engaging themselves in spiritual quests and practice. At the time of Asoka, monastic establishments had multiplied in a number and at places. Caves of Karle, Bhaja, Kanheri, Kondane, etc. in the western India; Tabo, Karja, etc. in the Himachal; Alchi, Lamayuru Spituk, Phayang, Thiksey, Hemis, Dhak-Thok, etc. in Ladakh regions came to the existence in the later centuries, which developed into educational as well as religion-cultural centers. These monasteries, particularly of Ladakh played significant role in disseminating Buddhist faith and values education among the local people. People established intimate relations with the recluses and in case of any confusion, disputes and such other

situations, sought valuable guidance and even interference of these masterminded monks to solve their problem. Within the mountain ramparts of the Leh valley stand some ancient yet active monastic establishments. Close observation of the living conditions evokes admiration for people who have learnt to live in tune with nature.

The word Gompa or a monastery is literally a combination of two words- Gom meaning Sunya or emptiness and Pa meaning Place. It is an embodiment of earthly seat of Buddha and other deities, which make up Buddhist pantheon. A monastery also houses sacred texts and objects- Kanjur, Tanjur, and banner paintings Thangkas. Monastic structures are generally built in isolation, away from settlements to provide solitude for the monks. The Gompa or the monasteries were and even today are Centers for intellectual and spiritual training of monks with the main function of education. The development of monasteries was prominent during 10th century onwards.

MONASTERIES IN LEH

Hemis Monastery

Location:	Approximately 47 km from Leh
Belongs To:	Dugpa Order
Founded By:	First incarnation of Stagsang Raspa Nawang Gyatso
Founded In:	1630 CE
Appeals:	Biggest and wealthiest monastery in Ladakh
Festivals:	Annual Hemis festival, Sacred Dance Festival

Hemis Monastery holds the distinction of being the biggest as well as the wealthiest monastery of Ladakh. It dates back to the year 1630 and was founded by the first incarnation of Stagsang Raspa Nawang Gyatso. Hemis Monastery is positioned inside a gorge, at a distance of approximately 47 kms from Leh. Belonging to the Dugpa Order, it stands on the western bank of the Indus River. The monastery also boasts of a very rich collection of ancient relics.

The array of items kept inside the monastery consist of a copper-gilt statue of the Lord Buddha, various gold and silver stupas, sacred thankas and several other exquisite objects. Situated slightly higher

than the Hemis Gompa of Leh Ladakh, is a sacred hermitage, founded by Gyalwa Kotsang. The meditation cave of Gyalwa, along with his footprints and handprints on the rock and sacred shrines, still bring back his memories of life.

The Hemis Monastery also serves as the venue of an annual festival, known as the Hemis Festival. This festival is celebrated as a commemoration of the birth anniversary of Guru Padmasambava. On the day of the Hemis Festival, the Thangka of the monastery is displayed, with a gap of twelve years between successive displays. The Thangka is the sacred appliqué-work tapestry wrought with pearls, which depicts Guru Padmasambava.

And not to be forgotten is a sacred mask dance that is performed at the monastery every year. The dance takes place on 9th and 10th day of the fifth month of the Tibetan calendar.

Matho Gompa

Location:	Approximately 26 km to the southeast of Leh
Belongs To:	Saskya Order
Founded By:	Lama Dugpa Dorje
Founded In:	16th Century
Highlights:	Four hundred years old Thankas
Festivals:	Matho Nagrang Festival

Lama Dugpa Dorje founded the Matho Gompa of Ladakh in the 16th century. It is situated on the opposite bank of the River Indus, at a distance of approximately 26 km to the southeast of Leh town. Matho is the only Gompa of Ladakh that belongs to the Saskya order of Tibetan Buddhism. The oracle of the monastery is a priest, who resides in the monastery itself. Also situated near the monastery, are a number of sacred shrines, of which one is dedicated to the guardian deities.

Matho Monastery of Leh Ladakh hosts the Matho Nagrang Festival, on an annual basis. The festival takes place on the 14th and 15th day of the first month of the Tibetan calendar. All the monks participate in the sacred dances, performed at this annual event. It is believed that, during Matho Nagrang Festival, two gods, known

as the Rongtsan, descend to visit the monastery. Matho Monastery also boasts of housing an amazingly rich collection of four hundred years old Thankas.

On the right side of the monastery courtyard, is the entrance to the Dukhang (the main assembly hall). Paintings of the Guardians of the Four Directions adorn the verandah of the Dukhang. Inside are two rows of seats for the lamas, along with a throne seat that is reserved for the Rimpoche, the head lama of Matho. There are four statues behind the throne seat, which of the thousand-armed Avalokiteśvara, Maitreya, Sakyamuni and a blessing Buddha. The entrance wall displays Mahakala, the fiercest Buddhist guardian divinity, on the left and other protecting deities, on the right.

Thiksey Gompa

Location:	Approximately 18 km from Leh
Belongs To:	Gelukpa Order
Founded By:	Spon Paldan Sherab, nephew of Sherab Zangpo
Founded In:	1430 AD
Highlights:	One of the most beautiful monasteries of Ladakh
Festivals:	Gustor Festival

Thiksey Gompa of Ladakh is situated at a distance of approximately 18 km from the town of Leh. One of the most beautiful monasteries of Ladakh, it belongs to the Gelukpa Order of Buddhism. Sherab Zangpo of Stod got the Thikse Monastery built for the first time, at Stakmo. However, later Spon Paldan Sherab, the nephew of Sherab Zangpo, reconstructed the monastery in the year 1430 AD. The new monastery was sited on a hilltop, to the north of Indus River.

Thikse Monastery of Leh Ladakh houses a temple, known as Lakhang Nyerma. This temple, built by Rinchen Zangpo, the Translator, is dedicated to Goddess Dorje Chenmo. A huge temple in its time, today it stands mostly in ruins. Apart from this temple, there are a number of other sacred shrines inside the monastery complex. The monastery also has a rich collection of numerous valuable artifacts and ancient relics.

Thiksey Gompa serves as the residence of approximately eighty monks. It has been served, for quite a long time, by the successive reincarnations of the Skyabsje Khanpo Rinpoche. The monastery also plays the host to Gustor ritual, organized from the 17th to 19th day of the ninth month of the Tibetan calendar. Sacred dances also form a part of this ritual, which takes place on an annual basis.

Spituk Gompa

Location:	Approximately 8 km from Leh
Belongs To:	Gelukpa Order
Founded By:	Od-de, the elder brother of Lha Lama Changchub Od
Founded In:	11th Century
Festivals:	Gustor Festival

Spituk Gompa of Ladakh dates back to the 11th century. It owes its inception to Od-de, the elder brother of Lha Lama Changchub Od. Od-de led to the establishment of a monastic community at this place. A three-chapel monastery, Spituk is located at a distance of approximately 8 km from the town of Leh. The name "Spituk", meaning exemplary, has been derived from a statement of a translator, Rinchen Zangpo, about the monastery. He said that an exemplary religious community would develop there, providing the name Spituk for the monastery.

At that point of time, the Spitok Monastery of Leh Ladakh was under the Kadampa School. Slowly and gradually, as time passed, the monastery started functioning under Dharmaraja Takspa Bum - Lde Lama Lhawang Lotus. He brought about the restoration of Spituk and introduced the stainless order of Tsongkhapa (Gelukpa). Even today, the monastery functions under the Gelukpa order only. Three other monasteries of Ladakh, namely Stok, Sankar and Saboo, are considered to be the branches of Spituk Gompa.

The incumbents serving in all these monasteries are the successive reincarnations of Skyabsje Bakula Rinpoche. The main image inside the Spitok Monastery is that of Lord Buddha. Along with that is a sacred image of Amitayus, about a finger high in length. Tsongkhapa, himself, presented this image, to Takspa

Bum-Lde. It also boasts of a rich collection of thankas, ancient masks, antique arms, etc. And not to be missed is an impressive image of Mahākāla.

The Dukhang (main temple) also has a high throne at its far end, reserved for the Dalai Lama. The door beside this central throne leads to dark old chapel. The central images inside the chapel are those of Tsong-kha-pa, his two chief disciples and of the Buddha. Spituk Gompa also plays the host to the Gustor Festival, held every year. The festival takes place from the 27th to 29th day in the eleventh month of the Tibetan calendar. A sacred dance also forms a part of the celebrations.

TAKTHOK MONASTERY

Location:	Sakti village, approximately 46 km to the west of Leh
Belongs To:	Nying-ma-pa sect of Buddhism
Founded In:	16th century CE
Festival:	15th day of 6 month Tibetan lunar calender

Takthok Monastery of Ladakh is situated in Sakti Village, at a distance of approximately 46 km from the town of Leh. The site where the monastery is now situated, once served as the meditation cave of Mahasidhas "Kunga Phuntsog". The name Takthok literally means 'rock-roof'. The monastery was so named, as both its roofs as well as walls are made up of rock. Tak Thok belongs to the Nying-ma-pa sect of Buddhism, also known as the Old Order, and serves as the residence of approximately 55 lamas.

It is the probably the only Gompa in Ladakh that follows this order. Every year a festival is held at the Tak Thok Gompa of Leh Ladakh, on the 9th and 10th day of the sixth month of the Tibetan calendar. Celebrations of the festival include sacred dances and the ceremony of hurling a votive offering. To the left of the central courtyard is the cave chapel of the monastery. Opposite the chapel are the images of Padme Sambhava and Avalokiteśvara. There is a small cave behind these images, believed to the place where Padme Sambhava lived and meditated for three years.

On the right of the central courtyard, lies the Dukhang or the main assembly hall. Murals of guardian divinities adorn the verandah entrance to the Dukhang. But, they are displayed only at the time of the annual festival of the monastery. There is a throne inside the Dukhang, reserved solely for the Dalai Lama. It is situated just opposite to the Dukhang entrance. The wall to the left of the throne stands decorated with the mural of Padmasambava, while the one on the right has a painting of Sakyamuni.

Also inside the Dukhang, are the statues of Maitreya, (the Future Buddha or Buddha of Compassion), Padmasambava and Dorje Takposal (a manifestation of Padmasambava). Takthok Monastery also houses the Kandshur, the 108 volumes of Buddha's teachings.

Stakna Gompa

Location:	Approximately 25 km from Leh
Belongs To:	Dugpa order
Founded By:	Chosje Jamyang Palkar
Founded In:	16th Century

Stakna Gompa of Ladakh is situated on the right bank of the Indus River, at a distance of approximately 25 km from the town of Leh. The name, 'Stakna' literally means 'tiger's nose'. The monastery was so named because it was built on a hill, which is shaped just like a tiger's nose. Stakna Monastery of Leh Ladakh owes its inception to Chosje Jamyang Palkar, the great scholar saint of Bhutan. It formed a part of the many religious estates offered by the Dharmaraja Jamyang Namgial to the saint, around 1580 CE.

The central image inside the monastery is that of the sacred Arya Avalokiteśvara from Kamrup (Assam). Stakna belongs to the Dugpa order and serves as the residence of approximately 30 monks. The successive reincarnations of the Stakna Tulku continue to serve as the incumbents of the monastery, preserving the teachings of the Dugpa order. Stakna Gompa also has a number of monasteries attached to it, namely Mud and Kharu and those of Stakrimo, Bardan and Sani in Zanskar.

On entering the central courtyard, one comes across the

Dukhang (main assembly hall). The head lama got seven feet high, silver gilted chorten erected inside the Dukhang, in the 1950s. The chorten comprises of a statue of the Buddha as well as numerous Buddhist texts. The left wall of the Dukhang is adorned with three new paintings, those of the Tsephakmad (a Buddhist deity), Sakyamni (the Historical Buddha) and Amchi (the Medical Buddha).

The wall opposite to the Dukhang entrance is also painted with three images, those of a Bodhisattva, Padma Sambhava (8th century Indian Buddhist scholar and translator of Buddhist texts into Tibetan) and Tshong-san-gompo (an early king of Tibet). To the right of the hall are the statues of Sakyamuni (Past Buddha), the Present Buddha and Maitreya (Future Buddha). And, the throne of the head lama of Stakna lies on the left side of the Dukhang

Phyang Gompa

Location:	Approximately 40 km to the west of Leh
Belongs To:	Red Cap Sect
Founded By:	Chosje Damma Kunga
Founded In:	1515
Festivals:	Gang-Sngon Tsedup festival and sacred dance festival

Phyang Monastery of Ladakh is situated at a distance of approximately 40 km to the west of the Leh town. It belongs to the Red Hat Sect of Buddhism. The site where the monastery now stands was once a part of the numerous monastic properties, offered during the time of Dharmaraja Jamyang Namgial to Chosje Damma Kunga. The hill of Phyang served as the venue of a monastery, known as Tashi Chozong, established in the year 1515. A monastic community was introduced to the monastery and with this started, the first establishment of the Digung teachings in Ladakh.

The traditions of the Digung teachings began with Skyoba Jigsten Gonbo. In the present time, the Phyang Gompa of Leh Ladakh is under Apchi Choski Dolma. The monastery is served by the successive reincarnation of Skyabje Toldan Rinpoche. There are a number of sacred shrines situated inside the monastery complex.

Also, there are some exquisite wall paintings, dating from the royal period, adorning the monastery.

Another attraction of Phyang Gompa is its 900 years old museum. Its rich collection boasts of numerous idols, thankas, Chinese, Tibetan and Mongolian firearms and weapons, etc. The festival of Gang-Sngon Tsedup is held every year from 17th day to 19th day of the first month of the Tibetan calendar. The monastery also serves as the venue of the sacred dances, held every year on the 2nd and 3rd of the 6th month of the Tibetan calendar.

Shey Gompa

Location:	15 km to the south of Leh
Founded By:	King Deldon Namgyal
Founded In:	17th Century
Highlights:	A huge image of the seated Buddha (the biggest metal statue in Ladakh)
Festivals:	Annual Festival in the First Tibetan Month

Shey Gompa of Ladakh is situated on a hillock, at a distance of approximately 15 km to the south of Leh town. The monastery was erected on the instructions of King Deldon Namgyal, in the memory of his late father, Singay Namgyal. The main image inside the Shey Monastery is that of Buddha Shalyamuni. It is a huge image of the seated Buddha and is considered to be the biggest metal statue and the second largest Buddha statue in the Ladakh region. Copper sheets, gilded with gold, make up this amazing Buddha Statue.

The image also contains sacrificial offerings such as grain, jewels, holy signs and mantras inside it. On both the sidewalls of the Buddha statue, are displayed the 16 Arhats (Worthy Ones who have achieved Nirvana), eight being on each side. The back wall of the statue is painted with the images of the two chief disciples of Buddha, namely Sariputra and Maudgalyayana. There is hardly any wall around the Buddha statue that A large bowl of wax with a central flame, symbolizing divinity and purity, is placed in front of the Buddha statue. This flame burns continuously for one year, before getting replaced. Some exquisite murals adorn the second story of the Shey Monastery of Leh

Ladakh. While, the lower story comprises of a large library and is decorated with murals depicting Buddha, with various types of hand gestures. An annual festival is also held at Shey Gompa, on the 30th day of the first month of the Tibetan calendar.

Chemrey Gompa

Location:	Approximately 40 km to the east of Leh
Belongs To:	Drugpa Order
Founded By:	Lama Tagsang Raschen
Founded In:	17th Century
Highlights:	One-story high image of Padmasambhava

Chemrey Gompa of Ladakh was founded by Lama Tagsang Raschen and dates back to the 17th century. Situated at a distance of approximately 40 km to the east of the town of Leh, this monastery belongs to the Drugpa Order. Infact, it serves as the residence of approximately 20 monks of the diminishing Drugpa community, and also their young apprentices. Chemrey Monastery of Leh Ladakh was initially built to serve as a memorial to King Sengge Namgyal. There are a number of shrines situated inside the monastery.

However, one of the major attractions of the Chemrey Gompa is the one-story high image of Padmasambhava it houses. Other than that, the monastery also boasts of a precious collection of scriptures, having title pages in silver and the text in gold letters. The successive reincarnations of Lama Tagsang Raschen have being serving as the incumbents of the Chemrey Gompa of Ladakh, since quite a long time.

The monastery also serves as the venue for the festival of sacred dances. The festival takes place, on an annual basis, on the 28th and 29th day of the 9th month of the Tibetan calendar. The dances, at this annual festival, are performed in association with the festival of an initiatory ritual.

Likir Gompa

Location:	Approximately 62 km to the west of Leh
Belongs To:	Yellow Hat Sect

Founded By:	Lama Duwang Chosje
Founded In:	1065
Attractions:	Votive offerings, Dosmochey

The name Likir means "The Naga - Encircled". The reason behind this naming of Likir Gompa of Ladakh is that it stands surrounded by the bodies of the two great serpent spirits, the Naga-rajas, Nanda and Taksako. The monastery is situated at a distance of approximately 62 km to the west of Leh town. Lhachen Gyalpo, the fifth king of Ladakh, offered the site where the monastery now stands, to Lama Duwang Chosje. The Lama, a great champion of meditation, blessed the site offered to him, after which the construction on the monastery was undertaken.

The Likir Monastery of Leh Ladakh was founded in the later half of the 11th century, around the year 1605. It belongs to the Yellow Hat Sect, founded by Tsongkhapa. It consists of a number of shrines inside its complex. Presently, it serves as the residence of approximately 120 Buddhist monks. The monastery also has a school, in which almost thirty students study. In the 15th century, Likir Gompa came under the influence of Lodos Sangphu. A disciple of Khasdubje, he made efforts to see that the monastery flourished and prospered.

From that time onwards and till today, the monastery continues to be under the Tsongkhapa order. The ritual of the three basic Pratimoksa disciplines, the basic Buddhist teachings, are observed at the Likir Monastery, even in the present times. The Gompa also serves as the venue of an annual event Dosmochey, the assembly of votive offerings. This event takes place from 27th day to 29th day of the 12th month of the Tibetan calendar. During Dosmochey, sacred dances are also performed at the monastery.

The Likir Gompa Ladakh has been served by the succeeding reincarnations of Naris Rinpoche, since quite a long time and continues to do so. The monastery also houses a protective deity, which stands inside, wearing a golden armor. There are two Dukhangs (assembly halls) inside the monastery, one of them relatively new. The older one is on the right of the central courtyard of the monastery and comprises of six rows of seats for the lamas.

Inside this Dukhang are the statues of Bodhisattva (Lord of All He Surveys), Amitabha (Buddha of the West), Sakyamuni (the Historical Buddha), Maitreya (the Future Buddha or Buddha of Compassion) and Tsong-kha-pa (Founder of the yellow-hat sect). After you exit from this Dukhang, you will see the new Dukhang, diagonally across from the courtyard's entrance. The main image in the new Dukhang is that of Avalokitesvara, with 1000 arms and 11 heads.

Rizong Gompa

Location:	Approximately 73 km from Leh
Belongs To:	Gelukpa Order
Founded By:	Lama Tsultim Nima
Founded In:	1831

The Rizong Gompa of Ladakh was founded by the great Lama Tsultim Nima in the year 1831. It belongs to the Gelukpa Order, and is situated at a distance of approximately 73 km from the Leh town. The monastery serves as the residence of approximately 40 monks. However, they have to follow some very strict rules. The inmates of the monastery are not permitted to have anything on their person, except for religious robes and books. Rizdong Monastery of Leh Ladakh consists of a number of shrines inside its complex.

The gompa also has quite a rich collection of the painting blocks of Lama Tsultim Nima's biography as well as a number of objects made and books composed by the first Sras Rinpoche. Serving as the incumbents of the Rizdong Monastery, are the successive reincarnations of Lama Tsultim Nima and his son, Sras Rinpoche. A nunnery, known as Chulichan (Chomoling) is located near the monastery, at a distance of approximately 2 km. comprising of about 20 nuns, the nunnery is under the control of the governing body of Rizong Monastery only. The nun, known as Chomos, worship at the temples of the monastery itself. They also perform a number of chores for the monastery like spinning wool, milking, extracting oil for the temple lamps, etc.

Lamayuru Monastery

Location:	Approximately 127 km to the west of Leh
Belongs To:	Red-Hat Sect of Buddhism
Founded By:	Mahasiddhacharya Naropa
Founded In:	11th Century
Appeals:	Largest and Oldest Gompa in Ladakh
Festivals:	Annual masked dance festival

Lamayuru Monastery is situated in Ladakh, in between Bodhkharbu and Kha-la-che, on a steep rock mountain. It lies at a distance of approximately 127 km to the west of Leh town. Lamayuru Monastery belongs to the Red-Hat sect of Buddhism and houses approximately 150 Buddhist monks. The monastery is made up of a number of shrines and also has a very rich collection of thankas and magnificent wall paintings. At the outset, the Lamayuru Monastery consisted of five buildings, out of which only the central one exists today.

Every year the Lamayuru Gompa plays host a masked dance, which takes place on the 17th and 18th day of the 5th month of Tibetan lunar calendar. The monks from the monasteries of the nearby areas also come to take part in the celebrations. There is an interesting legend associated with the Lamayuru Gompa of Leh Ladakh. It is said that the Lamayuru Valley used to be a clear lake, at the time of Sakyamuni (the Historical Buddha). And, nags (holy serpents) used to reside in the lake.

Bodhisattva Madhyantaka had once a prediction quite a long time back that the lake would eventually be dried, making way for the construction of a Buddhist monastery. The legend moves further to state that Mahasiddhacharya Naropa, an 11th century Indian Buddhist scholar, sat in meditation for a number of years in one of the caves in Dukhang. He was the one who caused a crack in the hillside surrounding the lake.

Through this crack, the lake started draining. When the lake dried out, the scholar found a dead lion lying inside it. On the same spot, where he found the tiger, he constructed the first temple of the area, known as the Singhe Ghang (Lion Mound). Another legend

has it that the building of Lamayuru Monastery was constructed, as per the instructions of King of Ladakh, under the direction of Rinchen Zangpo, the Translator. After this, the monastery came under the administration of the Zhwa-mar-pa (Red Hats).

Later, Dharmaraja Jamyang Namgial offered the monastery to Chosje Danma. And this led to the observance of the rituals of the Digung Kargyud School, with the monastery being renamed as Yungdrung Tharpaling. Today, the Lamayuru Monastery is served by the successive reincarnations of Skyabsje Toldan Rinpoche.

***



1. Monastic mask dance in Hemis Gompa



2. Little monks waiting for lunch to serve



5. Rock inscription of Mantra in Leh



6. Gompa Soma in Leh



7. A Monk fulfilling his vows of prostration



8. Monks performing monastic festival rituals



9. Tourists visiting Hemis Gompa



10. Monks praying in the Moring in Lingshed Gompa



11. Inside Du-khang of Spituk Gompa



12. Thiksey Gompa



13. Liker Gompa



14. Ridzong Gompa



17. A highly monk giving spiritual Healing



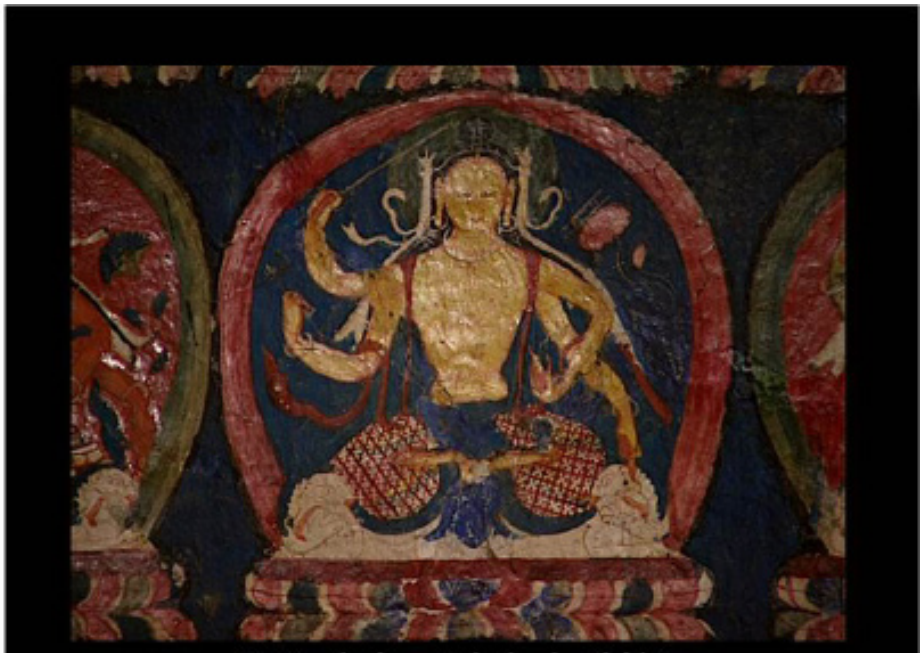
18. Entrance gate of Leh city



19. Hanle Gompa



20. Ladakhi Buddhists engaged in public sermon



21. Manjushree Painting in Alchi Gompa



22. A royal scene in Alchi Gompa



23. Likir monastic festival



24. The center Kitchen of Lingshed Gompa



25. Tse-mo Gompa in Leh



26. Phuktal Gompa in Zanskar



27. Phyang Gompa in Leh



28. A row of Chorten (Stupa) in Shey



33. Basgo Castle



34. Monks during monastic festival



35. Stucco Image of Avalokiteśvara in the Gon-Khang at Stong-de Gompa



36. Karsha Gompa in Zanskar



37. Maître Buddha in Liker Gompa



38. Seeking blessing of Tse-mo Gompa during Buddha Purnima



39. Alchi Gompa



40. Maitre Buddha of Basgo



41. Tingmosgang Gompa



42. Young monks studying in Lamayuru Gompa



43. Tourist visiting Chemday Gompa



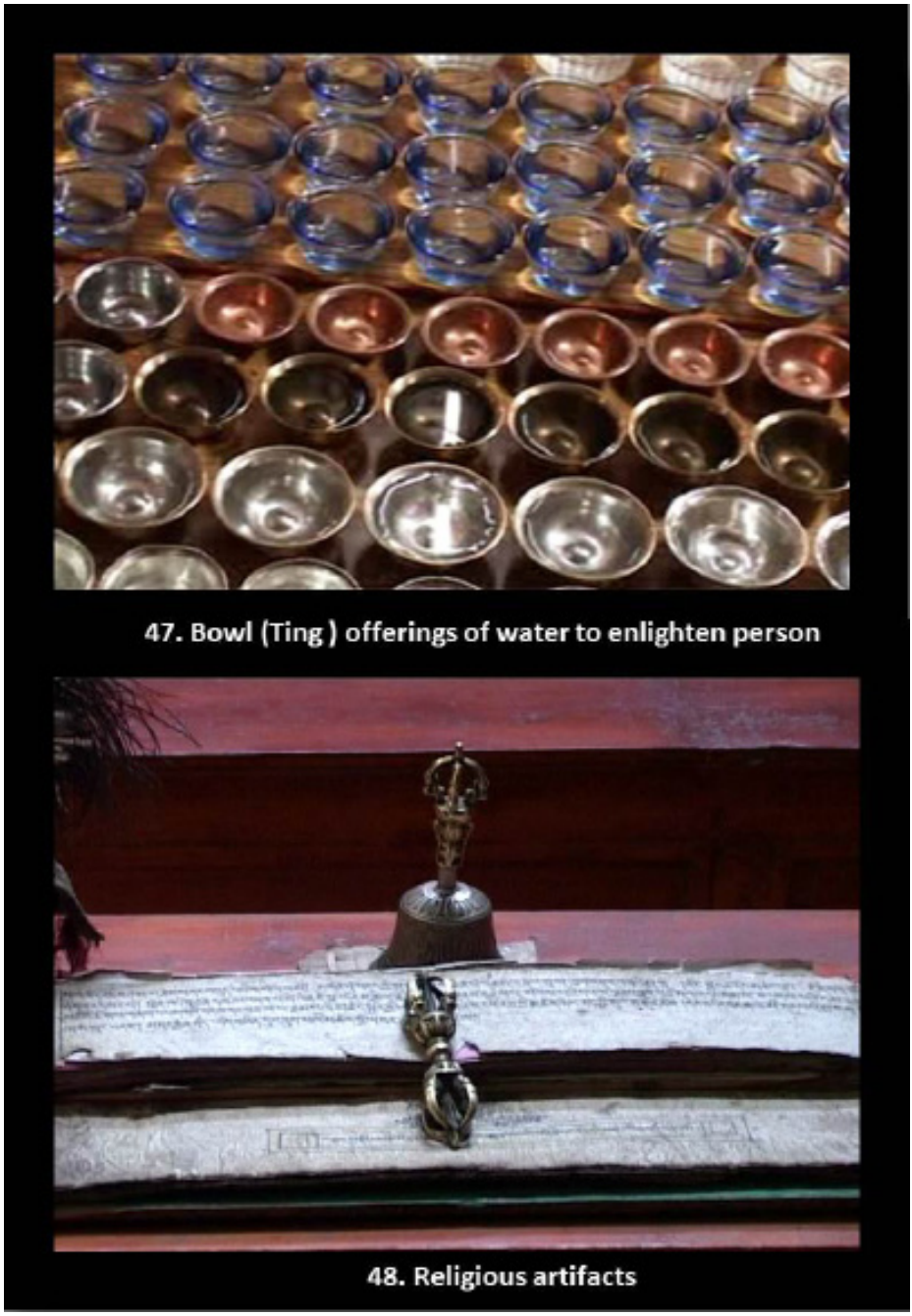
44. Museum of Liker Gompa



45. Artists painting a new shine in a Gompa



46. Butter Sculpture



47. Bowl (Ting) offerings of water to enlighten person

48. Religious artifacts



49. Statue of Maitre Buddha in Diskit, Nubra.

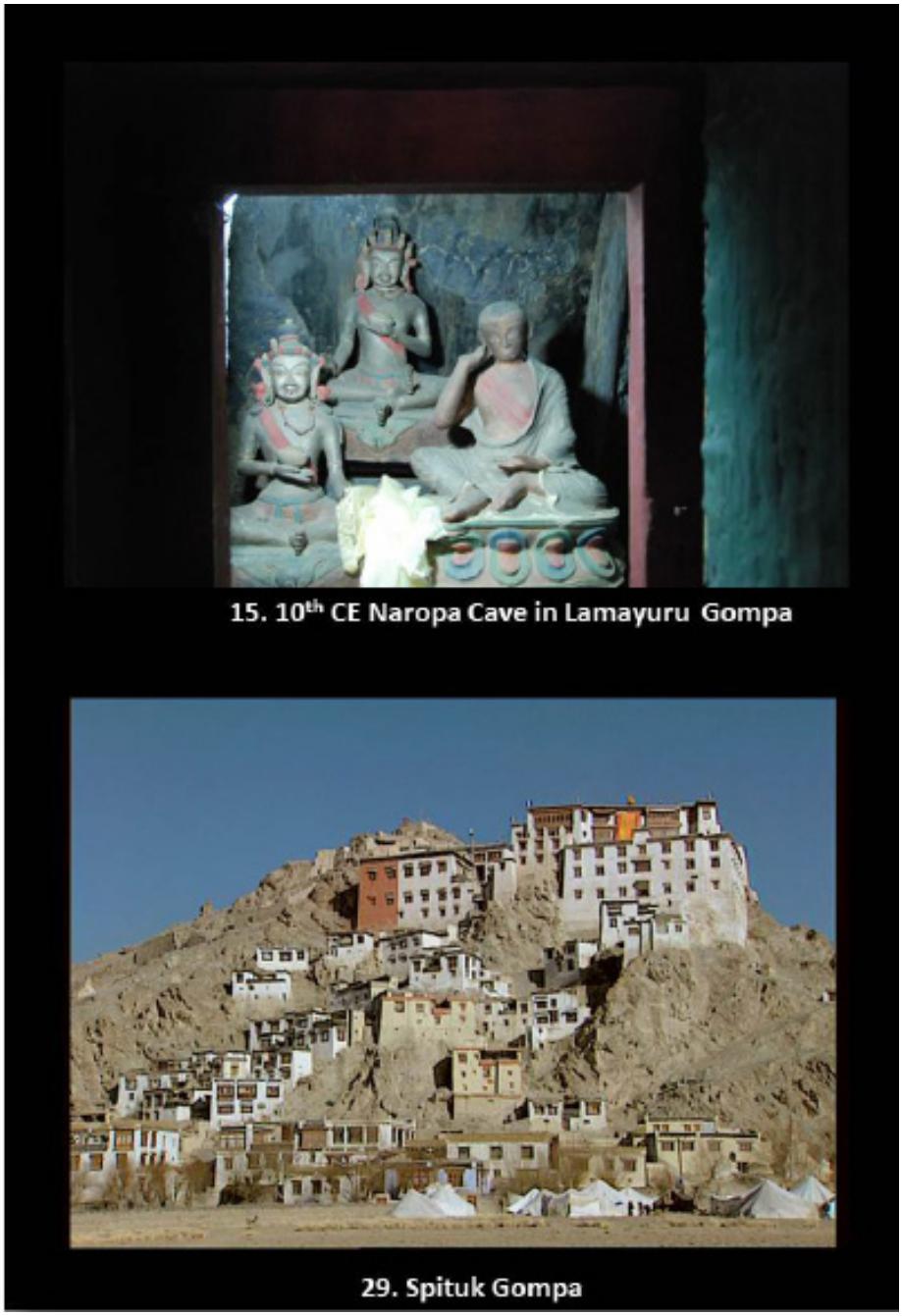


50. Butter Sculpture



51. Mass prostrations on eve of Gochak in Leh.

52. Lato (abode of Protectors) of Stakna Gompa



15. 10th CE Naropa Cave in Lamayuru Gompa

29. Spituk Gompa



31. Idol of Mahakala in Lamayuru Gompa



53. A small shrine of family in Phey village

INDONESIA

A LONG JOURNEY OF BUDDHISM IN INDONESIA

by Bhikkhu Asep Yusup Indaviriyo*

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a united nation of diverse culture, language, race, ethnic, religion, and custom. Indonesia is one of the countries with the highest level of cultural diversity in the world. It is the biggest island country in the world, consisting of the 17,504 Islands (Statistics Indonesia 2002-2016). The alternative name of Indonesia commonly is called the Nusantara (Archipelago) (Friend, 2003: 160). With a population of more than 258 million in the year 2016 (Team, 2013: 24). Indonesia is the fourth largest populated country in the world. There are1340 ethnic groups or tribes, more than 2500 native languages and six religions recognized by state viz. Islam, Christian, Catholic, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. Islam is the majority with more than 207 million people around 85.2% or 199,959,285 inhabitants, while the Buddhist population around 0,72 % of the total population. Although Islam became the majority, Indonesia is not an Islamic State based on the law on the teaching of the Islamic religion. Bahasa Indonesia (Indonesian language) is used as a national unifying language between languages of tribes. (Akhsan and Hendry, 2011: 5-6).

*. Graduate student, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

The entry of Buddhism in Indonesia is estimated to be around the beginning of the 2th-3th CE. In this essay briefly, it will be described the historical evidence of arriving Buddhism in the first time, its special characteristic, the heritage of the ancient Buddhist temples, and resurrection of Buddhism in Indonesia.

THE EARLY PERIOD ARRIVAL OF BUDDHISM

The trading relation between Indonesia, India as well as China, have been prolonged before the first century or at least the beginning period of the first century since the trade of sea route began to open (Editor Team, 2003: 261). In outline the history evidence entered Indian influence especially Buddhism, it can be divided into two parts as follow:

1. The Internal Historical evidence

The oldest evidence said that around 400 CE, in Kutai of East Kalimantan, in KotaBangun district had been found a large number of Buddha's statues in Gandhara style. In Kapuas basin of Mahakam and Rata found the Buddha's statue in Gupta style and the Buddha statue made of bronze found in Sempaga of South Sulawesi that was showing the style of Amarawati which flourished in the South of India since the first century (Poesponegoro, 2008: 35). The valuable records in the form of inscriptions such as Kedukan Bukit (683 CE) in Talang Tuo (684 CE) near Palembang, Telaga Batu, Kota Kapur (686 CE) and Karang Berahi inscription (686 CE) of Jambi clearly show there are the Buddhist Kingdoms near Palembang, one of them were the Kingdom of Srivijaya that have the characteristic of Mahayana tradition (Poesponegoro, 2008: 72-74).



Buddha statue of Kota Bangun



Buddha statue of Sempaga

2. The external reports

The arrival of Fa-Hien in 414 CE into Java Island on his journey back to China, after his visit to India for 6 years. He spent 5 months in Java and in his notes said that there are many Brahmanism followers that little bit different with the condition of life in India, but Buddhism is little and not interesting to be recorded (Encyclopedia of Buddhism Vol.V, 1990: 210). Because of the hard work of Bhikkhu Gunavarmanthe son of the king from Khasmir in 423 CE, Buddhism flourished in Java. (Encyclopedia of Buddhism Vol.V, 1990: 393-395).

After arrived I- Tsing (634-713) in 671 CE and 688- 695the Condition of Buddhism in Sumatera island began to expose. I-Tsing was coming twice to Srivijaya (Sribhoja), the capital of Srivijaya near Palembang. He said that he was sailing from China to Sriwijaya with the ship of Persian merchant. Next sailing to India with the ship of the king Srivijaya. In Sriwijaya before he went to India, he studied Sanskrit for 6 months. It shows that Sriwijaya is very important as the central to study Mahayana Buddhism at that time (Encyclopedia of Buddhism Vol.V, 1990: 606).

THE SPECIAL CHARACTERISTIC OF INDONESIAN BUDDHISM

1. The God Concept of Sang Hyang Ādi Buddha

The Concept of Ādi Buddha came from Bengal appeared in the fourth century and rapidly grown in the ten century. It was spread to Khasmir, Tibet, Nepal, Nalanda even Java island (Hazra,1986: 1-3). In fifth-century happened the close relation between

Indonesia with Bengal. In the seventh century, the Tantrayana Buddhist or Kalacakrayana flourished rapidly at Java. It, however, the genuine belief of Indonesian before the arriving of Buddhism was monotheistic that believed the eternal entity a God of Gods was called "Sanghyang".Then the term of Sanghyang Adi Buddha was used as the first and the highest Buddha or the source of Buddhas and it cannot be found in Pali Tipitaka, but only in the Sanghyang Kamahayanikan Mantrayana text was written in ancient Javanese language.

Indonesian Buddhists whether in the past even nowadays considered the Sanghyang Adi Buddha was the source of all Buddhas, source of survival of the Universe, the vitality to bring to the life of all sentient beings, the great, omniscient, omnipotent, and superpower. In his meditation state, he was caused the Universe formed with all its contents. He was the first Buddha, the everlasting Dharmakaya, without beginning, never-ending, formless and covering all universe, only can be understood by one who attain the Enlightenment (Sammasambuddha), Ādi Buddha has the names to show his power such as Paramadī Buddha (The first and unsurpassed Buddha), Ādi-Buddha (the beginning Buddha), Anadi-Buddha (unmade Buddha), Uru-Buddha (The Buddha of all directions), Adinatha (the first protector), Svayambhulokanatha (the protector of the world was who exist by itself), Vajradhara (the Vajra's holder), Vajrasattva (the Vajra's creature), Svayambhu (One who exist by itself), Jñānasattva (the intelligent creature), SanghyangAdwaya (nondualist). (Encyclopedia of Buddhism Vol.I, 1961-1965: 213-219)

His eternal holy light was the essence of Dhyani Buddhas or Pañca Manushi Buddha (The Human Buddha) viz. Vairocana (the source of light), Akhsobya (the source of silent), Ratnasambhava (the jewel of Universe), Amithaba (Unlimited light), and Amogasidhi (One who do not know darkness) (Lal hazra, 1986: 55-56)

2. The Syncretism Two Religion Siva-Buddha

Syncretism between Siwa-Buddha the first time occurred in the reign of the king Kertanegara (1268–-1292), the last king of Singosari. He was a follower of Siva-Buddha and he built several

syncretic temples between Siva-Buddha such as Candi Jawi in Pringen and Candi Singosari nearby Malang of Central Java. In Trowulan, he himself was worshiped as Jina Mahaksobya Buddha (Joko Dolok). It shows the Javanese always interested to the syncretism, on the other hand, it showed the high tolerance character, and also because the politic reason that is to strengthen the country to face the attack of foreign countries.



Candi Jawi



Candi Singosari

In the Majapahit era (1293 -1478), syncretism reached the highest culmination. Siva Siddhanta, Waisnawa and Sogatha (Buddhism) live together in harmony. The three are considered as the different forms of the same truth, Siwa and Buddha are similar, there are no one devotees of both religion get liberation if he separates that indeed one namely Siwa –Buddha (Mangka ng Jinatwa kalawan Śiwatatwa tunggal) Bhinnêka tunggal ika tan hana dharma mangrwa. They diversity in unity (Kakawin Sutasoma 139: 5). The stanza "Bhinnêka tunggal ika" was taken as the motto of the Republic of Indonesia. (Fortein with essays by R. Soekmono and Edi Sedyowati.,1990:49)

Up to now the syncretism still can be felt in Hindu ceremonies at Pura Besakih of Bali Island. It cannot be completed without the attendance of the Buddhist priest (Brahmana Buddha). The three priests such as Siva, Vaishnava, and Buddha must present to finish and make perfect the ceremony. Without the three of priests, the three realms (Triloka)that are Bhur (Human's realm), Bvah (Titans' realm), and Svah (Gods' realm) cannot be pure completely. This show

that the belief was "The Great Truth of Reality" in Hinduism and Buddhism did not differ. (Fortein with essays by R. Soekmono and Edi Sedyowati.,1990:73. Sanskrit English Dictionary, 2008: 460)

THE ANCIENT BUDDHIST CANDI IN INDONESIA

Candi derived from the term "Caṇḍikā" means a place to worship the Goddess Durga (Sanskrit English Dictionary, 2008: 383, Ariswara, 1992: 4). According to the Indonesian dictionary(Kamus Bahasa Indonesia, 2008: 255) mentioned that the meaning of Candi is the ancient shrine made from stone to store the king's ash who have died. Actually, Borobudur is not really a temple in the meaning of Candi, because it has the form of Stupa as a symbol of Buddhist's sacred building. While a Candi is a Hindu building. But later the term of Candi adopted to become Indonesian vocabulary which means "The sacred building" regardless of who uses it, therefore the term Candi used both Hindus and Buddhist's sacred temple. There are so many temples in the main island such as Sumatera, and Java both Hindu and Buddhist temple, more than 300 rediscovered temples but here will be explained briefly several of famous Buddhist temples.

Candi Borobudur

Candi Borobudur located in Magelang regency of Central Java. In Negarakertagama text (1365 CE) mentioned about Budur a sacred monument of Vajradhara or Vajrayana Buddhism. Soekmono added that according to J.G. de Casparis the German archaeologist (1995: 58), in Sri Kahulunan inscription (842 M)said that the name of Borobudur derived from the term "Kawulani Bhumi Sambhara or Bhumisambharabhudara (Micsic, 1990: 23) means the hill of heap virtues ten stages of Bodhisattva. The historians considered that this temple began to build approximately in 780 CE and finished in 830 CE for fifty years, in the reign of the king Samaratungga of Sailendra dynasty. The architect of this great temple named Gunadharma, but there is no information reported about him. In 950 CE, The Candi Borobudur was buried by the eruption lava of Merapi Mountain and rediscovered at least one thousand years later exactly in 1814 CE by Sir Thomas Stamford Bingley Raffles (1811-1816) in the England colonization era.



Candi Borobudur



Jaladvara of Candi Borobudur

Candi Borobudur established on the hill of Menoreh which was not flat. This temple constructed from andesite stone as much as 47,500 m^3 arranged without adhesive and the surface of stone have been coated by 'Vajralepa'[1]. Borobudur has the form of a multilevel pyramid with the upstairs in four side direction. The upstairs equipped with the gate that carved by beautiful Kala and Makara[2] without a lower jaw on the top and bottom of the doorstep. In some corner of the temple, there are Jaladwara.[3]As Mandala, Borobudur was a symbol of Universe and replica of Meru Mountain (Fortein, with essays by R. Soekmono and Edi Sedyowati,1990:32, Rawson,1967: 208). It has no room for worshiping or prayer because this temple built for pilgrimage and education of the Buddha's teaching. This is called the Buddhist sacred book that was carved on the rocks.

1. Vajralepa is the plaster indestructible as Diamond. It has a yellow color, especially used to keep the reliefs from corrosive and all building structure generally.

2. Kala is a decoration of candy symbolization of time and death which has the form of the open giant's mouth without a jaw. It located on the top of the entrance of the temple. Makara was defected as a combination of two kind animals, in frontage looks like elephant or crocodile and on posterior as fish or dragon. It located under the entrance of stair of the temple.

3. Jaladwara is part of a temple which has functioned as a drainage system. In Hindus mythology, Jaladwara has defected as an underwater mystical creature which has fang and tusk.



Kala



Makara

In the beginning whole of the building has high around 42 meters but after renovation it only 34, 5 m. The foot of the temple-shaped Mandala in large 123 x 123 m. The whole of the building consists of 10 floors. The first until the seventh floor has the form of a square, while the eighth till the tenth floor has the form of a circle. The wall decorated with around1460 reliefs, each relief as wide as 2 m (Ariswara,1992: 4). A large number of Buddha's statues included which was broken around 504 (Fortein with essays by R. Soekmono and Edi Sedyowati.,1990: 72). They were depicted the Buddha in various postures (Ariswara, 1992: 19)

1. In the Eastern direction, Dhyani Buddha Aksobhya statue sat in across legged position by the gesture of touching to the Earth as a witness (*Bhumiparsya-mudra*).

2. In the South direction, the Dhyani Buddha Ratnasambhava statue sits in a cross-legged position by the gesture of boon-granting (*Varada-mudra*).



Aksobhya Buddha



Ratnasambhava Buddha

3. In the West direction, the Dhyani Buddha Amitabha statue sits in a cross-legged position by the gesture of meditation (*Dhyana-mudra*).

4. In the North direction, the Dhyani Buddha Amogasidhi statue sits in a cross-legged position by the gesture of unafraid of danger (*Abhaya-mudra*).



Amitabha Buddha



Amogasidi Buddha

5. In the Center of the top, this temple the Dhyani Buddha Vairocana statue sits in across legged position by the gesture of giving a lesson (Dharmacakra-mudra or Vitarka-mudra).



Vairocana Buddha



Arupadhatu's Borobudur

Borobudur is a symbol of three stages of human life. The foot of the temple in the first stage was called the world of lust and desire (Kamadhatu). On the temple's wall, there are 160 reliefs of Karmavibhanga (Ariswara, 1992: 9). Now only reliefs in the Southeast of the temple still could be seen, most of them were closed by andesite stone that purposely made for kept them from the slide. The second stage was called as the realm of form (Rupadhatu). In this stage, the human still was bonded by worldly life but began

trying to control desire and lust. On the top wall of the first floor was decorated with a relief of the Lalitavistara's story (Encyclopedia of Buddhism Vol.VI, 1996-2002): 278-282, Nanayakkara, 2016: .309-317). It told the Buddha's story since descend of the Tusita heaven to the human's world, the first sermon at the deer park near Benares, and attains Enlightenment. In the first and second floor of the corridor was decorated by Jatakamala and Avadana's relief (Encyclopedia of Buddhism Vol. II, 1966: 395-398). The wall on the second, third, and fourth floor was decorated by the relief of Gandavyuha text (Encyclopedia of Buddhism Vol. V,1990: 291-293) that told about Sudhana in his attempt to search knowledge and truth. He met Gandavyuha and taught him how to reaches perfection in life (Ariswara, 1992*:* 9-15).

The roof of the temple consisted of three stages called the formless world (Arupadhatu). In this stage, the human released from desire and lust. The roof is in three levels has the form of Stupas in three multilevel circles that each of them contain the Buddha's statues. In the first level of the circle, there are 32 stupas, 24 and 16 stupas in the second and third level respectively. In the second level, the stupas' holes have the form of diamond. The diamond symbolized of lust to be left. While in the third level the stupas have the form of a square (Micsic, 1999: 13). The square was a symbol of desire and lust which have vanished un-remain. At the top of building erected the mother stupa which is very big, liability contained the Buddha's relic, but until now could not be found its existence.

Candi Mendut

Candi Mendut located in Mendut village, Mungkid district, Magelang regency of Central Java. It located around 3 km from Candi Borobudur (Encyclopedia of Buddhism, Vol.III: 1971: 636-638). It estimated to have a close relation with Candi Pawonand Candi Borobudur. Three of them located in one of the straight lines of the North and South. According to historians, Candi Mendut was built by the king Indra the first king of Wangsa Sailendra in 824 CE. That assumption based on the content of Karang Tengah inscription. It mentioned that the king Indra has built the sacred building named Veluvana means the Grove of Bamboo. Estimated

that the old of Candi Mendut elder more than Borobudur. The main function of this temple as the place to worship Dharmadhatu (Ariswara.,1992: 26). This temple the first time rediscovered in 1836. The Most part of the building has been found except the roof and it high around 26,4 m.



Candi Mendut



Candi Pawon

The wall of temple decorated with 31 panels contained various relief's story, beautiful flowers, and the several parts a long of the building there are Jaladvara and decorated with 48 small stupas. On the top of the building not remaining anything, so could not be known its original shape. The surrounding of the wall of the temple decorated with the Bodhisattva's stories and the Kuwera or Avataka's reliefs (Encyclopedia of Buddhism Vol.VI, 1996-2002: 265-268)carved in the North wall and Hariti's reliefs in the South wall. (pic 18-19) (Encyclopedia of Buddhism,Vol.V, 1990: .411-413)



Kuvera's relief of Mendut



Hariti's relief of Mendut

In the South wall, there are Avalokitesvara or Padmapani's relief (Nanayakkara, 2016: 242-256). He sits in the Lotus throne

(Padmasana) under the Kalpataru tree. In the left and right side of him was flanked by the Goddess Tara (Murthy, 1989: 43, Nanayakkara, 2016: 276) and a woman sits in the Padmasana. In the North side of the wall carved the relief portrayed the Goddess Tara sit in the Padmasana and flanked by two men. In the West of the wall in the North of the entrance, there is Sarvanivarana-viskhambi Bodhisattva's relief (Nanayakkara, 2016: 274-276). He was portrayed in the standing posture under the umbrella and wears the royal cloth.

In the main room of the temple, there are three statues. In the middle part, the Sakyamuni Buddha in Dharmacakra gesture was flanked by Avalokitesvara in the South and Vajrapani in the North. Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva as a symbol of compassion (Maitri Karuna). He portrayed in sitting posture with the left foot was folded, the right foot was dangling down and the right foot sole on the top of little lotus. Vajrapani is the protector of Dharma (*Dharmapala*), some of the scholars argue that it was Manjusri Bodhisattva as a symbol of Wisdom (*Paññña*) who sits in Simhakarna-mudra posture, similar with the Vitarka-mudra but his fingers closed. The three statues equipped by divine light (Prabha) around their head (Ariswara, 1992: 26).



Sakyamuni Buddha



Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva



Vajrapani / Manjusri Bodhisattva

Another example Buddhism Candis in Central of Java



Candi Prambanan



Candi Sewu

Buddhism Candis in West of Java



Candi Jiwa



Candi Balandongan

Buddhism Candis in Sumatera island



Candi MuaraTakus



Candi Mahligai

THE RESURRECTION OF INDONESIAN BUDDHISM

Re-Introduction Buddhism by Ven. Narada Thera of Sri Lanka

On March 4th, 1934, Bhikkhu Narada was put his feet for the first time on Tanjung Priok's harbor of North Jakarta. He was the first Sri Lankan monk of Theravada sect who came to Indonesia after five hundred years disappear of Buddhism. He visited Indonesia fifteen times and the last came in Mei 1983 in his 85 old. His services are very great and benefit for a flourish of Buddhism through delivering Buddha's teaching and established several Buddhist organization in Java (Editors team. 2003: 327-334)

Since that time, many Indonesian people interested to study Buddhism and became monks such as Bhikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita (The Po An), Bhikkhu Jinapiya, Bhikkhu Thitaketuko, Bhikkhu Girirakkhito, etc. Especially Bhikkhu Ashin Jinarakhita, he is the first Theravada monk who ordained in Burma and the pioneer of establishing Indonesian Buddhist communities. In 1978, Mahayana's monks established Sangha Mahayana Indonesia chaired by Bhikkhu Dharmasagaro. Vajrayana or Tantrayana sect of Indonesia was pioneered by Romo Giriputre Soemarsono and Romo Dharmesvara Oke Diputhera. It was established in 1953 with name Tantrayana Kasogatan or Sugata (Editor team, 2003: .335-340)and on October 23rd1976 Sangha Theravada Indonesia established in Vihara Maha Dhammaloka (now Vihara Tanah Putih) of Semarang (Sangha Theravada Indonesia 2019)



Pagoda Avalokitesvara- Semarang



TantrayanaKasogatan's Vihara- Jakarta



Vihara Tanah Putih– Semarang



Buddha's Altar in Vihara Tanah Putih

Interesting to be known, in Indonesia, there is a religious group which combines three different teaching that is Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism, it is called Tridharma (Sam Kaw). It was established by Kwee Tek Hoay at Jakarta in 1920. (Tridharma 2019)



KlentengTridharma



Three Prophets' Altar

CONCLUSION

The land of Nusantara that fertile and prosperous was endowed with resources overflowed, riches culture, and its civilization. Searching for the truth in a long period of time, created a faith deeply rooted in the tradition and Indonesian view of life. Began from worship to the natural phenomena, the ancestor's spirits, and finally understood that there is an absolute thing beyond everything. When Buddhism arrives not made them throw away the custom and forget the existing of original religious of the ancestors, but combined them beautifully and elegance. This confirmed with the establishment of the great sacred building such as Buddhist temple and Hindu as well as witnesses the history of greatness and glory of the Dhamma in the ancient time.

The Buddha's teaching existed around one thousand five hundred years in Indonesia. So that the contribution and its influence is very powerful in the life of Indonesian society. Buddhist art created luxurious religious monuments such as Candis, or Viharas which were can be seen nowadays. In the sculpture created the beautiful reliefs as education material and model for the society. Likewise the artistic literature such as Sanghyang Kamahayanikan, Sutasoma, Kunjarakarna, and the other sacred religious literature.

The lack of patronage, support, and protection the kings to Buddhism caused the Sangha as the keep of Dhamma cannot sustain the existence of the Buddhasasana. In addition, the Islamization quickly from the Wali Sanga (the nine Islamic saints), caused the Sangha in desperation position and became the small groups. The nineteenth century was the resurrection of Buddhism (*Buddhajayanti*) in Indonesia. Although now Buddhism was not Majority even only a minority in this country. The spirit of Dhamma had been soldering strongly in the feeling, mind, and soul native. Deep-rooted in all aspect and Philosophy of life of Indonesian society.

Bibliography

Primary sources

Ariswara. (1992) *Temples of Java*. Jakarta: PT. Intermasa.

Editor team. (2003) *MateriKuliah Sejarah Perkembangan Agama Buddha* (The material lecture history of the development of Buddhism). Jakarta: CV. Dewi Kayana Abadi.

Fortein, Jan, with essays by R. Soekmono and Edi Sedyowati. (1990) *The sculpture of Indonesia*. Washington: the National Gallery of Art.

Friend, T, (2003) *Indonesian Destinies*. London: Harvard University Press.

Lal hazra, Kanal. (1986) *The Ādi Buddha*. Delhi: B.R. Publishing Corporation.

Micsic, John. (1990) *Borobudur Golden Temple of the Buddhas*. Singapore: Periplus Editions.

Micsic, John. 1999) *The Mysteries of Borobudur*. Singapore: Periplus Editions.

Murthy, K.Krishna.(1989)*Sculptures of Vajrayāna Buddhism*. India: Classics India Publications.

Naim, Akhsan and Hendry. (2011), *Kewarganegaraan, SukuBangsa, Agama, dan Bahasa Sehari-hariPenduduk Indonesia* (Nationality, Tribe, Religion and colloquial Language of Indonesia), Jakarta : Badan Pusat Statistik

Nanayakkara, Sanath. (2016) *Buddhist Philosophy, History and Culture : Selected Essays of SanathNanayakkara*. Colombo: S.Godage Brother (Pvt) Ltd.

Poesponegore, MarwatiDjoened. (2008) *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia: Zaman Kuno* (The National History of Indonesia: The ancient Era). Jakarta: Balai Pustaka.

Rawson, Philip. (1967) *The Art of Southeast Asia*. London: The Thames and Hudson Ltd.

Soekmono, R.(1995)*The Javanese candi: function and meaning,*

Leiden: Tuta sub Aegide Pallas.

Team. (2013) *ProyeksiPenduduk Indonesia 2016-2035* (Indonesia Population Projection). Jakarta : Badan Pusat Statistik (Statistics of Indonesia).

Dictionary and encyclopedia

Compiler team. (2008) *Kamus Bahasa Indonesia* / Candi-Indonesian Dictionary. Jakarta: Pusat Bahasa Departemen Pendidikan Nasional.

Echols, John M.; Shadily, Hassan. (1989) *Kamus Indonesia-Inggris* / Nusantara -An Indonesian-English Dictionary.(3rd ed). Jakarta: Gramedia.

Malalasekera. (1971). Candi Kalasan – Goddess Tārā. *Encyclopedia of Buddhism* Vol. III. Srilanka: Published by the Government of Srilanka.

Malalasekera. (1961-1965). ĀdiBuddha.*Encyclopedia of Buddhism* Vol. I. Ceylon: Published by the Government of Ceylon.

Malalasekera. (1966). Avadāna. *Encyclopedia of Buddhism* Vol. II. Srilanka: Published by the Government of Srilanka.

Malalasekera. (1990). Fa-Hsien.*Encyclopedia of Buddhism* Vol. V. Srilanka: Published by the Government of Srilanka.

Malalasekera. (1996-2002). Kuvera.*Encyclopedia of Buddhism* Vol. VI. Srilanka: Published by the Government of Srilanka.

Williams, Monier. (2008). Caṇḍi. *A Sanskrit English Dictionary*. Chennai: Asian Educational Services

Internet sources

http://www.sanghatheravadaindonesia.or.id. Accessed on February 8, 2019, at 21.30 pm.

https://www.bps.go.id/luas (Statistics Indonesia-Area and number of islands according to province 2002-2016), Accessed on January 29, 2019, at 20:30 pm.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three_teachings. Accessed on February 11, 2019, at 00.00 am.

INTER-RACE, RELIGION AND CULTURAL TOLERANCE: THE SPREAD OF BUDDHISM BY TJONG FAMILY IN MEDAN, NORTH SUMATRA, INDONESIA

by Erond Litno Damanik*

ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe and understand inter-racial, cultural and religious tolerance by Chang Hung Nan or Tjong Yiauw Hian or better known as Tjong A. Fie (1860-1921) in Medan, North Sumatra, Indonesia. In the plantation era (1863) until now, Medan was a pluralistic and multicultural city. This city is called miniature Indonesia. In this city there are 16 ethnic groups that reflect cultural heterogeneity, namely Malay, Karo, Simalungun, Mandailing, Angkola, Pakpak, Toba, Aceh, Minangkabau, Java, Banjar, Ambon, Arabic, India, Japan, China and Europeans like the Netherlands, Belgium, United States, United Kingdom, Germany, Switzerland, Poland and Czech. In addition, there are different religions such as Islam, Methodists, Protestants, Catholics, Hindus, Buddhists, Confucians and Pemena namely the original Karo ethnic religion. Tjong is a Buddhist, originally from China and plays a prominent role in Medan. Various titles were given to him such as businessmen, leaders, billionaires, and philanthropists. His attention to each ethnic and religious group was demonstrated through donations for the construction of worship facilities (churches, mosques, and temples), education, health, housing, and other public facilities. He banned human slavery on plantations, banned human-

*. Senior Lecturer, Department of Anthropology, Faculty of Social Sciences, Universitas Negeri Medan, North Sumatera, Indonesia.

drawn rickshaws, or suggested using the Malay language at the Medan City of Council meeting. Tjong is a pioneer of inter-racial, religious and cultural tolerance in Medan. This study was carried out qualitatively with a historical approach. Data is collected through colonial archives such as notes, reports, and photographs. In addition, in-depth interviews were conducted with the Tjong family in Medan. The data are analyzed with an in-depth description. The findings of the study are: (i) tolerance is a virtue that has a core inter-racial, religious and cultural peace that comes from practice and life success, (ii) the success of life becomes a source of philanthropic attitudes to help others regardless of racial, religious and cultural differences (iii) Tjong is the first public figure in Medan to appreciate and develop tolerance.

1. INTRODUCTION

Based on statistics, Buddhism in North Sumatra Province reached 2.82% of the total population of 14,102,911 people (BPS, 2016). While 65.45% are Islam, 26, 62% Protestant, 4.78% Catholic, 0.19% Hindu and 0.14% other. The number of places of worship reached 21,933 Mosques and *Mushalla,* 12,209 Protestant Churches, 1,848 Catholic Churches, 323 Buddhist temples, 61 Hindu temples, 11 Confucianism monasteries (Harahap, 2018). In addition to these officially recognized of worship in Indonesia, there is 4 *Malim* religious worship in North Sumatra. Buddhism in North Sumatra was spread by ethnic Chinese. However, not all Chinese ethnicity is Buddhist. Some have embraced Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, and Confucianism (Lubis, 1999, 2011). In general, the spread of Buddhism in North Sumatra has been recorded since the era of Dutch Colonial Plantation in 1863 (Tan, 2004; Hamdani, 2013). However, traces of Buddhist civilization have been found since the 12th century AD in the Kota Cina site, Medan Marelan. The traces of Buddhist civilization is the discovery of stone sculptures (McKinnon, 1984, 1996).

This gap occurs because there is no record of Buddhism in Medan since the 12th century until the era of colonial plantations. Even if some ethnographical writings are found, the article only mentions Chinese exploration and trade (Groeneveldt, 1964; Huan, 1970; Wibowo, 1999). Today, the Chinese population in Medan is widely studied not about religion but rather economic and cultural

disparities (Lubis, 1995, 2012; Agustrisno, 2007). This problem permeates the national scale in the context of ethnicity and politics (Afif, 1999; Suryadinata, 2002, 2005; Coppel, 2003; Suparlan, 2003). However, archaeological findings explain that the influence of Buddhism in the 12th century had entered North Sumatra. In the 16th Century developed Islam according to the discovery of gravestones in the *Kota Rentang* site (McKinnon, 2012). In the Dutch colonial era, the Catholic and Protestant religions developed in Medan (Perret, 2009).

The impact of colonization in Medan City does not only appear from heterogeneous religions. However, the pre-colonial homogeneous society turned into a heterogeneous society in the colonial era. A number of Asian migrants such as Arabic, India, Japan, and China are present in Medan. Indonesian local immigrants such as Simalungun, Toba, Mandailing, Angkola, Aceh, Java, Banjar, Minangkabau, Ambon are present in Medan. A small but dominating number of politics and economics are Europeans such as the Netherlands, Belgium, Poland, Switzerland, Japan, the United States, Britain, Germany and the Czech Republic (Stoler, 1985; Pelzer, 1988; Breman, 1989). This situation changes Medan to become a pluralistic and multicultural city. The city is a miniature according to race, religious and cultural diversity in Indonesia.

When viewed from a residential aspect, colonial politics reflects ethnic polarization through the formation of ethnic villages (Pelly, 2013). The city was from the beginning set out as a modern town with parks, a villa quarter for the Europeans and separate areas for the indigenous, Chinese and Indian populations (Buiskool, 2009a). While from the aspect of employment, indigenous people are employed on plantations, Indians as transporters and Chinese as foremen, wood craftsmen, and traders. After the arrival of Chang Hung Nan or Tjong Yiauw or Tjong A. Fie hereinafter referred to as Tjong (figure 1), the colonial political constellation began to change. The tolerance embryo was developed by Tjong since getting a solid social position. The success of Tjong's life is an entrepreneur, billionaire, member of *Gemeenteraad* (council of the city), and member of *Cultureraad* (council of cultures). By these two positions, Tjong became a Chinese Major in 1911 replacing his

brother, Tjong Yong Hian.

The success of life pushed Tjong to be honored in Deli. Not only by the Sultan of Deli but also the by Colonial Government. Through the success of life, Tjong dedicated his life to virtue. Tjong donated his wealth to help poor people, build worship facilities, and public facilities. Tjong became the main philanthropist and was very popular in Medan. Through its social and political position, Tjong made it easy for ethnic groups to establish and receive donations for the construction of houses of worship. Every ethnic group has the freedom to develop its cultural expression. Tjong made a donation at the Toba and Karo Cultural Exhibition in *Batavia* (Jakarta) in 1919. This situation only happened when Tjong, a Buddhist and Chinese migrant had a strategic economic and political position. In other words, the embryo of acculturation between races, religions, and cultures only took place in Medan since the late 19th century. This acculturation was closely related to the presence of the Dutch Government which gave economic and political positions to the Malay Sultan (Milner, 1977) and Tjong.



Fig. 1 Tjong A Fie, 1911. Source: Col.Tropenmuseum, TMnr 10018656

Tjong, the legendary Chinese merchant in *Tanah Melayu Deli* (Deli Malay land) as a benefactor and his success embraces the whole heterogeneous society. The kindness of Tjong famous until the whole of North Sumatra without distinguishing tribe, religion, and race (Harahap, 2018). Tjong is different from a number of Chinese figures in Medan. Although he is a Buddhist, he has an

understanding of differences in race, religion, and culture. That understanding made Tjong also create an atmosphere of mutual support, mutual trust, mutual respect and coexistence between different religious groups, races, and cultures. The emergence of Tjong with a strategic economic and political position facilitated acculturation. This acculturation is very important to create integration, harmony or coexistence in the plural and multicultural society in Medan. In the colonial era, Tjong was an embryo of racial, religious and cultural tolerance in the city of Medan.

This study was compiled to describe and understand the contribution of Tjong to spread inter-racial, religious and cultural tolerance in a pluralistic society. This explanation simultaneously leads to the spread of Buddhism in the city of Medan. Although indirect, the spread could be traced in the 12th Century in the *Kota Cina* site, Medan Marelan, long before the period of colonialism. This period was used as an initial description of Buddhist civilization in the city of Medan. However, the period studied in this text is the era of Dutch colonialism which became the beginning of the creation of plural and multicultural society. The main description that wants to be built in the development of racial, religious and cultural tolerance in a pluralistic society which began in Tjong. Therefore, the scope of the study focused on the role of Tjong to create tolerance for pluralistic and multicultural communities in Medan. The approach used is a historical perspective supported by colonial archives and recent studies of tolerance in the city of Medan.

2. THE TRACES OF BUDDHIST CIVILIZATION IN MEDAN, NORTH SUMATRA

The spread of Buddhism only occurred after the fall of *Srivijaya* (7-11 AD) in Palembang in the late 12th century (Coedes, 1918; Wolters, 1970; Bronson, 1974). In that century, trade interactions were formed between the coast and the interior of northern Sumatra (McKinnon, 2009; Perret, 2009). This statement was confirmed by the discovery of archaeological evidence in the form of 2 stone sculptures on the *Kota Cina* site (Hallewijn, 1876; Krom, 1914; Miksic, 1979; McKinnon, 1984; Perret, 2013). The first reference to record this evidence of archeological discovery is Anderson in 1823 (Anderson, 1971). In 1914, the Archaeological Service of

the Netherlands recorded the name of this region is '*Kota Tjina'* (city of China) which refers to findings originating from China. The discovery of the Buddha statue (figure 2 and 3 below) is still complete (base, 43 cm x 38 cm; h. 86 cm), made of white granite and seated Buddha image, wearing a robe, hand gesture describing '*dhyānamudrā's,* right hand placed on the palm of the left hand.



Fig. 2 and 3 Buddha sculpture from Kota Cina, Medan. Source: (Setyawati, 1981)

The second Buddha statue was found incomplete (figure 3). The head was damaged and not found (base, 67 cm x 32 cm; h., 62 cm), made of black granite, depicted as seated Buddha image, wearing a robe, '*dhyānamudrā's'* hand attitude. The robe layer dangles from the front left shoulder to the abdomen. The traces of Chinese trade are found in various historical sites in North Sumatra such as *Benteng Putri Hijau* (Damanik, 2012). All of these archaeological discoveries reinforce the assumption on two things: (i) since the 12th century there has been trading contact between natives and foreign traders namely China and India, and (ii) findings in the form of statue fragments and temples allow a fortified settlement occupied by Chinese (Soedewo, 2011). Note from Anderson in 1823, that natives in Medan at that time were Malay and '*Carraw'* or '*Karau-karau'* or Karo (Anderson, 1971). This archaeological finding proves that the influence of Buddhism in the 12th century has entered North Sumatra. In the 16th century, Islam developed in North Sumatra. The assumptions are based on gravestone findings in the *Kota Rentang* site (McKinnon, 2012). In the Dutch colonial era, the Catholic and Protestant religions developed in Medan.

3. OVERSEAS TO DELI: A BRIEF SUCCESS STORY

The opening of Tobacco plantations in Deli (East Sumatra) in 1863 had an impact on the import of *coolies* from Java, India, and China (Reid., 1970; Heidhues, 2003). Jacob Nienhuys, the pioneer of Deli tobacco plantations, imported labor from outside North Sumatra since 1869. The success of tobacco plantations became a major attraction of migration to Deli. Not only in the plantation sector but a large number of Chinese workers are also employed in oil mining in Langkat, trade, the informal sector and *'Panglong'* in Medan (Chinese word: *pang* is board and *long* means warehouse). Chinese workers are known to be a skilled craftsman, so much is needed to build houses, offices, warehouses and public facilities in the Dutch colonial era (Erman, 2017). In the period 1870-1933, a total of 300,000 Chinese workers were present in Deli (Reid., 1970; Buiskool, 2009a).

One of the migrants from China who migrated to Deli was Tjong (1860-1921). Tjong is a *Hakka* from May Hsien, Guangdong, China. Tjong was 20 years old when he arrived in Deli in 1880. He followed his brother, Tjong Yong Hian who had already migrated to Deli in 1875 (Bruin, 1918; Bool, 1930). While in Deli, Tjong was known as a businessman, billionaire, leader, and philanthropist. Based on colonial records, Tjong donated a lot of money to build schools, temples, churches, mosques, hospitals or other public facilities. In Deli, Tjong owns plantations, factories, housing, hospitals, pharmacies, banks, and social foundations. Not only in Deli, but Tjong also has businesses in Minangkabau, Singapore, Malaysia and China (Huan, 1964; Chang, 1981; Nim, 1993). The entire business was controlled from his large and majestic house in *Kesawan* (China town) in the city of Medan.

In 1885-1890, Tjong formed a business partnership with The Big Five Hokkien Families on Penang Island (Wong, 2007). Through its social foundations, social activities are carried out to help fellow communities in the city of Medan. Donations made without regard to race, religion, and culture. Tjong founded a rubber plantation, *Sie Boelan* in 1906. Tjong was known as the first Non-European to own plantations and employ Europeans in his company (Chang, 1981; Buiskool, 1999). This fact made Tjong the first Chinese to own a plantation in Deli. Tjong is known to be active in resisting

penal sanction, which means that it is not allowed to leave the plantation during the contract period, which made them virtual slaves. In spite of his criticism, Tjong was highly appreciated by the Dutch Government. This was mainly because of his philanthropic activities.

The influence of especially Tjong can hardly be overestimated. Around the turn of the century owned, according to several sources, about 75% of the real estate of the fast-growing city of Medan and practically the whole new build city of Tebing Tinggi. Hotels and from 1906 was the first Chinese on Sumatra who owned plantations. Tjong served as Chinese officers, official representatives of the Chinese in Deli. The Dutch government appointed officers, the rank of lieutenant to major, selected from successful individuals who enjoyed respect and status in their community. Tjong managed to create a fortune in real estate, hotels, banks, plantations, palm oil, and sugar factories and even their own railroad line in South China (Buiskool, 2009a).

In 1911, his brother Tjong Yong Hian was passed away. His position as the Major of China was immediately replaced by Tjong while continuing to do social work. Many educational institutions managed by Christians, Muslims, and Chinese themselves receive great attention. In fact, the development of the Methodist School is one of his contributions (Huan, 1964). Many other contributions made by Tjong can be seen not only in various temples, mosques, and churches. The construction of the *Kwan Im* temples in Labuhandeli (Siagian, 2017) in 1885 (figure 4 below) or *Setia Budhi* monastery was contributed by Tjong to Buddhists in Medan. This building became the first temples in the city of Medan that Buddhism used to worship. Tjong also contributed to the construction of the *Shri Mariamman* Grand Temple, built 1884 and located in *Kampung Madras* (Madras village) (figure 5 below). This temple was built for Hindus in Medan. Until now, the building still stands in Medan which is adjacent to the *Khalsa* School, a Hindu school in the Dutch colonial era.



Fig. 4 Kwan Im temple at Labuhandeli, Medan 1890. Source: kitlv.nl

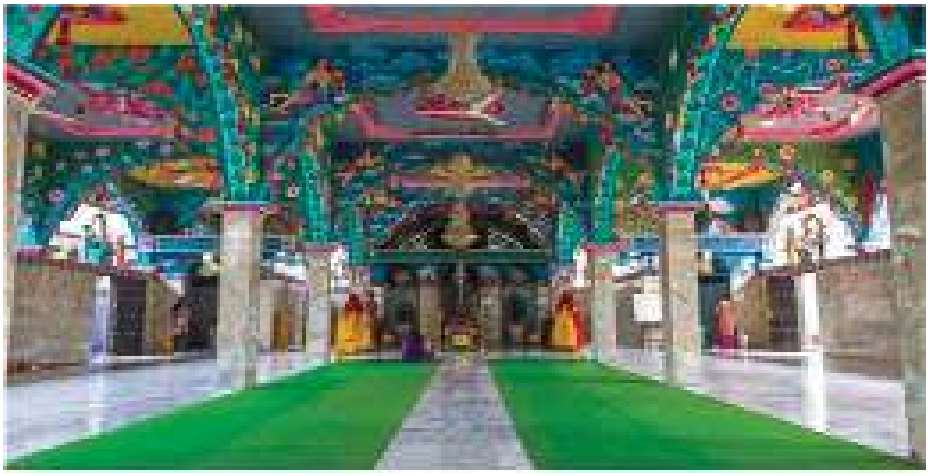


Fig. 5 Interior of Hindu Shri Mariamman temple at Medan, 2018. Source: Privat doc. by Erond L. Damanik

Tjong also donated to the construction and renovation of the Catholic Church on *Jalan* (street) Pemuda Medan (figure 6 below). The architect of this building is J.M. Hans Groenewegen, a popular architect from the Netherlands. The same donation was given to the construction of the Protestant church on *Jalan* (streets) Sugiapranata. Both of these buildings became houses of worship for Protestants and Catholics in Medan. Until now, these two buildings still stand majestically in the city of Medan.



Fig. 6 Immaculate Conception of the Cathedral of Medan, 2019
Source: Privat doc. by Erond L. Damanik

In addition, Tjong also donated the construction of the *Almashoem* Grand Mosque (figure 7 below) and *Gang Bengkok* Mosque. The *Almashoem* Grand Mosque was built in 1906. Both mosques are places of worship for Islam. The construction cost of 75 percent comes from Tjong. He also assisted in the construction of the *Maimoon* Palace, the Deli Malay Sultanate Palace. Both of these buildings still stand majestically in the city of Medan. In honor of his generosity, in *Kek Lok* Temple located in *Ayer Itam*, Penang, stands with the magnificent statue of Tjong (Harahap, 2018).



Fig. 7 Almashoem Grand Mosque, Medan 1915. Source: kitlv.nl

Various public facilities development shows the contribution of Tjong in Medan. The construction of the Bridge of Virtue that connects Madras Village (little India town) with *Jalan* (street) Gajah Mada. The entire cost of building this bridge comes from

Tjong. This bridge was built in 1916. Other donations were donations of the Clock Tower in the Medan Mayor's office, the construction of a railway line in China or public facilities in Malaysia showing the philanthropic of Tjong. He also helped finance the construction of a special Leprosy Hospital on the island of Sicanang, owned pharmacies, housing or assistance to the poor. Because of his generosity, the Sultan of Deli proposed it to the Colonial Government to become a member of the city of councils and the council of cultures.

After Tjong Yong Hian was edited in 1911, Tjong succeeded his brother as major and thus became the leading representative of the Chinese on Sumatra's east coast. Together with the appointment as Chinese officers came commercial privileges. They were involved in supplying plantations and mediated in the recruitment of coolies from China. It was not long before they became the official suppliers of crucial products as sugar and opium. Until 1918, the Dutch government sold a monopoly to the highest bidder, mostly to rich Chinese traders. Tjong acquired the opium monopoly and made a fortune (Damanik, 2018). As the Chinese officers of the Tjong knew in advance the city planning of Medan, the adjacent land and built rows of houses in Chinese-European style. In 1886 Tjong built a meat market, a year later in 1887 a fish market and in 1906 a vegetable market (Buiskool, 2009b) and went to the foundation Tjie On Djie Jan. In collaboration with uncle Tio Tiauw Siat and where he had intense contacts with Singapore and Penang (Buiskool, 2009b).

The biggest undertaking with uncle Tio Tiauw Siat has been the Swatow railway in South China. Long before the revenue farm system on Tjong has already acquired plantations. In 1908 Tjong bought his first plantation, in 1919 he owned almost twenty estates. For the administration of estates, Tjong employed the Dutch Dolf Kamerlingh Onnes. After Tio Tiauw Siat's death in 1916, Tjong established the Batavia Bank together with Batavia Major Khouw Kim An. Tjong also distinguished himself as a philanthropist. He financed schools, bridges, Chinese temples, mosques and hospitals on Sumatra, in Malaysia and China. With his enormous wealth and philanthropic activities, Tjong has become a legend during his

lifetime. No other person in Medan's history has been contributed to social projects as Tjong. On February 4, 1921, Tjong breathable last breath due to *apoplexy* or cerebral hemorrhage at his residence on *Kesawan* Medan. Thousands of people flocked to come and deliver to the last place in the area of Brayan Island (Kuhr, 1921).

The overall contribution above shows Tjong's generosity in Medan. He helped donate the construction of houses of worship regardless of race, religion, and culture. Generosity is formed from the success of life experienced in economic and political aspects. The stability of his social position guided Tjong to social activities namely helping everyone regardless of their racial, religious and cultural background. This understanding is formed from the virtuous religious experience of the Buddha. This virtue is a tool to build tolerance in the city of Medan.

4. PHILANTHROPY: LIFE'S GOODNESS BUILDS TOLERANCE

Philanthropy is the attitude of life that looks typical of Tjong. Philanthropic is a virtue of life to help fellow humans regardless of race, religion or culture. Philanthropists are born from social, economic and political positions, namely the realization of life's success. However, not everyone who has a strong social, economic and political position has the virtue of living in the form of generosity. Although the virtues of life such as generosity can be experienced and carried out by every mania, not everyone can do it. The virtue of living in the form of generosity is not artificial. He must be born in man. This virtue is realized because of the success of life, namely social, economic and political positions.

Tjong is different from his brother, Tjong Yong Hian, or a number of Chinese people in Medan who experienced the success of extraordinary life during the era of Dutch colonialism. The social, economic and political position of Tjong during the colonial era made his life perfect. He was written and remembered in history. He became a patron. He became a leader. Help and donations to various public facilities in Medan show the true attitude of a Tjong. Through these actions and attitudes, make his social position increasingly respected. The business is increasingly overwhelming and its influence is getting stronger.

Even though he was of a different religion, a Chinese, and an immigrant in the city of Medan but did not limit his steps to help fellow humans in Medan. Through the stability of his life, he built tolerance between people of different races, religions, and cultures. Even though his childhood is difficult, but does not make him arrogant when experiencing life success. He remains attentive to the poor, rich communities, small entrepreneurs and wealthy entrepreneurs. In this way, the business is more stable so that it becomes a channel of blessing to all people. Although he has a closeness with the Colonial Government or the Malay Sultan, it does not make him forget himself. The success of life experienced, it is actually used to help others sincerely. This trend is what most people lack very much.

At present time, many people help others but tend to be political in tone, think of economic rewards or economic opportunities. The success of the Tjong story gives clues to three things: (i) social, economic and political positions can be used as a tool to create tolerance and acculturation in plural and multicultural society. This strength is a good example for everyone to never stop creating tolerance and acculturation as the main capital of success in life, (ii) the virtue of living in the form of generosity does not reduce the wealth a person has. Life's attitude to help each other actually results in wider stability of life, (iii) the success of life is a channel of blessing to help fellow people regardless of racial, religious and cultural background.

Tjong's generosity did not just appear. Generosity is formed from an understanding of life values, togetherness values, environmental values, wealth values, and position values. Tjong has proven that the success of his life has made him respected. When Tjong died on February 4, 1921, hundreds of thousands of mourned his death. Hundreds of people stood along the road to deliver his death to his burial on Brayan Island in Medan. There is deep sorrow. There is a sense of loss towards public figures who put appreciation on the interests of many people. He was highly appreciated by all ethnic groups, Indonesian, Indian, Dutch and Chinese alike. On the occasion of Tjong's thirty years jubilee as Chinese officers, there was three days festival in town with fireworks, processions, and feasts. All population groups were involved. It was a multi-ethnic event on

the occasion of the jubilee of the Chinese major and reflected the harmonious relationship between the different ethnic groups.

Tjong is not only the economic aspect because of its enormous wealth, but also because it is a community figure that cooperates closely with the other population groups. In a plural society, it is necessary to think outside of the religion it embraces also the truth, although not as complete and perfect as the religion it embraces. This view needs to be grown in society, and when viewed from the truth of each teaching, one still believes that religion is the best and the right. However, at the same time, they had a tolerant attitude and friendship with followers of other religions. In order to realize a positive outlook in the society, it takes hard work by involving many factors: political, economic, social and cultural. This effort can be realized if based on genuine intentions. As mentioned (Veer, 2013) the appointment of the Tjong fortunate hit for the Dutch, whose guiding principle of "letting the Chinese take care of their own affairs" has a recipe for disorder in the sprawling cooled community needed for the boom plantation economy. As it turned out, the Tjong was largely responsible for the recruitment of coolies in the first place were dependable community leaders who the Dutch could be entrusted with the preservation of order in the Chinese community. The Tjong role as a key community leader whose authority is validated from within the community can be seen from their engagement in philanthropy.

Although the Buddhist population in Medan is relatively small, the success of life experienced can provide a positive image for the general public. Such images are shown not only in the Buddhist community but also for people of different races, religions, and cultures. At present, a number of schools and Buddhist houses of worship are scattered in the city of Medan. In North Sumatra, there are 14 Buddhist schools that manage elementary schools to universities. In addition, there is a monastery that stands majestically in the city of Medan, for examples, *Setia Budhi (Kuan Te Kong)*, and *Maha Maitreya* Monastery. The *Setia Budhi* Monastery (figure 8 below) is the highest in Medan consisting of 8 floors. The monastery embryo was built by Tjong. The monastery building is currently undergoing renovation from the temple built by Tjong.



Fig 8. Setia Budhi monastery under reconstructions, Medan, 2018.
Source: Privat doc. by Erond L. Damanik

Maha Maitreya (figure 9 below) is a Buddhist monastery that was built in 1991 and an inauguration ceremony on August 21, 2008. The area reaches 4.5 hectares. Maha Maitreya Monastery has a capacity of 4,000 people. The monastery consisting of a *Baktisala* room to worship *Sakyamuni Buddha, Bodhisattva,* and the *Bodhisattva Satyakalama Avolokitesvara*. In addition, this complex has a *Baktisala* Holy Patriarch, a guest house in one building that has the most complete facilities, namely the existence of office space, meeting rooms, recording studios, and a communal kitchen.



Fig 9. Buddha worships at Maha Maitreya Monastery, Medan 2018
Source: Google Image

A number of other temples are *Gunung Timur* and *Borobudur* in

Medan, or monasteries in *Lumbini Natural Park*, Brastagi, Karoland (figure 10 below). The *Lumbini Natural Park* is a Buddhist monastery that was inaugurated in 2010. The inauguration ceremony was attended by 1,300 monks and 200 lays from all over the world. The temple at *Lumbini Natural Park* is a replica of *Shwedagon Pagoda* in Yangon, Myanmar.



Fig. 10. Pagoda at Lumbini Natural Park, Brastagi 2018
Source: Privat doc. by Erond L. Damanik

Nevertheless, the success of the lives of a number of Chinese people in Medan and even Indonesia creates obstacles and prejudices. The magnificence of places of worship, Buddhist schools that are scattered in various places has become a trigger for problems (Coppel, 2003) and prejudice (Burhan, 2013). This obstacle refers to the historical aspect, namely the presumption of being a Dutch stooge in the colonial era, or the reason for China's involvement in *Poh An Tui*, namely the Chinese organization that rejected independence. This fact became the embryo of negative constraints and prejudices. The figure like Tjong has disappeared so that communication between races, religions, and cultures is slowly fading away. This kind of social reality has an impact on the gradation of tolerance.

The success of life, namely the generosity of Tjong has a correlation with tolerance in the colonial era. In that way, racial, religious and cultural differences can coexist harmoniously. In that way, Buddhism in Medan can live with other religions such as Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, and Hinduism. The virtue of life shown through generosity becomes an embryo of tolerance

which is very important to foster an atmosphere of peaceful living. Economic disparity is often a factor in the emergence of constraints and prejudices. Therefore, to grow back tolerance must grow figures who have the virtues of life. By imitating Tjong's life attitude that radiates virtue through his generosity, this gap can be reduced.

5. CONCLUSION

The virtue is the essence of life. Life's virtues are transmitted through life's success, namely social, economic and political positions. The success of life is the embryo of social generosity, namely life attitudes help each other regardless of race, religion, and culture. Social generosity becomes a tool to foster tolerance, namely the appreciation of every racial, religious and cultural difference. Tolerance is an important capital in social life, namely living peacefully and side by side. Through the success of life, namely the stability of social, economic and political positions during the era of Dutch colonialism in Medan, has a very important role in fostering tolerance. The virtue lives through its generosity, causing it to be accepted by all races, religions, and cultures.

***

References

Afif (1999) *Etnik Cina dalam Kehidupan Sosial Masyarakat Majemuk.* Jakarta: Grafiti.

Agustrisno (2007) *Respons Kultural dan Struktural Masyarakat Tionghoa terhadap Pembangunan di Kota Medan.* Pascarsarjana Universitas Sumatra Utara.

Anderson, J. (1971) *Mission to the Eastcoast of Sumatra in 1823.* Kuala Lumpur: Oxford in Asia Historical Reprints.

Bool, J. H. (1930) *De Chineesche Emigratie naar Deli.*

BPS (2016) *Sumatra Utara Dalam Angka*. Medan: Biro Pusat Statistik Provinsi Sumatera Utara.

Breman, J. (1989) *Taming the Coolie Beast; Plantation society and the colonial order in Southeast Asia.* Delhi/Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bronson, B. (1974) 'An Archaeological Survey in Sumatra', *Sumatra Research Bulletin*, 4(1), pp. 87–94.

Bruin, A. G. de (1918) *De Chineezen ter Ooskust van Sumatra.* Leiden.

Buiskool, D. A. (1999) *De reis van Harm Kamerlingh Onnes.* Leiden: Hilversum.

Buiskool, D. A. (2009a) 'A plantation city on the east coast of Sumatra 1870-1942 ', *HPAI*, April 2009(1).

Buiskool, D. A. (2009b) 'The Chinese Commercial Elite of Medan, 1890–1942: The Penang Connection.', *JMBRAS*, 82(2), pp. 113–129.

Burhan, O. K. (2013) 'Prasangka terhadap etnis Tionghoa di kota Medan: Peran identitas nasional dan persepsi ancaman', *Psikologia*, 8(1), pp. 25–33.

Chang, Q. (1981) *Memories of a Nyonya.* Singapore.

Coedes, G. (1918) 'Le Royaume de Crivijaya', *Bulletin de'l Ecole francaise d'Extreme-Orient*, 18(2), pp. 1–36.

Coppel, C. A. (2003) 'Kendala-kendala Sejarah dalam Penerimaan

Etnis Cina di Indonesia yang Multikultural', *Antropologi Indonesia*, 71, pp. 13–22.

Damanik, E. L. (2012) 'Traces of Early Chinese and Southeast Asian Trade at Benteng Putri Hijau, Namurambe, Northeast Sumatera', in Bonatz, D. (ed.) *Connecting Empires: Selected Papers from the 13th International Conference of the European Association of the Southeast Asian Archaeologist*. Singapore: NUS Press PTE. LTD.

Damanik, E. L. (2018) *Opium di Deli: Perdagangan, Konsumsi dan Pelarangan, 1774-1956*. Medan: Simetri Institute.

Erman, E. (2017) 'Chinese taukeh, laborer, and state control Case study of panglong in the eastern region of Sumatra (1890-1930)', *Wacana*, 18(2), pp. 514–539.

Groeneveldt, W. (1964) *Historical Notes on Indonesian and Malay: Compiled from Chines sources*. Jakarta: Bharata.

Hallewijn, E. (1876) 'Geographische en Ethnograpische Gegevens Betreffende het Rijk van Deli (Ooskust van Sumatra)', *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, uitgegeven door det Koninklijk Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen*, 23, pp. 149–158.

Hamdani, N. (2013) *Komunitas Cina di Medan dalam Lintasan tiga kekuasaan, 1930-1960*. Jakarta: LIPI Press.

Harahap, S. (2018) 'The Contribution of Tjong A Fie in Creating Religious Harmony in North Sumatera, Medan, Indonesia.', *Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 23(6), pp. 76–81.

Heidhues, M. F. S. (2003) *Golddiggers, farmers, and traders in the "Chinese districts" of West Kalimantan, Indonesia*. Ithaca, New York: Southeast Asia Program Publications, Cornell University. [Studies on Southeast Asia Series 34.].

Huan, L. R. (1964) *Tun Pun School: The Earliest Overseas Chinese School in Medan*.

Huan, M. (1970) *Ying-Yai Sheng-Lan: The Overall Survey of the Oceans Shores*. Edited by F. Cheng-Chun. Cambridge, UK: Hakluyt Society.

Krom, N. J. (1914) 'Inventaris der Oudheden: Residentie Ooskust van Sumatra, Afdeeling Deli en Serdang.', *Oudheidkunding Verslag*, p. 113.

Kuhr, E. (1921) 'Article Tjong A Fie', *Nederlansch-Indie Oud & Niew*, 3(5).

Lubis, L. A. (2011) *Persepsi Sukubangsa Tionghoa dan Pribumi terhadap Interaksi Komunikasi Antar-budaya di Sumatera Utara: Satu Kajian Kasus di Bandar Medan.* University Sains Malaysia.

Lubis, L. A. (2012) 'Komunikasi Antarbudaya Etnis Tionghoa dan Pribumi di Kota Medan', *Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi*, 10(1), pp. 13–27.

Lubis, M. . (1995) *Pribumi di mata orang Cina.* Medan: Pustaka Widyasarana.

Lubis, S. (1999) *Komunikasi Antara Budaya: Kajian Kasus Etnik Batak Toba dan Etnik Tionghoa di Sumatera Utara.* Medan: USU Press.

McKinnon, E. E. (1984) *Kota Cina: Its Context and Meaning in the Trade of Southeast Asia in the Twelfth to Fourteenth Centuries Volume I & II.* Cornell University.

McKinnon, E. E. (1996) 'Mediaeval Tamil Involvement in Northern Sumatra, c11-c14 : The Gold and Resin Trade.', *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 69(1), pp. 85–99.

McKinnon, E. E. (2009) 'Ceramics, Cloth, Iron and Salt: Coastal Hinterland Interaction in the Karo Region of Northeastern Sumatra', in Bonatz, D. (ed.) *Connecting Empires: Selected Papers from the 13th International Conference of the European Association of the Southeast Asian Archaeologist*. Singapore: NUS Press PTE. LTD.

McKinnon, E. E. (2012) 'The Kota Rentang Excavations', in Bonatz, D. (ed.) *Connecting Empires: Selected Papers from the 13th International Conference of the European Association of the Southeast Asian Archaeologist*. Singapore: NUS Press PTE. LTD.

Miksic, J. N. (1979) *Archaeology, Trade and Society in Northeast Sumatra*. Cornell University.

Milner, A. C. (1977) *The Malay Raja.* Cornell University.

Nim, K. S. (1993) *Streets of Georgetown.* Penang.

Pelly, U. (2013) *Urbanisasi dan Adaptasi: Peranan Misi Budaya Minangkabau dan Mandailing di Kota Medan.* Medan: Unimed Press dan Casa Mesra.

Pelzer, K. J. (1988) *Teoan Keboen dan Petani: Politik Kolonial dan Perjuangan Agraria di Sumatera Timur, 1863-1947*. Jakarta: Sinar Harapan.

Perret, D. (2009) 'Ethnicity and Colonization in Northeast Sumatra: Bataks and Malays', in Bonatz, D. (ed.) *Connecting Empires: Selected Papers from the 13th International Conference of the European Association of the Southeast Asian Archaeologist*. Singapore: NUS Press PTE. LTD.

Perret, D. (2013) 'The French-Indonesian Archaeological Project in Kota Cina (North Sumatra): Preliminary Results and Prospects', *Archipel*, 86, pp. 73–111.

Reid., A. (1970) 'Early Chinese migration into North Sumatra', in Ch'en, J. (ed.) *Studies in the social history of Cina and Southeast Asia*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 289–320.

Setyawati, S. (1981) *Sculptures of Ancient Sumatra*. Jakarta: Pusat Penelitian Arkeologi Nasional.

Siagian, M. (2017) 'Pekong, the symbol identity of Chinese at Pekan Labuhan Medan Indonesia.', in *Talenta CEST, IOP Conf. Series: Materials Science and Engineering.* Soedewo, E. (2011) *Penelitian Situs Dunia di Sumatera Utara: Situs Kota Cina.* Medan: Museum Negeri Provinsi Sumatera Utara.

Stoler, A. L. (1985) *Capitalism and Confrontation in Sumatra's plantation belt, 1870-1979.* New Haven CT: Yale University Press. Suparlan, P. (2003) 'Kesukubangsaan dan Posisi Orang Cina dalam Masyarakat Majemuk Indonesia', *Antropologi Indonesia*, 71, pp. 23–33.

Suryadinata, L. (2002) *Negara dan Etnis Tionghoa.* Jakarta: Pustaka LP3ES.

Suryadinata, L. (2005) *Pemikiran Politik Etnis Tionghoa Indonesia, 1900-2002*. Jakarta: Pustaka LP3ES.

Tan, S. (2004) *Jalan Menuju Masyarakat Anti Diskriminasi*. Medan: KIPPAS.

Veer, A. van der (2013) *The Pao An Tui in Medan: A Chinese Security Force in Dutch Occupied Indonesia, 1945-1948*. Utrecht University.

Wibowo, I. (1999) 'Tinjauan Kepustakaan tentang Etnis Cina di Indonesia', in Lan, T. J. (ed.) *Retrospeksi dan Rekontekstualisasi Masalah Cina*. Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka utama.

Wolters, O. (1970) *The Fall of Srivijaya in Malay History*. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press in Asia.

Wong, Y. (2007) 'The Big Five Hokkien Families in Penang, 1830s–1890s', *Chinese Southern Diaspora Studies*, 1, pp. 106–115.

MONASTERY WITHOUT BOUNDARY AN EMERGING PARADIGM IN SUMATRA, INDONESIA

by Hudaya Kandahjaya*

ABSTRACT

Not long after taking full ordination under the Chinese Mijiao lineage in 1995, an Indonesian monk—Venerable Nyanaprathama—began his social and ecological engagements in Sumatra, Indonesia. He started with establishing the usual social welfare institutions within the compounds belonging to his monastery, for instance, schools, scholarships, and health-care facilities for the underpriviledged members of the society. Afterward he launched and oversaw projects totally unrelated to his monastery but connected to overall environmental aspects, e.g., in conservation of natural resources and in assisting indigenous people make the most of their resources against the pressure from global economy. He maintains that those projects represent efforts in helping all sentient beings as advocated by Buddha Dharma. These ecological activities raise an alternative paradigm whereby the monk and his sangha take advantages of all resources available to them while working collaboratively with private as well as public (government) agencies for the benefit of preserving nature, educating, training, and developing the society in general regardless of their social, ethnic, or religious affiliations. His approach to exchanges with the sangha at large has not only generated a number of thriving undertakings including but not limited to Barumun eco-tourism, rainforest conservation, organic agriculture (coffee, mushroom, etc), goldmine protection, and holistic

*. Dr., Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, Berkeley, CA, U.S.A.

healing, but also has developed a community within as well as beyond the conventional monastery wall as if the monastery has no boundary at all.

INTRODUCTION

In modern day Buddhism of the 20th to 21st centuries, Buddhist social activism has been popularly known as 'engaged Buddhism.' The term was originally coined by Thich Nhat Hanh in his seminal book titled *Vietnam*: *Lotus in a Sea of Fire* (Thich 1967:42). As noted by Queen and King (1996:34) there was a claim that the term was already used earlier in 1963, though there seems to be no clear information to support this claim.[1] The monograph that Queen and King published in 1996 gave an overall survey of the state of nine engaged Buddhist movements in seven Asian countries up to early 1990s. Lately more and more leading Buddhist scholars have become involved and published portions of engaged Buddhism.[2] In recent publication on the commemoration of the 2550th anniversary of the Mahāparinirvāṇa of Lord Buddha two special sections comprising almost half of the volume size have been devoted to various aspects of engaged Buddhism (Mungekar 2009:231-440).

