INDIAN MISSIONARIES IN THE LAND OF GOLD
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INDIAN MISSIONARIES IN THE LAND OF GOLD

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INdIAN MISSIONARIES IN THE LAND OF GOLD

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GOVERNMENT OF BIHAR

‘He alone is a worthy and commendable historian, whose narrative of events in the past, like that of a judge, is free from passion, prejudice and partiality’

—Kalhana’s Rajatarangini 1-7

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1. The Government of Bihar established the K. P. Jayaswal Research Institute at Patna in 1950 with the object *inter alia*, to promote historical research, archaeological excavation and investigations and publication of works of permanent value to scholars. The Institute along with the five others was planned by the Government as a token of their homage to the tradition of learning and scholarship for which ancient Bihar was noted. Apart from the Kashi Prasad Jayaswal Research Institute, five others have been established to give incentive to research and advancement of knowledge—the Nalanda Institute of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in Pali and Buddhist Learning at Nalanda, the Mithila Institute of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in Sanskrit Learning at Darbhanga, the Bihar Rashtrabhasha Parishad for advanced Studies and Research in Hindi at Patna, the Institute of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in Jainism and Prakrit Learning at Vaishali and the Institute of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in Arabic and Persian Learning at Patna.

2. As a part of this programme of rehabilitating and reorienting ancient learning and scholarship, the K. P. Jayaswal Research Institute has undertaken the editing and publication of the Tibetan Sanskrit Text Series with the co-operation of scholars in Bihar and outside. Another series of Historical Research Works for elucidating the history and culture of Bihar and India has also been started by the Institute. The Government of Bihar hope to continue to sponsor such projects and trust that this humble service to the world of scholarship and learning would bear fruit in the fulness of time.
GENERAL EDITOR’S NOTE

The K. P. Jayaswal Research Institute has great pleasure in bringing out the present volume entitled ‘Indian Missionaries in the Land of Gold’ by Professor Upendra Thakur which deals with the Brāhmaṇa and Buddhist missionaries who went to various countries of South-East Asia to propagate their religion and culture, a memorable fact of human history which eloquently speaks of the realisation by races of their affinity of minds, their mutual obligation of a common humanity. Such a rare event did happen and the path was built up between the Indians and the people of South-East and East Asia in an age when physical obstruction needed heroic personality to overcome it and the mental barrier a moral power of uncommon magnitude. It reminds us of the great pilgrimage of those noble heroes who for the sake of their faith, their ideal of the liberation of self that leads to the perfect love which unites all beings, risked life and accepted banishment from home and all that was familiar to them. Many perished and left no trace behind. A few were spared to tell their story: a story not of adventurers and trespassers whose heroism has proved a more romantic excuse for career of unchecked bringandage, but a story of pilgrims who came to offer their gifts of love and wisdom, a story indelibly recorded in the cultural memory of their hosts.

This wonderful story of love and fortitude has been very succinctly narrated for the first time in the present monograph by Professor Thakur who is internationally known in his field of study. He visited countries of South-East and East Asia many times to collect first hand information bearing on this monograph, throwing a new light on this hitherto unknown and obscure topic. The Institute is highly grateful to professor Thakur for having acceded to its request, and I have no doubt that this painstaking and scholarly publication of the Institute will receive high appreciation from learned historians and Indologists of India and abroad.

Patna,
26 January, 1987

P. N. Ojha
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PREFACE

The present monograph contains an account of the Indian missionaries, both Brāhmaṇa and Buddhist, who crossed the frontiers of India to propagate their religions in various countries, particularly Suvarṇabhūmi (the Land of Gold), now known as South-East Asia.

It is an undoubted fact of history that Brāhmaṇism and Buddhism found their way into South-East Asia from India. Since then ages have elapsed and the almost insurmountable physical barriers which separated India and those countries, and the want of intercourse and sympathy between these strange peoples and the Indians tended, in the course of time, to obliterate the traces of the onward march of these religions from this country. Nevertheless, the connecting link, missing to all appearance, existed and does exist even now in the form of innumerable monuments, monasteries, temples, sculptures and painting as well as hundreds of epigraphic records found all over South-East Asia which speak eloquently of the erstwhile glorious role of those religions moulding the culture in those countries. Moreover, the travels of Fa-hian, Huen-Tsang, I-tsing and others in India in the 5th–7th centuries A.D. also throw some light on the topic. But, all told, the fact remains that the labours of the Indian missionaries in the propagation of these religions in South-East Asia, have been hitherto buried in oblivion and it has been my earnest endeavour to unearth them.

The present monograph is simply an outline and it is hoped that the information brought to light will induce the researchers to pursue their researches and increase our knowledge in this field.

I take this opportunity to express my gratefulness to the authorities of the K. P. Jayaswal Research Institute, Patna, and particularly to its present Director, Professor P. N. Ojha, Director of Public Instruction (Higher Education), Government of Bihar, Patna for the honour they have done me by publishing this book. I find no adequate words to express my gratitude to Professor Ojha for the efforts he has made to get this monograph published so soon.

Thanks are also due to my friends and colleagues, particularly to Dr. S. K. Maity of the Jadavpur University, Dr. Md. Aquique of the Magadgh University, Dr. Vijay Kumar Thakur of the Patna University and Sri Gopi Raman Chaudhary, Registrar, Bihar Research Society,
Patna for