By the time Thich Nhat Hanh's started his action, there had already been some who did similar activism. For example, in China, there was Taixu who started Buddhist activism commonly called 'humanistic Buddhism (*renjian fojiao* 人間佛教)' around 1910s (Welch 1968:55ff; Pittman 2001; Goodell 2008). In India, such action is usually associated with Dr. Ambedkar who began his Buddhist Liberation movement in 1956. Although, scholarship on Ambedkar movement does not seem to recognize earlier attempt by Rahul Sankrityayan who performed a number of socio-politico-religious actions starting around 1916 and who also appealed to restore Maha Bodhi Temple in 1922.[3] This latter piece

1. See further Queen and King 1996:321-364. Doyle (2003:253) mentions the year 1963 as well, but does not show the source.

2. The OCLC WorldCat lists 24 more books published with subject on engaged Buddhism in between 1997 to 2018, and 5 of them are dissertations. If, however, the type of publications is expanded to include articles, chapters, etc., the number of publications exceeds 700 pieces.

3. For example, Queen and King (1996:45-72) says Ambedkar started in 1956, while at the same time there seems no record at all about Rahul here. Doyle (2016) too while discussing

of information is important due to the fact that Rahul inherited such activism not only from Bhadanta Bodhananda but also from Anagārika Dharmapāla, who is on the other hand considered being the first carrying the spirit of engaged Buddhism.[4]

Reference to Dharmapāla and reading numerous discources on engaged Buddhism provide clues about the types of activity as well as problematics inherent in the field. The range of activities includes various movements from establishing social institutions like schools to hospitals to political movements and actions to preserve environment. But, as already insinuated by a number of scholars, there has been quite a struggle within the Buddhist community for justifying and finding authoritative bases for doing engaged Buddhism.[5] Variety of responses have already been suggested.[6] And yet the struggle seems to continue. For instance, King (2009:13-27) offers a number of concepts—such as karma, the four noble truths, and compassion—to serve as key Buddhist concepts for engaged Buddhism. However, we may wonder if this list answers the problem, or are we actually running in place?

As is traditionally held, being Buddhist means not merely taking refuge to the Triple Jewels, but also being observant to Buddhist doctrines and practices. In general, a lay person shall keep five precepts while maintaining a good understanding of Buddhist concepts listed above, go to temple where members of the Buddhist sangha hold services, and whenever possible shall also practice meditation, charities, including lend a support to the sangha. The lay person may hope that all these shall lead the person at least to attaining a happy life. On the other hand, while leading the Buddhist community, Sangha members shall do similar routines but perhaps in a more committed way and in a stronger intensity while striving

---

the liberation of the Maha Bodhi Temple does not seem to recognize Rahul's action. See Chudal (2016:142-145) for the context within which Rahul became involved in activism and specifically with the appeal to restore the Maha Bodhi Temple.

4. Queen and King (1996:20) consider Dharmapāla being the first who carried the spirit of engaged Buddhism.

5. For example: Queen and King (1996:1-44); Winston (2001); Heine and Prebish, *eds*. (2003:3-6); King (2005:231-249)

6. For example: Queen *et al*, *eds*. (2003:37-94); Neusner and Chilton, eds. (2005:88-158); Mungekar 2009:231-440.

to achieve enlightenment, the highest Buddhist goal. Their activities too are mainly monastery-centric. This pattern has been proven to be able to survive for more than two millennia. It has been virtually based on key Buddhist concepts suggested by King as listed earlier. Thus, if that has been the case, then we could say that the same list of key concepts ironically are also the foundation upon which Buddhists have all along been being justified to be disengaged from worldly affairs.

Regardless, as it becomes more and more apparent, the whole spectrum of challenges that people—including Buddhists—must face in today's environment are increasingly more complex and intrude into the day to day life at a greater speed. In other words, we can no longer assume that the slow pace of changes occurring in the past two millennia is going to happen as we move into the future. There are many instances showing the tough road lying ahead. But here let us consider two contrasting situations.

At one end, for instance, the plundering of rain forest[7] is just one example of how actors of global and local economy today endeavor to achieve quick economic gains.[8] Such rush into instant economic gratification may ravage human and natural resources at a rate which may speedily harm not only the ecological systems but also some defenseless population. While Buddhists may claim having no involvement in such activities, and thereby not being responsible for the resulting damages, at some point Buddhists too eventually might not be able to avoid the impact of unsustainable ecology (Jones 2003:27) or simply cannot afford doing nothing while being surrounded by vulnerable societies.

At a different end, even though the society at large has sometime ago experienced cashless transaction, a cashless society which now steadily becomes a new reality has a totally distinct underpinning due to a rapid and progressive use of digital methods while making monetary exchanges. This cashless systems presents us with a

7. Myers (1992:xviii) says "the annual destruction rate seems set to accelerate yet further, and could well double in another decade."

8. Jones (2003:159-172) devotes one chapter discussing this issue of profit making and describes the whole thing being like "A World in Flames."

fresh problem (Sivabalan 2017). Those who are reluctant to digital methods may be shunned away from using cashless systems and might thereby be at risk or at least marginalized. Though seems to be farfetched, Buddhists are not exempted from this situation. Ready or not they too are one day forced to be part of the digital and cashless society with all its ramifications.

Hence, in the face of such ever rapid changing society and environment, the more or less stable conditions which have presumably sustained the traditional way of being Buddhist will evaporate steadily. Consequently, there is a greater probability that the Buddhist traditional premise in the past two millennia may no longer be appropriate nor be able to tackle the quickly approaching adversities.

This paper attempts to showcase an alternative paradigm by which Buddhists around the world may be prepared to engage in new challenges and move forward with full confidence while overcoming all kinds of hardships due to the shifting milieu. This paper is a preliminary attempt to describe the paradigm and thereby might have contained incomplete information and unnecessary shortcomings. In case one wonders whether or not this alternative paradigm is justified, this paper offers a survey of relevant doctrinal background from which one could see its alignment with Buddhist teachings.

ALTERNATIVE PARADIGM[9]

An Indonesian monk—Venerable Nyanaprathama—was born by given name Kuslan in Bagansiapi-api on 7 April 1974. In his teenage years he was active at the Tri Ratna temple in Tanjung

9. I first met Venerable Nyanaprathama on 23 June 2015 while attending the 14th International Conference on Buddhist Women, organized by Sakyadhita in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. It was at this coincidental encounter I perceived an unpredented paradigm by which Buddhists might have a better chance moving forward. I compile the following concise description based on his oral description at the time, my subsequent meeting and visit to Padangsidempuan, North Sumatra on 20 to 25 August 2016, and a number of articles (Yang 2011, Harian Andalas 2016, Yang 2018, and Tanwijaya 2018a) as well as additional personal correspondences with Tanwijaya in December 2018. I would hereby extend my gratitude to Venerable Nyanaprathama and Tanwijaya who have generously given me their invaluable time and information regarding the activities set forth by Nyanaprathama.

Balai, North Sumatra. He became a novice following the lineage of Guanghuasi (廣化寺) on 6 April 1994 under the tutelage of Venerable Aryamaitri (释定盛). Under this lineage he thereby received the name Shi Xueyuan (释学源). More than a year later he undertook full ordination under the Chinese Mijiao (密教) lineage. He was ordained by Venerable Liaozhong (释了中) on 17 December 1995 at (now) the Hsuan Chuang University (奘大學), Hsinchu, Taiwan. For the range of his social and ecological engagements (which will be briefly explained below), Nyanaprathama received an award from the Indonesian Social Responsibility Institute (Lembaga Indonesia Social Responsibility) on 17 November 2014. His twenty years of monkhood was celebrated in Medan, North Sumatra, on 5 March 2016.

Nyanaprathama started his engagements with the usual social welfare activities in Medan, North Sumatra, Indonesia, in 1997. One day he met several Chinese girls and asked them why they did not go to school during school hours. The girls answered that because they were just girls, they do not have to read books. Their answer surprised him and wondered why they had such kind of opinion. He thought that behind a successful man there is usually a mother and a wife, and if women are not educated the society would have problems. This encounter has ever since motivated him to address education and other related social issues.

Nyanaprathama first established a scholarship program called Metta Jaya in 1997. It was followed by a free health-care clinic in 1999 and much later a dental clinic in 2007. In the meantime he was eventually able to establish a general education school named Bodhicitta in 1999. All of these have assisted many children and underprivileged families.

A major change in his activism began around the year 1998. While undergoing monk training in Taiwan, Nyanaprathama witnessed passionate activities by a number of environmental protection agencies. Back to Indonesia in 1998, Nyanaprathama involved in preventing the scooping of topsoil out of the area of Mount Sinabung in Tanah Karo, North Sumatra. In the same year, an Indonesian environmental protection organization invited five religious representatives to participate in an environmental

conference. Nyanaprathama was a Buddhist representative and attended the meeting. The conference started with a suggestion that Chinese people were the enemy of environmental protection because they logged down Indonesian forests and therefore were to be driven away. Nyanaprathama stood up and said that the idea that the Chinese were destroying the forest was debatable. In 1970s to 1980s the government asked businessmen to develop forests. The businessmen who were not all Chinese took the opportunity to gain profit. This situation indicated that both sides—the government and the businessmen—benefited each other. Nyanaprathama continued that the actual participants in the deforestation were actually local residents, who were mostly indigenous people, who did not even understand environmental protection nor the consequence of deforestation. Therefore, instead of simply blaming the Chinese, the problem should be solved comprehensively. Meanwhile, in the ensuing years after attending an international conference on global water crises in Taiwan in 2003, Nyanaprathama did a vigorous effort to make Indonesia be the host for a pilot project for research on water crises. The effort was successful as Indonesia was nominated to be the country for such pilot project in 2006. The regency of Humbang Hasundutan in the Toba Lake region in North Sumatra was selected to be the area for research. The regent being the official government officer from the regency welcomed the designation and was invited to Taiwan to sign off the international collaborative work agreement.

All of these triggered and kept his enthusiasm in the field of environmental protection. All the while, Nyanaprathama was able to found the Indonesian Bodhicitta Mandala Assembly (Pesamuhan Bodhicitta Mandala Indonesia) in 2004. The assembly is to promote Buddha Dharma in all aspects of life, as he believes that helping living beings means helping all beings regardless of their attributes, status, or categories. The assembly gathers members of the Buddhist sangha and laypeople. It also strives to include activities in conservation of natural resources and in assisting indigenous people make the most of their resources against the pressure from global economy.

In the years 2005-2006 while being a sangha member assigned

to serve the Province of Nanggroe Aceh Darusallam in the northern end of Sumatra, Nyanaprathama observed how coffee farmers in the village Bener Meriah, at the foothill of Mount Burni Telong lacking the know-how on cultivating coffee plants as well as on processing coffee beans. This deficiency forced them to sell their beans at a very low price and thereby were not economically supportive to their own family. Nyanaprathama then studied not just coffee cultivation and processing but also other agroindustrial and forest products, including but not limited to patchouli and agarwood (*nilam* and *gaharu*). He imparted the skill to local farmers or entrepreneurs and let the government take over after the recipients ready to grow their business. Entrepreneurs, like Tabo and Tonggi Sipirok, are among those who received Nyanaprathama's assistance in their early stage of business.

Further change in his activism happened when Nyanaprathama started a conservation program to protect the rain forest in North Sumatra. Being a home to the third largest rain forest in the world, Indonesia is losing acres of rain forest each year due to extensive logging and global warming. After establishing Bodhicitta Mandala Conservation program in 2007, Nyanaprathama has been on a campaign to save a 6,000 hectare rainforest in Sandean, North Sumatra. Along with this program, Nyanaprathama initiated a tree bank which he called the "Movement of 1,111,111 Trees" (Gerakan 1.111.111 Pohon). Various parties donated trees to this bank from which trees were then distributed all over the region of North Sumatra.

Nyanaprathama believes that the country is losing 30 to 40 Sumatran tigers annually. Thus, these tigers may be extinct within 10 years. In this context, he started in 2012 the Barumun Nagari Wildlife Sanctuary covering an area around 40,000 hectares at North Padang Lawas, in South Tapanuli Regency, North Sumatra. The sanctuary is now a home to six endangered species animals known in Sumatra (Sumatran tigers, elephants, orangutans, hornbills, siamangs, and tapirs). This sanctuary also serves as an area for developing ecotourism and conserving the rainforest.

As such, the assembly that Nyanaprathama brought into being has generated an alternative paradigm. The ecological activities

allow the monk and his sangha takes advantages of all resources available to them while working collaboratively with private as well as public (government) agencies for the benefit of preserving nature, educating, training, and developing the society at large regardless of their social, ethnic, or religious affiliations. His approach to exchanges with the sangha at large has not only produced a number of thriving undertakings briefly described above, but also has developed a community within as well as beyond the monastery wall as if it has no wall at all.

RELEVANT BUDDHIST BACGROUND

In support of the alternative paradigm presented above, this section will first examine some causes for the struggle in justifying engaged Buddhism, and proceed with a presentation of a collection of Buddhist concepts or teachings supportive of social action.[10] As it will become clear below, these teachings are coherent with the emerging paradigm.

Rahul Sankrityayan published an article titled "Buddhist Dialectics" in January 1956 issue of the *New Age*, a political monthly of communist party of India (Sankrityayan 1956:42-48). This publication was written when Rahul reached his culminating years after his life-long participation in social action in India from which he was also imprisoned a number of times. It was also written after Rahul accomplished retrieving Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts and studying their essential tenets and philosophy. Thus, though short, this essay is one additional proposition which deserves attention from Buddhist social activists. Not only does it contain a summary of Rahul's fundamental idea in social action movement, but it also an example of an early struggle in Buddhist activism.

Rahul's article was later published post humously in a collection of essays of similar thought in 1970 titled *Buddhism*: *The Marxist Approach*.[11] It was from this publication that most readers usually

10. In my ongoing study on engaged Buddhism I have written and presented fragmented results sporadically in a number of papers, such as Kandahjaya 2014, 2015, 2016, 2016, 2017a, 2017b, and 2018. This is my initial attempt to integrate them here.

11. In Sankrityayan *et al* 1970:1-8. In this collection, there are four other essays written by Debiprosad Chattopadhyaya, Y. Balaramamoorty, Ram Bilas Sharma, and Raj Anand showing

know about Rahul's essay. Though, perhaps unknown to Rahul himself,[12] it is interesting to note that Rahul's 1956 publication received a particular attention from the Chinese communist party who published its Chinese translation in 1957.[13] Then it was from this Chinese translation that a Chinese monk, Jinhui 晉惠, in 1960 cited Rahul's opinion to support the idea that Buddhism was atheistic and thereby did not contradict the Chinese Communist party policy nor the establishment of Chinese government's official religions.[14]

Rahul's *Buddhist Dialectics* offers us a number of important observations critical for understanding the background of Buddhism and Buddhist praxis of our era. First, Rahul observes that Buddhist commune economic communism could not continue for long (Sankrityayan *et al* 1970:2). Perhaps, seeing this Buddhist socio-economic failure, Rahul was looking for a new basis to support Buddhism into the future. Hence, Rahul evokes another observation. As cited by Jinhui, Rahul starts with an assertion that Buddhism is atheistic and likely scientific,[15] and from there on the basis of his reading of Dharmakīrti's[16] comes to Hegelian as opposed to Marxist dialectical materialism as a way to tackle Buddhist social economic issues. Probably it was from this line of thinking that he titled his essay Buddhist dialectis.

While Rahul's observation on Buddhist commune economic communism is justifiable, his assertion on atheistic and scientific attributes of Buddhism are debatable. In the early period of Buddhist studies—within which Rahul was in—such attributes

---

different aspects of Marxist approach.

12. I got this perception from a personal conversation with daughter of Rahul, Jaya Sankrityayan, on 16 March 2018, during a conference commemorating Rahul's life accomplishment.

13. The Chinese translation was in the journal *Xuexi yicong* 學習譯叢 3 (1957):11-15.

14. Pacey 2017:5. Jinhui published his article titled '*Fodian zhong "wushenlun" sixiang*' 佛典中「無神論」思想' in *Xiandai Foxue* 現代佛學 5 (1960): 25–27.

15. The essay starts with "In Buddhism there is no place for god (creator of the universe) or for a revealed book" (Sankrityayan *et al* 1970:1). On page 6-7, Rahul defines reality according to Buddhist thinkers being: "that which is capable of objective action." And then "...only the objective action or experiment is the touchstone of reality…The entire progress of science is based on this principle—that we accept object as our guide."

16. Sankrityayan quotes Dharmakīrti at least three times (Sankrityayan *et al* 1970:6-8).

including being rational and not dogmatic were prevailing.[17] Sir Edwin Arnold was among the early proponents of such view (Wright 1957:171). Anagārika Dharmapāla met with Arnold in London in August 1893 before attending and delivering his address at the Parliament of Religions, Chicago, on 18 September 1893. In this address Dharmapāla mentioned the *Kalama Sutta* (Guruge 1965:9) and was likely the first to popularize it. The *Kalama Sutta* has ever since become the most quoted teaching of Buddha to demonstrate the scientific property of Buddhism. It was an open possibility that Rahul being the inheritor of Dharmapāla's spirit of engaged Buddhism was also initiated into that attributive property of Buddhism. Although, today, as demonstrated by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998), such a view especially when the *Kalama Sutta* is taken as the support is actually unjustifiable.

On atheistic Buddhism, Heinz Bechert (1981:13) reveals that this atheistic attribute became problematic for Indonesian Buddhists who in the period right after the failed communist coup in 1965 had to prove to the government of Indonesia that Buddhism is theistic and in agreement with the Indonesian state principle of Divinity. In contrast to many Buddhist scholars' opinion and as has already been shown by Helmuth von Glasenapp (1966:89), an 8th century Sanskrit-Old Javanese Buddhist text titled the *Saṅ Hyaṅ Kamahāyānikan* (hereafter SHK) records a Buddhist doctrine which has pronouncedly monistic trend. It has also been

17. During the period, reason is often considered the utmost excellent property as opposed to faith or particularly dogmatic faith. Along this line, we had, for instance, the first edition of George Grimm's book written in German titled *Die Lehre des Buddha*: *die Religion der Vernunft* published in 1915 (later translated into English titled *The Doctrine of the Buddha*: *The Religion of Reason* published in 1920), which from its title strongly shows rationalistic leaning and—as we read inside—atheistic inclination. Related to this trend, McMahan (2008:3-14) shows how the Protestant Reformation, the scientific revolution, European Enlightenment, and Romanticism all influenced Buddhism when it initially emerged and spread throughout the world. See also Lopez Jr., *ed.* (1995). And, prior to these, Gananath Obeyesekere coined the term 'Protestant Buddhism' to denote the development of Buddhism in Sri Lanka which had already been influenced by Western culture and Christianity. The term was published initially in his article (1970:43-63), then republished in Smith, *ed.* (1972:58-78), and discussed furthermore in Gombrich and Obeyesekere (1988:202-240). See also Prothero (Summer 1995:281-302). On page 296, Prothero described Olcott as 'The most Protestant of all early Protestant Buddhists.'

made evident that this text is validly related to early cycle of the *Guhyasamāja* family of texts as well as to the lineage of Dignāga.[18] The SHK is likely the earliest scripture which records the term Ādi Buddha and its connotation here is in line with the concept of Ādi Buddha in the Kālacakra system. Then, it was from this breed of Buddhism that Javanese Buddhists built Borobudur, the most magnificent Buddhist temple in the world, and in the 14th century a Javanese Buddhist scholar, Mpu Tantular, composed a *kāvya* work titled the *Kakawin Sutasoma*. An old Javanese phrase *bhinneka tunggal ika* (meaning: distinct yet one) in a verse from this work becomes the Indonesian state motto. Thus, from this inspection it is clear that the assertion of Buddhism being atheistic is also not fully defensible.

In the SHK, besides being theistic, the doctrine shows a set of procedures for attaining the perfect enlightenment which is quite unlike the one commonly ascribed to the Mahāyāna or Theravāda traditions known today. For instance, when the SHK calls ten *pāramitā*s (*daśa pāramitā*)—being the perfection path (*parama-mārga*)—it comprises the six *pāramitā*s (*ṣaṭ pāramitā*) and the four *brahmavihāra*s or *pāramitā*s (*catur pāramitā*). Although, while the SHK procedure differs to those commonly recognized today, it is on the other hand consistent with the procedure prescribed in older authoritative Buddhist scriptures, some of which are less known today or even are no longer in use, such as the *Akṣayamatisūtra*, the *Ratnameghasūtra*, or the *The Brahmā's Net Sutra* (T. 1484 *Fanwang jing* 梵網經).[19] In other words, the inclusion of the four *brahmavihāra*s into the SHK procedure for attaining the enlightenment is an ancient procedure clearly advocated by older Buddhist texts but which is hardly known in todays received traditions.

By contrast, we know that by around the 5th century Bhadantācariya Buddhagosha devoted one whole chapter

18. For the examination of the SHK, see Kandahjaya 2016.

19. For the *Akṣayamatinirdeśasūtra*, see Braarvig 1993. I met Bhikṣuṇī Vinītā Tseng during the Buddhist Studies Workshop, LMU (Ludwig Maximilian Universität), München, on June 15th – 16th, 2018. She said that she is in possession and in the process of editing a Sanskrit copy of the *Ratnameghasūtra*. The procedure is in the first fascicle of *The Brahmā's Net Sutra*, see Muller and Tanaka 2017, which prior to this publication is hardly known.

on the *brahmavihāra*s while compiling his *Visuddhimagga*. In this commentary, Buddhagosha explains that practicing the *brahmavihāra*s could only lead one to the brahma-worlds, although at his final paragraph of this chapter he seems to suggest otherwise that the practice could lead one to perfection. Reading it this way, it is a controversial proposition. Richard Gombrich has taken the task to clarify the cause for such discrepancy (Gombrich 2009:75-91), but unfortunately most in the Theravāda tradition has usually taken the first part of Buddhagosha's commentary and ignored the final paragraph and thereby dismissing the controversial proposition.[20]

The practice on *brahmavihāra*s as suggested by Buddhagosha and as generally uphold in the Theravāda tradition is likely the reason why to some extent the four *brahmavihāra*s have been construed merely as the subjects of meditation (*kammaṭṭhāna*). While quite the reverse, if we follow the instructions written in the older Buddhist texts, the practice on *brahmavihāra*s could actually be the source for one's actions toward other beings. For example, here is the meaning of loving kindness (P. *mett*ā, Skt. *maitr*ī, OJ. *metri* or *metr*ī) in the SHK which parallels to the same in the *Akṣayamatisūtra*.

> The so-called *metri* is: the nature of performing meritorious action for the welfare of others (*parahitakākṛtva*), the state (*ākāra*) of *jñāna* of Saṅ Satva Viśeṣa. The so-called Saṅ Satva Viśeṣa: diligently does one's best in *ṣaṭ pāramitā* and *catur pāramitā*, he is the so-called Satva Viśeṣa. The state of his *jñāna* is working for the well-being of others. The so-called others (*para*) is: all beings (*sarbva satva*), low, middle, or high (*kaniṣṭamadhyamottama*), this loving kindness (*sih*) towards others without expectation of reward (*tan phalāpekṣa*) is the so-called *metrī*.[21]

20. For instance, Nyanaponika (2008:7) concludes that: "The meditations on love, compassion, and sympathetic joy can each produce the attainment of the first three absorptions, while the meditation on equanimity will lead to the fourth only, in which equanimity is the most significant factor."

21. The commentary in the SHK in Old Javanese is as follows: "*Metri ṅaranya: parahitakākṛtva, ākāra niṅ jñāna saṅ Satva Viśeṣa. Saṅ Satva Viśeṣa ṅaranya: tumakitaki ṣaṭ pāramitā mvaṅ catur pāramitā, sira ta Satva Viśeṣa ṅaran ira. Ākāra niṅ jñāna nira gumave hayva niṅ para. Para ṅaranya: sarbva satva, kaniṣṭamadhyamottama, ikaṅ sih riṅ para tan phalāpekṣa, ya metrī ṅaranya.*"

This kind of interpretation—we may exceptionally note here—in fact occurs in the Sarvodaya movement where the *brahmavihāra*s have been taken contrarily as guidelines for social action.[22]

It is also in the course of one's actions toward other beings that other beings mean all living beings regardless of all categories which may be attached to them. Those beings are not solely Buddhists, and are not even solely human beings. To this end, this concept is in compliance with Buddha's exhortation to his first 60 disciples to disseminate his teachings for the good of the many, which clearly implicates not merely Buddhists (per historical narrative there were no other Buddhists besides those 61) nor human beings. This exhortation too points to the fact that the teachings carried by the first 60 disciples could not be exactly the same as those codified in the commonly acknowledged Tripiṭaka today. And, even codified teachings during the first council cannot be considered complete because there was at least one incidence right after the first council suggesting that the compilation was not accepted by Purāṇa, the leader of a group of at least five hundred monks, who would only bear in his mind and practice the teaching that he heard directly from the Buddha Śākyamuni himself.[23]

Further implication of this fact directs us to acknowledge that Buddha's teachings cannot really be limited to just the received canonized Tripiṭaka. This understanding is corresponding to

22. Queen and King 1996:126-127. Sulak Sivaraksa echoes similar view, see Queen and King 1996:219-221. Jones (2003:105) suggests that the *brahmavihāra* meditation is a practice directly related to social activism. However, here it is clear that the suggestion is merely related to meditation practice and not to physical action. Thus far, I have not been able to find references from the Theravāda tradition which point the notion of *brahmavihāra* to physical action.

23. In the Pali Canon of the *Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyana Tipiṭaka*, in the *Cūḷavagga* of the *Vinayapiṭaka*: "*Tena kho pana samayena āyasmā purāṇo dakkhiṇāgirismiṃ cārikaṃ carati mahatā bhikkhusaṅghena saddhiṃ pañcamattehi bhikkhusatehi. Atha kho āyasmā purāṇo therehi bhikkhūhi dhamme ca vinaye ca saṅgīte dakkhiṇāgirismiṃ yathābhirantaṃ viharitvā yena rājagahaṃ yena veḷuvanaṃ kalandakanivāpo yena therā bhikkhū tenupasaṅkami, upasaṅkamitvā therehi bhikkhūhi saddhiṃ paṭisammoditvā ekamantaṃ nisīdi. Ekamantaṃ nisinnaṃ kho āyasmantaṃ purāṇaṃ therā bhikkhū etadavocuṃ – 'therehi, āvuso purāṇa, dhammo ca vinayo ca saṅgīto. Upehi taṃ saṅgīti'nti. 'Susaṅgītāvuso, therehi dhammo ca vinayo ca. Apica yatheva mayā bhagavato sammukhā sutaṃ, sammukhā paṭiggahitaṃ, tathevāhaṃ dhāressāmī'ti.*" Oldenberg 1880. English translations: Rhys Davids and Oldenberg, *The Mahāvagga* 1881-1900:380-381. Horner 1997:401-402.

a phrase we have constantly heard from within the Buddhist tradition that there are 84,000 kinds of teachings (*dharmaskandha*) or 84,000 dharma doors (*dharmamukha, dharmadvāra,* or *dharmaparyāya*), or even universal door to teachings of Buddha (*samantamukha*). The universality of the teachings of Buddha is indeed maintained and exposed in the chapter of the *Samantamukha* (*samantamukhaparivarta*) of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra*.

Similar in essence to the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra* is the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*. While extolling the protagonist Sudhana who studies all knowledge and practices in order to attain the highest Buddhahood, the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra* advocates a variety of sources for achieving enlightenment. Teachers of Sudhana, called the *kalyāṇamitras*, are fifty two in number and come from all walks of life. This group of *kalyāṇamitras* consists of members of different spiritual schools known at that time, and includes boys and girls, merchants, ascetics, monks, bodhisattvas, up to *brāhmaṇas* (Jayoṣmāyatana and Śivarāgra), a *bhāgavatī* (Vasumitrā), and a *deva* (Mahādeva). At Borobudur, Mahādeva is depicted as Śiva Mahādeva. Then, in this group, about forty percent of these *kalyāṇamitras* can be identified as female. The diversity of *kalyāṇamitras* in the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra* emphasizes the idea that perfect enlightenment can be attained by all via many paths and that this kind of enlightenment does not belong exclusively to just one spiritual school.

The *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra* also reminds us about Sudhana's meeting with one of his teachers, Indriyeśvara, whose teaching confirms that secular sciences—as we call them now—were not considered a separate domain outside the boundaries of religious or spiritual path. Instead, secular sciences were considered part of religious practice and doors to the highest spiritual enlightenment. As such, the meeting of Sudhana with Indriyeśvara, the *samantamukhaparivarta*, the *pāramitā*s as well as Buddha's exhortation to the first 60 monks are probably the most relevant discourses which expound Buddhist teaching in support of all kinds of social Buddhist engagement activities in all sorts of fields beyond the customary monastic boundaries.

Bibliography

Anonymous. "Mahasthavira Nyanaprathama Masuki 20 Tahun Masa Kebiksuan" in *Harian Andalas*, 26 February 2016.

Bechert, Heinz. "The Buddhayana of Indonesia: A Syncretistic Form of Theravada," *Journal of the Pali Text Society* 9 (1981):10-21.

Bodhi, Bhikhu. "A Look at the Kalama Sutta" in *Buddhist Publication Society Newsletter* 9 (Spring 1988):1-3.

Braarvig, Jens. *Akṣayamatinirdeśasūtra*. Vol. 2. Oslo: Solum Forlag, 1993.

Chudal, Alaka Atreya. *A Freethinking Cultural Nationalis*: *A Life History of Rahul Sankrityayan*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2016.

Doyle, Tara N. ""Liberate the Mahabodhi Temple!"" in Steven Heine and Charles S. Prebish, *ed.*, *Buddhism in the Modern World*: *Adaptations of an Ancient Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003):249-280.

Goodell, Eric, "Taixu's Youth and Years of Romantic Idealism, 1890-1914" in *Chung-Hwa Buddhist Journal* 21 (2008):77-121.

Guruge, Ananda. *Return to Righteousness*: *A Collection of Speeches, Essays and Letters of the Anagarika Dharmapala*. Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs, Ceylon: The Anagarika Dharmapala Birth Centenary Committee, 1965.

Gombrich, Richard. *What the Buddha Thought*. London: Equinox, 2009.

Gombrich, Richard and Gananath Obeyesekere. *Buddhism Transformed: Religious Change in Sri Lanka*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988.

Grimm, George. *The Doctrine of the Buddha*: *The Religion of Reason*. Leipzig: Offizin W. Drugulin, 1926.

Heine, Steven and Charles S. Prebish, *ed*. *Buddhism in the Modern World*: *Adaptations of an Ancient Tradition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Horner, I. B., tr. *The Book of the Discipline* (*Vinaya-Piṭaka*), Vol. 4 *Mahāvagga*. Oxford: The Pali Text Society, 1997.

Jones, Ken. *The New Social Face of Buddhism*: *A Call to Action*. Boston: Wisdom Publication, 2003.

Kandahjaya, Hudaya. "Viable Buddhist Contribution to Universal Learning for Global Development." In Thich, Nhat Tu and Thich Duc Thien, eds., *The Importance of Promoting Buddhist Education* (Phu Nhuan, Vietnam: Vietnam Buddhist University Publications, 2014): 25-53.

------. "Negotiating Buddhist Priorities for Education." In Phrama Somboon Vuddhikaro, eds., *Buddhism and World Crisis* (Ayutthaya, Thailand: Mahachulalongkornraja-vidyalaya, 2015): 302-309.

------. "Challenges and Offers from Indonesian Buddhism." Paper presented at the *8th International Lay Buddhist Forum*, 2016, in Padang Sidempuan, Indonesia.

------. "Saṅ Hyaṅ Kamahāyānikan, Borobudur, and the Origins of Esoteric Buddhism in Indonesia" in Andrea Acri, ed., *Esoteric Buddhism in Mediaeval Maritime Asia* (Singapore: ISEAS, 2016):67-112.

------. "Buddhism and Economy: How we get here and what next." Paper presented at the conference on Buddhism and Business, Market and Merit: Intersections between Buddhism and Economics Past and Present, May 19-21, 2017a.

------. "A Javanese Perspective on Self-Benefit and Benefit for Others" Paper presented at the 18th Biennial Meeting of the IASBS, Mushashino University, Tokyo, June 30 - July 2, 2017b.

------. "Revisiting the *Buddhist Dialectics* of Rahul Sankrityayan." Paper presented at the International Conference on Rahul Sankrityayan (1893-1963): Maha Pandit in the Land of Snow from 14th to 16th March 2018.

King, Sallie B. *Being Benevolence*: *The Social Ethics of Engaged Buddhism*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'I Press, 2005.

------. *Socially Engaged Buddhism*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'I Press, 2009.

Lopez Jr., Donald S., *ed. Curators of the Buddha: the Study of Buddhism under Colonialism*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995.

McMahan, David L. *The Making of Buddhist Modernism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Mungekar, B. L., *ed. Buddhism and the 21st Century*. Nalanda: Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, 2009.

Myers, N. *The Primary Source: Tropical Forests and Our Future*. 2nd ed. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1992.

Muller, A. Charles and Kenneth K. Tanaka. *The Brahmā's Net Sutra*. Moraga, CA: BDK America, 2017.

Neusner, Jacob and Bruce D. Chilton, *eds. Altruism in World Religions*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, c2005.

Nyanaponika. *The Four Sublime States: Contemplations on Love, Compassion, Sympathetic Joy, and Equanimity*. The Wheel Publication No. 6. Kandy: BPS Online Edition, 2008.

Obeyesekere, Gananath. "Religious Symbolism and Political Change in Ceylon." *Modern Ceylon Studies* 1, no. 1 (1970): 43-63.

Oldenberg, H., *ed. The Vinaya Piṭakaṃ*. Vol. 2. London: Williams and Norgate, 1879-1880.

Pacey, Scott. "'Aspiring to Enlightenment': Buddhism and Atheism in 1980s China" in *East Asian History* 41 (2017):3-14.

Pittman, Don A. *Toward a Modern Chinese Buddhism: Taixu's Reforms*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2001.

Prothero, Stephen. "Henry Steel Olcott and "Protestant Buddhism."" *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 63:2 (Summer 1995):281-302.

Queen, Christopher, *et al, eds. Action Dharma: New Studies in Engaged Buddhism*. London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003.

Rhys Davids, T.W. and Herman Oldenberg, tr. *Vinaya Texts*. Part 1: *The Pātimokkha, The Mahāvagga*, I-IV, Part 3. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1881-1900.

Sankrityayan, Rahul. "Buddhist Dialectics" *New Age*: *Political Monthly of Communist Party of India* 5 (January 1956):42-48.

Sankrityayan, Rahul, *et al*. *Buddhism*: *The Marxist Approach*. Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1970.

Sivabalan, Srinivasan. "Going Cashless? Bad for Tax Cheats, Privacy, Poor" in *Bloomberg Businessweek*, July 16, 2017 (https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-07-17/going-cashless-bad-for-tax-cheats-privacy-poor-quicktake-q-a).

Smith, Bardwell L., *ed*. "The Two Wheels of Dhamma: Essays on the Theravada Tradition in India and Ceylon" in *AAR Studies in Religion* 3 (1972):58-78.

Thich, Nhat Hanh. *Vietnam: Lotus in a Sea of Fire*. New York: Hill and Wang. 1967.

Tanwijaya, Rudyanto. "Sekilas Biksu Nyanaprathama Mahasthavira" An unpublished report to Directorate General Forestry at the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Republic of Indonesia, ca. October 2018a.

Vaidya, P. L. *Lalita-Vistara*. Darbhanga: The Mithila Institute of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in Sanskrit Learning. 1958.

------. *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*. Darbhanga: The Mithila Institute of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in Sanskrit Learning, 1960.

Von Glasenapp, Helmuth. *Buddhism—A Non-Theistic Religion*. New York: George Braziller, 1966 (original German edition: 1954).

Welch, Holmes. *The Buddhist Revival in China*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968.

Winston, Diana. "Justify Your Love: Finding Authority for Socially Engaged Buddhism; Ways of Relating Buddhist Tradition and Practice with Social Theory" *ThinkSangha web publication* <www.bpf.org/sebmeth.html> [September 2001].

Wright, Brooks. *Interpreter of Buddhism to the West*: *Sir Edwin Arnold*. New York: Bookman Associates, 1957.

Yang, Hongyun. "Indonesian Chinese NGO Research: Taking the Indonesian Bodhi Mandala Foundation as an example (印尼

华人非政府组织研究： 以印尼菩提心曼陀罗基金会为例)" in *Southeast Asian and South Asia Studies* (东南亚南亚研究) 4 (2011):69-73.

Yang, Yongkai. "他山之石可以攻玉：印尼社會企業幕後推手—菩提心曼荼羅基金會" in *Business Today* (今周刊) 9 August 2018.

JAPAN

BUDDHISM IN MODERN JAPAN*

by Bhikkhu Prayudh Payutto

I. PERSECUTION AND THE MODERNIZATION OF TRADITIONAL BUDDHISM

Modern Japanese Buddhism began as a reaction against the persecution under the Shinto nationalism of the *Meiji Restoration* of 2411/1868. Under the persecution, Buddhist statues, scriptures and decorations were taken out of Shinto temples and set on fire or thrown into the water for the purpose of purifying the Shinto temples and separating Buddhism from Shinto. This was carried out at the time of the opening of Japan to the outside world. Stimulated by the danger, the Buddhists united in common action to resist and took steps to modernize. Leading monks of the various sects adopted a modern system of education and gave modern education to the younger monks. They founded schools and universities or reorganized their old temple schools and transformed them into modern Buddhist universities.

An example of this development can be found in Otani University of the Shin School in Kyoto. This institution was founded in 2198/1655 as a study centre. After the opening of Japan, alterations and improvements were made in the curriculum and it was transformed into a modern university in 2448/1905. Another example is Ryokoku University of the Jodo School in Kyoto, which was founded as a temple school in 2182/1639, became subject to

*. Reprinted with permission from www.buddhismtoday.com

Western influences in the Meiji period, and was recognized as a University in 2465/1922. All the great sects of Japanese Buddhism have developed their own universities. In Kyoto, the Rinzai branch of the Zen School operates Hana-Zono University, the Jodo School runs Bukkyo University, and the Shingon Sect owns Shuchfin University. The Shingon Sect has another university on Mount Koya called Koyasan University. In Tokyo, Kornazawa University of the Soto branch of Zen Buddhism was founded as a temple school in 2302/1759 and raised to the status of a university in 2425/1882. Also in Tokyo are Rissho University of the Nichiren Sect and Taisho University, which serves the Jodo, the Tendai and the Shingon sects. Kyoto Women's University of the Shin Sect in Kyoto has been designed specially for the education of women.

Japanese Buddhist education still maintains the traditional close connection between study and meditation. Besides training monks and priests for their special roles, Buddhist universities offer courses to laymen both in the field of Buddhism and religious studies and in the field of secular studies. A number of research institutes specializing in Buddhism or in oriental studies in general have also been founded, such as the Nippon Buddhist Research Association and the Indogaku Bukkyogakukai (The Japanese Association of Indian and Buddhist Studies). With modern educational and research methods, these Buddhist universities and research institutes have been active in their task of preserving the great intellectual heritage of Buddhism, advancing Buddhist studies, and keeping for Buddhism a significant place in the modern intellectual life of the nation.

It should be noted that the persecution under Meiji Restoration could not destroy Buddhism, though its status was much affected. Moreover, the persecution did not last long and Buddhism shortly began to recover its strength. Besides reaction on the part of the monks, there was a closely related reaction against Europeanization and Christianity, which came about some time after the opening up of Japanese life to European thought, culture and religion, and which led to the reaffirming of the national religious traditions. Buddhism was then re-valued as its teachings were found to be compatible with new discoveries and theories of modern science,

such as Darwin's theory of evolution. Buddhism was thus reaffirmed and its status was restored. In spite of this, however, its influence on the national life of Japan was never as strong as in the earlier ages. Generally speaking, the numerous sects were still attached to traditionalism and their main efforts were directed toward maintaining their continuity in the midst of growing secularism and the non-religious attitude of the intelligentsia. As a desirable effect, Buddhist monasteries and temples have become the stronghold for preserving the Buddhist cultural tradition and for resisting the secularizing elements of westernization. As an undesirable effect, the scientific study of Buddhist philosophy which made remarkable early progress slowed down and became confined to leading Buddhist scholars, far beyond the understanding of the public and the interest of the highly westernized intellectuals.

Another important development after the Meiji Restoration was the practice of married priesthood. Under the disestablishment of Buddhism when support was lacking, monks were forced to struggle to earn their living and to maintain their temples. They became lax in monastic discipline. Moreover, there was a decree issued by the Meiji government allowing the clergy of all sects to marry. Today, not only priests of the Shin and the Nichiren sects but nearly all Japanese priests live married lives. Except for young monks under training, there are very few celibate monks in Japan.

Among the traditional sects, the *Zen, Shin* and *Nichiren* sects are most prominent and most advanced in activities directed towards regaining their lost position. Through their efforts, Japanese Buddhism has not only made significant scholarly achievements, become energetically involved in education, social work and humanitarian activities, and achieved an efficient confrontation with Western philosophy and modern intellectual currents, but has also returned to the West with Buddhist thought and ideas valued by and stimulating to the Western mind, and played a leading part in international Buddhist activities. The three sects can count among their followers, both priests and laymen, some of the ablest thinkers of the day. In the field of international collaboration, more, or at 'least not fewer, names of Japanese scholars can be found than those of any other Buddhist country. Numerous Japanese clergymen

engage in missionary activities in many countries, especially on the American continent, while a number of Japanese professors are conducting courses in Buddhist studies in American universities. More and more books and articles on Buddhism are being' published in Western languages. Through his writings and lectures, Dr. D.T. Suzuki, a Japanese Zen priest and scholar, has exercised on Western thought and culture a deeper and wider influence than any other individual Buddhist.

II. THE EMERGENCE OF THE NEW RELIGIONS

In spite of all these efforts and achievements, however, the success of the traditional sects has been confined mostly to the academic and scholarly field. In answering to the religious need of the populace, they are still at a loss. They may be well known internationally but in their native land they fail to recover their former influence on the Japanese national life. Their position was made even more difficult by Japan's surrender in World War 11 when, as a reaction, a tendency was developed to reject whatever was traditional. The oldness of these sects has thus resulted in a natural loss of their appeal. It is the hope of these traditional sects that through their intellectual pursuits they will find a channel through which they can achieve the joining of the spiritual with the temporal and the revitalization of the teaching in a way more fit to cope with the general trend of the age and civilization.

The defeat of Japan in World War II in 2488/1945 was followed by the emperor's renunciation of his divine status and the disestablishment of Shinto as the state religion. With the allowance of religious freedom and in the face of mental crisis, the number of religious sects and sub-sects increased rapidly. The number registered in 2488/1945 was 43. By 2494/1951, this had increased to 720. In 2504/1961 the number dropped to 170. Of the number 720 in 2494/1951, 260 were Buddhist sects and sub-sects. Again, of these 260, only five were the main sects which had more than one million adherents, namely, *Jodo, Shin, Zen, Shingon* and *Nichiren.*

The new movements or the so-called New Religions have been a development to fill the gap left by the traditional teachings. Most of them are offshoots of the Nichiren sect. They have been rapidly

attracting enthusiastic adherents. Interestingly enough, it is mainly through the practice of certain popular rituals of these new sects, and not through an intellectual role or scholarly achievements, that Buddhism remains an active religion in Japan.

Most of these new sects or religions began with a revelation and are centred on the personality of the founder or organizer. The founders are usually believed to have unusual spiritual powers in divination, sorcery, fortune-telling and healing, and to be able to work miracles. They usually teach simple doctrines which appeal most to the lower middle class and the rural populace who are inclined to superstitious beliefs and practices. The new sects are essentially lay organizations, avoiding distinctions between lay believers and priests. They give their followers a sense of belonging and promote mutual aid and public welfare, promising actual mundane benefits here and now. Emphasis is placed on group meetings and the performance of services, which are to be taken very seriously.

Among the new sects, the most prominent are the *Rissho Kosei Kai* and the *Soka Gakkai*. These both arose out of the Nichiren sect. The *Rissho Kosei Kai* (Society for Social Justice and Neighbourly Relations) was founded by a sickly girl from a poor and lowly family who earned her living as a factory worker. It claims a membership of approximately 3 million. The *Soka Gakkai* (Value-Creating Society), which started in 2474/1-931 and had about 500 followers in 2483/1940, surpassed in the 1960's all other Japanese religious orders, both old and new, in influence and power. While among the great traditional sects, Shin Buddhism with all its ten sub-sects claimed the largest following of about 14 million adherents, the Soka Gakkai alone had in 2508/1965 13 million members on its lists. The movement is militantly nationalistic and has political activities. As its political party called the Korneito (Party of Social Justice) has become Japan's third largest party, the Soka Gakkai has grown into a movement of great political importance.

III. THE GENERAL PICTURE

On the whole, Japanese Buddhism still maintains its strength in the intelligentsia and the rural population. Zen is associated

with the culture preserved among the highly cultured people, is the spiritual strength of the nation, and has a strong appeal to the intellectuals and the modern Western mind. For the rural people, the popular sects of Amida [Amitabh] and the Lotus offer stronger appeal, especially the Shin sect which has the greatest number of adherents. Superstitious beliefs and practices are also widely accepted. As a characteristic of Japanese modernity, the many new religions have emerged to meet the modern religious needs of the middle class.

Movements have grown among the Buddhists towards cooperation and unification, and lay Buddhists have taken a more active part in religious activities. This has resulted in the organization of the Japan Chapter of the World Federation of Buddhists, the All Japan Young Buddhist Federation, and the Japan Buddhist Women's Association. Representatives have been sent by the different sects to observe conditions, practices and activities in other Buddhist countries. There are many universities, colleges and schools operated or supported by Buddhist sects. Research activities have been conducted actively in universities and research institutions such as the Nippon Buddhist Research Association and the Japanese Association of Indian and Buddhist Studies, by scholars using modern methods, on the whole field of Buddhist literature in Sanskrit, Pali, Tibetan, Mongolian and Chinese. Studies in the Indian Buddhist sources and international contacts have also inspired a strong urge to return to original Buddhism.

Statistically, with a Buddhist population of approximately 75 million, or about 85 percent of the whole population, and with about 80,000 Buddhist temples attended by 200,000 priests, Japan is rightly called a Buddhist country. Through the variety of Buddhist movements and efforts toward a revival, Japan of the post-war period has thus experienced Buddhist vitality in various ways. There has grown a deepened religious concern through works of Buddhist scholars devoted to the reinterpretation of Buddhist ideas. There have been increased Buddhist social and political roles through lay people taking a more active part in Buddhist organizations. With the coming of the new-born sects,

there has been a reawakening to the Buddhist social ideal to make up for the faded social ethics of the old traditional sects, and a starting on a new course of the development of political power. So far, the energies of the Japanese Buddhists have been directed "not so much to the revival of the Buddhist culture as to the attempt to preserve and consolidate it amidst the essentially alien and hostile environment of modern life."**

Internationally, Japan's great contribution to the progress of Buddhism cannot be underestimated. Through the works both of the Japanese and of the Western scholars, the message of the Buddha has teen carried to the West. There, in the light of modern studies, the interest has been ever increasing, both in the doctrine and in the practice, especially in Zen psychology and meditation. If a special form of the religion called Western Buddhism is ever developing in the West, it is Japanese Buddhism that has made a great contribution to the process of the development. And it is this contribution that, as a repayment, has helped to keep for Japan a dignified and respected place in the realm of international relations.

***

**. See P.V. Bapat (ed). *2500 years of Buddhism*. (Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India, 1971), p. 401.

SHIFT THE POWER: BUILDING A BUDDHIST TEMPLE COMMUNITY AS A MECHANISM FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL CHANGE*

Jonathan S. Watts**

November 10, 2018

He has helped develop a micro-credit "Future Bank", constructed temples and houses to last 100 years, and is working for a nuclear free Japan to "recover hope within 300 years". Needless to say, Rev. Hidehito Okochi is a forward-looking Japanese Buddhist priest who has been ahead of the times for years. However, with the tsunami disaster of March 11, 2011 and the ongoing Fukushima nuclear reactor crisis, *his time* has arrived. Rev. Okochi has been a socially engaged Buddhist from his teens as a student activist and his 20s helping establish a Japanese Buddhist NGO for overseas aid work. What has differentiated him from most other engaged Buddhists in Japan up to this time has been his commitment to go beyond the emergency aid activities of social welfare and get into the structural and cultural roots of social transformation. Working to transform his own community as much as engaging in overseas work, his agenda has often been too radical for most other Japanese

* This article is a significantly edited and expanded version of an earlier article called "A Futuristic Priest whose Time Has Arrived", published in This Precious Life: Buddhist Tsunami Relief and Anti-Nuclear Activism in Post 3-11 Japan (Yokohama: International Buddhist Exchange Center, 2012). Many of the quotes and comments by Okochi come from an updated interview with him at his Kenju-in Temple on September 12, 2017 with Tom Eskildsen acting as interpreter. Reprinted with permission.

**. Associate Professor, Buddhist Studies, Keio University, Tokyo; Executive board of the International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB)

Buddhist priests to understand or to join in. Yet this agenda is now extremely timely with the political struggle over the future of the country's energy policy as well as its military policy amidst the present constitutional crisis. These urgent issues flow right into Rev. Okochi's long held analysis of Japanese society and his vision for reforming society based on Buddhist values.



Rev. Okochi at his Juko-in Solar Temple

A BUDDHIST PATH TO STRUCTURAL CHANGE

Rev. Okochi, like most Japanese priests, was born in a temple and raised to succeed his father as abbot. However, instead of entering the Buddhist Studies department of the university affiliated with his Jodo Pure Land denomination, Taisho University, he entered the Law and Political Science Department of the prestigious Keio University. Growing up in the late 1960s and early 1970s, Rev. Okochi was strongly influenced by the Japanese student political movement of the era; a movement that is for the most part dead today. Still, his ties to his family temple and his subsequent ordination as a priest, led him to search for the common points in his socio-political interests and his Buddhist path. He says, "Eventually I made the connection between the student movement ideals for political peace with Buddhist values for peace and social

justice, like no poverty and no discrimination. I also eventually saw how environment was connected to peace, and how I could work for society as a priest."

In his 20s, he and a group of other like-minded Buddhist priests took several trips abroad to various regions of conflict, especially war-torn Indo-China. These intimate encounters with the suffering of humanity led them to create AYUS, a Japanese Buddhist NGO focused on supporting small NGOs doing aid work in these areas. At this time, other Japanese Buddhist priests were developing similar concerns and a group of successful, overseas aid Buddhist NGOs sprouted up and continue their work today.[1]

However, these initiatives were not enough to satisfy Rev. Okochi's political sensibilities for social justice. Reflecting on the Buddha's Four Noble Truths, Rev. Okochi went deeper into the nature of the suffering that he had encountered overseas:

When Shakyamuni Buddha gained enlightenment, his first teaching was the Four Noble Truths, that is: first, get a solid grasp of the suffering (the problem); second, ascertain its causes and structure; third, form an image of the world to be aimed for; and fourth, act according to correct practices. From this, one gains a sense of the meaning of life in modern society as a citizen with responsibilities in the irreversible course of time. The suffering of the southern peoples and nature, from which we Japanese derive support for our lives even as we exploit it, has caused the Edogawa Citizens Network for Thinking about Global Warming (ECNG) to think, and therefore we have achieved concrete results. The problem is structural in nature, so by changing the system and creating measures for improvement, we achieve results. The first thing is to fulfill our responsibilities to the people around us and to future generations.[2]

---

1. Watts, Jonathan S. "A Brief Overview of Buddhist NGOs in Japan". Japanese Journal of Religious Studies 31 (2): 417–28, 2004.

2. Okochi, Hidehito. "The Citizen's Strategy for Creating a New World: The Future Starts with Us". New Internationalist Japan. No. 30, Jan-Feb. 2002. http://www.ni-japan.com/we-bold/jbody342.htm. Also on the Juko-in homepage: http://www.juko-in.or.jp/Eactivity.ht-m#sokuon.

Rev. Okochi discovered that the Japanese economic prosperity of the 1970s and 80s was built on the back of the economic and environmental exploitation of both the rural communities in Japan and the nations of Southeast Asia, while piggy backing on the political exploitation of the United States in the Middle East. While other Buddhist priests of his generation may have also seen this Second Noble Truth, almost all have been content in working on the First Noble Truth of immediate suffering through social welfare and aid work overseas. Rev. Okochi has been a pioneer in the Buddhist world of Japan for not only engaging in activist and advocacy campaigns on these issues within Japan—such as his leadership of the Palestinian Children's Campaign—but also for working in his own community to end the complicity with this overseas exploitation rooted in Japanese consumeristic lifestyles.



Longing for the Pure Land; No Nukes, No Arms; Taking Refuge in Amida Buddha

The critical consciousness developed in understanding the global system of economic, environmental, and political exploitation from engaging in the Second Noble Truth led Rev. Okochi to the Third Noble Truth. His endeavor to create a future vision of Japan comes

from his own Buddhist ideals and values. He has drawn heavily on the founder of his Jodo Pure Land denomination, Honen (1133-1212). Honen was the first of the generation of Kamakura Era Buddhist reformers who created a spiritual and social revolution by bringing Japanese Buddhism down to the masses. His teaching of a faith based in the vow of Amida Buddha to abandon no sentient being no matter how deep their transgressions and defilements made salvation and enlightenment possible for anyone, while empowering the common people with a sense of their own social rights and agency.[3] For Rev. Okochi, this means creating a world without discrimination and exploitation, especially one without a military and nuclear presence. This belief led Rev. Okochi to join a group of farsighted Japanese religious leaders to form the Interfaith Forum for the Review of National Nuclear Policy in 1993.

The second aspect of this vision derived from Honen is nurturing community based on trusting relationships and self-reliance. This was an endeavor he set about working on in his urban temple community in Tokyo through supporting and hosting a wide variety of NGOs in a building owned by his Juko-in temple. In one large office space are found:

- a children-at-risk support group
- an indigenous Japanese peoples' (Ainu) advocacy group
- an environmental group for keeping the nearby Arakawa River and its environs clean
- a small political party with numerous women candidates
- an alternative energy and culture NGO supporting the peoples of northern India called Julay Ladakh
- a local credit union called the Mirai ("Future") Bank
- the aforementioned Edogawa Citizen's Network for Thinking about Global Warming (ECNG).

These are further integrated with a host of other citizens groups

3. For more on Honen's teaching as a kind of Buddhist Liberation Theology, see Machida, Soho. Renegade Monk: Honen and Japanese Pure Land Buddhism (University of California Press, 1999).

located in the area in what is called the Edogawa Lifestyle Network. In this way, Rev. Okochi has sought to connect the people in his neighborhood together on important local issues and then connect them to peoples with similar concerns in other parts of the world towards building "global community".

SHIFT THE POWER: TRANSFORMING JAPAN'S ENERGY SYSTEM

1) Building a Citizen's Power Plant at Juko-in Temple

ECNG is an important lynchpin for the wide swath of Rev. Okochi's efforts. It was established in the summer of 1996 in the run-up to the Third Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP3) held in Kyoto in December 1997, resulting in the well-known Kyoto Protocol on greenhouse gas emissions. ECNG members started learning about global warming by first engaging in the recovery of CFCs in their local ward, which is responsible for a high level of such emissions in the central Tokyo 23 ward area due to the concentration of car demolition businesses there. This project led into a deeper investigation of Japan's industrial grid and the generation of electricity. Rev. Okochi explains:

In those days, there had already been various environmental activities carried out in Japan, but the focus tended to be on just personal restraint or frugality by individual effort. Sometimes these activities missed the mark and were not very effective in addressing the problems. In this way, the environmental movements were taken advantage of because they distracted people from the structural causes. Sometimes they became the subject of mockery for being nonsensical, and environmental activists tended to be looked at with disdain. We did not want that to happen in our work. We wanted to find a way forward that is truly rational and would really be effective in eliminating the suffering. This was the basic starting point of our activities. We considered that the first issue to tackle is the emission of CO2 and other greenhouse gases. We then considered where these emissions come from, and it became clear that they come especially from coal and other thermo-powered electrical generation. There is also the problem of the huge industries that make significant amounts of money while emitting greenhouse gases.

As a Buddhist priest, Rev. Okochi was cognizant about how their deepening analysis was flowing along the lines of the Four Noble Truths. Yet he never directly articulated this to the mostly non-Buddhist activists in the group, allowing it to naturally unfold as with all Dharma—a term meaning both the Buddha's teaching and the way of nature or natural law.

In terms of the Four Noble Truths, we paid attention to the First Noble Truth (*dukkha*) of suffering as expressed in the environmental destruction and collapse of rural communities in Japan triggered through the production of dams and nuclear power plants. We considered what our relationship as citizens living in an urban area was to this suffering. Then, we considered the Second Noble Truth (*samudaya*) of the different factors that come together to create this suffering, such as: the construction companies and electric companies who wanting to proceed with multi-billion-dollar projects at any cost; local regions dependent on economic subsidies to host these projects; the politicians who use large amounts of political funding enticed by incentives of several percent to support these projects; and the myopic lifestyles of consumers especially in urban areas. Looking more deeply into social structures, we discovered the stilted pricing system of electricity, an issue that strikes at the heart of our whole economic development policy. Finally, we tried to think about the Third (*nirodha*) and Fourth Noble Truths (*magga*), which is the way to envision and to alleviate or end the suffering. We wanted to come up with an alternative way of being and living where we would be able to be fully responsible for our actions and not be negligent or ignore the suffering created by our actions. Therefore, ECNG made it a goal not only to reduce peak electricity demand and change policy in order to promote the spread of alternative forms of energy, but also to familiarize people with the concept of energy and get communities involved in initiatives. The first test of this was the establishment of the citizens' power plant using solar electrical generation.

The site for this "plant" was none other than Rev. Okochi's Juko-in temple. At the time, the 400-year old temple also required a complete rebuilding, so Rev. Okochi used this opportunity to design a most unusual temple by Japanese Buddhist standards.

Borrowing heavily on Tibetan Buddhist temple design, the new temple contains a number of ecological features. The main Buddha Hall was built on the second floor to maximize sunlight and air circulation and to better adjust the room temperature through Japan's four seasons so as to cut down on heating and cooling costs. The first floor was designed without traditional Japanese tatami mats to encourage easier access without taking off shoes and to make it easier to create various community activities and events.[4]

The new temple style also has a long flat roof, instead of a steep angled roof as with most traditional Japanese Buddhist temples. This design made easier the installation of two sets of fifteen solar panels with an output of 5.4 kW in 1999. It is estimated that 3 kW is enough to meet the needs for the activities of a family of four, so the "power plant" produces a little less than twice this amount. Rev. Okochi explains that the point of this initiative was not to try to start building an alternative form of large-scale electrical generation but rather, in the spirit of Honen, to act as a replicable model to empower individual homes to develop sustainable electrical independence. He further explains:

In those days, it used to cost around 3 million yen ($27,000) just to install enough solar panels for a single household, which now costs half to a third the price. Such projects were very expensive, so we developed the idea to collect donations from enough people to be able to jointly run a solar power generation facility. 50,000 to 100,000 yen ($500-$1,000) per person was the average of the donation for a stake in the project. We tried to collect from a broad

4. On the specifics of funding the temple rebuild, Rev. Okochi notes: "Originally, Juko-in did not have what you could really call a proper temple building, so I had to develop a separate project for this reconstruction. The temple was rebuilt by reorganizing the cemetery to make enough space for an additional 250 tombs. In Tokyo, there is a great demand for burial lots, because the population is so dense and the land is not enough. From the money collected by providing additional cemetery facilities, I was able to finance the temple reconstruction. In previous times, a temple was generally rebuilt from accumulating the donations of the temple members over many years. Before World War II, Juko-in had a number of more affluent temple members who made large donations to help rebuild the temple, but after the war, due to demographic and economic changes to this area, our membership declined to only 20 or so households, who were not affluent. I think it is a unique feature of Japanese temples that they rely on their cemeteries for a large part of their income. People visit the temple not so much out of faith in Buddhism as out of a desire to venerate their ancestors."

range of people in our community, not just environmental activists in ECNG. We also made a mechanism where we would eventually get paid back through selling the power we generated. The ultimate purpose was not for ECNG to make big money by selling electricity. Rather, we wanted to show that there was support for renewable, clean energy in society and that they are people who were willing to share the burden for the future of the planet. We also wanted to make this possible for an average citizen to be a part of and not only by people who could afford to make a large investment for solar panels on their roof. There are other people who live in condominiums or apartments who are not able to install solar panels but also want to support this movement. The most important thing is developing new mechanisms or institutions in society by oneself within a community. Solar power generation is not a self-standing project. You could consider it as part of a larger package, because I place great emphasis on how to connect this project with other activities in different fields.



2) Creating Community Financing Systems for Clean Energy

In this way, Rev. Okochi and ECNG developed another mechanism to raise awareness and increase community participation in financing the 6 million yen cost of installing these panels. The financing involved a multi-level scheme: 1) grants from government foundations and NGOs paid for around 2.7 million

yen; 2) Juko-in Temple funded another 1.5 million yen by prepaying 10 years worth of its electric bills as if it did not have its own source of electricity; and 3) the remaining 1.8 million yen was paid with a loan from a community bank called the Mirai Bank. However, Rev. Okochi explains that if they only relied on the income from the electricity generated by the new panels and sold to Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO), it would have taken fifteen years or more to pay off the bank loan, so 4) they created a final financing mechanism called Green Power Certificates.

Rev. Okochi explains that the Mirai Bank (*mirai* meaning "future" in Japanese) is more of a community bank or an NGO bank than a micro credit bank—although its inspiration came from the micro credit banking systems first developed in Sri Lanka by the well known Buddhist based Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement under A.T. Ariyaratne and made famous by the Grameen Bank and Nobel Peace Prize Winner Muhammad Yunus in Bangladesh. He explains that the bank was created in 1994 by a few dozen depositors who had collected a few million yen worth of money, himself being one of those early investors. These early investors and a few other Japanese felt concerned about having their savings and investments in Japan's huge corporate banks or in the giant, governmental run Postal Savings (*Yūcho*) Bank. The money from these banks has ended up financing many kinds of destructive projects—such as nuclear power plants within Japan or huge development projects overseas like investment in coal mining[5] or arms trade[6] —which are creating a negative legacy for future generations. The Mirai Bank promised to use the investments or deposits only for projects that are good for the environment or beneficial for people in the future. Originally, the Mirai Bank was not necessarily positioned as being a local community initiative in Okochi's district of Edogawa. On the

5. "The top two lenders to coal plant developers since January 2014 were Japanese banks, Mizuho Financial and Mitsubishi UFJ Financial, providing $11.5bn and $10.2bn respectively." Madison Marriage. "Banks criticised for funding coal deals despite Paris agreement." The Financial Times. December 11, 2017.

6. Some of Japan's most prominent financial institutions—such as Mitsubishi UFJ Financial, Dai-Ichi Life Insurance Company, Mizuho Financial, and Sumitomo Mitsui Financial—are involved in funding organizations that make cluster munitions. "Worldwide Investments in Cluster Munitions: A Shared Responsibility". PAX, the Netherlands. June 2016 update.

other hand, its intention was not created to expand all over Japan and collect large amounts of capital either. Rather, it was supposed to be an initiative that would lead to more, similar local initiatives of making alternative banks. There were not that many community bank initiatives in Japan at that time, so by 1999 the capital had increased quite a bit to several hundred million yen as the number of depositors from all over Japan increased rapidly. [7]In this way, the ECNG solar power generation project was considered to be a project worthy for getting a loan from Mirai Bank.

Then, they created Green Power Certificates to not only speed up the process of paying back this loan but to further engage the community. Rev. Okochi explains that in Europe and other places, there are regions that stipulate the obligation to buy natural energy at a higher price than that of energy generated by normal means (fossil, large hydro, nuclear). There are also green power systems, which designate power produced by consumers using clean generation methods and purchase it at higher prices. In those days, Germany had a feed-in tariff system to support the development of renewables in which such electricity was sold at roughly 55 yen per kWh. The ultimate justification for the higher price was that natural or renewable energy does not leave any burden to future generations in the form of nuclear accidents or nuclear waste or other such environmental destruction. In other words, he explains, you are paying all the costs upfront rather than forcing the people of future generations to bear the burden. What ECNG then did was to subtract the price TEPCO bought electricity from Juko-in (22 yen per kWh) from this theoretical price of the natural energy (55 yen per kWh) to arrive at the price for selling their Green Power Certificates (33 yen per kWh). The Juko-in solar panels generate roughly 6,000 kWh a year, so at 33 Yen per kWh, they determined that they were generating the equivalent of 198,000 yen in clean, solar energy. They then sold 200 Green Power Certificates for 1,000 yen each (roughly 30 kWh per certificate), totaling 200,000 yen, to match this amount in clean energy generation and help pay back

7. As of March 2018, the bank has 441 investors with 152 million yen ($1.35 million) in initial investment, 1.21 billion yen ($10.7 million) in cumulative lending, and 40 million yen ($355,000) in outstanding loans. http://www.geocities.jp/mirai_bank/

the loan more quickly.

To better understand the depth of this mechanism, Rev. Okochi explains that at that time, the Japanese power sector had not been de-regulated, so households had no choice but to buy electricity from TEPCO—which not coincidentally owns and runs the Fukushima nuclear reactors. When one buys or uses TEPCO's electricity, one does not know where it is coming from, because TEPCO has stakes in all types of energy: oil, coal, gas, nuclear, even renewable. This includes the electricity from the roof of Juko-in that cannot be sold directly to the community but has to be sold back to TEPCO. The 6,000 kWh that Juko-in generates per year goes into the TEPCO grid, gets lumped together with many other sources of electricity, and then goes out to everyone in some very tiny percentage. By purchasing a Green Power Certificate at 33 yen per kWh, ECNG's supporters are "investing" in or promoting clean energy by supporting the development of Juko-in's and other such community power stations, and in theory, if not actuality, getting some of that clean energy back from TEPCO through Juko-in's contribution to the larger TEPCO grid. This mechanism that ECNG created was a precursor to the feed-in tariff system in Japan and the scheme that become more common since 2011 and is currently being used now between the new independent power producers and consumers. However, Rev. Okochi emphasizes, "It's very important to understand this point that we were not asking them just to pay this additional amount, because renewable energies are more costly. It would be really negative if we were actually planting the idea into people's minds that renewable energy is much more expensive. What we were really asking was to pay upfront costs that would be otherwise transferred to future generations in the destruction of our environment by investing in a change to the present system of structural violence. [8]

Yet a final mechanism of this scheme was a local currency called *Edogawatt,* in which three 10 unit *Edogawatt* bills were given with each Green Power Certificate to use in exchange for baby-

8. "Feed-in Tariffs in Japan: Five Years of Achievements and Future Challenges". Kimura, Keiji. Renewable Energy Institute. September 2017.

sitting, carrying loads, translating, and other small jobs within the community. Rev. Okochi explains that the bills acted like coupons and were an experiment as "an incentive for the creation of a mutual aid society within the community and a tool for deepening interpersonal relationships and trust."[5] The idea was to create a model of accumulating their own assets or capital. This local capital would be circulated within their own community, creating more and more value locally, rather than leaking outside the community—which happens so often now when large chain stores and businesses open up in local communities. The electricity and profits that were generated from the power plant served as a backing for the value of this local currency, like in the past when currencies used to have backing in terms of gold. As they have been able to fully pay back their loans, they have stopped selling the Green Power Certificates and discontinued the *Edogawatt* currency.



The Hottokan Edo Solar Plant #2

Finally, in 2009, the Hatoyama administration raised the buy-back price for such renewable electricity from 28 to 48 yen per kWh. [9]This greatly improved the profits from the solar panels on the

9. "Japan was a world leader in solar energy but has been overtaken by Germany after the LDP government terminated its financial subsidies to households to install solar panels. This subsidy programme to install solar panels began in fiscal 1994 and ended in fiscal 2005 and the solar market has since contracted by 15 percent each year. However, the programme was reintroduced in January 2009…Under the new DPJ government, utilities are obliged to buy back excess energy from households generated by renewable sources, including solar and

Juko-in roof, so that they were able to invest in installing another 10.58 kW on the roof in 2012. In 2007, ECNG also installed 3kW of used panels on the roof of a nearby elderly home, which were then completely upgraded in 2013 with a new set of panels totaling 11.52 kW. ECNG now dubs these two facilities as the Juko-in Edo Solar Plant #1 and the Hottokan Edo Solar Plant #2. According to ECNG [10], the Juko-in panels cost a total of 5 million yen ($45,000) paid from 43 separate investors, averaging about $1,000 per investor. The Hottokan panels cost 4 million yen ($35,000) with 33 investors, again at about an average of $1,000 per investor. The Juko-in Plant's generation averages around 11,500 kWh per year, which at a rate of 42/kWh[11] creates 483,000 yen annually ($4,200) in profits. The Hottokan Plant's generation is slightly higher at around 15,200 kWh per year, which at a rate of 38 per kWh creates 577,600 yen annually ($5,100) in profits. These profits support a variety of activities by ECNG, such as general educational activities, supporting another local temple to install solar panels on their roof, and supporting a special house for children-at-risk in the community. This house runs on used solar panels and recycled golf cart batteries so that it is completely off grid. As the work continues to expand, ECNG announces in February 2017 that the Edo Solar Plant #3 had begun producing power. Located in a parking lot owned by Juko-in temple near Hottokan, its set of 28.8 kW panels is ECNG's largest initiative yet.

3) Reducing Consumption as well as Shifting Production

Amazingly the work does not stop here. As Rev. Okochi previously noted, the community power station is just part of a larger structural and cultural shift to which ECNG and Rev. Okochi are

wind. To encourage more households to install solar panels, the buy-back price will be raised from 28 to 48 yen per kilowatt in this feed-in tariff system." Lam, Peng Er. "The Hatoyama Administration and Japan's Climate Change Initiatives", East Asian Policy Volume 2, Number 1, Jan/Mar 2010.

10. https://www.sokuon-net.org/市民立発電所/

11. On June 18, 2012, a new feed-in tariff was approved of 42 yen/kWh for solar power generators over 10 kW with a declining scale that has dropped gradually to 32 yen/kWh in 2014, 21 yen/kWh in 2017, and 18 yen/kWh in 2018. The rate stays stable for 20 years depending on the year the facility is approved and goes on line, so those who got in early on this system like the ECNG plants make significantly better profits over the initial 20 year period.

committed. Rev. Okochi explains that when they installed the solar panels at Juko-in, one of the goals was to reduce CO2 emissions. Another of the goals was to reduce peak energy demand, an issue that strikes deep at the system of providing mass, centralized electricity. At ECNG, they continued to dig deeper into all the reasons for Japan's massive use of energy from the standpoints of both consumers' daily lives as well as the different institutions and mechanisms in society, especially the big companies. They found studies that showed from 1965 to 1995 the gap between generated electricity used and lost due to various system inefficiencies in Japan had widened by 170%. [12]One of the important causes of this was the increased use of nuclear reactors. Because of the limits of the technology, nuclear reactors must operate at lower temperatures to ensure the safety of the nuclear fuel rods. This cuts their thermodynamic efficiency down to around 30%—some 10% lower than coal-fired plants, 20% lower than gas turbine plants, and 60% lower than hydropower stations.

Another core inefficiency in this process is how the government and big businesses have convinced the public that these giant power systems are needed to guarantee a peak level of consumption, which occurs only in urban areas for a short period of time in the middle of the day, often only in extreme weather, such as the height of summer. These giant power systems are now being seen as increasingly outdated, because they cannot respond to fluctuating demands. Nuclear power is a prime example, because the power it produces is constant and cannot be regulated except by shutting down the entire operation. While renewable energies have been criticized for not being able to provide constant peak supply, they are much more flexible. Further, solar panels generate the most electricity when the sun is at its height and is the hottest, thereby making it a great way to address peak energy needs. Solar power thus reduces the need to construct a large number of dams and nuclear power plants.[13] (For

12. "Supply and Demand of Energy in Japan". Citizen's Nuclear Information Center (Japan).

13. Rev. Okochi has written elsewhere that, "Studies show that such peak or excess periods only occur from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. on weekdays when the temperature is above 31 degrees celsius, which on average comes to a total of 10 hours out of a total of 8,760 hours in the year. The real issue, therefore, is not the need for more electricity but much more efficient manage-

more details on these issues, see Okochi's article "Deconstructing the Myths of Nuclear Energy")

While the community power station is important for creating new environmentally friendly forms of energy production, energy reduction is also essential for reducing peak demand and weakening the forces that legitimize the production of a mass centralized power system. In this way, ECNG engaged in a consumer campaign to decrease the amount of electricity used through the purchase of more energy efficient, electrical appliances. The energy efficiency of key household appliances, especially air conditioner-heaters and refrigerators, has improved drastically over the last decade. Thus ECNG started another project to support local residents to replace their outdated, energy inefficient appliances, especially owned by the elderly in the working class neighborhoods around Juko-in. This project was funded by another community bank, called the AP Bank (for "alternative power"), which was started in 2003 by a musician named Kazutoshi Sakurai of the popular band Mr. Children. In the end, they discovered that with almost a tenth of the amount spent on the solar panels on the roof on Juko-in, they could save 2,000 kWh more than these panels could generate in a year by updating such appliances and products. In this way, through both generating their own electricity and saving on the electricity they do use, Juko-in temple has become a successful model for realizing the final vision of every home becoming totally energy self-sufficient and of a movement to unplug from centralized electrical grids.

REBUILDING LOCAL RESOURCES, LOCAL ECOLOGY, AND LOCAL COMMUNITY

ment of it; for example, changing the current pricing system that increases consumption rates for household use while decreasing rates for industrial use during these peak periods." Okochi, Hidehito. "Deconstructing the Myths of Nuclear Energy and Building a Pure Land without Nuclear or Military Presence". In Lotus in the Nuclear Sea: Fukushima and the Promise of Buddhism in the Nuclear Age. Ed. Jonathan S. Watts (Yokohama: International Buddhist Exchange Center (IBEC), 2013). pp. 176-77.



Temple entrance with anti-war & anti-nuke banner

In his emphasis on connecting projects with other activities in different fields, Rev. Okochi has developed another set of environmental and systemic activities at a second temple he presides over, called Kenju-in, in central Tokyo. In his first experiences in Southeast Asia and through a study tour of Sarawak, Malaysia with ECNG, he came to learn of large Japanese companies, like Mitsubishi, that engage in destructive logging practices, while local timber companies within Japan have gone out of business. Not only has this been destroying the forests of Southeast Asia, but the abandoned mono-culture forests planted in previous years by local companies within Japan are now causing soil erosion, landslides, and a host of local environmental problems—yet another example of large development projects that sacrifice the environment and well being of people in rural areas and future generations for the convenience of urban consumers.

The negative effects, however, are also passed onto urban dwellers. Most houses that are built today by major contractors in Japan use inferior wood from fast growth, monoculture forests. In their construction, heavy amounts of chemical adhesives and finishings are used leading to the phenomenon known as "sick houses" for the respiratory, skin, and other problems they cause

new inhabitants. The entire structure may last only one generation, leaving the family with nothing to pass on to future generations while creating greater profit for the construction companies through planned obsolescence.



Kenju-in apartments with an outer wall of burnt cedar for non-chemical, external insulation

The vision Rev. Okochi and his partners developed to confront this problem is part of the increasingly well-known Japanese *sato-yama* (village-mountain) policy for developing sustainable human communities living in co-existence with forests as well as marine environments (*sato-umi*). As with Juko-in temple, Rev. Okochi was faced with rebuilding Kenju-in Temple. He decided to work with an ecological building company to not only rebuild the temple but reduce its size so that a set of apartments could be included. The building company is working with local lumber companies and marginalized, traditional Japanese architects and carpenters to plant a variety of hardwoods that will enrich biological diversity, avoid soil erosion, and provide a sustainable supply of timber for construction use. The houses they build are not only completely free of chemicals but are built to last up to 300 years. In his ongoing attempts to rebuild urban community, the apartments have been bought by a variety of people with concerns for healthy lifestyles, such as people with allergies and families with small children. As with so many of his other projects, this one has spawned another initiative, a small, completely chemical

free, share house for people with special disabilities established in 2017 in the area of Juko-in temple.

SHIFT THE POWER: EDUCATE, AGITATE, ORGANIZE [14]

All these initiatives are part of Rev. Okochi's ultimate vision of "working with civic groups and building a Pure Land without a nuclear and military presence". While the Japanese government, like many other governments, has used the promise of nuclear power to distance itself from oil dependency and fulfill targets to reducing green house gas emissions, nuclear power has actually been a means to reinforce a top down social order that ensures the profits of electric companies and construction companies, exploits laborers in the plants, [15] and robs communities in remote regions of their independence while endangering their future. Rev. Okochi's notes that his vision of and practices towards a natural energy society would "reverse the social hierarchy" by decentralizing the production and consumption of energy and empowering localities and individuals to better determine their own futures.



14. "Educate, Agitate, Organize" is a slogan developed by B.R. Ambedkar, the great Indian statesman and Buddhist leader who drafted the constitution of independent India and led the civil rights campaigns for the eradication of untouchability in India.

15. For an intimate and disturbing portrayal of this situation well before the Fukushima incident, see the 1995 documentary "Nuclear Ginza" by Channel 4 in the United Kingdom. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JPD_YeOAJys

Since the triple disaster of March 11, Rev. Okochi's Inter Faith Forum for the Review of National Nuclear Policy has been busy offering their churches, temples, and other facilities as shelters for families who want to evacuate the areas around the Fukushima nuclear power plant. They have also continued their advocacy work hosting public events in key regional areas where the government is attempting to restart nuclear power plants. Hoisting a banner reading "Longing for the Pure Land; No Nukes, No Arms; Taking Refuge in Amida Buddha", Rev. Okochi was one of the few Buddhist or religious figures found at the anti-nuclear protests that frequently occurred in Tokyo for the first years after the Fukushima disaster began. Since 2012, he has also begun working with the International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB) to run international study tours of the Fukushima region for religious, social activists in Asia to learn of the problems of nuclear energy development that is threatening their own countries. These connections have given birth the Eco-Temple Community Development Project under INEB, which links like-minded Buddhist temples in Asia to further develop and share know-how in building eco-temple communities like Juko-in and Kenju-in. [16]



16. Rev. Okochi first presented his work at the 2009 INEB Conference in Chiang Mai, Thailand and has since become active in the local JNEB group in Japan while joining the INEB Advisory Committee in 2016.

Still, there is much work to be done in Japan to raise a new generation of ecologically minded citizens with an understanding of the 2nd Noble Truth of the structural and cultural causes of suffering. In June 2011, shortly after the Fukushima nuclear accident, Rev. Okochi participated in a screening of Helena Norberg-Hodge's film *The Economics of Happiness* at his alma mater Keio University. He was struck by the political apathy to these issues, especially the nuclear one, by these students of one of Japan's top universities. He feels that today's young "educated" Japanese seem more ignorant than apathetic about important social issues. They are so consumed by their own career paths and by social media that they do not seem to have time for being concerned about critical social issues. Motivated to take action as always, Rev. Okochi has also gotten involved in a new initiative called the Social Justice Fund. Founded in November of 2011 as the country was in the midst of learning about the corruption behind the Fukushima disaster, the Fund holds interactive seminars for citizens to learn about social issues, often hosted at the town hall near Kenju-in temple. For a nation long known for social conformity and trust in government and big business, this development of critical public opinion, especially since Fukushima, is significant. Unwilling to stay ignorant to the Second Noble Truth, Rev. Okochi has been building a future in Japan that may hopefully be arriving sooner than expected.

KOREA

CHARACTERISTICS OF BUDDHIST TRADITION AND TRANSFORMATION IN KOREA

Ven. Jinwol Dowon*

I. INTRODUCTION

This is to introduce and point out some characteristics of Korean Buddhist history and culture to fellow Buddhists outside of Korea for supporting their understanding of Korean Buddhist tradition and its background. As a Korean Buddhist monk and Seon practitioner, I will suggest them from my understanding and experience a unique aspect of Korean Buddhism, specifically its practical and cultural tradition and transformation.

To help understand the background and basic setting of Korean Buddhist culture, I will first describe some basic settings of Korea to bring attention to the geographical position and environmental condition. Secondly, review the historical outlines of Korea, focusing on the significant Buddhist events and traditions from ancient to modern ages. Thirdly, I will introduce the doctrinal bases of Korean Buddhist culture that have been classified as Mahayana tradition which was mostly developed from Mahayana scriptures.

* Former Chair Prof. of Dept. of Buddhist Studies & Director of Institute of Seon, Dongguk University

Among various Mahayana sources, thoughts of *Avatamsaka-sutra (Flower Ornament Sutra), Sadharmapundarika-sutra (Lotus Sutra), Vajra-prajna-paramita-sutra (Diamond Sutra)* and Vinaya (Precepts) will be briefly appreciated. Fourthly, I will point out emphasis of the traditional major practices of Korean Buddhists such as Seon Meditation, Observing Sutras, Abiding in Precepts and Pure Land Practice or, chanting and reciting. Fifthly, I will review the sociopolitical and cultural characteristics of Korean Buddhist tradition then, finally make a conclusion.

The Korean Peninsula spans about 1,100 kilometers from north to south and lies on the northeastern section of the Asian Continent. Its waters are joined by the western-most parts of the Pacific Ocean and it shares a northern border with China and Russia. To the east is Donghae (East Sea) where Ulleungdo and Dokdo islands are located, and Japan is located further southeast. To the west is Hwanghae (Yellow Sea) or Seohae (West Sea) which reaches China. To the south is Namhae (South Sea) that is opened to the Pacific and where Jeju Island lies. It may be said that Korea is situated in the center of the East Asian countries. Korea encompasses a total of 222,154 square kilometers, almost the same size as Britain. In ancient times, it was the eastern point of the Silk Road which stretched between Western Europe and East Asia in both ground and sea routes. It has been said that Seorabeol (Gyeongju), a thousand years capital city of Silla, was one of four greatest cities of the world in the seventh century C.E., along with Constantinople of Rome, Baghdad of Persia and Xian of China. Gyeongju held about a million citizens and had been internationalized. Because of its location, Korea has 4 distinct seasons: spring, summer, autumn and winter. Summer is hot and humid, while winter is cold and dry with abundant snowfall.

Due to the geopolitical surroundings, Korea has naturally had a close relationship with China and has also taken an international role as a bridge between the Asian Continent and Pacific Islands, particularly China and Japan. Historically, conquerors from the north invaded Korea to attack Japan, and the Japanese also invaded Korea to conquer the Asia mainland. To manage such geopolitical situations, Koreans have been concerned with neighboring

countries in regards to the political economy and socio-cultural matters, as well as religion.

II. HISTORIC OUTLINE OF BUDDHISM IN KOREA

It is known that the history of human activity in Korea can be traced far into the ancient past. For instance, some of the earliest archaeological finds show the Paleolithic remains which indicate that habitation began between 40,000 and 30,000 B.C.E. The oldest Neolithic remains emerged around 4,000 B.C.E. According to *Samgukyusa* (Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms) of the Venerable Ilyeon, Dangun, the first patriarchal ancestor of Koreans, founded Joseon (literally means Morning Flesh), which was the first country of Korea in 2333 B.C.E. At that time, Koreans lived not only in the Korean Peninsular but also around Manchuria and northeast parts of China. Korea, known in the West as "the Land of Morning Calm" is one of the oldest countries in the world.

Buddhism was introduced into Korea from China in the fourth century C.E., during the period of the Three Kingdoms--Goguryeo (37 B.C.E.-668 C.E.), Baekje (18 B.C.E.-660 C.E.), and Silla (57 B.C.E.-935 C.E.). Then Koreans introduced Buddhism into Japan in the sixth century. Before the introduction of Buddhism, the religious beliefs of the ancient Koreans were animistic and shamanistic. In fact, it is known that Confucianism was received prior to the arrival of Buddhism and a Confucian academy was established in Korea as early as Buddhist temples, although it was far from being religious. Taoism was also introduced in the period of the Three Kingdoms but was basically confined to reading the books of Laotzu and Chaungtzu. However, Taoism was not developed and failed to secure its own religious footing in the society and, therefore, only became partially integrated into the native cults. Thus, Buddhism alone thrived as an independent religious movement while Confucianism and Taoism suffered stagnation.

It is recognized that Korean Buddhism reached its apogee in the latter half of the seventh century when Silla unified the Three Kingdoms. Buddhism permeated and inspired every aspect of the country's socio-cultural life--in the fields of the court and nobility, diplomacy and foreign trade, scholarship and the arts, and popular

faith and religious culture--under the influence of Tang China. A host of eminent monks such as Wonhyo (617-686) and Euisang (625-702) appeared in the field of doctrinal studies of Mahayana Buddhism. However, from the end of the eighth century Buddhism began to lose much of its earlier vitality and creativity. Concurrent with these changes in Buddhism was a general political decline that included internal conflicts within the ruling class. During that time Seon (Ch. Chan) Buddhism began to take root in local areas like the monasteries of Gusan (Nine Mountains) and were initiated by Seon master Venerable Doeui who is recognized as the First Patriarch of Jogye Order, as well as the founder of Gaji Mountain Seon School. Its radicalism gradually created tension and conflict with Gyo (Doctrinal Buddhism) and the later masters continuously tried to make harmony between them until the present.

1. Buddhism in Goguryeo

It is known that Buddhism was first officially recognized in the Korean Peninsula by Goguryeo, situated in the north in 372 C.E., the second year of King Sosurim (r. 371-384). This is when the Venerable Sundo (Ch. Shun-tao), a Buddhist monk, sent an envoy by Fu-chien, the king of Former Chin in the north region of China. The Venerable Sundo brought a Buddha image and Sutras from northern China. Another monk the Venerable Ado of the Eastern Chin came from southern China to Goguryeo in 374. Then, the government established monasteries for them: Seongmunsa and Ibulansa respectively. It is said that the Great King Gwanggaeto (r. 391-413) tried to actualize the idea of *Cakravatin* (Universal Monarch who rules by Dharma Wheel) like the King Ashoka in India, and built 9 temples in Pyeongyang. It is noticeable that among many eminent masters of Goguryeo, the Venerable Seungnang (?-615), a master of Samlon (Ch. San-lun, Three Treatise: *Madyamaka-sastra, Dvadasanikaya-sastra, Sata-sastra*), taught in China and influenced Chinese academia; 2 Venerables Hyeja and Hyegwan taught in Japan, and the former became a teacher of Shotoku, the Prince Regent of Japanese court and the principal initiator of Buddhism and innovative governing system in Japan.

2. Buddhism in Backje

It was in 384 C.E. that the Venerable Marananta, an Indian Buddhist monk came through the Eastern Chin, China to Baekje, situated in the southwest part of Korean Peninsula. At the time King Chimryu (r. 384-385) welcomed the master with respect to stay at the palace. It is known that King Asin (r. 392-405) issued an edict that people should believe in Buddhism to get good merits and fortune. He supported Buddhist events and Buddhism became well developed afterwards. It is remarkable that the Venerable Gyeomik of Baekje visited India and brought Sanskrit Buddhist Scriptures of *Abhidharma* and *Vinaya* texts in 526. He translated 72 volumes into Chinese Korean. The Venerable Damuk and Hyein wrote 36 books about the translation and King Seong (r. 523-554) made preface to the translations. In 545, King Seong made a tall Buddha statue and prayed for the Enlightenment of all sentient beings. King Beop (r. 599-600), which means Dharma and law, edified the people to live in Buddhism according to its precepts and prohibited killing not only human beings but also fish and animals. King Mu (r. 600-641) built Mireuksa (Temple of Maitreya Buddha) in which the oldest and biggest stone pagoda in Korea was made in aspiration for Pure Land of Maitreya, the future Buddha. It is noticeable that in 552 C.E. Baekje transmitted Buddhism to Japan by sending Buddha statues and Sutras. King Seong and Wideok occasionally sent many monks and nuns with Buddhist scriptures and technicians to Japan to help to develop Buddhism there. The Venerable Hyechong was a teacher of Prince Sotoku and Venerable Gwanreuk reformed Japanese Buddhist Order and became the first patriarch of Japanese Buddhism.

3. Buddhism in Silla

It is recognized that Buddhism was officially approved in Silla which lied in the southeast part of Korean Peninsula in 527 under King Beopheung (r. 514-540) after the religious martyrdom of Ichadon (Bak Yeomchok), although there had been various Buddhist activities earlier than the event. It is known that Mukhoja, a Buddhist monk from the west region to China, came to Silla through Goguryeo during the reign of King Nulji (r. 417-458). He stayed at the house of

Morye in Ilseon (Seonsan) and was invited to the palace for saving a princess who had been sick but medical doctors could not cure her. However, King Beopheung built Heungryunsa Buddhist monastery at Cheongyeonglim forest in Seoraberl (Gyeongju) and eventually became a monk with a Buddhist name as Beopgong (Dharma Emptiness). His wife followed him and became a nun with the Buddhist name as Myobeop (Mavelous Dharma).

The next King Jinheung (r. 540-576) was a great patronage of Buddhism and made immense impacts on the national culture of the later generations including Pungwoldo or Hwarangdo (Flowering Youth Organization) which was a base of national leaders who study and practice in Buddhist spirit, not only for themselves but for public services. He built many temples including Hwangnyongsa as well as made Buddha statues. He established Baekkojwahoe (Dharma Assembly with a Hundred Chair of Eminent Masters) and Palgwanhoe (Assembly of Buddhist Preceptors for Dedication Ceremony) and Buddhist Sangha system for promoting Buddhism. He also became a monk with a Buddhist name as Beopun (Dharma Cloud) and his wife followed him. He showed his intention to be a Cakravartin by naming his two sons as Dongnyun (Bronze Wheel) and Geumnyun (Gold Wheel). It might be an attempt to enhance royal authority with the idea that the King is a great Buddhist to lead the people to Buddhist paradise. King Jinpyeong (r. 579-632), a grandson of King Jinheung, also named himself "Jeongban" (Shuddhodana) and his wife "Maya" as the parent of Shakyamuni. He took his daughter Seondeok's name "Deokman" from the sutras. It is also appreciable that Kim Yusin, a great military general who took a leading role in achieving unification of the Three Kingdoms, was the head of Yonghwahyangdo (Maitreya Youth Corps) where their spirituality was based on the Ideal of Maitreya, the future Buddha.

It is noticeable that Buddhist master the Venerable Wongwang and Jajang affected people in both Buddhist community and general society. Among their contributions, it is remarkable that Preceptor Wongwang influenced social ethics and morality by giving the Five Lay Precepts (Loyalty for the country, Filial Piety for the parent, Sincerity for friends, Bravery at battle fields and Restraint of killing)

to Hwarangs including Guisan and Chuhang, who belonged to an elite youth corps. He provided the Buddhist spirit and ideas that became the impetus for the unification of the Thee Kingdoms. The Venerable Vinaya Master Jajang (608-686) built many temples and stupas, or pagodas, including Tongdosa and a Nine Story Pagoda of Hwangnyongsa. He was appointed Daeguktong (Great Governor of National Sangha) and was in charge of organizing Buddhism in the country and supervising Sangha nationwide. He emphasized the Buddhist precepts and influenced monastic lives of his time and the next generations. He is recognized as the Patriarch of Yuljong (Vinaya Order) in Korea.

In addition to the Buddhism of the Three Kingdoms, it is remarkable that Buddhism was strong in Garak (Gaya) which was situated between Backje and Silla but opened to the South Sea. However, she was annexed into Silla in the sixth century. It is said that Buddhism was introduced to Garak directly from India, when an Indian princess from Ayudhya arrived in Garak by a ship and became a wife of King Suro (r. 42-199), the first king of Garak. She has been called the Queen Heo Hwangok. This indicates that Buddhism was transmitted into Korea through not only China but also India or South Asian countries.

4. Buddhism in the Unified Silla

It is known that Buddhism was popularized in the Unified Silla with the simple practice of Pure Land Buddhism and spread among grassroots around the country, as well as high developed the doctrinal and meditative Buddhism such as *Avatamsaka* thoughts and Seon practice. It is recognized that the Venerable Wonhyo was the most influential master in terms of popularization of Buddhism although he was an adept of most fields of Buddhism. It is said that he was well versed in the Three Teachings (Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism) without having any particular teacher. He studied and got thorough knowledge of *Tripitaka*. It was a well known story that Venerable Wonhyo had a special experience of Enlightenment on his way to study abroad. He realized at the moment that the whole universe depends on the Mind and everything is of Consciousness only. He gave up studying abroad and practiced alone to establish

his own system of philosophy by synthesizing and consolidating all different Buddhist doctrines into one. Master Wonhyo lived his life as a Bodhisattva, enlightening people by adjusting situations and using skillful means as a manifestation of reconciling and harmonizing spirit in non-duality beyond statuses of the monastic and the secular. It is known that Wonhyo wrote 119 books originally contained in over 260 volumes but 21 books in 24 volumes are presently extant. Among them *Daeseunggisilron-so* (Commentary on the Awakening of Faith in Mahayana), *Geumgang-sammae-gyeong-non* (Vajra-samadhi-sutra-sastra), and *Simun-hwajaeng-non* (Treatise on the Harmonization of All Disputes in Ten Aspects) are most famous and the Venerable Wonhyo has been known as an advocatory Bodhisattva for harmony and reconciliation based on the One Mind, as well as for liberty and freedom of thoughts and life.

The Venerable Euisang is known as one of the twin greatest masters along with the Venerable Wonhyo in this period. He was the founder of Hwaeom (*Avatamsaka*) school in Korea. One of his well known works is *Hwaeom-ilseung-beopgyedo* (Picture of Dharmic Universe, the Underlying Spiritual Reality of the *Avatamsaka* of the One Vehicle), which is also called as *Beopseonggye* (Verses of Dharma Nature) and *Haeindo* (Picture of Ocean Seal). The verses and picture show universality and interpenetration of Dharma nature, or reality in Dharma Realm. The verses have been recited and chanted by most monks and lay Buddhists in Korea up to the present. He lived a simple monastic life and worked to educate his disciples and take care of the people. His influence on Buddhism and Hwaeom thoughts and practice has been maintained around country.

The Venerable Seon Master Doeui is known as the First Patriarch of Korean Seon School, similar to Bodhidharma, the First Patriarch of Chinese Chan schools. In 784, Doeui went to China. He visited Mt. Caoxi (K. Jogye) in Guangdong Province to pay homage to the shrine of Hui-neng, the Sixth Patriarch of Chinese Chan tradition. Then he met Xi-tang Di-cang (735-814) at Kaiyuan Temple in Hongzhou, Jiangxi Province, and received Dharma. He visited Bai-zhang Huai-hai (749-814) at Mt. Baizhang and was praised as "the entire Chan lineage of Ma-zu Dao-yi is now moving to Korea." He

is recognized as the Founding Patriarch of Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism, which is presently the most traditional and largest Buddhist denomination in Korea.

5. Buddhism in Goryeo

Although the Silla dynasty was superseded by Goryeo (918-1392), Buddhism continued to be the leading source of spirituality until the end of the fourteenth century. Nevertheless, despite its external success, Buddhism lacked the inner vitality it had demonstrated in Silla and showed little creative development. During the period of the Goryeo Dynasty, Buddhism dominated society as the state religion, and became politically and financially strong through the support of the court and nobles, as well as privileged by receiving tax exemptions. Moreover, the Seunggwa (Monks' Examination), which paralleled the civil and the military service examinations for the governmental officials, was a great incentive for monks to advance. Prestige was bestowed on monks of the higher ranks as far as to the Wangsa (Teacher of the King) and the Guksa (National Preceptor). Accordingly, being a monk was a respectable career for men of ambition and even for some princes, such as Euicheon (1055-1101) who was the fourth son of King Munjong (r. 1046-1083) and became the National Preceptor.

Since the Monks' Examination was taken separately for meditative Seon and doctrinal Gyo, Goryeo Buddhism became polarized and conflicts rose from this orientation. Therefore, Euicheon and Jinul (1158-1210) were popular for trying to create ecumenical harmony between Seon and Gyo. However, it is notable that the Buddhist canon was carved on woodblocks for the protection of the country during foreign invasions like the Goryeo-daejanggyeong (Tripitaka Koreana). Thus, such materials have contributed to Buddhist studies. It is also notable that Taego Bou (1301-1382) worked to unite the nine Seon schools into one movement and resulted in the Jogye Order. During the Goryeo period, the Palgwanhoe festival was revived to worship native gods while Yeondeunghoe was celebrated for Buddhism. Confucianism stagnated until the later period of the dynasty when Neo-Confucianism was imported and propagated by a host of scholar-officials.

6. Buddhism in Joseon

When Goryeo dynasty changed to Joseon (1392-1910), fundamental changes in the socioeconomic structure and the shift of political power of the country followed. It seems that while China was throwing off the alien rule of the Mongols (Yuan Dynasty, 1280-1368) and recovering its Han identity through the Ming (1368-1644), Korea was also trying to move from Goryeo which was under the domination of Yuan China and Buddhism. The Joseon Dynasty based itself on the Neo-Confucianism of the Sung (960-1279), which was seen as pure and untainted considering its time of pre-Mongol period. Generally it is said that Buddhism declined during the Joseon period due to the Confucian government suppressing Buddhism and promoting Confucianism. However, Buddhist tradition was maintained but the socio-cultural reorientation and the processes of changes need to be examined from different angles.

Among many eminent Buddhist masters of Joseon, the Venerable Hamheo Giwha (1376-1433), Cheongheo Hyujeong (1520-1604), Choeui Euisun (1786-1866) and Gyeongheo Seongu (1846-1912) were remarkable for representing the period. Hamheo was a Seon Master but advocated reconciliation among religions and left behind a number of writings and commentaries on Buddhist scriptures. His Hyeonjeongnon (Treaties on Manifesting Righteousness) compares Buddhist principles and their function in the world with Confucianism in order to defend Buddhism against attacks from Confucians and to seek reconciliation. The Venerable Seon Master Cheongheo is generally regarded as the greatest monk of the Joseon dynasty. Most of the eminent masters of modern Korean Buddhism trace their lineage back to him. Although he studied the Confucian classics at the National Academy in Seoul, Cheongheo became a Buddhist monk at the age of nineteen. Having passed Seunggwa (the National Monk Examination) in 1552, he was appointed to Pangyojongsa (Director of the Doctrinal School) and then Panseonjongsa (Director of the Seon School) in 1555. When

Japan invaded Korea in 1592 he organized and led a militia largely composed of monks to repel the invaders and to save the people. In his *Samgagwigam* (Ideal Mirror of Three Religions) Cheongheo attempted to show syncretism that the three religions (Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism) were ultimately not divergent in transmitting the truth and that the ultimate messages they convey are basically the same. The section on Buddhism in *Samgagwigam* is often published separately as *Seongagwigam* (Ideal Mirror of Seon Practitioners) and is one of the most widely read Buddhist text in Korea.

The Venerable Seon Master Choeui is known not only as a representative Seon Master in the late Choseon dynasty but also as the "Tea Sage," and master of "Three Perfections: Poetry, Calligraphy, and Painting." Choeui maintained unusual friendships and relationships with many prominent Confucian scholar-officials including leaders of Practical Learning, scholars of Northern Learning and Western Learning. It was from here the first Christian students of Korea emerged. In his *Seonmun-sabyeon-maneo* (Comment on the Four Arguments of Seon Schools), Choeui tried to correct misunderstandings of Seon tradition in the Buddhist community. The argument of the book brought lots of attention from the Buddhist community and scholars raised debates that continued about 150 years. It is said that Seon Master Gyeongheo showed himself as an exemplary Seon practitioner as he made special effort to improve Seon tradition through the foundation of meditative retreat community. As a reformer and advocator he tried to make Seon not only practical but also accessible for everyone.

7. Buddhism in the 20th Century, Korea

During the last century, Korea has experienced various changes in Buddhist community as well as in general society. Buddhists have taken many activities in cities and tried to adjust under the social situations. Jogye Order was reorganized and became the largest religious denomination in Korea. Buddhists established new missionary temples in the cities and modern educational system including the elementary school and university. Nowadays there are many Buddhist organizations and activities for people of the society such as welfare services, broadcasting system and

newspapers, hospitals, facilities for orphans, homeless and aged peoples. Among eminent monks, the Venerable Seon Master Yongseong Jinjong (1864-1940), Hyobong Haknul (1888-1966), Goam Sangeon (1999-1988), and Toeong Seongcheol (1912-1993) are noticeable for their unique characteristics and spiritual contributions to the society as well as Buddhist community.

III. DOCTRINAL CHARACTERISTICS OF KOREAN BUDDHIST TRADITION

Characteristics of Mahayana and Seon Traditions

It has been known that Mahayana Buddhism emerged in India around the first century C.E. as a more liberal, accessible interpretation of Buddhism. As the 'Greater Vehicle,' Mahayana is a path available to people from all walks of life - not just the monastic or ascetics. Mahayana Buddhism is the primary form of Buddhism spread in North and East Asia, including China, Korea, Japan, Tibet and Mongolia. Thus, it's sometimes known as Northern Buddhism in contrast with Southern Buddhism which is based on the Theravada Buddhism of South Asian countries, such as Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia and Laos. Mahayana Buddhists accept the Pali Canon as sacred scripture with the Theravada tradition, but also many other works, the Sutras, which were written later and in Sanskrit, Chinese and Tibetan. Mahayana Buddhists seem to differ from Theravada Buddhists in their perspective on the ultimate purpose of life and the way in which they can be attained. Mahayana Buddhists hope to become Bodhisattvas, who have become enlightened, but who unselfishly postpone Nirvana to help others attain it, as the Buddha did. Mahayana Buddhists teach that Enlightenment can be attained in the present lifetime and this can be accomplished even by a layperson.

The various subdivisions within the Mahayana tradition, such as Seon (Chan, Zen), and Pure Land, promote different ways of attaining the goal; but all agree that it can be attained by anyone who puts his or her life to it. The fundamental principles of Mahayana Buddhism were based around the possibility of universal salvation from suffering for all beings and the existence of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas embodying Buddha-nature. Perhaps the

Mahayana form of Buddhism tends to be more religious in nature than the Theravadas. It often includes veneration of Buddha and Bodhisattvas, ceremonies and rituals which sometimes use sacred objects like Buddha and Bodhisattvas images. Some Mahayana schools simplify the expression of faith by allowing salvation to be alternatively obtained through the grace of Amitabha Buddha by having faith and devoting oneself to chanting to the Buddha. This devotional lifestyle of Buddhism is mostly emphasized by the Pure Land practitioners and has been popular in North and East Asia where most rituals relied upon religious bows and chanting of a Buddha's name, of Mantras and Dharanis.

Seon is a practical form of Mahayana Buddhism in East Asia that stresses the practice of meditation as the key to Enlightenment. The term "Seon" is the Korean pronunciation of the Chinese character "Chan," which was a shortened transliteration of the Sanskrit sound *dhyāna,* a meditation practice in India. It has been known in English as "Zen" from the Japanese pronunciation of the same Chinese character Chan since the Japanese introduced it to the West first. In this context, Seon refers to the traditional Buddhist meditation practice in Korea, a way of concentration or contemplation on a certain critical point in order to attain Enlightenment through clear mind as *samādhi* with insightful wisdom. Through this practice, one can make one's mind calm and bright. From that state of mind one can see one's own nature, or "Buddha Nature" which refers to attainment of enlightenment. There are various meanings to refer to Enlightenment in different groups and contexts in society, but in Seon Buddhism Enlightenment means the Awakening from illusion and ignorance as if from a dream or sleep. It is said that when Bodhidharma transmitted Dharma to Hui-ko the *Lankavatra-sutra* was given. Therefore, the *Lankavatra-sutra* and *Vajracchedika-sutra* are to be recognized as the reliable sources of Chan and Seon meditation practitioners.

In general, the characteristics of Mahayana Buddhism are as follows: (1) Universalism - asserts that eventually everyone will achieve Buddhahood or attain Enlightenment. (2) Way of Bodhisattva - the motivation of actively resolving to save oneself and all other beings from Samsara through Six Paramitas or Virtues/

Perfections, (Generosity, Morality, Patience, Energy, Meditation, and Wisdom). (3) Compassion - emphasized in Mahayana, it is based on the spirit of Bodhisattva and Non-duality. (4) Skillful Means - refers to any effective method which aids the attaining of Enlightenment. (5) Salvation - a devotional Buddhism, represented by the Pure Land. It may be said that those characteristics are found in Korean Buddhism, or Korean Buddhists have sought and tried to realize Mahayana ideals. However, Seon Meditation, one of Paramita of Mahayana Buddhism has prevailed in Korea as the most important element for achieving the goal.

Hwaeom Thoughts

Hwaeom (Ch. Hua-yen) in Korean means Flower Ornament which refers to *Avatamsaka*. Its spiritual tradition stresses the interconnection between each individual being and the whole universe. It also asserts that the altruistic spirit of compassion is the fundamental principle of Mahayana. It seems that Hwaeom philosophy has prevailed in Korea, although it was up and down depending on the socio-political and cultural situations from Silla to Joseon. In Korea major line of Hwaeom tradition was derived from the Venerable Euisang although there were many other masters who did not belong to Euisang lineage. Wonhyo also left several works about Hwaeum including *Hwaeomgyeongso* (A Commentary on the *Avatamsaka-sutra*) which has been well known among scholars. He emphasized Ilseung (One Vehicle, *Ekayana*) for way of Buddha to overcome the Samseung (Three Vehicles, *Triyana*): ways of Sravaka, Pratyekabuddha and Bodhisattva. It is noticeable that when Wonhyo, in his later years, was given a wonderfully shaped gourd by a clown, he used to beat it with dancing and reciting a verse from the *Avatamsaka-sutra*, such as "One who is free from everything can transcend life and death." It is said that during the rest of his life Wonhyo wandered around villages and hamlets beating his gourd and reciting Buddhist verses, which popularized at grassroots.

However, the academic and practical Hwaeom tradition in Buddhist Sangha around country was developed and maintained through the Venerable Euisang's disciples and spiritual descendants. His thoughts and works of *Avatamsaka* represented by the

Beopseonggye has been reciting and remembering object among Buddhists for themselves and others. It seems that the Hwaeom thought and spirit of integral perfection and complete universalism based on interdependent and interpenetration have been studied and propagated by most masters, not only doctrinal scholars but even Seon practitioners. In the tradition, the ultimate state of the Enlightened One is characterized by the Ocean Seal Meditation which symbolizes images of depth and boundlessness, the profoundly ineffable character of Enlightenment. It is noticeable that the Venerable Seon Master Jinul appreciated the Hwaeom and tried to make association with the Seon meditation practice.

Beophwa Thoughts

Beophwa is a shortened form of Myobeopyeonhwa (Wonderful Dharma Lotus Flower) and its doctrine and tradition was derived from *Saddharmapundarika-sutra* (The Lotus Sutra of the Superb Dharma), one of the most influential Mahayana Sutras. Beophwa refers to the teachings that the Buddha takes care of all sentient beings as his children and they will eventually become Buddhas. Through the soteriological paths of Buddha's wisdom and compassion, the spiritual destiny of all sentient beings reaches Buddhahood although their capacities are different. The Sutra declares that the Three Vehicles (Triyana - the Paths of Sravaka, Pratyekabuddha and Bodhisattva) are but One Vehicle (Ekayana, the Path of Buddha). The spirit of unification, as the three become one, was one of the deriving spiritual forces for the people of Silla and helped unify the Three Kingdoms into one country. They eventually combined to form the Unified Silla which included Baekje and Goguryeo. The Venerable Wonhyo wrote several books about *Lotus Sutra* including *Beophwagyeong-jongyo* (Essentials of the Lotus Sutra). It is well known that Chinese Tien-tai school and tradition was based on the Lotus Sutra. Cheontae (Ch. Ten-tai) School and tradition in Korea was established by the Venerable National Preceptor Daegak Euicheon (1055-1101) to integrate the various schools and denominations into one in Goryeo. He emphasized Gyogwan-gyeomsu which means that the doctrinal study and meditation practice should be jointly done together in balance.

Banya Thoughts

Banya is the Korean term referring to Prajna, which means Wisdom in Sanskrit. Banya thoughts are base on the Prajnaparamita-sutra (Sutra of Perfection of Wisdom). One of the most well known scriptures of the group is *Geumganggyeong* (*Diamond Sutra*) which is the shorten form of *Geumgang-banya-baramil-gyeong* (*Vajra-cchedika-prajna-paramita-sutra*). The central theme of the scripture is that Perfection of Wisdom can be attained through the realization that nothing exists in and of itself and that all things are like dreams. The ultimate truth of existence is comprehended by the Emptiness (Sunyata). The Perfection of Wisdom involves the cultivation of a non-dual insight into the Suchness (Tathagata). The Venerable Wonhyo wrote about Prajana scripture such as Daehaedogyeong-jongyo (Essentials on the Sutra of Perfection of Great Wisdom). It is said that Chan Master Hui-neng, the Sixth Patriarch of China, attained enlightenment when he heard the reading of the *Diamond Sutra*. The *Diamond Sutra* is one of the most popular books in Korean Buddhism, particularly for Seon practitioners. Many meditation masters in China and Korea have made commentaries on the *Diamond Sutra*. In fact, Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism recognizes the *Diamond Sutra* as its principal scripture.

Jeongto Thought

Jeongto (Ch. Jingtu) in Korean literally means Pure Land which refers to Sukhavati and Ideal World as a Buddhist Paradise. Pure Land Buddhism is based on the Pure Land Sutras which describe Amitabha and Sukhavati. Although Amitabha was mentioned or featured in a number of Buddhist Sutras, the *Larger Sutra of Immeasurable Life* is often considered the most important and definitive. In this Sutra, the Buddha describes how Amitabha, as an advanced monk named Dharmakara, made a great series of vows to save all beings, and through his great merit, created a realm called the Sukhavati. This ideal paradise would later come to be known as the Pure Land. It is remarkable that Amitabha Buddha was not the absolute being as God, but was a human and became a Buddha as Shakyamuni Buddha did. We should recognize that Dharmakara's prolonged religious practices made him a great savior of the world. Pure Land traditions see Amitabha preaching the Dharma in his Pure Land, a region offering respite from karmic transmigration. In

Pure Land Buddhist thought, Enlightenment is difficult to obtain without the assistance of Amitabha Buddha, since people are now living in a degenerate era known as the Age of Dharma Decline. Instead of solitary meditative work toward Enlightenment, Pure Land Buddhism teaches that devotion to Amitabha leads one to the Pure Land where Enlightenment can be more easily attained. The Venerable Wonhyo also wrote about the Pure Land such as *Amitagyeongso* (Commentary on Amitabha Sutra). It can be said that Pure Land thoughts have been popular among grassroots throughout the ages.

Gyeyul Thoughts

Gyeyul means Buddhist Precepts (*Sila* and *Vinaya*) in Korean. It seems that Gye (*Sila*) is more personal or individual and Yul (*Vinaya*) for communal and monastic precepts. Buddhist Precepts refer to ethical and moral disciplines and regulations to help practice well and to prevent wrong doing or happenings both the individual and the communal lives. Thus there are various precepts applying to different status of Buddhist community, such as monk and nun as well as the lay people. The common instructions for all people including the monastic and the lay are the Five Precepts: (1) do not kill or injure living beings; (2) do not take what has not been given; (3) avoid misconduct in sexual matters; (4) abstain from false speech; (5) do not to take intoxicants. For the monastic (*Bhikkhu, Bhikkhuni, Sramanera, Sramanerika* and *Siksamana*) there are stricter and more rules in detail, such as for monk 250, nun 348, and novice 10. These monastic rules are based on *Sabunyul* (Precepts of Four Divisions, *Dharmagupta-vinaya*) which actually belongs to the Theravada tradition. However, there are Mahayanic precepts, called Bodhisattva Precepts, for both the monastic and the lay Buddhists. Bodhisattva Precepts are based on *Beommanggyeong* (Indra Net Scripture, *Brahmajala-sutra*) which consists of 10 majors and 48 minors. It seems that the Mahayana Precepts of Bodhisattva are more ideal guidelines for worldly lives and Theravada Precepts of monks and nuns are more practical regulations for monastic lives. However, Korean Buddhist tradition has maintained both precepts in balance.

IV. PRACTICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF KOREAN BUDDHIST TRADITION

The practical Buddhist tradition means here how the Buddhists tried to actualize and realize their doctrinal ideals in one's life and the community. It is said that Doctrinal teaching is a prescription to heal diseases and delusion, and is a map for attaining Enlightenment. Therefore, it is obvious that without taking one's medication or following the map, people can not be cured or attained Enlightenment as they desire. It is clear that doctrinal knowledge is not enough for moving away from Samsara, but rather practical wisdom of experiences may lead to Nirvana instead. Therefore, practice is most important for Buddhists in order to attain the ultimate goal of Nirvana, Buddhahood or rebirth in Pure Land. However, holding good for the individual and communal, what practice was taking changed occasionally.

Chamseon

Chamseon means, in Korean, Seon Practice or participating in Buddhist meditation. Seon practice has been recognized in Korea as the best among all Buddhist practices to attain Enlightenment. Seon training emphasizes daily life practice, along with intensive periods of meditation. Practicing with others is an integral part of Seon practice. However, focusing on the Awakening or Enlightenment has always been the ultimate goal no matter where or when one is situated, but should always be aware of being in the here and now. According to tradition, Seon originated in India as a transcendental non-verbal Dharma which communicated and transmitted directly by the Buddha to Mahakashapa, one of his principal disciples. It was later taken to China by Bodhidharma in the 6th century, where it was subsequently transmitted to other parts of Asia. It is known that Seon was introduced into Silla Korea by Doeui Myeongjeok in the 9th Century. Though the traditions have spawned numerous lineages, they all share two elements: a metaphysical system postulating that reality is essentially empty and a stress on the practice of meditation.

The characteristics of the Seon tradition have been known as the following four phrases: (1) Without standing on the letters,

(2) It (Mind) has been transmitted outside the Scriptures (the Doctrinal Tradition) (3) Direct pointing to the human mind, (4) Seeing one's true nature as attaining Buddhahood. Those words teach practitioners that they should not attach to scriptures and words, but use them as *Upaya*, or skillful means. In distinction to many other Buddhist traditions, Seon de-emphasizes reliance on religious texts and verbal discourse on metaphysical questions. Seon holds that these things lead the practitioner to seek the direct intuitive apperception of Buddha-nature. Seon can be practiced anywhere and anytime because it is dependant on one's single mind or intention regardless of any particular conditions. It is important to notice that a well known Seon proverb says that when a finger is pointing the moon, "one should not see merely the finger, but the moon." in terms of the ultimate purpose and communication.

Attaining Enlightenment means to attain Buddhahood or become a Buddha (Enlightened One). Enlightenment, or Awakening, refers to know the reality or nature of oneself and the world, as well as the completion of wisdom and freedom from transmigration. Seon is characterized by mental and spiritual discipline, calmness, austerities and effort. Seon asserts, as do other schools in Mahayana Buddhism that all sentient beings have Buddha Nature, the universal nature of inherent Wisdom and virtuous Compassion; and emphasizes that Buddha-nature is nothing other than the nature of one's mind itself. The aim of Seon practice is to discover this Buddha-nature within each person through meditation and mindfulness of daily experiences. Seon practitioners believe that this provides new perspectives and insights on existence, which ultimately lead to Enlightenment. In Chamseon, there have been various practical ways and lineages of the meditation throughout the world. However, Ganhwaseon (Observing Hwadu Meditation) is known as the best way in Korean tradition and was originally derived from Hui-neng, passing through the lineage of Doeui, Taego and Cheongheo. It can be said that Chamseon is the major practice in Korea.

Gangyeong

Gangyeong literally means Observing Sutra which is appreciating the teaching message of the scripture through reading the text.

It emphasises that merely reading the Sutra is not enough, but meditating on the content of the Sutra is also necessary. Therefore, it is said that without reflection reading the Sutras is useless and non-beneficial. Thus the observing Sutra does not simply belong to the Doctrinal studies but also to Seon meditation practice as well. Another practice regarding the Sutra is Sagyeong (Copying Sutra) which means that one is copying or writing the Sutra with concentration or contemplation on the text to purify and calm one's mind during the exercises. Gangyeong is good for scholastic practitioners.

Yeombul

Yeombul means Mindfulness of Buddha through chanting or reciting the name of Buddha or Bodhisattva, such as Sakyamuni Buddha, Amitabha Buddha, Maitreya Buddha, Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva and Kitigarbah Bodhisattva. It seems that chanting and reciting the names belong to the Pure Land practice. However, to meditation practitioners, the chant or recitation with reflecting ones mind is a meditation practice. Yeombul in one's daily life means to follow the life of Buddha or to pray for rebirth in Pure Land. Yeomhbul is popular among grassroots.

Jiju

Jiju means Maintaining Sacred sounds and refers to chanting or reciting Mantra or Dharani. It is thought to be imbued with supernatural powers of Buddha and Bodhisattva. Ju[mun], or Jineon, is known as truthful and sacred words or sentence of Bhuddha or gods, which cannot be analyzed through reasoning. These range from a few syllables to lengthy combinations, such as Ommanipadmehum and the Great Dharani of Avalokitesuvara. It is said that through Jiju, in creative imagination and meditation, one is able to access and develop the power of the various qualities they represent, whether for self-transformation or other purposes. Sometimes Jiju is classified in the realm of Yeombul.

Jigye

Jigye means Maintaining Precepts and refers to maintaining ethical and moral lives based on the Buddhist Precepts. Jigye is good not only for the individual and Buddhist community but also for

societies around the world. To achieve individual and communal Buddhist goal in terms of Nirvana and Buddha Land or Pure Land, all Buddhists should live with Jigye practice in their daily lives for a peaceful world.

V. CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS OF KOREAN BUDDHIST TRADITION

Buddhist cultural tradition here refers to that how the Doctrinal and Practical Buddhism have been adopted and influenced the lives of people including the sociopolitical and arts. In Korea, Buddhism was first introduced to the ruling class of the country including the royal family in the palace and nobility of the court. Then, eventually spread and permeated among ordinary people of the villages in the countryside. During the period of the Three Kingdoms and Goryeo Dynasty (4-14 centuries C.E), Buddhism was the prevailing national religion led by the upper class. However, during the Joseon Dynasty (15-19 C) Buddhism was oppressed and marginalized by Confucian government. Buddhist practical tradition was maintained by the monastic practitioners and its cultural tradition was supported among grassroots. Buddhist temples and monasteries were built in towns and mountains around the country. It is known that 70 to 80 percent of all cultural artifacts in Korea are related to Buddhism, particularly in the National Treasures.

Sociopolitical Aspect

Korean Buddhism has been known as Hogukbulgyo (Buddhism for Protecting Country) and Tongbulgyo (Unified Buddhism) which was based on historical events. For example, regarding the idea of protection of a nation, Buddhism protected and saved the country from foreign invasion, such as from China, Mongolia, Manchuria and Japan. From the Three Kingdoms to Goryeo Dynasty, kings and governmental officers applied Buddhism to be protected the land by the supernatural power of Buddha, as well as to make unity and harmony among people around the country. It is noticeable that Silla unified the Three Kingdoms into one as the Unified Silla based on Buddhist ideology. When the country had big problems, such as drought and diseases, the people held Buddhist

ceremonies to pray for Buddha and Bodhisattvas to overcome the situation quickly. Through Buddhist culture people enjoyed various high quality cultures which included Indian, Chinese and other western cultures of the Silk Road. Many Silla people believed that previous Buddhas, who are thought to have appeared before Sakyamuni, lived in their land which they called Buddha Land. Bulguksa (Monastery of Buddha Land) is one example. Therefore, it may be said that Korean Buddhism has greatly contributed to the country by a protecting supernatural power when the county was invaded or faced a critical situation, as well as by the making unity and harmony among the people.

Religious Cultural Aspect

Belonging to the Mahayana tradition, Korean Buddhists created many highly artistic temples and various things to glorify Buddhism and attract followers. Among those artifacts, many are world famous. For instance, Bulguksa Temple, Seokgulam Grotto and the artifacts of Mt. Namsan in Gyeongju are registered on the World Cultural Heritage of UNESCO. Stone Buddha statue in Seokgulam is one of the most beautiful in the world, while Bulguksa is famous for its artistic stone bridges and twine pagodas, Seokgatap (Stupa of Sakyamuni Buddha) and Dabotap (Stupa of Prabhutaratna Buddha). It is noticeable that *Mugujeonggwang-dharani*, the world's oldest printed scripture, was found inside in Seokgatap. Printed in the early 8th century, the scripture was imprinted by a wooden block. Namsan is known as an open- museum where hundreds of temples, stone statues and pagodas were built on the mountain. It is remarkable that *Tripitaka Koreana* and *Jikjisimcheyojeol,* a Seon Buddhist book of Goryeo Dynasty were registered in the UNESCO World Heritage of Memory. *Tripitaka Koreana* of 81,258 wooden blocks is known the oldest and best Tripitaka in existence today. *Jikjisimcheyojeol* is the oldest book printed by metallic printing type in the world. It is approximately 80 years older than the Gutenberg Bible, the oldest metal type book in the west. Yongsanjae, a Korean Buddhist traditional ritual consisted of music and dance, is also recognized by UNESCO as a World Cultural Heritage. It may be said that Buddhist cultural heritages of Korea were products of Korean Buddhists' expression including their character, spirit,

sensibility, dignity and creativity.

VI. CONCLUSION

From the review above, one is able to recognize that the history of Buddhism in Korea is about 1,700 years long and the doctrinal, practical and cultural characteristics of Korean Buddhist tradition and transformation are remarkable. Considering geopolitical and historical situations of Korea as the center of East Asia and the eastern point of the Silk Road through Eurasia, one can understand that Korean Buddhists might have had much mutual interaction with the foreign countries and various cultural exchanges around the world. I would like to point out the characteristics of Korean Buddhist tradition as follows.

Doctrinal aspects: Korean Buddhism belongs to the East Asian Mahayana, and is based on the thoughts of Hwaeom (Flower Ornament), Beophwa (Dharma Lotus), Geumgang-Banya (Diamond-Wisdom), Jeongto (Pure Land) and Seon (Meditation) Scripts. However, Korean Buddhists have tried to integrate various Buddhist thoughts inclusively into the ultimate goal of their common purpose of attaining Enlightenment and saving sentient beings.

Practical aspects: Korean Buddhists, especially the monastic, have been practicing Chamseon (Meditation, particularly Ganhwaseon), Gangyeong (Observing Sutra), Yeombul (Mindfulness of Buddha), Jiju (Maintaining Mantra and Dharani) and Jigye (Maintaining Precepts). One may practice concentrating on a special item or together with the others depends on one's situation. However, Seon practice has been mostly emphasized.

Cultural aspects: Korean Buddhism is known as Hoguk-Bulgyo (Buddhism for Protecting Country) and Tong-Bulgyo (Unified Buddhism) for its sociopolitical and religious cultural contributions to Korean people in various ways. Koreans adopted and applied Buddhism to protect their country from foreign invaders and to unify societies, as well as to make peace and harmony among people. Buddhism had been the national religion from the middle of the Three Kingdoms to the end of Goryeo Dynasty in Korea (4-14 century C.E.). It is remarkable that 80% of Korea's National

Treasures are products of Buddhist arts.

It can be said that non-Korean Buddhists would benefit by understanding Korean Buddhist tradition for their resources in terms of practice and culture of the global context of Buddhism. And likewise Korean Buddhists to be studying non-Korean Buddhism can do the same. I am sure that it would be good for sharing Buddhist wisdom and experiences with each other beyond national and traditional differences. I believe that Korean and non-Korean peoples need cultural exchange and cooperation for their cultural development and world peace in a global context.

References

Cleary, J..C., *A Buddha from Korea*, Boston: Shambhala, 1988.

Hong, Sungshim, ed., *The Great Seon Masters of Korea*, Seoul: Eastward, 2007.

Kim, Duk-Whang, *A History of Religions in Kor*ea, Seoul: Daeji Moonhwa-sa,1988.

Koo, John H. & Andrew C. Nahm ed. *Korean Culture*, Seoul: Hollym, 1997.

Lancaster, Lewis. R. ed., *Buddhism in Koryo*, Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, 1996.

Lee, Ki-baik, *A New History of Korea*, Seoul: Iljogak, 1996.

Lee, Petter. H,.ed., *Soursebook of Korean Civilization*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1993.

Ilyeon, (Ha, Tae-Hung and Mints, Grafton trans.) *Samguk Yusa*, Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 1972.

The Korean Buddhist Research Institute ed., *Buddhism in Korea*, Seoul: Dongguk University Press, 1993.

The Korean National Commission for UNESCO ed., *Main Current of Korean Thought*, Seoul: The Si-sa-yong-o-sa Publishers, 1983.

AN OVERVIEW OF KOREAN BUDDHISM

Jongmyung Kim*

The purpose of this paper is to examine Korean Buddhism focusing on its history, thought, and culture.

I HISTORY OF KOREAN BUDDHISM

Buddhism was introduced to Korea[1] as an advanced Sinitic culture and thought in the late-4th century C.E. and its fortune primarily depended on the political circumstances from the fourth to the twentieth centuries.

Much like Christianity in sixth-century Europe, for over a millennium from the fourth to the fourteenth centuries Buddhism was the dominant religious force of Korea, providing the social and spiritual basis for the Korean people. Korea saw the golden age of doctrinal Buddhism in the seventh century. Chinese *Chan* 禪 (*Seon* in Korean, Zen in Japanese) Buddhism was introduced to Korea in the ninth century, still becoming the mainstream of modern Korean Buddhism. Medieval Korea, which is equivalent to the Goryeo 高麗 dynasty (918-1392), was the most prosperous period of Buddhism in Korean history primarily under royal patronage and National Masters and Royal Masters were all monks. The characteristics of Buddhism at that time were the holding of numerous Buddhist rituals, the enrichment of Buddhist culture, and the establishment of the philosophical foundation of Korean Seon Buddhism. In contrast, with the demise of the Goryeo dynasty in 1392, the new Joseon 朝鮮 dynasty (1392-1910) put forth anti-Buddhist

*. Associate Professor, Graduate School of Korea Studies, The Academy of Korean Studies

1. Korea is divided into two, the Republic of Korea or South Korea and the People's Republic of Korea or North Korea. In this paper, Korea refers to the Republic of Korea.

and pro-Confucian policies. As a result, contrary to the previous age, the position of the Buddhist community fell to the lowest level and the monks were often mobilized in labor and wars. After the collapse of the Joseon dynasty in 1910, Korea was under Japanese colonial rule from 1910 to 1945 and Korean Buddhism became the victim of Japanese imperialism. With the end of the Second World War in 1945, Korea was liberated from Japan's rule. After the liberation, Korean Buddhism is currently reviving.

II. THOUGHT OF KOREAN BUDDHISM

To examine the thought of Korean Buddhism, the two issues of the discourses on the characteristics of Korean Buddhism and the thought of eminent Korean scholar-monks will be examined. This is because the former issue still needs further discussion and the latter is the largest part of research in the Korean academic circles.[2]

1. Discourses on the Characteristics of Korean Buddhism

The concepts of "Syncretic Buddhism" ([*hoe*]*t'ong* Pulgyo [會]通佛教) and "Buddhism as state protector" (*hoguk Pulgyo* 護國佛教) are the two most important concepts that have characterized Korean Buddhism in Korean academe. While the former is the concept of a philosophical point of view, the latter is the notion of a historical point of view. These two concepts were initially developed by Japanese scholars as significant issues in Japanese Buddhist history and Korean nationalists have adopted them to characterize their Buddhist traditions since Japanese rule..

Attributed to the thought of Wonhyo (元曉, 617-86), the most seminal and prolific scholar-monk in Korean history, Syncretic Buddhism represents the harmonized form of Buddhism that is distinctive from sectarian Buddhism, which is the alleged tradition of Chinese and Japanese Buddhism. The concept of syncretism has become the hallmark of Korean culture and Buddhism since the twentieth century. Throughout Korean history, the fortunes of Korean Buddhism have depended on the attitude of the political leadership and the collaboration of Buddhist circles with that leadership. In that context, the symbiotic relationship between the

2. For the general characteristics of Korean Buddhism, see Shim 1999, 171-82.

state and ecclesiastical orders in traditional Korea has led scholars to propose the idea of "Buddhism as state protector."

There are several assessments of these concepts (Kim 1995a, 23-55; Shim 1999, 173-81). Regarding discourses on Korean Buddhism as syncretic Buddhism, supporters defended the idea in the context of nationalist narratives, critics rebutted the supporters for their lack of scholarly objectivity, and the middle-of-the roaders side with the supporters, but from the different angle. The concept of "Buddhism as state protector" was also not an outcome of scientific research, but that of the historical circumstances and "practical considerations" based on an insufficient examination of source materials. For a better understanding of these ideas, further in-depth research on them is required in the larger context of Asian Buddhism.

2. Thought of Eminent Korean Scholars

The ideological and historical roles of the Flower Garland School (*Hwaeom jong* 華嚴宗) and the *Seon* School in Korean history have varied with the times, but the two have formed the two pillars of Korean Buddhism. Especially, Wonhyo, Chinul (知訥, 1158-1210), Hyujeong (休靜, 1520-1604), and Seongcheol (性徹, 1912-93) were scholar-monks representing each era in Korean Buddhist history and their ideas were also developed in this tradition. Posthumously given the title "National Master of Harmonizing Controversies" (*Hwajaeng Guksa* 和諍國師), Wonhyo lived before the Chinese *Chan* tradition was introduced to Korea in the ninth century. Therefore, he was basically a doctrinal monk, but practiced meditation. However, the other three were all Seon monks who also studied doctrinal Buddhism, but putting Meditation over Doctrine as a way of attaining enlightenment.

Wonhyo's major ideas include that: The one mind is the ontological ground of two aspects of things, the absolute and the conditioned; All theories are free from any limitations, any theory is valid and not contradictory to any other; One should not waste time, but strive diligently to achieve the Buddhist enlightenment from this very moment. Through his works, including the *Treatise of Harmonization in Ten Doctrinal Disputes* (*Simmun hwajaeng non*

十門和諍論), he is better known for his syncretic vision of various doctrinal Buddhist teachings and passionate involvement in Buddhist practice, thus his brand of Buddhist philosophy being termed "syncretic." In his *Formation of Ch'an Ideology in China and Korea*, Robert E. Buswell, Jr. argued that Wonhyo's *Exposition of the Adamantine Absorption Scripture* (*Kŭmgang sammae kyŏng non* 金剛三昧經論) proves that Korea played a significant role in the initial formation of Chinese *Chan* Buddhism (Buswell 1989).

Chinul was the philosophical founder of Korean Seon Buddhism and was given the posthumous title National Master Buril Bojo (佛日普照 Buddha-Sun Shining Universally). He is well known for his efforts to integrate Meditation and Doctrine. He also first introduced the *hwadu* (C. *huatou* 話頭: "topic") method of Seon practice in Korea. These traditions have become characteristic features of Korean Buddhism since then. His major ideas include that: An ordinary person must have a correct faith that he or she is already identical to the enlightened Buddha; Sudden awakening and gradual cultivation is the true path of enlightenment; According to each person's capacity, one can follow any meditative technique suitable for him. In particular, his soteriology of "sudden awakening and gradual cultivation," which was unique to the mature Buddhist schools of East Asia, was well represented in his *magnum opus* Excerpts from the *Dharma Collection and Special Practice Record with Personal Notes* (*Pŏpchip pyŏlhang rok chŏryo pyŏng ip sagi* 法集別行錄節要幷入私記), has become the hallmark of Korean Seon Buddhist tradition up to the present and his system of instructing Seon monks became the model of all later Korean Buddhist monastic institutions (Buswell 1983; Keel 1984; Shim 1999).

Better known in Korea as Seosan Daesa (西山大師 Great Master Seosan), Hyujeong was the preeminent Seon monk during the ani-Buddhist Joseon dynasty. He has been described as the grandfather of modern Korean Buddhism. Legitimacy through lineage was a newly established system in the mid-Joseon era and it is from Hyujeong that the rest of the subsequent lineage of Joseon Buddhism derives. He also established a family tradition that has lasted to the present day. However, he was not just a Seon master in a narrow sectarian sense, but his career encompassed both esoteric

and Pure land practices. In his major works, including the *Mirror of the Three Teachings* (*Samga kwigam* 三家龜鑑) and the *Mirror of the Meditation School* (*Seon'ga kwigam* 禪家龜鑑), Hyujeong advocated the unity of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Daoism, and the integration of Meditation and Doctrine. His major ideas are as follows: The essential teachings of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Daoism are the same; Meditation is the Buddha's mind, and doctrine is the Buddha's words; Meditation is better than doctrine as a way of finding truth; Everyone possesses the potential for salvation. Hyujeong's thought has little effect on the Korean society of his time, when was the age of anti-Buddhism and pro-Confucianism. However, his idea of harmonization among religions affected the new religions that arose in Korea since the nineteenth century, and his thought of the integration of meditation and doctrine has had a profound impact on the contemporary Korean Buddhist tradition. (Kim 1995b, 418-21; Kim 2017, 7-34).

A representative figure of modern Korean Buddhism and the former Supreme Patriarch of the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism 大韓佛教曹溪宗, the mainstream of Buddhism in contemporary Korea, Seongcheol was a reform-minded thinker and advocated the meditative method of "sudden enlightenment and sudden cultivation." He challenged the long-held tradition of Chinul's sysncretism as heretical, claiming that only sudden-awakening sudden-cultivation through the *hwadu* investigation is the orthodox practice of Seon Buddhism. According to Seongcheol, Chinul's soteriology is a gradualist theory and his sudden enlightenment does not mean enlightenment by verification, but understanding awakening, thus preventing practitioners from attaining compete enlightenment. His attack on Chinul brought the "sudden/gradual" debates in Korean Buddhism on the Zen doctrine of enlightenment and practice. These debates have provided a rare opportunity for Buddhist scholarship to engage in philosophical discourse on the legacy of Zen doctrine of enlightenment and practice in contemporary milieu. However, one of the striking features of these debates is that the arguments presented in them lack a fully shared context in which an effective discourse can take place. What is required for further progress in this debate is methodological reflections on the

scholarly tasks, namely, what they are doing and how they are doing it (Yun 1994, 94).

In short, Korean Buddhist thought has had a long tradition of harmonization among various ideological traditions and in Korean history, the close relationship between the state and the Buddhist community resulted in the concept of "Buddhism as state protector." However, these two concepts that haver characterized Korean Buddhism are now under criticism. The Seon Buddhist tradition that embraced doctrinal teachings has so far been the mainstay of Korean Buddhism, but discourses on the methods of attainting enlightenment are still in progress in the Korean Buddhist community. In addition, Korean Buddhist thought has belonged to the Mahāyāna Buddhist tradition transmitted from China, but it raises the need for more in-depth understanding of early Buddhism, which developed until 100 years after the death of the Buddha.

III. CULTURE OF KOREAN BUDDHISM

Buddhist culture constitutes an integral part of Korean culture. It accounts for more than fifty per cent of national treasures, more than forty per cent of tangible cultural assets, and fifty per cent of treasures designated by the Korean government.[3] In particular, Buddhist practice, Buddhist world heritage properties, and the Temple Stay Program are representative Buddhist cultures in contemporary Korea.

Buddhist Practice

Buddhist practice in Korea includes meditation, recollection of the Buddha's names, chanting, and Buddhist events. Among these, meditation and Buddhist rituals have a long history and are also important in modern Korean Buddhism.

Ganhwa Seon Practice

Ganhwa Seon 看話禪 (*Kanhua Chan* in Chinese: "Keyword Meditation") originated in China and made its way into Korea and Japan, establishing as one of the major Buddhist practices in East Asia. At present Korea is the only country which correctly preserves

3 For an introduction to the Jogye Order, see Kim 2004, 158-59.

the original tradition of the Keyword Meditation (IS 2011, 16) and it constitutes the main Buddhist practice in contemporary Korea.[4]

Buddhist Rituals

Buddhist rituals have been an integral part of Korean Buddhism since its introduction to Korean soil. Their fate depended on the circumstances of the times, mainly the wishes of the monarch and the political situation. Especially, during the Goryeo dynasty, more Buddhist rituals were held during this period than at any other time in Korean history, a frequency also unsurpassed in China or Japan. Among more than 100 kinds of Buddhist rituals, the Assembly of Eight Prohibitions (*P'algwan hoe* 八關會) and the Lantern Festival (*Yŏndŭng hoe* 燃燈會) were the most important Buddhist rituals under royal auspices. The eight prohibitions originally referred to the eight Buddhist precepts that regulated proper actions of cultivators and lighting lanterns was a way of cultivation of one's mind. However, in Korea, the two rituals incorporated traditional customs, accompanied by music and dance, and aimed at the longevity of the king and worship of the royal family's ancestors. (Kim 1994; Kim 2001) With the founding of the new Joseon dynasty, the two rituals under royal auspices were abolished or changed into folklore and instead, the Ritual for the Lonely Soul of Water and Land (*Suryuk chae* 水陸齋) was the only Buddhist ritual that had been performed with a high frequency throughout the anti-Buddhist Joseon dynasty. (Kim 2015) Except for Buddhist services in Korean monasteries,[5] the Lantern Festival on the Buddha's Birthday (*Pul'anil Yŏndŭng hoe* 佛誕日燃燈會) and the Ritual on Vulture Peak (*Yŏngsan chae* 靈山齋) (Kim 2014) constitute the representative Buddhist rituals of modern Korea.[6]

Registered in the national intangible cultural asset list of South Korea, the Lantern Festival on the Buddha's Birthday is held on the eighth day of the fourth month in the lunar calendar, early May in solar calendar and a week earlier than the day of Vesak, and the fes-

4. For an exploration of Korean heritage properties, refer to http://english.cha.go.kr/html/HtmlPage.do?pg=/classfication/classification.jsp&mn=EN_02_01 (accessed April 12, 2019).

5. For the practice of Son meditation in Korea, see Buswell 1992, pp. 149-60.

6. For principal chants used in Korean monasteries, refer to Buswell 1992, 229-42.

tival day has been a national holiday since 1975. Managed by the monastic circles of Korea and participated by monastics, lay Buddhists, non-Buddhists, important political figures, and foreigners, this festival is noted for popular street parades and large displays of lotus lanterns. Unique to Korea and registered in the UNESCO intangible heritage of humanity list, the Ritual on Vulture Peak is the greatest of all Buddhist rituals in contemporary Korea, accompanied by elaborate Buddhist music, dance, and painting.

While functioning as events of people around the world, these Buddhist rituals are also challenged in that they tend to have commercialism and politics beyond their original meaning.

World Heritage Properties

The Republic of Korea is a nation of world heritage properties and as of 2019,[7] she has forty-nine UNSCO world heritage properties, including thirteen World Heritage, twenty Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, and sixteen Memory of the World. In particular, Korea holds the greatest number of Memory of the World properties among all Asian nations, showing that Korea is a country of knowledge recognized by the world. In addition, there are six Buddhist world heritage properties in Korea: Buddhist properties in the Gyeongju Historic Areas, the Buddha Land Monastery (Bulguk-sa 佛國寺), the Stone Buddhist Grotto (Seokkur-am 石窟庵), the Depositories for the *Korean Buddhist Canon*, (Janggyeong panjeon 藏經板殿), the *Korean Buddhist Canon* (*Goryeo taejanggyeong* 高麗大藏經), and the *Chikji*. (直指, lit. Directly Pointing at [Human Mind]).

Among these, the *Korean Buddhist Canon* and the *Jikji* are registered in the Memory of the World list. The former is the second Korean edition of the Chinese canon of Buddhist literature created on more than 80,000 wooden printing blocks in the mid-thirteenth century and served as the *textus receptus* for the Japanese *Taishō* edition of the tripiṭaka (*Taishō shinshū daizōkyō*大正新修大藏經, 1921-34), which is today most widely used for research on East Asian Buddhism, and the modern Chinese counterparts.

7. For Buddhism in contemporary Korea, see Buswell 1992, 21-36.

(Kim 2002) The *Jikji* is a Korean Zen text published in 1377 and is the world's oldest extant metal type printing, seventy-eight years earlier than Johannes Gutenberg's (1400-68) *42-Line Bible* in 1455, preserved in Bibliothèque nationale de France (Reverend Baegun 2005; Kim 2018, 149).

The Temple Stay Program

The mainstream of modern Korean Buddhism is Seon Buddhism and the Jogye Order represents this Buddhist school. The Temple Stay Program is very young and is a unique experience program for a better understanding of Korean traditional culture and Buddhism. It was created by the Korean government under the cooperation of the Jogye Order, for foreign tourists in 2002, when the World Cup games were held in Korea together with Japan. This interplay between tourism and Buddhism in Korea is at the core of the Temple Stay Program itself to this day (Kaplan 2007, 10). Major Korean monasteries are now running this program. The Temple Stay Program includes ceremonial services, chanting, meditation, a tea ceremony, some community work, and Buddhist meals, and there are several kinds of programs: the one-day program designed for those who have a busy lifestyle, but want to experience Korean temple life within a short period of time, the experience-oriented program looking for an opportunity to experience the Korean monastic life, and the rest-oriented program for renewed energy.

IV. KOREAN BUDDHISM IN THE MODERN WORLD

The tradition of Buddhism as a religion for good fortune continues mainly among laywomen, who are mainstream Buddhists, in contemporary Korea. However, in modern Korean society, people's interest in Buddhism is increasing and academic activities are also becoming relatively active.

Buddhist monasteries are offering Buddhist subjects for lay Buddhists and ordinary cultivators are more and more paying attention to Buddhism as "a life education system." Nevertheless, considering the glory of Buddhism and its significant role in Korean history, the Korean academic community's interest in Buddhist studies is still not great. This has left Korean intellectuals almost ignorant of

Buddhism,[8] and Buddhist studies also remains a peripheral study, a result of the Korean government's Western-oriented education policy. There are about 350 colleges and universities in Korea. Only dozens of them, including those founded or sponsored by the Buddhist community, at most are offering courses on Buddhism.

The study of Korean Buddhism by Korean scholars were possible only after the middle of the twentieth century, and especially since the 2000s, it has shown remarkable growth in the number of researches. Although some Japanese scholars were interested in Korean Buddhism during the Japanese colonial period, Korean Buddhism remained an isolated tradition in Korea at least until the 1950s. It was in the 1960s that Korean Buddhism became known to Western academia beyond the Asian region. Peter H. Lee's English translation of a Korean Buddhist text, *Lives of Eminent Korean Monks*, which was published by Harvard University Press in 1969, was the starting point of Korean Buddhist studies in the global village. While Lee is a specialist in Korean and comparative literature, the Buddhist scholar Lewis R. Lancaster is the initiator of Korean Buddhist studies in the West. Robert E. Buswell, Jr., one of Lancaster's students, is the founder of Korean Buddhism in the West and is the most prominent Korean Buddhist expert abroad, publishing numerous influential research achievements and producing not only Korean Buddhist scholars, but also Asian Buddhist scholars. His works (Buswell 1989; Buswell 2005) prove that Korean Buddhism also played a significant role in the formation and development of Chinese Buddhism. In addition, his another work (Buswell 1992) shows that modern Seon monastic life in Korea offers a valuable counterparadigm to the usual Western portrayals of Zen. Students under the guidance of Lancaster and Buswell are now flourishing as experts in the field of Buddhist studies in both Korea and overseas. Although Korean Buddhism still remains a peripheral study at home and abroad, it is open to the world and illustrates the potential to contribute to improving the quality of human life.

CONCLUSION

8. For details, refer to http://english.cha.go.kr/cop/bbs/selectBoardList.do?bbsId=BBSMSTR_1205&mn=EN_03_01&ctgryLrcls=CTGRY209 (accessed April 13, 2019).

Since its introduction to Korea in the fourth century, Buddhism in Korea has primarily functioned as an object of faith for the fulfillment of secular wishes. In this context, until the mid-twentieth century, the fate of Korean Buddhism varied with the times and depended largely on the political situation. However, Korean Buddhism is now reviving in a democratic society in the twenty-first century. Taking Seon Buddhism as its mainstay, modern Korean Buddhism is proud of its distinctive ideas and rich Buddhist cultures even in the danger of modernization and commercialization. Although Korean Buddhism still remains a peripheral study at home and abroad, it is open to the world and illustrates the potential to contribute to improving the quality of human life.

***

Bibliography

Buswell, Robert E., Jr. 1989. *The Formation of Ch'an Ideology in China and Korea: The Vajrasamadhi-Sutra A Buddhist Apocryphon*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989.

Buswell, Robert E., Jr., ed. 2005. *Currents and Countercurrents: Korean Influences on the East Asian Buddhist Traditions*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Buswell, Robert E., Jr., tr. 1983. *The Korean Approach to Zen: The Collected Works of Chinul*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

http://english.cha.go.kr/html/HtmlPage.do?pg=/classfication/classification.jsp&mn=EN_02_01

http://english.cha.go.kr/cop/bbs/selectBoardList.do?bbsId=BBSMSTR_1205&mn=EN_03_01&ctgryLrcls=CTGRY209

IS: Institute for the Study of the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism, Dongguk Univ., ed. 2011. *Ganhwa Seon, Its Principles and Structure*, The 2nd International Conference on Ganhwa Seon, August 20-21.

Kaplan, Uri. 2007. "Simulations of Monasticism: The Temple Stay Program and the Re-branding of Korean Buddhist Temples," M.A. Thesis, Graduate School of International Studies, Yonsei University.

Keel, Hee-Sung. *CHINUL: The Founder of the Korean Seon Tradition*. Berkeley Buddhist Studies Series, 1984.

Kim, Jongmyung (Jong-myung, Jong Myung). 1994. "Buddhist Rituals in Medieval Korea (918-1392)," Ph.D. dissertation, University of California at Los Angeles.

____. 1995a. "Chajang (fl. 636-650) and 'Buddhism as National Protector' in Korea: A Reconsideration." In *Religions in Traditional Korea*. Ed. Henrik H. Sørensen. SBS Monographs Number 3. Copenhagen, Denmark: University of Copenhagen, pp. 23-55.

____. 1995b. "Hyujŏng." In *Great Thinkers of the Eastern World*. McGreal, Ian P., ed. New York: HarperCollins*Pulishers*, pp. 418-21.

____. 2001. *Han'guk chungse ŭi Pulgyo ŭirye* (Buddhist Rituals in Medieval Korea). Seoul: Munhak kwa chisŏngsa.

___. 2002. "The *Tripitaka Koreana*: Its Computerization and Significance for the Cultural Sciences in a Modern Globalized World." In *Korea and Globalization Politics, Economics and Culture*, edited by James Lewis and Amadu Sesay. London, England: RoutledgeCurzon, pp. 154-81.

___. 2004. "CHOGYE SCHOOL." In *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, Volume One. Robert E. Buswell, Jr. ed. New York: Macmillan Reference USA, pp. 158-59.

__. 2014: November 5-7: "*Yeongsanjae* as a Seon/Zen Buddhist Practice in Contemporary Korea: An Analysis," paper presented at the 7th World Congress of Korean Studies, Honolulu, University of Hawaii at Manoa.

____. 2015: July 14-16: "The *Suryuk chae* Ritual in Early Choson Korea and Its Buddhist Philosophical Implications," Prague Symposium on Buddhist Rites of Death, Charles University in Prague, Cz.

____. 2017. "The Seon Monk Hyujeong and Buddhist Ritual in Sixteenth-Century Korea," *Korea Journal* 57-1: 7-34.

___. 2018: "Korea's Possible Contribution to the Printing Technology in Europe: A Historical Survey," *Hualin International Journal of Buddhist Studies*, 1.1: 147-88.

Lancaster, Lewis. R. 1979. *The Korean Buddhist Canon: A Descriptive Catalogue*. Berkeley . Los Angeles·London: University of California Press.

Lee, Peter H., tr. 1969. *Lives of Eminent Korean Monks*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1969.

Reverend Baegun. 2005. *The Essential passages Directly Pointing at the Essence of the Mind*. Translated by John Jorgensen and Eun-su Cho. Seoul: Jogye Order Publishing.

Ryu, Sŏngmin. 2013. "Chonggyo chok munmaeng kwa chonggyo kyoyuk" (Religious Illiteracy and Religious Education), Han'guk chonggyo munhwa yon'guso *news letter* No. 288. November 12.

Shim, Jae-ryong. 1999. *Korean Buddhism Tradition and Transfor-*

mation. Seoul: Jimoondang Publishing Company.

Yun, Woncheol. 1994. "On the Theory of Sudden Enlightenment and Sudden Practice in Korean Buddhism: Texts and Contexts of the Subitist/Gradual Debates Regarding *Sŏnmun chŏngno*," Ph.D. dissertation, State University of New York at Stony Brook.

MEXICO

AN OVERVIEW OF BUDDHISM AND BUDDHISTS IN MEXICO*

by Ezer R. May May**

INTRODUCTION

The study of Buddhism in Mexico is nascent due to the preponderant interest by Pentecostals and para-Protestants. Buddhism is still not recognized as a legitimate subject of study for two main reasons: a) the small number of people who self-identify as Buddhist in the census and b) their reduction to the *New Age* sphere, that is, their presence in Mexico only ranks as bits of the "religious menu". For example, the book *Atlas de la Diversidad Religiosa en* México dedicates a section to Buddhism (Gutierrez, 2007), which exposes only its primeval history and doctrine, reproducing the Indian image of it, without considering its own diversity.

The aim here is to present a broad historical and contemporary profile of Buddhism in Mexico. In the first part I address the historical aspect with reference to Asian immigrations, the intellectual reception and the emergence of Buddhist institutions. Then, I examine the socio-demographic profile of Buddhists in Mexico. Finally, I

*. I thank Dr. Andrew Chesnut for the revision and correction of this essay.

**. E-mail: ezer.may@hotmail.com. Social Anthropologist trained at Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán (UADY) and trained as an Historian at Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social-Peninsular (CIESAS-Peninsular). May's main fields of study focus on religious minorities in Mexico, especially Protestants and Buddhists about which he has published articles in academic journals, as "Buddhism in Mexico" in *Encyclopedia of Latin American Religions* in 2015 by Springer (online version) and "Soka Gakkai en México" in *Diccionario de religiones en América Latina* (2018) by FCE/COLMEX.

conclude with an overview of the presence of Buddhism in Mexico.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF BUDDHISM IN MEXICO

Buddhism of Immigrants

The contact between Mexico and the East dates back to 16th century. Travelers to these lands also bore a Latin American Orientalism which in the 18th century dominated the image of "Eastern Despotism." In many of the writings of Latin American is the vision of a lower East (Taboada, 1998; Hincapié, 2001). This point is important because it determined the particularities of Asian immigration in Mexico.

This migration begins at the end of the nineteenth century; the Chinese in 1875 and the Japanese in 1897, who were concentrated in the north of Mexico (Shicheng, 2007; Ota, 1982). Diaz Covarrubias (1876) responsible for the travel of the Mexican Astronomical Commission in 1876, said that the Chinese immigration was inconvenient for Mexico due to their deep-rooted and unmodifiable habits; in contrast with the affable, polite and docile Japanese to accept all kinds of culture. Mexican officials described the Chinese as "cowards" and "servile". The construction of Mexican nationalism led certain revolutionary groups to organize anti-Chinese movements (Gomez Izquierdo, 1991). In term of religion of the Chinese it is thought that most of them were Confucian, which is likely because Buddhism was practiced more among the educated and upper classes of China.

Meanwhile, the first wave of Japanese immigrants brought Shinshu Buddhism belonging to the Honpa Hongwanji (Okubo 1991) and mostly exported Shintoism. The external demonstrations did not become public until before the Second World War. Between 1890 and 1940, of the 401 records of Japanese entry to Mexico, 343 declared themselves to be Buddhists (Ota, 1982).

Several factors explain the scant impact of immigrant or ethnic Buddhism in Mexico. First is the vision of inferiority of the Asians. Secondly, the interest of Chinese and Japanese to live in the United States with little interest in emigrating to Mexico, unlike Japanese immigrants in Brazil and Peru. Third, the religious

manifestation reduced to the domestic area. Fourth, the ritual expressions corresponded more to Shinto than to Buddhism. However, Japanese Buddhism prevailed due to the profile of the immigrants and their greater acceptance in Mexico.

The Buddhism of the Intellectuals

In the early days of Buddhism in the West, tit was defined as a textual object without context (Baumann, 2001). In this sense, it is important to understand that the Buddhism that arrives among the Central American and Mexican intellectuals is Western, characterized by rationalism, universalism and pragmatism. Specifically, in Mexico we can see Buddhist references with two intellectuals of two different times.

The first was Amado Nervo in the Porfirian period. His poems combine Christian and Buddhist concepts, the former predominating, as transmigration in the book *Místicas* (1898/1973). But, these words in his poems are associated with India. The book *Serenidad* (1914) presents two poems, "Renunciación" and "¡Quién sabe!", which he speaks in the first about detachment from desire and in the second about the multiple past lives. The pessimistic tone on past lives is remarkable, considering the Brahmanical dogma horrible. Obviously, there is a theosophical influence, at least in the need to carry out a dialogue with Christian thought in the literary field.

Eastern and Buddhist thought in the Central American intellectual field is framed in the arrival of Theosophy at the beginning of the Twentieth Century, which established a network of intellectual promoters of the regenerationism, Pan-Americanism, unionism and the mixed-race philia (Devés and Melgar, 2007; Casaus, 2011), in which José Vasconcelos was one of the pillars.

In the works *El monismo aestético* (1918) and *Estudios indostánicos* (1938), Vasconcelos set in dialogue between Christianity and Buddhism, found at the crossroads of knowledge that eastern philosophy was adequate for its current, but insufficient to completely abandon the Christian religion (Vasconcelos, 1918). According to him, the contradictions of both belief systems would be resolved by affirming that Jesus Christ is a Buddha (1918: 74, 81). Later he expressed that Christianity is superior to Buddhism; if Weber

believed that the problem of theodicy is remedied with the notion of Karma, Vasconcelos writes that "the appearance of Jesus to becoming necessary, therefore, imperative the brought the divine impulse that men needed to accelerate their progress by the rough and ruthless trails of Karma; that momentum is the grace" (Vasconcelos, 1938).

Vasconcelos concluded that Christianity would improve with the adoption of the Bhuddhist message, and that Buddhism should accept Christianity as the essence of the prophecies of the historical Buddha. However, I agree with "the tendency of the Theosophy when using the Eastern tradition and to deform them to transmit messages very own" (Taboada, 2007), therefore the intellectual image of Buddhism was the Hindu and theosophical, as expressed in Nervo's poems and Vasconcelos's books.

The Emergence of Buddhist Groups

There are 13 Buddhist groups and 48 ministers of worship (mostly Mexicans) registered in the *Secretaría de Gobernación*.* But recent web directories list more than 150 groups, both headquarters and branches, in which the Tibetan variety predominates. We noticed that Buddhism in Mexico still refuses to be identified as religious, but rather as cultural-philosophical.**

Since the end of the 1950s, two transitions of Buddhism have occurred in Mexico: 1) the move from intellectualism toward actual practice and 2) from a membership shape only among Asian immigrants to one of non-Asians. In 1957, the community of Mexican psychoanalysts under the tutelage of Erich Fromm held the first seminar of Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis under the auspices of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), and the main results were published in 1960 *Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis* of Suzuki and Fromm (Derbez, 1981; Fujiwara, 1998).

In 1967 the Zen monk Ejo Takata arrived in Mexico, by chance contact with disciples of Fromm, who helped to estab-

*. The Ministry of the Interior (Secretaría de Gobernación) provides online the list of registered associations as religious, this database was updated on 10-31-2014. Source: www.asociacionesreligiosas.gob.mx [consulted the 11-03-2014].

**. Source: www.budismoenmexico.com.mx [consulted the 11-03-2014].

lish two *Zendos* in the city, the majority of his students came from educated classes. Meanwhile the Catholic Church made advances toward interfaith outreach.

An ecumenical service held in the Olympic Stadium (10 October) had a "Prayer for Peace" as its Motif. Speakers during the service included Archbishop Miranda, Rabbi Meir Masliah Melamed, Methodist Bishop Alejandro Ruiz Munos, and Ejo Takata, a Japanese Zen Buddhist, whose talk was read in Spanish by a Japanese women translator (*The Tablet*, 1968: 22).

The establishment of the first *Sangha* reflects the change of Buddhism as a textual object to a psychoanalysis text within a context of meditative practice. Takata and several of his followers founded the Institute of Ryodoraku Acupuncture in 1974; this was the beginning of the dissemination Zen in Mexico via importation. In 1979 Taizan Maezumi comes to Mexico from United States at the request of Mexican psychologists, who in 1986 founded *Centro Zen de Mexico* led by the master Tesshin Sanderson. In 1985, The Buddhist Society for Compassionate Wisdom of the Rev. Samu Sunim founded Lotus Zen Society. This organization has led several Mexicans to take the precepts for monks and teachers, as Toan Sunim, Dharma Kasan and Dharma Kongyi.

Other Mexican psychoanalysts inviteed Philip Kapleau to give talks on Zen in 1976; then, in the 1980s close to 300 people attended a new conference of Kapleau, who began to gestate *Casa Zen* in 1985.* Recently in 2010 *Dojo Zen* was founded for those who follow the teachings of Stéphane Kosen, heir of the master Taisen Deshimaru.

In 1960 the *Soka Gakkai* was formalized during the visit of Daisaku Ikeda to Mexico, for 1966 amounted to 130 members, mostly Japanese immigrants. This image changed in 1968 when they reached 500 families of whom nearly 90% were Mexican. *Reiyukai* was established as a civil association in 1977, which in 1975 the member of the Los Angeles group, Keiko Obara does *michibiki* to Edna Vázquez from Mexicali, a family that established the first *tsu-*

*. Interview with Manuel Carpio Carrión leader of Casa Zen of Mexico, 10-14-2014.

doi. In 1976 Tomokatsu and Obara were sent to Mexico to guide the practice of the Mexican members. At present is formed by 31 thousand members.*

The 14th Dalai Lama first visited Mexico in 1989 to participate in a forum for peace. At the invitation of Archbishop Ernesto Corripio and the Interreligious Council he visited the Basilica of Guadalupe to attend in the First Ecumenical Meeting and Prayer for Peace. This same year the *Casa Tibet* was founded by the Mexican, Antonio Karam, who studied his post-graduate degree in Buddhist studies in the United States, Nepal and India.** At present, many Mexicans consider him a Lama. These events led many Mexicans to come closer to Buddhism and some to form other organizations. A member of Diamond Way Buddhism said to know Buddhism precisely at that ecumenical meeting of 1989 (I don't' understand).*** The current president of *Buddhismo Theravada México* first became interested in Buddhism courses at the Casa Tibet without belonging to it, until it met with the current organization constituted as a civil association in 1992, led by the venerable Nandisena (Argentine) and Silananda (Burmese).**** Another Tibetan Buddhist group established in the 1990s was the New Kadampa Tradition, which promotes a universal Buddhism, but preserves the symbolic boundaries based on lineage. In 1985 *Casa de Meditación Vipassana* was founded by the Venerable A. Jahn Tong Sirimangalo. Also in 1988 the organization Anumodana was founded by Thanat Chindaporn and Kathryn Johnston Chindaporn, both dependent Thai monastery WAT Phradhatu Sri Chom Tong Voravihara.

With regard to the Chinese Buddhism, there are only institutions that promote the Chinese culture in general such as the Shaolin Temple of Mexico that teaches Kung Fu, Tai Chi, Qi Gong and Buddhism Cha'n.

In this sense, Tibetan and Japanese Buddhism predominate in

*. In 1991 it approached its membership to 20,000 (Ota, 1993).

**. Interview with the president of Casa Tíbet, Marco Antonio Karam, 10-13-2014

***. Interview with the member of Way of Diamond of Mexico, Cecilia Blázquez, 10-14-2014

****. Interview with the president of Buddhismo Theravada Mexico, Alina Morales, 10-03-2014.

the Mexican public eye, as well as among some Mexicans Buddhists. Therefore, the Mahayana Buddhism would be the majority in this country, which in 2006 was confirmed with the creation of the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition which embraces other groups. Some possible explanations are related to what is presented in the media and also to the contrasting images of the Chinese and Japanese communities.

This phase could be characterized as Buddhism imported due to the impulse of demand, through travel and lectures on Buddhism by Mexican professionals; which is possible with people with a privileged economic situation, which could be associated with an "Elite Buddhism" (Nattier 1998).

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE: A SNAPSHOT

Between 2000 and 2010 Buddhists grew from 5,346 to 14,062 persons; although this represents less than 1% of the total Mexican population, 82% of whom are Catholic, it is important not to underestimate them. The census data have a large number of under-registrations due to shortcomings of the method, which does not take into account the true scope of Buddhism in Mexico. In addition, Buddhists are present throughout the whole country.

Table 1
Buddhists in Mexico by regions
(%)

Región	2000	2010
Noroeste	6.45	15.42
Noreste	9.50	8.28
Occidente	19.19	18.30
Centro	25.18	47.30
Sur	7.16	5.16
Sureste	6.08	5.54
Total	100	100

Source: own elaboration based from micro-data of INEGI, 2000 y 2010.

Although the male-female ratio is not distinguishable from the national average, other variables such as age, birthplace and geographical distribution did not allow us to glimpse the particular trends.

Mexican Buddhists are between the ages of 25 and 55 years old. Nevertheless, the largest concentration is in the young-adult sector. This population is very particular to be the generation that was born during the period of "stabilizing development" (1950-1980), in which indices of social equality and poverty presented improvements. However, subsequent years were ones of crisis in which real wages fell and afterward were adjusted. Therefore, the population that was born in this period is the one who lived the golden years of Mexico, which saw decline and then resurgence. Many current Buddhists feel attracted to the faith as a symbolic guarantee of maintaining their social status and economic means because it enables them to streamline their economic life, unlike Pentecostals who join to climb socially, Buddhists belong to not descend.

Table 2

Buddhists in Mexico by age and birthplace (%)

Year	2000[1]	2010
Age Groups		
Children and adolescents	11.07	12.47
Young People	13.80	15.45
Young Adults	33.56	33.59
Adults	32.90	28.86
Third Age	8.66	9.56
Place of Birth		
In the country	60.49	67.14
In another country	39.13	32.56

Source: own elaboration based on the census of the INEGI 2000 and 2010.

[1] The population of the 2000 census counted from 5 years.

The trend of Buddhists born in Mexico is gradually growing, at first glance, this would indicate a Buddhism of converts but because the population born in Mexico includes the second and third generations of Asians. Although these cases would be scarce, many investigations have shown that these generations have abandoned customs and practices that culturally differentiated them, including religion. It has even been discovered that migrants have chosen to socialize their children as Catholics in order to ensure a good job prospects in Mexico (Cañez *et al.*, 2010). Many of the latest generations of migrants do not identify as Buddhist.

On the other hand, between 2000 and 2010 there was a radical increase in absolute terms of Buddhists born in China, when in 2000 the majority came from Japan. The Japanese Buddhists have held their own during the decade; but in 2010 the Chinese surpassed them.

With regard to geographical distribution, there is a clear tendency toward urban concentration, places amounting to more than 10 thousand inhabitants. However, for the past 10 years the expansion of Buddhism has been very important. In 2000 the capital of the country was the only one that had a large amount of Buddhists; in 2010 Buddhists grew significantly in five more states.

Based on the latest census the majority are concentrated in the Central and West region of Mexico with 47.3% and 18.3% respectively; this geographical distribution draws attention when both –mainly the West– are considered as bastions of Catholicism or areas with a slow or moderate religious change (De la Torre and Gutierrez Zúñiga 2007). This connection allows four assumptions: first, it explains the reason for the Catholic background of many Mexican Buddhists. Second, the growth of evangelical groups is countered due to a tendency of Catholics to join different non-Christian groups, such as Buddhism. Third, the degree of subjectivation and not-exclusivisty of Catholicism and flexibility of Buddhism allows the person identify with less difference as Buddhists or Catholics. Finally, Buddhism has greater acceptance due to certain religious structural alignments with Catholicism, reflected in the use of rosaries and repetitive prayers.

This scenario leads us to two issues. First, Buddhism does not essentially grow in consonance with the decline of Catholicism. Second, the measurement of religious change in the Mexican academy must overcome the dichotomy of Catholicism versus Protestantism.

GENERAL POINTS

Buddhism in Mexico is little known in its diversity, which reproduces a monolithic image linked to India or Himalaya, due to scarce studies and its conception as marginal matter, considered only to be part of the *New Age*.

Buddhism's arrival to Mexico at the end of the 19th Century was received with an Orientalist vision characterized as part of a lower and despotic culture. Consequently, Chinese immigrants were persecuted, so they were not able to publicly express their Confucian or Buddhists beliefs, in contrast with the Japanese who were well regarded. Subsequently, Mexican intellectual movements enhanced Buddhism in its original version, the Indian, by what is corroborated that Buddhism was well seen from the Middle East, rather than the East; this perception is echoed at present among some academics. In summary, Japanese and Indian Buddhism were the most acceptable in this phase.

This is the scenario in which Mexicans began to establish Buddhist centers or Sanghas through importation. This stage can be divided into two, in the mid and late twentieth century. The first phase was related to Japanese Buddhism, which was supported by the artistic and academic network, therefore one can speak of an intellectualized Buddhism. The second was marked by the visit of the Dalai Lama; therefore Tibetan Buddhism concentrated among the middle and educated classes. Both periods saw a public impact, due to the Catholic religious situation in Mexico acquired an ecumenical character.

Statistical trends between 2000 and 2010 indicate that Buddhism more than doubled and increasingly conformed more to Mexicans than foreigners. The majority of Buddhists are adults-young people who live in urban areas; as well as their geographical distribution is decentralizing the capital.

At present the Mexican religious field has to be glimpsed with references to the Eastern religions, such as Buddhism. For the social sciences, the study of Buddhism will be worthwhile to reflect on social changes in Mexico in relation to values and attitudes, while Buddhism carries with it moral and economic ethics. Also, we must determine the social impact of Buddhists as individuals and organizations in Mexican society.

***

Bibliography

Baumann, M. (2001). "Global Buddhism: Developmental Periods, Regional Histories, and a New Analytical Perspective". *Journal of Global Buddhism*, núm. 2, pp. 1-43.

Cañez de la Fuente, G., Shoko Doode O. and Hernández Doode, G. (2010) "Ser japonés en México. Relato de un inmigrante". *Culturales*, vol. 6, núm. 11, pp. 129-158.

Casaus Arzú, M. E. (2011). "El vitalismo teosófico como discurso alternativo de las élites intelectuales centroamericanas en las décadas de 1920 y 1930. Principales difusores: Porfirio Barba Jacob, Carlos Wyld Ospina y Alberto Masferrer". *REHMLAC*, vol. 3, núm. 1, pp. 82-120.

Derbez, J. (1981). "Fromm en México: una reseña histórica". In Millán S, and Gojman S (Eds.). *Erich Fromm y el psicoanálisis humanista*. México: Siglo XXI, pp. 27-53.

Devés Valdés, E. and Melgar Bao R (2007). "Redes teosóficas y pensadores (políticos) latinoamericanos, 1910-1930". In Devés Valdés, E. *Redes intelectuales en América Latina. Hacia la constitución de una comunidad intelectual*. Chile: USC, pp. 75-92.

Díaz Covarrubias, F. (1876). *Viaje de la Comisión Astronómica Mexicana al Japón para observar el tránsito del planeta Venus por el disco del sol el 8 de diciembre de 1874*. Imprenta Políglota de Ramiro Ponce de León, México.

Fujiwara, E. (1998). *El Zen y su desarrollo en México*. México: CEAPAC/Plaza y Valdés.

Gómez Izquierdo, J. (1991). *El movimiento antichino en México (1871-1934). Problemas del racismo y del nacionalismo durante la Revolución Mexicana*. México: INAH.

Gutiérrez Zúñiga, C. (2007). "Origen oriental: Budismo". In De la Torre, R. and Gutiérrez Zúñiga C. (Coords). *Atlas de la diversidad religiosa en México*. México: Coljal/Colef/Ciesas/Colmich/Uqroo/Segob, pp 110-111.

Hincapié, L. M. (2001). "Rutas del pacífico: inmigrantes asiáticos a América Latina". Presentation in XIII Congreso Internacional de la Asociación Latinoamericana de Estudios de Asia y África, Bogotá, Colombia, march 24.

Nattier, J. (1998). "Who is a Buddhist? Charting the landscape of Buddhist America". In Prebish, C. and Tanàka, K. (Eds.). *The Faces of Buddhism in America*. California: University of California Press, pp. 183-195.

Nervo, A. (1898/1973). *Místicas*. Madrid: Espasa/Calpe.

Nervo, A. (1914). *Serenidad*. Madrid: Renacimiento/José Poveda.

Ota Mishima, M. E. (1982). *Siete migraciones japonesas en México, 1890-1978*. México: COLMEX.

Ota Mishima, M. E. (1993). "El Japón en México". In Bonfil Batalla, G. (Comp.). *Simbiosis de culturas. Los inmigrantes y su cultura en México*. México: FCE/Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, pp. 181-215.

Parker Gumucio, C. (2008). "Mentalidad religiosa post-ilustrada: creencias y esoterismo en una sociedad en mutación cultural". In Alonso, A. (Comp.). *América Latina y el Caribe. Territorios religiosos y desafíos para el diálogo*. Buenos Aires: CLACSO, pp. 337-364.

Shicheng, X. (2007). "Los chinos a lo largo de la historia de México". In Dussel, Peters E. and Trápaga Delfín, Y. (Coords.). *China y México: implicaciones de una nueva relación*. México: La Jornada/Fundación Friedrich Ebert/UNAM/ITESM, pp. 51-68.

Taboada, H. (1998). "Un orientalismo periférico: viajeros latinoamericanos, 1786-1920". *Estudios de Asia y África*, vol. 23, núm. 2, pp. 285-305.

Taboada, H. (2007). "Oriente y mundo clásico en José Vasconcelos". *Anuario de Filosofía Argentina y Americana*, núm. 24, pp. 103-119.

The Tablet (1968). "The Church in the world. News and notes from all parts". Resource document. October 26. The Interna-

tional Catholic News Weekly. http://archive.thetablet.co.uk/article/26th-october-1968/21/the-church-in-the-world. Accessed 4 november 2014

Vasconcelos, J. (1918). *El monismo estético*. México: Cultura.

Vasconcelos, J. (1938). *Estudios indostánicos*. 3th edn. México: Ediciones Botas.

MYANMAR

BUDDHISM IN MYANMAR: A BRIEF SKETCH

Bhikkhuni Dieu Hieu (Supetteyyā)*

INTRODUCTION

Myanmar, which was formerly called Burma, has been a home of Theravāda Buddhism for many centuries. According to the census of 2014,[1] more than 87% of the population in Myanmar follow Buddhism. The majority of them are Theravāda Buddhists. *'Thera'* means 'elder' and *'vāda'* means the 'view' or 'doctrine'. The term 'Theravāda' (Skt. Sthaviravāda) literally means 'school of elders.' According to Pali chronicles written in Sri Lanka, 'Theravādin' claims that its teachings were approved by the participants of the First Buddhist Council.[2] Theravāda is also called by the names 'Therīya' (belonging to elders) and 'Vibhajjavāda' (analytical or discriminating doctrine).

The present form of Theravāda Buddhism in Myanmar owes its existence to Mahāvihāra tradition of Sri Lanka. The Mahāvihāra

*. Dr.; Abbess, Hong Trung Son

1. "The 2014 Myanmar Population and Housing Census - The Union Report: Religion" (Department of Population, 2014).

2. Thera Dhammakitti, Mahāvaṃsa*: The Great Chronicle of Ceylon*, trans. Wilhelm Geiger (Colombo: Ceylon Government, 1950), 18.

tradition itself is believed to have been established by Venerable Mahinda who was sent there as a missionary by king Asoka in the earlier part of the third century B.C. In the history of Buddhism in Myanmar, it can be clearly observed that different forms of Buddhism that appeared in India found its way to Myanmar. But in due course, the Theravāda Buddhism embraced by Mahāvihāra became the established school in Myanmar. With the continued contact with Sri Lanka and the patronage given by the royalty in Myanmar, eventually all forms of Buddhism that existed in Myanmar were superseded by Theravāda Buddhism.

In this essay, I attempt to give a brief sketch on how Buddhism came to Myanmar and eventually the Mahāvihāra tradition got established. I also point out some historical events that played important role in the establishment of Theravāda Buddhism. Finally, I will present a brief survey of the situation of Buddhism in Myanmar today.

PRE-BAGAN ERA

Although Bagan era of the King Anawrahta (Pali: Anuruddha) (1044-77 AD) marks an important phase in the history of Theravāda Buddhism in Myanmar, it was neither the first place nor the first time that Buddhism got established in Myanmar. Prior to the time of king Anawrahta, the lower Myanmar, particularly the area which is often referred to as Rāmañ̃ñadesa had already a history of many centuries of Buddhism. Moreover, the places like Sri-ksetra, which were pre-Bagan, were also already well-introduced to Buddhism.

Myanmar probably came into contact with Buddhism during the time of the historical Buddha himself in the sixth century BC mainly through the merchants who traveled to India. Traditionally, it is believed that the two merchants named Tapusssa and Bhallika, who became the first lay disciples of the Buddha[3] are believed to have been the natives of 'Ukkalā.' They met the Buddha after seven weeks of his enlightenment in Gayā (Bodhgayā) and received the eight hair relics from him. On return, the merchant brothers enshrined the hair relics in the city of Ukkalāpa. Ukkalāpa is believed to be

3. *Vinaya Mahāvagga*, CSCD, Cha□□hasa□gāyana Tipi□aka (Igatpuri: Vipassanā Research Institute, 2004), 4.

a place in present day Yangon in Myanmar, and the hair relics are enshrined in the Swedagon Pagoda.[4] From this account, it can be surmised that the trade relationship between Myanmar and India was one of the primary reasons for the spread of Buddhism to Myanmar.

According to traditional accounts prevalent in Myanmar, the Buddha is believed to have visited Myanmar several times.[5] For instance, in the modern day Magwe, there is a place of pilgrimage called Shwesettaw where the Buddha is believed to have left his footprint as an object of worship.

According to Sāsanavaṃsa, the Suvaṇṇabhūmi, which was one of the places where the King Asoka sent Buddhist missionaries after the Third Buddhist Council, is identified with the Rāmañña country in lower Myanmar. From this account, it can be surmised that Buddhism was already established in some areas of Myanmar by third century BC and might have been a prevalent religion.[6]

Archeological evidences have shown that Theravāda Buddhism was well known at least by the fifth and sixth centuries in lower Myanmar.[7] Significant number of materials containing sections of Pali texts have been unearthed,[8] which show that this might have been a significant point in the development of Buddhism in Myanmar.

Pegu (Bago) and Thaton in the lower Myanmar were probably well-known centers of Buddhism by fifth century A.D,[9] and had

---

4. Roger Bischoff, Buddhism in Myanmar: A Short History, E-book (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1995), 14, 19; Khin Myint Myint, "Buddhism in Myanmar," Suratthani Rajabhat University, 2016, 4, https://umoar.mu.edu.mm/bitstream/handle/123456789/239/Buddhism%20in%20Myanmar%20pdf.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y; Khin Maung Nyunt, "The Arrival of Buddhism in Myanmar," Theravāda Buddhist Missionary University, 1998, http://www.myanmarnet.net/nibbana/kmnyunt1.htm.

5. Nyunt, "The Arrival of Buddhism in Myanmar," 67.

6. Nihar Ranjan Ray, *An Introduction to the Study of Theravada Buddhism in Burma* (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1946), 24.

7. Bischoff, *Buddhism in Myanmar: A Short History*, 33.

8. Nihar Ranjan Ray, *Sanskrit Buddhism in Burma* (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1936), 4.

9. Bischoff, *Buddhism in Myanmar: A Short History*, 39.

developed significantly by the eleventh century A.D.[10]

The archeological evidences as well as the sculptures in Bagan and other pre-Bagan cities such as old Prome suggest that other forms of Buddhism were also known in Myanmar. The inscriptions which are written in both Pali and Sanskrit have been excavated,[11] which further supports the point that non-Theravādin Sanskrit Buddhism also existed in the region. For instance, the existence of the statues of the objects of worship such as Avalokiteśvara and Lokanath, which are non-Theravādin, supports this point. The worship of Lokanath still continues to this day.[12] In Myanmar, the deity is called 'Lokanat,' and can be seen in many Buddhist pagodas. It is not clear, however, to what degree the people had embraced the non-Theravādin doctrines.

BAGAN ERA

Although Buddhism clearly existed in Myanmar prior to this time, Bagan era of the King Anawrahta is probably the time when Buddhism received full patronage from royalty and attempts were made to make it a national belief. The most significant part in this was played by the King Anawrahta. He made significant efforts to establish Theravāda Buddhism as a national religion. It is generally believed that Theravāda Buddhism was introduced in Bagan from Thaton. This is unlikely to be true. The more reasonable view would be that at that time, Bagan was probably a place where all forms of Buddhism thrived, and Anawrahta promoted Theravāda Buddhism which inspired faith in him.

The Theravāda Buddhism which was brought by Sona and Uttara to the Suvaṇṇabhūmi after the Third Buddhist Council was still being practiced in Thaton. Although other forms of Buddhism was known to some extent, the prevalent faith was Theravāda.[13]

Historically, Anawrahta was the first King in Myanmar who openly gave support to the version of Buddhism that was adopted

10. Ray, *An Introduction to the Study of Theravada Buddhism in Burma*, 76.

11. Ray, *Sanskrit Buddhism in Burma*, 32.

12. Bischoff, *Buddhism in Myanmar: A Short History*, 46.

13. Ray, *Sanskrit Buddhism in Burma*, 14.

by the monks of Mahāvihāra in Sri Lanka. The school adopted by Mahāvihāra also came to be known as Theravāda. The first attempt to this mission was made with the help of texts that were available in Thaton, a country in lower Myanmar. To some extent, Anawrahta was successful in doing this. The texts that he received from Thaton were compared with the texts from Mahāvihāra[14] Eventually, Bagan completely embraced the Theravāda tradition received from the Mahāvihāra school of Sri Lanka. The later kings of Bagan like Kyanzittha and Narapathisithu also continued to promote this school. Monks from Sri Lanka were welcomed in Bagan to teach and form their branch of school. By the time of Narpathisithu, Bagan flourished as a center of Theravāda Buddhism. It is possible that the monastics belonging to different schools that appeared in Sri Lanka were found also in Bagan.

It is evident that during the time of Anawrahta, the lower Myanmar, particularly the area which was then called Rāmañña country had a close tie with Sri Lanka. Buddhism was already flourishing there, and probably had close affinity with the fraternity of Mahāvihāra in Sri Lanka. It is however not clear to what extend did the Buddhism in Rāmañña resemble the school of Mahāvihāra. The close relationship, however, can be understood from the fact that Rāmañña desa received the Buddhaghosa's commentaries in the fifth century A.D. Perhaps the tradition established by Sona and Uttara, the missionaries sent to Suvaṇṇabhūmi after the Third Buddhist Council, were in close contact with their counterpart in Sri Lanka. There are traditional accounts which claim that Buddhaghosa was a native of Thaton and that he brought the commentaries himself.[15] This legend suggests that at least the arrival of commentaries or a visit is probably true.

It is believed that the tradition of Mahāvihāra was inherited from Venerable Mahinda who was one of the Buddhist missionaries sent by king Asoka. Thus, basically the tradition in Rāmañña country and Mahāvihāra is theoretically the same. The different groups of missionaries that were sent after the Third Buddhist Council may

14. Mabel Haynes Bode, *The Pali Literature of Burma* (London: Luzac & Co., 1966), 15.

15. Nyunt, "The Arrival of Buddhism in Myanmar."

have had maintained contact in some form or the other. It is also likely that when any significant texts were written in one place, copies of them were also sent to other areas.

As a result of annexing Rāmañña desa (in 1057), King Anawrahta induced three major developments in Bagan: (i) direct contact with Mahāvihāra tradition in Sri Lanka,(ii) Pali superseding Sanskrit, and (iii) Theravāda Buddhism becoming the national religion.

The good relationship with Sri Lanka can be known from the fact that Anuruddha sent monks and scriptures to Sri Lanka to revive the Buddhist faith.[16] The Mahāvihāra tradition is believed to have been established in 251 B.C. in Sri Lanka,[17] under the leadership of Venerable Mahinda who came there after the Third Buddhist Council.[18] Initially Mahāvihāra was a name of a monastery. Subsequently, it referred to a distinct school of Buddhism in contrast to other schools such as Abhayagiri and Jetavana.[19] By the twelfth century, which corresponded with Anawrahta, Mahāvihāra became the predominant school.[20] This probably influenced the Buddhism in Rāmañña country too.

When Anawrahta annexed Rāmañña country, there were hundreds of monasteries and libraries which housed Pali literatures.[21] The annexation marks the most important phase in the establishment of Theravāda Buddhism in Myanmar. The King not only obtained the scriptures from Sri Lanka but also made sure that the belief in two countries were the same.[22] The relationship established by Anawrahta became very important in due course as it allowed intercourse between the monks in Myanmar and Sri Lanka. The state of Buddhism in Thaton was very precarious during

16. G.E. Harvey, *History of Burma* (London: Frank Cass & Co., 1967), 32.

17. Harvey, 119. The exact

18. Gunaratne Panabokke, *History of The Buddhist Sangha in India and Sri Lanka* (Kelaniya: Postgraduate Institute of Pali and Buddhist Studies, 1993), 77.

19. Panabokke, 113.

20. Panabokke, 161.

21. Ray, *Sanskrit Buddhism in Burma*, 97.

22. Bischoff, *Buddhism in Myanmar: A Short History*, 54.

this time. The influence of Hindu belief was increasing.[23] From this viewpoint, Anawrahta could be credited for saving Buddhism.

It is said that it took 32 elephants to carry the scriptures from Thaton to Bagan.[24] After establishing good relationship with Sri Lanka, the King received the copies from Mahāvihāra, which was considered more reliable.[25] The arrival of texts from Sri Lanka might have provided fresh interest in the study and practice of Theravāda Buddhism in Bagan.

The mission initiated by King Anawrahta was carried on by his successors such as Kyanzittha (1084-1113) and Narapatisithu (1173-1210). Bagan soon became the land of Pagodas. Thousands of Pagodas which were built during this time can still be seen. Most of the other kings in Bagan continued to promote and support the Buddhism embraced by the predecessors.

Kyanzittha's time is most notable for the many Buddhist monuments that he created. The king Narapatisithu's name is also important in the history of Buddhism for giving support to the Mahāvihāra fraternity in Bagan.[26] His reign was peaceful and he established good relationship with Sri Lanka. By the time of his reign, Myanmar had completely adopted the Mahāvihāra tradition.[27]

Narapathisithu's time also saw the rise in literary activities. During his time, monks were encouraged to go to Sri Lanka and receive ordination or re-ordination with the Mahāvihāra fraternity[28] and study the scriptures available there.[29] This continued for some

---

23. Bischoff, 47–48.

24. Ray, *An Introduction to the Study of Theravada Buddhism in Burma*, 79; Pe Maung Tin and G.H Luce, trans., *Glass Palace Chronicle of the Kings of Burma* (Yangon: Unity Publishing House, 2008), 78.

25..... Ray, *An Introduction to the Study of Theravada Buddhism in Burma*, 100–101, 113.

26. Ray, 110.

27. Panabokke, *History of The Buddhist Sangha in India and Sri Lanka*, 170.

28. Tin and Luce, *Glass Palace Chronicle of the Kings of Burma*, 142–44.

29. Bischoff, *Buddhism in Myanmar: A Short History*, 7-; Harvey, *History of Burma*, 56; D.G.E. Hall, *Burma* (London: Hutchinson University, n.d.), 23.

time,[30] even until the time of king Dhammazedi of Pegu.[31] During the time of Narapathisithu, monks from Myanmar also went to study at Mahāvihāra in Sri Lanka.[32]

By the fifteenth century the Pali language had become the most important language and the Theravāda Buddhism had established well in Bagan. There are however still traces of evidence suggesting that Sanskrit texts were being studied by monastics.[33]

From the scholastic point of view, Anawrahta's time is important only in the sense that the Tipiṭaka literature were obtained and its study was promoted. The literary achievements and religious development reached its height only after about a century in the time of Narapatisithu. It was at this time that the grammatical treatise such as Saddanīti was written by Aggavaṃsa (1154). Although Pali was well-known for centuries in lower Myanmar due to influence of Theravāda Buddhism, it was only in the Bagan that works in Pali language were written by natives of Myanmar. The time of Aggavaṃsa probably marks the time when the natives of Myanmar become erudite in Pali language and could compose works in it. It is noteworthy that most of the works produced during the Bagan time were on Pali grammar. The close relationship that Bagan maintained with Mahāvihāra in Sri Lanka can be observed from the fact that the Saddanīti was carried from Myanmar to Sri Lanka as a gift.[34]

The efforts to establish the Buddhism that was identical to Mahāvihāra in Sri Lanka probably reached its final stage during the reign of King Dhammazedi (1472-92) in Pegu, lower Myanmar. As a monk, he himself had studied under the Mahāvihāra tradition. He is probably the last notable king known in history to have given support to the establishment of Mahāvihāra tradition in Myanmar.[35]

---

30. Ray, *An Introduction to the Study of Theravada Buddhism in Burma*, 45.

31. Ray, 90.

32. Bode, *The Pali Literature of Burma*, 17.

33. Ray, *Sanskrit Buddhism in Burma*, 35.

34. Panabokke, *History of The Buddhist Sangha in India and Sri Lanka*, 169; Bode, *The Pali Literature of Burma*, 17.

35. Bischoff, *Buddhism in Myanmar: A Short History*, 87.

The practice of sending monks to receive ordination in Sri Lanka continued to this time.[36]

BUDDHIST COUNCILS

One of the significant facts about Buddhism in Myanmar is the convening of Buddhist councils. According to the tradition of Theravāda Buddhism, there have been altogether six Buddhist councils. With relation to the history of Buddhism in Myanmar, the Third and the Fourth Council are significant.

According to Theravāda tradition, the First Buddhist Council was held in Rājagaha three months after the Buddha entered *Parinibbāna*.[37] In this Council, the significant number of texts were collected, recited, and given approval by five hundred Arahant monks.

The Second Buddhist Council was held after a hundred years in Vesāli. There were 1,000 Arahant monks participating in the Council.

The Third Council was convened under the patronage of King Asoka in the year 235 after the Buddha's *Parinibbāna*. This Council is significant in the history of Buddhism in Myanmar. After this Council, missionaries were sent to various places to propagate Buddhism.[38] Among the nine group of missionaries, the missionary sent to Suvaṇṇabhūmi and to the island of Sri Lanka played important roles in the establishment of Theravāda Buddhism in Myanmar. Although the exact location of Suvaṇṇabhūmi is a matter of dispute, it can be generally agreed that the Rāmaññadesa, which used to be a significant country in lower Myanmar, was a part of Suvaṇṇabhūmi.[39]

As it has already been said above, the arrival of Sona and Uttara, the two missionaries sent to Suvaṇṇabhūmi, however, is not that starting point of the history of Buddhism in Myanmar. The same is

---

36. Harvey, *History of Burma*, 119; Hall, *Burma*, 35.

37. I.B. Horner, trans., *The Book of the Discipline*, SuttaCentral (2014) (London: Pali Text Society, 1938), 2387 ff.

38. Dhammakitti, *Mahāvaṃsa: The Great Chronicle of Ceylon*, 82.

39. Bischoff, *Buddhism in Myanmar: A Short History*, 54.

perhaps true to some extent about arrival of Venerable Mahinda in Sri Lanka.[40]

In the first three Buddhist Councils, the texts were recited but not committed to writing. It is generally believed that in the Fourth Council, which was held in the year 450 after the Buddha's *Parinibbāna*, the texts were committed to writing. Up until this time, the texts were handed down orally.

After the Fourth Buddhist Council, another significant phase in the history of Buddhism in Sri Lanka is the time when Venerable Buddhaghosa wrote the commentaries. He translated, transliterated, and edited the Sinhalese commentaries into Pali.[41] Historically, it seems that the Rāmaññadesa or the lower Myanmar had received all these texts.[42]

In 1872 A.D, the Fifth Buddhist Council was convened in Mandalay during the reign of King Mindon (1853-1878). As many as 2400 monks participated in the Council. The texts that were available were checked for error and then inscribed on 729 marble slabs.[43] There are 111 marble slabs for Vinaya texts; 410 marble slabs for Suttanta texts; 208 marble slabs for Abhidhamma texts. These marble slabs form the largest book in the world and are kept in the precincts of Lokamarajina Pagoda at the foot the Mandalay hill.

In 1954, the Sixth Buddhist Council was held at the Mahapasana cave in Kaba Aye, Yangon. Representatives and delegates as well as 2500 learned monks from 25 countries participated in the event.

BUDDHISM TODAY

Here, three notable features of Buddhism in Myanmar today may be mentioned. First, the surge of interest in the meditation practice. Second, the inception of Universities where Buddhism is taught as an academic subject. Third is the Tipiṭaka examination.

---

40 G.P. Malalasekera, *The Pali Literature of Ceylon* (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1994), 14–15.

41. Malalasekera, 81ff.

42. Ray, *An Introduction to the Study of Theravada Buddhism in Burma*, 25.

43. Bischoff, *Buddhism in Myanmar: A Short History*, 137.

In the modern time, Myanmar has become well known for several meditation traditions, particularly the insight meditation practice. In the history of Myanmar, the twentieth century marks a rise in the establishments of various meditation traditions. Altogether there are sixteen notable traditions of meditation in Myanmar.[44] Among them, following is an overview of the seven popular traditions and sub-traditions:[45]

<table>
<tr><th>Teacher</th><th colspan="3">Sub-traditions</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">1. Ledi Sayādaw (1846-1923)</td><td>Mohnin Sayādaw
(1873-1964)</td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td>Saya Thet Gyi
(1873-1945)</td><td>U Ba Khin
(1898-1971)</td><td>Goenka
(1924-2013)</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="5">2. Mingun Jetavana
(1868-1954)</td><td>Taungpulu Sayādaw
(1897-1986)</td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">Mahāsi Sayādaw
(1904-1982)</td><td>Sayādaw U Paṇḍita
(1921-2016)</td><td rowspan="4"></td></tr>
<tr><td>Chyanmay Sayādaw
(1928-)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Saddhammaraṃsī Sayādaw
(1921-2011)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Kyaswa Sayādaw
(1935-2014)</td></tr>
<tr><td>3. Sunlun Sayādaw
(1878-1952)</td><td colspan="3"></td></tr>
</table>

44. Daw Nimala, "An Evaluation of Significant Meditation Techniques in Myanmar" (University of Delhi, 2014).

45. Nimala; Jack Kornfield, *Modern Buddhist Masters* (Massachusetts: Wisdom Publications, 1989).

4. Kanni Sayādaw (1880-1966)	
5. Theeingu Sayādaw (1913-1973)	
6. Mogok Sayādaw (1899-1962)	
7. Pa-auk Sayādaw (1934-)	

By comparing the census published in 2015 and 2018,[46] it can be known that the number of monasteries and the monastic have increased within these three years. The total number of monasteries in 2015 were 62,649. In 2018, the number rose to 66,664. Thus, 4000 monasteries have increased. Similarly, the total number of monks and novices increased by 1,600, while the number of nuns increased by 7,040. The number of novices have, however, decreased from 252,962 to 234,867.

Just to give an idea about the meditation centers, among the 18 regions in Myanmar, in the Yangon region alone there are 97 meditation centers.[47] They comprise of most of the well-known traditions including Mahāsi, Ledi, Mogok, Sunlun, and Theeingu.

Another notable feature of Buddhism today is the establishment of Universities where Theravāda Buddhism is taught as an academic subject. Some noteworthy ones are:

State Pariyatti Sāsana University, Yangon.

International Theravāda Buddhist Missionary University (ITBMU), Yangon.

46. "The Consensus of Monks and Nuns (2015)" (Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture, 2015); "The Consensus of Monks and Nuns (2018)" (Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture, 2018).

47. "The Consensus of Meditation Centers in Yangon (2018)" (Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture, 2018).

Yangon Buddhist University, Yangon.

Sitagu International Buddhist Academy (SIBA), Sagaing.

Shan State Buddhist University (SBU), Taungyi.

Mettānanda Sāsana College (MSC), Yangon.

Dhammadūta Chekinda University (DCU), Hmawbin.

Every year in December, The Tipiṭakadhara and Tipiṭakakovida examinations are held for 33 days in Kaba Aye, Yangon to select the successful candidates. The first examination was held in 1948 and has continued to this day. These two are the highest-level examinations conducted in Myanmar with relation to religious degrees. The total number of pages that have to be recited by memory is 8026 from the Tipiṭaka. In order to obtain the Tipiṭakadhara-Tipiṭakakovida title, the candidate has to pass also the written examination of those texts. The first candidate to pass the Tipiṭakadhara examinations was Mingun Sayādaw in 1953.[48] Until today, 14 Venerable Myanmar monks have received these degrees.

CONCLUSION

Myanmar had been in close contact with the developments of Buddhism in India throughout the early years of Buddhism. This is probably due to trade relations and the close contact that the kings of Myanmar had with India. Initially, Buddhism got introduced in Myanmar through the help of merchants travelling to India. In the later period, King Asoka's mission to Suvaṇṇabhūmi helped to consolidate the Buddhism that had reached there earlier. The most important phase in the Buddhism of Myanmar is its close contact with Mahāvihāra tradition in Sri Lanka. Due to this relationship, eventually, the Theravāda Buddhism upheld by Mahāvihāra tradition became the established Buddhism in Myanmar. The most prominent role in this were played by King Anuruddha of Myanmar. Some credit, however, must also go to the Kings of Thaton who had maintained its religious relationship with the island of Sri Lanka.

48. U Aung Thein Nyunt, "A Study of Tipitakadhara Selection Examination in Myanmar" (International Conference of All Theravāda Buddhist Universities, Yangon, 2007), http://atbu.org/node/26.

When writing about the history of Buddhism in Myanmar, study should be made into the introduction and development of Buddhism in different regions of Myanmar such as Arakan, Sriksetra, Pyu, Rāmaññadesa, and Bagan. It is not possible to cover all these in an essay like this. Bagan marks an important phase in the development of Buddhism in Myanmar. Therefore, in this essay, the history of Buddhism has been studied by dividing into pre-Bagan and Bagan era.

***

References

Bischoff, Roger. *Buddhism in Myanmar: A Short History*. E-Book. Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1995.

Bode, Mabel Haynes. *The Pali Literature of Burma*. London: Luzac & Co., 1966.

Dhammakitti, Thera. *Mahāvaṃsa: The Great Chronicle of Ceylon*. Translated by Wilhelm Geiger. Colombo: Ceylon Government, 1950.

Hall, D.G.E. *Burma*. London: Hutchinson University, n.d.

Harvey, G.E. *History of Burma*. London: Frank Cass & Co., 1967.

Horner, I.B., trans. *The Book of the Discipline*. SuttaCentral (2014). London: Pali Text Society, 1938.

Kornfield, Jack. *Modern Buddhist Masters*. Massachusetts: Wisdom Publications, 1989.

Malalasekera, G.P. *The Pali Literature of Ceylon*. Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1994.

Myint, Khin Myint. "Buddhism in Myanmar." *Suratthani Rajabhat University*, 2016. https://umoar.mu.edu.mm/bitstream/handle/123456789/239/Buddhism%20in%20Myanmar%20pdf.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y.

Nimala, Daw. "An Evaluation of Significant Meditation Techniques in Myanmar." University of Delhi, 2014.

Nyunt, Khin Maung. "The Arrival of Buddhism in Myanmar." *Theravāda Buddhist Missionary University*, 1998. http://www.myanmarnet.net/nibbana/kmnyunt1.htm.

Nyunt, U Aung Thein. "A Study of Tipitakadhara Selection Examination in Myanmar." Yangon, 2007. http://atbu.org/node/26.

Panabokke, Gunaratne. *History of The Buddhist Sangha in India and Sri Lanka*. Kelaniya: Postgraduate Institute of Pali and Buddhist Studies, 1993.

Ray, Nihar Ranjan. *An Introduction to the Study of Theravada Buddhism in Burma*. Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1946.

———. *Sanskrit Buddhism in Burma*. Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1936.

"The 2014 Myanmar Population and Housing Census - The Union Report: Religion." Department of Population, 2014.

"The Consensus of Meditation Centers in Yangon (2018)." Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture, 2018.

"The Consensus of Monks and Nuns (2015)." Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture, 2015.

"The Consensus of Monks and Nuns (2018)." Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture, 2018.

Tin, Pe Maung, and G.H Luce, trans. *Glass Palace Chronicle of the Kings of Burma*. Yangon: Unity Publishing House, 2008.

Vinaya Mahāvagga. CSCD. Chaṭṭhasaṅgāyana Tipiṭaka. Igatpuri: Vipassanā Research Institute, 2004.

THE ROLE OF MONKHOOD IN CONTEMPORARY MYANMAR SOCIETY*

by Sylwia Gil**

INTRODUCTION

Recent events in Myanmar, particularly the "Saffron Revolution" in 2007 and cyclone Nargis in 2008 placed Myanmar monks in the focus of the international community. Not for the first time in history, the Myanmar *sangha*[1] took a leading role in times of emergency, and was able to mobilise rapidly their forces in order to help and represent the people of Myanmar. In 1988 they went to the streets with other citizens to call for democratic and economic reforms in the country. Similarly, in 2007, monks participated in the nation-wide protests against rising fuel and commodity prices.[2] The visible and silent support of the monks provided encouragement and moral guidance for the predominantly Buddhist nation. Facing the post-Nargis devastation and indecisiveness related to access of international humanitarian aid, Myanmar monks be-came the only organised group able to respond promptly with aid for traumatised victims, providing them with shelter and distributing

*. First published in September 2008 by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Germany. Reprinted with permission.

**. Specialist on South East Asia and Theravada Buddhism, Warsaw, Poland, September 2008, (on behalf of Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung)

1. Sangha = community of monks.

2. It is difficult to estimate the proportion of monks who participated in the protest. According to Government only 2 %, in opinion of my interlocutors, monks from Yangon - 60 %. About 2% were strictly against, due to religious conviction, or strong relations with the government. Both estimations seem to be not adequate, to get it more precisely one should know the approximate number of adult novices and monks, as sangha includes novices children as well the number of temporary monks. The media's estimation is up to 30 thousand in Yangon.

basic commodities in their communities.

The saffron revolution did not succeed. However, for some analysts it was not the end but rather the beginning of a new chapter in Myanmar's contemporary history, marking the emergence of a new potential social and political force, nourishing hopes of the opposition and for all who expect general changes in Myanmar. Monks, particularly the younger generation, became more aware of their strength and responsibility for the country. In Myanmar most independent activity is suppressed or under strict control of the state. The monkhood, in contrast, enjoys a high level of immunity and freedom, for instance, with regard to freedom of movement (within the country and abroad)[3] or various social activities, mostly in the local area. The recent events showed that their role in the society is not limited to the preservation of religion and rituals.

Although there is a developed Sangha administration, the dependence of an ordinary monk on the administrative hierarchy is minimal. The Sangha Mahanayaka State Committee, the highest administrative body of the Burmese Sangha, is regarded by the new generation of monks rather as a care-taker of the government's religious activities and maintenance of its *status quo*, than as the body of moral authority for ordinary monks. Most of the members of the Committee are elderly, traditional monks enjoying high privileges and material welfare. They have no real power on community matters, because this lies in hands of the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

The Myanmar *Sangha* is not homogenous and the scope of monks' activities is complex. As a monk is perceived as a renouncer of the world, the question arises to what extent he should be engaged in the social and political life of the country? The purpose of this work is to introduce the reader to Myanmar Buddhist society and to give some ideas about the role of the monks in contemporary Myanmar.

Regarding monks' opportunities, monastic connections in the whole country and abroad as well financial situation comaparativly

3. Regarding monks' opportunities, monastic connections in the whole country and abroad as well financial situation comaparativly better than any average Myanmar layman.

better than any average Myanmar layman.

1. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF BUDDHISM IN MYANMAR

The first inhabitants of Myanmar belonged probably to Austro-Asiatic group but they have left no pursuable traces. They were replaced by Tibeto-Burman tribes, who came from eastern Tibet in the beginning of the Christian era. The oldest of them known by name were the Pyu, the Kanran, the Arakanese and the Thet, who may be the ancestors of the Chin. Other ethnic groups were Talaings (Mon) in the south-east of the country and the Karens in the east. The Shans appeared much later, in the 10th century.

The Pyus found empires of city- kingdoms in the Irrawaddy Valley. Similarly, like in other South-East Asian countries, the Pyus were under strong and wide influence of the Indian religion and culture, which came into the country through migration and trade. According to Harvey[4] the cultural influence from India took root not earlier than A.D. 300. However, Hinduism could have come to the land long before. In Myanmar tradi-tion, the Pyus are considered to be pious Bud-dhists but the excavations give evidence that both Hinduism and Buddhism coexisted. The oldest known Pyu cities carried names related to Hinduism (Sri Ksetra, Baitkhano – Visnu). The Hindu religion left its traces in royal ceremonies, arts, law and astrology. Some of the Hindu gods and goddesses eventually became members of the indigenous animistic religion and *nat*-spirits pantheon[5]. Although the Pyu are extinct, their civilisation is often regarded as a part of Myanmar heritage, as it absorbed Pyu culture.

According to Myanmar belief, Buddhism arrived into the country soon after Siddartha Gautama, the founder of the religion, was enlightened and became Buddha. The story tells of two merchant brothers from Lower Burma, who went on a journey to pay homage

4. G.E. Harvey, History of Burma, From the Earliest Times to 10 March 1824 The Beginning of the English Conquest, ed. Frank Cass & Co. Ltd, London and Edinburgh 1967:4.

5. Nat – from Pali *natha*-protector, saviour, lord.In Burma: spirits of ancestors, heroes, persons who died of violent and sudden death or deities. They can be malicious and capricious but while venerated can fulfill the wishes of worshipers. Nat worship co-exists with Buddhism, which is considered as religion con-cerned with life here after, whereas nat worship is the way for the material success and protection in the present life.

to the Buddha and re-ceived eight strands of his hair to venerate. The merchants were the first lay followers of the Buddha and the first people who took refuge in him and the *Dhamma*, his teachings, before the *Sangha*, the community of monks, began to exist. The offered strands were enshrined inside the Shwedagon pagoda by King Okalappa; and the place became the most precious treasure for all the people of Myanmar, a symbol of both religion and country. Traditionally, Myanmar historians mention four more advents of Buddhism in Myanmar, among them two visits of the Buddha during his lifetime. An Arakanese legend relates to his personal visit to the Arakan state, where he left his engraved image, later to be known as the Mahamuni statue. The other arrivals of Buddhism are connected with historically documented events. The first is related to the visit of the Indian king to the Asoka's missionaries, Sona and Uttara in the III A.D to Suvarnabhumi[6] and another with the work of Buddhaghosa, one of the greatest Buddhist commentators (IV-V A.D.). The people of Myanmar believe that he was a native Mon from Tha-ton who brought the *Tipitaka*[7], the Buddhist Pali canon, and other scriptures in Pali from Sri Lanka.[8]

However, before the Theravada school, one of the South Indian schools of Buddhism, came into existence as the religion of the court and spread its influence over the people, there existed different schools of Buddhism. Among them some obscure Buddhist Mahayana cults were practiced, similar to those known in Bengal and the Malay Archipelago. The most powerful one was the order of Ari monks, which was remarkably different from the Theravada school. Ari monks were not celibate; were well skilled in martial arts, were known for indulgence, and corrupted the doctrine. They

6. Suvarnabhumi according to Burmese scholars was the Mon kingdom with the port capital Thaton. Thai scholars place Suvarnabhumi on Thai teritory. G. E.

Harvey in his History of Burma rather doubts that this visit had ever took place because it is not documented in Asoka's rock edicts but mentioned only in *Mahavamsa*, the Ceylon=Chronicle compiled in VI AD. [Harvey:309]

7. *Tipitaka* – The Buddhist canon, Three Baskets com-prising: *Suttapitaka* – basket of discursive or narrative Buddhis scriptures, *Vinayapitaka*– basket of monastic discipline and *Abhidammapitaka* – basket of the theory of the doctrine or philosophy.

8. The ethnic origin of Buddhaghosa is not ceratain and the huge amount of literature written under this name suggests that there possibly were more than one Buddhaghosa.

practiced *tantra* cults and magic, selling spells and absolution from sins.

Since the 11th century, with the beginning of the Bagan dynasty, Theravada started to prevail, the Ari cult was eradicated and Buddhism infil-trated many aspects of the Myanmar culture.

King Anawrahta (AD 1044-77) and his religious guide Shin Arahan, a monk from Thaton, under-took many endeavours in order to purify the existing religion and establish the Theravada order. Having been refused *Tipitaka* from Mon Kingdom (with the capital in Thaton), Anawrahta organised a military expedition in 1057 and consequently brought home not only the Canon but also learned monks, artists and the Mon king Manuha himself. As a result, the Bagan kingdom assimilated the Mon culture and soon became a centre of religious learning. Pali, the language of the Buddhist canon, became the sacred language of learning and literature and enriched the indigenous languages. Anawrahta's successors continued his tasks; most of them were pious Buddhists, such as Kyanzittha [A.D. 1084-1112], who was well-known for his religious reforms and the promotion of Buddhism in the region.

Bagan's political power waned after the 12th century. Due to the weakness of the central power, the country broke into fragmentary principalities, but incipient dynasties, in spite of periods of unrest, strove to be the patrons and propagators of religion, with very few exemptions. Myanmar's kings traced their origin back to Buddha's *Sakya* dynasty. The Buddhist doctrine of *kamma* placed the king in the highest position, as one could only become a ruler after the accumulation of the greatest merit in former lives. The King was believed to be the *cakkavattin*, a righteous, universal ruler, who rested his rule on the principle of *dhamma*, whose duty was to disseminate and support the religion and to protect his people. The King was also believed to be the Bodhisattva, the incarnation of future Buddhas.

> *Scholar Khin Maung Nyunt comments: All Myanmar Kings whether noble of tyrant, tried to be noble patron of religion, promoter and supporter of Buddhism and defender of faith*

> *by building religious monuments for enshrining sacred relics and objects, by building residences for monks, rest house for sheltering travelers and pilgrims, by digging wells, tanks, dams and canals for supply of water for public use and cultivation and by doing many other meritorious deeds.*[9]

The role of the king was to perpetuate the *sasana*, the Buddha's= teachings, and to protect them from corruption and dispersion. This could only be done by enforcing the rules of a monk's moral code by means of control. The king appointed the head of the *Sangha*, the so-called *sasanabaing*, and ensured the rule of order through ecclesiastical hierarchy. At the same time, he ruled with the support of the Buddhist order and its prestige.

2. MONKHOOD – FROM MEDITATIVE MENDICANTS AND RENOUNCERS TO ACTIVE MEMBERS OF THE CIVIL SOCIETY

Buddha taught renunciation of the material world by means of spiritual practice in order to attain salvation (*nibbana*).[10] He advised his disciples to cultivate a walk of life that strikes a balance, the middle way – the avoidance of two extremes, such as uncontrolled indulgence in sensual pleasures on the one hand, and on the other, unnecessary self-mortification leading to exhaustion of the body and mind. The cultivation of *sīla* (morality), *paññā* (wisdom) and *bhāvanā* (meditation) leads to the cessation of *Taṇhā* (craving, thirst or desire), which he considered to be the cause of suffering, endless rebirths and infinite entanglement in the worldly matters. The Buddha and his first disciples were wandering mendicants, living in the forest, eating "what was given", wearing rags found in a cemetery, with neither a permanent place to live nor any possessions.

The growing popularity of Buddha's teachings, which increased the number of followers and highlighted the necessity for a retreat

9. Khin Maung Nyunt. 2003. An Anthology of Confer-ence Papers: Religion in Myanmar Culture and History. Department of History, University of Yangon: 177.

10. Nibbāna – cessation, extinction, liberation. The ultimate goal for a Buddhist, the Absolute, the realisation of the Truth; the state is usually described by negative therms as extinction of craving, uncompound, unconditioned and in fact, an experience, which cannot be expressed in words. A person who achieved the nibbana is free from future rebirths and consequently from suffering.

during the rainy season, were the main reasons for the disciples to settle down and found monasticism. Soon the need for the establishment of basic rules and regulations for the new community emerged / with the aim to avoid corruption and abuse of the original teachings and to regulate the discipline of monks. The moral code of a monk is called *vinaya.* There are 227 rules that a monk should respect. The offences are devised in seven categories, and only four of them, called *parajjika*, involve the so-called defeat, which consequently implies the exclusion from the *sangha* order without possibility of expiation. They include unchastity, including sexual intercourse even with animals, stealing, murder and false claiming of supernormal activities. The other offences are said to be curable, but this procedure entails a formal meeting of the order or, in the case of the less grave ones, involve forfeiture, eventually only confession. All of these rules are not only precisely elaborated, but they also cover all aspects of a monk's life and conduct, his relationship with the lay community, his way of dressing, taking food or acquiring and keeping properties. Respecting the rules is indeed the only way to make extinct desire (*taṇhā*) and to follow the way leading to salvation.

> In the handbook, "*How to Live as a Good Buddhist*", edited by the Department for the Promotion and Propagation of Sasana, the duties of the order are defined as follows: *"The community of ariya-sangha*[11] *serves mankind by constantly practicing morality and highest purity. The serve as Noble Ideal to follow, deserving respect, devotion and veneration from devotees. The* bhikku-sangha *by learning original scriptures, by practicing and by realization of highest truths, serve others by example, precept and teaching. Since they alone preserve the original sasana handed down form teacher to pupil, the devotees pay them due respect and support. They serve both sasana and people by teaching the scriptures, learning, practicing and reaching the goal of Nibbana are three aspect of the task of the bhikku sangha, past and present."*[12]

11. Ariya (pali)– noble, right, good, ideal; ariya-sangha – order or community of noble ones" synonim with „bhikkhu sangha" – order of monks.

12. *How to Live as a Good Buddhist.* 2000. Vol. I. Department for the Promotion and Propa-

At present, about 90 percent of Myanmar's population are Buddhist and an estimated 500,000 inhabitants are practicing monkhood. The first encounter with Myanmar monasticism may be somehow astonishing and raise the question of contemporary monkhood and the renunciation of the material world. The most striking are certainly the monks' obvious liberties. In the big cities, the monks sitting in the coffee shops, smoking, chewing betel, watching television and roaming around without obvious purpose is quite a common sight. Another fact is that they enjoy a visibly better material status than most of their followers. The first impression would of course be different, if the first encounter was taking place in a meditation centre, where the way of life is strictly regulated and most of the monks are meditating, or in any of the Buddhist academic centres, where monks specialise in Pali language and Tipitaka. In the villages, a monk is under stronger surveillance of the community and is mostly concerned with traditional rites and services. However, regardless of the place they live and their intellectual level, monks enjoy the highest respect from society.

It must also be stressed that the general respect they enjoy is not directed to an individual monk but to the robe he wears, which is the symbol of the Buddha. Monks might not be ideal, but they strive for an ideal and that is important. In Myanmar's culture, there are three kinds of people worthy of being worshipped: monks are the first, before parents and teachers. According to Buddhist belief, to become a human being in the circle of uncountable lives is very difficult, what more about becoming a monk, who is the closest to liberation?

What must be understood is the notion that monks differ and among them there are representatives from the whole spectrum of society. The motivation to join the order may vary. E.M. Spiro, in his research, points out five main motives for becoming a monk, such as disgust with the world and its misery, to avoid labour, to have an easy life, to achieve the state of *Nibbana*, to acquire merit and

gation of the Sasana, published by U Tun Mya Aung, Director of D.P.P.S., Yangon, Myanmar: 58.

good *kamma*[13] or to promote and teach Buddhism.[14] The wish for education as the main motive to become a monk should be added here. The majority of monks are villagers, who have no other opportunity to study or raise their status. The village monk is also the highest authority known to them and whom they follow. In case of the monks, who were raised in the monastery from a very early age, they are not able to contemplate on their motivation in childhood and they just learned to like the life in the monastery. When they reach the age of twenty, that way of life is the only one they have known and they do not see any other opportunity or reason to quit.

To leave the order is easy in theory, as it only requires the recitation of a special formula in the presence of one witness. However, taking this kind of decision after many years of monkhood usually involves strong resistance and disappointment from the monk's family, due to the prestige the family enjoyed, thanks to having a monk among its members. Supposedly, the years of material support might also have a negative impact and often cause a hysterical reaction.

Traditional monks start as novices while still in their childhood, between 7 and 14 years of age. They might stay in the monastery since their initiation ceremony (*shin-byu*). This ceremony is compulsory for all Buddhist boys, usually from the age of 7 to 12 years. However, it often depends on the financial situation of the family whether the ceremony takes place, since the performance involves serious expenses. The family has to cover the costs of a set of robes and other requisites, donations to the monastery as well as food for the invited guests. The ceremony symbolically reflects the renouncement of the material world by the Buddha, who abandoned his comfortable life of a prince and became a homeless mendicant. So does a boy, wearing the costume of a prince, who is carried to the monastery on a white horse or on a litter. There he has his head shaved; he puts on the robe and is instructed by the senior teacher. He stays in the monastery for at least a week, during which he is

13. *Kamma* – (more common in literature under the sanskrit term- karma) the acquisition of good or bad deeds which brings the fruits in the next life.=

14. Melford E. Spiro. 1984. *Buddhism and Society, A Great Tradition and its Burmese Vicissitudes*, University of California Press:137.

taught the basic principles of Buddhism. This performance is the most important stage in a boy's life, because only then he formally becomes a part of the Buddhist community and society. He, as it is stressed, becomes "a human being".

The monks brought up in the monastery enjoy generally a higher degree of respect than the ones who become a monk at an older age, as they are considered to be "pure": They neither had any sexual experience, nor experienced the burden of family life. But this might also depend on personal qualities, skills and motivations of a person who joins the order.

Some of the monks, according to their own interests and inclination, may also undertake some kind of specialisation. Those interested in studies and propagation of Buddha's teachings, can undertake studies up to the academic level. They later become abbots or teachers in monastic schools, the so-called *phongyi kyaung*; they may also perform some missionary tasks in distant regions of the country. Those interested in any particular school of meditation can be trained as meditation teachers and serve the community in meditation centres.

Monks who do not pursue higher degrees of studies usually stay in a monastery and serve the community with religious, daily life services or those related to Buddhist festivals. In fact, any important enterprise in the lifespan of a lay devotee should be accompanied by religious rites such as, for instance, recitation of prayers and offerings to the monastery. Monks living in a village serve also as teachers and counsellors for their followers, not only concerning religious matters but also as part of a monk's engagement in other village activities.

It is fairly easy to become a monk in Burma and the way to liberation is open to all. One can become a monk at any age, regardless of life circumstances. That is why generalisations concerning the *sangha* should be avoided.

A person can become "a temporary monk", coming to the monastery for a limited period of time to regain clarity of mind, which is strongly advised and appreciated by the society, as the monastery is a refuge from daily turmoil and meditation is the

highest remedy for the people of Myanmar. It is common that the head of the family stays in the monastery for some time and the rest of the family supports him with food. It is also believed that meditation and temporary seclusion are auspicious for future undertakings, because it helps one attain the highest merit. It is common that the whole department of an administration unit joins a monastery for a few weeks, in order to work better.

Although the *vinaya* rules strictly prohibit any additional occupation in the areas of medicine, magic, alchemy, fortune telling, choosing lucky lottery numbers, exorcism etc., these additional activities are quite common for a monk and they are not really despised by the majority of lay supporters. On the contrary: if a monk is successful, he can become quite popular and rich. But whatever is outside of the realm of formality and religious dogma often happens to be the most expressive aspect of human nature and represents the true needs of religious followers. However, this kind of performance may not be accepted or ignored by educated monks.

The easy access to the monastic life, in consequence, makes the monastery a place open to all sort of bogus monks, people who avoid responsibility or hardship and who just want to enjoy the privileges of monkhood. Unless they do not commit any serious offence, they will not be driven away from the order. One can also often hear about infiltration of monasteries by intelligence officers ordained as monks.

In conclusion, the modest and austere life of the *sangha* is rather a rare ideal. Contemporary monks asked about their strivings for liberation and becoming an *arahant* (a Buddhist saint) usually answers that it is difficult, and they doubt if it is still possible in the present life. They often claim that the *parami* (the perfections[15]) are also important on the way to *Nibbana*, so first they should fulfil them. They try to explain that they are just human beings and they should be perceived as such. Educated monks stress their duty as

15. The ten perfections include: generosity, morality, freedom from lust, wisdom, effort, peace, truthfull-ness, resolution, universal love, equanimity. The Buddha had to fulfill all of them in his various, previous lives, before he had become enlighted.

religious teachers. A monk may live in a comfortable monastery, using computer and mobile phone, but he still is a renouncer as long as he does not break any of the four *parajjikas*. On the other hand, monks are in the middle of mundane life and they do participate in it. The most active and educated monks believe that they should adapt to the times, they are no relics and as teachers and moral guides they have the right to represent the community they live in and to work on behalf of their people.

3. MUTUAL EXCHANGE BETWEEN SANGHA AND LAY SOCIETY

The formally organised and numerous *sangha* certainly cannot exist without the material sup-port of the lay people in the field of basic needs such as food, habitat or clothing. This obvious material dependence on the lay society from the very beginning seems to have created a need for a religious option for the lay supporters, since the Buddha's doctrine was based on the renun-ciation of the material world. The moral code for laity is simple and embodied in five precepts, also known as *pancasila*: not to kill, not to steal, not to commit adultery, not to lie and not to use intoxicants. There are also a few Buddhist *suttas* concerned with the life of a layman and the most important of them is the *Mingala-sutta* (*Sutta* of Blessings). It is composed of 38 so-called "blessings" or moral guidance notes related to various aspects of life, for instance social association, good living, education and skills, meditation practice, avoidance of sin, nobility, mental maturity, achievement of *Nibbana*.

But the main religious offer for the laity is the cultivation of the *dana*: donations for the monks and worship of sacred relics. Through the act of donation lay followers can acquire the highest religious merit, which accumulates and brings fruits in one of their next lives and will eventually bring them closer to salvation. They can also achieve the so-called "five great benefits" in present life by offering alms food, such as longevity, beauty, happiness in mind and body, bodily strength, great wisdom and insight.

Without practicing *dana* one is not able to make any religious progress. That is why important events in the life of a layman cannot be celebrated without the act of donation. Monks are the vessel through which laity can aspire to the better here and after.

The most generous donors deserve also the highest respect and prestige in society. Monkhood, due to the vows, is also a kind of sacrum. In this way, both sides are living in symbiosis and depend on each other, materially and spiritually.

4. THE MONASTERY AS THE CENTRE OF CULTURAL AND SOCIAL LIFE IN THE VILLAGE

The monastery in a village is a centre of social life. It is supported through the joint effort of the whole village community. Monasteries in Burma have always been centres for education for the people. In pre-colonial times, Burmese society was, like few other Asian societies, liter-ate. During colonial rule (1886- 1948), the role of monasteries was partly weakened due to Christian missionary schools and educational reform, but since independence in 1948 and through the turbulent modern history of an independent state, they are still fulfilling the educational role. In contemporary Myanmar, the state is not able to guarantee access to free education for all and rather tries to adapt existing monastic centres. If they can secure the basic standards, they are registered as self-reliance schools within the state education system and their pupils can sit for state examinations. Monastic schools not only educate a new generation of novices, but they also widen the curriculum for other children. They usually accept all village children who cannot afford to go to a state school or who have difficult access regarding distance. The education in a monastic school is free, often accompanied by free meals and lodging.

Myanmar monasteries are also a place for preservation and transmission of Myanmar cultural heritage. The children are taught basic morals and civics, social rights and duties towards the others.

What is also stunning is that Myanmar's temples are a place of rest and enjoyment. It is indeed a place of refuge for villagers. People come to the monastery to take a rest after work, to give offerings to the monks, meditate or seek for religious or mundane advice. Monastery buildings are usually of better quality and provided with better equipment than any of the village houses. It is possible that the monastery is the only place in the village with electricity, and, what is more, radio or television is available. It is the first place

where all the news is received and distributed.

5. ORGANISATION OF THE BUDDHIST *SANGHA* IN MYANMAR AND ITS RELATION TO THE STATE

In Myanmar's history the ruler was always the main supporter and propagator of religion, responsible for its maintenance and purity. The king was the sponsor of state Pali examinations and Buddhist places of worship. *Sangha* enjoyed the king's protection and served him with religious instructions.

According to Khin Maung Nyunt, *Sangha* had a sort of constitutional check upon the ruler. Some of the traditions and customary practices were preventive measures against despotism and tyranny.[16] The monks were forbidden to be involved in secular matters and politics, but they could act as advisers. The head of the order appointed by the king, the *Thathanabaing* or other distinguished teachers could even admonish the king, demand to pardon a condemned person and stand up for the subjects in times of natural disasters, to lessen their obligations to-wards the state. Sometimes kings entrusted political missions to monks, as in the case of the Mongol invasion and occupation of the country in the 14th century, to settle the conflict peace-fully. One case is known where a monk became king (Dhammazedi – 1453-1472), chosen for his wisdom by queen Shin Saw Pu (1453-1472) as her successor to the throne. Generally, kings and *sangha* were dependent on each other, cooperating and balancing each other with mutual respect.

Without the king's strong central support, the ecclesiastical hierarchy the order easily divided and declined. During colonial times, the secularisation of Burma caused a weakening of the order. Prominent Buddhist teachers appealed to the British to assume religious duties of the for-mer rulers as patrons. But due to the policy of non-interference in religious matters, the British response was rather superficial and not effective. This negligence, in effect, was one of the rea-sons for growing nationalism with a strong Buddhist religious background and the beginning of the resistance

16. Khin Maung Nyunt. 2003. *An Anthology of Conference Papers: Religion in Myanmar Culture and History*. Department of History, University of Yangon: 181-182.

movement.

In 1906, the Young Men's Buddhist Association was established with the objective to promote: national spirit, national language and literature, Buddhist doctrine and education in general. The YMBA developed in 1920 into the General Council of Burmese Associations, which advocated constitutional reforms and staged a strike at Rangoon University against University Act perceived to be restrictive for Burmese. Buddhist clergy took an active part in national resistance movement. The most prominent among them were U Wisara and U Ottama who applied a *non-violent* strategy in the struggle. In 1930-1932 Saya San, a Buddhist monk initiated the first armed resistance, which turned into national revolt.

After independence, the new authorities were aware of the role of Buddhism for national identity in the new state. Prime Minister U Nu organ-ised the Sixth Buddhist Synod and invited the most learned Buddhist monks from all Theravada countries to recite and edit the *Tipitaka* and commentaries. However his achievement to declare Buddhism as the official state religion in 1961 created mistrust among Karen and Kachin Christian ethnic minorities and strengthen animosity in the already weak union.

At present, Myanmar authorities follow the example of the past regarding the support and control over the order, still being aware of the potential strength of the Buddhist *sangha* and its moral impact on the nation. However, the former balance and respect seems to have declined.

As stated in the Brochure of "The Department for the Promotion and Propagation of *Sasana* of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, monks and novices in Myanmar live inside the system of hierarchy and according to the *Vinaya* rules[17], free from the direct administration of the government. In 1980, nine Myanmar Buddhist sects[18] were united in one body of monks and novices.

17. They hierarchy is based on the years (*vasa*) spent in order, counted from the higher monk's ordination.

18. The nine sects (or schools): Sudhammâ, Shwe Kying, Veluvan, Anout Chawing Dvâra, Mûladvâra, Mahâd-vâra, Catubhummika Hnget Twin, Gaòavimutti Gatot, Maggarî. The schools differ mostly in their interpretation of *vinaya* rules.

After having elected one thousand, three hundred were appointed to the Sangha Central Working Committee and then forty seven of their members were chosen to organise the Executive Committee – the State *Sangha Mahanayaka* Committee. One hundred *sayadaws*[19] from different parts of the country are organised in the State *Ovadacariya* Committee, the advisory board supervising the different levels of *sangha* organisations.

Under the leadership of the *State Sangha Mahanayaka* Committee there are different levels of organisations: State and Division, Town-ship, Village and Wards Committees.

There are also three judicial levels of *Vinaya* Judical Courts: Township *Vinicchaya* Courts State and Division *Vinicchaya* Courts and the Highest *Vinicchaya* Courts.

The government of Myanmar sponsors the state Pali examinations and confers the titles. The basic one - *Pathamabyan* Pali Examination – has four levels. To continue their education, students may sit for the *Dhammacariya* examinations, testing their knowledge of *Tipitaka* and confer-ring them the title of *Sasanadhaja Dhammacariya*. There is also a Honorary *Dhammacariya* examination, which confers students the title of *Sasanadhaja Siripavara Dhammacariya*. For especially talented candidates, there are *Tipitakadhara* (The Bearer of Three Baskets) Examinations. A candidate must be able to memorise at least one of the three baskets in the term of five years. If he passes all three examinations, he obtains the title of *Tipitakadhara*, *Tipitakakovida* or *Tipitakadhara Dhammabandagarika*. The successful candidates are held in highest respect in the country. The conferring of the title is accompanied by donations and con-vocation ceremonies. *Pitakadharas* enjoy special facilities as free travel by air, water and road and they receive monthly cash donations by the gov-ernment. All ceremonies are sponsored by the government and held annually.[20]

Apart from the above mentioned examinations for monks and novices, there are also national Pali Examinations of different levels

19. *Sayadaw* is a teacher.

20. Buddha Sâsanâ and Myanmar, The Department for the Promotion and Propagation of the Sasana, Minis-try of Religious Affaires, Union of Myanmar.

held for the members of the *sangha,*praised with donations from lay devotees.

The titles of *Abhidhajamahatattaguru* and *Aggamahapandita* are annually conferred to prominent *sayadaws* by the government. These and twenty other new titles are annually announced on Independence Day, 4 January, and a titles' presentation ceremony is held in March. These *sayadaws* can also travel free by road, air and water and they receive financial donations by the government.

There are two State Pariyatti Sasana Universities (Religious Universities) in Yangon and Mandalay, with both traditional and modern systems of teaching. Alongside them, there is also the In-ternational Theravada Buddhist Missionary Uni-versity. The government sponsors different ceremonies such as hoisting the Pagoda Um-brella, ceremonies to honour the relics of the Buddha and *arahants*.

The government supports many monastic schools, particularly in the cities, where up to one thousand novices and monks live together in one monastery, which could otherwise not survive without central support as well, is in charge of maintenance and preservation of Buddhist monuments. In 1991, a new body was established, the Department for the Promotion and Propagation of *Sasana*, with the aim to spread Buddhist teachings in the country and abroad.

The fact is that *sangha* cannot exist without the state, at least not in such numbers as at present. It depends on the central power materially and judicially in case of civil disputes for instance about the land or monastery property, criminal offences. Regarding the numbers of monks and the easy access to the monkhood there is no question about the need of the State *Sangha Mahanayaka* structure and controlling role. The problem is how to restore its moral authority, real representation of the community and executive power, so that it could be perceived as more than a puppet institution, exercising regulations of the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

6. MYANMAR MONKS AND THEIR RECENT SOCIO-POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

In accordance with state directives, monks are prohibited from

participating in secular affairs. *"The monks should stay away from forming, joining or supporting any illegal sangha organization that does not accept supervision and administration of sangha organizations at different levels."* [Directive no 83 of 13 July 1991]. *"Party politics is concerned only with lay persons. No matter which party comes to power, members of the sangha are to try to maintain the perpetuation of the Buddha Sasana under the administrative machinery of the party."* [83.5] *"All in the members of the sangha residing in Myanmar are directed to avoid getting involved in party politics and instigation* [83.6]

The moral dilemma about monks' participation in socio-political affairs arises for both the monks and the state. According to U. Acara and U. Parami, *vinaya* teachers *at* International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University in Yangon, in *vinaya* code there are no direct restrictions regarding monk's activities in politics. Undoubtedly, according to the rule, the best for the monk is to keep far from all social or political affairs, even from the modern education, regarded as to being mundane for the attainment of gain and fame in the world. There are few vinaya rules related to the subject:

1. Monks should not go to watch the soldiers' parade,
2. One who is giving a service to a king must not be ordained without the king's royal permission,
3. Monks are allowed to follow the ruling kings if the rulers are righteous.

But there are also a few examples of the Buddha's engagement in social affairs or[21] even acting as a negotiator. There is compromise that if anything good could be done for the welfare of many without serious transgression of *vinaya*, it should be done.

Usually, where there is no direct restriction in the church rule, and special circumstances arise, there is a space and need for

21. Dispute of Sakyas and Koliyas on the share of waters from Rohini rivers, his effort to stop Vitadubha to kill Sakya people . One example is even devastating, regarding tolerance – when king Kosala allowed religious sect Titthiyas to build monastery near the Buddha's place, the Teacher appealed to the King to remove the building of neighbours. Sources: Commentary of Sahassabhikkhunisamgha-sutta, Mahavagga-samyutta, Samyutta-nikaya, Commentary of Kunala-jataka, Vitatubha-vatthu, Dhammapada-atthakattha.

interpretation. Buddhist community itself should elaborate the extent and area of monk's participation in socio-political life and the right and way of expressing general concerns. Particularly, given that monks' grassroots activity is already given.

The Myanmar monks' involvement in politics has a long tradition dating back to the colonial times. Similarly, in several other Buddhist countries there is a phenomenon known as "engaged Buddhism" or "liberation movement", concerned with monastic activities in social and political life. Regarding neighbouring Thailand, the most prominent Buddhist reformers are Buddhasa Bhikkhu and Ajaan Sulak Sivaraksa, founder of various non-governmental organisations that deal with issues of development, education, ecology etc. Ajaan Sulak Sivaraksa is also a co-founder of the "International Network of Engaged Buddhists".[22] Another Buddhist platform is the annual International Buddhist Conference on the United Nations Day of Vesak, which this year took place in Hanoi and concluded with approval of the "Hanoi Declaration of the Fifth International Buddhist Conference on the United Nations Day of Vesak". The declaration includes articles outlining the international Buddhist community's commitment to build a just, democratic and civilised society including urging international communities to strengthen efforts for world peace, advocating for social justice and solutions to social problems.[23]

In September 2007, the so-called "Saffron Revolution" in Myanmar was a spontaneous act, without coordination and permission from the highest levels of monastic hierarchy. This sudden and courageous act was also quite unexpected for the opposition.

The monks tried to use their immunity to urge the authorities to consider the economic situation of Myanmar citizens and to protest against a sudden fuel price hike. After violent events in the town of Pakkoku[24] ended with the death of a monk, the protests spread over

22. "INEB issues of interest revolve around integration of spirituality and social activities. Issues that INEB emphasised included peace reconciliation, ecology, women issue and empowerment, health, education, human rights, community building, alternative development, role of spiritual leaders in modern world context, etc." http://www.inebnetwork.org/

23. http://english.vietnamnet.vn/social/2008/05/783550/

24. Pakkoku – town in western central Myanmar, Magwe division.

the whole country. The monks launched the *Pattaneik-kuzana*[25], *an* excommunicative boycott, the so-called "turning the bowls upside down", not accepting donation from the Buddhist offender. Ingrid Yords in her article "*Turning over the bowl in Burma*", comments: *The statement was a significant rebuke, but remained highly moral and anti-political. The language of kingship and refusal of donations remained within the traditional bounds available to the Sangha in desperate times.*[26]

In the meantime four political demands were presented to the government by activated All Burma Monks Alliance Group:

1. The SPDC must apologise to the monks until they satisfy and can forgive and pardon them,
2. Reduce all commodity prices, fuel prices, rice and cooking oil prices immediately,
3. Release all political prisoners including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all detainees arrested in ongoing demonstrations over fuel price hike,
4. Enter a dialogue with democratic forces for national reconciliation immediately to resolve the crises and difficulty facing and suffering by the people.[27]

The protest ended with a violent crackdown by the military, with many deaths, arrests and a clearout of the monasteries, which in only a few days became empty, as most of monks fled to the villages. The events were publicly considered by authorities as an attempt to destabilise the country by the opposition and foreign agents, which

25. Any important decision in the monastery is taken by an announcement, repeated three times, if there are no opposed voices the decision takes effects. The excommunication announcment of 18-th september in unoficial translation was as follow: *Reverend fathers, may you lend ears to me! The evil, sadistic and pitiless military rulers who are robbing the nation's finances and indeed are large scale thieves have murdered a monk in the City of Pakkoku. They also apprehended the reverend monks by lassoing. They beat up and tortured, swore and terrorised monks. Provided that monks be bestowed with four deserving attributes, they ought to boycott with four deserving attributes, they out to boycott the evil, sadistic, tyrants and immensly thieving military rulers. The monks ought not to associate with the tyrants, not to preach them. This much is informing, reccomending or proposing.* [Burma Update by PDC 181- 18 September 2007].

26.http://caribou.cc.trincoll.edu/depts_csrpl/RINVol10No3/turning%20over%20the%20bowl.htm

27. www.irrawaddy.org/article.php?art_id=8610 - 31k

is more comfortable interpretation, than admit that expression of concern had arisen originally from inside. That violent reaction brought a silent but permanent anger to many Myanmar people. The lack of respect towards the social sacrum had a very negative impact on the authorities' prestige. The government, which uses religious symbols in everyday rhetoric, reacting with violence against the *sangha,* lacks credibility. Moreover, regarding that the doctrine of "*non-violence*" is a foundation stone in the Buddhist religion. After the crackdown, the government forcefully tried to improve its image by providing huge donations to the *sangha* hierarchy and organised many Buddhist ceremonies and events, in which the main political players participated. There was also a notable side effect: the violent reaction brought about a revitalisation of religion in its social dimension but as well visible political activities of monks in the country and abroad.[28]

In another example, after the cyclone Nargis' devastation of the Irrawady Delta in May 2008, with over one hundred thousand dead and missing and about 2 million homeless survivors, monks came into focus as a group with high mobilisation. In contrast to the tardiness and suspiciousness of the government, which seemed to give more attention to their own image than to constructive actions, the monks took a leading role in giving assistance to the helpless people. The monasteries become shelters and aid centres for those left out from the government or international aid workers' relief efforts. The clergy particularly filled the lack of a sufficient number of effective organisations in the country, such as NGOs, reaching distant and forgotten areas, distributing aid, organising temporary hospitals and orphanages. As many noticed, the leading role of monks in these times of emergency certainly galvanised their ranks and gave them a way to express their political voices. Moreover the open critique of the government from inside the country became visible, as in the case of Sitagu Sayadaw U Nanissara[29]. There is hope

28. The foundation of Sasana Moli – International Bur-mese Monks Organization by Myanmar sayadaws abroad, strongly connected with the Myanmar oppo-sition in exile and Monks Supporting Commitee of the National Council of the Union of Burma.

29. Sayadaw U Nanissara, born in 1937 in Thegon, founder of International Buddhis Academy in Sagaing Hills, prominent Buddhist teacher, known for his missionary work.

that this voice will be considered more seriously in the future.[30]

7. TOWARDS A MORE ACTIVE ROLE OF MONKS IN SOCIETY

A monk's engagement and active participation in social or political life is controversial due to their religious purpose to search for spiritual liberation. But it seems that for many of the younger generation, involvement in social life is unavoidable because of their importance in a community and numerous duties they are in charge of. Moreover, in times of emergency it seems that there is no other group in the Myanmar society which is more fitted, flexible and accepted by the nation. Even if political activity might be more controversial, any peaceful action is acceptable as long as it is not contrary to the *vinaya* rules.

Quite a few younger monks, who have travelled, studied and preached abroad, are in closer con-tact with the outside world and have had an opportunity to widen their perspectives. They are more conscious about underdevelopment of their country caused by isolation, lack of access to the means of communication such as inter-net, mobile phones etc., and they realise the impact of overwhelming poverty on their people. They are more open towards working for the benefit of others. Although salvation in Buddhism is not acquired through charitable work, one still accumulates merit. The Buddhist doctrine provides room for vivid interpretation in terms of social matters. Monks have access to the people and the subject of preaching is open. The "Saffron Revolution" brought more people to the monasteries to listen to "what is right". The present role of monks in the time of disaster certainly proves their importance as an active group, enjoying respect, being easy to mobilise and getting access to everyone. In Myanmar it is often emphasised that "monks are powerful". They are. They have real power to positively influence the society they live in. The question is if the present revival can develop into a more organised and representative movement, where the engaged *sangha* would be

30. Althought the strict polarisation sangha versus state is an exaggeration. One should not forget that in a Burmese family it often happens that there is one monk and one soldier, being also quite common that a retired soldier becomes a monk. As is the case in many places monks and army cooperate in post-Nagris works.

able to formulate postulates and define their area of activity.[31] That depends on the participation of prominent and respected teachers, with authority in the *sangha* and among the followers.

One may argue that the traditional curriculum and lack of basic education in other fields such as economics or politics does not entitle monks to claim the position of advisers. Still, they are very close to the ordinary people and their hard-ship and, as illustrated above, they live in complete dependence and symbiosis with their sup-porters. In fact, in Burma it would be difficult to find better mediators and respected authorities than the members of the *sangha* and their voice could be valuable and beneficial for both the authorities and the people.

***

31. Probably the areas of activity of the monkhood should be defined wider than stressing the political postulates formulated by the opposition in exile, which is ad hoc labelled by the military government as being manipulated by hostile and foreign forces. The role and influence of the monks is quite incomparable on the grassroot level, as for example in the development of civil society, human and citizens'rights, education, ecology etc.

Bibliography

Bishof, Roger. 1995. *Buddhism in Myanmar. A Short History. Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy Sri Lanka.* The Wheel Publication no. 399/401.

Buddha Sasana and Myanmar. The Department for the Promotion and Propagation of the Sa-sana, Ministry of Religious Affaires, Union of Myanmar.

Engaged Buddhism, Buddhist Liberation movements in Asia, ed. by Christopher S. Queen and Sallie B. King, State University of New York Press, Albany, 1996.

Harvey G.E. 1967. *History of Burma. From the earliest Times to 10 March 1824. The beginning of the English Conquest. London and Edinburgh.*

Jordt Ingrid. 2007. *Burma Mass Lay Mediation Movement*, University of Chicago Press.

Jordt Ingrid, 2007. Turning Over the Bowl in Burma, Religion in the News, Winter 2008, vol.10, No.2, http://caribou.cc.trincoll.edu/depts_csrpl/RINVol10No3/turning%20over%20the%20bowl.htm

Khin Maung Nyunt. 2003. *And Anthology of Conference Papers: Religion in Myanmar Culture and History.* Department of History, University of Yangon 2003.

Khin Maung Nyunt. 2006. *Radio Talks on Myanmar Culture,* Ministry of Information, Union of Myanmar. Printing and Publishing Enterprise.

Maung Htin Aung. 1967. *A History of Burma, Columbia University Press, New York and London.*

Oldenberg Hermann. 1994. *Ycie, nauczanie I wspólnota Buddy.* Kraków: Oficyna Literacka.

Smith Donald Eugene. 1965. *Religion and Politics in Burma.* Princeton, New Jersey: Pronceton University Press.

NEPAL

BUDDHISM IN NEPAL

Tina Manandhar*

This paper intends not to analyze the principles and philosophy of Buddhism, rather it is designed to give an introduction to Nepali Buddhism in the context of the country's history, culture and society.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT:

Buddha was born in Lumbini Nepal, and had spent his first 29 years in Kapilvastu (present Tilaurakot). Even after his enlightenment, Buddha visited Kapilvastu many times. The Buddhist text also mention the visit of Buddha and his disciples to Nepal Valley. The Swayanbhu Purana refers to the visit of Buddha to Nepal valley with his disciples, and Mulsarvastivad Vinaya mentions the visit of Buddhist monks led by Ananda to Nepal during the lifetime of Buddha himself. So we can safely assume that Buddhism entered Nepal as early as Buddha's lifetime. In addition, the vamsabalis (chronicles) have recorded the visit of Adi Buddhas i.e, Biswopi, Sikhi, Biswobhu, Krakuchanda, Kanakakmuni and Kasyapa to Nepal even before the lifetime of Gautam Buddha. These chronicles also mention the arrival of Manjushree Bodhisatwa from China, who made the Kathmandu Valley habitable by draining the water that filled the valley. After his departure from Nepal, his disciples had erected a Chaitya in his memory.

We have no idea about the religious policy of the first two royal

* Former Chair Prof. of Dept. of Buddhist Studies & Director of Institute of Seon, Dongguk University

dynasties i.e, Gopala and Mahispala, but the Kiratas (the third royal dynasty) though considered to be Hindus, had great respect for Buddhism. Among the Lichhavi rulers, Vrisadeva is mentioned as a great follower of Buddhist faith and given credit for the construction of Swoyambhu Chaitya. Mana Dev constructed Sri Mana Vihar and Amsuvarma established a trust for its upkeep and also constructed a new vihara, Raj Vihara by name. Shiva Dev relinquished throne to lead a ascetic life of a monk, and Narendra Dev used to wear a belt having the image of Buddha and later retired to a monastery. During the early medieval period, the Khasa Malla rulers of Karnali region were devoted to Buddhism, and their inscriptions have words of praise for Buddha and his ideals. The Malla rulers of the Kathmandu Valley during the later medieval period were Hindus, but had equal respect for Buddhism. It was an age when the people in general showed enthusiasm on Buddhism by constructing Chaityas and offering donations for the maintenance of Buddhist Monastries.

After the unification of Nepal, the Shah rulers continued to adopt a policy of religious harmony, but the Rana Prime Ministers had negative attitude towards the Therabad and Lamaist Buddhism. Chandra Shamsher expelled a Tibetan Lama and other Nepali monks from Nepal, on charges of initiating religious conflict. Bhim Shamsher created obstacles in holding Buddhist prayers, lectures, and worship in the Viharas, and Juddha Shamsher once again expelled the Buddhist monks from Nepal. However the last two Prime Ministers gave some concessions to the Buddhist community. Padma Shamsher allowed some of the expelled Buddhist monks to return, and Mohan Shamsher declared Buddha Purnima a holiday for the Buddhist Community, which was later on made a public holiday in 1952.

After the introduction of democracy in 1951, the Nepali Buddhist got opportunities to work in a free and favourable atmosphere, King Tribhuvan took part in Buddhist activities by gracing the Buddhist functions and listening to Buddhist prayers and chanting, and King Mahendra played active role in hosting the fourth World Buddhist conference in Nepal with the then prince Gyanendra as chief guest. Since then a number of International Buddhist conferences have

been held in which the head of the state have graced the occasion as chief guest.

The constitution of Nepal 1962 officially declared Nepal a Hindu state, but the people were allowed to practice their own religion freely as handed down from his forefathers. During the making of 1990 constitution many socio-religious organizations demanded Nepal to be declared a secular state but to no avail. But finally the

BUDDHIST COMMUNITIES IN NEPAL:

The Buddhists in Nepal are divided into many different ethnic and cultural groups having different traditions and rituals. Roughly speaking, three types of Buddhism are professed by the Nepali people. They are- Therabad, which considers Buddha as an enlightened person and believes on his teaching of four noble truth and noble eight fold path; Mahayana+Vajrayana, which worship the image of Buddha as a god and also believe on Tantrism as a means to achieve the end; and Lamaist Buddhism which is a revised form of Mahayana Buddhism influenced by the Tibetan culture and tradition.

The Bhiksus (monks) and Anagarikas (nuns) practice and profess the Therabad Buddhism in Nepal. They live in different Viharas and give dharmadesana (lecture or talk on Buddhism) along with Sila Prathana to their disciples who profess the Mahayana + Vajrayana sect of Buddhism. The disciples are mostly Newars and they offer donations in kind and cash to the Viharas and also invite the Bhiksus for Bhojan(lunch). Most of the Bhiksus and Anagarikas are form Newar Buddhist families. These Therabad Bhiksus suffered a lot during the Rana regime because of the harsh behavior of the then government resulting in their expulsion from the country. But now, at present they are regarded as most respected religious teachers to the entire Buddhist community in Nepal.

The Newar community in Nepal are either Hindus (Shaiva) or Buddhists, with the Buddhist Newars professing and practicing the Mahayana +Vajrayana sect of Buddhism. The Vajracharyas, called as guru, work as priest where as the Shakyas, called as grantha guru composed Buddhism psalms, stories, and ritualistic texts, which the Vajracharyas used during ritual activities. The other

Newar Buddhists have Vajracharyas as their priest and profess Mahayana sect of Buddhism. Most of the Shresthas who were devoted to Buddhism during the medieval period as courtiers and businessmen, have declared themselves as Hindus, with very few of them still practicing Buddhism in specific localities.

The another sect practiced in Nepal is known as Lamaist Buddhism, It is in real the Mahayana+Vajrayana sect of Buddhism, but it has borrowed some features from Therabad and has been largely influenced by Tibetan tradition and culture. This sect is popular in Himalayan areas, mid and western regions of Nepal, and the communities which profess this sect are Tamangs(mid-region), Sherpas (Himalayan region), Thakalis (low -Himalayan region), Gurungs (western region) and Tharus (eastern and western regions). During the last 5/6 decades, some of the Newar Buddhists have come under the influence of the Lamaist Buddhism. They have appointed Lamas as their priest for some special purpose, continuing the Vajracharyas as their priest on normal occasions.

Most of the Newar Buddhist in one way, have come under the influence of Hinduism, and it is considered as a special feature of Buddhist culture in Nepal. The Vajracharyas work as the priest of the Hindu deities such as Ganesh, Mahankala, Sankata, and Bhairab, and their Buddhist Yajamans (disciples) worship these deities with greater devotion. Most of the Buddhist Newars worship Ganesh to start any ritual, and the Newar businessmen worship Bhimsen as a god of trade and commerce. The Hindu rituals and festivals have greater impact on the daily life of the Newar Buddhists. Likewise, the followers of Lamaist Buddhism are also under the influence of Hinduism to some extent. The Kiratas, though had close linkage with Buddhism, considers themselves as Hindus and worship Shiva as their principal deity. Similarly, the Sherpas, Tamangs, and Thakalis observe some of the festivities of the Hindus. Only, the Therabadi monks and nuns are observing the Buddhist principles in strict terms. That is why they became the targets of the Rana rulers during the first half of the twentieth century and resulted in their expulsion from the country.

FUTURE PROSPECTS :

Nepal is a multi ethnic, multilingual and secular state. But the country remained Hindu State until 2006. Though the constitution has guaranteed all the citizens the freedom to practice their own religion the debate over the Hindu influence has always been there. It is evident from the 1991 census where majority of the Buddhist community including Vajracharyas and Shakyas, have been categorized as Hindu. The government argued that the census reflected the peoples' sentiment but the Buddhist claimed it as a well arranged plan to show the Hindu majority to justify the concept of 'Hindu State'. They believed that the concerned officials were biased, so the Buddhist organizations requested the Buddhist community to be sincere to their religion and alerted against the ill design of the census officials in the 2001 census. The 2001 census saw the rise in Buddhist population by three percent.

It is an undisputed fact that Buddhism is not a threat to Hinduism in Nepal, and the Nepali Buddhists have adopted plenty of Hindu rituals in their daily life as a part of their culture, but their pious desire to maintain a separate identity has been thwarted in many ways through the popular slogan - Buddhism is a part of Hinduism and Buddha is a Hindu by birth. Not to forget, if Buddha is taken as a Hindu simply because of his birth in a Hindu family then Jesus Christ must also be a Jew and not a Christian. The attitude of Nepali Buddhist towards the Hindus has a feeling of religious tolerance and harmony and they have embraced Hindu culture in their daily life.

CONCLUSION:

Though it has been more than a decade since Nepal was declared a secular state the attitude of the Hindus' towards other community has a smell of domination and superiority. With the exception of Brahmins, Kshatriyas and the Terai people, the other communities are connected to Buddhism in one or other way. The slogan of religious harmony is very popular in Nepal, but for its proper implementation the business should not be one sided. The identity of the Buddhist should be recognized because one must realize, the dream of religious tolerance or harmony at the cost of Buddhism will never come true.

References:

Amritananda, B.1983. A Short History of Therabad Buddhism in Nepal. Kathmandu: Anandakuti Vihar

Bajracharya, N M. 1998. Buddhism In Nepal (465 BC to 1199 AD). Delhi: Eastern Book Linkers.

Locke, J K. 1986. Buddhist Monasteries in Nepal. Kathmandu: Sahayogi Prakashan

Mitra, R L. 1882. The Buddhist Sanskrit Literature of Nepal. Calcutta: Firma K L Mukhopadhyaya

Pradhan, B B. 1956. Buddhism in Medieval Nepal. Kathmandu: Dharmodaya Sabha

Pradhan, B L. 1975. Lumbini, Kapilvastu, Devdaha. Kathmandu: Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies

Ram, R. 1977. A History of Buddhism in Nepal. Patna: Jana Bharati Prakashan.

Sakya, MB. 1986. A Short History of Buddhism In Nepal. Lalitpur: Buddhist youth Publication.

Singh, H L. 1999. Buddhism in Nepal. Kathmandu: Ratna Pustak Bhandar.

Slusser, M S. 1982. Nepal Mandala: A Cultural Study of the Kathmandu Valley. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

THE *GUTHIS*: BUDDHIST SOCIETAL ORGANIZATION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

by Shobhit Shakya* & Wolfgang Drechsler**

ABSTRACT

The defining aspect of the Newar society of Kathmandu Valley (also referred to as Nepalmandala) is their traditional form of community governance – the Guthi. The Guthi is a specifically Buddhist institution of community governance based on the notions of societal resilience and philanthropism. At the core of the administrative structure of Nepal Mandala since the 4th century CE, after the Hindu Gorkhali conquest of the Nepalmandala and reforms towards a more global-Western style of governance in the last few decades, the Guthi Institution was reduced to only being used for religio-cultural activities. But when the Earthquake of 2015 damaged several World Heritage monuments, the Nepali government could not 'deliver', and so the Guthis, to all intents and purposes, re-emerged. In effect, some traditional Guthis, and new community initiatives following the blueprint of the Guthis, came forward, if mostly facilitating the restoration of several important monuments. It is of special interest that this re-emergence appears to be clearly ICT-enabled, i.e. based on community organization via social-media and other new communication technologies.

INTRODUCTION: NEWARS AND *GUTHI*

The Newars of Nepal are generally considered the original inhabitants of Kathmandu valley. They have a distinct culture

*. Ph.D. Student, Tallinn University of Technology

**. Professor of Governance, Tallinn University of Technology

amongst the population of Nepal and their own language, which is officially called Nepal Bhasa, while also being termed as Newari (Shrestha, 1999). Often seen as a homogenous community, the Newars are a very diverse community with most practicing either Buddhism, Hinduism or both (Gellner, 1986). Before the annexation of Kathmandu valley by the Gorkha to what became modern Nepal, historical Nepal or *Nepalmandala* existed as a system of cities and villages in and around Kathmandu valley. Historians usually credit the times under the Lichhavi and Malla dynasties with having been prosperous, and it gave rise to rich art, architecture and a distinct culture (Shrestha and Singh, 1972; Shaha, 1990). *Nepalmandala* under the Lichhavi and Malla dynasties had a governance system in which citizens actively participated in the activities of the state. It was defined by an institution of community self-governance via organizations called *Guthis.*

Guthi is a distinctive institution among Newars that has existed since the Lichhavi era (400 to 750 CE), called *Gosthi* in older historical accounts (Shrestha and Singh, 1972; Shaha, 1990). In Sanskrit, the word *Gosthi* means 'assembly' or 'association' (Toffin, 2005; Dangol, 2010; Pradhananga, Shrestha and Dee, 2010). Toffin (2016, p. 349) has describes them as "communal groups which are theoretically motivated by the notion of service rather than by profits." *Guthis* have had several functions within the Newar society and they have been categorised in many ways (Quigley, 1985; Toffin, 2005; Shrestha, 2012, p. 512). In general, based on the goals or objectives of *Guthis*, they seem to be of three types:

1. concerned with festivities (*jatras*), workshops, craftsmanship, music, maintaining water conduits and other activities,

2. activities of the dead, such as carrying out of funerals, and

3. purely religious activities.

Often *Guthis* do relate specific groups based on caste or kin within the Newar community, but this is not always so. They can be based simply on geographical propinquity as well (Regmi, 1977, p. 48). Research about the Newars and their culture always discusses *Guthi* to varied degrees, thus exhibiting how *Guthis* are an integral part of the Newar community (Shrestha, 1999, 2007; Toffin, 2008;

Nepali, 2015; Sharma, 2015).

GUTHI AS A BUDDHIST INSTITUTION OF GOVERNANCE

Newars being partly Hindu and partly Buddhist, to see *Guthi* as a Buddhist institution of governance may be met with some criticism. *Guthis* do exist among the non-Buddhist side of the Newar population, and rarely outside the Newar community, too. However, there can be a clear indication that the existence of *Guthis* is most widely prevalent amongst the Buddhist Newar population. Most *Guthis* are associated with Buddhist deities like *Bajrayogini* and *Karunamaya* (Shrestha, 2012; Maharjan and Barata, 2017), and Buddhist monasteries, known locally as *Baha* and *Bahi*, or *Mahavihara* in Sanskrit (Locke, 1985; Vajracharya, 1998). When concerning *Baha* and *Bahi*, it has been noted that *Guthis* are the organizations that commonly oversee their upkeeping activities conducted around them.

Even though in Sanskrit both *Baha* and *Bahi* structures are termed as *Mahaviharas,* and both are essentially *Bajrayana* monasteries, they are locally distinguished as *Baha* or *Bahi*. Locke (1985) has given detail of how these structures differ in location within the cities and to some extent in architecture, but as he further explains, the major difference historically was based on whether or not celibate monks lived there (Locke, 1985, pp. 185–186). *Bahas* used to have a non-celibate monastic tradition, and were usually located towards the inner-city areas, while the *Bahis*, having celibate monastic tradition, were located towards the outskirts of the cities (Locke, 1985; Beckh, 2006). This eventually changed and both *Bahis* and *Bahas* now have non-celibate practitioners, and their lives revolve around the monastery they are associated with through ancestry (Locke, 1985, p. 185). Activities of the monasteries and the community associated with them are organized through *Guthis* (Locke, 1985).

All *Guthis* have ritualistic importance given to assembly and discussions, with most of these organization having annual assemblies where all members meet; this usually being over a feast. This practice of annual assemblies is common in *Guthis* that have activities being conducted year-round. For example, *Guthis* related

to functions of *Mahaviharas,* and *Guthis* concerning funerals or *Sana Guthis,* all have annual assemblies of sorts (Locke, 1985; Shrestha, 2012, p. 193). Duties are overtaken by *Guthi* members in turn, using a rotation system, usually in groups of a few *Guthi* members. According to the type of *Guthi* and the type of task required, members from the appropriate age group are selected. For example, in *Guthis* of Vajracharyas, elders will be responsible for priestly functions while younger members will be responsible for acting as the guardians of the deity (*dya-palas*) in the monastery complex (Locke, 1985, p. 474). *Sana Guthis* will also have different duties during the passing of a *Guthi* member, which other members will take over in a rotation system (Quigley, 1985; Dangol, 2010). Feasts that are prepared during annual assemblies are also organized by *Guthi* members in turns.

Guthis were maintained mostly through endowments provided by community members or monarchs in form of land. There are multiple types of *Guthis,* but they can be categorized into two types on the basis of ownership and on how they were established. The monarch delegating a responsibility to a community group would establish a *Raj Guthi* with the state owning the properties of the *Guthi* too, while *Guthis* that were established by community groups would be *Niji Guthi* (Diwasa, Bandu and Nepal, 2007; Dangol, 2010). *Guthi* land being farmed by tenant farmers in return of part of their harvest has been a common practice in Kathmandu valley, providing source of income to the *Guthis* and maintaining self-sustainability of these organizations (Regmi, 1977; Adhikari, 2008).

Not all *Guthis* receive land endowments. *Niji Guthi* may be without any endowments and they do not also receive any funds from the state either (Shrestha, 2012, p. 212). In cases where *Guthis* do not have sources of funds in form of land endowments or state sponsorship, the activities of such *Guthis* are funded through donations collected from their members or through external donations. Even *Guthis* having sources of funds may not necessarily have enough funds for all of their activities, so in such cases, too, *Guthi* members themselves provide the funds (Locke, 1985, p. 37). Members in any Guthi are also working for the activities of the *Guthis* as volunteers, thus keeping the operational cost at a

minimum (Shrestha, 2012, pp. 185, 282).

In general, *Guthis* are organizations within the sphere of Buddhist traditions that are based on notions of philanthropism, service and volunteerism that adheres to Buddhist practices as seen elsewhere too (Choden, 2003). *Guthis* are part of Buddhism in practice, of institutions that historically emerged in the specifically Buddhist context, which is often more important than institutions mentioned in theory or constructed backwards referring to the latter (Drechsler, 2016). There are evidences to support that *Guthis* come from traditions in governance practiced in ancient India (covering most parts of present-day South Asia) when Buddhism had much more influence in the region. References from Buddhist scriptures do support this argument. The *Satta Aparihaniya Dhamma* as mentioned in *Digha Nikaya* of the *Sutta Pitaka emphasizes frequent assembly, unity and harmony, resilience of traditions and maintenance of hierarchal order (Harris, 2007; Shobhana, 2017). The scripture mentioned the seven duties the Vrijji (one of the Mahajanapadas of ancient India) needed to follow if they were not to go into decline and risk being overtaken by Magadh. The principles to a great degree match with the principles under which the Guthis of Newars function. The Lichhavis, a faction of which later ruled Nepal, were part of the Vrijji confederacy during the time of Shakyamuni Buddha (Sharma, 1983; Vajracharya, 1998). Based both on historical links and traditions, there is a significant basis to claim that Guthis are a specific form of Buddhist Governance that has roots to the governance system that were prevalent in history.*

OTHER INTERPRETATIONS AND COMPARISON WITH SIMILAR INSTITUTIONS

There is large a volume of literature that defines *Guthis* to be part of a land tenure system or a religious trust (Regmi, 1965, 1977; Acharya, 2008). Being a well-established practice within the most developed culture in the country (Regmi, 1977; Nepali, 2015), *Guthi* practice, understandably, continued even after the *Gorkha* conquest of Kathmandu Valley. It is important to note that Prithvi Narayan Shah was given education in Bhaktapur (Shaha, 1990), thus his knowledge of statecraft would have been largely influenced

by the *Newars*. However, the blurring of the boundary between Hindu and Buddhist traditions has always been evident with both religions sharing the same cultural landscapes. As a result, *Guthis* continued even under the Shah Kings, but with increasingly changed interpretation of the institution.

The changed interpretation of *Guthis* took towards redefining them as a part of system of a land tenure system, disassociated with the original interpretation and origin of the institution. Quigley (1985) argues that *Guthis* being seen as part of a land tenure system is a "*Gorkhali* invention" that started only after the *Gorkhali* conquest of *Nepalmandala*. Regmi (Regmi, 1965, 1977, 1988) has written of *Guthis* from the perspective of land tenure system. But he acknowledges *Guthis* as a distinct social organization amongst the Newars and writes:

> *Among the Newars, the term Guthi is used to denote an organization based on caste or kinship, or, occasionally, on geographical propinquity, which ensures the continued observances of social and religious customs and ceremonies of the community. The term, Guthi, in this sense is primarily used to denote a social institution that determines the rights and obligations of a Newar vis-à-vis his community. This is obviously that such an institution has no relationship with the land-tenure system.* (Regmi, 1977, p. 48)

Regmi (*ibid.*) further states that a *Guthi* organization may acquire and hold estates, and in such case, they come under the *Guthi* land-tenure system. This clearly indicates that the *Guthi* being primarily a part of a land tenure system is misinterpretation of the Newar *Guthi* that was adopted by the Shah regime and continued through the Rana regime (Regmi, 1977).

Guthi land has been common during the Rana regime, by which time it had become a way of making land holdings tax free, as no tax was levied on these lands (Regmi, 1977; Nepali, 2015). Another benefit of converting one's land to *Guthi* land was that it could not be attached by creditors in settlement of debt (*ibid.*). While the land was supposedly donated for a charitable purpose, familial interests were still served by these lands, as the law stipulated that persons who endowed land as *Guthi* land were entitled to receive

food and clothing from the *Guthi* endowment if such need arised (Regmi, 1977), comparable e.g. to Western trust funds even today. It is evident that the original meaning of *Guthis* has been lost as the practice was reinterpreted by the Shaha and Rana regimes. The notion of charity was still advertised, even though in effect *Guthi* lands were becoming less about charity.

Institutions of governance based on religious foundations are not uncommon around the world in varied contexts. *Mahallas*, as an Islamic institution of governance, have served as a means of providing social welfare and in fact local governance, and they strongly reemerged in post-Soviet Uzbekistan when the state could not provide sufficient infrastructure and services (Sievers, 2002; Urinboyev, 2011). *Waqf* is the classic example of an Islamic institution of governance that is prevalent in Islamic countries as an endowed charity (Latif *et al.*, 2018). When focusing on the land endowment aspect of the *Guthis*, they seem to exhibit the exact same characteristics as that of *Waqf*. In Christianity, too, there have been civic associations that oversee construction and maintenance of churches and Cathedrals which resemble some aspects of *Guthis*, from monastery endowments with land to the Zentral-Dombau-Verein zu Köln von 1842 that built and maintains Cologne Cathedral (*Kölner Dom: A brief history of Cologne Cathedral*, no date; Brichta, 2014).

However, *Guthis* arguably exhibit a deeper integration within the Newar community, with the organizations being involved not just in religious activities but in almost all aspects of the Newars' life. Crucially from a NWPA perspective, this includes several functions too that are usually seen as state functions, rendering them what is called "alternative public service delivery." This includes, i.a., maintaining water resources and the resting shelters known as *Pati* (Khaniya, 2005; Toffin, 2008; Pradhananga, Shrestha and Dee, 2010; Shrestha, 2014; Nepali, 2015; Maharjan and Barata, 2017).

Water supply in Kathmandu is done by Kathmandu Upatyaka Khanepani Limited (KUKL) and Nepal Water Supply Corporation (NWSC). However, before modern water pipes were installed, the sources of water supply in the cities were public wells, dug wells and water spouts called *Hiti*, and these were kept up by *Guthis* (Khaniya, 2005; Shrestha, 2014). Patis too were exclusively

maintained by *Guthis* (Shrestha and G.C, 2010, p. 97; Astha Joshi, 2017). These are small structures with open platform and tiled roof where people can take shelter temporarily. Often older people, ascetics or homeless persons spend time in these structures. In addition, some authors mention other public infrastructure such as bridges, roads and schools being maintained by *Guthis* as well (Toffin, 2005; Shrestha, 2012, p. 35). There are some literature on schools being run by *Guthis* albeit in a greatly dilapidated state due to lack of prioritisation to support them (Thapa and Mukhia, 2013, p. 242; *Guthi-run schools told to furnish property details*, 2015). But regarding bridges not much has been written in detail, so further research is needed at this point.

Considering how *Guthis* were responsible for a diverse set of functions, it is important to understand that the scope of *Guthis* go beyond the religious sphere, even though in most cases there is a religious background to most activities in the daily life of the Newars. Moreover, *Guthis* can also be taken to be a functional unit of the society that creates advantages in governing the population. For instance, when the local government calls for community participation in any socio-cultural functions, instead of making a public call or reaching out to individuals, approaching *Guthis* has clear benefits. This has been exhibited on several occasions with one being the case of the Kasthamandap, which is discussed in a later section below.

GORKHA CONQUEST, THE RISE OF HINDU HEGEMONY AND CURRENT POLITICS

After the conquest of *Nepalmandala* by the Gorkhas in 1769, the Gorkha King Prithvi Narayan Shah became the ruler of the country with a larger territory, one that is comparable to the current territory of Nepal (Whelpton, 2005). Even though this was the decisive turning point leading towards the dominance of Hinduism in Nepal, the region including Kathmandu valley was already in a steady transition towards Hinduism since a few centuries (Gellner, 2005). However, the influence of Hinduism after and before the Shah conquest can be said to be largely different in nature. The Mallas, while being Hindu themselves, were tolerant towards Buddhism, if not influenced by Buddhism to some

extent themselves (Shrestha and Singh, 1972; Gellner, 2005). The Lichhavis who ruled before the Mallas had been influenced by both Hinduism and Buddhism (Shrestha and Singh, 1972, p. 15; Thapa, 2001, pp. 33–34). However, cities like Patan and Kathmandu (even though the whole valley later became known as Kathmandu Valley, Kathmandu is only one of the three main cities there) were largely Buddhist. Especially Patan was known to be full of Buddhist monasteries (Slusser, 1982; Locke, 1985).

The conquest of *Nepalmandala* by the *Gorkhalis* led to increased Hinduism. This was part and parcel of the political process that took place after the Gorkha conquest of Nepal. The changed dynamics in the religious balance amongst the population was an entirely political process that helped the Shah kings develop a strong sense of Nationalism based on Hinduism amongst majority of the population; it has been stated that Prithvi Narayan Shah wanted to make Nepal the true 'Hindustan' (Bhattachan, 2005, p. 4). The intents of Prithvi Narayan Shah can be understood by the step he took in banishing Christian Missionaries as soon as he took over Kathmandu Valley (Gellner, 2005, p. 761). The Hindu caste system was instrument for legitimizing the rule of the elites, while the indigenous population, most of whom were Buddhists, were reduced to lower-class status (Bhattachan, 2005; Pradhan, 2007). The "Muluki Ain" of 1854, which was the first written law that was introduced by Jung Bahadur Rana after becoming the Prime Minister and seizing absolute power, emphasized this class discrimination (Höfer, 1981). The Ranas were particularly against Buddhism, and during their regime, Buddhist monks were exiled from the country (Sujano, no date; Gellner and LeVine, 2007, p. 147).

The fortunes of the Ranas, who were close with the British ruler in India, changed as India gained independence. Through the crucial role played by the Nepali Congress party, who were supported by the Indian Congress Party, the regime was overthrown in 1951 (Malagodi, 2008). This brought in a short democratic interlude which eventually ended as the next king, Mahendra Bir Bikram Shah, took absolute power, banning all political parties in 1960 (*ibid.*). The vision of King Mahendra was to establish a nation based on Hindu Nationalism with the single identity and

single language policy based Panchayat System (Pradhan, 2005; Gellner, 2007). The Panchayat regime also pushed administrative reforms and established laws focusing on equality, cultural homogeneity, modernisation and development. However, the policy favoured only Hindu religion and the *Parbatiya* culture and language (the language which then became the Nepali language), thus marginalizing other groups (Pradhan, 2005). It must be noted that even before the Panchayat era, during the Rana regime, most ethnic minorities and geo-cultural groups like Newars and the Madhesis were in a highly disadvantageous position. Added to that, the Panchayat time policies became the means for the elites to impose linguistic and cultural dominance (Giri, 2010)the official language of administration of Nepal, has been privileged through systematic political manoeuvres throughout its history. English also enjoys special status and privileges, and despite the fact that it is officially only a \"foreign\" language, in practice it is one of the most dominant languages in educational and economic domains. Both Nepali and English have become status symbols and tools in the hands of the ruling elites who use them to create linguistic hegemony. Speakers of other languages, on the other hand, are confused about their languages, their ethnic identity and their place in the community. To become a part of the mainstream life, they learn and use Nepali and English at the expense of their own languages. While Nepali and English contribute significantly to the development and modernisation processes, the people have paid a heavy price for them. In this article, I describe strategies adopted by the ruling elites to impose linguistic, as well as cultural dominance. I also demonstrate how the dominance of Nepali and English has led to a situation in which the people abandon their language and culture to adopt those of someone else. (Contains 7 notes., the elites here being the Hindu *Parbatiya* Brahmin and Chhetris.

By the time the Panchayat regime ended and democracy with more inclusive policies was reintroduced, there was already a clear hegemony of Hindu *Parbatiya* Brahmins that had been established in Nepali politics and bureaucracy (Bhattachan, 2005; Giri, 2010). This was the background for the *Nepal Bhasa* movement that focused on providing equality to all national languages and the *Adibasi Janajati* movement that followed with the resurgence of

democracy in 1990 (Onta, 2006; Gellner, 2007). The agenda was also taken up by the Maoist Communist Party of Nepal who during the "People's War" were largely supported by the *Janajatis* (Lawoti, 2003; Shakya, 2008; Ismail and Shah, 2015). Coming through a long political transition since then with a peace process, transition into a Republic and drafting of the new constitution through the Constituent Assembly, the Hindu Brahmin hegemony continued, as it was dominant within all major political parties (Bhattachan, 2005; Malagodi, 2008). In the whirlwind of political transitions, the *Newars* lost their influence in the state's affairs, and their legacies in statecraft, defined by the *Guthis*, were gradually even more sidelined as well.

A couple of key steps taken by the government can be pointed out which contributed most to the decline of the *Guthis*. The first of the two is "*Guthi Sansthan* Act" of 1964 and the second being the "Land Reform Act" of the same year. With the former, with further amendment in 1976, significant changes were introduced to the framework concerning the traditional *Guthi* institution and their role in local governance (Pradhananga, Shrestha and Dee, 2010). The *Guthi Sansthan* Act allowed for the creation of a state agency, the *Guthi Sansthan*, which now oversees the functions of traditional *Guthis* for religious and cultural activities such as *jatras* (festivities to roughly translate) and running rituals in temples and shrines. It has been argued that the competence of the *Guthi Sansthan* is questionable, as is the state's interest in improving it (Khaniya, 2005, p. 27).

Most importantly, the reduction of the scope of responsibilities of the *Guthis* to religio-cultural activities meant that they were not as relevant as before. Many of the structures and spaces that were managed by *Guthis* were eventually handed over to local municipalities. Through the "Land Reform Act" of 1964, *Guthi* lands were converted to "*Guthi Raitan Nambari*" land - a privately owned land which could be divided among the *Guthi* members and the tenant farmers (Acharya, 2008, p. 7). The intention of the new legislation ostensibly was to empower the tenant-farmers, but this meant that the *Guthis* subsequently lost their income. As described by Shrestha (2012, p. 228), in the case of *Guthis* in Sankhu, several

stopped functioning primarily due to the lack of income as a consequence of the "Land Reform Act". This certainly is the case with not just Sankhu but most *Guthis.*

However, despite the state's negligence towards the *Guthis* as a governance institution, it was not absolutely the case that *Guthis* were completely obsolete. Amongst the Newars, the emaciated Guthis continued to exist even though at a largely lessened capacity and interest among the people.

GORKHA EARTHQUAKE 2015

The 2015 Gorkha earthquake, which was of magnitude 7.8 and had the hypocentre located in the Barpak village of Gorkha, was devastating for the country, causing 8674 deaths (Chiaro *et al.*, 2015; Goda *et al.*, 2015). For Kathmandu valley and nearby districts, the losses to heritage structures were on huge scale, with 753 temples, monasteries and monuments significantly or completely damaged (Satyal, 2018). Nepal, being situated in a seismic zone, has faced large earthquakes almost every century (Weiler, 2009). Yet, as the 2015 earthquake showed, the government lacked a proper preparedness plan. The earthquake and its aftermath have therefore underlined the inadequacies of the state's governance capacity. This is understandable given the political transition the country had been going through (*How political instability affected Nepal's disaster preparedness*, 2015). This lack of existing governance capacity is also evident when looking at the post-earthquake restoration process. Many historical structures within the world heritage site of Kathmandu Valley, like Kasthamandap, Rani Pokhari and Trailokya Mohan Narayan temple, just to name a few, were still awaiting restoration months into the aftermath, and distribution of relief funds to earthquake victims took a very long time (Adhikari, 2015; Risal, 2015; APF, 2017; Ojha, 2017b).

As important as it was to provide relief to private citizens, the management of heritage monuments was almost as pressing as issue. Tourism being a significant part of Nepal's economy, Nepal needed to ensure that the monuments and areas enlisted in UNESCO World heritage sites were restored immediately (Kim Sengupta, 2015). However, the municipalities were without elected representatives

since a couple of decades (until the election finally was conducted in 2017) and thus seriously lacking legitimacy and capacity. As a result, the initial attempts to restore some structures backfired, as restoration projects came under scrutiny for mismanagement (*UNESCO concerned about inappropriate rebuilding of Ranipokhari*, 2016; *'An attack on our heritage': lowest bidders threaten Nepal's earthquake-hit historical site*, 2017; Ojha, 2017b). In some cases, the government accepted offers of foreign assistance for the restoration of some key monuments (Bista, 2017; Zhang Yu, 2017), but this was not well received amongst the Newars. Their concern was about the use of local resources and skills; most structures having been built through indigenous technology and knowledge centuries ago, many in the local community believed that accepting foreign assistance and expertise was disrespectful to their cultural legacies (S. Bhattarai, 2018), but it would also result in mere copy versions of the previous buildings and would not help local craftsmen and artisans.

GUTHIS IN THE EARTHQUAKE'S AFTERMATH

The situation of the aftermath of the earthquake had brought the *Guthis* back into discussion again. Few early articles that were published concerning the post-earthquake reconstruction of heritage dealt with the topic of whether *Guthis* should have been a more integral part of the governance structure in the country (Wolfson, 2015; KC, 2016). In a scenario like a large-scale natural disaster, for any developing country, the key concern is the availability of human resources. Most *Guthis* that were functioning had already become defunct, and the temples looked after by them were hardly cared for by anyone anymore. Most importantly, the state had undermined the importance of these organizations thinking of them as outdated legacies or even as hostile for its Hindu-nationalist mainstreaming efforts, and had not come up with an alternative means to serve the function that they once served. This was one of the reasons for the large degree of failure to 'deliver' on the part of the government. But, with *Guthis* already having been part of the cultural blueprint of the *Newar* community and perhaps beyond the *Newars* too, the earthquake saw a resurgence of community activities in the post-earthquake rehabilitation processes.

The case which gained most attention was probably that of Kasthamandap. The monument is one of the most important structures in Kathmandu (Slusser and Vajrācārya, 1974; Risal, 2015), which through archaeological surveys was discovered to have been built according to Buddhist traditions, using the mandala structure in its foundation. It was the oldest standing structure in Kathmandu valley until the earthquake brought it down (Slusser and Vajrācārya, 1974; Coningham *et al.*, 2016). With concerns towards quality of the restoration work done by contractors that were being selected based on 'lowest bid', as the failure of the Rani Pokhari restoration showed (Ojha, 2017a, 2017b), the community formed the "Rebuild Kasthamandap Campaign" and restoration through community initiative was attempted, based on an agreement between the campaign, National Reconstruction Authority (NRA), Department of Archaeology (DoA), Kathmandu Metropolitan City (KMC) and the Campaign (*Kasthamandap's Journey Through History, Kathmandu Sights*, no date; A. Bhattarai, 2018). A direct involvement from the *Guthis* associated with the structure for the restoration was not witnessed initially, but there were discussions on the possibility of the same (KC, 2016; A. Bhattarai, 2018). The campaign members felt that it was necessary to involve the *Guthis* that were responsible for rituals that were held in the monument, and there were discussions with the members of the *Sa Guthi* and *Ta Chatan Guthi* (KC, 2016).

After the local elections of 2017, there was a tussle between community activists from the campaign and KMC, with the mayor wanting to go for reconstruction through contractors (Tuladhar, 2018). The new committee was eventually formed in May 2018, headed by member of Provincial Assembly, Rajesh Shakya. The new committee also included some members of the previous committee but was also politically backed by a Provincial Assembly member. This seemed to have resolved the tension, and there was space for optimism as the reconstruction process steadily moved forward with the target to finish the first level of the structure within end of fiscal year 2019 (*Reconstruction of Kasthamandap temple begins*, 2018; RSS, 2019).

On 10 February 2019, the main pillars of the structure were

erected in an elaborate ceremony in which the Mayor of Kathmandu Municipality participated (Xinhua, 2019). The event was conducted traditionally in a ceremonious way with participation from community members and *Guthis*. In an interview conducted 7 February 2019, Rajesh Shakya mentioned that on the day members from all *Guthis* in the vicinity and those directly associated with structure were invited. Before the event, there were participation from the members from local *Guthis* in multiple volunteer calls that the committee made when non-expert help was needed in the rebuilding process. The committee made community involvement and traditional processes a priority, which meant that the *Guthis* associated with the structure were going to be actively participating in the rebuilding process whenever added help was necessary.

In case of *Mahaviharas* in Kathmandu valley, the scenario has been comparatively different as the *Guthis* associated with *Mahaviharas* have managed to stay functional. As discussed in the first sub-chapter, since most Buddhist Newars are associated with one of the many *Mahaviharas* in Kathmandu Valley, the sense of ownership towards the *Mahavihar* they are linked to is very strong. It is perhaps this that helped most *Guthis* associated with Mahavihara to stay functional even with minimal support from the government.

Maitripur Mahavihara, which is one of the several *Mahaviharas* in Kathmandu, is undergoing reconstruction through the initiatives from the *Guthi* members associated with the *Mahavihara*. Several of the *Mahaviharas* did suffer significant damage through the earthquake, but none were completely razed to the ground. However, in the case of *Maitripur Mahavihara,* the members of the *Mahavihara* decided to completely rebuild the structure, and the process was started in July 2016. Perhaps due to the current religious setup of Nepal as a country, where Hinduism is the majority religion and given more attention, except when concerning tourism advertising, Buddhist *Mahavihara* structures in Kathmandu valley like Buddhist sites elsewhere in Nepal have not been given the same attention as Hindu religious sites and structures (*Demand to promote Ramgram monastery*, 2018; *Ashoka pillar finally gets protective shed*, 2018). The lack of media reports on the renovation process of these structures certainly tends to support this argument.

But this has not affected the restoration processes negatively as the case of *Maitripur Mahavihara* shows. As per information provided by Milan Ratna Bajracharya in an interview conducted 7 January 2018, a member of the *Guthi* associated with the *Mahavihara,* the earthquake had caused significant damage to the structure and since the structure had not gone through a major renovation since centuries, a full reconstruction was started through the initiatives of their *Guthi*. For the source of funding, 85% of the initially estimated cost was provided by Kathmandu Metropolitan City and 15% by the *Guthi* members. The restoration process in the *Mahavihara* has been going at a very slow pace but with steady progress.

The cases from the post-earthquake restoration of heritage structures have re-emphasized *Guthis* and their relevance, if for now primarily as far as temple restauration is concerned. For an institution that has continued for more than a millennium, Guthis have a deep-rooted connection with the culture of the people in Nepal and especially the Newars. As Toffin (2016, p. 236) has pointed out, the community in Nepal is strong, and may it be through Guthis or through cooperatives, communities in Nepal have had a tendency to rely more on the community institutions. The large volume of literature on community forestry and the health sector (Chakraborty, 2001; Acharya, 2002; Shrestha, 2003) support Toffin's claim. Heritage structures being rebuilt through direct or indirect involvement of Guthis, or at least the acknowledgement of the advantage of having them, shows how these organizations are still relevant despite their relegated positioning within the governance framework in the country.

GUTHIS IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) proved to be a key factor in the aftermath of the 2015 earthquake. Initiatives in mapping affected areas were started immediately after the earthquake through Commons-Based Peer Production (CBPP), a model based on collaboration among large groups of individuals often over a digitally networked environment (Benkler and Nissenbaum, 2006). Through the use of crowdsourcing and open data, a few activists helped to develop a system that would allow identifying the areas of most urgent need during the immediate post-

earthquake scenario (Poiani *et al.*, 2016; McMurren *et al.*, 2017). In addition, there have been feasibility studies for photogrammetric modelling of heritage sites (Dhonju *et al.*, 2017). Photogrammetric modelling can enable keeping better records of heritage structures in digital form and help visualize these historical structures, so that reconstruction match the original structure in events of a natural disaster.

But more importantly, the use of ICT cannot only enable new models of collaborative efforts and provide for other technological benefits (Thapa and Sein, 2010; Kostakis, Niaros and Giotitsas, 2015), but also revitalize and use old ones that seemed obsolete from a classic-modern perspective. From the perspective of community empowerment too, ICT, has had an important role; this can be observed via the cultural movement amongst the Newars which has become visible in cyberspace too.

The *Newar* community apparently had the most emotional connection with cultural heritage in Kathmandu valley and was most concerned by the mismanagement witnessed in the restoration of heritage structure. The phenomenon does have roots to a broader background concerning political movements amongst the Newars. After the end the *Panchayat* regime, the *Adivasi Janajati* movement (Indigenous Peoples Movement) gained strength in the 1990s, and the ongoing *Nepal Bhasa* movement amongst the *Newar* population was strengthened, as being to a degree connected with the movement (Onta, 2006; Pradhan, 2018). As ICT became more accessible to the middle-class population of the country, the movement expanded into cyberspace. But, with the earthquake and the mismanagement of the heritage restoration process by the government, the movement that was previously focused on *Nepal Bhasa* has refocussed now on cultural heritage. As a result, 'heritage activists' have found a platform within cyberspace, through smartphones and social media. The "Rebuild Kasthamandap Campaign" concerning reconstruction of Kasthamandap, as discussed above, is a prime example of that.

But again, the activities in cyberspace, which stemmed from 'heritage activism', is only one side of the story. What is more significant in our context is that the use of ICT has also been

adopted by the traditional organizations already. Traditional *Guthis* from *Baha* and *Bahis* had started creating social media accounts and pages since the recent past. Rudravarma Mahavihara and Kwa Baha (also known as 'Golden Temple' or Hiranyavarna Mahavihara) in Patan, Itum Baha and Maitripur Mahavihara in Kathmandu are just some of the Buddhist *Mahaviharas* that have online presence (see table 1 for list of *Mahaviharas* and *Guthis* with social media pages). In all this, the central theme has been the use of ICT for communication, dissemination of information, and transparency for heritage restoration projects, but also helping old activities of *Guthis* and other community activities. The *Thamel Ashok Chaitya* restoration team started to use social media for providing updates on the restoration process since June 2016, soon after the restoration project started. They have used social media platforms very well for providing updates on the progress, and for maintaining transparency. The 'Rebuild Kasthamandap Campaign' has also used social media platforms and had an official website since their inception. The committee for restoration for *Kasthamandap* that was later formed has also used social media effectively. These social media accounts – all on Facebook, as is common in Nepal – have been used for providing updates and other information in general about the respective restoration projects.

There have been concerns over the transparency of *Guthis* and traditional community-based organization (A. Bhattarai, 2018). Not all traditional organization follow proper record keeping procedures as per current standards; they usually do not have internal capacity and lack resources to acquire professional help, and it might also not be in line with the specific cultural-historical context. Thus, there is often lack of trust towards these organizations form donor agencies or government. But with the use of social media for transparency, the credibility of community-based organizations has increased, as the case of Maitripur Mahavihara has shown. In most cases, not all *Guthi* members can participate equally actively on tasks requiring a hands-on approach. To overcome this issue, *Guthi* members of Maitripur Mahavihara have created a working committee for the restoration project from within their members. The updates on the project have been posted on social media pages by the committee, and this has assured better trust of other *Guthi* members on the

restoration process being carried out. In the case of Thamel Ashok Chaitya restoration project, ICT has largely helped in the collection of funds for the project too. The continued updates had instilled better trust of people in the execution of the project. This has also made an alternate source of funding in form of 'crowdfunding' possible. In case of Maitripur Mahavihara individual donations from the community and *Guthi* members have been important for funding the projects, which was facilitated by ICT.

The use of social media has proved to be very effective for better networking as well, and the outreach has increased to great extents. Groups on social media have also facilitated discussions among the communities for heritage conservation related agendas. As explained by Rajesh Shakya, without the availability of the social media platforms, collaborations and discussions in larger scale, that has been achieved so far, would not have been possible. ICT has also allowed for collective actions that had largely begun to diminish with changes in lifestyle. Day jobs and increasingly isolated and individualistic lifestyle had caused collective actions to become more difficult to achieve (Toffin, 2016). The prioritisation of jobs and personal life over community-oriented activities was already a phenomenon witnessed by Locke in the 1980s (Locke, 1985, pp. 35, 256). However, social media has brought about alternative possibilities in achieving collective actions.

With an increasing number of people emigrating in search of better jobs and income, there is also another angle from which necessity of ICT can be looked at from. People living abroad, who otherwise would have been left out from these collective actions, have been able to provide inputs by means of ICT. Observing these developments, the culture of collective actions that adheres to the principles of *Guthis* has been facilitated by ICT.

A phenomenon that is entirely based on the new possibilities brought about by ICT are the new organizations that have been started by the Newar diaspora community in various parts of the World, with most of them being named *Guthis*, whether or not these organization adhere to the functional principles of *Guthis* – but the explicit takeup of the tradition is significant. Being a trading community, having groups in places that have been part of the

trading destinations for the Newars have been a norm since long back. There have been organizations and association established by the Newars in Tibet, Kolkata (Calcutta), Sikkim and other neighbouring places (Sen, 1971). With increasing globalization, the Newars too have expanded their horizon and many have settled in parts of Europe and the Americas. Bal Gopal Shrestha has written about the Newars in Sikkim and their Guthis (Shrestha, 1998). Beyond the neighbouring region, Guthis have been formed in places like New York, London, Copenhagen and many others with most of them being affiliated to World Newah Organization in recent years (*Chapters | World Newah Organization*, no date). While, these organizations may not be 'true' *Guthis* in a historical sense, they still do share some attributes of traditional *Guthis*, and arguably they form contemporary iterations. They provide for the social welfare needs of the people and provide cohesiveness for functioning as a community despite the dispersed nature of the demographics of the diaspora. This would have been impossible without the possibilities that ICT has brought about. Some of these newly formed diaspora *Guthis* are involving the younger generation too, as explained by Sanyukta Shrestha, President of Pasa Pucha Guthi London; this involves online presence and utilization of digital medium to a great extent.

CONCLUSION

Guthis have served as a relevant institution for providing social and cultural activities among the Newars. Despite the increasingly unsupportive environment, *Guthis* have proven to be resilient and continued to exist, especially when supporting *Mahaviharas*. The cases of heritage restorations in the aftermath of the 2015 Gorkha Earthquake has re-emphasized the usability and importance of *Guthis* with either *Guthis* being brought into discussions or into action. As shown by the case of post-earthquake restoration of Heritage structures, *Guthis* can be a viable way towards effective governance through community initiatives. This is even more so given the availability of ICT that helps with communication, outreach and establishing transparency and trust towards the *Guthis*. Buddhist traditions and practices have the potential for impacting the models of governance in modern times. The

likability of Buddhist teachings not only in Asia but in most parts of the Western world certainly creates acceptance towards practices and models based on Buddhism. Buddhist traditions often adhere to the changed values in the modern world. There can be several examples of Buddhist institutions that potentially can have a larger positive impact towards a sustainable society in general. The *Guthi* institution of Kathmandu Valley, certainly is a suitable example of such institutions which are Buddhist traditions in practice. With a growing emphasis on participation, collaborative governance and sustainability globally, the Buddhist paradigm is a key alternative to the global-Western paradigm in economics or Public Administration (Drechsler, 2015). Being a working example of Buddhist practices that still hold relevance, the *Guthis* are Buddhist societal organizations that suit the 21st century.

Note on research methodology

This paper is based on the ongoing research for the PhD thesis of the first author that started in September 2017. The research takes the form of on semi-structured interviews and field work in Nepal in addition to literature-based desk research. Six interviews conducted in person or remotely have been included in this paper. Email and social media correspondence with several community members and experts have also helped immensely. Fellow researchers and academicians from Nepal and elsewhere have also been consulted. Official social media pages and websites have been used and news articles from key media houses in Nepal have been followed. The first author is a member of the Guthi associated with Okubahal (Rudra Varna Mahavihara) in Lalitpur, Nepal.

References

Acharya, B.R., 2008. Land Tenure and Land Registration in Nepal Land Tenure and Land Registration in Nepal.

Adhikari, J., 2008. Land Reform in Nepal:Problems and Prospects. Kathmandu.

Adhikari, P., 2015. Quake victims stage protest against relief distribution delay [WWW Document]. Kathmandu Post. URL http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2015-10-13/quake-victims-stage-protest-against-relief-distribution-delay.html (accessed 10.16.18).

Ambassador Teplitz visited the US funded Gaddi Baithak Restoration Project [WWW Document], n.d. URL https://np.usembassy.gov/slide/ambassador-teplitz-visited-us-funded-gaddi-baithak-restoration-project/ (accessed 4.29.18).

'An attack on our heritage': lowest bidders threaten Nepal's earthquake-hit historical site [WWW Document], 2017. . South China Morning Post. URL http://www.scmp.com/news/asia/article/2081821/attack-our-heritage-lowest-bidders-threaten-nepals-earthquake-hit (accessed 6.24.18).

APF, 2017. Lowest bidders threaten Nepal's quake-hit heritage | Daily Mail Online [WWW Document]. Dailymail. URL http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/afp/article-4344866/Lowest-bidders-threaten-Nepals-quake-hit-heritage.html (accessed 4.27.18).

Ashoka pillar finally gets protective shed [WWW Document], 2018. . Kathmandu Post. URL http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2018-03-20/ashoka-pillar-finally-gets-protective-shed.html (accessed 7.8.18).

Beckh, M., 2006. Traditional Construction Techniques of the Newars at the Itum Baha Monastery in Kathmandu. Proc. Second Int. Congr. Constr. Hist. Exet. 325–339.

Benkler, Y., Nissenbaum, H., 2006. Commons-based peer production and virtue. J. Polit. Philos. 14, 394–419. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9760.2006.00235.x

Bhattachan, K.B., 2005. Nepal: From absolute monarchy to "democracy" and back — The need for Inclusive Democracy. Int. J. Incl. Democr. 1, 1–6.

Bhattarai, A., 2018. The Movement to Rebuild an Iconic Monument in Earthquake-Hit Nepal. Caravan.

Bhattarai, S., 2018. Clash of cultures in Bhaktapur [WWW Document]. Nepali Times. URL https://www.nepalitimes.com/banner/clash-of-cultures-in-bhaktapur/ (accessed 8.21.18).

Chiaro, G., Kiyota, T., Pokhrel, R.M., Goda, K., Katagiri, T., Sharma, K., 2015. Reconnaissance report on geotechnical and structural damage caused by the 2015 Gorkha Earthquake, Nepal. Soils Found. 55, 1030–1043. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sandf.2015.09.006

Choden, T., 2003. Traditional Forms of Volunteerism in Bhutan.

Coningham, R.A.E., Acharya, K.P., Davis, And Kunwar, C.E., Tremblay, R.B., Schmidt, J.C., Simpson, A., Lafortune-Bernard, Davis, C.E., Tremblay, J.C., Schmidt, A., Simpson, I., 2016. Post-Disaster Rescue Archaeological Investigations, Evaluations and Interpretations in the Kathmandu Valley World Heritage Property (Nepal): Observations and Recommendations from a UNESCO mission in 2015.

Dangol, N., 2010. Sana Guthi and the Newars: Impacts of Modernization on Traditional Social Organizations. University of Tromsø.

Dave, 2018. Reconstructing the Ashok Stupa in Thamel [WWW Document]. Long. W. home. URL https://www.thelongestwayhome.com/blog/nepal/reconstructing-the-ashok-stupa-in-thamel/ (accessed 4.29.18).

Demand to promote Ramgram monastery [WWW Document], 2018.. Himal. Times. URL https://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/demand-to-promote-ramgram-monastery/ (accessed 7.8.18).

Dhonju, H.K., Xiao, W., Sarhosis, V., Mills, J.P., Wilkinson, S., Wang, Z., Thapa, L., Panday, U.S., 2017. Feasibility study of low-cost image-based heritage documentation in Nepal. Int.

Arch. Photogramm. Remote Sens. Spat. Inf. Sci. - ISPRS Arch. 42, 237–242. https://doi.org/10.5194/isprs-archives-XLII-2-W3-237-2017

Diwasa, T., Bandu, C.M., Nepal, B., 2007. The intangible Cultural Heritage of Nepal: Future Directions, UNESCO Kathmandu Series of Monographs and Working Papers. Kathmandu. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107415324.004

Drechsler, W., 2016. The Reality and Diversity of Buddhist Economics (With Case Studies of Thailand, Bhutan and Yogyakarta). Tallinn.

Drechsler, W., 2015. Paradigms of non-Western public administration and governance. Int. Handb. public Adm. Gov. 104–131. https://doi.org/10.4337/9781781954492.00011

Gellner, D., 1986. Language, caste, religion and territory: Newar identity ancient and modern. Eur. J. Sociol. 27, 102–148.

Gellner, D., LeVine, S., 2007. All in the Family: Money, Kinship and Theravada Monasticism in Nepal. Occas. Pap. Sociol. Anthropol. 10, 141–173. https://doi.org/10.3126/opsa.v10i0.1150

Gellner, D.N., 2007. Caste, Ethnicity and Inequality in Nepal. Econ. Polit. Wkly. 42, 1823–1828.

Gellner, D.N., 2005. The Emergence of Conversion in a Hindu-Buddhist Polytropy: The Kathmandu Valley, Nepal, c.1600 –1995. Comp. Stud. Soc. Hist. 47, 755–780. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417505000344

Giri, R.A., 2010. Cultural anarchism: The consequences of privileging languages in Nepal. J. Multiling. Multicult. Dev. 31, 87–100. https://doi.org/10.1080/01434630903398103

Goda, K., Kiyota, T., Pokhrel, R.M., Chiaro, G., Katagiri, T., Sharma, K., Wilkinson, S., 2015. The 2015 Gorkha Nepal Earthquake: Insights from Earthquake Damage Survey. Front. Built Environ. 1, 8. https://doi.org/10.3389/fbuil.2015.00008

Harris, I., 2007. Buddhism and Good Governance: Doctrinal Resources, Institutional Problems, in: 4th International Buddhist Conference. Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University,

Bangkok.

Höfer, A., 1981. The Caste Hierarchy and the State in Nepal: A Study of the Muluki Ain in. J. Asian Stud. 40, 824–825.

How political instability affected Nepal's disaster preparedness [WWW Document], 2015. . DW. URL http://www.dw.com/en/how-political-instability-affected-nepals-disaster-preparedness/a-18411259 (accessed 4.28.18).

Ismail, F., Shah, A., 2015. Class struggle, the Maoists and the indigenous question in Nepal and India. Econ. Polit. Wkly. 50, 112–123.

Kasthamandap's Journey Through History, Kathmandu Sights [WWW Document], n.d. URL https://www.himalayan-dreams.com/kasthamandap-s-journey-through-history (accessed 9.25.17).

KC, C., 2016. Preserving the intangible [WWW Document]. Nepali Times. URL http://nepalitimes.com/article/Nepali-Times-Buzz/saving-the-intangible,3303 (accessed 10.3.17).

Khaniya, G., 2005. TRADITIONAL WATER MANAGEMENT PRACTICES: A CASE STUDY OF BHAKTAPUR CITY. Kathmandu.

Kim Sengupta, 2015. Nepal earthquake: The task to conserve what survived at the Unesco World Heritage site in Kathmandu | The Independent [WWW Document]. Indep. URL http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/nepal-earthquake-the-task-to-conserve-what-survived-at-the-unesco-world-heritage-site-in-kathmandu-10221688.html (accessed 11.18.17).

Kostakis, V., Niaros, V., Giotitsas, C., 2015. Production and governance in hackerspaces: A manifestation of Commons-based peer production in the physical realm? Int. J. Cult. Stud. 18, 555–573. https://doi.org/10.1177/1367877913519310

Lawoti, M., 2003. Centralizing Politics and the Growth of the Maoist Insurgency in Nepal. Himalaya 23, 47–58.

Locke, J.K., 1985. Buddhist Monasteries of Nepal: A Survey of the Bahas and Bahis of the Kathmandu Valley, 1st ed. Sahayogi

Press, Kathmandu.

Maharjan, M., Barata, F.T., 2017. Living with Heritage : Including tangible and intangible heritage in the changing time and space 13, 178–189.

Malagodi, M., 2008. Forging the Nepali Nation through Law: A Reflection on the Use of Western Legal Tools in a Himalayan Kingdom. Stud. Ethn. Natl. 8, 433–452.

McMurren, J., Bista, S., Young, A., Verhulst, S.**, 2017. Nepal: Open Data to Improve Disaster Relief Open.

Nepali, G.S., 2015. The Newars: An Ethno-Sociological Study of a Himalayan Community, Second. ed. Mandala Book Point, Kathmandu.

Ojha, A., 2017a. KMC threatens to scrap contractor's deal over Rani Pokhari project delay - Capital - The Kathmandu Post [WWW Document]. Kathmandu Post. URL http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2017-11-12/kmc-threatens-to-scrap-contractors-deal-over-rani-pokhari-project-delay.html (accessed 12.8.17).

Ojha, A., 2017b. Concrete wall around Rani Pokhari draws flak - Capital - The Kathmandu Post [WWW Document]. Kathmandu Post. URL http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2017-12-20/concrete-wall-around-rani-pokhari-draws-flak.html (accessed 12.22.17).

Onta, P., 2006. The growth of the Adivasi Janajati movement in Nepal after 1990: The non-political institutional agents. Stud. Nepali Hist. Soc. 11, 303–354.

Poiani, T.H., Rocha, R.D.S., Degrossi, L.C., Albuquerque, J.P. De, 2016. Potential of collaborative mapping for disaster relief: A case study of openstreetmap in the Nepal earthquake 2015, in: Proceedings of the Annual Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences. pp. 188–197. https://doi.org/10.1109/HICSS.2016.31

Pradhan, R., 2007. Negotiating Multiculturalism in Nepal : Negotiating Multiculturalism in Nepal : Law , Hegemony ,

Contestation and Paradox Rajendra Pradhan, in: Constitutionalism and Diversity in Nepal. Kathmandu, pp. 1–26.

Pradhan, R.P., 2005. The Ain of 1854 and after : Legal Pluralism , Models of Society and Ethnicity in Nepal, in: Negotiating Ethnicity in Nepal's Past and Present. https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.1.2039.7529

Pradhan, U., 2018. Simultaneous identities: ethnicity and nationalism in mother tongue education in Nepal. Nations Natl. 1–21. https://doi.org/10.1111/nana.12463

Pradhananga, N., Shrestha, K.K., Dee, J., 2010. Sustaining Indigenous Heritage : Learning from the Guthi System in Nepal, in: New Zealand Geographical Society Conference. Christchurch, pp. 1–28.

Pradhananga, S., 2017. Heritage Reconstruction 2.0 [WWW Document]. Kathmandu Post. URL http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2017-03-18/heritage-reconstruction-20.html (accessed 12.8.17).

Quigley, D., 1985. The Guthi Organizations of Dhulikhel Shresthas. Kailash 12, 5–61.

Reconstruction of Kasthamandap temple begins [WWW Document], 2018.. Himal. Times. URL https://thehimalayantimes.com/kathmandu/reconstruction-of-kasthamandap-temple-begins/ (accessed 6.28.18).

Regmi, M.C., 1988. Land Tenure and Taxation in Nepal, Essays on the Economic History of the Middle East. Berkeley.

Regmi, M.C., 1977. Landownership in Nepal, 3rd ed. Adroit Publishers, Delhi.

Regmi, M.C., 1965. Land Tenure and Taxation in Nepal. Asian Surv. 5. https://doi.org/10.2307/2642296

Satyal, U., 2018. 85pc heritage monuments yet to be rebuilt [WWW Document]. Himal. Times. URL https://thehimalayantimes.com/kathmandu/85-per-cent-heritage-monuments-yet-to-be-rebuilt/ (accessed 4.27.18).

Shaha, R., 1990. Ancient and Medieval Nepal. Kailash - J. Himal. Stud. 16.

Shakya, M., 2008. Capitalism and ethnicity facing a rising wave of communism in Nepal. Himalaya 28, 49–58.

Sharma, P.R., 1983. Nepali Culture and Society: A Historical Perspective. Contrib. Nepalese Stud. 10, 3–19.

Shobhana, V.S., 2017. Introducing the Seven Condition of Welfare (Satta Aparihaniya Dhamma) show how they are particularly useful to govern a country successfully . [WWW Document]. URL https://bhanteshantashobhana.wordpress.com/2017/03/24/first-blog-post/ (accessed 1.22.19).

Shrestha, B.G., 2012. The Sacred Town of Sankhu : The Anthropology of Newar Ritual, Religion and ...: EBSCOhost. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Shrestha, B.G., 1999. The Newars: The Indegenous Population of the Kathmandu Valley in the Modern State of Nepal. Cent. Nepal Asian Stud.

Shrestha, D.B., Singh, C.B., 1972. The History of Ancient and Medieval Nepal. HMG Press, Kathmandu.

Slusser, M.S., Vajrācārya, G., 1974. Two Medieval Nepalese Buildings: An Architectural and Cultural Study. Asiae 36, 169–218.

Sujano, S.M., n.d. Theravada Buddhism in Modern Nepal.

Thapa, D., Sein, M.K., 2010. ICT, social capital and development: The case of a Mountain region in Nepal. Third Annu. SIG GlobDeve Work.

Toffin, G., 2016. Imagination and realities : Nepal between past and present, First. ed. Androit, Delhi.

Toffin, G., 2005. FROM KIN TO CASTE THE ROLE OF GUTHI S IN NEWAR. Mahesh Chandra Regmi Lect.

Tuladhar, A., 2018. The movement to rebuild Kasthamandap [WWW Document]. Nepali Times. URL http://archive.nepalitimes.com/article/Nepali-Times-Buzz/rebuilding-kasthamandap-nepal,4012 (accessed 4.27.18).

UNESCO concerned about inappropriate rebuilding of Ranipokhari [WWW Document], 2016. . Kathmandu Post.

URL http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2016-09-01/unesco-concerned-about-inappropriate-rebuilding-of-ranipokhari.html (accessed 6.4.18).

Vajracharya, P.R., 1998. Role of Guthi in Newar Buddhist Culture, in: Conference on the Buddhist Heritage of Nepal Mandal. Kathmandu.

Weiler, K.M.L., 2009. The Neoclassical Residences of the Newars in Nepal. Heidelberg University.

Whelpton, J., 2005. A reading guide to Nepalese History. Himalaya J. fo Assoc. Nepal Himal. Stud. 25, 9–18.

Why Kasthamandap Matters | Features | ECSNEPAL - The Nepali Way [WWW Document], n.d. URL http://ecs.com.np/features/why-kasthamandap-matters (accessed 9.25.17).

Wolfson, E., 2015. Theft In Kathmandu: Can Nepal's Cultural Legacy Be Saved? [WWW Document]. Newsweek. URL https://www.newsweek.com/theft-kathmandu-can-nepals-cultural-legacy-be-saved-326684 (accessed 12.22.18).

Zhang Yu, 2017. China will restore Nepali heritage site [WWW Document]. China Dly. URL http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/epaper/2017-05/05/content_29219527.htm (accessed 11.18.17).

NORWAY

BUDDHISM IN NORWAY

Ethil Gothe*

I. HISTORY

Archaeological evidence shows that the Vikings brought a statue of the Buddha to Scandinavia, but nothing suggests that Buddhism had any impact in this part of the world until the late 19th century when it became known to educated people in Western Europe through the writings of scholars and philosophers.

During the 20th century various Eastern-inspired spiritual movements lead to an interest in Buddhism among some Norwegians. The fascination with Tibet, created by books on this topic translated into Norwegian, also contributed to the attraction of Buddhism.

However, the first steps in organizing Buddhist groups and associations, did not take place until the early 1970s. The interest in Zen and Tibetan Buddhism led to the establishment of organizations devoted to these forms of Buddhism in 1972 and 1975 respectively. The establishment of the Buddhist Federation of Norway (BFN) in 1979 was the result of a joint initiative by these two organizations.

The origin of Zen in Norway was mainly due to local interest inspired by the writings of proponents of Zen in the West such as the Japanese scholar D.T.Suzuki. In the case of Tibetan Buddhism, the visits to Norway of Tibetan lamas, such as the 16th Gyalwa Karmapa as well as the 14th Dalai Lama, have been very important in encouraging the development of Tibetan Buddhism in this country.

*. Cand.Philol., General Secretary of the Buddhist Federation of Norway .....

Vietnamese refugees began to arrive in Norway shortly after the end of the Republic of Vietnam in 1975. The Buddhists from this community were approached by representatives of the BFN inviting them to form a member association of the BFN. The association thus established (in 1981) has also co-operated closely with Vietnamese Buddhists in other countries.

The arrival of Thai Buddhist in Norway, beginning in the 1980s, was mainly due to intermarriages between Thais and Norwegians. Today there is a sizeable community of Thai Buddhists scattered all over the country.

The Sri Lankan Buddhist community in Norway consists to a large extent of regular immigrants who have settled in this country over the years. In 1993 they formed the Tisarana Educational and Cultural Society devoted to the promotion of Theravada Buddhism.

In addition to Japanese Zen and Tibetan Buddhism, the traditions of Theravada, Vietnamese Zen (in the tradition of master Thich Nhat Hanh), Chinese Zen, Korean Buddhism as well as The Triratna Buddhist Order have found Norwegian followers and are now represented by local associations that are members of BFN.

II. HOW MANY BUDDHISTS IN NORWAY?

The majority of Buddhists in Norway have their origin in the Buddhist countries in Asia. A conservative estimate based on official statistics of immigrants from countries with large Buddhist population and their descendants in Norway suggests that there are presently more than 38.000 Buddhists in this category. There are also several thousand Buddhists with a Western background among whom more than 2000 are members of the Buddhist Federation of Norway.

The total number of Buddhists can be estimated to be at least 40.000. This constitute 0,77 % of the population of Norway which presently stands at 5,2 million.

III. BUDDHIST FEDERATION OF NORWAY

The Buddhist Federation of Norway which was founded in 1979 is a registered faith community based on the Act relating to Religious Communities, passed by the Norwegian parliament in

1969, which provides for regular government funding of registered religious communities of all faiths based on the principle of equal per capita support to that given to the established Church of Norway. This law encouraged Norwegian Buddhists to register as a religious community in order to receive the support of the state.

Through the Buddhist Federation of Norway its member organizations can cooperate for their own benefit as well as for the larger purpose of promoting Buddhism nationally and internationally. Presently 15 Buddhist organisations with a total number of 14.000 members have joined the Buddhist Federation of Norway. The major traditions of Buddhism are all represented in the BFN which represents the Buddhists in relation to the government as well as in relation to other religions in the country.

In addition to the member organisations of the BFN there are around twenty-five other Buddhist organisations in Norway with a total membership of more than 6000. These are registered with locally with the authorities but cooperate with the BFN.

The member organisations of The Buddhist Federation of Norway

The organisations of the Buddhist Federation of Norway represent both Buddhists of Asian backgrounds as well as "new Buddhists» of Western background. There are also "nondenominational" Buddhists (mostly of Western origin) who are directly affiliated with the Buddhist Federation of Norway.

These two categories can be further described as follows:

Traditional Buddhists

These Buddhists represent the traditional Buddhism of their countries of origin. The Vietnamese Buddhists (formally established in 1981) have five temples (two purpose built) situated in the major cities of Norway with altogether around twenty-five monks and nuns. The Thai Buddhists (formally established in 1991) built a temple in 2007 at the outskirts of the capital of Norway (Oslo) with more than five resident monks. There are also a number of smaller Thai temples with resident Thai monks in other parts of Norway. The Burmese Theravada Buddhist Association, The Khmer Buddhist Association as well as Tisarana Sri Lankan Buddhist Association also have their own temples with resident monks.

These temples serve both as religious centres as well as cultural and social gathering points for their respective expatriate communities where cultural traditions are maintained along with the practice of the Buddhadharma.

New Buddhists

This category of organisations represent Western Buddhists who have mostly chose Buddhism individually as adults. Tibetan Buddhism followed by Zen Buddhism has attracted the largest following. Here the focus is more on the practice of meditation as part of an individual spiritual search. The activities conducted by these organisations are therefore mostly courses for learning and practicing meditation.

IV. THE ACTIVITIES OF THE BUDDHIST FEDERATION OF NORWAY

The Buddhist religious activities mostly take place in the member organisations of the Buddhist Federation of Norway. However, administrative tasks such as registering members, applying for grants from the government, allocating funds to the member organisations, and so on are all done by the federation. The member organisations are therefore relieved from handling some of the administrative responsibilities that follows from being a registered faith community with funding from the state.

Membership

According to established legislation Norwegian citizens may ask for their "church tax" to be allocated to their own faith community on a regular basis. A system set up to fund the established church of Norway has therefore come to benefit the other religions equally as they are supported on the same per capita basis (since 1969). Any individual is free to join the Buddhist Federation of Norway through accepting its credo which states its commitment to the welfare of all beings on the basis of faith in the Three Jewels, the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path.

Celebration of Buddhist festivals

The Buddhist Federation of Norway aims to establish a sense of community of all Buddhists. Although the larger member associations celebrate Buddhist festivals according to their respective

traditions, the BFN organizes common celebrations every year of Vesak, commemorating the birth, enlightenment and death of the Buddha, as well as of the Festival of Lights, commemorating the enlightenment of the Buddha according to the Japanese Buddhist calendar.

Publishing activities

Information about Buddhism through various media such as books and the internet is also an important activity of the Buddhist Federation of Norway.

Educational activities

The public school system in Norway provides general knowledge about religion. Buddhism is therefore included in the curricula of primary and secondary schools. The Buddhist Federation of Norway contributes to the improvement of the education given on Buddhism through providing lecturers as well as facilitating access to temples.

Dialogue with other religions

The BFN is also important to Buddhists in Norway as it speaks on behalf of the whole Buddhist community to the government, to other religions and churches as well as to the society in general. More specifically the BFN has participated in a number of projects on dialogue between religions and life stances. In 1996 the BFN co-founded the Council of Religious and Life Stance Communities in Norway. This institution is a forum for regular dialogue between religions communities organizing various conferences and seminars for this purpose. Through this institution the BFN was instrumental in establishing The Oslo Coalition on Freedom of Religion or Belief in 1998. This organisation promotes freedom of religion internationally through dialogue between governments and religious leaders. In this context the BFN has participated in dialogue with Buddhists as well as the government in the Peoples Republic of China. As part of its international engagement the BFN also initiated a dialogue with Sri Lankan Buddhists on the issue of Buddhist approaches to conflict resolution. More recently the BFN has engaged in dialogue with Buddhist leaders in Myanmar on issues relating to religious minorities.

Humanitarian assistance

The Buddhist Federation of Norway is also involved in occasional international humanitarian assistance in connection with natural disasters in countries such as Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Nepal and Thailand.

International Buddhist cooperation

The Buddhist Federation of Norway is a member of international Buddhist organisations such as World Fellowship of Buddhists (Bangkok), International Council of Day of Vesak (Bangkok) and European Buddhist Union (London).

V. THE ORGANISATION OF THE BUDDHIST FEDERATION OF NORWAY

The Buddhist Federation of Norway is governed by a board with members appointed by the Buddhist organizations that have joined the federation. A president with a council of three vice presidents leads the federation. An office handles the day to day affairs led by a coordinator. Committees set up for the purpose handle areas such as finances, publishing, and celebration of festivals and so on.

VI. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Buddhism in Norway is diverse in terms of the origins and denominational adherence of its followers. Also, it is in a process of transition with new temples and communities being continuously established while being faced with the challenges of needing to adapt to a new social and cultural environment. Most Buddhist communities are closely related to their countries of origin and the cultures of those countries. At the same time the gradual integration of immigrant Buddhists into the culture of the host country create a need to adjust Buddhism to the western society. The BFN takes an active role in this work involving education of monks and nuns as well as engagement in interreligious dialogue and translating Buddhist teachings and practices into the Norwegian language to facilitate better understanding and appreciation of the Buddhadharma, especially by young Buddhists growing up in Norway.

SOUTH AMERICA

BUDDHISM IN SOUTH AMERICA AN OVERVIEW WITH REFERENCE TO THE SOUTH AMERICAN CONTEXT*

by Frank Usarski**

INTRODUCTION

Compared to research in other parts of the Western Hemisphere, Buddhism in South America[1] is still a rather unexplored issue. Except for Brazil, where there has been a steady increase of related academic activities since the late 1990s[2], and a handful of researchers in Argentina, Ecuador and Venezuela particularly interested in Zen and Soka Gakkai[3], research on Buddhism is absent in South American universities and appears only sporadically on the agendas of associated scientific communities such as the Latin American

*. Originally published in 2600 Years of Sambuddhatva: Global Journey of Awakening, Abeynayake, Oliver (Ed.), Tilakaratne, Asanga(Ed.), 2012, pp. 527-540. Reprinted with permission.

**. Professor, Religious Studies Department, the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo

1. In tension with the geo-political reality associated with the expression "South America" (including countries such as Suriname or French Guyana) the present article concentrates on the 10 major countries, that is: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela.

2. Cf. Usarski, Frank: 0 momento da pesquisa sobre o budismo no Brasil: tendências e questões abertas, *Debates do NER*: 7, n°9 (Jan/Jun) 2006, pp.129-141.

3. I am refering to Caton Carini, Lucia Salinas, and Matilde Viglianchino (Argentina), Lucila Donoso Gómez (Ecuador) and María dei Pilar Quintero (Venezuela).

Association for the Study of Religions (ALER)[4], the Mercosur Religion Social Scientists Association (ACSRM)[5] or the Latin American Association of African and Asian Studies (ALADAA).[6]

The main reason for this is that although Buddhist history dates back to the first half of the nineteenth century, and despite the presence of institutions of virtually any Buddhist branch, Buddhism continues to be a statistically modest part of South America's diversified religious field. In relation to the vast Christian, particularly Catholic maj ority of the population of the South American countries and their institutional predominance, Buddhism, with around 500,000 practitioners and approximately 600 groups represents a numerically insignificant segment.

Furthermore, and again with the exception of Brazil, useful official statistical data is either missing or incomplete. In most cases the national censuses do not contain any question concerning religion. If there is the rubric "religion" on the census' questionnaire, Buddhism does not explicitly appear in the results but is treated as one of several alternative minorities to the Christian mainstream and therefore subsumed under the headline "other religions"[7].

In the face of these not very auspicious intellectual conditions, this essay is not entitled to deliver an empirically and analytically satisfactory discussion of the history and current state of Buddhism in South America. This is especially true for the first part, which offers a preliminary synoptic approach to Buddhism in South America in general. The latter part is based on a combination of different kinds of references, including academic sources[8], official

4. One rare example is the paper "Budismos 'latinos': la presencia del budismo en Latinoamérica y el Sur de Europa" presented by Francisco Diez de Velasco at the 1311ALER Congress (2010) n Granada, Spain [sic!].

5. One rare example is the paper "Fragmentación geográfica, comunidades emergentes y globalización en el budismo argentino" presented by Catón Carini at the 14th ACSRM-Congress (2007). In Buenos Aires.

6. One rare example is the paper "Encuentros y desencuentros en el diálogo cristiano-budista. La situation en Chile" presented by Gonzalo Ulloa-Ríibke (Universidad Católica de Valparaiso, Chile), at the 10th International ALAADA-Congress (2000), Rio de Janeiro.

7. Cf. for example, CEIL/CONICET: *Primera encuesta sobre Creencias y actitudes religiosas en Argentina*, Buenos Aires: CEIL/CONICET 2008.

8. Cf., for example, Shoji, Rafael: *The Nativization o f East Asian Buddhism in Brazil*, PhD

statistics of religion launched by governmental[9] and research agencies[10], Buddhist directories, estimations of the statistical relevance of Buddhism by continent[11], by country[12] or in a city[13], and homepages run by Buddhists institutions active in South America. Despite the effort to overcome the limitations of isolated sources especially as far as the Spanish speaking countries are concerned, the heuristic value of the collected material suffers from a series of uncertainties. In some cases, obviously inconsistent information makes provisional conclusions even more difficult.[14]

Since research on Buddhism in Brazil is well advanced, the reader can expect more details in the second part of this essay dedicated to a description and interpretation of the situation in the only Portuguese speaking country in South America.

BUDDHISM IN SOUTH AMERICA: AN OVERVIEW

There are currently around 600 Buddhist institutions of different size and scope active in South America. A closer look at the list reveals that virtually every Buddhist school has established itself in at least one of the respective countries. Besides "classical"

Thesis, University o f Hannover, 2004.

9. Concerning Chile, Peru and Bolivia cf. Comision Nacional del XVH Censo de Poblacion y vi de Vivienda: *Censo 2002. Sintesis de Resultados*, Santiago de Chile: Empresa Periodistica La Nation 2003, pp.25-27; Instituto Nacional de Estadistica e Informática (INEI): *Censo de Poblacion y Vivienda* 2007, http://iinei.inei.gob.pe/iinei/ RedatamCpv2007.asp?ori=R (accessed22/01/2011); Ministério de relaciones exteriores y cultos: Registro nacional de culto - asociaciones religiosas no católicas, http://www.rree. gob.bo/webmre/documentos/servicios/d27.pdf, (accessed 11/01/2011).

10. Cf. PROLADES: *A Directory o f Religious Groups in Latin America and the Caribbean: Argentina*, San Pedro: Prolades 2002.

11. Cf., for example, Markham, Ian S. (ed.): *A World Religions Reader*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1996, pp.356-357.

12. Cf., for example, http://www.nationmaster.com/graph/rel_bud_by_coubudbudtot-religion-buddhism -country-buddhist-total, accessed 23/01/2011; http://www.budismo.com/directorios/index.php, (accessed 23/02/2011).

13. Cf, for example, Mallimaci, Fortunato; Cárdenas, Luis A. (eds.): *Guia de la diversidad religiosa de Buenos Aires*, vol.2, Buenos Aires: Biblos 2003; Costa, Néstor da: Chiappara, Carla, Albanês, Lorena (eds.): *Guia de la diversidad religiosa de Montevideo*, Montevideo: Taurus 2008.

14. See the dramatically discrepant numbers o f Buddhist adherents in Bolivia given by worldiQ.com (8,857) [cf. http://www.wordiq.com/definition/ Buddhism_by_country (accessed 15/01/2011)] and Wikipedia (23,710) [cf. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ Buddhism_by_country (accessed 15/01/2011)].

orientated Theravada-circles, Mahayana temples with a Chinese, Japanese, Korean or Vietnamese background, and Vajrayana groups following the teachings of Nyingma-, Kagyu-, Sakya- or Gelugpa-masters, one finds centers representing more recent developments such as the New Kadampa Tradition, followers of Thich Nath Hanh, neo-Buddhist movements within the Nichiren-branch, and institutions without a definitive orientation dedicated to the study and practice of Buddhism in an "ecumenical" sense.

In systematical and geographical terms, however, the spectrum of Buddhists institutions is far from being proportionally segmented. As for systematical disproportions, the strongest divisions are that of Tibetan Buddhists groups representing approximately 27% of the total of institutions established in South America, of Soka Gakkai (25%) and of Zen (22%). On the other hand, Theravada is represented by about twenty local centers (3%). "Ecumenical" Buddhism (around ten local groups) is even less popular.

The main geographical difference consists of the numerical, organizational and substantial significance or even predominance of Brazil in comparison with the Spanish speaking countries. Due to the existence of approximately 300 centers, dojos, groups and temples and around 230,000 self-declared Buddhists, more than 50% of the Buddhist institutions and around 47% of the South American Buddhists are located in Brazil. This tendency correlates with the fact that Brazil's population (185.7 million in 2010[15]) is nearly as high as the estimated population of the rest of South America.[16]

15. According to the last census realized by the Brazilian Institute for Geographic and Statistics, cf. http://www.ibge.gov.br/home/presidencia/ noticias/noticia_visualiza.php?id_noticia=1744&id_pagina=l.

16. Reference:https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/ index.html, (accessed 15/01/2011)



Zen-Meditation on the top o f the Copan-Building in São Paulo

The general statistical strength of the Brazilian Buddhist institutions is reflected in a numerical overweight of certain Buddhist branches. This is true for Amida Buddhism represented in South America by eighty-four temples of which 90% are located in Brazil. Another example is the New Kadampa Tradition with followers in Brazil (more than twenty centers) and in Chile (three local institutions). More striking is the situation of Buddhist branches restricted to Brazil as in the case of Honmon Busuryushu (eleven institutions), Shingon (five) and Tendai (two).



Tendai-Temple in São Paulo, Photo: Rafael Shoji (2004)

For other branches, Brazil plays a crucial administrative and spiritual role in relation to South America as a whole. The Soto-Zen temple Busshinji in the city of São Paulo is not only the spiritual reference for local practitioners but serves as the headquarters in order to expand its activities to neighboring countries and to coordinate the work of the associated Brazilian institutions and a temple in Peru. The same is true for the Hokekyo Temple in São

Paulo, which is the South American headquarters of Nichiren-shu. In a similar way, the temple of the International Buddhist Order founded in 1996 in Foz de Iguaçu, a Brazilian city close to Argentina and Paraguay, welcomes adherents from either side of the border.[17] Another example for the logistical significance of Brazil is the Latin America Study Session on Nichiren Buddhism in April 2009 held at the Daisaku Ikeda Culture Center in São Paulo and attended by more than 2,000 Soka Gakkai adherents from all South American countries.[18]

The importance of Brazil for South American Buddhism is also seen with regards to Tibetan Buddhist teachers who are not only venerated by their Brazilian disciples but also have adherents in other South American countries. One example is the Brazilian Gelug monk Segyu Choepel Rinpoche, founder of the Lama Je Tsongkhapa Center in Porto Alegre and a correspondent institution in Buenos Aires. A second example is the Tibetan Nyingma-master Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche, who, after moving his headquarters from California to the South of Brazil in 1994, has opened more than twenty local centers in Brazil, Uruguay and Chile. A third example is the Tibetan Gelugpa-monk Lama Gangchen, founder of the Centro de Dharma da Paz Shi De Choe in São Paulo (1988) as the very first institution of an international religious movement which also includes local groups in Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires.

About 400 of the enlisted South American institutions are run by Mahayana Buddhist branches. The great majority is associated with Japanese Buddhists schools, but there are also temples that represent Chinese or Korean tradition. This high proportion is obviously not an unequivocal indicator of the quantitative significance of the so-called ethnic Buddhism, but it is a reminder that the reconstruction of the past and present of Buddhism in South America would be incomplete without reflection upon the role of Chinese, Japanese and Korean immigration.

17. Cf. Shoj, Rafael: Reinterpretação do Budismo Chinês e Coreano no Brasil, *Revista de Estudos da Religião*, 3, vol 4, 2004, pp. 74-87, especially pp. 79-80.

18. C f .h ttp ://w w w .sg i.o rg /n e w s/e v en ts/e v en ts2 0 0 9 /e v en ts0 9 0 4 1 2 . html(accessed 03/02/2011).

Although Chinese immigration to South America is already documented in the first half of the nineteenth century prior to the arrival of the Japanese, the latter have had a stronger effect on their host societies, especially in Brazil and Peru, and to a lesser extent in Paraguay, Argentina and Bolivia.[19] Korean immigration is more recent and has had only a minor impact on the evolution of Buddhism in South America.

The first Japanese vessel landed in Peru in 1883. Japanese immigration to Argentina and Bolivia started in 1899 and the first arrival of Japanese in Brazil occurred in 1908.

Today, Brazil hosts the largest Japanese community outside Japan. It is estimated that currently 1.3 million Japanese immigrants and their descendants live in the country, far outnumbering Brazilians of Chinese origin (about 150,000)[20]. Next comes Peru where around 80,000 Japanese represent the largest ethnic minority. Around 50,000 are of Chinese origin. In Argentina there currently exists a minority of about 35,000 "japo-argentinos" probably outnumbered by a fast growing Chinese colony.[21] The Bolivian Japanese community is composed of about 12,000 individuals. In Paraguay there currently live around 50,000 Asian immigrants and their descendants, about 10,000 of Japanese origin.

If one generalizes the well-documented statistical decline of ethnic Buddhism in Brazil over the last decades and suppose that other countries have witnessed similar dynamics, then only a

19. If not indicated otherwise the following information are based on Levinson, David: *Ethnic Groups Worldwide: A Ready Reference Handbook*. Phoenix: Oryx 1988; Sowell, Thomas: *Migrations and Cultures'. A World View*. New York: Basic Books 1996; Lesser, Jeffrey: Asians in South America, in Encyclopedia o f World Cultures, vol. VII New York/ London: G.K.Hall/ Prentice Hall 1994, pp.58-61; *Encyclopedia o f Latin America*. Volume IV: The Age o f Globalization, New York: Facts on File 2010, p. 170.

20. Cf. SHANG-SHENG, Chu. Imigrantes e Imigração Chinesa no Rio de Janeiro (1910-1990). *Leituras da HISTÓRIA*, no. 17 (fevereiro), 2009, pp.44-53.

21. Estimations are confusing andvary between 30,000 in 2000 [cf. KUMAGAI, Satoru: *Comparing the Networks o f Ethnic Japanese and Ethnic Chinese in International Trade*, IDE Discussion Paper No. 113, Institute of Developing economies 2007, http://202.244.105.132/ Enghsh/Publish/Download/ Dp/ pdf7113.pdf, (acessed 25/01/2011)] and 120,000 in 2010 [cf. Cf. Sanchez, Gonzalo: La communidad china em el país se duplicó enm los últimos 5 anos, *portal clarin.com*, November 27a1 2010, http://www.clarin.com/ sociedad/comunidad-china-duplico-ultimos-anos_ 0_343165728.html, (accessed 25/01/2011)].

relatively small proportion of the enlisted Mahayana-Buddhists should be taken as an indicator of the current relevance of ethnic Buddhism in South America. On the other hand, besides more than eighty ethnic-based Shin-Buddhists communities, there is a series of ethnic Buddhists communities in the region. In this context there are traditional Zen institutions with a strong ethnic background such as the Busshinji Temple in São Paulo and Daishinji Temple in Bogota. Another example is the Tzong Kwan Temple in São Paulo, built with the extensive financial help of the Taiwanese order and the local Chinese community, and which served after its inauguration by the Buddhist master Pu Hsien in 1993 as a model for the construction of two "sister" institutions, one in Argentina the other in Paraguay.[22] In a similar category falls the Fo Kuang Shan-order whose religious activities in countries such as Brazil, Chile, Argentina and Paraguay are supported by local Chinese communities.



Recitation at the Zu-Lai Temple in São Paulo

From an historical point of view the significance of Buddhist immigrants in South America is even more evident. The most obvious cases are that of Peru and Brazil, where Buddhist activities began long before Buddhism attracted a Western audience. In the face of "the tragedy of the initial immigrants", both the Soto Zen and the Jodo branch decided to send official delegations to Peru. Consequently, "the priests, the Revs. Ueno, Masumoto [Zen] and Kinoshita [Jodo] received orders from their respective organizations to go to Peru as missionaries" and "to work in South America among the Japanese immigrants like those who had gone

22. Cf. Shoj, Rafael: Reinterpretação do Budismo Chinês e Coreano no Brasil, op.cit

to Hawaii and North America."[23] As far as Brazil is concerned, all Buddhist activities before World War Two were in Japanese "colonies" located in the Federal State of Sao Paulo. The first group that comes to mind is Honmon Butsuryu-shu, whose pioneer, Tomojiro Ibaragi, was among the immigrants that arrived on the first Japanese vessel in 1908.[24]

While the first decades of Buddhism in the region were directly related to Asian immigration, more recent trends gained momentum through a growing number of South Americans who - from the 1960s onwards and parallel to the development in other Western countries - discovered Buddhism as an alternative to their inherited religions, mostly Catholicism. Two tendencies were mainly responsible for these dynamics. On the one hand, Buddhists institutions (for example traditional Zen temples) and movements (such as Soka Gakkai) initially firmly enrooted in a Japanese immigrant milieu, became open to a wider audience and served as a catalyst for the expansion of Buddhism into new sociological contexts. On the other hand, while traveling in the USA or Europe or experiencing workshops and lectures given by roshis and lamas who visited South America, potential converts came into contact with Buddhists approaches already adapted to the mentality and needs of Western religious seekers. Eventually, these alternative settings have given rise to a generation of converts who assumed an active role as Buddhists teachers or as "innovative" members of staff of a traditional ethnic temple or as protagonists of a "globalized" Buddhist branch whose international network of local groups includes centers in South America.

One example of the South American converts who started her career as a minister in a traditional Zen temple is the Brazilian Claudia Souza de Murayama, bom in 1947. In 1960, "Monja Coen", as she is called by the Brazilian media, went to San Francisco in order to study Buddhism at the Zen Mountain Center until she moved to

23. Ota, Hirohito: The First Buddhist Missionaries in Peru - An Unknown Centennial History, *Dharma Eye*, n° 12, August 2003, http://global.sotozen-net.or.jp/pdf7dharma-eye/del2/del2_08.htm, (accessed 15/12/2010).

24. Cf. Nakamaki, Hirochika: *Japanese Religions at Home and Abroad. Anthropological Perspectives*. London and New York: Routledge Curzon 2003, pp.143-167.

Nagoya, Japan, where she underwent long-term monastic training at the Shoboji Temple and finally gained the status of an official Soto-Zen teacher. Back in São Paulo she assumed the leadership of the Busshinji Temple, became a member of the South American Soto-Zen Council and was elected president of the Brazilian Federation of Buddhists Sects [sic!]. Being a Buddhist modernist who sympathized with the inclusion of Buddhists converts into the Busshinji community, Muruyama came into conflict with the order's conservative faction, finally left the Busshinji Temple and founded the Tenzui Zen Dojo as a more convenient spiritual home for Buddhist converts.[25]



Monja Coen

Densho Quintero[26] and Shotai de la Rosa[27] are two Columbian Zen protagonists at the *Daishinji* temple in Bogotá, a traditional institution related to the Soto Zen Buddhist Association of North America. Densho Quintero wasordained as a Soto Zen monk in France in 1987. Since 1989 he has dedicated his time to the propagation of Zen Buddhism in his home country. In 2009 he received dharma tradition in Japan. Today he is the head teacher of the Daishinji. Shotai de la Rosa became a Zen Buddhist in 1989. From the 1990s onwards she first studied Zen under Dokusho Villalba (Spain) and Fausto Taiten Guareshiin (Italy), then in the USA and finally, like Claudia Souza de Murayama, at the Aichi

25. Cf. Rosha, Cristina: *Zen in Brazil. The Quest fo r Cosmopolitan Modernity*, Honululu: University of Hawai'i Press 2006, pp.50-54.

26. Cf. http://sweepingzen.com/2009/12/24/1470/, (accessed 25/01/2011).

27. Cf.. http://sweepingzen.com/2009/12/23/shotai-de-la-rosa-bio/ (accessed 25/01/2011).

Senmon Niso-doin, Nagoya, Japan.

As with Claudia Souza de Murayama and Shotai de la Rosa, Ricardo Dokyu, bom in 1959 in Argentina, went to Nagoya for spiritual reasons. In Japan he was ordained as a Soto-Zen monk (1991) and received dharma transmission (2002). One year later he founded the An Raku Ji Temple in Buenos Aires as well as the Soto Zen Buddhist Association of Argentina (2007).[28] Two other examples in Argentina are Augusto Alcalde and Antonio Eiju Pérez. Augusto Alcalde's interest in Buddhism arouse out of countercultural ambitions in the 1960s[29]. In 1984 he joined the Diamond Sangha in Hawaii and studied Zen under Robert Aitken from whom he finally received dharma transmission. In 1986 he returned to Argentina and founded the Shobo An Zendo in Cordoba, an institution affiliated with the Hawaii Diamond Sangha. Antonio Eiju Pérez is the founder of the Zen-Center in Mendenoza. He started his career as a Zen-Buddhist in 1988. In 1997 he went to Japan where he became a disciple of Roshi Harada Tangen. In 2000 he was ordained as Soto-Zen minister Tenhsin Fletcher at the Zen Mountain Center, California.

As far as Tibetan Buddhism is concerned, an outstanding case is that of the Brazilian Michel Lenz Calmanowitz, who was still a young child when his parents founded the first Institution of the Lama Gangchen Movement in São Paulo. After Lama Gangchen had recognized the boy as a tulku, "Lama Michel" entered the Tibetan Buddhist monastic exile community of Sera Me, South-India and today plays a leading role within the movement.[30]

Less spectacular is the history of the Argentinean convert Gerardo Abboud, bom in 1945, today the resident dharma teacheof

28. Cf. *Asociación Budista Soto Zen Argentina,* n ol, vol.l, (August) 2009, http://cnargentina.com.ar/files/boletinl.pdf, (accessed 27/12/2010).

29. Zen in South America - An Interview with Augusto Alcalde, Roshi by Vladimir Keremidschieff, *Moon Mind Circle*, Autumn 1992, online ftp:// coombs.anu.edu.au/coombspapers/otherarchives/electronic-buddhist-archives/buddhism -zen/information/south-american-zen.txt,(accessed 30/12/2010).

30. Cf. Usarski, Frank: (Re)Making Tradition in an International Tibetan Buddhist Movement: A Lesson from Lama Gangchen and Lama Michel, in: Engler, Steven; Grieve, Gregory P. (eds.): *Historicizing "Tradition" in the Study o f Religion*, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 2005, pp.345-355.

the Drukpa Kagy Center in Buenos Aires.[31] Abboud began to study and practice Buddhism in the 1970s in India and Nepal. Since then he has dedicated himself to the tradition of Tibetan texts into English and Spanish and to the service of an interpreter on the occasion of workshops and lectures of Tibetan masters during their tours to countries such as including Argentina, Brazil and Chile. In this function he even accompanied the Dalai Lama during his visit to Latin America in 1992.

Finally, there are the considerable number of South American converts who have assumed responsibility for a local center on behalf of a Buddhist movement that operate on an international scale, such as the Association Zen Internationale and Karma Kagyu - present all over South America - the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order in Venezula, Vipassana Meditation groups in the tradition of SN Goenka in Brazil, Peru and Venezuela or the Kwan Um School of Zen and the Order of Interbeing in Brazil.

BUDDHISM IN BRAZIL: HISTORICAL AND SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DEVELOPMENTS

The history of Buddhism in Brazil can be subdivided into four phases. The first roughly dates between 1810 and World War Two. In the respective decades Buddhism was restricted to Asian immigrants and their domestic practices according to inherited traditions. This is not only true for Japanese families who entered the country from 1908 onwards, but - according to reports indicating that the early Chinese immigrants to Brazil[32] maintained their customs and continued to celebrate their annual festivities[33] - probably also for Chinese workers whose initial group had

31. Cf. http://www.dongyuling.com.ar/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=20&Itemid=36, (accessed 18/12/2010).

32. Cf. Elias, Maria José: Introdução ao Estudo da Imigração Chinesa, *Anais do Museu Paulista*, XXIV, 1970, pp.55-100; Bussche, Eric Vanden: A Dimensão Histórica das Relações Sino-Barsileiras (Séc.: XVI-1943), Revista Tempo Brasileira, 137: abr.-jun., 1999, pp.85-98, especially pp.89 f f; ; Leite, José Roberto Teixeira: *A China no Brasil*, Campinas: Editora da Unicamp 1999.

33. Cf. Chen, Miao Shen: *Cultura e educação dos imigrantes chineses na cidade de Cascavel: dois mundos, um mesmo objetivo*, Master Thesis. Cascavel: Universidade Estadual do Oeste do Paraná 2010, p.62.

immigrated nearly a century before the vessel Kasato Maru with the first Japanese immigrants on board arrived at the port of Santos.

While informal religious practices and involuntary autonomy at the level of laymen and laywomen was the rule in those days[34], the few efforts to institutionally support the spiritual life of certain colonies must not be forgotten. The first activities that come to mind are associated with the Rev. Tomojiro Ibaragi, who according to the order of the Honmon Butsuryu-shu, was among the first wave of Japanese immigrants. In 1936 he made a name for himself as the founder of the Taisseji Temple in Lins, Brazil's very first official Buddhist institution. The construction of the temple was encouraged by the members of a local nucleus of Honmon Butsuryu-shu practitioners initiated by the layman Yoneji Matsubara in 1932. Soon thereafter, the first Shin Buddhist institution was inaugurated in the city of Cafelandia.[35] Further efforts related to Shin Buddhism were undertaken in the Iguape colony to which the Rev. Masumo Ikoma had been sent by the Honpa Honganji headquarters in 1928. Six years later, the Rev. Shinba introduced Shingon to Brazil.[36]



Community o f the Taissenji Temple in Lins in 1951

Two more Honmon Butsuryü-shü temples were constructed during the first phase of Brazilian Buddhism, namely the Nissenji

34. Cf. Handa,Tomoo: *O imigrante japonês. História de sua vida no Brasil,* São Paulo: T.A. Queiroz 1987, especially pp. 238,359,384,483,725-726.

35. Cf. Gonçalves, Ricardo Mario: *Homenagem aos Imigrantes Japoneses Pioneiros do Budismo no Brasil*, 2004, http://www.dharmanet.com.br/ honganji/vesak2004.htm (accessed 14/11/2010).

36. Shoji, Rafael: *Continuum Religioso Nipo-Brasileiro: O caso do Budismo Carmico da Shingon*. Debates do NER 7/9 (Jan/Jun) 2006: pp. 35-56, especially p.43.

in Présidente Prudente (1940) and the Ryushoji in Moji das Cruzes (1941).[37] Finally, one event of a different nature has to be mentioned in the given context: the foundation of the Buddhist Society of Brazil by the Theosophist Lourenço Borges in 1923. As the first association intentionally designed for Western Buddhists, the institution anticipated tendencies characteristic of a later period. In this sense it is paradigmatic that the Buddhist Society of Brazil in its original form was closed after few months, but revived in its current form in 1967[38] under different circumstances.

The second period of the history of Buddhism in Brazil took place in the post-war period and was characterized by the establishment of institutions associated with ethnic Buddhist communities. The respective dynamics were particularly stimulated by the intention of the majority of the Japanese to stay on in Brazil. The decision not to return to their country of origin put an end to "experimental immigration" as well as to the immigrants' idea that at home someone else was responsible for the religious affairs of the family until they returned and reassumed their duties.[39] In consequence, a series of Japanese Buddhist institutions was established. Honmon-Busutryu-shu expanded its network of Brazilian temples to Taubaté (1949), Londrina (1950) in the Federal State of São Paulo, and to Itaguai (1950) in the Federal State of Rio de Janeiro and inaugurated its Brazilian headquarters in the city of São Paulo (1962).[40] In the first half of the 1950s, the Tendai-shü and Õtani branch of Jõdo Shinshü inaugurated their first temples, the Honpa branch of Jõdo Shinshü founded its national headquarters, and the Jodo, Zen, Nichiren, and Shingon sects announced the official start of their missions in Brazil. In 1958 the Federação das Seitas Budistas no Brasil established itself as a Japanese Buddhist umbrella organization.[41]

37. Cf. Como foi fondada a HBS no Brasil, *Revista Lótus n°* 19 (Abril) 2001, p.6.

38. C f.http://w w w .sociedadebudistadobrasil.org/quem -som os/historia, accessed 25/01/2011.

39. Cf. Maeyama, Takashi: *O imigrante e a Religião. Estudo de uma Seita Religiosa Japonesa em São Paulo*, Master Thesis, São Paulo: Fundação Escola de Sociologia e Politica 1967, pp.78 ff.

40. Cf. Como foi fundada a HBS no Brasil, op.cit.

41. Cf. Sasaki, Yomei: Palavras de Abertura, in: Comemoração do Centenário de Amizade Brasil-Japão: *Simpósio e Conferência Brasil-Japão de Budismo. A Contribuição do Budismo para a Ordem e o progresso do Brasil*, São Paulo: Federação as Seitas Budistas do Brasil 1995, p.7.

Stimulated by the beginning of the internationalization of its then lay-organization Soka Gakkai, and the visit of its president, Ikeda Daisaku, to Brazil, Nichiren Shōshū began to publicly articulate itself in 1960. Brazil's first Chinese Buddhist institution[42], the Mo Ti Temple in Sao Paulo, has existed since 1962.[43]

From a chronological standpoint, the inauguration of the other ethnic Chinese temples, as well as of the only ethnic Korean temple, overlaps with events already characteristic of the third period. Compared to the Mo Ti Temple it took twenty-five years for the local Chinese colony to start with the construction of a second Chinese Buddhist temple, the Kuang Ying in São Paulo, and another five years until the institution opened its doors for the associated community. Only a short time before that, the Zu Lai temple in Cotia was inaugurated (1992), followed by three other Fo Kuang Shan temples in Rio de Janeiro (1996), in Recife (1999) and in Foz de Iguaçu (2000).[44] As for traditional Korean Buddhism there is only the Jin Kak Temple in the city of Sao Paulo, inaugurated in 1988 and belonging to the line of Chogye-Buddhism.

The third phase of Buddhism in Brazil was marked by an intensified interest of intellectual circles in Japanese Buddhism, especially in Soto Zen. This dynamic began to articulate itself in Sao Paulo but was not restricted to this city as proved by similar, although slightly later tendencies, in Brasilia.[45]

Three elements were essential for the new trend. First, one has to consider the repercussion of a positive

42. Although already founded in the 1940s, the I Guan-Tao temple of São Paulo is omitted here since its syncretic character makes her categorization as a Buddhist institution problematic. Cf. Chen, Miao Shen: op.cit. p. 99.

43. Cf. Yang, Chung Yuan Alexander: O Budismo entre os Chineses no Brasil, in: *China em Estudo*: vol. 2, n°2, 1995, pp.49-57.

44. Cf. Shoji, Rafael. Estratégias de adaptação do Budismo Chinês: Brasileiros e Chineses na Fo Kuang Shan, in: Usarski, Frank (ed.): *O Budismo no Brasil*. São Paulo, 2002, pp. 125-150.

45. Cf. Pereira, Ronan Alves: Instituições Etico-Religiosas Japonesas no Distrito Federal, in: Shigeru Hayashi (ed.): *Centenário as imigração japonesa no Brasil e cinquentenário da presença Nikkey em Brasilia*: Brasília: FEANBRA2008, pp.274-278, especially p.273.



M inister o f the Jin K ak Temple in São Paulo (Foto: Rafael Shoji 2004

Three elements were essential for the new trend. First, one has to consider the repercussion of a positive idea of the East and particularly of Japan constructed by the early writings who had dedicatedthemselves to respective topics out of enthusiasm for the exotic, a romanticizing interest in the Orient, or an intellectual curiosity in a relatively unknown part of the world[46]. Thus, works of authors such as Fagundes Varela(1841-1875), Machado do Assis (1839-1908)RaimundoCorreia (1859-1911), Aluisio de Azevedo (1857-1913), Farias Brito (1862-1917), Alexandre Marcos Konder (1904-1953) or Lourival Nobre de Almeida (1906-1981)[47] had laid the foundation for a favorable image that even resisted the growing resentment of the Brazilian public against Asian immigrants before and during World War Two.[48]

The second factor was the growing knowledge of Zen Buddhism due to newspaper articles and books, including DT Suzuki's Introduction to Zen, the Portuguese version of which was first published in Brazil in 1961.[49]

46. Cf. Orientalismo na literatura brasileira, in: *Dicionário de literatura*, Porto, Figueirinhas, 1981, p.772.

47. Cf. Albuquerque, Eduardo Basto de: *Intellectuals and Japanese Buddhism in Brazil*, Japanese Journal o f Religious Studies 35/1, 2008, pp. 61-79, especially pp.62-63.

48. Cf. Lesser, Jeffrey: Tomando-se japonês: literatura de viagem em busca de identidade nacional, *Estudos Ibero-Americano*: XXV, no.2, December 1999, pp.175-184.

49. Cf. Rocha, Cristina: All roads come from Zen, *Japanese Journal o f Religious Studies* 35/1, 2008, pp. 81-94, especially 82-83.

Third, and most importantly, one has to recognize the catalyst role of Soto-Zen temple Bushinji in Sao Paulo, which at that time began to show greater openness towards the Brazilian public. The key figure of Soto-Zen was Rosen Takashina Roshi. In 1955, he had visited several Japanese colonies. One year later he was sent again to Brazil, this time due to his order's decision to make him the official head of the Busshinji temple. He remained in this position until 1985.

In 1961, Rosen Takashina Roshi began to organize public zazen-meetings in the Busshinji. From 1971 onwards three or four-day sesshins were periodically held at the temple. Detailed information about the composition of the group of early Western practitioners is not available, but at least some of the Brazilians who made no secrets of their passion for Buddhism are frequently cited in relevant publications. The list contains Brazilian personalities such as the writer Nelson Coelho, the poet Orides Fontela (1940-1998)[50], the physician Maria das Dores Pereira da Silva[51], the psychiatrist Nise da Silveira[52], and the university professor Eduardo Basto de Albuquerque.[53]



Busshinji-temple in S ão Paulo

50. Cf. Os budistas procuram a paz, *O Cruzeiro*, May 15ft 1969.

51. Cf. Gonçalves, Ricardo Mário: *Homenagem aos migrantes japoneses pioneiros do budismo no Brasil*, http://www.dharmanet.com.br/honganji/ vesak2004.htm, accessed 25/01/2011.

52. Cf. Gonçalves, Mario Ricardo: A trajetória de um budista brasileiro, in: Usarski, Frank (ed.): *O Budismo no Brasil*, São Paulo: Lorosae 2002, pp.171-192, especially p.178.

53. Cf. Albuquerque, Eduardo Basto de: Um mestre zen na terra da garoa, in: Usarski, Frank (ed.): op.cit. pp.151-170.

Probably the most renowned representatives of the circle of early Buddhists converts are Murillo Nunes de Azevedo and Ricardo Mário Gonçalves. Azevedo, inspired not only by Buddhism but also by Theosophy, was an engineer but also gave university courses on eastern religions and produced a series of Buddhist writings. Similar is true for Gonçalves who worked full-time as a History Professor at the University of Sao Paulo and besides his commitment to Buddhism was also a Freemason. Both Azevedo and Gonçalves played an outstanding and at the same time peculiar role for the popularization of Japanese Buddhism among a wider Brazilian audience. Due to religious careers that started with Zen, continued with their ordination as Shingon ministers, and ended up with leading positions in the Honpa Hongwanji Temple in Brasilia (Azevedo), and in the Higashi Honganji Temple in Sao Paulo (Gonçalvez), their contribution to the development of a "brazilianized" Buddhism went hand-in-hand with their work as "spiritual mediators" inside traditional Japanese Buddhist institutions.

The fourth phase, characterized by the growing emancipation of Zen from ethnic Japanese settings, as well as the multiplication and substantial diversification of institutions predominantly frequented by Buddhists converts, started in the middle of the 1970s. As in other Western countries these developments profited from spiritual orientations of the counterculture movement and a growing number of publications on Eastern religions. In many cases, the Brazilian audience came in contact with relevant ideas through translations of books from English to Portuguese.[54]

A decisive figure for the sociological manifestations of these tendencies in the context of Buddhism in Brazil was Ryotan Tokuda, another official Soto Zen representative sent to Brazil by the Soto Zen order in 1968. He started his work at Bushinji but was soon dissatisfied with the conservatism of the temple's majority. In 1974 he established, together with a group of Brazilian converts,

54. Cf. Rocha, Cristina Moreira da: Catholicism and Zen Buddhism: A Vision of the Religious Field in Brazil, in Cusack, Carole M.; Oldmeadow, Peter (eds.): *The End ofReligions? Religion in an 'Age o f Globalisation*, Sydney: The University of Sydney, p.249-265, especially pp. 253f.

the retreat center Morro da Vargem in Ibiraçu, in the Federal State of Espirito Santo. Later Cristiano Bitti, a former participant of the "open" zazen meetings and sesshins in São Paulo, turned out to be an important figure for the Morro da Vargem. During the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s he underwent a long-term monastic Soto training in Japan. Back in Brazil he became the head of Morro da Vargem and has remained in this position until today.



Saikawa Roshi, Sokan o f the Soto School in South America, ordains three Brazilian members o f the Zen Community in Florianopolis

In 1984, Tokuda inaugurated a second institution, the retreat center Pico dos Raios in Ouro Preto in the Federal State of Minas Gerais. "Continuing his missionary work among non-Japanese Brazilians," Cristina Rocha writes, "in 1993 Tokuda founded the Zen Center of Planalto, in Brasilia, the federal capital. In the following year, Tokuda and Brazilian practitioners founded the Zen Center of Rio de Janeiro. In 1998, Tokuda established the Serra do Trovao monastery in Minas Gerais state. This monastery was established to be exclusively for the training of new monks and it holds two seven-day monthly retreats."[55]

Another key-figure for the dynamics characteristic for the fourth phase of Brazilian Buddhism was Roshi Moriyama who had been spreading Zen on the United States' west coast before coming to Brazil. Like Tokuda, Moriyama started his spiritual work at Bushinji. Later he had to leave the temple due to incompatibilities between his "globalized" approach to Zen and the conservative attitudes of

55. Cf. Rocha, Cristina Moreira da: Catholicism and Zen Buddhism, op.cit, p.255.

the temple's hierarchy. From this split resulted two "modernist" Zen centers in Porto Alegre in the State of Rio Grande do Sul.

Parallel to innovative trends in the Zen sector, Soka Gakkai began to grow and evolved from about 150 members of Japanese origin in the 1960 to a geographical widespread and probably in recent times numerically most significant Buddhist branch with a high proportion of members without an ethnic Asian background.[56]

Another trend constitutive for the fourth period of Buddhism in Brazil consists in the spread and increasing attraction of Tibetan Buddhism. In 1988, followers of Tarthang Tulku inaugurated in São Paulo the very first Tibetan Buddhist institution in Brazil: the Tarthang Tulku Nyingma Center. Shortly after, disciples of the Gelugpa monk Lama Gangchen founded the Centro de Dharma Shi De Choe Tsog, also in São Paulo.

In 1993, again in São Paulo, three more Tibetan Buddhists institutions were inaugurated, namely the Thubten Dargye Ling (committed to Geshe Lobsang Tenpa), the Centro Budista Mahabodhi (New Kadampa Tradition) and the Õdsal Ling (inspired by the Nyingma master Chagdud Tulku). In 1995, disciples of Chagdud Tulku inaugurated a temple in Três Coroas, in the Federal State of Rio Grande do Sul, as the movement's future international headquarters and permanent home of Chagdud Gonpa, he until then had lived in northern California. In the following years the Chagdud Tulku-organization established a series of local centers in cities such as Belo Horizonte, Florianopolis, Rio de Janeiro, Salvador and Goiânia.



Chagdud Gonpa Khadro Ling in Três Coroas

56. Already in 2000 there were approximately more than 100,000 Soka Gakkai members in Brazil of whom 80% were ethnically unrelated to the Japanese colony. Cf, Pereira, Ronan Alves: *O Budismo Leigo da Soka Gakkai no Brasil: da revolução humana à utopia mundial*. PhD-Thesis, Campinas, Universidade Estadual de Campinas, 2001, pp.281 f.

In addition, during the 1990s a Sakya group in Rio de Janeiro, founded by Sakya Trizin, and two groups (in Cotia, near São Paulo and in the national capital Brasilia), associated with the Kagyu-master Kalu Rinpoche, emerged. One of the most interesting inaugurations in the Tibetan Buddhist sector is that of the Gelugpa Centro Je Tsongkhapa in Porto Alegre (2000). Although the institution is attended by a numerically relatively insignificant group of practitioners, it deserves attention because of its founder, Lama Segyu Rinpoche. The latter is a native Brazilian and was an Umbanda medium in Rio de Janeiro until he was officially recognized as the reincarnation of a sixteenth century tantric master. Today, Lama Segyu is not only the abbot of the Tibetan monastery Sed-Gyued Datsang in Nepal, but also the director of the Healing Buddha Foundation Segyu Gaden Dhargye Ling, in Sebastopol, California[57].

Brazil is the only South American country whose national censuses contain valuable information about the status and dynamics of the religious field. The data ascertained by the Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE) include a series of statistics that allow insight into the evolution and current situation of the Buddhist sector. Although the relevant material is methodologically reliable and rich in details, one has to be careful with definite conclusions since "eclecticism is deeply entrenched in the Brazilian psyche"[58] and quantitative statements about adherents are undermined by the fact that exclusive religious commitment is not the rule. With these reservations in mind, the numerical evolution of the Buddhism in Brazil can be summarized as follows.

According to the 2000 National Census 214,873 Brazilians, or approximately 0.14% of the country's population, are Buddhists. This is a relative insignificant percentage for a religion frequently and often enthusiastically mentioned by the media even compared to religious minorities almost publicly ignored such as the Jehovah's

57. Cf. Simões, Maria: Psicologia budista no ambiente empresarial, Entrevista: Segyu Choepel Rinpoche, *T&D, Desenvolvendo pessoais*, March 2000, pp. 8-11.

58. Cf. Carpenter, Robert T.; Roof, Wade Clark: The Transplantation of Seicho-no-ie from Japan to Brazil: Moving Beyond the Ethnic Enclave, *Journal o f Contemporary Religion*, Vol. 10, No. 1 1995, pp.41-54, especially p.48.

Witnesses (~ 0.6%) or the Seventh-Day-Adventists (~ 0.73%).

Correlation between the questionnaire's categories "color" (= "race") and "religion" indicate that the absolute number is composed of 81,345 Brazilians that identified themselves as having "yellow" skin and 133,528 individuals who opted for an alternative item on the respective fivefold scale (besides "yellow", "white", "brown", "black" and "indigenous").



Religious celebration o f the Japanese community in São Paulo, Photo: Frank Usarstí (2001)

The first observation regarding these data has to do with "ethnic" Buddhists whose negative numerical evolution becomes evident when one compares the statistic for 2000 (81,345) with the corresponding previous figures. Compared to the results of the National census of 1950 (152,572 "yellow Buddhists") the subfield witnessed a dramatic decline of about 47% during the second half of the twentieth century.

Complementary empirical data suggest that a strong reason for this tendency consists in the growing indifference of the second and third generation of immigrant families towards the cultural baggage brought to Brazil by their fathers. Already from the post-war years onwards this attitude was not restricted to the negligence of the domestic religious heritage. Rather it has led a considerable proportion of the younger members of the ethnic community (characterized by socio-demographic mobility, the flexibilization of communication patterns in disfavor of the Japanese language and a

growing tendency towards intermarriage) to abandon Buddhism and to nominally embrace Catholicism or to join a Protestant church.[59]

In 1941, only 1.5% of Japanese immigrants had declared themselves to be Christian.[60] An empirical study conducted seventeen years later showed how strongly Japanese religions were already "affected by direct and constant contact with the predominant Brazilian religion".[61] While in 1958 the proportion of Catholics (42.8%) was almost as high as that of Buddhists (44.5%), the study indicated significant differences between age groups and in other demographical factors. 16.6% of the immigrants of the first generation bom in Japan had converted to a "Brazilian religion", the rest had remained faithful to their Japanese religious heritage. For their descendants the situation had changed dramatically. 60.7% declared themselves adherents of a "Brazilian religion". The second generation (39.3%) was less affected than the third and fourth generation (together 70.3%). A comparison according to age groups showed similar variations. 83.3% of the Japanese older than 44 years but 32.4% of those who at that time were between fifteen and nineteen-years-old were still committed to a Japanese religion.[62]

According to the trends indicated above, ethnic Buddhism in Brazil has continued to decline. After a minor loss of 2,939 individuals between 1950 and 1970, the negative numerical tendency gained momentum in the last three decades of the twentieth century during which there was a decrease of 68,288 individuals. More recently, reports about a continuous statistical decline of "ethnic Buddhism" have challenged representatives of traditional Japanese Buddhist communities to overcome the glossing over of the situation. One example of a more realistic attitude is the following question asked by Shôjo Sato, minister of the Honpa Hongwanji Temple in Brasilia: "We are not in the position to claim that we

59. For more details see Usarski, Frank: "The Last Missionary to Leave the Temple Should Turn Off the Light" Sociological Remarks on the Decline of Japanese "Immigrant" Buddhism in Brazil, *Japanese Journal o f Religious Studies* 35/1 (2008), pp.39-59, especially pp.50-53.

60. Cf. Fuji, Yukio,T.Lynn Smith: *The Aculturationofthe Japanese Immigrants in Brazil*, Gainesville: Univ. of Florida Press 1959, p.14.

61. Suzuki, Teiti: *The Japanese Immigrant in Brazil*. Narrative Part, Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press 1969, p.121.

62. Cf. ibid, p.123.

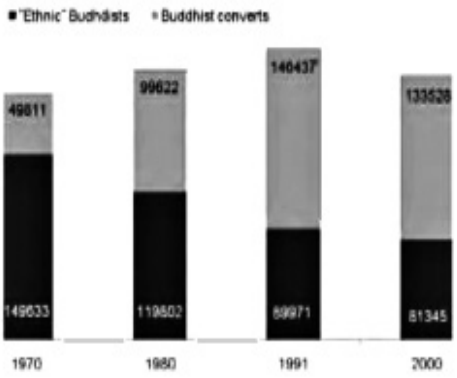
have been successful in guaranteeing that our descendants, nisses e sanseis, continue to hold on to Buddhism. What should we do, then, in order to respond to the growing spiritual demand of those who suffer from fragmented, materialistic and stressful daily-life, if they are Japanese descendants or not? What exactly are the correct measures to be taken for our mission in a modem age, particularly in Brazil and in South America of today?"[63]

Reasonable data indicating the evolution of the sub-field of conversion Buddhism are available from the 1970s onwards. While the respective national censuses suggest that the number of converts increased constantly until the beginning of the 1990s, the 2000 census showed a considerable general decline of Buddhism caused by a decrease both of ethnic Buddhists and of Buddhist converts. In the first three relevant decades Buddhism statistically uncorrelated with "yellow skin" increased from 49,811 (1970) to 99,622 (1980) and finally reached the number of 146,437 in 1991. In 2000, the total number of Buddhists had dropped from 236,408 to 214,873 including 81,345 ethnic Buddhists (8,626 less than in 1991) and 133,528 "non-yellow" Buddhists (12,909 less than in 1991).

A series of reasons is responsible for the discrepancy between the IBGE-statistics and the public image of an allegedly booming Buddhism in Brazil in terms of a religious alternative for spiritual seekers. Due to formal restrictions, only four aspects are mentioned here.

The first factor has to do with the multi-religious tendency and facility of the Brazilian people to identify a "universal essence" in the midst of phenomenological diversity and to benefit ideologically and practically from the supposed unity of all religions. This is a disposition that favors the harmonious coexistence of different kinds of spiritual approaches but does not necessarily promote a sense of superiority of one's exclusivist religious choice or leads to long-term commitment to a certain community.

63. Cf.: http://www.terrapura.org.br/vl/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout= blog&id=38&Itemid=65, accessed 30/01/2011.



A second reason for the difficulties of Buddhism to further expand in Brazil has to do with the popularity and statistical relevance of Kardecism (or Spiritism) especially for the middle-class and higher middle-class, hence for the sociological strata from which in many countries Buddhism wins its Western converts. According to Rodney Starks "cultural-continuity" hypotheses[64], alternative religions are more likely to succeed if their teachings and practices are in tune with the society's dominant religious tradition. Seen from this angle, Kardecism with its combination of Christian theology, cosmology and ethics on the one hand, and elements of Eastern traditions such as karma and rebirth on the other hand, serves as a perfect "filter" for Brazilians who are still committed to Catholicism but unsatisfied with the linear time-conception and the soteriology of official Catholicism without depriving the practitioners of their Christian identity. While a conversion to Buddhism would demand the price of alienation of the dominant religious heritage, Kardecism provides - to a certain extent - similar but far "less expensive" solutions.

The third element is certainly the incapacity of traditional ethnic Buddhist institution to overcome their linguistic limitations and cultural single-mindedness in order to attract a wider audience. This is not only true for Amida-temples whose devotional, family-based Buddhism does not correspond to widespread Western ideals

64. Cf. Stark, Rodney: Why Religious Movements Succeed or Fail: A Revised General Model, *Journal o f Contemporary Religion*, v o l.ll, n 2, 1966, pp. 133-146.

of an individualized meditative Eastern spirituality, but also for older Zen-temples whose rituals of ancestor worship correspond to the demands of their traditional followers but not to the needs of potential converts.

The fourth explanation for the stagnation or even downward trend of Buddhism in Brazil is the institutional under supply in the greatest part of the country. According to the study of Shoji in 2004[65], Buddhism in Brazil is concentrated in the Federal States of São Paulo (51 % of all Buddhists institutions), Rio de Janeiro (11%) and Paraná (10%). That means that the population of the majority of the twenty-seven Federal Unites is institutionally inadequately provisioned or completely deprived of the possibility to come in contact with a local dharma teacher who could convince his audience to follow in his footsteps and guarantee further spiritual assistance on the common path.

Although the number of Brazilian's Buddhists is relatively insignificant, it would be misleading to affirm that Buddhism is an isolated and somehow "alien" religious element in the overwhelmingly Christian country. This is particularly true when one concentrates on the more indirect cultural and social effects of Buddhism. But there are also moments of direct participation of Buddhist entities in affairs of public interest in fields such as socio-politics, public health or economy. Furthermore, one must not forget the many internal activities offered by Buddhists institutions to a wider Brazilian audience.

One of many other cases that stand for the latter aspect is that of the ethnic Chinese Tzong Kwan temple in São Paulo which besides its religious service in a narrow sense offers courses in Ikebanba, Mandarin and Chinese cuisine.[66] One example for the engagement of Buddhists institutions in affairs of public interest is that of the ethnic Chinese Buddhist Association Chi-Chie. In 1995, members who trained as medical experts joined a group of Brazilian physicians in order to provide a regular and free medical service for the poor.

65. Cf. Shoji, Rafael: *The Nativization o f East Asian Buddhism in Brazil*, op.cit.

66. Cf. Shoj, Rafael: *Reinterpretação do Budismo Chinês e Coreano no Brasil*, Revista de Estudos da Religião, 3, vol 4, 2004, pp. 74-87, especially pp. 79-80.

In 1998, the Buddhist Association even founded a diagnostic center for the needy population.[67] A more recent example is that of the Zu Lai temple, recognized by the Brazilian public for its multifold efforts not only in the field of education but also in the health sector.[68]

Regarding a less evident impact of Buddhism on the wider Brazilian society one must not forget the great popularity of martial arts of Asian origin and Buddhist roots among Brazilians with or without an oriental ethnic background. A great part of the older sports academies of the respective category are historically related to Chinese,[69] Japanese and Korean[70] immigration to Brazil.

The situation is similar for the many Haiku associations in the country which, according to Eduardo Basto de Albuquerque, belong to the spectrum of "small and intersecting pathways" through which "Zen entered into Brazilian culture". Over the years, these associations have attracted an increasing number of members outside the Japanese colony indicating an "immense appetite for haiku" among "native Brazilians" .[71]

Furthermore, Buddhist ideas and methods play a role in the economic sector, where companies such as Tec-toy, Lachmann and A90S Villares[72] have organized Buddhist workshops in order to promote both harmony among employees and the increase of the firm's productivity.

In many cases, Buddhist ideas and approaches have infiltrated the wider Brazilian society in a subtle and often unnoticeable manner. To understand these dynamics one has to bear in mind the following: one consequence of the reception of Buddhism

67. Cf. Chen, Miao Shen: op.cit., pp. 99-100.

68. Cf. Em busca da Iluminação, *Vida Simples*, Outubro de 2003, onlineonline http:// vidasimples. abril.com.br/ subhomes/equilibrio/equilibrio_238191. shtml, accessed 25/01/2011.

69. Cf. Apolloni, Rodrigo Wolff: "Shaolin à brasileira". *Estudo sobre a presença e a transformação de elementos religiosos orientais no Kung-Fu praticado no Brasil*, Master Thesis: São Paulo: Pontifícia Universidade Católica 2004.

70. Cf. http://www.labeurb.unicamp.br/elb/asiaticas/leiamais_coreano.html accessed 2/2/2011.

71. Cf. Albuquerque, Eduardo Basto de: *Intellectuals and Japanese Buddhism in Brazil*, op.cit, p.64.

72. Cf. O Brasil dos Budas, in: *Isto É, n°* 1432 , March 121* 1997, pp. 62-70 ,especially p.70.

in the West is the gradual emancipation of beliefs and practices from the institutional bodies which were actively involved in the process of transplantation of Buddhism into occidental settings. In this process, thematically relevant books, magazine articles, movies, documentaries and websites have played an additional role for the ongoing popularization of Buddhism. As a result, and similar to other Western countries, Buddhism in Brazil has in many ways transcended its former sociological boundaries and is now resonating in diffuse surroundings. The latter can be described in terms of a "cultic milieu"[73] or "an audience" ,[74] distinct from concrete and immediately identifiable forms, such as denominations, "cult movements" or "client cults".

From the perspective of the general public, Buddhist's contents, symbols and approaches originally shaped within a certain cultural context now appear as universal elements of a *perennial wisdom* ready to be spontaneously quoted and applied often without a clear notion of the systematic identity of respective ideas and methods.

One example for this diffusion is the growing number of gyms and fitness centers in Brazil that - in response to the increasing demand of new forms of "personal training" have incorporated Zen-classes in their weekly routines.[75] Gabriela Bastos Soares goes even one step further by suggesting that Buddhism plays a significant role within the public health sector in the sense of a "tacit" impact. According to her observations, a considerable number of Brazilians engaged in the health sector are inspired by a holistic worldview which - from the standpoint of the respective individuals - is fully compatible with Buddhist principles. Thus, Buddhism is an important issue for the relevant social circles, however not explicitly or in form of a manifest spiritual preference but according to the category of an "invisible religion" introduced by Thomas Luckmann.[76]

---

73. Cf. Campbell, C.: The Cult, the Cultic Milieu, and Secularisation, in: Hill, M. (ed.): *A Sociological Yearbook o f Religion in Britain*, voLV, London: SCM Press 1972, pp.119-136.

74. Cf. Stark, R.; Bainbridge, W.S.: O f Churches, Sects and Cults: Preliminary Concepts for a Theory of Religious Movements, *Journal fo r the Scientific Study o f Religion*: 1979, pp.117-131.

75. Cf. Falcão, Daniela: Ofertas zen atraem aluno ioiô e sedentários, *Folha de São Paulo* (caderno equilíbrio), September 7* 2000.

76. Cf. Soares, Gabriela Bastos: *O biopoder na contemporaneidade: o espírito do corpo e a alternativa budista*, PhD-Thesis, Rio de Janeiro: Universidade do Rio de Janeiro 2004,

CONCLUSION

Rafael Shoji has argued[77] that the value of the study of Buddhism in his home country not only contributes to a more profound and realistic understanding of the history, current constitution and possible future tendencies of the national religious landscape. Rather, the conclusions drawn from research on Buddhism in a traditionally Catholic country could also play a constructive role within an international academic discourse often guided by an image of Western Buddhism contextualized within a predominantly Protestant culture. If Shoji is right, research on Buddhism in South America has an even greater heuristic potential. At least this is the prospective for the future and as long as the initial course followed in the first part of this essay is taken as a stimulus for a far more profound and detailed study of the history and current status of Buddhism in different parts of South America. This demand includes the commitment to a continuous study of Buddhism in Brazil as well as the permanent revision of conclusions according to new insights. In this sense the next challenge is already ahead: while the present essay is ready to be forwarded to the organizer of this volume, the IBGE is preparing the publication of the results of the 2010 National Census.

***

especially pp. 122ff.

77. Cf. Shoji, Rafael: *The Nativization o f East Asian Buddhism in Brazil*, op.cit., p.8.

References

Albuquerque, Eduardo Basto de: Intellectuals and Japanese Buddhism in Brazil, *Japanese Journal o f Religious Studies* 35/1,2008, pp. 61-79.

Albuquerque, Eduardo Basto de: Um mestre zen na terra da garoa, in: Usarski, Frank (ed.): *0 Budismo no Brasil,* São Paulo: Lorosae 2002, pp.151-170.

Apolloni, Rodrigo Wolff: *"Shaolin à brasileira". Estudo sobre a presença e transformação de elementos religiosos orientais no Kung-Fu praticado no Brasil,* Master Thesis: São Paulo: Pontifícia Universidade Católica 2004.

Bussche, Eric Vanden: A Dimensão Histórica das Relações Sino-Barsileiras (Séc.: XVI-1943), *Revista Tempo Brasileira,* 137, abr.-jun. 1999, pp.85-98.

Campbell, Colin: The Cult, the Cultic Milieu, and Secularisation, in: Hill, M. (ed.): *A Sociological Yearbook o f Religion in Britain,* vol.V, London: SCM Press 1972, pp.119-136.

Carpenter, Robert T.; Roof, Wade Clark: The Transplantation o f Seicho-no-ie from Japan to Brazil: Moving Beyond the Ethnic Enclave, *Journal o f Contemporary Religion,* Vol.10, N o.l 1995, pp.41-54.

CEIL/CONICET: *Primera encuesta sobre Creencias y actitudes religiosas en Argentina,* Buenos Aires: CEIL/CONICET 2008.

Chen, Miao Shen: *Cultura e educação dos imigrantes chineses na cidade de Cascavel: dois mundos, um mesmo objetivo,* Master Thesis. Cascavel: Universidade Estadual do Oeste do Paraná 2010.

Comision Nacional dei XVII Censo de Poblacion y vi de Vivienda: *Censo 2002. Sintesis de Resultados,* Santiago de Chile: Empresa Periodística La Nación2003.

Como foi fundada a HBS no Brasil, *Revista Lótus* n° 19 (Abril) 2001, p.6.

Costa, Néstor da: Chiappara, Carla, Albanês, Lorena

(eds.): *Guia de la diversidad religiosa de Montevideo,* Montevideo: Taurus 2008.

Elias, Maria José: Introdução ao Estudo da Imigração Chinesa, in: *Anais do Museu Paulista,* XXIV, 1970, pp.55-100.

Em busca da Iluminação, *Vida Simples,* Outubro de 2003, onlinehttp:// vidasimples. abril.com.br/ subhomes/equilibrio/ equilibrio_238191.shtml.

Encyclopedia of Latin America. Volume IV: The Age of Globalization, New York: Facts on File 2010.

Falcão, Daniela: Ofertas zen atraem aluno ioiô e sedentários, Folha de São Paulo (caderno equilíbrio), September 7a1 2000.

Fuji, Yukio, T.Lynn Smith: The Aculturation of the Japanese Immigrants in Brazil, Gainesville: Univ. of Florida Press 1959.

Gonçalves, Mario Ricardo: A trajetória de um budista brasileiro, in: Usarski, Frank (ed.): O Budismo no Brasil, São Paulo: Lorosae 2002, pp.171-192.

Gonçalves, Ricardo Mario: Homenagem aos Imigrantes Japoneses Pioneiros do Budismo no Brasil, 2004, http://www.dharmanet. com.br/honganji/vesak2004. htm (Gonçalves, Ricardo Mário: Homenagem aos migrantes japoneses pioneiros do budismo no Brasil, http://www.dharmanet.com.br/honganji/vesak2004.htm

Handa,Tomoo: O imigrante japonês. História de sua vida no Brasil, São Paulo: T.A. Queiroz 1987.

Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática (INEI): Censo de Poblacion y Vivienda 2007, http://iinei.inei.gob.pe/iinei/ RedatamCpv2007.asp?ori=R

Kumagai, Satoru: Comparing the Networks of Ethnic Japanese and Ethnic Chinese in International Trade, IDE Discussion Paper No. 113, Institute of Developing economies 2007, http://202.244.105.132/English/Publish/ Download/ Dp/ pdf/113 .pdf,

Leite, José Roberto Teixeira: *A China no Brasil,* Campinas: Editora da Unicamp1999.

Lesser, Jeffrey: Asians in South America, in *Encyclopedia o f World Cultures,* vol. VII New York/London: G.K.Hall/Prentice Hall 1994.

Lesser, Jeffrey: Tomando-se japonês: literatura de viagem e m busca de identidade nacional, *Estudos Ibero-Americano:* XXV, no.2, December 1999, pp.175-184.

Levinson, David: *Ethnie groups worldwide:* a ready reference handbook. Phoenix: Oryx 1988.

Maeyama, Takashi: *O imigrante e a Religião. Estudo de uma Seita Religiosa Japonesa em São Paulo,* Master Thesis, São Paulo: Fundação Escola de Sociologia e Politica 1967.

Mallimaci, Fortunato; Cárdenas, Luis A. (eds.): *Guia de la diversidad religiosa de Buenos Aires,* vol.2, Buenos Aires: Biblos 2003.

Markham, Ian S. (ed.) *A World Religions Reader.* Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1996.

Ministério de relaciones exteriores y cultos: *Registro nacional de culto asociaciones religiosas no católicas,* http://www.rree.gob.bo/webmre/ documentos/servicios/d27.pdf,

Nakamaki, Hirochika: *JapaneseReligions atHome andAbroad. Anthropological Perspectives.* London and New York: Routledge Curzon 2003.

O Brasil dos Budas, in: *Isto É,* n° 1432 , March 124 1997, pp. 62-70.

Orientalismo na literatura brasileira, in: *Dicionário de literatura,* Porto, Figueirinhas, 1981, p.772

Os budistas procuram a paz, *O Cruzeiro,* May 15th 1969.

Ota, Hirohito: The First Buddhist Missionaries in Peru - An Unknown Centennial History, *Dharma Eye,* n° 12, August 2003,http://global.sotozen-net. or.jp/pdf/dharma-eye/del2/del2_08.htm

Pereira, Ronan Alves: Instituições Ético-Religiosas Japonesas no Distrito

Federal, in: Shigeru Hayashi (ed.): *Centenário as imigração japonesa no Brasil e cinquentenário da presença Nikkey em Brasília:* Brasília: FEANBRA 2008, pp.274-278.

Pereira, Ronan Alves: *O Budismo Leigo da Soka Gakkai no Brasil: da revolução humana à utopia mundial.* PhD-Thesis, Campinas, Universidade Estadual de Campinas, 2001.

Prolades: *A Directory o f Religious Groups in Latin America and the Caribbean: Argentina.* San Pedro: Prolades 2002.

Rocha, Cristina Moreira da: Catholicism and Zen Buddhism: A Vision o f the Religious Field in Brazil, in: Cusack, Carole M.; Oldmeadow, Peter (eds.): *The End of Religions? Religion in an Age o f Globalisation,* Sydney: The University of Sydney, p.249-265.

Rocha, Cristina: All roads come from Zen, *Japanese Journal o f Religious Studies* 35/1, 2008, pp. 81-94.

Rosha, Cristina: *Zen in Brazil. The Quest for Cosmopolitan Modernity,* Honululu: University of Hawai'i Press 2006.

Sânchez, Gonzalo: La communidad china em el pais se duplicó enm los últimos 5 *sãos,portal clarin.com,* November 27th2010, http://www.clarin.com/sociedad/comunidad-china-duplico-ultimos-anos_0_343165728.html.

Sasaki, Yomei: Palavras de Abertura, in: Comemoração do Centenário de Amizade Brasil-Japão: *Simpósio e Conferência Brasil-Japão de Budismo. A Contribuição do Budismo para a Ordem e o progresso do Brasil,* São Paulo: Federação as Seitas Budistas do Brasil 1995, p.7.

Shang-Sheng, Chu. Imigrantes e Imigração Chinesa no Rio de Janeiro (1910-1990). *Leituras da HISTÓRIA,* no. 17 (fevereiro), 2009, pp.44-53.

Shoj, Rafael: Reinterpretação do Budismo Chinês e Coreano no Brasil, *Revista de Estudos da Religião,* 3, vol 4,2004, pp. 74-87.

Shoji, Rafael. Estratégias de adaptação do Budismo Chinês: Brasileiros e

Chineses na Fo Kuang Shan, in: Usarski, Frank (ed.): *O Budismo no Brasil.* São Paulo, 2002, pp. 125-150.

Shoji, Rafael: Continuum Religioso Nipo-Brasileiro: O caso do Budismo Carmico da Shingon. *Debates do NER* 7/9 (Jan/Jun) 2006: pp. 35-56.

Shoji, Rafael: *The Nativization o f East Asian Buddhism in Brazil,* PhD Thesis, University o f Hannover, 2004.

Simões, Maria: Psicologia budista no ambiente empresarial,

Entrevista: Segyu Choepel Rinpoche, *T&D, Desenvolvendo pessoais,* March 2000, pp.8-11.

Soares, Gabriela Bastos: *O biopoder na contemporaneidade: o espírito do corpo e a alternativa budista,* PhD-Thesis, Rio de Janeiro: Universidade do Rio de Janeiro 2004.

Sowell, Thomas: *Migrations and Cultures: A World View.* New York: Basic Books 1996.

Stark, Rodney: "Why Religious Movements Succeed or Fail: ARevised General Model," *Journal o f Contemporary Religion,* vol. 11, n 2,1966, pp. 133-146.

Stark, Rodney; Bainbridge, William Sims: "Of Churches, Sects and Cults: Preliminary Concepts for a Theory of Religious Movements," *Journal fo r the Scientific Study o f Religion:* 1979, pp.117-131.

Suzuki, Teiti: *The Japanese Immigrant in Brazil.* Narrative Part, Tokyo: University o f Tokyo Press 1969.

Usarski, Frank: "(Re)Making Tradition in an International Tibetan Buddhist Movement: A Lesson from Lama Gangchen and Lama Michel," in: Engler, Steven; Grieve, Gregory P. (eds.): *Historicizing "Tradition" in the Study o f Religion,* Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 2005, pp.345-355.

Usarski, Frank: "The Last Missionary to Leave the Temple Should Turn Off the Light" Sociological Remarks on the Decline o f Japanese "Immigrant" Buddhism in Brazil, *Japanese Journal o f Religious Studies* 35/1 (2008), pp.39-59.

Usarski, Frank: O momento da pesquisa sobre o budismo no Brasil: tendências e questões abertas, Debates do NER: 7, n°9 (Jan/Jun) 2006, pp.129-141.

Yang, Chung Yuan Alexander: "O Budismo entre os Chineses no Brasil," in: *China em Estudo:* vol. 2, n °2 ,1995, pp.49-57.

Zen in South America - An Interview with Augusto Alcalde Roshi by Vladimir Keremidschieff, Moon Mind Circle, Autumn 1992, online ftp://coombs.anu.edu.au/coombspapers/otherarchives/electronic-buddhist-archives/buddhism-zen/information/south-american-zen.txt.

SOUTH-EAST ASIA

INFLUENCE OF BUDDHISM IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA

by Bela Bhattacharya*

It is a challenging task to go in for presenting "Buddhism around the World". It is undoubtedly a daunting task to make an in-depth study of the whole world in modern time. I propose to confine my discussion on the "Influence of Buddhism in South East Asia" which are Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Indonesia, Singapore, Brunei, Malaysia, Philippines etc. Lord Buddha attained Enlightenment in the 6th Century B.C. under the Bodhi tree at Bodhgaya. From the time Buddhism is known as one of the most ancient religions and spread to every corner of Asia because as state religion and has been serving as the back bone in South East Asia. Emperor Asoka's contribution to Buddhism is unparalleled. In the third century Asoka achieved the goal successfully. He introduced, propagated and disseminated of the Dhamma of Buddha. It is no exaggeration to add that by virtue of his ceaseless efforts Buddhism reached distant corners of the globe and thus became a world religion. Buddhism ushered in a revolutionary transformation in the concept of the values and the way of life of mankind. Buddha emphasized on equality of man, on the doctrine of Kamma, i.e. man is the architect of his destiny, message of non-violence (*ahimsa*), pity for one who is suffering (*Karuna*), the state of peace and happiness (*Nibbana*).

*. Ex-University Professor of Pali University of Calcutta, West Bengal, India.

PROPAGATION OF BUDDHISM

Buddha's teaching is "One vision, one identity and one Community". When followed will do away with greed, hatred and delusion which is the offspring of economic growth and development. Politics and social chaos will disappear. Happiness and peace will then prevail amongst the Community.

In the early centuries, merchants travelled to South-east Asia. They not only established trading stations, the Indian merchants brought along with them religion and culture. Under their influence the Locals practised a mix of Buddhism and Hinduism. They also maintained their old beliefs and customs.

1. BUDDHISM IN MYANMAR [BURMA] (44 MILLION BUDDHISTS APPROX.)[1]

Emperor Asoka, sent monks to Thaton (*Burma*) to spread Buddha's teachings. Thaton was a trading station in southern Burma.

From the first century C.E., trading between Burma and India increased. The Indian traders brought along with them their religion beliefs. Many Buddhist missionaries also started coming in numbers. Buddhism was not only accepted by the people of Thaton but also spread.

Thaton became an important centre for Theravada Buddhism. To the people of northern Burma, in later centuries, Vajrayana Buddhism was introduced. The local people besides Buddhism also practised Hinduism along with their local folk beliefs.

King Anawratha, in mid eleventh Century, brought northern and southern Burma under his rule. The king believed in Buddhism. He was a Buddhist. He strongly supported Theravada Buddhism. He made it the national religion in Burma. The King brought in texts and relics from Sri Lanka. He constructed monasteries and stupas in the city of Pagan, the capital. Soon Pagan developed into a Buddhist cultural centre. Since there were no sacred texts in Pagan, Anawratha, on the advise of Shin Arahan, Thatons king Manohari- for a copy of the three Pitakas and some relics. Shin Arahan was

1. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Association_of_Southeast_Asian_National.

a Talaing monk of Thaton. He was noted for his learning in the Theravada School of Buddhism. Anawratha marched into Thaton and returned with thirty sets of the Tipitaka, some monks and king Manohari and his family.[2]

Pali Literary active in Burma started in right earnest with the arrival of Pali Tipitaka from the South of Burma. The Burmese monks studied all the books of the Tipitaka and wrote many commentaries both in Pali and Burmese. Burmese scholars in their eagerness to wealth of the Pali language, they raised their language by addition of large number of Pali words. They also mastered the Pali Grammer. This grammer was highly appreciated by the scholars of Ceylon. Pali became quite popular in Burma. It was not confined to the monasteries and temples but kings, ministers, princes and serving maids took keen interest in the study of Pali. They even used Pali in their conversations.[3]

Pali was also used on secular subjects like politics, Astrology, Medicine and Law. Pali culture had taken deep roots in Burma. After independence of Burma and the 2nd world war, Burma remained true to her traditional, Buddhist culture. It is clearly demonstrates what Pali culture and Theravada Buddhism has done for Burma.[4] Buddhist Pali culture and Burmese culture are synonymous terms. Buddhism has been an important factor in Burmese life.

Buddhism withstood successfully, every political upheaval. Buddhism steered Burma clear of catastrophes and cataclysms that threatened to engulf the country. Buddhism gave to Burma the most sublime faith. It replaced the primitive of worship and heathenism by the pure religion of Theravada Buddhism, which is based on the cult of universal love. The semi-barber elements the Shans, came under the humanising influence of the Pali culture. Racial jealousies, cultural rivalries were subjugated when they came under one banner i.e. Theravada Buddhism. The Buddhist Sangha has been an educating force. The Buddhist temples were a centre of learning. People gathered daily to pick up wisdom

2. Ahir, D.C. *Buddhism in South East Asia*, p. 74.
3. *Ibid*., p. 77.
4. *Ibid*., p. 79.

from the monks.[5]

2. BUDDHISM IN THAILAND (62 MILLION BUDDHISTS APPROX.)[6]

The first form of Buddhism introduced to Thailand was Theravada Buddhism by Theras -Sona and Uttara, under the instructions of Emperor Asoka. Nakon Pathom of Suvarnabhami was the first place where Buddhism was introduced. It came to Thailand in the 3rd century B.C.[7]

Mahayana Buddhist missionaries from Northern India spread gradually to Sumatra from the beginning of the 5th Century AD. From Sumatra Buddhism spread to Java and Cambodia.[8]

The Srivijaya Kingdom's capital was in Sumatra. It rose to power in 757 AD. A part of South Thailand came under the rule of the Srivijaya Kings. The Srivijaya dynasty, being Mahayanist, encouraged the propagation of Mahayana Buddhism. Even today there is evidence of Mahayana Buddhism in South Thailand. On the cause of this fact Mahayana Buddhism flourished for five centuries along with Theravada Buddhism.

In the 2nd half of the eleventh century A.D., Theravada Buddhism from Pagan, was introduced in North and NW part of Thailand when Thailand came under king Aniruddha, Burmese Buddhism had great influence over the country. In 1257 A.D., the Thais were able to establish their independent state at Sukhothai (*Sukhodaya*) in Northern Thailand.

Thailand was during their southward movement; the Thais came in contact with the Buddhism that was practised in Burma under the patron of King Aniruddha. In China, where the Thais came from, they were followers of Mahayana Buddhism.[9]

Buddhism, from Ceylon, forms an important part in Thailand. It is that form of Buddhism which remains dominant today.[10] At

5. *Ibid.*
6. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Association_of_Southeast_Asian_National.
7. Ahir, D.C. *Buddhism in South East Asia*, p. 81.
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Ibid.*

the 13th Century, Theravada Buddhism was supported by the Thai King. Buddhist monks were invited, by King Ramkham haeng, to the capital city of Sukothai to teach. He also sent across monks to Ceylon for further studies. He also began appointing a Sangha chief to supervise the administration of the monastic community. All the people in the kingdom became Buddhist.

Half a century later, King Luthai, a strong supporter of Buddhism initiated a tradition. He initiated the Thai-tradition of Buddhists becoming monks for at last three months.

In spite of the turmoil of war, Thailand went through, Buddhism remained unaffected. It continued to grow and enjoyed an uninterrupted support. The Thai Order is even influential today as in the past. But some reforms have been made since the turn of the present century. The importance is on Buddhist education. The monks are responsible for teaching of the religion. It is also their duty to provide secular education to the lay people.

Several monks are still teaching in the primary and secondary schools set up by Buddhists, throughout Thailand. There are also many who pursue higher studies at Buddhist Colleges and Universities. There are many monks, over the past few decades, gone overseas to spread the teachings of the Buddha. Thailand has made a contribution in spreading of Buddhism to other countries. There are two Buddhist universities, (1) Mahaculangkorn Raja Mahavidyalaya and (2) Mahamakut University in Thailand.

3. BUDDHISM IN CAMBODIA (14 MILLION BUDDHISTS APPROX.)[11]

Indian influence spread throughout Cambodia, by the end of the 4th Century. In the 5th-6th Century, the rulers practised Hinduism but supported the Buddhists who practised Mahayana Buddhism. In the 5th Century, the learned Buddhist monks were invited to China to translate Buddhist text from Indian languages to Chinese. In the 7th Century there were rulers who gave preference to Hinduism over Buddhism. It was in the 9th Century, the then rulers began giving importance to Buddhism again. Jayavarman VII (1181-1218): The then "Grand Monarch" of Cambodia, may be compared to Emperor

11. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Association_of_Southeast_Asian_National.

Asoka. He was benevolent and possessed noble qualities. He was a great king and the greatest personality of Cambodia.[12] Jayavarman VII was a dedicated Buddhist. His father was a Buddhist, from whom he received the faith of Buddhism. He was also influenced by his two queens who were ardent Buddhist.[13] During his reign, Mahayana Buddhism became the dominant religion. He built a new city called Angkor. A temple was built in the centre of the city, called Bayan. In the centre of the temple was built a huge tower with four human faces carved on it. The face portrays the king as the "Buddha King". The Burmese Monks, during Jayavarman reign began teaching the common people Theravada Buddhism. In the 14th Century, the Thais invaded Cambodia. This also contributed in the spreading of Theravada Buddhism. By the mid of the 14th Century, the people in Cambodia, accepted Buddhism. Apart from spreading Buddhism, the king built resthouses throughout, the kingdom. This was meant to provide shelter to piligrims. He also built several Buddhist temples and hospitals.[14] The noble sentiment of the Buddhist monarch (King Jayavarman VII) suffered from the maladies of his own. It is the grief of the public that makes a king sad. That is why he had a net-work of 102 hospitals. "With the help of the physicians the warriors versed in the science, the king destroyed the enemies of the kingdom." The name of King Jayavarman VII has been immortalised in the history of Cambodia. In the words of Osbert Sitwell, "he accomplised things in building, of which no man before or since has ever dreamed." It was due to the influence of Thailand and Ceylon that Cambodia (*Kambujadesa*) became a strong hold of Theravada Buddhism. Today it is the Theravada form of Buddhism which prevails in Cambodia today.[15] After independence, Cambodia made some progress is Buddhist education and text publications. But, owing to political unrest future of Buddhism in Cambodia is uncertain.

4. BUDDHISM IN LAOS (4.3 MILLION BUDDHISTS APPROX.)[16]

12. Sengupta, S. *Buddhism in South-East Asia*, p. 106.
13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*, p. 109.
15. *Ibid.*
16. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Association_of_Southeast_Asian_National.

The culture of the people of Laos and Buddhism is very closely interlinked. Buddhism is the way of life in Laos. Buddhism was introduced to Laos between the Late 13th or early 14th Century.[17]

King Fa Ngum, the first of the Lane Xang Kings, declared Buddhism as the state religion. This was after accepting the Pha Bang Buddha image from his father-in-law. He was a Khmer. In 1356, the king built a pagoda (Wat) to house the image of Buddha. The temple was built in Muang Sawa, the present town of Luang Prabang. Between 1547 and 1571, attempt was made by, King Sethathirath tried to make Vantiance a regional Buddhist study centre. It was in the late 17th century they began teaching Buddhism in schools. It was from that time since Theravada Buddhism has been the theme of Buddhism in Laos. Men of Laos, followers of Theravada Buddhism, becomes a monk for a short period. It is ideally, becoming a monk, done between schooling, starting a career or marriage. Youths, under 20, enter the Wat as a novice. The period of monkhood is usually three months. Many men become monks for life, ultimately to become scholars, teachers and practise healing. A good number of youths from the countryside, are making WATS their temporary homes. During their stay the youths assist in the maintenance of the WATS, as Temple boys. The government even after the revolution encourages of self-sustaining of the WATS vegetable gardens. There is no doubt that the WATS are building the Lao tradition of community, intrinsic to the culture of Laos. It may be mentioned that in the later period, the Thai Buddhist tradition also influence Buddhism in Laos. The structure of the Saigha, in Laos, followed that of Thailand. Monks from Laos also went over to Thailand to study. Today only the Lao Sangha is the only sect in Laos.

5. BUDDHISM IN VIETNAM (9 MILLION BUDDHISTS APPROX.)[18]

The population of Vietnam is about 25 million. It is estimated that there are about 15 million "cool or warm Buddhists".[19]

It was around the 189 A.D. year, Buddhism was introduced. It was probably Master Meou-Po, from You Techeou (China), anx-

17. *Ibid*.
18. *Ibid*.
19. Ahir, D.C. "*Buddhism in South-East Asia*", p. 120.

Taoist converted to Buddhism, who introduced Buddhism. It was China who influenced Buddhism, in the northern state of Vietnam. It was dominated by the Chinese empire. Monks during the early days were said to have come from China. Vietnam, from 544 A.D. to 602A.D., enjoyed a short period of independence. It was during this period, Buddhism was promoted, superficially. During the third Chinese domination (603-939) started a period of real progress. The Chinese Emperor, gave 20 stupas. These stupas housed the precise relics. At that moment there were about 300 monks.[20] In 939, the Ngo-quyen dynasty drove away the Chinese Governer and defeated the imperial army. The Ngo dynasty lasted for a period of 1,000 years. There were internal conflicts in the Ngo dynasty. It was Dinh-Bo-Linh who came out victorious. It was he who protected Buddhism. An era of prosperity began, which lasted until 1009.[21] Ngo-Chan-Luu, a monk, lived in the monastery of Phat-Da. He was invited to the court by the Emperor. He was a shed to explain "Dharma". Satisfied by his teachings, the Emperor, appointed him as the Head of the Buddhist Clergy in the year 946. A year later the Emperor promoted him to the dignity of Imperial Councillor. The Dinh dynasty was succeded by the first Le's (980-1009). It was a diplomatic mission was sent to China, to bring back the complete series of the sacred book on Dharma. In Vietnam there are three religions Taosi, Confucianism and Buddhism. Monks and devotees are dedicated to Buddhism or Taoism. The total population has no discremination. Even if they approach Taoist temples or perform their ancestrals cult, they yet belong to Buddhism. In the field of fine Arts they are influenced by the main ideas of Buddhism : Purity and Compassion. The reformist since 1920, have made a long way but is yet to reach its aim. The essence of Buddhism are willing to remain faithful to the Mahayanist tradition. In Vietnam, Buddhism gathers the most of adepts. It is prosperous in Central Vietnam as it was in North Vietnam at the end of 1954. In South Vietnam, numerically Buddhism is much less because of other creeds of Western or local origin. The faith in Dhamma is maintained within the Buddhist circles and with other religious systems. Buddhism, underwent

20. *Ibid.*, p. 121.
21. *Ibid.*

modernisation, at the beginning of the present century. National Buddhist organisations were set-up. Emphasis on education was given. But this progress was hindered due to the continuous war, which brought in Communist rule. It is hoped with the return of peace. Modern Buddhism will make tremendous progress.

6. BUDDHISM IN INDONESIA (1.6 MILLION BUDDHISTS APPROX.)[22]

The majority of Buddhists now practise in the Theravadin tradition. Two of the large monestries are located in North Jakarta (Sunter) and West Java (Pacet) Confucianism and Taosim. Followers from these two religions also call themselves Buddhists.

Buddhism is the 2nd oldest religion after Hinduism. Before these two religions people believed that nature had super normal power. These were worshipped along with stones. Tarumanegara in Western Java and Kutal in Western Barneo were based on Hinduism. Buddhism came to Indonesia a few hundred years after Hinduism. Buddhism reached its peak at the time of the Srivijaya's dynasty. This dynasty was the targets Buddhist kingdom in S.E. Asia-from the 7th century till the 14th Century. During that period many Buddhist colleges and monasteries were built. Famous Buddhist scholars Dharmapala and Sakya Kriti were tutor there. Another major Buddhist kingdom was the Mataram kingdom ruled by the Sailendra clan. This was during the 8th and 9th Century in Central Java. 1934, Venerable Narada Thera, from Sri Lanka, visited Indonesia to spread Dhamma in S.E. Asia. The then local Buddhists took the opportunity to spread Buddhism. A ceremony was held in front of Borobudur, on 10th March 1934, to plant a Bodhi tree. 1955, Buddhism started a comeback in Indonesia. Monk Ashin Jinarakkhita began journey Indonesia to spread the Dhamma. Theravada Buddhism started reviving since then by monks trained in Thailand. Although the Mahayana tradition is still well represented. Buddhism is one the five religions recognised by the government of Indonesia. The majority of the population follows Islam that is 87% of the population. Buddhism at the moment is followed by only 1% of the population i.e. 1.8 million. The percentage of Buddhists, in the Theravadin tradition, are higher in Jakarta, Riau, North

22. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Association_of_Southeast_Asian_National.

Sumatra and West Borneo. Two of the large Buddhist monasteries are located in North Jakarta (Sunter) and West Java. Acharya Dipankara Sri Gyan, who had become the head of Vikramsila University and propagated Buddhism in Tibet in the 11th Century A.D., had also gone to Sri Vijaya in his early life to study Buddhism. Guna-Varman propagating Buddhism in Java. Guna-Varman was the son of King Sanghanand and grandson of Haribhadra of Kashmir. He preferred to become a Bhikkhu than to be a King. At the age of 30, he reached Java via Sri Lanka (Ceylon). When the queen-mother came under his influence and embraced Buddhism, the King of Java also became a Buddhist. The fame of Guna-Varman reached China from Java. There are many Buddhist heritages in Indonesia. The monuments of importance are the 8th Century Borobudur mandala monument and Sewu temple in Central Java, Batajaya in West Java, Muaro Jambi, Muara Takus and Bahal Temple in Sumatra. Evidence suggests Borobudur was constructed in the 9th century and was abandoned by the 14th-century decline of Hindu kingdoms in Java and the Javanese conversion to Islam. Worldwide knowledge of its existence was sparked in 1814 by Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, then the British ruler of Java, who was advised of its location by native Indonesians. Borobudur has since been preserved through several restorations. The largest restoration project was undertaken between 1975 and 1982 by the Indonesian government and UNESCO, following which the monument was listed as a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**. Borobudur is still used for pilgrimage; once a year, Buddhists in Indonesia celebrate Vesak day at the monument, and Borobudur is Indonesia's single most visited tourist attraction. The Sailendra kings were great patrons of this form of Buddhism and erected monumental structure Borobudur and also Kalasam Mendant in Java. During the era of Kediri Singhasari and Majapahet empire Buddhism than identified as "Dharma ri Kasogatan" was recognized as one of the official religions along with others. It is noteworthy, majority of the Buddhists in Indonesia are of the Chinese Mahayana School. This Buddhism is mainly followed by the Chinese and some indegenous groups. A small minority of "Sasaks" called Bodha are found in the village of Bentak Gunung Rinjani a Lambok. They are untouched by Islamic influence. Buddhism secured a footing in Java on the arrival of the

prince of Kashmir, Gunavarman. In 414 AD the Buddhists were already present.[23] It was Gunavarman who left Kashmir to preach. Saddharma-the Gospel Truth. On his arrival at Java, the King's mother gave him a hearty welcome. It was she who first converted to Buddhism. Thereafter the king PO-to-Chia (*Vadhaka*) embraced the fault. After him becoming a Buddhist, his country was attacked. Under the advise of Gunavarman he fought back the enemy as according Buddhism: "It was the duty of everybody to punish the robbers." The enemy was repelled. The King Po-to-chia of Java was then more and more inclined towards the religion. His ministers implored him not to follow this course of action. The king obliged under the following condition.

1) Gunavarman should be respected and obeyed.

2) Living creatures should not be killed by any his subjects.

3) Wealth accumated in the Royal treasury should be distributed among the sick and poor.[24]

There is no direct evidence to determine the nature and kind of Buddhism that was introduced in Java. By the 7th Century A.D. Buddhism flourished all over Indonesia and Sumatra. It became a strong hold of the Buddhist faith.

7. BUDDHISM IN SINGAPORE (20,600 BUDDHISTS APPROX.)[25]

Singapore Island is situated off the southern extremity of the Malay Peninsula. The Straits of Johora connect the Island and the mainland. The Island of Singapore is 682.3 sq. km in area.

Singapore has shown the most impressive economic growth. The rate of economic growth in 1960-1970 was higher than those of South Korea Taiwan: Observes gave the title of the world's most successful economy. Economic success also brought contradictions in the political and social realms.[26] Account of the Island of Singapore was obtained from a Chinese explorer of the 3rd century A.C. Buddhism in Singapore became evident during the Buddhist

23. Sengupta, S. *Buddhism in South East Asia*, p. 122.
24. *Ibid*., p. 125.
25. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Association_of_Southeast_Asian_National.
26. XXXVI International Buddhist Conference, 2011, p. 59.

Sri Vijaya Empire from the 9th to 14th Centuries A.C. Adherents of Buddhism were mostly of the Chinese majority ethnic group. There were small groups of Sinhalese and Thai Buddhists as well. Mahayana Buddhism was the most prevalent form of Buddhism in Singapore. Many of the Chinese inhabitants mixed in Taoism and Confucianism to Buddhism. The younger generation blended Thai Buddhism amongst the young in Singapore. Theravada Buddhism has seen a potent growth in Singapore amidst influential Chinese Culture. Since Singapore is a nation of immigrants from Mainland China. Buddhism took the form of Chinese Mahayana perception. Therefore, Chinese Mahayana remained the majority of the Buddhist population in Singapore like Taiwan, Hongkong and Malayasia. However due to the rise of Thai Buddhism and Sinhalese Buddhism in Asia, which dominates on the oldest school of thought. Theravada Buddhism is a strong proliferating trend of to this form of Buddhism. Another school of Buddhism making inroads into Singapore was the Tibetan Budddhism. Zen Buddhism also gained its prominence in Singapore due to the tradition of Chinese, Mahayana Buddhism. Singapore Census on religion and ethnically on Buddhism showed a rapid growth in Buddhist population from 27% up to 31.2% and 42.5%. It was also noticed that there was an increase of interest in Buddhist Dhamma, practises and customs.[27] During the British rule period the Theravada School, Mahayana School and Tibetan Buddhism grew in Singapore. Monks from Sri Lanka, Thailand and other S.E. countries came to teach their form of "Dharma" to the Chinese in Singapore.[28] Further due to the English language during the British period information in English on Buddhism in three different were available media, English knowing Chinese joined Buddhist Circles. In the early 20th Century there was a large support by Chinese of English language. Buddhist Missions and Schools run by the Irish Buddhist U-Dhammaloka.[29] Buddhist Monasteries, Temples and Religious Circles, after independence in 1965, became highly organised. Singapore institutions also had a connection

27. *Ibid.*, p. 60.
28. *Ibid.*
29. *Ibid.*

with foreign religions organisations in China, India, Taiwan, Thailand, the UK, the USA and Sri Lanka. Several foreign Buddhist associations established branches in Singapore.

8. BUDDHISM IN BRUNEI (33,000 BUDDHISTS APPROX.)[30]

Along with Ancestor Worship, Taoism and Confucianism, Mahayana is the most popular form of Buddhism in Brunei. As per available statistics, today 14% of Bruneis population is Buddhists. After Islam, Buddhism is the 2nd largest religion of Brunei. Buddhism is practised by people who are of Chinese origin (in. Wikipedia, org.)

Prior to the official Instalment of Islam by the Sultan in the 15 Century Brunei was a place of Malay Hindus Buddhists. This report is from Chinese references to Pali (ancient Brunei, one of the earliest kings was known as Sang (Sanskrit name). It is believed Buddhism made its entry to Brunei through traders. Islam came in the same way. Today Mahayana Buddhism is the 2nd largest religion in Brunei: Although anyone can become a Buddhist. Males normally spend a lot of time about 3 months as a monk in a temple. Normally Buddhist must adhere to five rules throughout their life. The majority of Bruneis population of 3,22,000 is Malay. The Chinese community makes about 20% of the population. They also dominate the business scene. It is the Chinese who practise Buddhism.

9. BUDDHISM IN MALAYSIA [MALAY PENINSULA] (5.3 MILLION BUDDHISTS APPROX.)[31]

Chinese material indicate that Buddhism became popular by the 6th Century A.D. Specimen of Buddhist are showing the existence of Buddhism in Malay in the 2nd or 3rd century A.D.

Chinese sources show that king of P'an P'an sent envoys to the Chinese court in 527-530 to present a tooth of the Buddha a painted stupa. In the Chinese annals that in P'an P'an there were ten monasteries where a monk and a nun studied in

30. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Association_of_Southeast_Asian_National.
31. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Association_of_Southeast_Asian_National.

Buddhist scriptures.[32] In 530 A.D. Tan-Tan another state in Malaya despatched presents stupas and ivory images to the Chinese court. Chinese analysts say that there were many Buddhists in the kingdom of Ch'ip-tu. Buddhists were called Pi-chiu (*bhiksu*). Buddhism also flourished in Fo-lo-an in Malaya. Every year on the full moon of the 6th month was observed as Buddha's birthday. In Kedah (in the Western Coast) ruins of temples assigned to the 4th-5th Century A.D. were found. Mahayana is one of two main branches of Buddhism. In course of its history Mahayana Buddhism from India to S.E. Asia and neighbouring countries and Malaysia. Buddhism is the 2nd largest religion in Malaysia after Islam. Buddhism in Malaysia is mainly practised by the ethnic Malaysian Chinese. Buddhism was introduced as early as 200 B.C. Chinese sources indicate that about 30 small Indianized states rose and fell in the Malay Peninsula. Malay-Buddhism began when Indian traders and priests had brought with them Indian concepts of religion, governments and arts. For several centuries the people and the royal courts synthesised indigenous ideas including Hinduism and Mahayana Buddhism. The Malay Kedah Kingdom denounced Indian religion after the king of Chola attacked them. The king of Kedah Phra Ong Mahawangsa, then denounced Indian religion and converted to Islam in the 15th Century.

10. BUDDHISM IN PHILIPPINES (1.7 MILLION BUDDHISTS APPROX.)[33]

Buddhism is one of the religions in the Philippines. It is viewed as the teaching of Buddha. It is one of the minor religions.

Buddhist population is only around 2%. Several schools are present which teaches Buddhism. There are Mahayana and Vajrayana Buddhist temples as well Theravada followers, small organisations and meditation centres. Though no written record is available as when Buddhism first arrived. It is likely present in some form by the 9th Century C.E. Buddhism declined with the influx of Islam between 14th a 16th centuries along with missionaries with Catholic colonists. The persecution ended in Philippines ended when Spain

32. Sengupta, S. Buddhism in South East Asia, p. 117.

33. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Association_of_Southeast_Asian_National.

ceded the Philippines to the Americans after their defeat in 1898. It was then freedom of religion was granted. Buddhism, Vajrayana gained a foothold with the rise of the Indianised Srivijaya Empire centered in Sumatra in the 7th Century. The Spanish colonialism in the 16th century became a closed colony. Buddhist practises and festivals had to be converted and adopted to Catholicism. Buddhism seemed to have virtually disappeared during the 400 years of Spanish rule. It was post 1896 revolution against Spain and the coming of the American Colonial Period that Buddhist temples began to be built in 1920s-30s. Davao had a large number of Japanese and Ceber a large of Chinese had the largest Buddhist population in the Philippines Post World War-II. The Japanese, were expatriated to Japan. The Chinese and Fillipino group became the predominant Buddhist ethinic group. In 1960, refuges from Vietnam arrived. They then establised a temple in Palawar. At the same time Japanese Buddhist temples and organizations began to re-emarge such as Sokka Gakkai International. Today Buddhists account for 1%-3% of the Philippines population. Mahayana and Zen are present. Thervada Buddhism is confined to the nationals of Myanmar, Thailand and Sri Lanka, also amongst the people from Cambodia and Laos.

BUDDHISM AND THE MODERN NATION-STATE

Buddhism proved to be a crucial factor during the end of the colonial and the postcolonial periods, as Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam became modern nation-states. On the one hand, Buddhism contributed decisively to the development of the new nation-hood; on the other, it resisted in various ways changes forced upon traditional Buddhist thought and practice in various countries, spreading over ASEAN Regions. We shall first examine the Buddhist contributions to the national independence movements and to the maintenance of national identity and unity; second, we shall explore Buddhist resistance to pressures put on the tradition by the organization of the modern nation-state.

Historically, Buddhism played an important role in the definition of the classical Southeast Asian states. It was inevitable, therefore, that it would be a crucial factor in the redefinition of these states. In those cases for example, in which a country was dominated

by a colonial power, nationalist movements grew out of, or were identified with, a religious base or context. In addition to providing the inspiration for political independence movements, contributing to a political ideology with uniquely Buddhist features, and being the motivating force challenging political power structures, Southeast Asian Buddhism has been used to promote political unity within the boundaries of the nation-state. U Nu's hope that making Buddhism the state religion would promote national unity was naive; it did not take into account the contending factions within the Buddhist Sangha and the presence of sizable non-Buddhist minorities who feared they might be threatened by conversion, pressurisation from the Buddhist majority.

In Thailand the centralization of the Thai Sangha under King Chulalongkorn and his able sangharaja, Vajiranana, not only improved monastic discipline and education but also integrated the monastic order more fully into the nation-state. Chulalongkorn's successor, Vajiravudh (1910-1925), made loyalty to the nation synonymous with loyalty to Buddhism; in effect, he utilized Buddhism as an instrument to promote a spirit of nationalism. In particular, he glorified military virtues and identified nationalism with the support of Thai Buddhism. He founded the Wild Tigers Corps, resembling the British Territorial Army; the Tiger Cubs, a branch of the corps, was later assimilated into the Boy Scout movement. Both encouraged loyalty to nation, religion (i.e., Buddhism), and the king. Buddhism has continued to be an important tool in the government's policy to promote national unity. In 1962 the Buddhist Sangha Act further centralized the organization of the monastic order under the power of the secular state. In the same year the government Dhammadhuta programme and in 1965 the Dhammacarika programme. The former supported Buddhist monks abroad and those working in sensitive border areas, especially north-eastern region of the country, while the latter has focused on Buddhist missions among northern hill tribes. Buddhism, however, has not only functioned as a kind of "civil religion," contributing to the support of the new Southeast Asian nation-states in the postcolonial period. It has also resisted the kind of accommodation and change brought on by the new nationalism.

In some cases, this resistance has been generated by the desire to maintain traditional religious practices and more local autonomy; in others, it has come in the form of armed rebellion and messianic, millenarian movements. While the vast majority of the Buddhist Sangha in Thailand cooperated with the central goverment's attempts in the early twentieth century to standardize monastic organization, discipline and education, there were a few notable exceptions. Khraba Sawichai of the Chiangmai region of northern Thailand was one of them. He ran into problems with the Sangha hierarchy because he ordained monks and novices according to northern Thai custom although he had not been recognized as a preceptor by the national order. He also single-handedly raised vast sums of money to rebuild monasteries that had fallen into disrepair and to construct a road, using manual labour, to the famous Mahadhatu Temple on Doi Sutp Mountain, overlooking Chiangmai. Because of his success in these enterprises, miraculous powers were attributed to him. In 1919, however, he was ordered to report to Bangkok to answer charges of clerical disobedience and sedition, but high Thai officials, fearing the repercussions that punishment of khraba Sawichai might have, intervened on his behalf. Although eventually Sawichai submitted to the laws of the Thai national monastic order, Sangha officials tacitly agreed to permit the northern clergy to follow some of its traditional customs.

Other, more radical Buddhist responses to the emerging nation-state developed in various parts of Southeast Asia and usually centered on a charismatic leader who was sometimes identified as in incarrnation of the bodhisattva Maitreya. In Burma several rebellions in the early twentieth century aimed to overthrow British rule and to restore the fortunes of both Burmese kinship and Burmese Buddhism. One of these was led by Saya San, who had been a monk in the Tharrawaddy district in lower Burma but disrobed to work in a more directly political way to overthrow the British. Sava San's movement had a strongly traditional religious and royal aura, and much of his support came from political monks associated with nationalistic associations (wunthanu athins) that had formed in the 1920s. Sava San was "crowned" as "king" in a thoroughly traditional Burmese manner in a jungle capital on

October 28, 1930c. An armed group was trained and the rebellion launched toward the end of December. As the conflict spread through lower Burma and into the Shan States, the British army was called in to help police forces repress the rebellion. Only after eight months of fighting did the warfare end.

RECENT TRENDS

The chapter on Southeast Asian Buddhism's future within the context of the modern nation-state has yet to be closed. The disestablishment of the Sangha in Cambodia and Laos has shaken, but by no means rooted out, the tradition, even though Pol Pot's genocidal regime attempted such wholesale destruction in the aftermath of American withdrawal from the war in Indochina. Laos and Cambodia, however, have experienced a breakdown of the traditional religio-cultural synthesis. This is taking place more slowly in Thailand and even in Burma, which has been much more isolated from Western influences since the early 1960s. The political and economic contexts of Southeast Asian Buddhism, in short, have obviously affected the state of Buddhism in Southeast Asia. The trends that have emerged seem paradoxical, if not contradictory. We shall examine three sets or pairs: increasingly active lay leardership and the veneration of monks to whom supernatural powers are ascribed; a revival of meditation practice and an emphasis on active political and social involvement; rampant magical syncretic ritual practice and insistence on the purity of the authentic teaching.

Meditation has always been the sine qua non of Buddhist practice, but traditionally it was preserving of the forest-dwelling (*arannavasi*) or meditating (*vipassana dhura*) monk. In the modern period, meditation has been more practiced as part of the routines of ordinary Buddhist temples and more particularly, in meditation centers that either include or are specifically for lay practice. The lay meditation movement was especially strong in Burma under the leadership of such meditation masters as U Ba Khin and Ledi Sayadaw (1856-1923). Westerners have been particularly attracted to some of Southeast Asia's renowned meditation teachers, such as Acharn Cha of Wat Pa Pong in Ubon Ratchathani. Some meditating monks have also gained reputations not only for their method of meditation or for

holiness but for the attainment of extraordinary powers as well.

While meditation has become a lay as well as monastic practise in contemporary Southeast Asian Buddhism, this development has not precluded a movement to formulate a strong, activist social ethic. The Vietnamese Zen monk Thich Nhat Hanh attempted to work out a Buddhist solution to the military conflict in his country during the 1960s, and there has been a widespread interest in formulating a Buddhist theory of economic development that is critical of Western capitalism but not necessarily indebted to Marxism. Buddhists have also acted to solve particular social problems, such as drug addiction, and have spoken out strongly against the proliferation of nuclear arms. Southeast Asian Buddhists have also joined with members of other religious groups, both within their own countries as well as in international organizations, to work for such causes as world peace and basic civil rights for all peoples. Buddhist interpreters, such as the Thai monk Bhikkhu Buddhadasa, have referred to Buddhism as a practical system of personal and social morality.

CONCLUSION

Buddhism has a great vision of the eternal harmony of the world. This faith, with its message of compassion, spread far and wide and shaped the culture of a continent. This is a culture of peace and gentleness which continues, even in the midst of the materialistic world of today. From earliest times Buddhism, the influences of the faith reached Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Indonesia, Singapore, Brunei, Malaysia, Vietnam, The Philippines and other parts of South east Asia.

The teachings of the Buddha are exceedingly vast and very profound. In fact, over the past weeks, we have only managed to survey a few of the fundamental teachings of the Buddha and these too only superficially. Yet, I may feel that what I have covered is a lot, and I may feel that it is impossible to practise all that I have discussed. In fact, it is said that it is difficult even for a monk living in isolation to practise all of the fundamental teachings of the Buddha. No small wonder that it is difficult for laymen and women like ourselves who have many secular responsibilities. Nonetheless, if one succeeds in sincerely cultivating and practising even a few of the many teachings of the Buddha, then one will have succeeded

in making this life more meaningful. One will be certain that one will again in the future encounter circumstances favourable to the practice of the Dharma and to the eventual realization of liberation.

To sum up, Buddhism has made substantial religious and cultural development of all the countries of South East Asia. This has created ties of unity and kinship amongst the people of this region.

***

Bibliography

Myanmar

Adas, Michael. *The Burma Delta. Economic Development and Social Change on an Asian Rice Frontiers 1852-1941*, University of Wisconsin Press and London, 1974.

Aung-Thwin, Michael and Aung-Thwin, Maitri. *A History of Myanmar*: *Since Ancient Times Traditions and Transformations*, London, Reaktion Books, 2012.

Bapat, P.V. *2500 Years of Buddhism*, Publications Division Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Government of India, 1959.

Cady, John F.A. *History of Modern Burma*, Ithaca, New York, 1958.

Dittmer, Lowell. *Burma or Myanmar*: *The Struggle for National Identity*, New Jersey, World Scientific, 2010.

Fink, Christina. *Living Silence*: *Burma Under Military Rule*. Bangkok, White Lotus, 2001,

Ganesan, N. *Myanmar*: *State, Society and Ethnicity*, Hlaing, Kyaw Yin, Singapore Institute of South-East Asian Studies, 2007.

Horsey, Richard. *Ending Forced Labour in Myanmar*: *Engaging a Pariah Regime*, London, Routledge, 2011.

James, Helen. *Security and Sustainable Development in Myanmar*, London, Routledge, 2006.

Ling, Trevor. *Buddhism, Imperialism and War*, London, George Allen & Unwin, 1979.

Marshal, Andrew. *The Trouser People*: *A Story of Burma in the Shadow of the Empire*, Washington, Counterpoint, 2002.

Nu, U. (*The*) *Buddha*. University of Calcutta, Kolkata, 1961.

Ray, Nihar Ranjan. *An Introduction to the Theravada Buddhism in Burma*, Calcutta University, 1946.

ÞÞ. *Sanskrit Buddhism in Burma*, Calcutta University, 1936.

Roberts, Christopher. *Asean's Myanmar Crisis*: *Challenges to the*

Pursuit of a Security Community, Singapore Institute of South-East Asian Studies, 2010.

Smith, Donald E. *Religion and Politicts in Burma*. New Jersey, 1965.

Smith, Martin. *State of Strife*: *The Dynamics of Ethnic Conflict in Burma*, Washington DC, East-Western Center, Washington, 2007.

South, Ashley. *Ethnic Politics in Burma*: *States of Conflict*, Oxon Routledge, 2008

Taylor, Robert H. *The State in Myanmar*, London, Hurt and Company, 2009.

The Channha Saigayana Souvenir Album, Rangoon, Burma, Union Buddha Sasana Council Press, Yegu.

Wilson, Trevor. *Myanmar's Long Road to National Reconciliation*, Singapore Institute of South- East Asian Studies (ISEAS), 2006.

Woodman, Dorothy. *The Making of Burma*, London, 1962.

Wright, Ashley. *Opium and Empire in Southeast Asia*: *Regulating Consumption in British Burma*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

Thailand

Abuza, Zachary. *Conspirecy of Silence*: *The Insurgency in Southern Thailand*, Washigton United States of Peace Press, 2009.

Blachard, Wendell. *Thailand Its People, Its Society, Its Culture*, New Haven, 1958.

Kahn, Joel S. *South-East Asian Identities*: *Culture and the Politics of Representation in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand*, London, I.B. Tauris, 1998.

Mishra, Patitpaban. *The History of Thailand*, Westport Green Wood Press, 2010.

Misra, Neeru and Sahai, Sachchidanand. *Indo-Thai Historical and Cultural Linkages*, New Delhi, Manohar, 2007.

Williams, China. *Thailand*, Beales, Mark. Hong Kong Lonely Planet, 2009.

Cambodia

Chatterjee, Bijan Raj. *Indian Cultural Influence in Cambodia,* University of Calcutta, 1964.

Ghosh, Manomohan. *A History of Cambodia,* Kolkata, Calcutta Oriental Book Agency, 1968.

Majumdar, R.C. *The History of Kambuja-Desa*: *Modern Cambodia,* New Delhi, Cosmo Publications, 2010.

Laos

Askew, Marc. Logan, William S. *Vientiane*: *Transformations of a Lao landscape,* UK, Oxon, Routledge, 2007.

Smith, Bardwell L. *Religion and Legitimation of Power in Thailand Laos and Burma,* Chambersburg, Anima Books, 1978.

The Encyclopaedia Britanica, Vol.-7, 1903.

Walker, Andrew. *The Legend of the Golden Boat*: *Regulation, Trade and Traders in the Borderlands of Laos, Thailand, China and Burma,* Surrey Curzon, 1999.

Vietnam

Corfield, Justin. *The History of Vietnam,* Westport Greenwood Press, 2008.

Daum, Andreas W. and Gardner, Lloyd C. *America, the Vietnam War and the World*: *Comparative and International Perspectives,* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Gaiduk, Ilya V. *Confronting Vietnam*: *Soviet Policy Towards the Indo-China Conflict, 1954-1963,* Chicago, Stanford University Press, 2003,

Joes, Anthony James. *Why South Vietnam Fell,* New York, Lexington Books, 2014.

Katsiaficas, George. *Vietnam Documents*: *American and Vietnamese Views of the War,* New York, M.E. Sharpe, 1992.

Majumdar, R.C. *Champa, History and Culture of an Indian Colonial Kingdom in the Far-East 2nd-16th Century A.D.,* Delhi, Gian Publishing House, Saktinagar, 1977, reprint 1985.

Richard Allen. *A Short Introduction to the Hostory and Politics of South-East Asia,* London, Oxford University Press, 1970.

Sharma, Geetesh. *Traces of Indian Culture in Vietnam,* New Delhi, Banyan Tree Books, 2009.

Sharma, J.C. *Hindu Temples in Vietnam,* New Delhi, The Offsetters, Udaichand Marg, 1997.

Swami Sadananda and Mitra, Suhrid Kumar. *Champa,* Kolkata, 1938

Young, Marilyn B. and Buzzanco, Robert. *A Companion to the Vietnam War*. Malden, USA, Blackwell Publication, 2002.

Indonesia

Acharya, Amitabha. *Indonesia Matters Asia's Emerging Democratic Power,* World Scientific Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd., 2015.

Frost, Nocola. *Indonesia An Oxfan Country Profile,* 2002.

Hazra, K.L. *History of Therevada Buddhism in South-East Asia with Special reference to India and Ceylon,* New Delhi, Munshiram Monoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1982.

ÞÞ. *Indonesia Political History of Hindu and Buddhist Cultural Influences,* Vol-I and II, New Delhi, Decent Books, 2007.

Jha, Ganganath. *Indonesia*: *Society and Politics,* New Delhi, Shipra, 2003.

Jha, Goutam Kumar. *Kuswadi Son, India-Indonesia Legacy of Intimate Encounters,* New Delhi, Suryodaya Books, 2016.

Madison. *Religion and Nationalism in South-East Asia, Burma, Indonesia, The Philippines,* The University of Wiseon Press, 1963.

Singapore

Asean Economic Community Blueprint, Singapore Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS Publication), 2009 (Journal).

Chee Kiong, Tong. *Identity and Ethnic Relations in South-East Asia*: *Racializing Chineseness,* Singapore, Springer, 2010.

Eng, Lai Ah. *Religious Diversity in Singapore,* Singapore Institute of South-East Asian Studies (ISEAS), 2008.

Farrell, Brian P. *The Defence and Fall of Singapore 1940-1942*, Gloucestershire Tempus Publishing Limited, 2006.

Ravenhill, John (Ed.). *Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, The Philippines and Thailand*, Aldershot, Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 1995.

Singh, Daljit. *South-East Asian Affairs*, Singapore, ISEAS, 2011,

Southeast Asian Affairs 1999. Singapore, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1999 (Journal).

Teo, Peggy. Mehta, Kalyani. *Ageing in Singapore: Service Needs and the State*, Oxon, Routledge, 2006

Vohra, N.N. *Emerging Asia: Challenges for India and Singapore*, New Delhi, Manohar, 2003.

Brunei

Buswell, Robert E. *Encyclopadia of Buddhism*, U.S.A. Macmillan, 2003.

Singh, Nagendra Kumar. *International Encyclopaedia of Buddhism*. New Delhi, Anmol Publications Pvt. Ltd., 1996.

Malaysia

Bhattacharyya, Harihar. *Federralism in Asia India, Pakistan and Malaysia*. London, Routledge, 2110.

Bowie, Alasdair. Unger, Danny. *The Politics of Open Economics: Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1997,

Koh, Jaime. Ho, Stephanie. *Culture and Customs of Singapore and Malaysia*, Santa Barbara, ABC-CLIO, 2009,

Lahiri, Imankalyan. *Malaysia's Foreign Policy: Under Mathathir Mohammad*, Delhi, Academic Excellence, 2009.

Nesiah, Devanesan. *Discrimination with Reason: The Policy of Reservations in the United States, India and Malaysia*, Delhi, OUP, 1997.

Winstedt, Sir Richard. *Malaya and Its History*, Amazon Book, 1962.

Philippines

Beniter, Conasado. *History of the Philippines, Social, Political,* Boston, 1940.

Estioko, Leonardo. *History of Education*: *A Philipino Perspective,* Lagos Publications Inc., 1994.

Grunden, Gozel A. and Liverzey, Norman W. *The Philippines and United States,* University of Oklahoma Press, 1951.

Webliography

http://www.everyculture.com/sa-th/thailand.html

http://www.thaibuddhist.com/category/ordination

http://www.abuddhistlibrary.com

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/buddhist_chant

http://suvarnabhumiairport.com/en/festivals/431

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/kathina

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/culture_of_thailand

http://www.wikipedia.org

http://www.visitsingapore.org/religious_singpore

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/association_of_southeast_asian_national

htpp://factsanddetails.com/southeast_asia/laos

Visit asean@50goldencelebration2017

http://www.photius.com/countries/cambodia/society/cambodia_society_public_school_system

http://www.tourismcambodia.org/contents/festival.

www.slideshare.net / philippinesfoodandbeverage.

https://dirpu.govu.ph//ris//dps

THERAVADA BUDDHISM AND BUDDHISM IN SRI LANKA

by Walmoruwe Piyaratana*

Theravada Buddhism is the main form of Buddhism in Sri Lanka (by 70% of the population), Myanmar (Burma) (by 88% of the population), Thailand (by 90% of the population, 94% of the population), Cambodia (by 97% of the population) and Laos (by 67% of the population).[1] Deep rooted Theravada Buddhist practices can be seen in above countries. Due to time collapsed even there were some failures of Buddhism, still Theravada influence can be seen within the society. Aim of this chapter is to discuss about the influence of Theravada Buddhism on above countries' society. The discussion is made under the four topics, such as introduction of the Buddhism or Buddhist historical background, influence of the Buddhism on society, sangha administration and Theravada Buddhist education. Due to the limitation of time, Theravada Buddhism in those countries will discuss briefly with focusing only the main ideas.

2.1. Theravada Buddhism in Sri Lanka

Buddhist history of Sri Lanka goes back to the Pre-Mahainda

1. CIA Homepage, *The World Factbook*, Retrieved on 18 January, from https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/.

*. Asst. Prof. Dr., BA (Pāli, University of Peradeniya), MA (Sanskrit, Buddhist & Pali University, Colombo, Sri Lanka), MA (Buddhist Studies, Mahachulalalongkornrajavidyalaya University), Ph.D. (Buddhist Studies, Mahachulalalongkornrajavidyalaya University).

Faculty of Buddhism Department of Buddhist Studies, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University B.E. 2562, Bangkok, Thailand.

epoch. According to the chronicles Buddha had visited Sri Lanka three times.[2] The Buddha's first Sri Lankan visit took place is called Mahiyangana in 9th month after the enlightenment. According to chronicles *yakkas* (demons) were inhabited Mahiyanaga when the Buddha visited that place. There is no any evidence to make sure whether there were real *Yakkas* or group of people who had belief on demons. However the Buddha visited this place and preached the *dhamma*.

History of Nāgadīpa goes back to the pre-Buddhist Sri Lanka. At that time aborigines called *nāgas* inhabited in Nāgadīpa. They were known as *nāgas* as they worshiped and believed in *nāgas*, snakes. There were two *nāga* groups. Mahodara led one group, and Cūlodara led the other. Both were brothers. They were against each other for having farming lands and water. The Buddha came to know their conflict and decided to visit Nāgadīpa in order to make peace among them. King Kaḷyāṇatissa who reins in Kelaniya invited to the Buddha to visit his kingdom. The Buddha accepted his invitation and visited Kelaniya in 8th year after the enlightenment. That was Buddha's third Sri Lankan visit. King Kaḷyāṇatissa offered the throne made of gems to the Buddha. The Buddha sat on it and preached the *dhamma*. It is believed that the throne had been enshrined in Kālaniya cetiya (pagoda).

It is recorded in Mahāvaṃsa that the Buddha has visited several places in Sri Lanka. Sirīpāda, Divāguhā, Dīghavapi, Mutiyangana, Tissamahāvihāra are some of them. Tapassu and Bhalluka who offered honey and porridge to the Buddha built a pagoda enshrining hair relics given by the Buddha on their request at Tiriyaya[3] in Eastern province. Thus we can infer that the Buddhist influence in Sri Lanka goes back to the 6 century BCE.

2.2. Introduction of Theravada Buddhism

King Asoka made arrangements to introduce Buddhism officially to the neighboring countries of India at the end of the third Buddhist council. Nine Buddhist missionaries were dispatched.

2. Mhv.i. 1-84.

3. Kotmale Amaravamsa, Lakidiva Sellipi (Sin) Tiriyaya Inscription, (Colombo: M. D. Gunasena, 1969), p. x.

Buddhist missionaries headed by Ven. Mahinda, (Ittiya, Uttiya, Sambala, Bhaddasala, (these four Ven. were Arahantas), Novice Sumana and lay follower Bhanduka) son of king Asoka arrived to Sri Lanka on a Poson (June) full-moon day[4] in 236 BCE.[5] Then king Devanampiyatissa was the ruler in Sri Lanka. The king met the Buddhist missionaries at Mihintale in Anuradhapura. There had a discussion between the king and the Ven. Mahinda. Ven. Mahinda examined the king's knowledge to understand Buddha's words asking logical questions on Mango and relatives. Having understood the capability of king's understanding, Ven. Mahinda expounded the Cullahatthipadopama Sutta ("The shorter discourse on the simile of the elephant's footprints").[6] The king invited Ven. Mahinda to visit his palace that was at 'Mahameuna Uyana' in Anuradhapura. The next day, Ven. Mahinda and his companions visited the king's palace. The king welcomed Buddhist delegation officially. He requested them to preach the Buddha's words. Ven. Mahinda preached them Vimānavatthu and Petavatthu of Khuddaka-nikāya. One of the king's ministers named Ariṭṭha who was listening to the *dhamma* requested ordination and higher ordination at the end. Ven. Mahinda ordained him and gave the higher ordination. He was the first Sri Lankan to get ordination and higher ordination in Buddhist sangha.[7] Queen Anula requested Ven. Mahinda the ordination and higher ordination. Considering her request Ven. Mahind sent messengers to the king Asoka. King Asoka dispatched Nun Saṅghamitta, sister of Ven. Mahinda along with a sapling of the Bodhi tree to Sri Lanka.[8] The king warmly welcomed the Buddhist delegation headed by Nun Saṅghamitta. Nun Saṅghamitta gave ordination and higher ordination to Queen Anula, the first Sri Lankan *bhikkhunī*. The sapling of the Bodhi tree was planted in Mahameunauyana ceremonially.[9] Thus, steps had

4. Kotmale Amaravamsa Lakdiva Sellipi, Inscriptions of Mihitale, Inscription in Rassagala in Ampara, *Op. Cit.*

5. K. Sri. Dhammananda, *Sri Lanka's Contribution to Buddhism*, (Dehiwala: Buddhist Cultural Center, 1994), p. 24.

6. M.i.175.

7. Mhvs. xxvi. 10-12.

8. Mhvs.xix.50-58.

9. Mhvs.xix.60-61.

been taken to establish Buddhism immovably in Sri Lanka.

2.3. Influence of Buddhism in Society

Sinhalese Buddhist society is made up of five groups, i.e. *saṅgha* (monks), *veda* (doctors), *guru* (teaches), *govi* (farmers), and *kamkaru* (laborers). There is no any kind of discrimination among these persons. They respect each other and work for the wellbeing of the society. The Buddhist monks are respected as *kuladevata*'s (household Gods). They are the leaders in Sinhalese Buddhist society. Other professionals contribute their capacity to the wellbeing of society under the monk's leadership. This Buddhist society faces various religious and western threats today. Sri Lankan seeks the help of Buddhism from the birth to the death. As our chronological texts mention, king Kāvantissa offered food and other requisites to the monks on the day of prince Duṭṭhagāmini's conception.[10] On the naming ceremony of prince Duṭṭhagamini and the day of giving food to the prince, king Kāvantissa invited sangha and offered them alms. King Kāvantissa, made promise prince Duṭṭhagāmini on respecting to the eldest, felicitating the *saṅgha* and leading not a war against Tamils, daily.[11] King Duṭṭhagāmini did not have his meals without offering to the *saṅgha*. One day he had a chilly curry without offering to the *saṅgha*, unknowingly. The king regretted on the day he thought about it. He decided to build the Mirisaveti pagoda in Anuradhapura in order to correct himself. King Dutthagamini invited *saṅgha* to chant *parittas* when he was lying on his deathbed. The same religious practices had been followed by all the kings and peoples in ancient Sri Lanka. Sri Lankan follow the above mentioned religious practices even today. They give priority to Buddhist religious practices, i.e. paying respect to the Triple gems, chanting *parittas* when they start new household, economic, social, educational or political activities. Sinhalese Buddhists do not consume the new harvest until they offer its first part to the Buddha. Every family member pays respect to the Triple gem twice a day. There are small shrine rooms in every Sinhalese house. Having respected to the Triple gems, family

10. Mhvs.xix.74-84.
11. Mhvs.xxii.84-88.

members bow down according to their seniority. Buddhists gather to the temples on full moon (*uposatha*) and they observe Eight precepts. Some Buddhist observes Eight precepts twice a month on dark-moon day and full-moon day, respectively. Full moon Poyaday is declared as a national holiday. Villages are cooperative.

All Sinhalese Buddhist children are encouraged to gain a considerable knowledge in Buddhism. There are *dhamma* schools in every temple entirely maintained by Buddhist monks with the help of the ministry of *buddhasāsana*. Buddhism is a compulsory subject in school curriculum. There is temple centered social organizations, associations for laity including children also. Every village either younger or adults must become a member of all these societies.

The hospitality can be introduced as significant feature in Sinhalese society.[12] Visitors are respected as guests. They are welcomed by smiling that followed by a glass of water, cup of tea, or beetles, food and lodgings according to their arrivals. Buddhism and the *saṅgha* cannot be separate from the Sinhalese life. It is same as the bark of a tree. The British couldn't establish their governing body in Sri Lanka until broke this relationship between the Buddhism and the Sinhalese. Thus the church employed several ways to separate Buddhism and the Sinhalese people. We would like to quote Bishop Herber's idea about Buddhism and Sinhalese society.

> What though the spicy breezes
> Blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle,
> Where every prospect please,
> And only man is vile;
>
> In vain with lavish kindness
> The gift of God are strewn
> The heathen in his blindness
> Bow down to wood and stone.[13]

12. Robbert Knox, *An Historical Relation of the Island Ceylon* (Colombo: Tisara Prakasakayo, 1966).

13. K. Sri Dhammananda, Sri Lanka's Contribution to Buddhism, *Op. Cit.*, p. 13.

A Bishop even is reputed to have said that although they were not able to convert the whole the population of the country, they wouldn't allow the rest to remain as good Buddhist. From this statement one can very clearly understand the evil motive of the missionaries who tried to introduce their religion in the name of social advancement and foreign education. The brave Sinhalese did not surrender their noble religion, but continued to sacrifice their lives to protect it.[14]

2.4. Sangha Administration in Sri Lanka and Its Propagation

At present there are 3 main sects in Sri Lanka namely:

1. Siyam Nikāya
2. Amarapura Nikāya
3. Rāmañña Nikāya

The sect which received higher ordination from Thailand is called Siyama Nikāya and other two sects received higher ordination from Burma, therefore they are called Amarapura Nikāya nad Rāmañña Nikāya. Each sect has their own history of origin and development.

2.4.1. Siam Nikāya

Sri Vijaya Rajasinha (1739-1747 CE) did a tremendous amount of work to reestablish the monastic administration in Sri Lanka. With the instructions given by Ven. Saraṇaṅkara, the king send a groups of Sri Lankan delegations to Siam (Thailand) with the aid of the Dutch who gave a vessel for the voyage, to king Dhammika[15] of Siam requesting his assistance to re-establish the higher ordination in Sri Lanka.[16]

After studying the issues, king Dhammika has instructed to send a group of Siamese monks and laities to Sri Lanka in order to re-establish the higher Ordination. The delegations were headed by Phra Upāli of Wat Dhammarama in Ayutthaya. All the Siyam Nikāya monks could trace their immediate spiritual ancestry to just one

14. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

15. According to Siamese records, the name of the king who assisted to re-establish the higher ordination in Sri Lanka is king Boromakot of Ayutthaya.

16. 250th Anniversary of Syamavamsa in Sri Lanka, (Bangkok: MCU, 2003), p. 8.

person, the monk Upāli who led the Siamese mission to Ceylon in 1751. The Siyam Nikāya officially refers to itself as Syāmopāli Mahā Nikāya, meaning the great fraternity of Siam.

The revival of Buddhist *saṅgha* administration during the Kandyan period was mainly due to the efforts of Ven. Velivita Saranankara. After higher ordination (upasampadā) was established king Kirtisri Rajasinha issued a Katikāvata for the guidance of the lives of the monks in the Island.

2.4.2. Amarapura Nikāya

It was only towards the middle of the 19th century that controversies involving further issues in the background of a steadily weakening Kandyan establishment finally led and enabled some monks in the low country to reject the authority of the Mahā Nāyakas and organize a fraternity of their own. These situations led to the occurrence of other *nikāyas*.

"While this group of monks could well have been accommodated, albeit in a subordinate position, within the existing order, there was another group of monks in the low country monks of low caste social origins who were almost totally unacceptable to the establishment."[17]

The Amarapura fraternity had its origin in five different groups of (Ceylonese) monks who went to Burma and returned with higher ordination at different times during the first two decades of the nineteenth century.

2.4.3. Rāmañña Nikāya

The Karave, Salagama and Durave castes were the major non-Goygama castes to comprise the segment of the Amarapura Nikāya.

"Speaking of the Amarapura fraternity as a whole, it is worth noting that though its membership was drawn predominantly from these three castes, admission in to the fraternity was in no way limited to them exclusively."[18]

Founder of new *nikāya* was Ven. Ambagahavatte Saraṇaṅkara,

17. Kitsiri Malalgoda, p. 89.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 161.

who helped in matters relating to the actual organizations of the new *nikaya* by two other monks, Puvakdandave Paññānanda and Varapitiye Sumitta.

2.5. Theravada Buddhist Education in Sri Lanka

There is no evidence to prove well-organize educational system in Pre-Buddhist Sri Lanka. Ven. Arahant Mahinda established organized educational system with the help of king Devānampiyatissa. The first Buddhist educational institute that is known as Mahāvihāraya where the Visuddhimagga was compiled. Monks as well as laity attended to the classes and various subjects were taught there. According to the commentaries it had earned a good reputation in the Buddhist world. Sinhala was the medium of instruction in this institute but Pāli replaced it later on.[19] The Sinhalese commentaries on Tipiṭaka were compiled in this institution. Buddaghosa Mahā Thera, Ven. Upasens and Ven. Mahānama translated those Sinhalese commentaries into Pāli residing in this institute. Commentaries, poetry and chronological texts were compiled in three languages, i.e. Pāli, Sinhala and Sanskrit. Jetavana Pirivena and Abhayagiri Pirivena where the Vimuttimagga of Ven. Upatissa was compiled were other Buddhist Institutions in Anuradhapura. Mahāvihāra Bhikkhus hosted the fourth Theravada Buddhist council for writing down the Tipiṭaka on palms leaves at Matale Aluviharaya. The present world is indebted to Mahāvihāra due to their endeavor that had been taken to protect Buddha's words in its true form.

Polonnaruwa period was the golden epoch in Pāli Language and its Literature. There were eight Buddhist educational institutes in Polonnaruwa period, i.e. Galaturumula, Uttaramula, Mahanetpāmula, Vilgammula, Senarathmula, Dimbulagala. Eighteen subjects related to the Buddhism were taught in those institutions. Ven. Tipiṭakācariya Sāriputta, Ven. Tipiṭakāacariya Dhammapāla, Ven. Vyakarani Moggallāyana, Ven. Dimbulagala Kassapa and Ven. Medhankara were Pāli scholars in this period. The Kaccāyana Vyākaranaya and the Moggallāyana Vyākaranaya

19. Sadesa bhāsāya kavīhi sīhale – katampi vansaṃ jinadantadhātuyā niruttiyā māgadhikāya uddhiyā – karomi dīpankara vāsinampi, Dṭv.i. 10

were composed in this period. Pāli scholars compiled Ṭīkās (sub-commentaries) to Tipiṭaka. Pāli Meter texts (Vuttodaya and Subodhālaṅkāraya) were added to the Pāli literature. Polonnaruva can be understood as a new epoch in Pāli literature. Not only the Pāli literature but Sinhalese literature also flourished under the Buddhist influence in this period. Sinhalese classical literature, i.e. Amavatura, Butsarana, Muvadevda kava, Sasada kava, Jataka atuva getapadaya and Kusada kava suggests the Buddhist influence on Sinhalese literature.

2.5.1. Modern Monastic (Pirivena) Education in Sri Lanka

Sri Lankan government has set up separate education system for Buddhist, especially for monks. This system is called monastic education or Priviena education. There are about 20,000 students in those institutes; they are studying several subjects regarding Buddhism. It has been given priority to study Pāli canon.

Those Pirivenas (monastery schools) and Buddhist school play an important role in Sri Lankan educational curriculum introducing students to Buddhist environment. There are 500 forty Pirivenas[20] (Monastery Schools) for Buddhist Monks in present Sri Lanka. This monastic education system is divided into three categories as follow:

1. *Mūlika piriven* – which provides education in primary level for monks.
2. *Mahapiriven* – which provides education both primary and advance level for monks.
3. *Vidyāyatana pirivena* – which provides education in both monk and pay students in primary level and advance level.

These centers follow the syllabus that provided by ministry of education, *pirivena* section. All the subjects that teach in *mūlika* and *mahapirivena* are related to the Buddhism. Sri Lankan government pays much attention to the oriental language studies. It has established the Oriental Language Society to encourage Buddhist

20. Abayrathne Adhkari, Maha Sagaruvana ha sambhavya Adhyapanaya (sin), Ministry of Education, Introduction, 2000.

monks in learning Pāli, Sanskrit, Prākrit and Sinhalese languages. Dhamma schools are held almost all the temples in Sri Lanka that propagate lay students' education in Buddhism.

Vidyodaya was the first monastic educational center in Sri Lanka that was established by Hikkaduwe Sri Sumangala in 1873. Hīkkaduwe Sri Sumangala Thero was one of the well-known Pāli scholars in Sri Lanka. Dr. Rhys Davids who worked as a civil service officer in Sri Lanka learnt pāli from Ven. Sumangala thera. He was a son of Christian Minister. His main motive for studying pāli was to prove the weaknesses of Buddhism against Christianity. However, he himself admitted that the truth of Dhamma was so powerful that he accepted it full and even become a very important force to introduce it in England. He founded the Pāli Text Society for that purpose.[21] Anyhow this monastic education institute is been producing many Buddhist scholars even today.

Vidyalankaraya was the second monastic educational institute in Sri Lanka, which was established in 1875 by Ratmalane Dharmaloka Thera. This institute also plays very important role regarding Buddhist education. These tow institutes are the leading monastic education centers even today. Later on two universities were introduced as facilitated institutes of these two centers.

2.5.2. Universities in Buddhist Studies

There are three Buddhist Universities in Sri Lanka which are directly focused on Buddhist Studies, namely:

1. Buddhist and Pāli University of Sri Lanka.
2. Pāli and Buddhist University.
3. Buddhsrāvaka Bhiksu University of Anuradhapura.

Over 4000 monks are following Buddhist studies and other concern subject in these universities. **Buddhist and Pāli University** was established in 1981 by the Sri Lankan government as a separate center for higher study and research in Pāli and Buddhism. At beginning only Buddhist monks were admitted to BA programs.

21. K. Sri Dhammananda, *Sri Lanka's Contribution to Buddhism*, https://www.google.co.th/ srilanka's contribution to the Buddhismk+sri+dhammananda

With the request of Buddhist it has been provided some programs for laities. It is not matte monk or lay everyone has to study Buddhism as compulsory subject. University also provides MA, MPhil and PhD programs for both monks and laities.

Pāli and Buddhist University was established as facilitate Institute of Kelaniya University. It was established in 1972.

Buddhasravaka Bhikshu University of Anuradhapura was established during last decay by the government of Sri Lanka. It is only for Buddhist monks.

Other national universities such as University of Peradeniya, Kaleniya University, University of Ruhuna and University of Jayawardhanapura also have a department to provide Buddhist education. Eg: Peradeniya University itself has the Department of Pāli and Buddhist Studies. It has produced several Buddhist scholars, as Prof. G.P. Malalasekara, Prof. D.J. Kalupahana, Prof. K.N. Jayatilake and Prof.P.D. Premassiri etc.

University of Kelaniya and University of Jayawardhanapura were established in 1959 by turning Vidyalankara and Vidyodaya pirivenas into universities as a mark of recognition of their academic service. In the year of 1978 they were renamed as their present manner. It is sorry to mention here at present those universities mainly pay attention to provide the courses concerning lay students. Anyhow those universities also have separate department for Buddhist studies. There many foreign students are entering to those two universities to study Buddhism. Except universities there are two Buddhist Teacher training collages. Buddhist Studies in these institutes can be classified into following categories.

1. **Textual Studies**. Textual editions and translation has been a highly developed field in Sri Lanka. Many departments of Buddhist Studies are providing this subject.
2. **Buddhist Conceptual and Philosophical Studies**. Buddhist conceptual and philosophical analysis of Pāli Cannon can be considered a strong area in contemporary Sri Lankan Buddhist Studies. Analysis and exposition of the doctrine is an area in which a large number of Sri Lankan scholars

are engaged in. Buddhist philosophy of education, Political and Social Philosophy of Buddhism have become as attractive subjects in Buddhism.

3. **Historical and Sociological Studies**. These studies are highly developed field in Sri Lankan Buddhist studies and Buddhist research. Historical studies on Buddhism have a long history.

There are several societies devoted to Buddhist studies and research. They are; Oriental Studies Society, Buddhist (OSS), Buddhist Publication Society (BPS), Royal Asiatic Society (RAS), Buddhist Culture Center, Tulana Research Center and Ecumenical Institute for Study and Dialogues. The last one was established by Christian; even this institute has a division for Buddhist Studies. Those centers provide great assistant to propagate Buddhism and encourage Buddhist scholar in writing Buddhist books, articles etc.

***

Bibliography

Ariyavimala, K. *Buddhism*. Colombo: Samayawardhana, 1998.

Bhikkhu Bodhi (tr.). *Kindred Sayings of the Buddha*. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2000.

Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli, Bhikkhu Bodhi (trs.). *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha,* Kandy: BPS, 1988.

D. P. R. Samaranayaka (ed.). *Nikāyasaṅgraha*. Colombo: Gunasena Press, 1960.

G. P. Malalasekera. *Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names*. Online Edition. https://what-buddha-said.net/index.htm.

Geiger, Wilhelm. *The Mahāvaṃsa or the Great Chronicle of Ceylon*. New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 1986.

Geiger, Wilhelm. *Pāli Literature and Language*. New Delhi: Munishiram Manoharlal Publishers, 2004.

Hermann Oldernberg (ed.). *Dīpavaṃsa*. Oxford: PTS, 1979.

I. B. Horner (tr.). *The Book of the Discipline*. 6 Vols. Oxford: PTS, 1938-1966.

James Gray (ed.). *Buddhaghosuppatti*. New Delhi: Asian Educational Service, 1998.

John Strong. *The Relics of the Buddha*. India: Motilal Banarsidass Publisher, 2007.

Koswatte Ariyavimala. *The Buddhism* (sin). Maradana: Samayawardhana Publishers, 2010.

Maurice Walshe (tr.). *The Long Discourses of the Buddha*. Kandy: BPS, 1995.

N. A. Jayawikrama (ed.). *Samantapāsādikā Vinayaṭṭhakathā*. London: PTS, 1962.

N. Mutukumarana. *Guide to Study of Theravāda Buddhism*. Colombo: YMBA Publication, 2005.

Balangoda Dhammakusala Thero, *Mahāvaggapāli*, (Colombo: State

Printers, 2000).

Paul Williams. *Mahāyāna Buddhism: The Doctrinal Foundation*. London & New York: Routledge, 1989.

Sri Rahula, Attudave. *Aṭṭhakathā Sāhityaya and Aṭuvā Rasakathā*. Dehiwala: Buddhist Cultural Center, 2000.

Teripehe Somananda, Waradiwela Dewarakkhita, W.P. Senananayake, "Worng Interpreptation of Mayadunna" (in Singalis). *Academic Journal of Sri Lanka College*, Vol. II. 1962: 86.

Wilhelm Geiger (ed.). *Mahāvaṃsa*. Oxford: PTS, 1908.



Avukana Buddha Statue, Avukana



Brazen Palace in Anuradhapura and Suvannamali Cetiya



Buddha Statue at Mihintalawa Royal Temple



Buddha Statue at Minneriya Army Camp



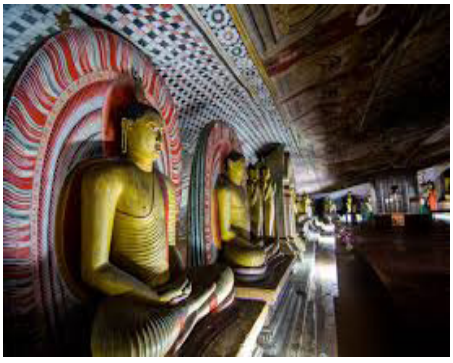
Buddhaghosa_s compilation of Visuddhimagga. Kelaniya Royal Temple



Dambulla Cave Temple 5



Dambulla Cave Temple 6



Dambulla Cave Temple



Dambulla Cave Temple 6 Elephant Wall at Anuradhapura



Galviharaya, Polonnaruwa



Golden Temple at Dambulla



Kelaniya Cetiya



Lentons for Vesak



MIhinatalawa Royal Temple



Mihintalawa Royal Temple



Pagoda, Mihintalawa Royal Temple



Sacred Bodhi Tree at Anuradhapura



Sacred Bodhi Tree at Anuradhapura



Suvannamali Cetiya at Anuradhapura



Vesak Torana



Thuparama Cetiya at Anuradhapura



Wall Decoration at Kelaniya

THE INCORPORATION AND CONVERSION OF LOCAL GODS AND HINDU DEITIES INTO BUDDHIST WORSHIP IN SRI LANKA

by Ven. Thich Dong Tam*

INTRODUCTION

According to *Mahāvamsa* and *Dipavamsa*, one of the important Ceylon[1] chronicles of Sri Lanka, venerable Mahinda, son of Asoka King in India, had introduced Buddhism to this island about the middle of the 3rd century B.C[2]. Before Buddhism came to Ceylon, there was a system of local beliefs and worship presented in the island. The worship *yakṣa* and *yakṣani*, worshipping trees and the spirit of kings or chiefs of aborigines accompanied with other gods, supernatural beings are references can be found in the chronicles. Among the local beliefs and cults, the worshiping of the *yakṣa* seemed to be more prevalent and popular than the others. After Buddhism was immigrated in Sri Lanka, by its flexibility, Buddhism by the time has converted some local gods and deities into Buddhism. Some popular *yakṣas* was venerated and elevated to the position of a *deva* after conversion to Buddhism. Especially, Hindu has influenced on medieval Sri Lanka Buddhist culture and some Hindu gods were incorporated into Buddhist worship. The incorporation and conversion of local gods and Hindu deities into Buddhist worship in Sri Lanka is considered as a typical acculturation of Buddhism in abroad in order to adapt the Buddha`s

*. Ph.D. Candidate, Kelaniya University, Sri Lanka.

1. Ceylon is national name of Sri Lanka under the Anuradhapura dynasty.

2. Dipavamsa, vii, 18,19; Mahāvamsa. V, 195.

teaching to the new circumstances on its transmission routes. The paper goes to introduce the system of local pre-Buddhist worship as well as the process of incorporation and conversion of local gods and Hindu deities into Buddhist worship in Sri Lanka by the time as an acculturation of Buddhism for Dhamma`s spreading to the new lands.



P1. Devanampiya Tissa king confronted Ven. Mahinda at Mihintale peak (painting in the Mahavihara Kelaniya temple)

THE SYSTEM OF FAITHS AND BELIEFS IN SRI LANKA AT THE PRE-BUDDHIST TIME

Sri Lanka on the 3rd century B.C named Ceylon with the

capital Anurādhapura was ruled by Devānampitiya-Tissa[3]. At that time, there was no evidences to show Ceylon has a national or state religious system. Some of forms of worship were prevalent can be named such as worship of *yakṣa* trees-worshipping, etc. However, worship of *yakṣa* was the most popular and prevalent cult at that time. According to Mahāvamsa and Dipavamsa, there are many parts of the chronicles depict the form of *yakṣa* worshipping such as *yakṣa* Kālavela, *yakṣa* Cittarāja. They were those popular *yakṣa* who were respected, worshiped and venerated. Besides the *yakṣas*, there were several others of less importance like Jutindara, Padukābhay, Kammara-deva, Jayasena, yakṣani[4] Pacchimarājini[5] etc. Yakṣa were considered as spirits of the dead existing in the imagination of the people. Besides the worship of yakṣa, the ancestor worship (the veneration of the spirits of the dead) was present parallel. According to Epigraphia Zeylanica Dictionary, ancestor worship is "one of the great branches of the religion of mankind. Its principles are not difficult to understand, for they plainly keep up the social relations of the living world. The dead ancestor not passed into a deity, simply goes on protecting his own family and receiving suit and service from them as of old"[6]. Like some countries in the Southeast Asia, this form of worship in Sri Lanka was venerated and practised up to modern times.

3. Natha Yogasundram, (2006), "A Comprehensive history of Sri Lanka from pre-history to tsunami", Colombo: Vijotha Yapa Pub., pages. 42-43.

4. Female yakṣas

5. Mhv.xxxvi, p.44 & Mhv.x, p.84.

6. ERE, Vol.I, p.425.



P2. Yakṣas *aborigine took refuge in the Buddha, wall-picture in Mahinyagana temple where is considered the location of the 1st visit of the Buddha to the island.*

Accompanied with worship of *yakṣas,* the chronicles Mahāvamsa and Dipavamsa mention about the other cults of trees-worshipping that were existent the pre-Buddhist time. Trees-worship is not a strange cult that is mentioned in some texts of Early Buddhism under name of *cetiyas*[7]. There were two kinds of trees that were worshiped and venerated as *banyan* tree and the *palmyrah* tree. *Banyan* tree is believed a sacred tree where the deities reside while the *palmyrah* tree is seemed to have been considered sacred in ancient India during the time of the Buddha that related to the Buddha`s teachings in the scriptures. The other tree that originated

7. M.I, p. 21; Dhp.xiv, p.10

from Vedic traditions like Asvattha[8], a holy fig tree was widely influenced to Sri Lanka worship is said that to has been inhabited by spirits[9]. Another less important cult in pre-Buddhist Ceylon, which not be categorised in religious beliefs was the cult of astrology.



P3. Banyan tree

8. According to Hindu mythology, ashvattha (Sanskrit: अश्वत्थ, IAST: aśvattha) (or Assattha) that is, the Sacred Fig, is a sacred tree for the Hindus and has been extensively mentioned in texts pertaining to Hinduism, mentioned as 'peepul' (Ficus religiosa) in Rig Veda mantra I.164.20 .

9. Mhv. iv, p. 37-40; Mhv. I, v. 33.



P4. Worship banyan tree near a Hindu temple in Sri Lanka

Along with the streaming of local faiths, Sinhalese chronicles like Mahāvamsa and Dipavamsa also mention about the presence of Hindu gods like Shiva[10] that transmitted from India had been worshipped in Sri Lanka. Chapter X of Mahāvamsa supplies some evidences to prove that the Hindu beliefs prevailed in Sri Lanka at that time. Under the dynasty of King Padukabhaya[11], there was a separate Hindu temple to Shiva was built for *brahmins*[12] uttered blessings and celebrated rituals and ceremonies.

10. Shiva is one of the principal deities of Hinduism. He is the Supreme Being within Shaivism, one of the major traditions within contemporary Hinduism.

11. Mhv, p.102-103.

12. A Brahmin is a member of the highest caste or varna in Hinduism. The Brahmins are the caste from which Hindu priests are drawn, and are responsible for teaching and maintaining sacred knowledge.



P5. Palmyrah tree

Although there were many forms of worship and beliefs that were present at Sri Lanka in the pre-Buddhist time but none of each has really become a systematically arranged powerful state religion officially. There was a small group of community who has embraced a number of cults and religious faiths through the landsides until

Buddhism has set up firmly and has become a state religion in the island.



P6. Palmyrah tree

THE CONVERSION OF PROVINCIAL GODS IN BUDDHISM

The context of introduction of Buddhism into Sri Lanka is attributed in both Sri Lanka chronicles Mahāvamsa and Dipavamsa. According to Dipavamsa, the chronicles of the island, Asoka`s son Mahinda who was said to be got enlightenment as an Arahant[13] came to Sri Lanka about the middle of the 3rd century B.C[14]. He is considered as the father of Sri Lanka Buddhist culture. In the chronicles, Ven. Mahinda came to the Island with four other monks with the purpose in bringing them was enough account of 4 monks to be a complete sangha to confer the *upasampadā*[15]. The first meeting of Ven. Mahinda and Devānampiya-Tissa happened on the root of Mihintale`s peak while the king and his companions were hunting deer on the full moon day of the month Jettha. Ven. Mahinda convinced the king and preached the *Culahatthipadopama-sutta*

13. Theravada Buddhism defines arhat (Sanskrit) or arahant (Pali) as "one who is worthy" or as a "perfected person" having attained nirvana. Other Buddhist traditions have used the term for people far advanced along the path of Enlightenment, but who may not have reached full Buddhahood.

14. Dpv.vii, pp. 18,19; Mhv.v, p.195

15. Make an ordaination ceremony to enroll a new monk into sangha successfully

(M.N. 27) to him. At the end of the sermon, the king expressed his wish to embrace the new faith and invited Ven. Mahinda and his companions to the capital Anuradhapura for offering meal and preaching Dhamma to the royal household. The king and his queen offered the royal pavilion of Mahāmegha Park to the residence of Ven. Mahinda and his companions. Later on, it had become the famous Mahāvihāra, the great Buddhist culture and learning centre of the Ceylon. Then, Buddhism had set a firm position and become a state religion from the day of its arrival into Sri Lanka. With the sponsoring of the kings through many alternative dynasties, Sri Lanka Buddhism had obtained a lot of great and glorious achievements in culture, architecture and Buddhist learning.

About the faiths and beliefs, there was a big change in the worship forms and rituals in Sri Lanka. An acculturation in Buddhist worshipping culture had happened gradually that transformed Sri Lanka Theravada Buddhism into a unique miscellaneous religious system with local elements and Hindu characteristics. Walpola Rahula, one of the famous Buddhist scholar of Sri Lanka assumes "the Sinhalese were converted to Buddhism but they desired to continue to venerate their friendly deities. However, being a Buddhists, they did not like to worship a non-Buddhist deities so they converted these deities to Buddhism and elevated them to a higher plane as in the case of Sumana"[16]. The case is considered as an acculturation in Buddhist culture that had happened to most of the other local gods. Most of the important deities who survived the introduction of Buddhism became Buddhist sooner or later such as: Yaksa Cittaraja and Kalavela, Pandukabhaya and Jutindara also had converted into Buddhism. The god Sumana of Samantakuta (Adam`s peak) was a pre-Buddhist local deity later on was elevated to the position of a deva after his conversion to Buddhism by the Buddha during the latter 1st visit to the Island. In some account shows the god Sumana was sought to be identified with the Mahayana Boddhisattva Samantabhadra[17]. The conversion

16. Walpola Rahula, History of Buddhism in Ceylon, Colombo:BCC, 1956, p. 41

17. S.Paranavitana, The God of Adam`s peak, an Artibus Asiae Supplementum, Section G. Vol.II, Pt.I, p.64.

of local beliefs into Buddhism also thanked to the merit of Ven. Mahinda at the time of introduction Buddhism to the island by giving a new interpretation to the age-old beliefs in ghosts and spirits[18]. Mahavamsa has an account of conversion that old beliefs in the worship of trees like *banyan* and *palmyrah* tree were replaced by the worship of the *Bo*-tree[19], which introduced into Sri Lanka by Sanghamitta Theri (daughter of Asoka King) who was established the nun Buddhist order on the invitation of King Devanampiya-Tissa after the introduction of Buddhism to the Island by his brother Ven. Mahinda[20].

THE INCORPORATION HINDU DEITIES INTO BUDDHIST WORSHIP IN SRI LANKA

Under the dynasty of King Sri Lanka Rajashingha I, the king converted to the Shiva religion, destroyed a number of Buddhist temples and killed many Buddhist monks, the cult of Shiva and Vishnu disappeared soon after the death of King Rajashingha I but the worship of Vishnu and Shiva were mingled with the temples rites and rituals. To explain this matter, some scholars assume this was that both the god Vishnu and the god Uppalavanna exhibited the same complexion. Instead of destroying cult of Vishnu, people found some reasonable similarities to incorporate Vishnu into Buddhism as a guardian god. Similarly, Hindus believed that the Buddha was an incarnation of the god Vishnu. On the contrary, the Buddhists believed Vishnu is the future Buddha[21].

18 Talawe Sangharatana Thero, Provincial Gods in Sri Lanka, Colombo: Bentota Buddhist Social Welfare Institution. ISBN: 978-955-95531-3-7, p.68

19. Bodhi tree (belongs to the fig family)

20. Ibid, Ch.xiii, pp. 124-126

21. Talawe Sangharatana Thero, ibid, p. 82



P7. Hindu gods are worshipped in Buddhist temple in Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka Buddhism under the Tamil ruler form India has been invaded and disrupted by the assimilating policy. The ruler had diversified religious beliefs by handing-over Hindu beliefs to Buddhist communities in order to decrease strengthen of Buddhism. Buddhists did not agree Hindu faith as they were because they had converted to the Buddhist faith. By the time, Buddhists were either made friendly towards Buddhism or Hinduism. The Hindu gods gradually had become guardians of Buddhism. Dharmadsa says there are some clear evidence of this fact: gods like Sakka, Brahma, Yama, Varuna, Vessavana, Vishnu mahesvara, Ganesh and Skandha kumara approached the Budhda and paid their homage to him. Gods like Ishvara, Ganesha and Skandha originated from South India to Sri Lanka were worshipped as Buddhist gods, Hindu gods were worshipped together with the Buddha[22]. Some temples in Sri Lanka remain the pictures depict as how Hindu gods venerate the Buddha like the temple of Gadaladeniya and Lankatilaka[23]. Under

22. Dharmadsa, op.cit.p.18
23. M.B. Ariyapala, Society Mediaval Ceylon, p.102

the King Buvanakabahu IV, some Hindu priests (*Cholabrahmin*) were invited to perform Hindu rites in Sri Lanka Buddhist temples. The other reason for Hindu gods were worshipped in Sri Lanka Buddhist temples come from the unware of Buddha`s teaching of some rural people living in the remote areas began to worship Hindu gods.



P8. In one offering ceremony to Hindu gods in the Buddhist temple

Although some clergy scholars wrote many books against the practices of worshipping Hindu gods in Buddhist temples like Vidagama Thero but the faith in the Hindu gods was dramatically implanted and rooted in the minds of common people at the period up to now. Nowadays, it`s easy to see a Hindu god shrine altars were located and venerated in the corner of Sri Lanka Buddhist temples and the Hindu gods were incorporated into Buddhism as the guardian deities that can satisfy and make fulfil the wishes of lay Buddhists praying for wealth, health and luckiness. The incorporation of Hindu gods into Buddhism is a long complicated streaming that had reached the climax from the time of introduction of Buddhism to Portuguese colonial period.

CONCLUSION

Buddhism, on the path of propagating, is a religion with high flexibility in acculturation as well as adaption towards new circumstances. The development of Mahayana Buddhism is a typical illustration of the excellent capacity of Buddhism towards fitting with the new circumstance as well. It is considered that the acculturation in Buddhism is a strong process, which had happened through many centuries from the early Buddhism. When Buddhism has immigrated and introduced to a new country, firstly it would look for the similarities of provincial beliefs and faiths or prevalent philosophies and then depending on the local foundations that mixed skilfully the core Buddhist`s teachings to conquer the local faiths and populace counting. Before Buddhism was introduced to Sri Lanka by Ven. Mahinda, Buddhist faiths and other local faiths were present at Sri Lanka earlier. Later on, Buddhism has converted and incorporated the gods and deities into Buddhism. It is called an acculturation in Buddhism. The conversion of provincial gods and the incorporation Hindu deities into Buddhism in Sri Lanka shows a strong acculturating power of Buddhism towards other religions. It is also a clear and typical example for the acculturating in Buddhist culture.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary sources:

1. *Mahāvamsa*. (1912). *The great chronicles of Ceylon*. Wilhelm Geiger translated form Pali. Colombo: BCC. ISBN: 955-8540-83-8
2. *Dipavamsa. (2006). An Ancient Buddhist Historical record.* New Delhi: Asian Educational Services. ISBN: 81-206-0217-X

Secondary sources:

3. Ahangama, Dhammarama. (2005). *Gods and their origin in Sri Lanka: the Buddhist and the concept of divinity.* CA: Pasadena. 589626
4. C. G. Uragoda. (2000). *Traditions of Sri Lanka: a selection with a scientific background*. Ratmalana: Vishva Lekha. ISBN: 955-96843-0-2
5. De Silva, L.M. (2005). *A history of Sri Lanka*. Colombo: Vijitha Yapa Publications. ISBN: 978-955-8095-92-8
6. G. C. Mendis. (1996). *The Pali chronicles of Sri Lanka*. Colombo: Karinaratne & Sons Ltd. ISBN: 955-9098-27-6
7. Gombrich, R. & Obeyesekere. (1988), *Buddhism transformed: religious change in Sri Lanka.* Princetion: Princetion University Press.
8. H. A. J, Hulugalle. (1965). *Ceylon of the early travellers*. Colombo: Arhuna Hulugalle Dictionaries. ISBN: 955-

8035-07-6

9. H. Parker. (1909). *Ancient Ceylon*. New Delhi: Asian Educational Services. ISBN: 81-206-0208-0
10. Hold John Clifford. (2011). *The Sri Lanka reader: History, Culture, and Politics*. Durham and London: Duke University Press. ISBN: 978-0-8223-4982-2
11. Hold John Clifford. (2006). *Hindu influences on medieval Sri Lanka Buddhist culture.* (In: Buddhism, conflict and violence in modern Sri Lanka*)*. Ed London: Routledge.
12. J. B. Disanayaka. (2007*). Lanka: the land of Kings*. Colombo: Sumitha Publishers. ISBN: 978-955-1146-61-0
13. P. Arunachlam. (2009). *Sketches of Ceylon history*. Colombo: M.D. Guna & Co.LTD. ISBN: 955-21-1255-9
14. Malhotra, Achal. (2006). *Prehistoric, Mythological and Legendary Links Sri Lanka-India*. Delhi: B. R. Publishing Corporation. ISBN: 81-7646-577-1
15. Rahula, Walpola. (1956). *History of Buddhism in Ceylon*. Colombo: BCC Pub. ISBN: 978-955-663-433-4.
16. P. Raven-Hart. (2005). *Ceylon history in stone*. Malawana: A Stamford Lake Publication. ISBN: 955-1131-38-X
17. Talawe Sangharatana, Thero. (2008). *Provincial gods in Sri Lanka*. Colombo: Bentota Buddhist Social Welfare Institution. ISBN: 978-955-95531-3-7
18. S. Pathmanathan. (2009). *Hindu temples of Sri Lanka*. Colombo: Kumaran Book House. ISBN: 955-9429-91-4
19. W. Bunce Fredrick. (1935). *An Encyclopaedia of Buddhist Deities, Demigods, Godlings, Saints and Demons with special*

focus on Iconographic Attributes. Volume 2. New Delhi: D.K. Printworld (P) Ltd. ISBN: 81-246-0019-8

20. Yogasundram, Nath. (2nd edit. 2008). *A Comprehensive history of Sri Lanka from prehistory to Tsunami*. Colombo: Vijjitha Yapa Publications. ISBN: 978-955-665-002-0

THAILAND

BUDDHISM IN THAILAND ITS PAST AND ITS PRESENT[1]

Karuna Kusalasaya

People all over the world who are interested in Buddhism and keep in touch with its news and activities must have heard of the Buddha Jayanti celebrations held a few years ago in all Buddhist countries, including India and Japan. It was in 1957 or, according to the reckoning of some Buddhist countries, in 1956, that Buddhism, as founded by Gotama the Buddha, had completed its 2,500th year of existence. The Buddhist tradition, especially of the Theravada or Southern School such as now prevails in Burma, Ceylon, Cambodia, Laos and Thailand, has it that on the completion of 2,500 years from its foundation, Buddhism would undergo a great revival, resulting in its all-round progress, in both the fields of study and practice. Buddhists throughout the world, therefore, commemorated the occasion in 1956-57 by various kinds of activities such as meetings, symposia, exhibitions and the publication of Buddhist texts and literature.

As to whether or not the tradition mentioned above has any truth behind it, the future alone will testify. However, judging from

1. ©2005 Buddhist Publication Society. *The Wheel* Publication No. 85 (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 2005). First edition 1965; revised 2005. Transcribed from a file provided by the BPS, and with the help of a volunteer. Minor revisions were made in accordance with the ATI style sheet. Pali diacritics have been omitted. Last revised for Access to Insight on 30 November 2013. Reprinted from: http://www.accesstoinsight.org/lib/authors/kusalasaya/wheel085.html.

news received from all corners of the globe, it is no exaggeration to say that mankind is taking an ever-increasing interest in Buddhism. As a matter of fact, since the end of the Second World War interest in Buddhism as evinced by people in Europe, America, and Australia has reached a scale unheard of before. Any casual perusal of journals on Buddhism in any of these continents will convince the readers of this statement. It is a matter worth noticing that after the end of the First World War also, Buddhism made great headway in Europe and elsewhere. This phenomenon can perhaps be best explained by the fact that mankind's spiritual thirst is more sharpened by calamities like war, and that in times of distress mankind realizes Truth better.

THE LAND OF YELLOW ROBES

Thailand is perhaps the only country in the world where the king is constitutionally stipulated to be a Buddhist and the upholder of the Faith. For centuries Buddhism has established itself in Thailand and has enriched the lives of the Thais in all their aspects. Indeed, without Buddhism, Thailand would not be what it is today. Owing to the tremendous influence Buddhism exerts on the lives of its people, Thailand is called by many foreigners "The Land of Yellow Robes," for yellow robes are the garments of Buddhist monks. In view of the increasing interest the world is taking in Buddhism and in view of the fact that Thailand is one of the countries where Buddhism still exists as a living force it will not, perhaps, be out of place to know something of the story of how this great faith reached that country.

BUDDHISM IN THAILAND: ITS PAST

Different opinions exist about when, exactly, Buddhism reached that part of the world now officially known as Thailand. Some scholars say that Buddhism was introduced to Thailand during the reign of Asoka, the great Indian emperor who sent Buddhist missionaries to various parts of the then known world. Others are of the view that Thailand received Buddhism much later. Judging from archaeological finds and other historical evidence, however, it is safe to say that Buddhism first reached Thailand when the country was inhabited by a racial stock of people known as the Mon-Khmer who then had their capital, Dvaravati, at a city now known as Nakon Pathom

(Sanskrit: Nagara Prathama), about 50 kilometers to the west of Bangkok. The great pagoda at Nakon Pathom, Phra Pathom Chedi (Prathama cetiya), and other historical findings in other parts of the country testify to this fact as well as to the fact that Buddhism, in its varied forms, reached Thailand at four different periods, namely:

Theravada or Southern Buddhism

Mahayana or Northern Buddhism

Burma (Pagan) Buddhism

Ceylon (Lankavamsa) Buddhism

We shall now proceed to study each of these periods in detail.

I. Theravada or Southern Buddhism

That the first form of Buddhism introduced to Thailand was that of Theravada (The Doctrine of the Elders) School is proved by various archaeological remains unearthed in the excavations at Nakon Pathom, such as the Dharma Chakra (Wheel of Law), the Buddha footprints and seats, and the inscriptions in the Pali language, all of which are in rocks. Such objects of Buddhistic veneration existed in India before the introduction of the Buddha image, which appeared later as a result of Greek influence. Buddhism, therefore, must have reached Thailand during the 3rd century B.C., and it must have been more or less the same form of Buddhism as was propagated by the great Buddhist Emperor Asoka. This form of Buddhism was known as Theravada or Hinayana (The Lower Vehicle) in contradistinction to the term Mahayana (The Higher Vehicle); the two schools having sprung up soon after the passing away of the Buddha. When worship of the Buddha image became popular in India, it also spread to other countries where Buddhism had already been introduced. This is borne out by the fact that many Buddha images, especially those of the Gupta style, had been found in the ruins of Nakon Pathom and the neighboring cities. Judging from the style of the Buddha images found, it can also be assumed that the early Buddhist missionaries to Thailand went from Magadha (in Bihar state, India).

To support the view that the first form of Buddhism introduced to Thailand was that of the Theravada School as propagated by Emperor

Asoka, we have evidence from the Mahavamsa, the ancient chronicle of Ceylon. In one of its passages dealing with the propagation of the Dhamma, the Mahavamsa records that Asoka sent missionaries headed by Buddhist elders to as many as nine territories. One of these territories was known as Suvarnabhumi where two Theras (elder monks), Sona and Uttara, were said to have proceeded.

Now opinions differ as to where exactly this land of Suvarnabhumi is. Thai scholars express the opinion that it is in Thailand and that its capital was at Nakon Pathom, while scholars of Burma say that Suvarnabhumi is in Burma, the capital being at Thaton, a Mon (Peguan) town in eastern Burma near the Gulf of Martaban. Still other scholars of Laos and Cambodia claim that the territory of Suvarnabhumi is in their lands. Historical records in this connection being meager as they are, it would perhaps be of no avail to argue as to the exact demarcation of Suvarnabhumi. Taking all points into consideration, one thing, however, seems clear beyond dispute. That is Suvarnabhumi was a term broadly used in ancient times to denote that part of Southeast Asia which now includes Southern Burma, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Malaya. The term Suvarnabhumi is a combination of the words *suvarna* and *bhumi*. Both are Sanskrit words; the former means gold and the latter stands for land. Suvarnabhumi therefore literally means Golden Land or Land of Gold. Keeping in view the abundance of nature in that part of Asia just referred to, the term seems but appropriate.

The reason why scholars of Thailand express the view that the capital of Suvarnabhumi was at Nakon Pathom was because of the archaeological finds unearthed in the area surrounding that town. Nowhere in any of the countries mentioned above, not even at Thaton in Burma, could one find such a large and varied number of ancient relics as were found at Nakon Pathom. By age and style these archaeological objects belong to the times of Emperor Asoka and the later Guptas. Even the Great Stupa (Phra Pathom Chedi) at Nakon Pathom itself is basically identical with the famous Sañchi Stupa in India, built by Asoka, especially if one were to remove the *shikhara* or upper portion. Many Thai archaeologists are of the opinion that the shikhara was a later addition to the pagoda, a result, so to say, of the blending of the Thai aesthetic sense with Indian

architectural art. Moreover, the name Pathom Chedi (Pali: Pathama Cetiya) means "First Pagoda" which, in all probability, signifies that it was the first pagoda built in Suvarnabhumi. This would easily fit in with the record of the Mahavamsa — that Theras Sona and Uttara went and established Buddhism in the territory of Suvarnabhumi at the injunction of Emperor Asoka.[2] Taking cognizance of the fact that Asoka reigned from 269 to 237 B.C., we can reasonably conclude that Buddhism first spread to Thailand during the 3rd century B.C. It is interesting to note in this connection that the history of the penetration of Indian culture to Southeast Asia also started more or less during the same period.[3]

II. MAHAYANA OR NORTHERN BUDDHISM

With the growth of Mahayana Buddhism in India, especially during the reign of King Kanishka who ruled over Northern India during the second half of the first century A.D., the sect also spread to the neighboring countries, such as Sumatra, Java, and Kambuja (Cambodia). It is probable that Mahayana Buddhism was introduced to Burma, Pegu (Lower Burma) and Dvaravati (now Nakon Pathom in Western Thailand) from Magadha (in Bihar, India) at the same time as it went to the Malay Archipelago. But probably it did not have any stronghold there at that time; hence no spectacular trace was left of it.

Starting from the beginning of the fifth century A.D. Mahayana Buddhist missionaries from Kashmir in Northern India began to go to Sumatra in succession. From Sumatra the faith spread to Java and Cambodia. By about 757 A.D. (Buddhist Era: 1300) the Srivijaya king with his capital in Sumatra rose in power and his empire spread throughout the Malay Peninsula and Archipelago. Part of South Thailand (from Surasthani downwards) came under the rule of the Srivijaya king. Being Mahayanists, the rulers of Srivijaya gave much encouragement and support to the propagation of Mahayana Buddhism. In South Thailand today we have much evidence to substantiate that Mahayana Buddhism was once prevalent there. This

2. The History of Buddhist Thought, by E.J. Thomas.

3. The Discovery of India, by Jawaharlal Nehru, Chapter V (XVI).

evidence is in the form of stupas or chetiyas and images, including votive tablets of the Buddhas and Bodhisattas (Phra Phim), which were found in large number, all of the same type as those discovered in Java and Sumatra. The chetiyas in Chaiya (Jaya) and Nakon Sri Thammarath (Nagara Sri Dharmaraja), both in South Thailand, clearly indicate Mahayana influence.

From 1002 to 1182 A.D. kings belonging to the Suryavarman dynasty ruled supreme in Cambodia. Their empire extended over the whole of present-day Thailand. Being adherents of Mahayana Buddhism with a strong mixture of Brahmanism, the Suryavarman rulers did much to propagate and establish the tenets of the Northern School. There is an interesting stone inscription, now preserved in the National Museum at Bangkok, which tells us that in about 1017 A.D. (B.E. 1550) there ruled in Lopburi, in central Thailand and once a capital city, a king from Nakon Sri Thammarath who traced his ancestry to Srivijaya rulers. The king had a son who later became the ruler of Kambuja (Cambodia) and who, more or less, kept Thailand under the suzerainty of Cambodia for a long time. During this period there was much amalgamation of the two countries' religions and cultures. The stone inscription under consideration probably refers to one of the Suryavarman kings who had blood relationship with the Srivijaya rulers.

From the inscription just referred to we also learn that at that period the form of Buddhism prevalent in Lopburi was that of Theravada, and that Mahayana Buddhism, already established in Cambodia, became popularized in Thailand only after Thailand had come under the sway of Cambodia. There are no indications, however, that the Mahayana School superseded the Theravada in any way. This was due to the fact that Theravada Buddhism was already on a firm basis in Thailand when the Mahayana School was introduced there. That there were monks of both schools, Theravada and Mahayana, in Lopburi during those days, is indicated in a stone inscription in the Cambodian language, found in a Brahmanic Temple within the vicinity of Lopburi city itself.

Much of the Brahmanic culture which survives in Thailand till today could be traced to its origin from Cambodia during this period. Many of the Cambodian kings themselves were zealous adher-

ents of Brahmanism and its ways of life. This period, therefore, can be termed Mahayana Period. Sanskrit, the sacred language of the Hindus, took its root deep in Thailand during these times.

III. Burma (Pagan) Buddhism

In 1057 A.D. King Anuruddha (Anawratha) became powerful in the whole of Burma, having his capital at Pagan (Central Burma). Anuruddha extended his kingdom right up to Thailand, especially the Northern and Central parts, covering areas now known as Chiengmai, Lopburi, and Nakon Pathom. Being a Theravada Buddhist, Anuruddha ardently supported the cause of Theravada which Burma, like Thailand, at first received directly from India through missionaries sent by Emperor Asoka. However, at the time under consideration, Buddhism in India was already in a state of decline, and as contact between Burma and India was then faint, Theravada Buddhism, as prevalent in Burma at that time, underwent some changes and assumed a form somewhat different from the original doctrine. This, at a later stage, became what is known in Thailand as Burma (Pagan) Buddhism. During the period of King Anuruddha's suzerainty over Thailand, Burmese Buddhism exercised great influence over the country, especially in the North where, owing to proximity, the impact from Burma was more felt.

It is significant that Buddhist relics found in North Thailand bear a striking Theravada influence, whereas those found in the South clearly show their Mahayana connections dating back from Srivijaya days. To a great extent this is due to the fact that, in their heyday of suzerainty over Thailand, the Burmese under Anuruddha were content with Upper Thailand only, while leaving the South practically to be ruled by their Khmer (Cambodian) vassals whose capital was at Lopburi.

From the beginning of the 2nd century B.C. the Thai people, whose original homeland was in the valleys between the Huang Ho and the Yangtze Kiang in China, began to migrate southwards as a result of constant friction with the neighboring tribes. In the course of their migration which lasted for several centuries, they became separated into two main groups. One group went and settled in the plains of the Salween River, Shan States, and other areas

and spread on as far as Assam. This group of Thais is called Thai Yai (Big Thai). The other main group moved further South and finally settled in what is today termed Thailand. The latter group of Thais is called Thai Noi (Small Thai). The Thais in present-day Thailand are actually the descendants of these migrant Thais. Of course, in the course of their migration which, as said above, continued off and on for a long time, there had been a great deal of mixture of blood through intermarriage which was only natural. We should always bear in mind that there are several ethnic groups scattered through the length and breadth of Southeast Asia from times immemorial. But even today we can trace the language affinity of the Thais living in widely scattered areas such as Assam, Upper Burma, Southern China, Shan States, Laos, North Vietnam, and Thailand.

After struggling hard for a long time the Thais were able to establish their independent state at Sukhothai (Sukhodaya) in North Thailand. This was probably about 1257 A.D. (B.E. 1800). It was during the period of their movement southwards that the Thais came into contact with the form of Buddhism as practiced in Burma and propagated under the royal patronage of King Anuruddha. Some scholars are of the opinion that as Mahayana Buddhism had spread to China as early as the beginning of the Christian Era, the Thais, while still in their original home in China, must have already been acquainted with some general features of Buddhism. As the Thai migrants grew in strength their territory extended and finally they became the masters of the land in succession to Anuruddha, whose kingdom declined after his death. During the succeeding period, the Thais were able to exert themselves even more prominently in their southward drive. Thus they came into close contact with the Khmers, the erstwhile power, and became acquainted with both Mahayana Buddhism and Brahmanism as adopted and practiced in Kambuja (Cambodia). Much of the Brahmanic influence, such as religious and cultural rites, especially in the court circles, passed on from Cambodia to the Thais during this period, for Hinduism was already firmly established in Cambodia at that time. Even the Thai scripts, based on Cambodian scripts which, in turn, derived their origin from India, were invented by King Ram Kamhaeng of Sukhothai during the period under consideration.

Of the period under discussion it may be observed in passing that Northern Thailand, from Sukhothai District upwards, came much under the influence of Burma (Pagan) Buddhism, while in the central and southern parts of the country many Mahayana beliefs and practices, inherited from the days of the Suryavarmans and the Srivijayas, still persisted.

IV. Ceylon (Lankavamsa) Buddhism

This is the most important period in the history of the spread of Buddhism to Thailand, for it witnessed the introduction to that country of that form of Buddhism which remains dominant there until today.

About 1153 A.D. (B.E. 1696) Parakramabahu the Great (1153-1186 A.D.) became king of Ceylon, known in ancient days as Lanka. A powerful monarch and a great supporter of Theravada Buddhism, Parakramabahu did much to spread and consolidate the Dhamma of the Lord in his island kingdom. He it was who caused (according to some scholars of Southern Buddhism) the Seventh Buddhist Council[4] to be held under the chairmanship of Kassapa Thera, of Dimbulagala in order to revise and strengthen the Doctrine and the Discipline (Dhamma and Vinaya).

As a result of the efforts of King Parakramabahu the Great, Buddhism was much consolidated in Ceylon and the news spread to neighboring lands. Buddhist monks from various countries, such as Burma, Pegu (Lower Burma), Kambuja, Lanna (North Thailand) and Lanchang (Laos) flocked to Ceylon in order to acquaint themselves with the pure form of the Dhamma. Thailand also sent her Bhikkhus to Ceylon and thereby obtained the *upasampada vidhi* (ordination rite) from Ceylon, which later became known in Thailand as Lankavamsa. This was about 1257 A.D. (B.E. 1800). Apparently the early batches of Bhikkhus, who returned from Ceylon after studies, often accompanied by Ceylonese monks, established themselves first in Nakon Sri Thammarath (South Thailand), for

4. The counting of the Buddhist Councils (Sangayana or Sangiti) differs in the several Theravada countries. In Ceylon, the above-mentioned Council is numbered as the fifth; and in Burma, its place is taken by the Council of Mandalay (1871), while the last Council in Rangoon (1954-1956) is counted as the sixth. [BPS Editor.]

many of the Buddhist relics bearing definitely Ceylonese influence, such as stupas and Buddha images, were found there. Some of these relics are still in existence today. News of the meritorious activities of these monks soon spread to Sukhothai, then the capital of Thailand, and King Ram Kamhaeng who was ruling at the time, invited those monks to his capital and gave them his royal support in propagating the Doctrine. This fact is recorded in one of the King's rock inscriptions, dated about 1277 A.D. Since then Ceylon (Sinhala) Buddhism became very popular and was widely practiced in Thailand. Some of the Thai kings, such as King Maha Dharmaraja Lithai of Sukhothai dynasty and King Borom Trai Lokanath of the early Ayudhya Period, even entered the Holy Order or Bhikkhu Sangha according to the ordination rite of Lankavamsa Buddhism by inviting a patriarch from Ceylon, Maha Sami Sangharaja Sumana by name, to be the presiding monk over his upasampada (ordination) ceremony. Many monasteries, stupas, Buddha images and even Buddha footprints, such as the well-known one at Sraburi in central Thailand, were built in accordance with the usage popular in Ceylon. The study of Pali, the language of Theravada or Southern Buddhism, also made great progress, and in all matters dealing with the Dhamma the impact of Ceylon was perceptibly felt.

However, there had been no antagonism between the different forms of Buddhism already in existence in Thailand and the Lankavamsa which had been introduced later from Ceylon. On the contrary they seemed to have amalgamated peacefully, and all had adjusted themselves to one another's benefit. This is evident in all religious rites and ceremonies of Thailand. Indeed, somewhat characteristic of the Buddhists, there had been a spirit of forbearance in all matters. For instance, even today Brahmanic rites thrive side by side with Buddhistic ceremonies in Thailand and Cambodia, especially in the royal courts.

History repeats itself. Years after, when in Ceylon under King Kirtisri (1747-1781 A.D.) the upasampada ordination was lost due to a decline of Buddhism and upheavals in the country, Thailand (during the reign of King Boromkot, 1733-1758 A.D.) was able to repay the debt by sending a batch of Buddhist monks, under the leadership of Upali and Ariyamuni Theras, who in the course of

time established in Ceylon what is known as the *Siyamopali Vamsa* or *Siyam Nikaya,* or Siamese Sect, which still is a major sect in that country. Upali worked and died in Sri Lanka, the country he loved no less than his own.

Today, for all purposes, Thailand can be termed a Theravada Buddhist country. There are, of course, a few Mahayana monks and monasteries, but they are mostly confined to foreign communities, chiefly the Chinese. All, however, live at peace and cooperate with one another.

So much for the past of Buddhism in Thailand.

Buddhism in Thailand: Its Present

According to the census taken in 1960 the population of Thailand numbers 25,519,965. Of this number 94% are Buddhists (the rest are mostly Muslims and Christians). This fact itself demonstrates more than anything else how influential Buddhism is in Thailand. In their long history of existence the Thais seem to have been predominantly Buddhists, at least ever since they came into contact with the tenets of Buddhism. All the Thai kings in the recorded history of present-day Thailand have been adherents of Buddhism. The country's constitution specifies that the King of Thailand must be a Buddhist and the Upholder of Buddhism.

The term "The Land of Yellow Robes" has not been inappropriately applied to Thailand, for two things strike most foreigners as soon as they set foot in that country. One is the Buddhist temple with its characteristic architecture, and the other is the sight of yellow-clad Buddhist monks and novices who are to be seen everywhere, especially in the early hours of dawn when they go out in great numbers for alms. The two sights inevitably remind the foreigners that here is a country where Buddhism is a dominant force in the people's life. Indeed, to the Thai nation as a whole, Buddhism has been the main spring from which flow its culture and philosophy, its art and literature, its ethics and morality, and many of its folkways and festivals.

For clarity and convenience we shall divide the study of the present state of Buddhism in Thailand into two parts, namely the

Bhikkhu Sangha or the Holy Order, and the Laity.

I. The Bhikkhu Sangha or the Holy Order

The Bhikkhu Sangha or the Holy Order of Buddhist monks has been in existence in Thailand ever since Buddhism was introduced there. According to the 1958 census there were in the whole kingdom of Thailand 159,648 monks; 73,311 novices; and 20,944 monasteries or temples. These are scattered throughout the country, particularly more numerous in the thickly populated areas. The Bhikkhu Sangha of Thailand, being of Theravada or Southern School, observes the same set of discipline (Vinaya) as the Bhikkhu Sanghas in other Theravada countries such as Ceylon, Burma, Laos, and Cambodia. In spite of the fact that the government allots a yearly budget for the maintenance and repair of important temples and as stipends for high ranking monks, almost the entire burden for the support of the Sangha and the upkeep of the temples rests with the public. A survey entitled "Thailand Economic Farm Survey" made in 1953 by the Ministry of Agriculture of the Government of Thailand gives the religious cash expenses of the average Thai rural family per year as ranging from 5 to 10 per cent of its total annual cash income. It may be added here that the report concerns the average Thai rural family, and not the urban dwellers, the majority of whom, in Thailand as elsewhere, are less inclined to religion than the country folks.

Two Sects or Nikayas

There are two sects or Nikayas of the Buddhist Order in Thailand. One is the Mahanikaya, and the other is the Dhammayuttika Nikaya. The Mahanikaya is the older and by far the more numerous one, the ratio in the number of monks of the two sects being 35 to 1. The Dhammayuttika Nikaya was founded in 1833 A.D. by King Mongkut, the fourth ruler of the present Chakri Dynasty who ruled Thailand from 1851 to 1868 A.D. Having himself spent 27 years as a Bhikkhu, the King was well versed in the Dhamma, besides many other branches of knowledge, including Pali, the canonical language of Theravada Buddhism. The express desire of the King in founding the Dhammayuttika sect was to enable monks to lead a more disciplined and scholarly life in accordance with the

pristine teachings of the Buddha. The differences between the two Nikayas are, however, not great; at most they concern only matters of discipline, and never of the Doctrine. Monks of both sects follow the same 227 Vinaya rules as laid down in the Patimokkha of the Vinaya Pitaka (the Basket of the Discipline), and both receive the same esteem from the public. In their general appearance and daily routine of life too, except for the slight difference in the manners of putting on the yellow robes, monks of the two Nikayas differ very little from one another.

ORGANIZATION OF THE SANGHA

Formerly, and in accordance with the Administration of the Bhikkhu Sangha Act (B.E. 2484, A.D. 1943), the organization of the Sangha in Thailand was on a line similar to that of the State. The Sangharaja or the Supreme Patriarch is the highest Buddhist dignitary of the Kingdom. He is chosen by the King, in consultation with the Government, from among the most senior and qualified members of the Sangha. The Sangharaja appoints a council of Ecclesiastical Ministers headed by the *Sangha Nayaka*, whose position is analogous to that of the Prime Minister of the State. Under the Sangha Nayaka there function four ecclesiastical boards, namely the Board of Ecclesiastical Administration, the Board of Education, the Board of Propagation and the Board of Public Works.

Each of the boards has a Sangha Mantri (equivalent to a minister in the secular administration) with his assistants. The four boards or ministries are supposed to look after the affairs of the entire Sangha. The Ecclesiastical Ministerial Council which, by the way, corresponds to the Cabinet, consists of ten members, all senior monks of the Sangha. In addition to this, there is a Consultative Assembly (*Sangha Sabha*), equivalent to the National Assembly, the members of which number 45, selected from various important monasteries. The Sangha Sabha acts as an Advisory Body to the Ecclesiastical Ministerial Council. Below the Sangha Sabha the administration of the Sangha continues to correspond to the secular administration of the country. All monks and novices (*samaneras*) have to live in monasteries which are scattered throughout the country. Each monastery has its abbot appointed by the Ecclesiastical Ministerial

Council in consultation with local people. It may be pointed out here that all religious appointments in Thailand are based on scholarly achievements, seniority, personal conduct and popularity, and contacts with monks further up in the Sangha.

There is a Department of Religious Affairs in the Ministry of Education which acts as a liaison office between the Government and the Sangha. In general the Department of Religious Affairs works in cooperation with the Ecclesiastical Ministerial Council on all matters affecting the Sangha. For instance, it issues all legal directives concerning the entire community of monks; it keeps record of the Sangha's property, such as lands etc.; it maintains facts and figures with respect to monks and monasteries. The Religious Affairs Department also prepares the annual budget for the upkeep of the Sangha functionaries and the maintenance and repair of temples etc. It may be added here that all temples and monasteries are State property.

In 1962, the Administration of the Bhikkhu Sangha Act of 1943 was abolished; a new one was enacted instead. By virtue of the new act, the posts of Sangha Nayaka, Sangha Mantris, and Sangha Sabha were abolished. In place of these there is a *Mahathera Samagama* (Council of the Elders) headed by the Sangharaja himself and consisting of not less than four and not more than eight senior monks (*mahatheras*) of the two sects (*nikayas*). The Mahathera Samagama, in collaboration with the Department of Religious Affairs, directly governs the entire Sangha.

EDUCATION OF MONKS

As is well known, the original idea of men's entering monkhood during the Buddha's time or shortly later, was to attain liberation from worldly existence in accordance with the teaching of the Master. Such an idea, of course, springs from man's feeling of aversion to things mundane. In other words, in those far-off days, men entered monkhood with the sole intention of ridding themselves of life's miseries and of obtaining spiritual freedom or Nirvana. Instances of such self-renunciation are found in the holy books of the Buddhists. With the passage of time, as is only natural, many of the ideals and practices of the early followers of the Buddha underwent

modifications. Today, over 2,500 years after the passing away of the Buddha, though the ideal of becoming a Bhikkhu still remains very lofty among Buddhists of all lands, in practice it must be admitted that there have been many deviations from the Master's original admonitions with regard to the whys and wherefores of man's entering monkhood. Generalization of any subject matter is often dangerous but it will not be far from truth to say that today, in Thailand as in other Buddhist countries, the practice of Buddhist males entering monkhood is to a considerable extent prompted rather by the dictation of custom, the wish for education and other external considerations than by the desire to attain emancipation. Yet there are also many who join the Sangha through genuine love for a religious life and religious studies, or out of the wish to be of service to Buddhism and their country. Finally, in the Thai Sangha also those are not entirely lacking whose life is vigorously devoted to the aim of ultimate emancipation and to the guidance of others towards that goal. There have been, and still are, saintly and able meditation masters in Thailand, with a fair number of devoted disciples in Sangha and laity. There are also still monks — the so-called *thudong* bhikkhus — who follow the ancient way of austere living embodied in the "strict observances" or *dhutangas*.[5]

In view of the above facts, there are two categories of Buddhist monks in Thailand. One comprises those who become monks for long periods, sometimes for life, and the other those who enter the Order temporarily. To serve in the monkhood even for a short period is considered a great merit-earning attainment by the Thai Buddhists. Even kings follow this age-old custom. For instance, the present ruler, H.M. King Bhumibol Adulyadej, also observed the custom for a period of half a month some time ago. Government officials are allowed leave with full pay for a period of four months in order to serve in monkhood. The idea is to enable young men to gain knowledge of Buddhism and thereby to become good citizens. Life as a monk gives them practical experience of how an ideal Buddhist life should be. In rural districts the general tendency is still to give more deference to those who have already served in monk-

5 See The Wheel No. 83/84: With Robes and Bowl: Glimpses of the Thudong Bhikkhu Life, by Bhikkhu Khantipalo.

hood. Such people are supposed to be more "mature" than those who have not undergone the monk's life. Moreover, in Thailand *wats* (monasteries and temples) used to be and are still regarded as seats of learning where all men, irrespective of life's position, could go and avail themselves of education benefits. This is especially so in the case of economically handicapped males of the countryside. Instances are not lacking in which people have climbed high up on life's status ladder after obtaining education while in monkhood. There are neither religious restrictions nor social disapproval against monks' returning to lay life if and when they find themselves unable to discharge their duties as monks.

Cases exist in which, for some reason or the other, men have entered monkhood more than once, although such practice cannot be said to be in the esteem of the public. Looked at from this viewpoint, the institution of entering monkhood in Thailand, apart from being a way of gaining moral and spiritual enlightenment, is a social uplift method by which those not so fortunately placed in life could benefit. Judged from the ideal of adopting a monk's life as enunciated by the Buddha, whether or not such practice is commendable, is a different story. The fact is that even today when modernism has penetrated deep into Thailand, about one half of the primary schools of the country are still situated in wats. With sex and crimes on the increase in the country, the cry for living a better Buddhist life is being heard more and more distinctly in Thailand today.

The traditional education of monks and novices in Thailand centers mainly on the studies of the Buddhist Doctrine (Dhamma) and Pali, the language in which the Theravada scriptures are written. Of the former, the study of the Doctrine, there are three grades with examinations open to both monks and laymen. Those passing such examinations are termed *Nak Dhamm,* literally meaning one who knows the Dhamma. The latter, i.e., the study of Pali, has seven grades, starting with the third and ending with the ninth grade. Students passing Pali examinations are called *parian* (Pali: *pariñña* = penetrative knowledge); in the Thai language the word *parinna* is used to mean academic degree. For example, monks and novices passing the first Pali examination are entitled to write "P. 3" after their names.

Generally the Dhamma and the Pali studies go hand in hand and take at least seven years to complete. The stiffness of the two courses, especially that of the Pali language, can be guessed from the fact that very few students are able to pass the highest grade, the Parian 9, in any annual examination. In the good old days when living was less competitive than now, passing of even the lower Dhamma and Pali examinations used to be of much value in securing good government posts. But now things are quite different; even those successful in the highest Pali examination, the 9th Grade, find it difficult to get suitable employment.

Of late there has developed a new outlook in the education of monks in Thailand. With the rapid progress of science and with the shrinking of the world, Buddhist leaders of Thailand, monks as well as laymen, are awakened to the necessity of imparting broader education to members of the Sangha, if the Sangha is to serve the cause of Buddhism well, "for the gain of the many, for the welfare of the many." As a result of the new outlook there now function in Bangkok two higher institutes of learning exclusively for monks and novices. One is the Mahachulalongkorn Rajvidyalaya, and the other is the Mahamongkut Rajvidyalaya. Both are organized on a modern university footing and both seem to be making satisfactory progress towards that direction. Inclusion in the curriculum of some secular subjects not incompatible with monks' discipline (Vinaya) is among the notable features of these two institutes; the aim is to give an all-round education to monks in order to enable them to be of better service to the cause of Buddhism amidst modern conditions.

So much for the education of 'long-term' monks. As for those who enter the Order temporarily, mostly for a period of three rainy months during the Vassa, or Buddhist Lent, the education is brief and devoted to the main tenets and features of Buddhism only. As pointed out above, such people enter monkhood either by their own genuine desire for knowledge of the Dhamma, by the dictum of custom or, as generally is the case, by the two reasons combined. Monks of this category return to lay life again as soon as the Lent is over. This is the reason why accommodations in monasteries (wats) are usually full during the Lenten period. Nowadays, owing

to the pressure of modern life, the custom of temporarily entering monkhood is not so rigorously observed by people living in urban areas as by those in the countryside. The custom has its parallel in Burma, Cambodia, and Laos where Theravada Buddhism prevails.

WATS AND MONKS

The word "wat" means monastery and temple combined. It is the residence of monks and novices. There are about 21,000 wats in the whole of Thailand. In Bangkok alone there are nearly two hundred wats. Some big wats in Bangkok have as many as 600 resident monks and novices. Wats are centers of Thai art and architecture. Thai culture, to a considerable extent, flows from wats. Wat-lands and constructions thereon are donated by royalty, wealthy people and the public in general. The wat is the most important institution in Thai rural life. The social life of the rural community revolves around the wat. Besides carrying out the obvious religious activities, a wat serves the community as a recreation center, dispensary, school, community center, home for the aged and destitute, social work and welfare agency, village clock, rest-house, news agency, and information center. A wat is headed by a *Chao Avas* (the abbot) who is responsible for the maintenance of the wat discipline, the proper performance of religious services and rituals, and the general welfare of the inmates. Besides monks and novices, there are also the "temple boys" in wats, who assist monks and novices in various ways, such as bringing and arranging food, cleaning dormitories, washing yellow robes, etc. Usually these boys are related to resident monks in one way or another, and their stay is free of charge. Most of them are students whose homes are far away and who would, otherwise, find it impracticable to get education. This is especially so in Bangkok where accommodation is difficult to get and where all higher seats of learning of the country are situated. The census taken in 1954 reveals that there are as many as 119,044 temple boys in Thailand, which indeed is not a small figure. The institution of the wat, in itself a gift of Buddhism, therefore contributes in no small measure to the social welfare and progress of the Thai Buddhists. The benefits in this respect, of course, are more apparent among the lower strata of society than in the case of the fortunate few on the top.

Apart from engaging themselves in doctrinal studies and observing disciplinary rules (Vinaya) in general, monks are expected to be "friends, philosophers, and guides" of the people. Preaching to masses face to face or over the radio is one of the commonest ways by which monks help the promotion of moral stability among various members of the society. It may not be out of place to reiterate the fact that Buddhism lays great stress on the necessity of leading a morally good life in order to obtain happiness in life here and hereafter. In most of the ceremonies and rituals, whether private or public, monks' cooperation and benediction are indispensable. Indeed, in the life of the average Thai Buddhists, from the cradle to the grave, monks are persons to whom they constantly turn for moral support.

The role of monks in rural districts is even more important, for there the local wat is not only the religious but also the social center of the community. It is at the wat that people come together and experience a sense of comradeship. Religious rituals and ceremonies held at wats are always accompanied by social activities: they are occasions for people, especially the young, to enjoy themselves in feast, fun and festivities. This aspect of the religious service helps the common folks to relax and satisfies their needs for recreation. Not a few matrimonial alliances started from contacts at wat premises. Acting as a moral and ethical example, monks are the most venerated persons in the countryside Thai society, remaining very close to the hearts of the people. In times of crisis, it is to monks that people bring their problems for counsel and encouragement. With few exceptions, the Sangha has well justified this attitude of respect and honor shown to it on the part of the laity and, on the whole, has lived up to the dignity of the Faith.

II. THE LAITY

Throughout its over 2,500 years of existence Buddhism has been closely connected with the lay community. In Pali the word for a male lay devotee is *upasaka*; *upasika* is its female equivalent. In the history of Buddhism, right from the time of its founder, there had been numerous upasakas and upasikas whose faith in the Teachings of the Master had contributed largely to the dissemina-

tion of the Doctrine. Names of the Buddha's munificent followers like Anathapindika, Visakha, Asoka, Kanishka, etc., are on the lips of Buddhists even today. Without the patronage of Emperor Asoka, Buddhism probably could not have spread so far and the course of its history might have been different. In India, the land of its birth, as well as in most of the countries where its Message has been accepted, Buddhism has received unstinted support from people of all classes, especially the ruling class. History of the movements of Buddhism in China, Japan, Burma, Ceylon, Tibet, etc., amply justifies this statement. In the case of Thailand too, ever since its introduction to that country, Buddhism has been warmly received and patronized by kings and commoners alike. It is well-known that many of the Thai rulers, not satisfied with being mere lay-devotees, got themselves ordained into monkhood and became famous for their erudition in the Dhamma. King Mongkut, Rama IV, probably stands out as most distinguished among this class of royal devotees. The custom of Thai males entering the Sangha also contributes much to the better understanding and cooperation between the lay community and the monkhood. After all, personal experience is better than mere theoretical knowledge.

The Buddha himself, in one of his discourses, exhorted his followers to discharge their duties well so as to enable the Dhamma to endure long in the world. One of the duties of the lay followers, as taught by the Master, is to look after the needs of monks. Hence it is the traditional practice with lay followers in all Buddhist countries, especially those following Theravada Buddhism, to see that monks do not suffer from lack of the four requisites, namely food, clothing, shelter, and medicine. Although in the present age of competitive economy, when life in any field is not so easy, nobody can say in fairness that monk-life in Thailand suffers greatly from shortage of the above four requisites. As Bhikkhus are not allowed to follow any occupational activities, it is clear that they entirely depend on the laity for their existence. In return for this spontaneous support offered them by the public, monks are expected to live exemplary lives for the benefit of themselves as well as of those who look to them as teachers and guides. We have already seen what moral influence monks have upon the people.

Cooperation between the laity and the Bhikkhu Sangha in Thailand is close and spontaneous. To a very great extent this is due to the fact that in an average Thai family some of its members are certain to be found who have for some time served in the Sangha. To the masses yellow robes are symbol of the Master, and Bhikkhus are upholders of the Dhamma, to be deferred to in all circumstances. It is interesting to note that Bhikkhus or Samaneras found guilty of committing crimes are formally divested of their yellow robes before legal action is taken against them by the State, and this is done invariably under permission of the chief monk or the abbot.

"To do good" (*kusala kamma*) is a cardinal point in the teachings of Buddhism. Consequently the idea of performing meritorious deeds is very deeply ingrained in the minds of Buddhists. Ways of doing good or making merit (*puñña*) among the Thai Buddhists are numerous. A man gains merit each time he gives alms to monks or contributes to any religious rituals. To get ordination into monkhood even for a short period, of course, brings much merit. Besides, there are other ways of merit-earning, such as releasing caged birds or freeing caught fishes, plastering gold leaf on Buddha statues or religious monuments, contributing to the construction of a new temple or the repair of an old one, etc. "The Law of Karma" that each action has its corresponding result and the belief in rebirth are two important factors in molding such attitude towards life among the Buddhists. Though *Nibbana* (Sanskrit: Nirvana), the highest bliss in Buddhism, is aspired to by all good Buddhists, the vast majority of them still think it is not so easy to reach and that they will be reborn again in this world, in heaven or some other world, or — at the very worst — in hell. Hence, as long as they live they must try to do good in order to ensure good results in this very life as well as in the life to come. "Be a light unto yourself. Each man must strive for his own salvation" — these were the Master's words. In view of this, Theravada Buddhism is often said to have individualistic temper. Nevertheless, it is very tolerant, as the long history of its existence will prove. Indeed, the characteristic tolerance of Buddhism, for instance in Thailand, has always permitted the absorption of many beliefs and practices from other sources which have often served to supplement or expand its concepts or

to fill gaps. Animism and Brahmanism may be cited in this connection; the two being important supplements of popular Buddhism in Thailand. A foreign writer has rightly observed that the attitude of the Thai masses towards their religion is of an easy-going nature. They do not bother to distinguish among the various components of their religion; for them it is all of a piece. Only the sophisticated few are concerned with doctrinal logic and purity. Of course, they too know much about its legends, its festivals, its ideals, and its general message that "good will render good." On the whole it can be said that the Thais enjoy their religion. Religious observances are to them as social and recreational as sacred occasions. And for the vast majority, Buddhism suffices in that it enables them to feel and believe and enjoy.

BUDDHIST ORGANIZATIONS AND THE REVIVAL OF BUDDHISM

Organizations among the lay Buddhists of Thailand are recent establishments. Prominent and oldest among them is perhaps the Buddhist Association of Thailand, under Royal Patronage, which now is about 30 years old, having been established in 1933. Having its head office in Bangkok, it maintains branch organizations in almost all major districts of Thailand. Its membership is open to both sexes, irrespective of class, creed, and color. The aim and object of the Buddhist Association of Thailand is to promote the study and practice of Buddhism and to propagate its message in and outside Thailand. Besides arranging regular lectures and discussions on topics concerning the Dhamma, the Association also publishes a monthly journal in the Thai language on the teachings of the Buddha.

Another organization is the Young Buddhists Association which came into being at the close of the Second World War. As its name implies, the Young Buddhists Association takes care of the interest of the young in matters concerning Buddhism. Its primary object is to encourage the young to imbibe the tenets of Buddhism and to live a virtuous life. Chief among its activities are arranging regular lectures and discussions on the Dhamma, issuing publications on subjects dealing with Buddhism in general, and sponsoring meetings of the young on the platform of Buddhism. The Young Buddhists Association also has branches in the districts.

As said earlier the end of the Second World War saw a great revival of interest in Buddhism throughout the world. Even in countries like Thailand where the Doctrine of the Awakened One has been traditionally accepted for generations, people seem to be increasingly eager to know more about the Dhamma. Strange as it may seem, this is partly due to the interest the Occidental World has taken in Buddhism. In times past religion has been more or less regarded in Thailand as "solace of the old." But with the impact of the West in most matters and with the general interest shown towards Buddhism by Western intelligentsia, the Buddhists of Thailand, especially the younger generations who came into contact with the West, began to evince an inquisitive attitude towards their religion — a heritage which they have all along accepted as their own but which they have cared little to know about its true value. This is no attempt to belittle the exceedingly great importance the Thais attach to their religion. But human nature being what it is, the saying "Familiarity breeds contempt" is in most cases not very far wrong. In the Thai language also we have a proverb "*klai kleua kin dang*" which may be rendered in English as "to have the folly to resort to alkali when one is in possession of salt."

Having taken root on the soil of Thailand for centuries Buddhism has naturally attracted many appendages to its fold, some of which are not quite in conformity with the teachings of the Master as contained in the Canon (Tipitaka). Many leaders of Buddhistic thought in Thailand have, therefore, come forward to try to purify the Dhamma of the many impurities that have crept into it. Notable among the reformatory groups are the Dhammadana Association in Jaiya, South Thailand, under the leadership of Buddhadasa Bhikkhu, and the Buddha Nigama of Chiengmai (North Thailand) started by Paññananda Bhikkhu. The two organizations are showing good efforts in the field of awakening the Buddhists of Thailand to the pristine teachings of the Buddha as treasured in the Pali Tipitaka. The mission is admittedly a difficult one but already a promising start has been made in this direction. Much will also no doubt depend on how things transpire in other spheres of human activities, chiefly economic, social and political. The present is an age of conflict — conflict between mind and body, between spirit

and matter. Man must find harmony between the two if peace be his aim in life. And to this task of finding harmony within man Buddhism could contribute in no small measure.

Notes

1.

The History of Buddhist Thought, by E.J. Thomas.

2.

The Discovery of India, by Jawaharlal Nehru, Chapter V (XVI).

3.

The counting of the Buddhist Councils (Sangayana or Sangiti) differs in the several Theravada countries. In Ceylon, the above-mentioned Council is numbered as the fifth; and in Burma, its place is taken by the Council of Mandalay (1871), while the last Council in Rangoon (1954-1956) is counted as the sixth. [BPS Editor.]

4.

See *The Wheel* No. 83/84: *With Robes and Bowl: Glimpses of the Thudong Bhikkhu Life*, by Bhikkhu Khantipalo.

BUDDHISM IN THAILAND: ROLE OF WAT TOWARD SOCIETY IN THE PERIOD OF SUKHOTHAI TILL EARLY RATANAKOSIN 1238 – 1910 A.D.

by Phramaha Chakrapol Thepa*

ABSTRACT

The article is a review of my dissertation that the same title study on the question is "what are the roles of Buddhist temple towards the society in Thailand? That some part of study related to history and social of Thais belong to early period of Sukhothai era to early time of Ratanakok period. The Buddhist temple or Thais call "Wat" played on the Thai society not only religion dimension but had roles participated education, social, art and cultural. Wat play a role as hospitals and lodging of a traveler. The roles that arise because of monks are spiritual teacher. Thai people respect, it found that the role of education is very important role of Wat in Thailand focused on behaviour and phenomenal companies of Buddhist society in Thailand.

1. INTRODUCTION

Wat is the important structure of Thai's society, which showed as the Thai king established a new kingdom must built temple within the grand palaces and around kingdom by support construction to built temples or "Wat" call by Thai language. Although the important situations of Wat had been being a centre of everyone

*. Ph.D. Research Scholar, Centre for Mahayana Buddhist Studies Acharya Nagarjuna University, Guntur-522510, A.P, India Wat Shubchoroun Tanti Dhammarama, Nongkhai, Thailand.

in the Thai society. The roles of Buddhist temples in Thailand was interesting to study by quality study under the framework of questions as "what is the important of wat in Thailand? And what are the roles of wat in Thailand towards the society?"

2. HISTORICAL AND BACKGROUND OF WAT IN ANCIENT BUDDHISM

Wat is the synonym mentions point to Āvāsa, Arāma, Monastery, Temple, some of main constructions such as Vihara and Pagoda taken mentions point to the Wat. Wat quite means a residential of monasticism members belong to Buddhism particular in the Buddha time Wat is dwelling of ascetics such as Bikhu, Bikhuni, and Sāmanera. Wat is a word called place takes to be religious activities of Buddhists in Thailand. Inside the temple combine pagoda, Vihara, Uposata and Kuti which is used as a monk residence and the crematorium. The chanting hall or Sālā is used for various ceremonies such as candlelight, prayer, meditation, and Dhamma talk. At present, rural Thai temples are still a community center. Unlike the big city, the monastery became a monk's place of residence and for religious ceremonies.

Wat in Thailand are characterized by Stupa, and the Buddhist architecture of Thailand is similar to Buddhist temple in other Asian countries particularly Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Si Lanka, with which Thailand shares cultural and historical heritage. Moreover the wat combine not only materials structure but also people is important to mansion of wat as wheel of vehicle such Buddha Pariṣad; monks, novices, nuns, layman and laywomen.

3. ROLE OF WAT IN PREVIOUS SOCIETY IN THAILAND

Buddhism is one of the main institutions of Thai society. Buddhism in Thailand was as early as 250 B.C. placement in the time of Indian Emperor Ashoka. Since then, Buddhism has played a significant role in Thai Culture and society. Wilson western said Buddhism in Thailand is a peculiar structure of ideas and value attitudes which forms the ethical pattern of national behavior Buddhism in this sense is a vital part of life. It is hard to estimate because so that hi value importance and unfortunate to analyses and measure its role (Wilson, 1962:69). Thais had respected since

ancient times. And it has been passed the historical movements are as follows.

3.1. Sukhothai Period

The Sukhothai dynasty (1238-1438 C.E.) was establishment on eighteenth century B.E. the decline of Cambodia power, the leadership who free Thais knew as Poh Khun Intrathit and Ban Muang. Sukhothai people professed Buddhism both Mahayana and Theravada. In the reign of the great King Ramkhamhaeng, the kingdom was greatly extended Theravada to gain spiritual power over the people, whereas the Mahayana sects of Cambodia and Shrivijaya were having once risen to power together. And now that the Laṅkāvaṃsa Buddhism was well patronized by King Ramkhamhaeng of the Sukhothai dynasty, it finally dominated the existing beliefs of the Theravada and Mahayana. The study of Pali was certainly at that time greatly enhanced as the sacred language of the Theravadin and the Laṅkāvaṃsa (Noranit, 2002).

One later kings of the Sukhothai dynasty name Phya Lithai was the important book name *Triphoom Phra Ruang* (P.A. Payutto, 2012:27) and wrote by Pali. It is a Buddhist literature that was composed in the Sukhothai period, it gathered in the Buddhist scriptures in Thailand. It had divided into three categories as Kama Bhumi, Rupa Bhumi and Arupa Bhumi. This literature is relevant Thais beliefs such as hell, heaven, death, four continents such as the Indian subcontinent, etc. (Reynolds & Reynolds, 1982)

3.2. Ayutthaya Period

In nineteenth century B.E., Ayutthaya dynasty (1340-1767 C.E.) was ruled over by 33 kings, which lasted for 411 years. The Theravada Buddhism in Thailand seemed to have reached its zenith of popularity, there were scattered in numerable temples and pagodas, temple served as places of education, hospitals and general meeting places, there by exerting a great influence on the spiritual life of the people. Buddhist art flourished especially the field of architecture and in Buddha image construction. And a tradition was young Thai man to be ordained at least once as a Bhikkhu. In the Ayutthaya kingdom had been participation of Buddhism with Ceylon on the reigned of the king Kitti Siri Raj Singha. ***Chiang Mai***

act as a colony of the Ayutthaya kingdom in the Chiang Mai Period 1367-1388 C.E. (Dentan & Robert, 2002) under the leadership of Dharmadinna Thera, a general Council of Bhikkhus was convened at the Maha Bodhivaṃsa Vihara to be the first Council held in Thailand and reflected the intensive study of Buddhism during that time. A collection of Pali texts compiled by the Thera of that glorious age were now prized by those who wished to further their research of Buddhism in the Pail language. Some of these texts were Abhidhammayojanà, Mūlakaccā Yanayojanā, Vinayayojanā, Vessantaradīpanī and Mangalatthadīpanī.

3.3. Thon Buri Period

During the prelude of fifteen years of Thon Buri period, the king Taksin (1767-1782 C.E.) had several temples repaired, monastic rules settled, Buddhism texts collected, the study and practice of Buddhism revived to some degree. Texts as the Tripitaka, the commentaries and sub-commentaries, which had been destroyed by fire, he had them borrowed or rewrote from those of neighboring countries.

3.4. Ratanakosin or Bangkok Period

The first century of reign King Rama I of the Chakri dynasty in the last quarter of 18th century (Lepoer, 1989), he encourage the study and practice of Buddhism, usually temples in the capital and outside were repaired. Buddhism literature during his reign was compiled both in Pali and Thai. In B.E. 2372 there was a Buddhist movement which marked a cornerstone for the study and practice of Buddhism in Thailand, it was the birth of the Dhammayutta group of Bhikkhus. That was establishment by the Prince Mongkut in the time of King Rama III. Thus, since that time there have been two groups of Bhikkhus as the Dhammayutta and the Mahanikaya. In the time of the King Rama V he managed to satellite two Buddhist Universities with the aim to increase and stability of Buddhist education namely Mahamakuta Raja Vidyalaya and Mahachulalongkorn Raja Vidyalaya. In B.E. 2431 Tripitaka printed in the form of paper books using Thai characters. The reign of King Rama IX, a special hospital for Bhikkhus was built and two Buddhist universities supported to change placement and subsidy

from the Government and contributions from the public under the organizing by Bhikkhus[7]

Thai monarchy has often been intertwined, with Thai kings historically seen as the main patrons of Buddhism in Thailand. That is important point saw in the Thai's history.

3.5. Buddhism and Thai society

The traditional Thai society usually referred to the backward rural areas and the uneducated or the old fashioned, Buddhism had been influent in both personalities and traditional of Thais. Thai Buddhism has put itself in a more and more narrowed confinement. However, the important roles of Buddhism in Thailand are still influencing society as the following;

3.5.1. Buddhism is a religion that most Thais respect. The majority of Thais 95 percents are Buddhists from Thai ancestry. Since, Thailand has a clear history Thais are Buddhists. Ancient evidence includes ancient monuments such as religious places, the Buddha statues, the Buddha Vihara and stone Buddha inscriptions, etc., show that the people in Thailand territory to respect Buddhism both of Theravada and Mahayana since the 12th century. Buddhism has long been a religion of Thailand.

3.5.2. Buddhism is the root of Thai culture. Because Thais are Buddhists for a long time with the principles of Buddhism has been absorbed into the Thai's way. It is the foundation of Thai lifestyle in all aspects such as the way of life, language, customs and morals.

a. Thai's lifestyle has a unique way of life such as to show respect, generous, gratitude, tolerant, and patience, etc. there are all influenced by the principles of Buddhism. It has a unique Thai's style.

b. Thai Language, Thai Literature and Buddhist languages such as Pali are appearing in Thai languages. Many Thai literatures have the root from the principles of Buddhism, such as the *Triphoom Phra Ruang* in the Sukhothai period.

c. Thai customs and Thai traditions come from the belief in Buddhism, such as the ordination ceremony, candle *Puchā* festival and Visak *Puchā* festival*, etc.,* it said that the

Buddhism influence traditions with Thai people from birth to death.

d. Thai art all most influence from Buddhism. The temple are sources of Thai art, Thai architectural such as the Stupa, Phra Prang, Vihara, Thai sculptures, Thai paintings.

3.5.3. Buddhism is the center of the mind of Thai society. Monk is the spiritual leader of the people. It is the center of Buddhist devotion and training Thai people behave in good morals. In addition, wat is the center of the community such a place of community activities and making harmony in the community.

3.5.4. Buddhism is the main development of Thai nationality. The principles of Buddhism focus on the development of people as the quality of health, mental, moral and intellectual life in order to develop themselves and cooperate to develop the community, social development and development of the country. In addition, many monks have played an active role in leading the community in various areas, such as the conservation of natural resources, conservation of local wisdom and culture. Wat is a learning source of Thai society from past to present. Thai people have been ordained in Buddhism for training a good person. It is an important to development.

3.5.5. Buddhism is one of the three main institutions of the Thai nation. The main institutions of Thailand there are all Thai people respect composed of national, religions and monarchs. The Constitution of Thailand stipulates that the monarch is a Buddhist referring to the head of the Thai nation, who respects Buddhism as well as the majority and is also the patron saint of all religions in Thailand.

4. WAT AND CENTER OF THAI SOCIETY

Wat or Buddhist temple in Thailand has complex roles participated working and people in the temple relative with society. The Buddhism came into existence in Thai society. The landscape wat divide into two sections of monk residents and public hall (*Buddha Āvāsa*) such as chanting hall, Vihara, dining hall, and pagoda. Thais are emphasis on the construction of monastic

buildings. They are usually seen blessing religious ceremonies by chanting or ceremonial preaching and urging the adherents to make donations for a monastic building (Dentan, cited in Geoffrey & Cynthia, 2002).

Monks and priests are involved in the Thai people's life. The temple has become a part of society. Measure is the center of ethics training. It is an institution of great importance in the field of social studies and is the source of various arts. The monks who inherit Buddhism are regarded in society. As a moral person, respect and obedience are the following;

a. Education is a school education. The monk acts as a trainer. Even today Monks continue to teach Buddhism in schools.

b. Society is the center of community. Is the assembly to make a sermon listen to the sermon? And social gatherings. The monks represent the Buddhist institutions that play an important role in the spiritual leadership of the people. Some wat had became health center or hospital to treatment poor people, another had wat had took in to lodge of travelers.

c. The art of the temple is a combination of fine arts such as sculpture stucco. Wood carving Murals the various artists are Thai's artists have appear at the temple such Vihara, Chedi and Buddha statue. This is reflects the faith on Buddhism.

Thai society respects monks very much. Because it is believed that monks are more knowledgeable than seculars. The relationship between the people in the community and the temple is closely linked to the way of Thais life style even more everyone from birth to death. The teachings have been credited with distrust. So the monks became the anchor of every society. It are auspicious and gratuitousness. The temple is a place to serve the traditions of merit making to make merit for the lay faithful on religious holidays, which are available throughout the year as well for examples Community, Education, Facilities, supported from the novitiate to the ordained monk. Wat are the peaceful places of peace, such as preaching, meditation practice and Dhamma study. It is a gathering

place of the society every term, such as the meeting of the village council, festive festivities with fairs, etc. It is a ritual place for death, such as the funeral and the cremation (P.A. Payutto, 2012).

The relationship that is occurs in the Thai society as a whole. There are three main types of institutions: homes, temples, and palaces. These three institutions are interrelated throughout. The "palace" is in the status of the king or the leader of society and the nation. Although, it is a symbol of the center of the kingdom, while "home" is the residence of the people. It is one of the infrastructures. And the "wat" is the Buddhist temple. It will be the center of the mind between the "palace" and the "home", or the other hand is linking between the king and peoples in Thailand adopted the influence of belief in the "Diva Recanation Idea" from the Khmer into the Ayutthaya period. The image and role of the king of Thailand is more noble and sacred, so that make the relationship between the monarchy and the people have a very important link. Thus the important role of wat is a link between monarchy and peoples.

5. CASES OF ORIGINAL ARCHIVE SOURCES: ROLE OF WAT TOWARD PREVIOUS SOCIETY IN THAILAND

Complex Center Role of Wat and Thai Society in the Inscription of King Ramkhamhaeng the Great, the Ramkhamhaeng Inscription is a stone tablet recording the history of the Sukhothai Inscription. The study found the Inscription of King Ramkhamhaeng the Great, in the time of Sukhothai funded the important role of Wat was the accommodation of Buddhist monks such as senior monks Nissaya Muttaka, Theras and Mahatheras. In the spiritual role of Wat was the central of King, princes, princess, also layman and laywoman to pay homage the Buddha statues, to learn Dhamma as well as practicing, and observe the Precepts such as five or eight rules of morality. That is the five precepts to be observed by all Buddhists are; (1) to refrain from killing; (2) to refrain from stealing; (3) to refrain from sexual misconduct; (4) to refrain from telling lies; (5) to refrain from drinking intoxicants. On the holy day lay devotees generally observe the eight precepts, that is the five rules plus three more as; (6) to refrain from eating after midday; (7) to refrain from taking part in any kind of entertainment and from wearing perfume and

ornaments; (8) to refrain from using high and luxurious couches. In the geography role of Wat was a botanical garden because various types of tree planting and growing in side and to become the forest of the city. In the education role of Wat was the school teaching Buddha Dhamma as a school of religion to service morality and knowledge belong to the Buddha teaching by the Mahatheras, who wiz and graduated Tipitaka Pali Canon and commentary, the three divisions of the Buddhist Cannon, namely (1) Vinaya, a series of instructions for the monks and female monks; (2) Suttanta sermons and addresses to all; (3) Abhidhamma, thematic arrangement and logical development of Buddha's teaching: it is entirely abstract, precise and impersonal. In the social role of Wat was the meeting place serviced anyone in the society to meeting as well as the purports of functions. In the culture role of Wat was servicing the merit culture base on Buddhism culture such as Katin ceremony. In the Architecture role of Wat was the land mark of city by the building such as a large rectangular Vihara by the way of building art of nation appearing and presenting on the tall exceedingly beautiful, Kuti where monks reside and Chide or Pagoda. Furthermore Wat was a museum collecting of Buddha Art such as Buddha statues and Managsilabai is a sitting stone slab. According to the study founds role of Wat in the Inscription of King Ramkhamhaeng the Great, the Ramkhamhaeng Inscription is a stone tablet recording the history of the Sukhothai Inscription can sum into 8 dimensions are (1) accommodation, (2) spiritual, (3) geography, (4) education, (5) social, (6) culture, (7) Architecture, (8) Museum.

Context of Wat and Buddhism Company toward Thai Society: In The Archive "Du Royaume De Siam or A New Historical Relation of The Kingdom of Siam By La Loubere", **it appeared in a primary source take to study the role of Wat in previous Thai Kingdom especially period of Ayutthaya** founds the role of Wat toward society in Thailand clearly through La Loubere noted contents of Thai society in Ayutthaya period, that represented Wat as a complex center of Thai society supposed to duties, activities, cultures, functions, and relations of Thai participated Wat as main place to play on roles. Thus, Wat become the complex center saw note of La Loubere finding several roles had Buddhist monk and company play on duties and Buddhist culture in the frame of Buddha doctrines

presented above the study are; (1) Wat is residential of Monk, Nun, Sāmaneras and some layman, (2) Wat represent to be School and Work shop to practices for everyone in Thai society not monk only and not teaching Pali only various knowledge service educated appropriately for students, (3) Wat is treasury take collecting of Thai Art such as architectures by the way of building example Ubosot or Temple, the Hall of Vihara or Dhamma Sala, and Buddha status these include elements within the Wat that were created through the transmission of Thai art through buildings and constructions. (4) Wat was origin of Thai tradition and culture belong to Buddhist such as "Wai" the culture respecting others consists of a slight bow, with the palms pressed together in a prayer, giving or Dana anytime anyway, sprinkle water onto a Buddha image or a gesture of worship during the annual "Songkran Festival", and Ordination ceremony etc. (5) Root of Thai Habit and personality took from Wat through the moralizes transfer form monk to followers such being a humble person, patriotism, kindness, like entertaining etc. (6) Wat become a convention hall or party place of Thai Buddhism for meeting, cerebrating, preaching, trading and festival. (7) Wat was a lodge used as a place to rest, to solve travelers, to facilitate the merchants and travelers. (8) The specific role of Wat represented sanctified place for a praying or chanting particular at the Ubosot and Vihara. (9) Some time Wat represented a warning center of society such when have special case of war or fire.

6. DISCUSSION

The discussion is followed the analysis and finding relative the three themes of study which designed and classifieds are (1) Theme 1: Historical and background of Wat in ancient Buddhism, (2) Theme 2: Role of Wat in previous Society in Thailand, (3) Theme 3: Cases of Original Archive Sources: Role of Wat Toward Previous Society in Thailand.

Theme 1: Historical and Background of Wat in Ancient Buddhism

The study have been found meaning of Wat is the synonym mentions point to Āvāsa, Arāma, Monastery, Temple, some of main constructions such as Vihara and Pagoda taken mentions point to the Wat. Wat quite means a residential of monasticism members

belong to Buddhism particular in the Buddha time Wat is dwelling of ascetics such as Bikhu, Bikhuni, and Sāmanera. The first forest monastery was donated by King Bimbisara. It was named Veluvana or the Bamboo Grove Monastery. The Wat definition is consistent the study of a doctoral dissertation name *"Buddhist State Monasteries in Early Medieval China and their Impact on East Asia"* by Liqun He mention monastery is a general term indicating a place where Buddhist monks and believers engage in religious activities (He, 2013). The fist reason foundation Wat find that is for Bhikkhus to live together in congregation. Second reason found as the character of the Buddhist Vassavāsa or rain retreat and it seems to have been the practice of no other sect. Third reason is congregated at an appointed place for the purpose of the Pātimokkha recital after that place becomes Āvāsa or Wat.

Theme 2: Role of Wat in previous Society in Thailand

The role mentions is individuals occupy particular social positions are expected to behave and how they expect others to behave. A role can be defined as a social position, behavior associated with a social position, or a typical behavior. I recommend role of Wat means part or character one takes and part played by the Wat in previous society in Thailand are includes function performed characteristically by someone, group of people, society, royal monarchy, Sangha, layman and anyone. The characters of role determine by characteristic behavior or expected behavior, a part to be played, or a script for social conduct. Role behaviour is influenced by following aspects the norms, determining a social situation, internal and external expectations are connected to a social role, and social sanctions punishment and reward are used to influence role behaviour. Observation, the role development will run by the society as much as individual because it trend individual persons weak to determine role and development. So the absolute allocation role really are conform by members in society.

Thai called Wat means the monastery or temple, there are two kinds of Wat in Thailand as long as is a country: the royal and the community or private ones. And two of tradition has been Arannavasi or forest temple and Gamavasi or Urban temple Wat in the previous Thailand was therefore often small. In larger Wat

there are combination of structures proposed to support activities and sacred buildings such Vihara, Ubosot, etc. containing Buddha statues, images and other objects of worship. So that is the essential accord the study of *"Doctrinal Analysis of the Origin and Evolution of The Thai Kammatthana Tradition with special reference to the Present Kammathana Ajahns"* (2014) by Zhi Yun Cai (Long Yun Shi). The study found the traditional of Thai monk stay in the Arannavasi or forest monastery practice experiences and memories of Ajahns in the Thai Kammatthana tradition by the way Wat took place as role of dwelling and practicing of Vinaya and Dhamma learning as long as previous till nowadays in Thailand (Zhi, 2014).

In the early Thailand years, before the first capital, there was no country of Thailand. It was a collection of city states each with their own kings. There were no defined borders, like the regional Thai dialects today are very similar. By the Thai history divided into four of capitals period, but for the study I take it any especially Bangkok or Early Ratanakosin took reigns of King Rama I till King Rama V; (1) Sukhothai Period (1238-1378 A.D.). (2) Ayutthaya Period (1350-1767 A.D.). (3) Thonburi Period (1767-1782) A.D.). (4) Bangkok or Early Ratanakosin Period *King Rama I* - King Rama V (1782-1910 A.D.) Buddhism first introduced in Thailand during the reign period of Emperor Asoka in third century B.C. was succeeded by Mahayana in the seventh century A.D. Buddhist society in the Sukhothai period found the king of Sukhothai was patron Buddhism as a centre of social because the situation of kings is a reincarnation of god and in the political the king stands in the position of father inhabitants is a position look like son. The strength of Paternalism, therefore, the king as a father can use the absolute power to govern the child to obey. The ancient scriptures finding were the lost, the Sangha communities were dispersed after Ayudhya loss of independence, trough the Thonburi period King Thak Sin or King Thonburi, and he had patron and several temples. After, Thailand founded a new capital by King Rama I, also the founder of the present reigning Chakri dynasty. One of primary tasks the king performed after building the capital was reviving the religion, repaired, monastic rules settled, religious texts collected and the study and practice of Buddhism revised to some degree. Period of King Rama IV found two sects of Dhammayatika and

Maha Nikaya.

Sake structural role of wat divided three functional meaning of Wat are (1) Buddhavas, (2) Sanghavas, (3) public area. There are complex of the Ubosot, Vihara, and a number of Stupa. The Stupa role was the centre of Wat represents the monument of Buddha Sāsana found it is the place where the relic of the Buddha was believed to be encased. The Vihara roles were first constructed to provide Buddhists with a space to perform a 'Puja' to the Stupa as well as to enshrine Buddha images, second it was a dwelling place of the Sangha, third it was treated as the centre of the Buddhavas together with the Stupa. The Buddha image role toward Thai society found the attractive point the faith and believable to the symbol of Buddha. The Buddha images in the Wat are one of the physical representations of the Buddhism ideology to designate the surrounded area within the cloisters as the heaven realm. Ubosot is the Mein hall was had been since the time of the Lord Buddha, monk used the Ubosot Hall together every fortnight for the observance of Ubosotha. Kumpang Keow or the semi-open space of the cloister in Wat was used by monks for walking meditation and performing the ritual of circumambulation. The sacred area, in this case, is expanded from the Stupa to the surrounding cloisters are also found as structures separated from the body of the Stupa.

Ritual role of Wat found as Ritual is a living symbol of sacredness and devotion. Ritual must be beautiful and inspiring, and the aesthetic sense is essential. As long as Buddhists still venerate the 'Triple Gems', the ritual still prevails. But ritual can lose its richness and beauty and no longer satisfy and calm the heart which is the objective of devotion. Wat was a place to gain the ritual by the marriage functions it is mental power through the physical act such as the ritual. Cremation is practiced by most people throughout the ethnic particular in the city most of funeral took in the Wat and in rural sometime funeral took house place but most of Buddhist Thai creamery took the body into the graveyard as must as in a part of Wat.

Sanghavas and Orders role of Wat in Thai society studies on the three majors are (1) Sanghavas role (2) Sangha role (3) Role of Administration of the Buddhist Order in Thailand. The study founds Sanghavas is the part of a monastery that still retains the

function of the original retreat of the Sangha. Although the rules are very strict, the monkhood is not separated from the lay world because the monasteries are always open to anyone who wants to retire there, either permanently or temporarily. The administration of the Buddhist Order in Thailand developed every time to time had influenced by the king and the government state but role of that directed to play on Thai society found such as (1) the close relationship and mutual assistance between Sangha and Thai Buddhist, (2) to be still faithfully adhered to the members of Bhikkhus, (3) each ecclesiastical group chief was performed through the king's approval, (4) which had been inheriting Buddha Sāsana, (5) to collect or Council decline Buddha teaching in the ruined time of state, (6) role of Wat mentioned duties and act by the administration act authorized of the state law. The study found consistent of result in the point of Sangha role or monks particular the leader act as a supporter helped guide activities and functions of Wat see in Master of Arts in Peace Studies dissertation named *"Wat Prayurawongsawas Warawihan's Role to Promote Multicultural of Tourism Community Based on Buddhist Peaceful Means"* (2016) by Siripattra Raksaphol, Graduate School, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University fond a part of study involved to role of the leader as The temple, Wat Prayurawongsawas Warawihan and its roles of promoting multicultural community tourism: it promotes developments of community's resources, learning and unity; in addition, its leader is the role model who has good knowledge and conduct (Raksaphol, 2016). That showed on role of leader Buddhist monks play in society in Thailand.

Rural social role toward Wat found it was under the monk guidance, assumed such diverse roles as a school, a clinic, a juvenile correctional facility for unruly youths, a vocational education centre, a hostel for travelers, an entertainment complex, a community kitchen and even a bank. The experiences of the monks and Buddhist lay leadership are convincing and are of seminal importance for Thai society. Monks have developed the following ten primary duties for monks to fulfill are (1) alms Gathering, (2) temple cleaning, (3) confession, (4) chanting and meditation, (5) reflection, (6) caring for your preceptor, (7) management, maintenance, exercise, (8) Dhamma and monastic studies, (9) caring for temple property

and responsibility, (10) behaviour worthy of respect. And role of Wat in the ancient of Thailand toward society represented are (1) academic complex, (2) hospital body and mind treatment, (3) architecture, art and Craft, (4) loge, (5) public kitchen. The education of Sangha was a role of Wat found consistent with the dissertation names *"Buddhist Architecture: Meaning and Conservation in the Context of Thailand"* (1996) a Doctor of Philosophy by Pinraj Khanjanusthiti found the formal education for the Sangha in Thailand has been long established and developed through time. Traditionally, the education emphasized the study of Dhamma and ecclesiastical matters. The sate that showed the role of Wat deal to the important role of Wat was education centre. And found the character role of Wat represented architecture, involved belief and role of the Buddhist Sangha as Buddhism has been practiced in Thailand since the beginning of the Thai kingdom in the early thirteenth century. Over the centuries, monastic architecture, as an outcome of the belief, has developed and changed its character along with the transformation of the religion and the role of the Buddhist Sangha (Khanjanusthiti, 1996).

Theme 3: Cases of Original Archive Sources: Role of Wat Toward Previous Society in Thailand

According to the study founds role of Wat in the Inscription of King Ramkhamhaeng the Great, the Ramkhamhaeng Inscription is a stone tablet recording the history of the Sukhothai Inscription can sum into 8 dimensions are (1) accommodation, (2) spiritual, (3) geography, (4) education, (5) social, (6) culture, (7) Architecture, (8) Museum.

Context of Wat and Buddhism Company toward Thai Society: In The Archive "Du Royaume De Siam or A New Historical Relation of The Kingdom of Siam By La Loubere", **it appeared in a primary source take to study the role of Wat in previous Thai Kingdom especially period of Ayutthaya** founds the role of Wat toward society in Thailand clearly through La Loubere noted contents of Thai society in Ayutthaya period, that represented Wat as a complex center of Thai society note of La Loubere finding several roles had Buddhist monk and company play on duties and Buddhist culture in the frame of Buddha doctrines presented above the study are;

(1) Wat is residential (2) Wat represent to be School and Work shop (3) Wat is treasury tasked collecting of Thai Art (4) Wat was origin of Thai tradition and culture (5) Root of Thai Habit and personality (6) Wat become a convention hall or party place (8) The specific role of Wat represented sanctified place (9) Some time Wat represented a warning center of society such a case of war or fire.

The study of Cases of Original Archive Sources: Role of Wat toward previous Society in Thailand found role of Wat toward previous Thai society have findings accord the dissertation name *"The Roles and The Impacts of The Roles of Wat Rajburana (Wat Chang Hai), Amphoe Khokphoe, Changwat Pattani."* (1999) Dissertation Master of Arts, Thaksin University by Kamals Boonpechthong. That found role of Wat Rajburana or Wat Changhai had four aspects (1) the role on supporting Buddhism as in religious precepts and education school, Sunday Buddhist study centre, Buddhist missionaries teaching and propagation, Buddhist studies in schools construction of religious places, permanent buildings and objects, (2) the role on social welfare as in funding Khokphoe Hospital and Napradoo Health Centre provided hospital buildings and medical equipments, (3) the role on education funding the Munee Rang Sarit School, developing Phamon Khatiwan School and giving scholarships to students and, (4) the role on the reservation of art, culture, rituals and local handicraft. The roles of Wat Rajburana (Wat Changhai) bring benefit to Buddhism in prospering the religion as well as developing the societies (Boonpechthong, 1999).

According to the study of Buddhism in Thailand: role of Wat toward society in the period of Sukhothai till Early Ratanakosin 1238 – 1910 A.D. the study finding Role of Wat especially the role play relative on Social behaviour only. Wat is a complex canter. I propose body of knowledge gainful to the Role of Wat toward Previous Society in Thailand as a set of 8 dimensions are *"S.C.E.N.T.W.S.B."* stands for:

1. **S : Social Welfare Role**, Wat acts as resident of people who abandon of abode, hospital cure physical pain and mental suffer, cafeteria and kitchen of starving persons, resting place, etc.

2. **C : Convention Place Role**, Wat represent as the meeting centre for each other events and functions relative the public duties of the society such as Buddhist ceremony, exhibition, festival, cerebration also the ordinary function and cremation function etc.
3. **E : Education Centre Role**, Wat acts as school teaching various kinds of science such as Buddhist knowledge for example Buddhist Study Pali, Sutta, Sila, Abhidhamma, Philosophy, Moral Education, Cosmology, Astronomy, Medical Science, Pharmacy, Architecture, Art, Handicraft, Instrument, Botanical and as well as popper educational resources especially instrument and teacher who is a members in that society some of monks or householders.
4. **N : National Art and Architecture Role**, Wat represent as the centre of several arts such as mural, sculpture, handicraft, and acts as the centre of Thai architecture view on the structural of Wat such as building of Ubosot, Vihara, Sala Chedi, etc.
5. **T : Traditional, Cultural and Buddhist Holy day Functions Role**, Wat services facilitations encourage people in the Thai society for the events, activities and practicing related Buddhist traditional and Buddhist holy day such as Visak Day Cerebration, Songkran festival, also Funeral traditional etc. And Thai Cultural supposed to Dana or giving, Wia and respect to the older etc.
6. **W : Warehouse Role**, Wat is the collecting many things of villages it represent like treasury because Thai offered too much wares, objectives, appliance, tool, equipment to share for general used support events and functions tack place at Wat and some time householder borrowed.
7. **S : Spiritual Centre Role**, Wat act as the centre mental, sacredness, ritual, belief, faith thought Buddhist ideology, Buddhist practicing, architecture, structures, building, activities and movement those become the elements to promote Wat as the centre of spiritual.
8. **B : Botanical and Public Garden Role**, Wat in the previous of

Thailand have large area stumble services as a botanical and public garden because of various trees, flowers and plant species as well as natural shrouding people like to go for resting and enjoy.

Finally the discussion of the Buddhism in Thailand: role of Wat toward society in the period of Sukhothai till Early Ratanakosin 1238 – 1910 A.D. display on the Figure for shortly and briefly to understanding, so that could answerers the questions of study are (1) What is the historical and background of Wat in ancient Buddhism? (2) What is Role of Wat in previous society in Thailand? (3) What is result of Analysis the Role of Wat toward previous society in Thailand? The Three answerers of the research questions presenting are:

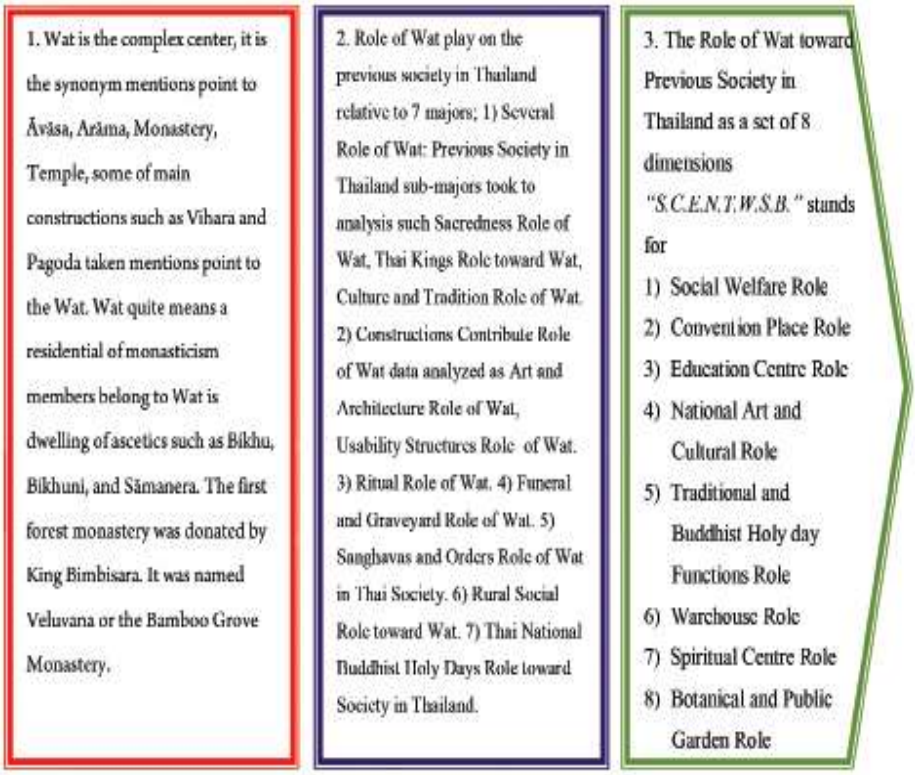


Figure: The Three Answerers of The Research Questions

7. CONCLUSION

The study have been found historical and background of Wat

in the meaning of Wat is the synonym mentions point to Āvāsa, Arāma, Monastery, Temple, some of main constructions such as Vihara and Pagoda taken mentions point to the Wat. Wat quite means a residential of monasticism members belong to Buddhism particular in the Buddha time Wat is dwelling of ascetics such as Bikhu, Bikhuni, and Sāmanera. The first forest monastery was donated by King Bimbisara.

According to the study of Thai history, Thailand is part of a sub continental called Suvarnabhumi. It is a place of Buddhism for a long time. The teachings of Buddhism spread to all regions of Thailand and relate to the way of life, creating the traditions, cultures, fine arts, architecture of Buddhism. It became a national treasure for Buddhists to be proud. Buddhism is closely related to everyday life. Even the etiquette Thais are taught to respect seniority. It is a way of life and practice to be correct according to traditions derived from Buddhist principles. The study Role of Wat in previous society in Thailand found phenomenal of the previous society in Thailand participated acting and playing relate to Wat finding are (1) ***Sukhothai,*** the study found role of Wat as well as the relationship of Wat and Thai society as a complex centre are to be accommodation, spiritual place, educations centre, social meeting, national culture centre, architecture, and museum. (2) ***Ayutthaya*** found the role of Wat toward Thai society act as representative functions of members such Bhikkhu, Sāmanera, nun, laymans almost Upaska and Upasika are residential, school and work shop, treasury, origin of Thai tradition and culture, root of Thai habit, lodge, convention hall, sanctified places, warning center. (3) ***Thonburi and Early Ratanakosin*** role of Wat toward Thai society are the place act as library to collect the Buddhism texts, Buddhist council took place, educations center, the museum, destination of traveler, cultural, architecture, and arts such mural gallery . The monk is a preacher and the temple is also a gathering place for people to be a meeting place or to purify people's minds. In the past, the temple had a great influence on the Thai's society until the present day. The wat is also the center of the Thais people and the Buddha word collections keep and spend to the society for a long time. So the wat is a source of gathering and creating culture.

The research suggests an interpretative the role of Wat toward society by having the Wat as a religious complex centre to keep people in communities together with good relationship in spite of their different eliminated passions. The makes role of Wat toward society necessity engaged people into the good conduction and representation also well know the position and situation in the social duty actions performed the good organization by the Role of Wat especially the role play relative on Social behaviour. The study finding Role of Wat is a complex canter. I propose body of knowledge gainful to the Role of Wat toward Previous Society in Thailand as a set of 8 dimensions are *"S.C.E.N.T.W.S.B."*

***

Bibliography

Boonpechthong K. (1999) *The Roles and The Impacts of The Roles of Wat Rajburana (Wat Chang Hai), Amphoe Khokphoe, Changwat Pattani.* Dissertation Master of Arts in Thai Studies. Thaksin University: Thailand.

Geoffrey B. and Cynthia C., (2002) *Tribal Communities in the Malay World: Historical, Cultural and Social Perspectives.* Singapore: International Institute for Asian Studies and Institute of Southeast Asian Studies. p.p 77-78.

He L., (2013) *Buddhist State Monasteries in Early Medieval China and their Impact on East Asia.* Dissertation: Doctor of Philosophy. Institute of East Asian Art History, Heidelberg University: Germany.

Khanjanusthiti P., (1996) *Buddhist Architecture: Meaning and Conservation in the Context of Thailand.* Dissertation Doctor of Philosophy. Institute of Advanced Architectural Studies. University of York: England.

Lepoer, B. L., (1989) *Thailand: A Country Study.* 6th ed. Washington D.C. USA: United States Government, Federal Research Division Library of Congress.

Noranit, S. (2002) *Buddhism in Thailand*. Bangkok: The World Buddhist University.

P.A. Payutto, Brahmagunabhorn, (2012) *Thai Buddhism in the Buddhist World: A Survey of the Buddhist Situation Against a Historical Background*. 7th ed. Bangkok.

Raksaphol S., (2016) *Wat Prayurawongsawas Warawihan's Role to Promote Multicultural of Tourism Community Based on Buddhist Peaceful Means.* Dissertation Master of Art in Peace Studies. Graduate School, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University: Bangkok. Thailand.

Reynolds Frank E. & Reynolds Mani B., (1982) *Three Worlds According to King Ruang: Thai Buddhist Cosmology,* Berkeley: Asian Humanities Motilal Banarsidass.

Wilson, D.A., (1962) *Politics in Thailand.* Thailand: Ithaca.

Zhi Y. C., (2014) *Doctrinal Analysis of the Origin and Evolution of The Thai Kammatthana Tradition with special reference to the Present Kammathana Ajahns.* Dissertation Degree Doctor of Philosophy. The Faculty of the Department of Religious Studies. University of the West: California. USA.

ENGAGED BUDDHISM IN MODERN THAILAND

Nun Daria Mikheeva (Sucitta)*

INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS ENGAGED BUDDHISM?

Engaged Buddhism is a term of modern origin, which describes a movement within the Buddhist religion. Engaged Buddhism seeks to apply Buddhist principles to solve social, economic, environmental, and political problems – in a more direct and activist way than it has been done traditionally. It is a global movement that consists of monastics and lay followers, from traditional Buddhist countries as well from the West. Although engaged Buddhism still focuses on personal spiritual development, it places a special emphasis on reducing social suffering through social activities and reforms.

In the West, at an early stage of development of Buddhism, it was common to erroneously emphasize the social aspect of Buddhism as something new to the religion. The fact is that traditional Buddhism has always paid much attention to the social sphere and actively participated in it. Thus, in the Theravada Buddhist countries, the Buddhist sangha played a significant role in the life of the society and always participated in the solution of significant social issues. Mahayana Buddhism in Central Asia (in Tibet and Mongolia) has long been a state religion, its hierarchies were the heads of the central government, and monasteries played a crucial role in regional governance. A great role in the social life of the peoples was played also by Far Eastern Buddhism.

* International Buddhist Studies College (IBSC), Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya, Thailand

While the canonical writings are focused on monastic order, personal training in morality, meditation and right view, they also include teachings on social service and policies to promote general welfare. The Pali jatakas illustrate the ideals of compassion, generosity, and dedication using the life stories of bodhisattva, the future Buddha, been born as various animals and people from different social backgrounds. For an engaged Buddhist, bodhisattva can be seen as a role model in developing spiritual perfections in order to help others.

Texts like the Cakkavattisihanada sutta and the Kutadanta sutta discuss that violence and crimes of property are often related to poverty, and assert that the righteous king should provide necessary means for farmers, merchants and workers to promote harmonious society. Instructions to the ideal monarch, such as the Dhammapadatthakatha and Dasarajadhamma (the ten duties of the king), and later Mahayana texts such as the Jewel Garland of Royal Counsels and Japanese Prince Shotuku's Fourteen Article Constitution, promote social welfare and suggest Buddhist conceptions of a humane society.

The monastic order itself embodies values and social options associated with the modern understanding of progressive society. Originally the Sangha was equally accessible to men and women of all castes, the members were praised on the base of personal attainment rather than birth or wealth, and a program of self-cultivation and community development was based on rational analysis and practical training rather than ritual.

Thus, Buddhism in its original source and throughout the history assumed engagement of some degree, however, contemporary turn towards engagement is indeed a directional shift, which remains grounded in the Buddhist tradition.

Followers of socially engaged Buddhism believe that at a time when modernist ideology and social practices greatly influence the life of traditional societies practicing Buddhism, when the world of traditional Buddhism collided with the processes of globalization, traditional forms of sangha's social activity ceased to meet the challenges of modernity, which led to a need to develop new forms of social involvement.

It is important to note that the primary goal of traditional Buddhism is not a peaceful society but the discovery of genuine freedom by each person. However, it has never been asserted that the conditions of society are unimportant or unrelated to this more important goal. In this sense, socially engaged Buddhism differs from the traditional not by fact, but rather by the degree and ways of involvement in solving social, economic, and environmental problems in the world.

To understand the importance and relevance of this movement more deeply, it necessary to consider the history and causes of its emergence. We can see that engaged Buddhism appears as an answer to rapidly changing reality with its new challenges. This is confirmed by the fact that the movement appeared in each school of Buddhism, not only in Mahayana, where the Bodhisattva is the sole ideal of a Buddhist practitioner. This article touches on the subject of engaged Buddhism in the most conservative of its schools, Theravada Buddhism, and examines the case of the "Peace Village", which is a project led in the North-Eastern Thailand.

ORIGINS OF ENGAGED BUDDHISM IN THE MODERN ERA

The term "engaged Buddhism" was introduced by the Thien Buddhism teacher Thích Nhất Hạnh, who in a series of articles drew attention to the need for the Buddhist Sangha to take a more active stance in resolving urgent social issues. He formed The Order of Interbeing (Tiep Hien) in the mid-1960's and ordained six people – three men and three women – who were members of the School of Youth for Social Service. At that time, Vietnam War was escalating and the teachings of the Buddha were desperately needed to combat the hatred, violence, and divisiveness enveloping his country.

In his teachings on engaged Buddhism, Thích Nhất Hạnh was inspired by the ideas of the Buddhist reform movement in China, developed by the teacher of the Thien School, Daisi (Tàixū, 1890-1947), and the teacher of the Sanlun Yun School, Shuo Daoshi (Yìnshùn Dǎoshī, 1906-2005) (this movement in China was called "humanistic Buddhism"). Subsequently, these ideas became widespread in Taiwan thanks to the efforts of Wujiang (Zhèngyán,

born 1937) and Sinnyun (Xīngyún, born in 1927).

Initially, Thích Nhất Hạnh called his approach "wordly Buddhism". During the Vietnam War, he and his sangha sought to respond to the suffering they had seen around them and exerted much effort. They viewed this activity as part of their practice of meditation and awareness. Thích Nhất Hạnh set forth his vision of what attitudes should be cultivated in the new conditions of the Buddhist community in the fourteen precepts of socially engaged Buddhism. The new six ordainees of Thích Nhất Hạnh's order vowed to study, practice, and observe the fourteen precepts, which is a blend of traditional Buddhist training and contemporary social concerns.

Each in itself, the precepts are not something innovative for Buddhism. They represent the three trainings – training in morality, training in concentration, and training in wisdom, which are among the very core Buddhist teachings. However, there is a fundamental difference between the traditional order given by the three training starting with morality and the order of the fourteen precepts, which opens up with rules related to knowledge, i.e. wisdom. The first and the second precept prescribe "not be bound to any doctrine, theory, or ideology", to "avoid being narrow-minded and bound to present views", as well as to "be open to receive others' viewpoints". This particular order can be considered as a response to the problem of interreligious conflicts, which are acute in some societies. Absence of a strong doctrinal binding greatly contributed to the popularity of Thích Nhất Hạnh's teachings as a rationale for social practices in which schools of different doctrinal orientation can be combined, and even those belonging to different confessions.

Thích Nhất Hạnh and his followers founded peace-oriented educational and religious institutions during the Vietnam War, led antiwar protests, rebuilt villages, resettled refugees, and published articles and books on the crisis facing his country and the Buddhist tradition. The government opposed these actions, and thousands of Nhất Hạnh's followers were killed or jailed. In 1963 photographs of a burning monk on a Saigon street appeared in the international media, illustrating the determination of the newly engaged Buddhists. After the war, Thich Nhất Hạnh, exiled from his country,

spread the practice and teachings of engaged Buddhism in more than eighty-five books of commentary, poetry, and meditation, through mindfulness retreats at Plum Village in southern France, and in public gatherings throughout the world (King, 1996; Hunt-Perry and Fine, 2000).

In recent years, Engaged Buddhism has grown to become a sub-field in Buddhist academic study, and has spread to Buddhist communities throughout the world. The range of issues considered by engaged Buddhists from across all streams of Buddhism now include peace, the environment, consumerism, racism, prisons, hospice care, globalization, gender, ethics, and more.

ENGAGED BUDDHISM IN THAILAND

It has already been noted that traditionally Buddhism has had a great impact on social life in the Theravada countries, especially in the villages, where monasteries could serve as religious and educational centers, provide medical assistance, and serve as places where the villagers gathered to socialize and spend their leisure time.

In the modern history of Thailand, a series of reforms, including the religious reform of King Mongkut, gradually changed the place of Buddhism in the social life. In the process of rapid urbanization, which affected the environment and lifestyle of the people , temples gradually ceased to be the centers of public life. Rapid technical and economic development against the backdrop of globalization gave rise to a number of issues, which cause concerns and attempts to find urgent solutions. Consumerism, environmental pollution, sexual exploitation, drug and alcohol addiction are among the most notable problems related to recent changes in Thai society. Less related to the modern lifestyle but still apparent, major problems include economic problem (poverty), political conflicts, restriction of free speech, and violence in the Southern provinces.

A number of contemporary Buddhist thinkers raised the question whether Buddhism can help to solve these and other problems of modern Thailand. Outstanding Buddhist figures like Buddhadasa Bhikkhu and P.A. Payutto predicted the need to apply Buddhist teachings to address the problems of the modern

"globalized" world already at the end of the last century. Enough to remember the "three wishes" of Ajahn Buddhadasa, in which he formulates the important problems of our time:

There are 3 wishes in my life: 1) Help Buddhists or followers of any religion attain the deepest meanings of their religion. 2) Develop good understanding among religions. 3) Usher fellow human beings out of the influence of materialism. And I have constantly worked towards the perfection of these 3 wishes. If people in each religion fail to attain the heart of their religion, there would be no way an inter-religious understanding could be fostered. Thus, we must all try to help each other attain the heart of our religion together. Ultimately, they will be above the influence of materialism together.

Analyzing the "three wishes" and their interrelation, one can come to the conclusion that Buddhadasa not only emphasized the need for interreligious dialogue and rising above materialism, but also believed that the victory over materialism is a goal that can only be pursued by people united by high spiritual principles. Dr. Suwanna Satha-Anand noticed that significant changes occurred in the society in the recent decades, which mark a transition from materialist to hyper-materialist reality with its own features and challenges:

"...some twenty-four years after the passing away of Ajahn Buddhadasa, the materialist world does not primarily indicate the world of commercialized goods and services, but it indicates a world of hyper-materialist reality, made possible by the advancement and proliferation of digital technologies. New businesses are created every day, new avatars are being created every second, new projections of the future are making decisions on the lives of many marginalized people. How do we overcome or rise above this "materialism?"It is no longer just materialism of things, sitting there waiting for our consumption or greed, it has become a master monster who conjures up new things, forming new selves, deciding new government policies, dictating new international trades, nurturing new dreams for the younger generation".

The above statements allow to conclude that social practices of Buddhism in general, and of Thai Buddhism in particular, must be

revised in accordance with the rapidly changing reality in order to solve problems and preserve the important place of Buddhism in the society. This opinion was also held by Sulak Sivaraksa, probably the most prominent social critic, activist, and a major contemporary exponent of socially engaged Buddhism in Thailand.

The foundation for Sulak's activism was found in the teachings of the Buddha. In A Buddhist Vision for Renewing Society, he writes, "Buddhist practice inevitably entails a concern with social and political matters, and these receive a large share of attention in the teaching of the Buddha as it is represented in the Pali Canon. To attempt to understand Buddhism apart from its social dimension is mistaken." He argued that Buddhists need to practice the Dhamma in a manner that is relevant to today's socio-political context. Sulak did not make an attempt to re-interpret Buddhism but discussed the ways individuals should apply the Buddha's teachings to modern socio-economic and political challenges. Sulak has been greatly inspired by his work with Thich Nhat Hanh and the Dalai Lama, and the two most progressive and influential Thai monks of the 20th century, Ajahn Buddhadasa and P. A. Payutto.

In Sulak's most widely read book, Seeds of Peace, he presents the idea of small "b" Buddhism. Firstly, he encourages practitioners to develop their character based upon the Buddha's teachings of mindfulness, tolerance, and interconnectedness. He believes this will naturally lead to the deeper understanding of how one's spiritual progress is related directly to the degree we work to relieve suffering within society. Progress along one's spiritual path and social reform, then, are inextricably linked.

Sulak also reinterprets the five precepts for contemporary Buddhists and extends them to society at large. For example, regarding the first precept to abstain from killing, Sulak suggests the individual to be also aware of indirect actions, which might support racial conflicts, wars, or killing animals for human consumption. Considering the second precept of abstaining from stealing, Sulak questions the implications of capitalism, and of the depletion of natural resources. Stopping global structures of male dominance and the exploitation of women is a natural extension of one's third precept of abstaining from sexual misconduct. And vowing to

abstain from false speech would naturally bring into question how mass media and mainstream education promotes a prejudiced and biased view of the world. Finally, Sulak believes the fifth precept to avoid intoxicants deals with nothing short of international peace and justice because, "the Third World farmers grow heroin, coca, coffee, and tobacco because the economic system makes it impossible for them to support themselves growing rice and vegetables."

Sulak reserves his most pointed criticism for his fellow Buddhists and decries extravagant rituals and those concerned with titles and shallow ceremony. He warns against institutionalized elements of Buddhism that offer little spirituality but rather perpetuate patriarchal hierarchies, myth, superstition, and insincere rituals – what Sulak calls Buddhism with a capital "B". Whether it is government-backed clergy or simply large Buddhist organizations, Sulak sees the seeds of chauvinism, prejudice, and nationalism being sown when the Buddhist teachings are used by individuals and groups to advance a politically-motivated agenda.

Sulak's activism has transformed in the last decade. Previously he focused on defined issues or country-specific problems. Now he struggles against globalization and what he sees as structural violence. Structural violence, Sulak writes in his book, The Wisdom of Sustainability, is the "systematic ways [that] a society's resources are distributed unequally and unfairly, preventing people from meeting their basic needs."

To understand how these structures of suffering are perpetuated, Sulak returns to the fundamental Buddhist teaching which asserts every individual has within them seeds of greed, hatred, and delusion—the three poisons. These three poisons are at the root of our suffering. Through the practice of meditation and contemplation, the poisons can be rooted out completely and transformed into generosity, loving-kindness, and wisdom. While this is the classic Buddhist presentation, Sulak extends these from the individual to the world, and asserts that the three poisons are used immorally by the rich and powerful.

Sulak explains that personal greed manifests in society as the insatiable desire for accumulation, an ever expanding "possessiveness" - in other words, capitalism, consumerism

and natural resources extraction that ignores the limits of the environment. Secondly, he sees individuals' seeds of hatred manifest in the world as militarism. Thirdly, he criticizes advertisers and the mainstream media, which promotes useless products and unwholesome ideas.

Sulak disagreed that the world today is at the highest mark of human development, because this often unspoken sentiment prevents the peoples of the world from pursing other aspirations and from thinking about alternative ways to improve or maintain their livelihood and traditions. When Sulak speaks about globalization, one senses a profound sadness for his home country and the world.

"The diverse ways of life worldwide increasingly dance to the same tune of consumer culture, which insists that ultimate happiness can be achieved by the never-ending consumption of goods and services. This oppressive environment is like a tightening noose that will squeeze the life out of meaningful freedom, democracy, and human rights."

Sulak founded a number of organizations which include Komol Keemthong Foundation in 1971 in order to promote the idealism of the youth, and Sathirakoses-Nagapradipa Foundation, which works on environmental issues, on questions of conservation and natural resources, and also attempts to help artists and poets. Wongsanit Ashram, connected with this foundation, accepts young people who come for retreats to reflect, learn, and meditate. Sulak also founded the Thai Inter-Religious Commission for Development, in which people work with Christians and Muslims on questions of alternative development.

Referring to the work of such public figures as Buddhasa Bhikkhu, P.A. Payutto, and Sulak Sivaraksa, one can not but recognize their great contribution to understanding the problems of modern society and the ways to solve them. However, it remains an open question whether their activities and organizations could transform the situation in Thai society, and change attitudes toward consumption, use of natural resources, environmental problems, and personal responsibly for national problems at the global level. Urgent problems in Thai society makes us think of more effective solutions that could cover a greater amount of people in the country

and make a bigger difference for the society. In this connection, the "Peace Village" project, which is being led in one of the villages of northeastern Thailand, is of great interest.

THE PEACEFUL VILLAGE OF TA KOY NANG

The Peace Village project is an attempt to create a village community where internal (psychological, emotional) and external conflicts of residents are minimized. Particular emphasis is placed on inner well-being, since an attempt to control only the external environment, according to Buddhist teachings, can not create conditions for peaceful existence. The project began in November 2012 and was developed by the Master's Degree Program on Peace Studies at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University. Ta Koy Nang village in the northeast of Thailand was selected as the original community for development.

The project included activities that can be divided into 4 groups: physical, behavioral, mental, and intellectual development. Taking care for the physical needs of people is essential to create a suitable environment for the other three types of development. Activities for physical development of community included disaster management during the flood (providing necessities for survival), village restoration (repairing the main road leading to the village, developing main water supply), providing medical support, and inviting officials to offer career advice.

Behavioral development is based on ethical educational for the villagers to encourage them to apply five precepts in daily life. Activities were organized both inside and outside the monastery. Children in Ta Koy Nang Village School participated in events to foster moral behaviour; guest speakers were invited to teach students and adults. Events to train and develop the mind were aimed at improving mental health and stability so the villagers can endure stressful situation and adapt to changing conditions more easily. It has been observed that through chanting, meditation and listening to the Dhamma people are able to develop a more positive outlook and improve their relationships with family members, coworkers, and friends.

A seminar on peace was organized where villagers could share

their experiences, difficulties, as well as opinions on the project and further development of their village. More than 50 doctoral students were invited to participate and discuss the means to improve this project in the future.

There are around 75000 villages in Thailand. Supporters of the project believe that it is impossible to achieve peace at the country level unless life in the village will be improved. Buddhism provides a complete system of knowledge to develop all aspects of life and avoid conflicts at mental, personal, and social level. Peace Village project is aimed at creating an exemplary community that applies Buddhist teachings for village management and personal development.

CONCLUSION

The Pali Canon demonstrates that Buddhist teachings initially included methods and guidelines for harmonious life in the society and prevention of social conflicts. All schools of Buddhism throughout their history have shown involvement in solving social problems, and at certain stages of history played a key role in this aspect. In Theravada countries, a century ago monasteries served not only as religious centers, but also provided basic education, medical care, and general advice for people. In the 21st century, due to the rapid urbanization of Thailand and other traditional Buddhist countries, the social role of monasteries has significantly diminished.

Globalization, rapid economic growth, and development of technologies led to the emergence of new problems, including threatening ecological situation, increasing stress, and aggravation of social problems. According to some prominent social critics and religious thinkers in Thailand, Buddhism has a great potential to solve problems in the modern society, be it economic, political or environmental problems. In the article, some practical attempts to apply Buddhist teachings to solve various social problems were examined in order to give examples of socially engaged Buddhism in Thailand.

There is a growing number of Buddhist projects in Thailand that are engaged in such activities. Their scope includes environmental

problems, alcohol and drug addiction, education problems, and many others. The teachings of prominent Buddhist teachers often concern social conflicts, whether at the family level or at the global level. Although Theravada Buddhism is often seen as "egoistic" Buddhism, or a doctrine aimed only at individuals own liberation, it is impossible to ignore the fact that throughout the history its role in solving social problems has been and remains significant.

UNITED KINGDOM

SOKA GAKKAI INTERNATIONAL IN THE UNITED KINGDOM IN THE 21ST CENTURY: AND THE PRACTICE OF NICHIREN BUDDHISM

Jamie Cresswell

SGI members practise the Buddhism of Nichiren (1222-1282) which is a Japanese Lotus Sutra based teaching in the Mahayana tradition. The core text is the Kumarajiva translation (406 CE) from Sanskrit to classical Chinese of Sad-dharma-pundarika-sutra, the title of which was pronounced 'Myoho-renge-kyo' in thirteenth century Japan. Nichiren taught the practice of reciting passages from the Lotus Sutra and the title, or daimoku, Nam-myoho-renge-kyo. Nichiren based his school on the writings of T'ien-t'ai (or Chih-I 538-597) and in particular his Maka Shikan ('Great Concentration and Insight'). This text expressed the principle of 'ichinen sanzen' or 'three thousand realms in a single moment of life'. T'ien-t'ai extrapolated ten states of life (or 'ten worlds') from the Lotus Sutra, demonstrating that every person has the same inner life potential as Shakyamuni, including the latent life state of Buddhahood. Nichiren taught that the Buddha nature can be activated and actualised in our daily lives through faith, practice for both oneself and others and study. He noted the Lotus Sutra's

*. **Director,** Centre for Applied Buddhism – UK

description of countless Bodhisattvas who emerged from the earth promising to spread the Buddha's teachings in the future.

Nichiren's collected writings (or 'Gosho') are the basis for the study carried out by SGI members. The texts include letters of encouragement written to individuals which provide practical guidance on applying Buddhist principles in daily life, as well as doctrinal theses explaining his view of the importance of the Lotus Sutra compared with other Buddhist texts.

Nichiren was a priest in 13th century Japan, and as a youth was confused by the conflicting and contradictory approaches of the Buddhist schools being practised at the time. He himself later wrote that he vowed to become the wisest person in Japan, in order to ensure that his parents would become happy. He studied at the key monasteries in Japan and focussed on the Lotus Sutra.

THE LOTUS SUTRA

The Lotus Sutra or Sad-dharma-pundarika-sutra is a Mahayana Buddhist text which was first translated from Sanskrit into Chinese around 255CE. The translation by the Central Asian scholar-monk Kumarajiva done in 406 is the version most widely known in China and other countries within East Asian Buddhism. Kumarajiva's version (Miao-fa-lien-hua-ching, or Sutra of the Lotus of the Wonderful Law) became the basis for T'ien-t'ai's teachings that spread in China, Korea and Japan. This was expressed as 'ichinen sanzen' or 'three thousand realms in a single moment of life'. T'ien-t'ai would extrapolate ten states of life (or 'ten worlds') from the Lotus Sutra demonstrating that every person has the same life potential as Shakyamuni, including the life state of Buddhahood.

This is a brief introduction to the points in the Lotus Sutra which Nichiren would later consider to be of great importance in his interpretation of the sutra. The sutra starts with Shakyamuni and an enormous assembly of listeners on Eagle Peak. The Buddha declares that the three vehicles (the teachings for voice-hearers, cause-awakened ones, and bodhisattvas) are not ends in themselves but only means to lead people to the one supreme vehicle of Buddhahood. The second chapter ('Hoben' or 'Expedient Means') reveals 'shoho jisso' or 'the true aspect of all phenomena'

indicating theoretically that there is no essential difference between an ordinary person of the nine worlds and a Buddha, and that the potential for enlightenment exists in everyone. The chapter goes on to declare that Buddhas appear in the world for one reason: to expound the one Buddha vehicle, to enable all people to attain the Buddha wisdom. Shakyamuni then shares various parables which lead to deeper understanding by members of the assembly. The Devadatta (12th) chapter illustrates dramatically the principle that all people can equally attain Buddhahood with the examples of the Buddha's evil cousin, Devadatta, and the daughter of the Dragon King, who is a female child in reptile form.

A central part of the Sutra is the famous Ceremony in the Air, when an enormous Treasure Tower or stupa containing Prabhutaratna (or Taho, Many Treasures) Buddha emerges and becomes the locus of the teaching. Although a number of Shakyamuni's disciples say they will spread the teachings of the Lotus Sutra in the age of conflict expected to follow, he instead reveals countless Bodhisattvas who emerge from the earth and says these are his original disciples he has been teaching since long ago. In the 'Juryo' or 'Lifespan' (16th) chapter, Shakyamuni reveals his original enlightenment in the inconceivably distant past. He says that he has always been in this 'saha' (samsara) or impure world using various expedient means to teach and convert the people. The later chapters of the Sutra are concerned with the propagation of the sutra and the benefits of doing so. Shakyamuni transfers the sutra to the Bodhisattvas of the Earth before the assembly disperses.

Taking the example of Bodhisattva Fukyo (or Never Disparaging) from chapter 20 of the Sutra, whose practice involved expressing deep respect to everyone he met, we see that the Lotus Sutra contains principles of equality, respect and transformation.

THE T'IEN-T'AI SCHOOL

Chi'i asserted that Shakyamuni's ultimate teaching is to be found in the Lotus Sutra. The three major texts of the T'ien-t'ai school, compiled by Chang-an, were all based on the Lotus Sutra: (1) The Words and Phrases of the Lotus Sutra (587 CE); (2) The Profound Meaning of the Lotus Sutra (593 CE); (3) Great Concentration

and Insight (594 CE). Key principles developed by Chi'I are 'ichinen sanzen' (three thousand realms in a single moment of life') and 'santai' ('the unification of the three truths'). Ichinen sanzen is based on the Ten Factors in the Hoben chapter, the Ten Worlds (and Mutual Possession of those worlds) extrapolated from the Juryo chapter and the three realms of the individual, society and the land. Chi'i taught that enlightenment is achieved by observation of one's mind, through which one can discern 'the region of the unfathomable' or Buddhahood.

The T'ien-t'ai doctrine was transmitted to Japan by Dengyo (767-822) who established the Tendai school based on those teachings.

NICHIREN AND NAM-MYOHO-RENGE-KYO

Nichiren (1222-1282) studied both Buddhist and secular teachings at a Tendai temple called Seicho-ji in 1233. Following years of study he became convinced that the highest of Shakyamuni's teachings is the Lotus Sutra and that the great pure Law that leads directly to enlightenment in the Latter Day of the Law is implicit in the sutra. He took and developed the principles expounded by Chi'i, in particular teaching how individuals can reveal their Buddhahood in this lifetime based on a practical understanding of ichinen sanzen. He also saw that his was the mission of Bodhisattva Superior Practices who, according to the Lotus Sutra, was entrusted with the task of propagating that Law in the Latter Day. At noon on the 28th day of the fourth month he preached a sermon where he taught that the essence of the sutra is its title (pronounced Myoho-renge-kyo in medieval Japan) and that Nam-myoho-renge-kyo is the very teaching in the Latter Day of the Law that enables all people to attain Buddhahood in this lifetime.

Nichiren criticised the interpretations of other Buddhist schools which led to a combined series of persecutions from those schools as well as from the government authorities. He was twice exiled, and on one occasion was taken to be executed, but on each occasion he was able to transform the situation and reveal his great life force. He was a prolific writer, especially in exile, and his most important works are now translated into English and other modern languages. As well as teaching the chanting of Nam-myoho-renge-

kyo, Nichiren also inscribed a mandala, known as the Gohonzon, for his disciples, and taught that it is a mirror reflecting the existence of the enlightened state of Buddhahood in every person. The form of the mandala is a visual representation in calligraphy of the Ceremony in the Air from the Lotus Sutra with the phrase Nam-myoho-renge-kyo representing the Treasure Tower in which the two Buddhas Shakyamuni and Prabhutaratna were seated. Chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo to the Gohonzon is the cause for this life state to emerge, transforming both the individual and the environment. Nichiren quoted from the Vimalakirti Sutra to say that if the minds of living beings are impure, then their land is also impure, but if their minds are pure, so is their land. This principle is at the heart of the concept that inner change based on the world of Buddhahood will create the Buddha land around us.

Nichiren Buddhism in the 20th Century – the growth of the Soka Gakkai

In 1930 in Japan the Soka Gakkai was formed by two educators: Tsunesaburo Makiguchi and Josei Toda. Gakkai means society or association, and soka means 'value creating'. Drawing on the principles of Nichiren Buddhism they intended to establish a new philosophy of education, developing Makiguchi's theories of value creation. Makiguchi saw in the teachings and practice of Nichiren a means for leading a life of the highest values and the greatest good. He conducted discussion meetings at which members of the Soka Gakkai talked about the results of their Buddhist faith, which Makiguchi referred to as experimental evidence of its efficacy. In 1943, refusing to comply with the military government's demand to accept the Shinto talisman, Makiguchi and Toda were imprisoned, charged with violation of the Peace Preservation Law. Makiguchi died on 18th November 1944 having continued to challenge the religious and political views of his captors until the end. Toda was released in July 1945, shortly before the end of hostilities. He had realised in prison that the Buddha referred to in the Lotus Sutra is life itself, and that he shared the mission of the Bodhisattvas of the Earth described in the sutra. He re-established the Soka Gakkai, but did not limit its membership to those in education. He issued a declaration in September 1957 calling for the abolition of atomic

and hydrogen bombs urging young people to work towards that end. By the time Toda died in 1958 the membership of the Soka Gakkai was over a million.

The third President was Daisaku Ikeda (1928-) who assumed the role in 1960 aged 32. He founded SGI (Soka Gakkai International) in January 1975 which links together practitioners in now 192 countries around the world. In Europe there are around 140,000 members of SGI (Italy has 80,000, France has 22,000, the UK has 16,000, Germany 7,000 and Spain around 5,000). In pursuit of peace, Ikeda has tirelessly conducted dialogues and exchanges with scholar and cultural as well as political leaders from around the world. In 1972 he met British historian Arnold Toynbee and their dialogue was published by Oxford University Press as 'Choose Life'. He has founded several institutions to promote peace, culture and education including Soka University and other Soka schools, the Min-On Concert Association, the Tokyo Fuji Art Museum and the Institute of Oriental Philosophy. In the 1990s he founded the Boston Research Center for the 21st Century and the Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research, both dedicated to Peace Studies. As non-governmental organisations of the United Nations dedicated to peace, the Soka Gakkai and SGI actively encourage support for the United Nations and sponsor peace and anti-nuclear weapons exhibits and fund-raising campaigns for refugees.

Based on the practice and philosophy of Nichiren's teachings, the Soka Gakkai advocates an individual inner reformation it calls 'human revolution', the ultimate goal of which is a peaceful world and the happiness of humanity. It upholds the Lotus Sutra's philosophy that all people inherently possess within them the Buddha nature, the potential for attaining Buddhahood, and can bring it forth through Buddhist practice. Based on this teaching, the Soka Gakkai has been endeavouring to establish the sanctity of life and the dignity of humanity as fundamental universal ideals. The Soka Gakkai does not view Buddhism as an exclusively spiritual or metaphysical pursuit, but as an applied philosophy of life. It encourages Buddhist practice as a means for people to develop the character, wisdom and strength to improve themselves and their circumstances, to contribute to society, and to help bring about

happiness and peace in the world.

BEING SOCIALLY ENGAGED

The practice of Nichiren Buddhism involves a twice daily ceremony of reciting two passages from the Lotus Sutra (gongyo) and chanting daimoku (the phrase Nam-myoho-renge-kyo). For most of our members this takes place in their homes, around an altar with a Gohonzon which is transcribed and bestowed on our members. We teach the importance of 'faith, practice and study' and emphasise that each of these has a personal aspect as well as an aspect of being for other people.

The majority of organised activities are based around members' homes. There are four centres in the UK but far more meetings are held in peoples houses where up to a dozen or so people can meet to chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo and share experiences about the difference that Nichiren Buddhism has made to the various people's lives. These are known as 'discussion meetings' and are the heart of the Buddhist community (sangha). In the UK at present there are 617 local groups or districts where discussion meetings are arranged. This figure is growing all the time. The discussion meeting is seen as the opportunity for guests to be introduced to Nichiren Buddhism and to share their own perspective. In addition other meetings are held to study Nichiren's letters, to chant together and other meetings as necessary to support people in the development of their faith and practice. The process of human revolution is considered to be a contemporary way of expressing the inner change that Nichiren referred to as revealing one's Buddhahood.

In 1280 Nichiren wrote: "Becoming a Buddha is nothing extraordinary. If you chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo with your whole heart, you will naturally become endowed with the Buddha's thirty-two features and eighty characteristics." Earlier he had written: "If you wish to free yourself from the sufferings of birth and death you have endured since time without beginning and to attain without fail unsurpassed enlightenment in this lifetime, you must perceive the mystic truth that is originally inherent in all living beings. This truth is Myoho-renge-kyo. Chanting Myoho-renge-kyo will therefore enable you to grasp the mystic truth innate in all life."

In his seminal 'Rissho Ankoku Ron' (or 'On Establishing the Correct Teaching for the Peace of the Land') written in the seventh month of 1260 and delivered to Japan's retired regent, Hojo Tokiyori (retired, but still the most influential person in Japan), Nichiren urged a reformation of the underlying philosophy in the government of Japan. He wrote: "Therefore you must quickly reform the tenets that you hold in your heart and embrace the one true vehicle, the single good doctrine [of the Lotus Sutra]. If you do so, then the threefold world will become the Buddha land, and how could a Buddha land ever decline?"

This idea that inner change results in a change in the environment is at the heart of the SGI activities. Each person has their own personal interests and concerns, but the SGI serves as the sangha and an oasis in the busy swirl of life where members can meet with like-minded people, study Buddhist principles and hear experiences of transformation. Members then will return to their own particular arena of work or interest and take action to make a difference.

As an organisation SGI-UK supports a number of projects such as the UK's Network of Buddhist Organisation's 'Buddhist Action Month' in June each year, where SGI members take part in initiatives such as to clear litter from public spaces, and to transform other community facilities. Funds have been raised through concerts and cultural events for UNICEF and charities like War Child.

EXHIBITIONS

SGI-UK regularly works together with other agencies to put on exhibitions about relevant topics. Titles of exhibitions include: "Transforming the Human Spirit – from a culture of war to a culture of peace", "Gandhi, King, Ikeda – A legacy of building peace" (created by Dr Martin Luther King Jr's alma mater Morehouse College, USA), "Seeds of Change" (linked to the UN Earth Charter), "Seeds of Hope" which stresses the interconnectedness the rest of the community and the need to broaden the sphere of compassion and concern.

EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

An annual Hiroshima Peace Day is held on or near the anniversary of Josei Toda's 1957 declaration against nuclear weapons. In 2015 the

guest speaker was Rebecca Sharkey, chair of ICAN-UK. An annual Academic Symposium is held at the national centre, Taplow Court, where invited academics discuss the principles set out in Ikeda's annual peace proposals which are aimed at the United Nations.

INTERFAITH EVENTS

Many SGI-UK members are involved in interfaith and multi-faith activities in their local communities. The Three Faiths Project was instigated by SGI-UK and involved 24 young people from three religious institutions in South London: the local mosque, a Christian church and SGI youth members. This project received government funding and was endorsed by Sadiq Khan MP (the Labour candidate to be London's next mayor). Based on the spirit of tolerance and respect, SGI looks to engage in dialogue and work together with others towards a resolution of fundamental issues facing the world.

PEACE AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS ABOLITION

SGI-UK members are also active in events such as the 'People's Decade for Nuclear Abolition' which seeks to raise awareness of the humanitarian consequences of either an accidental or intentional nuclear weapons detonation.

2017 marked the sixtieth anniversary of second Soka Gakkai president Toda's declaration calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons. It is from this declaration that the SGI draws inspiration in the ongoing efforts to build broad public support for a world without nuclear weapons. SGI members deeply hold to the need to achieve the prohibition and abolition of these weapons as an initiative of the international community – what might be called an international people's law – that would be established by many state and civil society actors working together.

PERSONAL ACTIONS

The majority of actions for peace are the ones taken by members who are undergoing this process of 'human revolution' or inner transformation in their daily lives. The monthly discussion meetings, mentioned above, have been a tradition since the Soka Gakkai's founding in 1930.These are places where participants come to

understand that they are not alone in their problems. People derive courage from the example of fellow members striving to overcome their own challenges. In turn, the example of the practitioners renewed determination can powerfully ignite the flame of courage in others. They are places therefore of encouraging and being encouraged. Ikeda describes in his 2016 Peace Proposal to the United Nations the discussion meeting movement that is "central to the SGI's efforts for empowerment by, for and of the people; it is an embodiment of a sense of mission in society. Through it, members seek to revive awareness of the weightiness and unlimited possibilities of each person's life, something that is all too often obscured amidst the expanding and increasingly complex threats facing the world. Ikeda also refers to a concept explained by the first president Makiguchi:

For his part, Makiguchi asserted that the way of life to strive for is a contributive one. "Authentic happiness cannot be realized except through sharing the joys and sufferings of the masses as a member of society." Today, we need to expand such awareness to encompass the entire world: Nothing is more crucial.

Buddhism views the world as a web of relationality in which nothing can be completely disassociated from anything else. Moment by moment, the world is formed and shaped through this mutual relatedness. When we understand this and can sense in the depths of our being the fact that we live—that our existence is made possible—within this web of relatedness, we see clearly that there is no happiness that only we enjoy, no suffering that afflicts only others.

In this sense, we ourselves—in the place where we are at this moment—become the starting point for a chain reaction of positive transformation. We are able not only to resolve our personal challenges but also to make a contribution to moving our immediate environment and even human society in a better direction.

This palpable awareness of interdependence provides a framework or set of coordinates by which to reconsider the relationship between self and other and between ourselves and society as a whole. This is the approach that Buddhism urges us to adopt.

In the same proposal, Ikeda confirms 'the importance of dialogue

as the foundation for peace activities.' He says: "It is my personal conviction that dialogue is essential if we are to build a world in which no one is left behind."

As mentioned previously, The Soka Gakkai is a growing movement across the world. It brings Buddhist concepts up to date and into todays society, in a way that is can be simply understood and practiced by all people of all genders, races and bckgrounds. The Movement works hard to develop itself in a way which is respectful of local culture.

Buddhism is sometimes perceived to be somewhat of a religion detached from ordinary life and consisiting of people sitting in silent meditation on a cusion, of robed slow walking monks and of ceremony and intense iconography. This may lead modern day people to think that it is either irelevent for today or that the Buddha may have fallen asleep.

However the SGI is amongst the most dynamic and socially relevant Buddhist movements of today. It empowers individuals to transform their daily lives and is applicable to the issues of todays complex societies.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The Lotus Sutra, translated Burton Watson, Columbia University Press 1993

The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin, 1999

Soka Gakkai Dictionary of Buddhism, 2002

"Universal Respect for Human Dignity: The Great Path to Peace" - Peace Proposal 2016, Daisaku Ikeda

UNITED STATES

AMERICAN BUDDHISM: LOOKING BACKWARD, LOOKING FORWARD

Charles S. Prebish

INTRODUCTION: PRE-1965 BUDDHIST HISTORY IN AMERICA

Although it is rather common to refer to Oriental influences in the writings of such prominent American literary figures as Henry David Thoreau, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Walt Whitman, the more specifically Buddhist beginnings in America can be traced to the Chinese immigrants who began to appear on the West Coast in the 1840s. Prior to the discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill, the number of Chinese immigrants was small, but with the news of the golden wealth in the land, the figure increased exponentially. Rick Fields has suggested that by 1852, 20,000 Chinese were present in California, and within a decade, nearly one-tenth of the California population was Chinese.[1] In the Chinese temples that dotted that California coastline, the religious practice was an eclectic blend of Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism, and although there were a number of Buddhist priests in residence, a distinctly Chinese Buddhism on the North American continent did not develop until much later.

The Japanese presence in America developed more slowly than the Chinese, but had much greater impact. By 1890, the Japanese population was barely 2,000. The World Parliament of Religion,

1. Rick Fields, How the Swans Came to the Lake: A Narrative History of Buddhism in America, 3rd edition, revised and updated. Boston: Shambhala, 1992, 70-71.

however, held in conjunction with the Chicago World's Fair in 1893, radically changed the entire landscape for Japanese Buddhism in America. Among the participants at the parliament was Shaku Sōen. Sōen returned to America in 1905, lecturing in several cities, and establishing a basic ground for the entry of Zen. Upon his return to Japan in 1906, three of his students were selected to promote the Rinzai lineage in America.

The first of Sōen's students, Nyōgen Senzaki, came to California in the first decade of the twentieth century, but delayed his teaching mission until 1922. Sōen's second disciple, Shaku Sōkatsu, lived in America from 1906-1908, and again from 1909-1910, but eventually returned to Japan without having made much impact. By far Sōen's most noted disciple, and the man who made the most impact on the early growth of Buddhism in America, was Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki. Suzuki worked for Open Court Publishing Company in LaSalle, Illinois, from 1897-1909, but returned to Japan to pursue a career in Buddhist Studies. He visited America again from 1936 until the beginning of World War II, and eventually returned for a final time from 1950-1958, lecturing frequently in American universities and cities.

Nonetheless, the Rinzai lineage was not the only one to develop in America. The Sōtō tradition (the other major branch of Japanese Zen) began to appear in America in the 1950s. By the mid-1950s, Soyu Matsuoka Rōshi had established the Chicago Buddhist Temple, and Shunryu Suzuki Rōshi arrived in San Francisco in 1959, founding the San Francisco Zen Center shortly thereafter. The Dharma successors to Suzuki Rōshi have continued the Sōtō lineage, while other teachers in this lineage, including female rōshis, have also appeared.

In addition to the traditional forms of Rinzai and Sōtō Zen, still another form of Zen appeared in America, one that attempts to harmonize the major doctrines and practices of each school into a unified whole. Proponents of this approach included Taizan Maezumi Rōshi (arriving in 1956), Hakuun Yasutani Rōshi (who visited the United States first in 1962, and who visited regularly until his death in 1973), and Philip Kapleau, an American by birth who first learned about Japanese religion and culture while serving as a court reporter in 1946 during the War Crimes Trials held in

Tokyo. Maezumi Rōshi and Kapleau Rōshi have been enormously successful. Maezumi Rōshi established the Zen Center of Los Angeles, where he resided until his death in 1995. He left a dozen Dharma heirs, many of whom have developed their own vital, creative communities. Kapleau Rōshi too was quite successful, having built a stable Zen community in Rochester, New York that was notable for its attempt to develop an American style for Zen practice. Also significant are Robert Aitken Rōshi, who founded the Diamond Sangha in Hawaii in 1959, Eidō Shimano Rōshi, who first came to the United States as a translator for Yasutani Rōshi, and Joshu Sasaki Rōshi, who founded the Cimarron Zen Center in Los Angeles in 1966 and the Mt. Baldy Zen Center five years later.

Zen was surely not the only Japanese Buddhist tradition to make an appearance in America before the turn of the twentieth century. In 1898 two Japanese missionaries, Shuei Sonoda and Kakuryo Nishijima, were sent to San Francisco to establish the Buddhist Mission of North America, an organization associated with a Pure Land school of Japanese Buddhism. Although seriously hampered by the Japanese Immigration Exclusion Act of 1924, by 1931, thirty-three main temples were active. With the outbreak of World War II, more than 100,000 Japanese Americans (more than half of which were Buddhist and two-thirds American born) were relocated to internment camps. In 1944, the name Buddhist Mission of North America was changed to Buddhist Churches of America.

In the 1960s, another form of Japanese Buddhism appeared on the American landscape. It was known as Nichiren Shōshū of America, and by 1974, it boasted 258 chapters and over 200,000 members (although these figures were highly suspect). This group grew out of the Sōka Gakkai movement in Japan, a non-meditative form of Buddhism that based its teachings on the thirteenth century figure Nichiren (1222-1282) and his emphasis on the doctrines and practices focusing on or deriving from the famous Lotus-sūtra. Brought to this country by Masayasa Sadanaga (who changed his name to George Williams), the organization set up headquarters in Santa Monica, where it began an active program of proselytizing. Although the group has splintered, it remains a formidable Buddhist presence in America, having become extremely attractive among

Euro-American and African American Buddhists.

Although not nearly so visible as the Japanese Buddhist groups, several Chinese Buddhist organizations have appeared in the last half-century. Perhaps the most notable of these is a largely monastic group originally known as the Sino-American Buddhist Association which, until his death, was under the direction of a venerable monk named Hsüan-Hua. Established in 1959, this organization developed a huge monastery in Talmadge, California known as the "City of Ten Thousand Buddhas," which serves as the headquarters of what is now identified as the Dharma Realm Buddhist Association. Of even larger size is the Hsi-Lai Temple outside Los Angeles, founded in 1978, and now offering a wide variety of Buddhist teachings and services. Other Chinese Buddhist groups can be found in virtually every major metropolitan area. The religious practice of the Chinese Buddhist groups in America is largely an eclectic combination of various Buddhist schools, combining Chan, Vinaya, Tiantai, Tantra, and Pure Land practices. Most of these practices are Mahāyāna-based, and a similar kind of approach is followed by the Vietnamese Buddhist groups that have begun to appear in urban areas, largely as a result of a large influx of Vietnamese immigrants following the termination of the United States' involvement in Vietnam.

The Buddhist culture to enter America most recently is the Tibetan. Although a few Buddhist groups appeared in the West prior to 1960, the majority came after the Tibetan holocaust, during which the Communist Chinese made every effort to extinguish religion in Tibet. Following an immediate exile in India, Bhutan, Nepal, and Sikkim, the diaspora has widened, with many Tibetans seeking to reestablish their sacred lineages on American soil. Communities from each of the four major Tibetan sects can now be found in America, with those founded by Tarthang Tulku and Chögyam Trungpa, Rinpoche being especially popular and visible. The Tibetan groups are the most colorful of all the Buddhist groups now prospering in America, possessing a rich tradition of Buddhist art and a powerful psychological approach to mental health. They continue to grow rapidly, being very attractive to Euro-American Buddhists. It is no wonder, then, that they quote the thousand-year-

old saying attributed to the sage Padmasambhava to explain their rapid growth: "When the iron bird flies, and horses run on wheels, the Tibetan people will be scattered like ants across the World, and the Dharma will come to the land of the Red Man."

The final sectarian tradition to be considered is that of the Theravāda. Until quite recently, most Theravāda groups in the United States were similar to the Buddhist Vihāra Society in Washington, D.C. In 1964, when the Most Venerable Madihe Pannaseeha Thera (the Maha Nyaka of Sri Lanka) visited the United States, he noticed a serious interest in Buddhism on the part of many Americans, but a complete absence of groups in the Theravāda tradition, and thus the idea for a Theravāda group was born. The following year, on the suggestion of this esteemed monk, the Sasana Sevaka Society of Maharagama, Sri Lanka sent an emissary—the Venerable Bope Vinita from Vajirarama Temple (in Colmbo)—to Washington. After Vinita's arrival in August 1965, he enlisted the assistance of the Ambassador of Sri Lanka (and his embassy staff), and on 10 December 1966, the Buddhist Vihara Society was found with Vinita as its president.

Now, however, as many Buddhists from Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Burma have migrated to the United States to escape the economic and political uncertainty of their native homes, there is a vigorous new infusion of Theravāda Buddhism into America.

INFLUENCES ON BUDDHISM'S POST-1965 GROWTH IN AMERICA

Following the 1965 amendments to the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, the population of immigrants from Asia grew dramatically, as did the number of Buddhists flowing into America. As Wendy Cadge has pointed out[2], the 1965 Immigration Act ended country-of-origin quotas, which led to both ethnic and religious diversification throughout America. In the decade of the 1960s, Buddhism was to experience the largest, fastest, and most dynamic growth spurt in its short history on the American scene. Its rapid rise presented Buddhism with as many potential liabilities as it did opportunities. In the first place, the undeclared war in

2. Wendy Cadge, Heartwood: The First Generation of Theravada Buddhism in America. Morality and Society Series. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005, 6.

Vietnam again focused continued awareness on Asia. As reports of pacifist Buddhist monks engaging in acts of self-immolation began to filter back to America in the media, a proliferation of books appeared, prepared by journalists, practitioners, and scholars alike. In academia, Buddhist Studies began to emerge as an independent discipline, usually embodied as an aspect of the many developing Area Studies Programs in American universities. The most notable of these was the Buddhist Studies Program at the University of Wisconsin. Shortly thereafter, other programs, initially at Columbia University, Harvard University, the University of Chicago, and the University of California at Berkeley began to offer comprehensive training in Buddhist Studies.

In the social domain, the most significant development for Buddhism in America was the emergence of a considerable counterculture, from which Buddhism was to recruit some of its most ardent supporters. Theodore Roszak, in his influential book The Making of a Counter Culture, suggested that the counterculture was an exploration of the "politics of consciousness."[3] By the end of the decade of the 1960s, many Americans were associating consciousness awareness and expansion with the varieties of Buddhist meditation that were becoming prevalent on the American scene. The most immediate predecessors of the hippies were the "Beats" of the 1950s, and even Jack Kerouac himself conceded that the hippies were the descendants of the Beats. Thus the Beats had an enormous influence on the Buddhism that was developing on the American scene, and "Beat Zen," as it was called, became popular and contrary to the "Square Zen" of other popularizers like Alan Watts.

On the religious front, the entire religious situation in America was in turmoil. There was a continuous drop in church attendance, possibly indicative of a declining faith in the value of religion or its importance in an increasingly secular society. When Peter Berger argued that secularization created about a demonopolization of religious traditions eventually leading to a pluralistic situation, he was describing a religious "market situation" in which Buddhism was certain to thrive. Buddhism took advantage of the mitigation of

3. Theodore Roszak, The Making of a Counter Culture. Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1969, 156.

its somewhat alien appearance by the religious fellowship inherent in the important ecumenical movement to gain new footholds in the American domain.[4] Thus by the end of the 1960s, there were more Buddhist groups, and with greater diversity, than ever existed before in America.

In spite of the above, Buddhism was still searching for a lifestyle consonant with its pursuits in America. There was virtually no monastic community or sangha present, and there were almost no Buddhist monks or nuns in residence. Thus Buddhist community meant lay community, and, to a large extent, city community. New American Buddhist communities of the 1960s and 1970s, however, faced other problems that proved difficult. Because Buddhist communities tended to define themselves more in terms of what they rejected than what they affirmed, a severe sense of ambiguity persisted, making it quite easy for new converts to withdraw from the sangha altogether or jump from one Buddhist community to another as "Dharma hoppers."

Up to this point, the Buddhist movement in America, and specifically Buddhist community life, had been a city movement. Nevertheless, in the 1970s a large number of Buddhists deserted the city and sought to practice their religion in a wilderness setting. Some of these practitioners simply rejected the evils and complexity of city life; others seemed to be motivated by a concern for the preservation of a sane ecological environment; and a goodly number were naïvely pursuing a "back to nature" way of life. Within a short while, and in decades to come, these practitioners mostly returned to urban life, having learned that Buddhism has always maintained that the best place to practice Buddhism is precisely where you are, and that the environment that needs tending is the interior environment.

CONTINUING HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

By 1970, virtually the full extent of Asian Buddhist sects was represented in America, and there was a plethora of Asian Buddhist teachers in permanent residence in the growing number

4. Peter Berger, Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966, 134.

of American Buddhist centers. Dozens of rōshis, along with their Dharma-heirs, many Tibetan tulkus, Chinese monks and nuns, and an increasing number of Theravāda monks from various South and Southeast Asian cultures are now visibly active on American soil. The presence of a growing number of Asian Buddhist teachers in America has been complemented and augmented by regular visits from global Buddhist leaders such as the Dalai Lama and Thich Nhat Hanh.

Further, these Asian Buddhist teachers, and the gradually increasing number of American Buddhist masters, have been able to establish an institutional foundation that is stable, solid, and even ecumenical in nature. In 1987 a conference on "World Buddhism in North America" was held at the University of Michigan during which a "Statement of Consensus"[5] was promulgated (a) to create the conditions necessary for tolerance and understanding among Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike, (b) to initiate a dialogue among Buddhists in North America in order to further mutual understanding, growth in understanding, and cooperation, (c) to increase our sense of community by recognizing and understanding our differences as well as our common beliefs and practices, and (d) to cultivate thoughts and actions of friendliness towards others, whether they accept our beliefs or not, and in so doing approach the world as the proper field of Dharma, not as a sphere of conduct irreconcilable with the practice of Dharma. Geographically organized organizations, like the Sangha Council of Southern California, and associations of the students of famous Buddhist masters, such as the White Plum Asanga, linking the Dharma-heirs of Taizan Maezumi Rōshi, are now becoming commonplace in the American Buddhist movement.

The availability of accurate primary and secondary literature on Buddhism has expanded almost exponentially in the latter half of the twentieth century. Many of these publications now focus on the Western Buddhist tradition. Many pages of scholarly bibliographic sources on American Buddhism can be found in

5. Cited in Eleanor Rosch, "World Buddhism in North America Today," Vajradhatu Sun 9, no. 1 (October-November 1987), 28

various sources.[6] The trade market publication of popular books on aspects of American Buddhism is even larger. As of 1994, nearly two dozen North American universities could boast at least two full-time faculty members devoted to the academic discipline of Buddhist Studies, and nearly 150 academic scholars of Buddhism were located on the North American continent, many of whom can best be identified as "scholar-practitioners." A decade later, each of these statistics has grown substantially. Moreover, the American Buddhist movement is aided by the presence of a growing number of individuals who have traveled to Asia for extensive training and then returned to the United States to share their approach with Americans. One of the most successful enterprises of this kind is the Insight Meditation Center in Barre, Massachusetts, initially guided by Joseph Goldstein, Jack Kornfield, Sharon Salzberg and Christina Feldman, each of whom received extensive vipassanā training in Asia.

It is now very common for university courses on Buddhism in North American universities to be taught by professors who, in addition to having sophisticated academic credentials in Buddhist Studies, also happen to be practicing Buddhists in one of the many rich and varied Buddhist traditions that have proliferated in the West as part of Buddhism's profound globalization, that is, the "scholar-practitioners" referred to above.

Not surprisingly, stories reflecting the study/practice dichotomy in Buddhism are abundant in both the primary and secondary literature on the subject. During the first century B.C.E., in response to a concern over the possible loss of the Tripiṭaka during a severe famine, a question arose: What is the basis of the "Teaching" (that is, Sāsana)—learning or practice? A clear difference of opinion resulted in the development of two groups: the Dhammakathikas, who claimed that learning was the basis of the Sāsana, and the Paṃsukūlikas, who argued for practice as the basis. The Dhammakathikas apparently won out. The two vocations

6. See Charles S. Prebish, Luminous Passage: The Practice and Study of Buddhism in America. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999, 301-310; and Martin Bauman and Charles Prebish (eds.), Westward Dharma: Buddhism Beyond Asia. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002, 383-399

described above came to be known as gantha-dhura, or the "vocation of books," and vipassanā-dhura, or the "vocation of meditation," with the former being regarded as the superior training (because surely meditation would not be possible if the teachings were lost). Moreover, not the least characteristic of these two divisions was that the vipassanā-dhura monks began to live in the forest, where they could best pursue their vocation undisturbed, while the gantha-dhura monks began to dwell in villages and towns. As such, the gantha-dhura monks began to play a significant role in Buddhist education. It would probably not be going too far in referring to the gantha-dhura monks as "scholar-monks." Why is this distinction so important? It is significant because the scholar-monks were responsible for the education of the laity; for cultivating a "Buddhist literacy" among the ordinary practitioners of the tradition. While this was a normative practice in the ancient Buddhist tradition, Buddhism in the Western world has not favored a monastic lifestyle. As such, the education of the laity has been left to teachers who are no longer trained as scholar-monks. In fact, while many of the leaders and authorized teachers in the various Western Buddhist groups have had formal monastic and scholarly training at some point, many—if not most—have abandoned the monastic and scholarly lifestyle altogether. This fosters a "scholarship gap" in the global Buddhist community. To a large extent, this scholarship gap is rapidly being filled by the academic scholar-practitioners who, although not living as full-fledged monastics, have solid scholarly and academic training grounded in a rigorous personal practice.

Prior to 1975, there weren't very many places in North America where one could pursue graduate level academic training in Buddhist Studies, and get the solid grounding necessary to become an authentic scholar-practitioner. By 1995, when I conducted the second of two statistical surveys of Buddhist Studies scholars in North America, I was able to verify that one could do advanced work in Buddhist Studies at no less than 16 universities or colleges, and the anecdotal data supplied by my informants supported my suspicion that between one-quarter and one-half of the people whose teaching focused on Buddhist Studies were scholar-practitioners. Two years later, when Duncan Ryūken Williams

published an article called "Where to Study?" in the Spring 1997 issue of Tricycle, he listed 22 universities with extensive resources in Buddhist Studies, including a special category of universities he called "Practitioner-Friendly Institutions."[7] Clearly, an "American School of Buddhist Studies" was obviously fermenting in the years after 1970, and it now rivals and perhaps even surpasses, the earlier "Anglo-German," "Franco-Belgian," and "Leningrad" schools of Buddhology. Most obviously, this rapid development was fueled by the twin spires of the fast growing interest in Buddhism, generally, on the part of North Americans, and the establishment of the "Buddhism Section" of the American Academy of Religion as the chief academic venue for Buddhist Studies in North America.

At the very heart of this exciting development of North American Buddhist Studies was the role that scholar-practitioners were actively playing. By the beginning of the twenty-first century, some estimates placed the number of Buddhists in the United States as high as six million. There are currently more academic courses in the study of Buddhism than ever before, and with the huge explosion of well written and informative trade volumes published on virtually all aspects of Buddhism, a genuine "Buddhist literacy" has developed in North America . . . one that made it increasingly easier for scholar-practitioners to finally appear publicly and vocally.

Despite the above data, it still seems fair to suggest that the scholarship versus practice dichotomy persists to some degree. In North America, in the absence of the traditional "scholar-monks" so prevalent in Asia, it really does appear that the "scholar-practitioners" of today's North American universities are indeed beginning to fulfill the role of "quasi-monastics," or serve at least as treasure-troves of Buddhist literacy and information, functioning as guides through whom one's understanding of the Dharma may be sharpened, irrespective of whether it occurs in the university or practice center.

Quite apart from issues relating to the specificity with which American Buddhist life is manifested (lay versus monastic ideals; urban versus rural lifestyle), a distinct and unique application of

7. Duncan Williams, "Where To Study," Tricycle: The Buddhist Review 6, no. 3 (Spring 1997), 115-117.

Buddhist ethics, creatively called "socially engaged Buddhism," has emerged that demonstrated in dramatic fashion both the active and optimistic approach of today's American Buddhism. Organizations like the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, founded in 1978, aggressively demonstrate how to strike a careful balance between meditational training and political activism. Their task in bringing this activism and optimism to the American Buddhist public is aided by a strong new Buddhist journalism in America that has fostered exciting publications such as Buddhadharma: The Practitioners Quarterly, Tricycle: The Buddhist Quarterly, the Shambhala Sun, Turning Wheel: Journal of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, and many publications of individual Buddhist centers. Additionally, the useful and productive development of the Internet has allowed American Buddhism to expand its sphere of influence to a sangha not necessarily limited to a given geographic space. The electronic Journal of Buddhist Ethics, for example, in its "Global Resources for Buddhist Studies" component, has created links to literally hundreds of American Buddhist sanghas across the totality of North America, as has the resource of the Australian-based Buddha Dharma Education Association: www.buddhanet.net.

Equally, one cannot dismiss the role that the media has played in the development of the growing American Buddhist tradition. Most of this new public attention began with the deacde of the 1990s. Between the months of June and November 1994, features on American Buddhism appeared in such popular print media as The Wall Street Journal, USA Today, Newsweek, New York Magazine, and Christianity Today. The Newsweek article, titled, "800,000 Hands Clapping,"[8] focused on a varied group of American Buddhists that included John Daido Loori, the abbot of Zen Mountain Monastery in upstate New York, well known actor Richard Gere, Mitchell Kapor of Lotus Development Corporation, Phil Jackson, coach of the world champion Chicago Bulls professional basketball team, and even The Beastie Boys rock group, who recorded "The Bodhisattva Vow," a rap tribute to the

8. Jerry Adler, "800,000 Hands Clapping: Religion-America May Be on the Verge of Buddhadharma," Newsweek, 13 June 1994.

Buddhist path. New York Magazine[9] went even farther, categorizing American Buddhists into "Beat Buddhists" (such as Gary Snyder, Allen Ginsberg, Philip Whalen, and Lawrence Ferlinghetti), "Celluloid Buddhists" (including Willem Dafoe, Oliver Stone, and Ellen Burstyn, along with Gere), "Art Buddhists" (Milton Glaser, Robert Moscowitz, Roy Lichtenstein, and Robert Rauschenberg, among others), "Power Buddhists" (Jerry Brown), and "Benefit Buddhists" (like Porter McCray and Bokara Legendre).

Also in 1994, American Buddhism was also presented as a major feature on the "ABC Nightly News with Peter Jennings," (with scholar-practitioners Robert Thurman and Charles Prebish serving as scholarly consultants) as well as on "Talk of the Nation" on National Public radio (with and Helen Tworkov and Kenneth Tanaka fielding questions from a national audience). Peter Jennings's researchers estimated the American Buddhist population at that time to be between four and six million individuals, composed of both Asian American and Euro-American ethnic groups, making American Buddhism a religious movement significantly larger than many Protestant denominations.

The flurry of national media attention devoted to American Buddhism has continued almost non-stop since. And it's expanding. As a result, this virtually non-stop appearance of media stories related to the growth and development of the American Buddhist community begs for a careful delineation and discussion of the major issues that have shaped that very tradition.

DEVELOPMENTAL ISSUES IN AMERICAN BUDDHISM

Outlining the historical details of the Buddhist movement in America tells but a small part of the story, for the growth of American Buddhism is far more than its history. Rather, it presents a struggle to acculturate and accommodate on the part of a religious tradition that initially appeared to be wholly foreign to the American mindset. It is important to realize that two different groups were primarily responsible for Buddhism's earliest growth in America. On the one hand, Buddhism is the native religion of a significant number of Asian immigrants. On the other hand, it became the

9. Sallie Dinkel, "In with the Om Crowd," New York Magazine, 6 June 1994.

religion, or at least the subject of serious personal interest, for an ever-increasing group of (mostly) Euro-Americans who embraced Buddhism primarily out of intellectual attraction and interest in spiritual practice. This latter circumstance has created its own Buddhist subculture that is literate, urban, upwardly mobile, perhaps even elite in its life orientation. The above bifurcation makes even the issue of Buddhist identity and membership a very murky problem, further exacerbated with confusion about various Buddhist positions on ethical issues, sexuality, gender roles, and the like. This developmental pattern, and the issues associated with it, needs to be explored.

In her 1976 volume Buddhism in America, Emma Layman devoted an entire chapter to the question "Who are the American Buddhists?"[10] She considered how many Buddhists there are in America, the geographic diffusion of Buddhism in America, the personal characteristics of Buddhists in America, their educational and occupational status, their "personality factors," American versus Asian Buddhists, and in the case of converts, their previous religious affiliation. What she did not consider wass precisely how one determines who is an American Buddhist. Three years later, in American Buddhism, I suggested that one of the traditional ways of identifying Buddhists in Asian countries—taking refuge—was perhaps an insufficient and even misleading approach when applied to the American scene. My solution in 1979[11] was regarded as highly controversial at best, and obviously incorrect at worst. I suggested that if we define a Buddhist as someone who says "I am a Buddhist," when questioned about "his most important pursuit," we not only abandon our attachment to a ritual formulary (i.e., the three refuges) that is neither workable nor widely followed, but we also provide more than a modicum of freedom for the American Buddhist groups—a freedom in which they can develop a procedure that is consistent with their own self-image and mission . . . In other words, what appears initially as an outrageous definition of Buddhist affiliation serves the double purpose of providing a new

10. Emma McCloy Layman, Buddhism in America. Chicago: Nelson-Hall,1976, 251-263.

11. Charles S. Prebish. American Buddhism. North Scituate, MA: Duxbury Press, 1979, 187-188.

standard and a simple method of professing Buddhist commitment while at the same time imposing a renewed sense of seriousness on all Buddhist groups. Over the past thirty years, this notion of "self-identification," as it has come to be known, has become the standard mode of verifying Buddhist identity in America. With the issue of "Who is a Buddhist?" clarified, five additional developmental issues frame American Buddhism since 1965: ethnicity, Buddhist practice, democratization, social engagement, and adaptation or acculturation.

The most recent debate about ethnicity in American Buddhism was precipitated by an editorial in Tricycle: The Buddhist Review in which Helen Tworkov wrote that most of the spokespeople for Buddhism in America have been almost exclusively well educated Caucasians, while also suggesting that Asian American Buddhists, despite numbering over a million members, had not contributed significantly to the development of American Buddhism.[12] Her editorial provoked an angry letter of response from Ryo Imamura, an 18th-generation Jōdo Shinshū priest, but the letter never appeared in Tricycle, although it was later printed in its entirety elsewhere.[13]

In the aftermath of the above incident, many articles appeared in the popular and scholarly literature addressing the issues of how to speak of the different kinds of Buddhism alluded to above. These articles seem to fall into two camps. The first of these camps emerged in response to and support of my article "Two Buddhisms Reconsidered."[14] I had originally coined the phrase "two Buddhisms" in 1979 to delineate one form of Buddhism that places primary emphasis on sound basic doctrines, shared by all Buddhists, and on solid religious practice, from another which seemed to emerge shortly after radical social movements. At that time, I considered the former group conservative and stable, while I characterized the latter as flashy, opaquely exotic, and hip. In "Two Buddhisms Reconsidered," I redefined the former group as

12. Helen Tworkov, "Many is More," Tricycle: The Buddhist Review 1, no. 2 (Winter 1991), 4.

13. See The Sangha Newsletter 7 (Summer 1994), 2-10.

14. Charles S. Prebish, "Two Buddhisms Reconsidered," Buddhist Studies Review 10 (1993), 187-206.

representing the Buddhism practiced by essentially Asian American communities. My intention was to find a way for Asian American immigrant Buddhists and American Buddhist converts (mostly, but not exclusively of European American descent) to find a respectful and mutually enhancing way of relating, and to find a way for scholars interested in studying these communities to properly and accurately refer to the communities. I went on to suggest that while generalizations about American Buddhism are probably either impossible or foolish, we might reconsider these "two Buddhisms" in a way that not only added other critical issues into the mix, but also moved beyond the limits of a perhaps restrictive twofold typology. To do that, I utilized Peter Williams recent book American Religions: Traditions and Cultures. Williams identified three categories to describe the way Asian religions impact on America: (1) "ethnic religions" practiced by Asian immigrants and, to an extent, by their descendants; (2) "export religions," popular among well-educated, generally intellectual Americans; and (3) "new religions," developing in consonance with the process outlined by Jacob Needleman and others, often as revolutionary outgrowths of religions cited in the first two categories.[15]

Shortly thereafter, Jan Nattier published an article in Tricycle that was very explicit and sophisticated in her approach to the varieties of Buddhism in America, and she developed the argument more thoroughly in "Who is Buddhist? Charting the Landscape of Buddhist America."[16] Nattier postulated a threefold typology explaining how religions move into new locations and cultures, consisting of (in her characterization):

1. Import religion—a "demand-driven transmission" in which a religion is sought out in an active fashion by the recipient. With specificity for Buddhism, this is labeled "Elite Buddhism."

2. Export religion—a missionary-driven transmission, in which

15. Peter Williams, American Religions: Traditions and Cultures. New York: Macmillan, 1990, (especially) 417.

16. See Jan Nattier, "Visible and Invisible," Tricycle: The Buddhist Review 5, no. 1 (1995), 42-49; and also "Who Is a Buddhist? Charting the Landscape of Buddhist America." In Charles S. Prebish and Kenneth K. Tanaka, The Faces of Buddhism in America. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998, 183-195.

individuals encounter Buddhism through the proselytizing effort of a particular Buddhist group. With specificity for Buddhism, this is labeled "Evangelical Buddhism."

3. Baggage religion—the religion of immigrants to North America, but whose motivation for travel was not evangelical. With specificity for Buddhism, this is labeled "Ethnic Buddhism."

The typology conflict between "two Buddhisms" or "three Buddhisms" persisted until Paul Numrich offered a reasonable alternative. His labels identify "Asian immigrants" and "American converts" as the basic two groups in American Buddhism.[17] Further research by other scholars has offered additional subdivisions within these two groups, but this distinction has continued to be useful. Additionally, we will see at the end of this article that more emphasis has now been placed on "hybridity" as perhaps the newest typology for understanding groups within American Buddhism.

There is no disagreement among researchers that Asian immigrant Buddhist communities and American convert communities engage in significantly different expressions of Buddhist practice. The general consensus is that American converts gravitate toward the various meditation traditions, while Asian immigrants maintain practices coincident with ritual activity or Pure Land observance, depending on the nature of the parent tradition of their community.With the exception of those American converts who have taken up the practices of Sōka Gakkai, there is an almost completely exclusive focus upon meditative practices. More than a few observers of the American Buddhist tradition have remarked that American converts treat Buddhism as if it was a "onefold path," focusing only on meditation and little, if anything, else. In a very real sense, the meditation tradition in America continues to be seen as an all-pervasive activity, offering a complete solution to the entire spectrum of life's ills, from getting high without the risks of drugs to finding a way to cultivate peace. It would not be going too far, I think, to suggest that Buddhist meditation, and the tradition associated with it, has become its own subculture; and it is a subculture that has spawned an enormous popular literature.

17. Paul Numrich, Old Wisdom in the New World: Americanization in Two Immigrant Theravada Buddhist Temples. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1996, 64.

Yet Buddha spoke of a threefold training that includes not simply spiritual practice, but also the ethical training which supports it, and the wisdom that emerges from it. Most often the ethical training is described in terms of the practice of precepts or śikṣā. This is significant because precepts are not practiced in a specific, temporally defined portion of one's day. Properly observed, precepts apply to the totality of one's experience. They infuse our lives in every moment. Thus, in the broadest sense, precepts are practice in a far more comprehensive fashion than any single spiritual endeavor. Stephen Batchelor is one of the few scholar-practitioners who has come to identify the application of ethics and spiritual practice as interpenetrating, complementary factors. He argues that ethics include values and precepts that impact one's practice significantly.[18] The problem, in general terms, is how Buddhist ethical guidelines can be applied to daily life; and in specific terms, what adaptations must be made to accommodate the experience of Buddhist life in the West.

To sum up: If the American Buddhist tradition is to affirm the suggestion of Batchelor and others that precepts are an integral aspect of Buddhist practice, and of a Buddhist lifestyle that fosters awareness of and respect for all living beings, then a new and modern ethical literature must necessarily be created. However, if that literature is to meaningfully address the conflicts and ambiguities that result from colliding with a modern world that the earliest tradition never imagined, and engaging that confrontation in a fashion that is truly transcultural and transnational, then it is essential for that new literature to reflect an American Buddhist ethics that is both current and textually supported.

While Asian Buddhism was, for the most part, primarily hierarchical and highly authoritarian, the forms of American Buddhism that are currently developing are clearly undergoing a process of democratization. Unfortunately, and perhaps ironically, this democratization was hastened by a series of scandals that rocked many American Buddhist communities. In an interesting Time magazine article about the collective American Buddhist

18. Stephen Batchelor, "The Future is in Our Hands." In Arnold Kotler (ed.), Engaged Buddhist Reader. Berkeley: Parallax Press, 1996, 243

community, David Van Biema noted that many American Buddhist teachers, both Asian and American, had abused their positions by having sexual relations with their disciples.[19] He argued that this circumstance led to an aggressive democratization in many Buddhist communities in which leadership was administratively adjusted so as to prevent further abuse. This radical democratization is being manifested in three essential aspects of American Buddhist communities. First, it can be observed in changing patterns of authority in the various Buddhist sanghas, highlighted by a reevaluation of the nature of the relationship between the monastic and lay communities. Second, democratization can be witnessed in changing gender roles in American Buddhism, and especially in the prominence of women. Finally, it can be seen in the manner in which individuals pursuing a non-traditional lifestyle, particularly with regard to sexual preferences, are finding a meaningful role in American Buddhist communities. As a result of this process of democratization, American Buddhism has been able to move away from the hierarchical pattern of Asian Buddhism to the pursuit of an egalitarian approach that is more consistent with American democratic trends.

Studies of the Buddhist monastic tradition in various Asian countries are too plentiful to mention, but nearly all of the books and articles reveal the importance of the monastic unit for the surrounding community and the degree to which its monks and nuns were venerated for their effort, and often, for their erudition. In other words, the ideal lifestyle for Buddhist practitioners was that of the monastic. In the United States, however, the monastic lifestyle has never been the ideal.Thus Buddhist community meant lay community, and, to a large extent, city community. One of the most popular and successful attempts to find a workable alternative to the traditional lay/monastic bifurcation was put into practice at the Zen Center of Los Angeles in which many serious students of Taizan Maezumi Rōshi lived in an intermediate lifestyle, marrying and holding outside jobs while negotiating the full course of training incumbent on a Zen monk. As the Dharma-heirs of Maezumi Rōshi moved on to begin forming their own Zen communities,

19. David Van Biema, "Buddhism in America," Time, 13 October 1997, 80.

many of them have utilized this pattern with much success. In the Theravādin tradition, a similar approach has been identified, noting that a number of lay disciples have taken ordination as an anagārika, a celibate path about mid-way between the traditional lay and monastic sanghas. Until quite recently, the problem of Buddhist lifestyle and changing patterns of authority was exacerbated by the fact that, unlike its Asian counterpart, American Buddhism was a city movement. The early pattern for American Buddhist communities was to first establish a city center, and then as the center grew and became stable, to develop satellite country centers. To some extent, the members of many infant American Buddhist city centers communicated more effectively with city-centered members of other Buddhist sectarian groups than with country-centered members of their own community. Now this is no longer true. The general explosion of information exchange technology, and the widespread accessibility of the Internet, have changed the shape of how and where American Buddhist communities define themselves and engage in Buddhist practice.

Stories about the Buddha's reluctance to begin an order of nuns are legion in the scholarly literature devoted to the development of the early sangha. Although it was pointed out earlier that the monastic tradition represents only a tiny portion of American Buddhist communities, many American Buddhist women see the role of nuns as instrumental in cultivating gender equality in American Buddhism. The degree to which male Buddhist practitioners and teachers welcome such women remains the challenge of changing gender roles in American Buddhism. The growing community of female teachers is significant in that it bridges the gap between the small sanghas of monastic members and the overwhelmingly larger number of female lay practitioners in American Buddhism.

Amidst the huge variety of lifestyle choices available in modern America, none are more visible than the non-traditional, alternative sexual preferences of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered people. Not long ago, Roger Corless's "Coming Out in the Sangha: Queer Community in American Buddhism" creatively explored the existing material, finding scriptural references where he could. He pointed out that since the Vinaya precepts largely assumed

heterosexuality, both homosexuality and homoeroticism were basically ignored. Corless pointed out that now a number of Buddhist groups have emerged that support gay, lesbian, and bisexual Buddhists. In trying to isolate the motives and characteristics of queer Buddhist groups, Corless extracted points from the mission statement of one of these groups, concluding that the main issues include: (1) creating a safe environment in which to practice; (2) creating an environment in which practitioners of various Buddhist paths can meet, share viewpoints, and be mutually supportive; (3) providing a community that is socially and psychologically supportive; (4) offering compassion through social action; and (5) offering a place to explore the degree to which Buddhism does, or does not, meet their spiritual needs.[20]

Perhaps the one issue that dominated the early comprehensive books on American Buddhism was adaptation, or as it is sometimes referred to, acculturation or Americanization. The underlying issue is questioning whether we were witnessing Asian Buddhism transplanted onto (but not necessarily into) American soil, or whether we have a new cultural amalgam that we should properly identify as "American Buddhism." During the fall of 1994, the Institute of Buddhist Studies in Berkeley sponsored an ongoing lecture series entitled "Buddhisms in America: An Expanding Frontier." Most of the papers from this series were collected into the book that was eventually called The Faces of Buddhism in America. Why was there a switch in title on the path from conference to book? Presumably, it was more effective to present American Buddhism as one whole with many faces than many American Buddhisms celebrating their diversity together. In his treatment of adaptation in the "Epilogue" to The Faces of Buddhism in America, Kenneth Tanaka acknowledged that in some cases the qualities of American individualism and secularism can give rise to a sense of impatience with, and possibly even arrogance toward ancient forms of Buddhism. Nonetheless, he tried to interpret this inclination in a positive way. In so doing, he suggested that the urgency for aggressive adaptation has fostered what he calls "diffuse affiliation"

20. Roger Corless, "Coming out in the Sangha: Queer Community in American Buddhism. In Prebish and Tanaka, The Faces of Buddhism in America, 253-265.

and "eclectic tendencies" in American Buddhism. Diffuse affiliation suggests that individuals may have association with a variety of Buddhist forms in their religious quest. As such, not only may the current affiliation of an individual not necessarily be their final affiliation, but an individual may also maintain concurrent affiliation with more than one Buddhist organization. Diffuse affiliation is also witnessed among American Dharma teachers who have received training authorization in more than one tradition. The most publicized expression of diffuse affiliation, as Tanaka pointed out, is Rodger Kamenetz's book The Jew in the Lotus, in which he coined the term "JUBU" for referring to individuals holding a Jewish-Buddhist dual affiliation. Eclectic tendencies refer to such accommodations as Seung Sahn's blending of Zen with Korean folk Buddhism, or in a more extreme example, the practice of some vipassanā teachers to claim no association with the Theravāda tradition or even with Buddhism.[21]

We have seen that American Buddhism has grown within a developmental framework in which the serious issues of ethnicity, practice, democratization, engagement, and adaptation have necessitated a careful self-examination on the part of individual Buddhist communities. Resulting from that self-reflection is the generally accepted notion than an internal American Buddhist ecumenicity is now required for the continued harmonious growth of the tradition on American soil. Thus, as noted above, the "Conference on World Buddhism in North America" was sponsored by the Zen Lotus Society in Ann Arbor, Michigan on 10-17 July 1987. Conceived by Ven. Samu Sunim, and with ample assistance from Professor Luis Gómez (who served as co-coordinator), a wide variety of talks, panel discussions, and meetings were held in an effort to bring together representatives of the Buddhist traditions in America to work together toward common goals. As also noted above, the conference developed a carefully conceived "Statement of Consensus" for implementation. More than twenty years later, Lama Surya Das, who was closing speaker at the "Buddhism in America Conference" held in Boston on 17-19 January 1997,

21. Kenneth K. Tanaka, "Epilogue: The Colors and Contours of American Buddhism." In Prebish and Tanaka, The Faces of Buddhism in America, 287-298.

emphasized that American Buddhism must be ecumenical in the future. The underlying assumption seems to be the hope that an ecumenical attitude, implemented in the proper way, will function as a protective umbrella under which the issues of ethnicity, practice, democratization, engagement, and adaptation may be addressed in a constructive and productive fashion.

TECHNOLOGY AND THE CYBERSANGHA

In the earliest general, comprehensive books on Buddhism in America, not a single word was written about the role of computer technology in the development of American Buddhism. The earliest formal interest in the application of computer technology to Buddhism seems to have occurred when the International Association of Buddhist Studies formed a "Committee on Buddhist Studies and Computers" at its 1983 meeting in Tokyo.

Early in the 1990s, a profusion of online discussion forums (or "e-mail discussion lists") began to proliferate and thrive on the Internet. Although these forums were global in scope, the vast majority of subscribers and participants were from North America. Now these discussion forums are too numerous to list, and many are sponsored by individual American Buddhist sanghas as a means to maintain continuous, ongoing communication among community members irrespective of where they may reside. New terminology developed to capture the essence and function of these computer-based means of communication. One of the earliest pioneers of Buddhist online communication, Gary Ray, coined the catchy phrase "cybersangha" in 1991 to depict the bevy of online communities that were appearing. With the creation and expansion of the World Wide Web (or WWW), and the increasingly sophisticated technology that has accompanied it, there seems no limit to the expansive means of communication available to American Buddhists. Many, if not most, American Buddhist communities now have individual web sites on the World Wide Web, informing members of various aspects of the community's functions, but also serving as clever advertising occasions for new potential members.

At the far extreme of the technological revolution are an

increasing number of Buddhist communities that exist only in cyberspace, with no geographic component in real space. Some of these cybersanghas have had real impact for individuals who are geographically isolated from communities that exist in real space. On the one hand, it is possible to see technology and the cybersangha as the completion of the traditional Buddhist "sangha of the four quarters." On the other hand, it is possible to see this new development in American Buddhist communication as a true sign of the cold, rational, contemporary world in which communication is faceless and even impersonal.

THE FUTURE OF AMERICAN BUDDHISM

On 17-19 January 1997 a "Buddhism in America Conference" was held at the Boston Park Plaza Hotel. The promotional brochure distributed by the conference's producer, Al Rapaport, subtitled the event: "A Landmark Conference on the Future of Buddhist Meditative Practices in the West." In addition to the various keynote addresses, pre-conference workshops, and panels, there was a cornucopia of American Buddhist activities available for all to experience. Throughout the weekend, the Drepung Loseling Tibetan monks were creating a Medicine Buddha Sand Mandala, and on Saturday evening, nine lamas from the Drepung Loseling monastery performed their world-famous multiphonic singing. There were almost two dozen commercial exhibitors, consisting of booksellers, distributors of Dharma-ware, and other Buddhist items. On the last night of the conference, Lama Surya Das, an American convert Buddhist (originally born as Jeffrey Miller) and founder of the Dzogchen Foundation in Cambridge, Massachusetts gave the final presentation. He offered ten points which he believed would characterize the American Buddhism of the future. These included:

1. Dharma without dogma. Like other speakers before him (most notably Stephen Batchelor), he argued for a "Buddhism without belief."

2. A lay-oriented sangha. He acknowledged and supported the notion of three communities in American Buddhism: the traditional monastic sangha, the lay sangha, and what he referred to as "the in-between sangha," with the latter reflecting the attempts

by many men and women to maintain a monastic-oriented lifestyle while maintaining traditional family life.

3. A meditation-based and experiential tradition. He contrasted this feature against a study-based or academic Buddhism. There was no mention of non-meditational practices, such as those utilized by the Pure Land tradition, or by Sōka Gakkai.

4. Gender equality. Surya Das noted that half of the Buddhist teachers in the West are women, and that the American Dharma needed to be an equal-opportunity enterprise.

5. A non-sectarian tradition. Surya Das stressed that the developing American Buddhism of the next century must be eclectic, ecumenical, and utterly equal.

6. An essentialized and simplified tradition. Here he maintained that American Buddhism needed to be "de-mystified," and bypass technical jargon and foreign terminology. In reshaping the Dharma for the West, however, he also underscored the avoidance of "New Age" and pop psychology.

7. An egalitarian, democratic, and non-hierarchical tradition. The chief emphasis in this point was Surya Das' insistence that American Buddhism not be class-oriented or theocratic. He argued for supporting non-institutionalized forms of American Buddhism.

8. A psychologically astute and rational tradition. Perhaps in an attempt to expand and clarify point 3 above, he restated his insistence on a practice-based American Buddhism, but here included faith and devotional practices as well. But, he also argued for the tradition to be skeptical, practical, and acquiring. Nonetheless, he concluded this point by advocating self-help as a primary aspect of American Buddhism.

9. An experimental, innovating, inquiry-based tradition. Surya Das wants American Buddhism to be forward looking rather than preservationist. He argued aggressively against preserving old wine in new bottles. Of special interest was his observation that we are now experiencing the "third wave" of teachers: Western teachers trained by Western teachers.

10. A socially informed and engaged tradition. As his final point, he accentuated an integrative rather than reclusive American

Buddhism in which family life was included as part of the spiritual path. He further indicated the importance of hospice work, ethics and right livelihood, deep ecology, the performing arts, sports, social service, and interfaith dialogue as critical features of the socially engaged Buddhism of the future.

Surya Das closed the conference by inviting the entire audience to chant with him, perhaps a fitting way to bring everyone together into a practice that reflected the points he emphasized in his presentation.

In reviewing the forward-looking suggestions of Surya Das and other researchers, it is possible to isolate a number of common, internal variables in the American Buddhist movement, and there is virtually unanimous agreement among these researchers that the development of American Buddhism in the current century will depend on the unfolding of these internal variables. Broadly defined, they include the nature and definition of the sangha, democratization within the entire tradition, ethnicity, gender equality, practice orientation, social engagement, and sectarian issues as the challenges of the future. Although there seems little doubt that American Buddhism will continue to be a mostly lay-oriented movement, more and more successful monastic communities are beginning to appear on the landscape which provide various kinds of monastic living experiences for members of the American Buddhist sangha. Contextually, it is within the expanding inclusiveness of the American sangha that new and evolving experiments in self-governance are emerging which provide exciting possibilities for American Buddhists living in both urban and rural settings. Further, these attempts at a rationally conceived democratization of the sangha include thoughtful considerations of how to successfully implement gender equality, respect for the full spectrum of Buddhist practices and practitioners within both the Asian immigrant and American convert communities, and a keen awareness that social engagement is the most profound expression of Buddhism's life-affirming attitude possible. Nurtured in an environment of concern for a proper application of Buddhist ethics, implemented in a modern and global Buddhist community, and with a renewed sense of inquiry into the nature, quality, and

requirements of spiritual authority, the above factors provide the American Buddhism of the next millennium with an active and positive agenda.

Nonetheless, in each of the above topics, there is a host of variables that will act and react in an interdependent fashion yielding an almost endless set of possible permutations for the future of American Buddhism. In addition to these internal variables, there are many external ones as well, relating to the changing face of American religious life. Further, there has been the development of a growing ecumenical Buddhism, and with it, a new sense of global identity. The importance of the development of an ecumenical American Buddhism cannot be stressed strongly enough, for it provides perhaps the best potential for American Buddhist unity in the current century. In other words, in looking for innovative and creative methodologies for successfully negotiating the future, American Buddhism and American Buddhists might well look beyond the North American borders and learn from the experiences of other Western Buddhists. The importance of the American Buddhist movement can easily be seen in its rapidly growing numbers. From no more than 100,000 Buddhists in the 1960s, the tradition has grown to likely six million Buddhist in North America today. As a testament to its importance on the American religious scene, the American Academy of Religion recently authorized the creation of a new unit in its organization called the "Buddhism in the West" consultation. This will allow for yearly papers to be presented at the organization's annual meeting. Headed by an adventurous young scholar named Jeff Wilson, this unit, and the scholars who support it, will bring forth the next generation of scholarship on American Buddhism. Most likely new typologies will deconstruct or even replace the old, focusing not on the "Two Buddhisms" or "Three Lines of Transmission" outlined above, but rather on an American Buddhism of hybridity, a mixing of traditions, and an interreligious dialogue that will move the entire tradition forward. In so doing, the coming years in the development of American Buddhism may exhibit a genuine interest in the American Buddhist ecumenicism mentioned above; one in which Buddhists from each of the "vehicles" and cultures

will communicate openly and meaningfully.

***

Bibliography

Cadge, Wendy. Heartwood: The First Generation of Theravada Buddhism in America. Morality and Society Series.Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005.

Coleman, James William. The New Buddhism. The Western Transformation of an Ancient Tradition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Fields, Rick. How the Swans Came to the Lake: A Narrative History of Buddhism in America. 1981. 3rd revised and updated edition. Boulder, CO: Shambhala Publications, 1992.

Fields, Rick. "The Future of American Buddhism." The Vajradhatu Sun 9, no. 1 (1987), 1, 22, 24 26.

Hammond, Phillip and David Machacek. Soka Gakkai in America: Accomodation and Conversion. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Hunter, Louise. Buddhism in Hawaii. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1971.

Kashima, Tetsuden. Buddhism in America: The Social Organization of an Ethnic Religious Institution. Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1977.

Layman, Emma. Buddhism in America. Chicago: Nelson Hall, 1976.

Leyland, Winston (ed.). Queer Dharma: Voices of Gay Buddhists. San Francisco: Gay Sunshine Press, 1998.

Matthews, Bruce (ed.). Buddhism in Canada. Critical Studies in Buddhism Series. London: Routledge, 2006.

Morreale, Don (ed.). The Complete Guide to Buddhist America. 1988. 2nd revised and updated edition Boston, London: Sham-

bhala, 1998.

Numrich, Paul David. "How the Swans Came to Lake Michigan: The Social Organization of Buddhist Chicago." Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion 39, no. 2 (2000), 189-203.

Numrich, Paul David. Old Wisdom in the New World: Americanization in Two Immigrant Theravada Buddhist Temples. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1996.

Numrich, Paul David. "Two Buddhisms Further Considered." In Buddhist Studies from India to America: Essays in Honor of Charles S. Prebish, edited by Damien Keown. Critical Studies in Buddhism Series. London: Routledge, 2006, 207-233. .

Prebish, Charles S. American Buddhism. North Scituate, Mass.: Duxbury Press, 1979.

Prebish, Charles S., "Ethics and Integration in American Buddhism." Journal of Buddhist Ethics 2 (1995), 125 139.

Prebish, Charles S. Luminous Passage: The Practice and Study of Buddhism in America. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.

Prebish, Charles S. "Reflections of the Transmission of Buddhism to America." In Understanding the New Religions, edited by Jacob Needleman and George Baker. New York: Seabury Press, 1978, 153-172.

Prebish, Charles S. and Martin Baumann (eds.). Westward Dharma: Buddhism Beyond Asia. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002.

Prebish, Charles S. and Kenneth K. Tanaka (eds.). The Faces of Buddhism in America. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.

Prothero, Stephen. The White Buddhist: the Asian Odyssey of Henry Steel Olcott. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996.

Queen, Christopher S. Engaged Buddhism in the West. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2000.

Seager, Richard Hughes. Buddhism in America. Columbia Se-

ries on Contemporary American Religions. New York: Columbia University Press, 2000.

Tsomo, Karma Lekshe (ed.). Buddhism Through American Women's Eyes. Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 1995.

Tweed, Thomas A. The American Encounter with Buddhism 1844-1912: Victorian Culture and the Limits of Dissent. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992.

Williams, Duncan Ryūken and Christopher S. Queen (eds.). American Buddhism: Methods and Findings in Recent Scholarship. Critical Studies in Buddhism Series. Richmond, UK: Curzon Press, 1999.

VIETNAM

VIETNAMESE BUDDHISM: PAST AND PRESENT

Most Ven. Thich Tam Duc

Buddhism arrived in Vietnam around the 2nd century B.C. in the context the nation was being independent. However, from the year 43 A.D. up to 1975 A.D. Vietnam suffers constant foreign aggressions or civil wars. For this reason, Vietnamese Buddhism must adapt itself to such circumstances by secularizing itself, i.e., taking part into many aspects of the nation, only for the welfare of the nation and people. Although the nation spends periods of rise and fall, many dynasties or regimes collapse, Buddhism in Vietnam continues to survive and develop incessantly. It is independent from the government it lives in. It can serve any dynasty or government as long as the rule is for the welfare and benefit of the people. Many questions relating to the Vietnam history would not be clear if one does not understand Vietnamese Buddhism.

A) VIETNAMESE BUDDHISM IN THE PAST:

I. Preserving The National Culture And Independence

According to the Vietnamese text *Lĩnh Nam Chích Quái* (compiled in the 14 th century A.D.), the first Vietnamese Buddhists

[1] Lê Mạnh Thát, *Lịch sử Phật giáo Việt Nam*: NXB Thuận Hóa, 1999, pp. 19 – 22.

[2] *Thiền Uyển Tập Anh* (Outstanding Figures of the *Thiền* community). The text was probably compiled by a Vietnamese *Thiền* Master, *Kim Sơn*, around 1337. This is an important Buddhist text mentioning the biographies of 68 *Thiền* Masters.

– *Chữ Đồng Tử* and his wife *Tiên Dung* (*Hùng Vương's* princess) – studied Buddha's teachings (thaumaturgics) from an Indian monk named *Phật Quang* at mountain *Quỳnh Viên* in *Cửa Sót* (now *Hà Tĩnh*)[1]. And, as mentioned in *Thiền Uyển Tập Anh*,[2] after defeating the South force the Chinese *Tuỳ* dynasty (603 – 607 A.D) intended to propagate Buddhism to Vietnam, but monk *Đàm Thiên* informed that in *Giao Châu* Province (former name of Vietnam at that time) there had already been 500 monks and scores of Buddhist texts translated into Vietnamese language.

After defeating *Trưng Vương* in 43 A.D. the Chinese took up *Giao Châu* and performed a policy of assimilation by capturing the intellectual and leaders, changing *Việt Luật* (Vietnamese law) … But they failed. A letter from *Hoài Nam Vương* sent to *Hán Võ Đế* writes: "The Viets are shaving head, tattooing body. They cannot be administered by Chinese law…, not following Chinese calendar."[3] The *Hán* historians also said: "The people of *Giao Châu* do not know the way of father and son (both swim at the same river). They only follow sexual indulgence, not knowing the way of husband and wife (free marriage after knowing each other at seasoning rituals), etc."[4]

But from 100 A.D. onwards successful insurgences of the Viets led to the establishment of an independent government (180 – 230) greatly influenced by Buddhism under *Sĩ Nhiếp*.



Pháp Vân pagoda

[3] Phan Huy Le et al, Lịch sử Việt Nam, I, Hà Nội, 1991, p. 250.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Hồis referred to Indian monks.
[6] Lê Mạnh Thát, Opcit., p, 147.

1) *Sĩ Nhiếp* (137 – 226): He was of Chinese origin called Vietnamese king – *Sĩ Vương*. He abandoned his original customs and morals, and was converted to a barbarian religion (Buddhism). The famous Vietnamese pagoda, *Pháp Vân*, was built by *Sĩ Nhiếp*himself. Once sitting on a chariot down the street he was accompanied by scores of persons '*Hồ*'[5] burning incense.[6]

2) The text *Lý Hoặc Luận* : At the end of the 2nd century A.D. appeared the text *Lý Hoặc Luận* (Treatise on removing doubt) by *Mâu Tử*.[7] The text which was composed of 37 pairs of questions and answers was important not only for the information it gave about Buddhism in Vietnam but also for the distinction it enjoyed as the first treatise on Buddhism to be written by a Chinese convert. By protecting Buddhism and criticizing the ideas and practices of native cults, superstitions or arguments of the opponents, the text may be said to highlight the superiority of Buddhism to Confucianism and Taoism at the time. At the end of the text, the hearers, after listening to the author's explanation about Buddhism, requested to take refuge in Buddha.

One important thing in the text, in the background of Chinese rule, *Mâu Tử* (C.160 – 230), a representative of Buddhism in Vietnam dared to refuse the sense of arrogance of the Chinese, especially the Confucianists, that China is the centre of Heaven-and-Earth and all other countries are barbarians. The text not only converted the upper class but also met the religious belief of the people with a definition about a thaumaturgical Buddha: "Buddha is an awakened one, endowed with thaumaturgics without limit, untouched by fire, weapons, impurities or bad luck, and is able to fly in air and illuminate when sitting."

It can be said that the text *Lý Hoặc Luận* was a summary of the struggle on culture between Vietnam and the North, mainly Buddhism and Confucianism, and that Confucianism or Taoism was unnecessary to Vietnamese Buddhism and culture.

3) *Khương Tăng Hội* (? – 280) : The person bringing the cul-

---

[7] Kenneth K.S.Ch'en, Buddhism in China, Princeton, 1964, p. 37.

tural strength from Vietnam to China was *Khương Tăng Hội*. *Hội*'s father was a Sogdian, who migrated from his homeland to India, then from India to *Giao Châu* for trade and he married a Vietnamese girl. From this marriage Hoäi was born in *Giao Châu*. When he was aged 15, his parents died; he left home for monkhood life and studied hard under *Mâu Tử's* tutorship. He was well-versed in Sanskrit and Chinese. When staying in *Giao Châu* and hearing that Buddhism had not been accepted by *Giang Đông* government in China yet, *Hội* moved to *Kiến Nghiệp* (Nan-king) in 247 A.D. under the reign of king *Ngô Tôn Quyền*. When *Hội* performed the magic of Buddha's relics, the King admired him very much and had a temple erected for worshipping the relics. The name of the temple was *Kiến Sơ*. After that, Buddhism flourished there. *Hội* died in 280 A.D. and stayed in China for 25 years.[8]

Hội translated, interpreted and compiled some Buddhist texts. He explained in the text *An Ban Thủ Ý*[9] a method of meditation inclusive of 6 stages (*sổ, tùy, chỉ, quán, hoàn, tịnh*). Those who are skilful in this meditation can achieve some magical powers, of which the most important is to see the Buddha.

II. New Buddhist Ideology

Even till the mid-5th century A.D. when a concept of the thaumaturgical Buddha did not become a decisive one in the religious life of Chinese Buddhism yet, in Vietnam in the early centuries A.D. *Mâu Tử* and *Khương Tăng Hội* had already mentioned it. The concept was enthusiastically received and dreamt of by the Viets in the condition of a nation suppressed by fiendish aggressors. However, after the death of *Hội* in about 280 A.D., and for over successive 150 years, nobody succeeded with *Hội*'s instructions, i.e., nobody saw the appearance of a thaumaturgical Buddha at all. The doubt, till the mid-5th century A.D., became a main question and was brought out by *Lý Miễu*, a representative of a newly Buddhist tendency, in a letter sent two monks *Đạo Cao* and *Pháp Minh*, representatives of supernatural Buddhism; however, they could not satisfy *Lý Miễu*.

---

[8] Cao Tăng Truyện, a Chinese text, compiled by Huệ Hạo in 519 A.D. in 14 fasciculi.

[9] Ānāpānasati, the text of mindfulness on in-and-out breathing.

Had not the thaumaturgics be found from outside, could it be found inside the body?



Khai quốc pagoda

After *Hội*'s death, many uprisings occurred and the Viets gradually realized that it was they alone that could save themselves, certainly not outsiders. The newly critical Buddhist ideology was later turned into the great strength of people in order to liberate themseves and construct a powerful, independent country by the patriotic leaders such as *Lý Trường Nhân*, *Lý Thúc Hiến* (458 – 485) and especially *Lý Bí* in the mid-6th century A.D. who proclaimed himself as the South Emperor. The dream of the Viets came true with an independent state, named *Vạn Xuân*,[10] founded by *Lý Bí* (or *Lí Bân*) from 545 – 603. To show his deep gratitude to Buddhism, a faithful comrade, *Lý Bí* had the first Buddhist *Khai Quốc* (state-founding) pagoda built in the capital.

Not so long after *Lý Bí's* enthronement was the founding of the Vietnamese *Vinitaruci* (*Tỳ Ni Đa Lưu Chi*) *Thiền* [11] school (580) which declared that enlightenment is within and nobody heard about the question of seeing the Buddha longer. The concept of thaumaturgical Buddhism was turned into that of *secular Buddhism* which can be considered a socio-political theory. This explains the political tendency of Buddhism in Vietnam from the *Vinitaruci* to next *Thiền* schools.

III. Vô Ngôn Thông Thiền' School And Independence

[10] It means 10.000 Springs; figuratively, prosperity and welfare.

[11] Thiền or Ch'an in Chinese, Zen in Japan, meditation in English.

For a clear-cut solution of the 2 things – crisis of thaumaturgical Buddhism in mid-5th century and taking part in the protection and construction of the country – *Vô Ngôn Thông Thiền* school was founded. In 820 *Vô Ngôn Thông*, a Chinese *Thiền* Master, came to Vietnam. He refused the viewpoint that *Thiền* originated from India or China and advocated that whoever enlightens he is Buddha, any place that is enlightened it is *Thiền*. This *Thiền* school asks for the Buddhists to carry out their will and ideas, i.e., to engage in worldly life and politics.

When the ruling machine of the *Đường* (唐) dynasty in China became weak and confused, the Viets started rising up. *Mai Hắc Đế* (722) and *Bố Cái Đại Vương* (766 – 799) failed. But *Khúc Thừa Dụ* (906-907), *Khúc Hạo* (907-917), *Khúc Thừa Mỹ*(917-923) and *Ngô Quyền* (905-938) continuously rose up, defeating the *Đường* and *Nam Hán* (南漢) and starting a long and stable period of national independence in every aspect – culture, economy, politics and military affairs – with the successive dynasties *Ngô, Đinh, Tiền Lê,* and especially the *Lý* and *Trần* dynasties.

It is during this period that the intellectual Buddhist monks were skilful counselors who helped the leaders to gain success. Monk *Định Không* (730-808), who said Buddhism can only develop in an independent country,predicted that it was the terrain of his village *Cổ Pháp* which would produce a politician surnamed *Lý* who could secure the national independence. The prediction came true. Two centuries later, in 1010, *Lý Công Uẩn* started the *Lý* dynasty, which was powerful for two centuries (1010-1225). Monk *Vạn Hạnh* advised king *Lý Công Uẩn* to move the capital from *Hoa Lư* to *Thăng Long* (modern *Hà Nội*) with the intention to keep the national independence long. It is monk *Pháp Thuận* who utilized prophecy to help king *Lê Đại Hành* (980-1005) seize power for ending the confusion in the royal court at the end of the *Đinh* dynasty. One day king *Lê Đại Hành* asked *Pháp Thuận* about the stability of the country, the monk answered the verse "*Quốc Tộ*" (國祚):

"國	祚	如	藤	絡
Quốc	*tộ*	*như*	*đằng*	*lạc*
南 天	里	太	平	

Nam thiên lý thái binh
无 為 居 殿 閣
Vô vi cư điện các
處 處 息 刀 兵
Xứ xứ tức đao binh."

(The state destiny is like winding strings,

The Southern heaven opens the prosperous and peaceful sight.

Vô vi lies in the royal palace,

Everywhere stops hostility.)

Pháp Thuận implies that it is the talented virtuous leader of the government who will lead the nation to the unity among various sections of the people and make the nation powerful. It can be said that the verse "*Quốc Tộ*" (國祚) is the first Vietnamese theory of government.

Iv. Thảo Đường Thiền School And South March

In 1069, under the *Lý*dynasty, one more *Thiền* school – *Thảo Đường* – was founded to meet a new demand of the country. After the war between Vietnam – Champa in 1069, *Chế Củ* offered three provinces – *Địa Lý, Ma Linh* and *Bố Chính* (now *Hà Tĩnh, Quảng Binh* and *Quảng Trị*) – for ransoming his capture and King *Lý Thánh Tông* accepted. And among the prisoners of war was a Chinese monk named *Thảo Đường*. He was soon appointed Imperial



Một Cột (One pillar) pagoda

Preceptor and a new *Thiền* school was founded bearing his name. This school spent nearly 150 years with 18 *Thiền* Masters; however, half clergy, half laity. In *Vinitaruci Thiền*school survived over 600 years but all generations were monks; and, *Vô Ngôn Thông* surviving around 250 years had 3 laymen. This means that the impact of Buddhism shifted gradually from clergy to laity.

V. Trúc Lâm Thiền School

This moving trend increased day by day and reached its peak when *Trúc Lâm Thiền* school was founded by king *Trần Nhân Tông* (1258-1309) with the idea "*Cư trần lạc đạo*" (居塵樂道). It means living a worldly life and loving the Way. In 1307King *Trần Nhân Tông* received two provinces – *Thuận Châu* and *Hoá Châu* (now *Thừa Thiên* and *Quảng Nam*). The expansion of the new territories and the menace of aggressions put forward an urgent demand for population growth.

Vietnam continued its Southward march and Buddhism as a cultural instrument was necessary to stabilize the new territories.

The advent of the *Lê* dynasty (1428 – 1527) marked a newly developing period of secular Buddhism based on the idea of "*Cư trần lạc dạo*" by King *Trần Nhân Tông*. The *Lê* kings were ardent supporters of Buddhism. King *Lê Thánh Tông*, the most typical Buddhist in this time, was well-versed in both Confucianism and Buddhism.

VI. Period Of New Buddhism

In 1698 Lord *Nguyễn Phúc Chu* completed the South march and from this time onwards the spirit of "*Cư trần lạc đạo*" was changed to "*Cư Nho mộ Thích*" (居儒慕釋). It means living as Confucian but loving Buddhism. This means that the Buddhists of this period must master the Confucian art of governing the country.Six *Thiền* schools, i.e., *Tào Động, Trúc Lâm, Quốc Ân, Thập Tháp, Chúc Thánh* and *Liễu Quán* during this time have still existed until now.

In 1856 French troops attacked *Đà Nẵng* and after that they presented new pressures on the Vietnamese Buddhists from 1883 to 1945. Under foreign rule, Vietnamese Buddhists urgently felt the need to create a more socially and politically engaged Buddhism.

Many eminent Buddhists were ardent patriots and leaders of insurgent movements; intellectual Vietnamese Buddhists were inspired by reformed movements in other East Asian countries in the 1920s and, in particular, by the Chinese monk *Thái HưĐại Sư* (1890 - 1947). Buddhist magazines and periodicals in colloquial Vietnamese (*Quốc Ngữ*) began to appear with a view to addressing political and social issues.

During the 1930s three new associations of Buddhist studies were established in the three parts of Vietnam. All were guided and supported by learned clergy and laity with exposure to Western culture. There were attempts at consolidating three associations into a unified *Sarigha*, but the efforts were hindered by the repressive policy of the French and a lack of communication.

VII. Postcolonial Struggle

Hồ Chí Minh set up the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in 1945, the Buddhists participated in the construction of the country and later on in the resistance against the French.

When King *Bảo Đại* (1913 – 1997) assumed the role of head of state of South Vietnam in 1949, he signed Decree No. 10 in 1951, which followed the French policy of relegating all religions to the status of "public associations," with the exception of Catholic and Protestant missions. On assuming power in 1955, *Ngô Đình Diệm* (1901 – 1963) retained Decree No. 10. In 1957 *Diệm* also eliminated the Buddha's birthday from the list of official holidays.

Diệm's policy toward Buddhism led to many Buddhist resistance movements during the 1960s, especially the death of the monk *Thích Quảng Đức* by self-immolation on June 11, 1963, which ultimately resulted in the overthrow of *Diệm*'s government. The Vietnamese Unified Buddhist Church was founded in South Vietnam and in 1964 *Vạn Hạnh* University, the 1st Buddhist one, was established in Saigon and eminent monks such as *Thích Trí Quang* and *Thích Tâm Châu* became household names. A charismatic young monk with an American education, *Thích Nhất Hạnh* (1926 -), the founder of *Trường thanh niên phụng sự xã hội* (School of Youth for Social Service) at *Vạn Hạnh* University, be-



Monk *Thích Quảng Đức*

came an overnight celebrity. However, due to inexperience on the part of the monks, division among the leadership, and a lack of a capable lay Buddhists, Vietnamese Buddhism failed to seize a rare opportunity to reform and explore the potential of Buddhist culture in its country.

B) VIETNAMESE BUDDHISM IN THE PRESENT:

In 1975Vietnam was unified. This was a good condition for the unification of Buddhism in Vietnam.

Late in 1981, all Vietnamese Buddhist sects in the North and South of Vietnam were unified in an organisation called "*Giáo hội Phật giáo Việt Nam*" (Vietnam Buddhist Sangha) with the motto: "Dharma – Nation – Socialism." The Sangha is divided into two ranks: a) Central and, b) Local. In the Central the Sangha includes a Sangha Patronage Council (*Hội đồng Chứng minh*) and a Dhamma Executive Council (*Hội đồng Trị sự*) including 09 departments and 01 institute as follows: 1) *Tăng sự* (Sangha affairs), 2) *Giáo dục tăng ni* (Training monks and nuns), 3) *Hoằng pháp* (Dharma propagation), 4) *Hướng dẫn Phật tử* (Guidance of laity), 5) *Nghi lễ* (Buddhist rites), 6) *Văn hóa*(Buddhist culture), 7) *Kinh tế – Tài chánh* (Economics and Finance), 8) *Từ thiện xã hội* (Social charity), 9) *Phật giáo quốc tế* (International Buddhism), and 10) *Viện Nghiên cứu Phật học Việt Nam* (Vietnam Buddhist Research Institute). In 2018 the Sangha added 3 more departments: 11) *Pháp chế* (Legal); 12) *Kiểm soát* (Supervisory); and 13) *Thông tin truyền thông* (Communication information).The Local Sangha in cities and provinces also have the same works as for the Central except the 10th.

Hereafter are some reports of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha in March, 2018:

- There have been 54,941 monks and nuns in the whole



country – Mahayana: 39,229; Theravada: 10,328 [Khmer: 8,574]; Mendicant: 5,384. There also have existed18,466 monasteries and temples – Mahayana: 15,846;Khmer Theravada: 454; Vietnamese Theravada: 106 and Mendicant: 541.

- About 60 % of Vietnam's population is Buddhist.

A souvenir photo at the Vietnam Buddhist University in Hochiminh City, Vietnam

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Tamás Agócs graduated from Eötvös Loránd University in 1991 in English and Tibetan. In 1998, he received the Candidate (CSc) degree of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences with his thesis on the Tibetan commentaries on Diamond Cutter. He conducted Tibetan studies in the United States of America (1991, 1993-1994) and Nepal (1998-99, 2000, 2003–4). From 1998 to 2002, he taught classical Tibetan language, classical Tibetan reading at the Tibetan Department of ELTE BTK and held Tibetan cultural history lessons. He was also an assistant Secretary of the International Association of Buddhist Universities Compiler and translator of Vajrayana section in Common Buddhist Text Project.

Suman Kanti Barua is working as an Associate Professor of Pali and Buddhist Studies Department of Dhaka University. He received a Master degree with honors in Language and Literature from Dhaka University in 1989 and a PhD from the same university in 2005. Prof. Barua is also the Executive Editor of Kirti, a monthly literary magazine of Buddhist Culture Promotional Association. He has talked at international seminars and presented scholarly articles in the country and abroad. His publications include: Introduction to Tripitaka and other topics (collectively) 2000, Poetry Buddhist writers and philosophers (collectively) etc. He is also the Public Secretary in Dhaka University.

Bela Bhattacharya has been teaching in the Department of Pali as University Professor, University of Calcutta for thirty-eight years and also in the Department of Languages (Tibetan). She has written seven books on Buddhism, contributed a large number of research papers (approximately 310) on the different branches of Indology in India and abroad. She edited Journals, Encyclopedia of Buddhism (Bauddhakosa), Pali text books, Tibetan Readers, Haraprasad Smarane, etc. under the University of Calcutta. Prof. Bhattacharya has travelled to different parts of the Globe and delivered

lectures on Buddhism to spread the light of Buddha's message of Metta. Internationally, she also addressed lectures on Buddhism in London, Japan, Bangladesh, Thailand, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Cambodia, Taiwan, Oxford, Croatia, U.S.A. Australia and China. Prof. Bhattacharya was awarded a Griffith Memorial Prize and served as Principal Investigator under UPE Project funded by UGC entitled Buddhist Education in India. Under her supervision, many students from different countries have obtained their PhD degrees.

Jørn Borup is an Associate Professor and Head of the Department of the Study of Religion at Aarhus University in Denmark, specializing in Buddhism. He earned his Ph.D. with a project on contemporary Japanese Rinzai Zen Buddhism (published by Brill in a revised version) and has since then done research on Zen and spirituality, Pure Land and secularization and Soka Gakkai and business. Buddhism in the West has been another major focus of Prof. Borup with projects on transnational/diaspora Buddhism (Japanese Americans in Hawaii and Vietnamese in Denmark) and 10 years of mapping Buddhism in Denmark. He has participated in cooperative research projects on modern Buddhism, religious diversity, and the circulations of religious ideas and practices between East and West ("Eastspirit"). He is mainly interested in contemporary religion using sociological and anthropological methods, but as a trained historian of religion he is also including textual studies and historical perspectives.

Catón Eduardo Carini graduated in anthropology in 2004 from the National University of La Plata and obtained a master's degree in 2009 in social anthropology from the Latin American Institute of Social Sciences (FLACSO). He also completed a PhD in anthropology in 2012, the thesis was about Zen Buddhism in Argentina. Nowadays, the author is a professor at the School of Psychology of the National University of La Plata and a researcher at the National Council of Scientific and Technical Research (CONICET). His academic interests focus on the anthropology of religion, specializing in the sociological, historical, ritual and symbolic aspects of Buddhist centers formed in Argentina in recent decades. In relation to these issues, he has published several articles in national and international scientific journals, as well as several chapters of books

published in the country and abroad.

Jitka Cirklová, M.A., Ph.D. is a sociologist at the University of Finance and Administration in Prague, the Czech Republic. She completed her Ph.D. in Sociology at the Charles University in Prague and her M.A. studies at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Israel. Articles based on her Ph.D. research were published in the Routledge JournalContemporary Buddhism. She currently lectures courses in Sociology and Sociological Research. The focus of her research work is in the Sociology of Values, Lifestyles, Consumer culture and Identity - following the changes in the structure of institutions that are initiated by the dynamics of changing value models. She is looking into the transformation of lifestyles towards responsible consumption, social stratification and intergeneration transfer of value models that promote sustainable development of society on global and local level.

Jamie Cresswell is director of the Centre for Applied Buddhism, a member of the European Council of Religious Leaders and a trustee of Religions for Peace, UK. He is a member of the Soka Gakkai International-UK and has practiced Buddhism for 28 years. His Buddhist background includes a degree in Buddhist studies from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), other study courses in Buddhism at the Sharpham College of Buddhist Enquiry and at The Schumacher Institute. In 1995, he set up the Institute of Oriental Studies, European Centre and Library a research center. The Library covers all schools and traditions of Buddhism, history, art and culture. In 2012 he created The Centre for Applied Buddhism which focused on the application of Buddhist philosophy to contemporary issues. Topics are explored through conferences, seminars and workshops and include, Buddhism and creativity, conflict transformation, dialogue techniques, Buddhist action and the SDGs, Global Citizenship and value-based education.

Ven. Tampalawela Dhammaratana (M.A; Ph.D. Paris Sorbonne), is a Sri Lankan Buddhist monk, residing in France. Currently he holds the positions of the Vice-Chair, International Council of the United Nations Day of Vesak and one of its representatives to the United Nations Headquarters (ecosoc), in New York. He is also the President, Director General of the International Institute

of Buddhist Studies of Paris (Linh Son Buddhist Academy) in France and the President of Global Buddhist Council. Besides that, he is also the author of number of scientific research publications in the fields of Buddhist philosophy, Comparative Indian philosophy, peace education, culture and ethics are published in leading University Journals in English and in French. He is also the copy editor of the History of Humanity, vol.VI and VII, published by UNESCO in 2008. His recent joint publication was: Buddhist Ideals of Good Governance with a Preface by Maitripala Sirisena, the President of Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, published in Colombo 2016.

Wolfgang Drechsler is Professor of Governance at Tallinn University of Technology's Ragnar Nurkse Department of Innovation and Governance and associate and member of the advisory board at the Davis Center at Harvard University. He has a Ph.D. from the University of Marburg and an Honorary Doctorate from Corvinus University Budapest. In civil service, he has been Advisor to the President of Estonia, Executive Secretary with the German Wissenschaftsrat during German Reunification, and, as an APSA Congressional Fellow, Senior Legislative Analyst in the United States Congress. He has been a visiting professor, i.e., in Singapore, Bangkok, Yogyakarta, Zhejiang, Kuala Lumpur and Beijing, as well as in Louvain-la-neuve, where he held the Chaire Andre Molitor. Wolfgang's main interests are Non-Western Public Administration and Governance (especially Confucian and Buddhist); Public Management, Technology and Innovation; and Public Management Reform generally, about all of which he has published widely. He is an expert on Buddhist Economics, Governance, and Public Administration and is involved in several projects especially about Buddhist sustainable agriculture (Thailand, Bhutan) and forms of governance today (Bhutan, Nepal, Cambodia).

Sylwia Maria Gil received a Master's Degree in Indian Studies from University of Warsaw in Poland and post-graduate studies in Indonesian language studies at Gadjah Mada University in Indonesia, in Developing Countries Studies at University of Warsaw in Poland, and a diploma in Buddha-Dhamma Studies from the International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University in Myanmar.

She has published numerous articles on Theravada Buddhism, and Indonesian and Myanmar culture. She is working as an independent expert, translator, and text editor on South and Southeast Asian religions and cultures.

Michael Givel is a Professor in Department of Political Science, University of Oklahoma; specializing in public policy, health policy, complexity policy, Himalayan and Tibetan area studies, happiness and well-being policy, and U.S. urban politics. His current research includes examining Bhutanese diplomatic and political history including in Bhutan, India, and Tibet, happiness and well-being policy, and complexity policy theory and practice. He received a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of California, Riverside in 1988. Professor Givel, in recent years, has published a number of scholarly articles related to Bhutanese culture and policy. This includes articles illustrating the connection between Mahayana Buddhism and Gross National Happiness, the policy history of Gross National Happiness, and a survey and analysis of the unwritten constitution of early Bhutan. In 2005, with Andrew Spivak, he produced the report "From Industry Dominance to Legislative Progress: The Political and Public Health Struggle of Tobacco Control in Oklahoma." The report was supported with a grant from the American Heart Association. In 2009, he became the first U. S. Fulbright ever to serve in Bhutan. Professor Givel's current research areas include: Policy theory, comparative public policy, Himalayan and Tibetan area studies, complexity and public policy, well-being and public policy, corporate actions and policy, and public health policy.

Bhikkhuni Dieu Hieu (Rev. Dr Dieu Hieu (Bhikkhunī Supetteyyā) earned a BA in Buddhist Studies from Vietnam Buddhist Academy in 2001. She joined International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University, Yangon, Myanmar in 2016 and obtained BA, MA, and Ph.D. Her main research area is tranquility and insight meditation according to early Buddhist texts. Currently, she is a lecturer at the Vietnam Buddhist University in Ho Chi Minh City teaching Buddhist Meditation, Pali Language, Dhammapada, and Pali Literature. She is also the deputy director of Theravada Meditation Center affiliated to Vietnam Buddhist Research Institute. She

is abbess of Tuong Quang Temple in HCM city

Hudaya Kandahjaya received a PhD in Buddhist Studies in 2004 from the Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California, with a specialization in Indonesian Buddhism. He has separately issued a number of publications in the form of book, chapter, article, or encyclopedia entries related to his ongoing study of Indonesian Buddhism. Dr. Kandahjaya has been working at the BDK America (aka the Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research in Berkeley), currently in Moraga, California, USA, since 1998, as an assistant to the editor in its main publishing project, the BDK English Tripitaka. He has also engaged in practical aspects of Buddhism, gearing his interests towards theoretical as well as practical understanding of Engaged Buddhism.

Jongmyung Kim is now Associate Professor in the Graduate School of Korean Studies at the Academy of Korean Studies. He received his MA and PhD from UCLA, graduating in 1994 with focuses in both Buddhist studies and Korean studies. He has published extensively in both English and Korean on a range of issues in Korean Buddhism. He serves as Editor-in-chief for the International Journal of Korean Historical Studies and Vice President of the Association of East Asian Buddhism and Culture. Before his academic career in Buddhist studies, Dr. Kim was a scientist in Dairy Technology and Microbiology and conducted research on genetic engineering in 1987 for the Cancer Institute in the School of Medicine at Seoul National University.

Ven. Jinwol Y. Lee, a Korean Buddhist monk and the Seon (Chan/Zen) Master, was Chair Professor of Buddhist Studies at Dongguk University, Korea. He practiced meditation on the mountain for 6 years and earned a Ph. D. in Buddhist Studies from UC Berkeley. He established United Religions Initiative of Korea and worked as a Global Council member of URI (2000-2010). He had been appointed as a member of Presidential Committee on Sustainable Development in Korean government (2004-2006). He has worked as a Vice-President of WFB (2012-2016) and EXCO member of ICUNDV (20013-2018). He is now the Abbot of Gosung Monastery in California.

Egil Lothe is Norwegian born in 1954. He became a Buddhist in 1977 and studied Buddhist teachings as a member of a Buddhist residential community in Oslo 1978 – 1982. He travelled in India and Southeast Asia during this period to do study Buddhism. He has a Cand.Philol. degree from the University of Oslo (1986) in Buddhist studies as well as studies in History of Religions (1980) Sanskrit & Pali Languages (1982) Social Anthropology (1983). He has been president of the Buddhist Federation of Norway 1987 – 2018) and became Secretary General of the organization in 2018. He is also a member of the Executive Committee of International Council of United Nations Day of Vesak, Thailand (2008 – present). He has also been vice-president of the European Buddhist Union (2011 – 2014). He has also been leader of the Council for Religious and Life Stance Communities in Norway (1999-2003). He was coordinator of "Common Buddhist Text" project, MCU, Thailand (2009 – 2017). He has been leader of Oslo Coalition on Freedom of Religion or Belief (OC) project on freedom of religion with the People's Republic of China. (2001 – 2011) and participant and leader of various Norwegian delegations visiting China and has authored books on Buddhism and related subjects

Ezer Roboam May May is a Social Anthropologist trained at Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán (UADY) and trained as an Historian at Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social-Peninsular (CIESAS-Peninsular). May's main fields of study focus on religious minorities in Mexico, especially Protestants and Buddhists about which he has published articles in academic journals, as "Buddhism in Mexico" in Encyclopedia of Latin American Religions in 2015 by Springer (online version) and "Soka Gakkai en México" in Diccionario de religiones en América Latina (2018) by FCE/COLMEX.

Tina Manandhar did her M A and Ph D from Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal. She is currently a Lecturer at Central Department of Nepalese History, Culture and Archaeology in the same University. She has participated and presented papers in different international conferences. Her research interests are Newari Buddhism, Culture and Gender Studies. She is Life Member of SSEASR.

Ven. Bhikku Prayudh Payutto also known by his current monastic title, Somdet Phra Buddhakosajarn, is a well-known Thai Buddhist monk, an intellectual, and a prolific writer. Prayudh has lectured and written extensively about a variety of topics related to Buddhism, including the position of women in Buddhism and the relationship between Buddhism and the environment. He was awarded the 1994 UNESCO Prize for Peace Education. Prayudh was appointed Associate Dean of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University and had maintained this position for the following ten years. In the 1970s, Ven. Bhikku Prayudh Payutto was emerging as a major figure in Thai Buddhist scholarship. In 1971, the first edition of his condensation of Buddhist principles, entitled Buddhadhamma: Natural Laws and Values for Life, was published. About ten years later, this first edition would grow to almost five times its original length. This volume has come to be known as Prayudh Payutto's masterpiece and holds a significant place in the history of Buddhist literature. Buddhadhamma and his Dictionary of Buddhism demonstrate his love for encyclopedic knowledge.

Mauro Peressini is Curator of Social History at the Canadian Museum of History and holds a PhD in social and cultural anthropology from the Université de Montréal. Dr. Peressini's work has long focused on questions relating to immigration and on the construction of identities that underpin the decision to emigrate and immigrants' lives in Canada. More recently, he has been focusing on religious identities. In both instances, the biographical approach (life stories) has been his principal research method. In addition to authoring numerous publications, Dr. Peressini has curated a number of major exhibitions for the Museum, including Presenza – A New Look at Italian-Canadian Heritage (2003), Pompeii (2005), The Greeks (2008) and Vodou (2012).

Walmoruwe Piyaratana received a Bachelor's Degree with First Class (Pali Special) from the University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka and Masters of Arts Degrees from the Buddhist and Pali University in Sri Lanka and Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University (MCU), Wang Noi, Ayutthaya, Thailand. He earned his Doctorate Degree in Buddhist Studies from the same university. He served as a Temporary Lecturer at the Department of Pali and Buddhist

Studies, University of Peradeniya in Sri Lanka for two years and served as a visiting lecturer at International Buddhist College, Hat Yayi for several years. Currently, he serves as the senior lecturer at the Department of Buddhist Studies, the Faculty of Buddhism, MCU. So far he has published 'The Expectation from Sigalovada-sutta in Social Concept', 'Sigalovadasutta: How to Strike a Perfect Balance in Society', (Revised Version of the 1st edition), 'Chan & Enlightenment: A Sinhalese Translation', 'Theravada Buddhism: Teaching Material'. He has written more than 35 academic articles in Sinhalese, Pali and English Languages.

Charles S. Prebish is Professor Emeritus of Religious Studies at the Pennsylvania State University, where he served on the faculty from 1971 until 2006. He is also Charles Redd Chair in Religious Studies Emeritus at Utah State University, where he served from January 2007 until December 2010. His formal training in Buddhist Studies initially centered on early Indian Buddhism, with special attention to the disciplinary literature known as Vinaya and the development of the monastic system. Upon arriving at Penn State, he quickly became interested in Buddhism's development on the North American continent. In this way he could continue his classical studies of Buddhism while also contributing to the major aspect of the Religious Studies Department's graduate program. He has maintained these research interests throughout his career. Throughout his career, Prof. Prebish published over twenty books and nearly one hundred articles and chapters. His books Buddhist Monastic Discipline (1975) and Luminous Passage: The Practice and Study of Buddhism in America (1999) are considered classic volumes in Buddhist Studies.

Karam Teje Singh Sarao is presently Professor of Buddhist Studies at the University of Delhi. He received his first class first MA (History), MPhil (Chinese & Japanese Studies), and PhD (Buddhist History) from the University of Delhi. He was a Commonwealth Scholar at the University of Cambridge (1985-1989) from where he obtained his second doctorate through the Faculty of Oriental Studies. Professor Sarao has been a visiting professor/fellow at Dongguk University (Seoul, S. Korea), Chung-Hwa Institute of Buddhist Studies (Jinshan, Taiwan), St. Edmunds College

(Cambridge University, UK), Maison des Sciences de L'Homme (Paris, France), Department of Religious Studies (Toronto University, Canada), and Visvabharati (Santiniketan, India). He was conferred the special academic honor, Doctor of Letters (honoris causa), by Preah Sihanouk Raja Buddhist University, Phnom Penh, Cambodia in a Special Convocation held on 07 March 2011. His research interests are Indology; Indian Buddhism; Brāhmī; Vedānta; Socially Engaged Buddhism; Ancient South Asian Archaeology, History & Civilization; Pāli Language & Literature; Ancient Indian Epigraphy; Ancient Indian Topography; Pilgrimage; Religious Conversions; Buddhist Philosophy and Ethics; Ancient Indian Religions; Sikh-Udāsin Paramparā.

Shobhit Shakya is a PhD student and Early Stage Researcher in Ragnar Nurkse Department of Innovation and Governance in Tallinn University of Technology. He completed his MSc degree in E-Governance Technologies and Services from Tallinn University of Technology in 2017. His ongoing research for his PhD thesis focuses on traditional Buddhist governance practices amongst the Newar community of Nepal. He has worked as an IT professional for several years but has shifted more towards researching use and impact of ICT in governance and development. His interests include e-Governance and ICT in development, Himalayan and Buddhism studies, Commons and Peer Production.

Ravi Shankar Singh is an Assistant Professor of Buddhist Studies at Satyawati College of University of Delhi, India. He had completed his Graduation from Magadha University Bodhagaya. He obtained Master & M. Phil degree in the subject of Buddhism from University of Delhi. He has completed Doctoral & Post-Doctoral research on Peace Ecology & Environment. Dr. Singh has been awarded Post-Doctoral fellowship from ICPR, Govt. of India. Mr. Singh has been teaching Buddhist Studies since 2009. His interested field of study is Buddhist Philosophy, art & architecture, Tibetan Buddhism and Buddhist tourism. Prof. Dr. Singh has started work with newly opened department at Mahatma Gandhi International Hindi University, Maharashtra. He has innovated a new course in the field of Buddhist Studies i.e. Post-Graduation Diploma in Buddhist Tourism & Guiding. Prof. Dr. Singh has presented numer-

ous papers in International and National conference like Thailand, Hong Kong, Australia and Sri Lanka etc. He has published several research papers in International and National Journal and also the author for a book.

Ven. Khy Sovanratana earned his B.A and M.A degrees in Buddhist Philosophy from Sri Lanka. He also received a Master's Degree in Public Law, a Post Graduate Diploma in Education, and a Diploma in Public Administration from Cambodia. He is a Rajagana Fourth Class (Royal Title), a Vice-Rector of Sihanouk Buddhist University, Phnom Penh, and the Acting Secretary-General of Cambodian Interreligious Council. He is also a founder Executive Council Member of International Association of Buddhist Universities (IABU) and Association of Theravada Buddhist Universities (ATBU). He has presented numerous papers at inter-religious and academic conferences in Cambodia and abroad. Having won a research scholarship from the Indian Government, he is currently pursuing a PhD in Buddhist Philosophy in India.

Sue Erica Smith is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Education at Charles Darwin University in Australia. She received a PhD from Victoria University and a Master of Education from La Trobe University. From an extensive teaching background in primary, secondary and tertiary education settings, a country upbringing and being a keen traveler, Dr. Smith has continued to explore equity and ethics in education. Her research interests are in meditation, social and emotional wellbeing, spirituality, Asian studies and Buddhism. She has published "Buddhist voices in schools: How a community created a Buddhist education program for state schools," (2013, Sense), and explores ethics from diverse perspectives in "A Difficult Dinner Party — Being Loved and Safe How Spirituality in Education Can Open Inclusive Practices" (2014, Creative Approaches to Research). Loving a good story, Dr. Smith is also currently working on a lively anthology of Jataka stories for adult readers.

Most. Ven. Dr. Thich Tam Duc graduated BA in Buddhist Studies in 1988 and MA in History in 1991 in Vietnam. At the University of Delhi, India, he passed MA in Buddhist Studies in 1993, completed the PhD program in Buddhist studies in 1997 with the thesis "Vietnamese Buddhism under the Tran Dynasty," received his Di-

ploma in Pali in 1998, Diploma in Chinese in 1998 and completed a Doctorate in Philosophy in 2003 with the thesis "Philosophy of the Saddharmapundarika Sutra - A Conceptual and Doctrinal Analysis." After returning to Vietnam in 2003, he is now a Standing Member of the Central Dhamma Executive Council of Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, Vice Rector and General secretary of the Vietnam Buddhist Research Institute and Vice Rector & Lecturer of Vietnam Buddhist University in Ho Chi Minh City.

Frank Usarski defended his PhD-thesis in the field of Religionswissenschaft on the process of the stigmatization of New Religious Movements in West Germany at the University of Hannover, Germany in 1987. From 1998 to 2003, he was a Visiting Professor at the Religious Studies Department at the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo (PUC-SP), Brazil. Since 2003, he is a tenured member of this Department. Prof. Usarski is the founder and editor in-chief of the periodicals "REVER – Revista de Estudos da Religião", the first full text online-journal on Religious Studies in Latin America, and the International Journal for Latin American Religions. He is also the leader of the research group CERAL (Centro de Estudos de Religiões Alternativas de Origem Oriental no Brasil) that is investigating the history and contemporary situation of traditional and "new" Eastern religions in Brazil. In 2009, he obtained the title of a "Livre Docente" (Privatdozent, Habilitation) in Ciência da Religião (Study of Religions) at the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo, Brazil

Jonathan S. Watts graduated with a BA in religious studies from Princeton University in 1989 and an MA in human sciences from the Saybrook Institute in 2002. He has been a researcher at the Jodo Shu Research Institute in Tokyo since 1999 and the International Buddhist Exchange Center since 2005. He has also been an associate professor of Buddhist studies at Keio University, Tokyo, and has been on the executive board of the International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB) since 2003. He has coauthored and edited Never Die Alone: Birth as Death in Pure Land Buddhism; Rethinking Karma: The Dharma of Social Justice; and This Precious Life: Buddhist Tsunami Relief, and Anti-Nuclear Activism in Post 3/11 Japan. Jonathan S. Watts serves on the executive board of the Inter-

national Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB) and coordinates Think Sangha, a socially engaged Buddhist think tank affiliated with INEB.

ABOUT THE EDITOR

Most Ven. Dr. Thich Nhat Tu obtained his D.Phil., in Philosophy from Allahabad in 2002, is the Founder of Buddhism Today Foundation since 2000. He made valuable contribution as an editorial member of Hue Quang Encyclopedia of Buddhism (9 volumes, 1992-2007). He is editor-in-chief of the first ever audio Vietnamese Tripitaka, of the ongoing Vietnamese Tripitaka Translation project and Buddhism Today Series (over 250 books), as well as editor of more than two 200 CD albums on Buddhist music. He has authored more than 80 Vietnamese books on applied Buddhism. He has traveled extensively around the world to give public Dharma talks to Vietnamese communities in Vietnam, Canada, America, Australia, and Europe and has produced over 4,000 VCDs on various dharma topics.

Master Thich Nhat Tu now serves as Vice Rector of the Vietnam Buddhist University and Vice Chairman of the National Department of International Buddhist Affairs. Several universities conferred upon him the title of Doctor Honoris Causa in appreciation of his excellent contributions to Buddhist education, his works on Buddhist academic research and leadership in international Buddhist communities. He has received many recognitions, awards, and titles from the Government of Vietnam, Myanmar, Thailand, and Cambodia.

***

VIETNAM BUDDHIST UNIVERSITY SERIES
Advisor: His Holiness Thich Tri Quang
Editor: Most Ven.Dr. Thich Nhat Tu
ISBN: 978-604-61-6268-1

As a not-for-profit Publisher, VBU PUBLICATIONS is the publishing division of Vietnam Buddhist University, dedicated to publishing fine books on Buddhist Philosophy and socially engaged Buddhism in English, Chinese and Vietnamese, for the benefit of all sentient beings and dependent upon the kindness and generosity of sponsors in order to do so. We are committed to making Buddhadhamma and authentic Buddhist works from all the major Buddhist traditions accessible to everyone.

This collection is jointly published by Vietnam Buddhist University and Buddhism Today Foundation.

Publishers
VIETNAM BUDDHIST UNIVERSITY PUBLICATIONS
750 Nguyen Kiem, Phu Nhuan, TP.HCM, Vietnam
Email: thichnhattu@gmail.com • Website: www.vbu.edu.vn

BUDDHISM TODAY PUBLICATIONS
(A non-profit charitable organization and a part of Buddhism Today Foundation)
92 Nguyen Chi Thanh, P3, Q10, TP.HCM, Vietnam
Tel (In English and Vietnamese): +84-908-153-160
Email: buddhismtodayinc@yahoo.com • Website: www.buddhismtoday.com

BECOME A FRIEND OF VBU PUBLICATIONS

We invite our community of readers to support the publication and distribution of books by joining Friends of VBU Publications.

Donations of any amount are gratefully welcome. Friends of VBU Publications is a direct way you can help us sustain our commitment to reaching a wide audience and to preserve Buddha's Teachings for general public.

If you would like to sponsor the publication of a book, please write or email us for more information. If you would like to make a contribution or all donations to VBU Publications, you may send it to Vietnam Buddhist University office as mentioned above.

RELIGION PUBLISHER
53 Tràng Thi – Hoàn Kiếm - Hà Nội
ĐT: (024)37822845 - Fax: (024)37822841
Email: nhaxuatbantongiao@gmail.com

Publishing Liability: **DR. BUI THANH HA**
Editor: Vu Van Hieu
Typesetting: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Anh
Cover design: Thu Thao
For Free Distribution: Giac Thanh Nha

Printed for Free Distribution by
Buddhism Today Foundation
Giac Ngo Temple, 92 Nguyen Chi Thanh, P3, Q10, HCM City, Vietnam

Printed at Fahasa, address: 774 Trương Chinh street, ward 15, Tân Bình district, Ho Chi Minh City. Publishing licence Info: 1317 - 2019/CXBIPH/15 - 48/TG. ISBN: 978-604-61-6261-2. Publishing decision No.: 137/QĐ-NXBTG dated on 24-04-2019. Printed and deposited in: 2019.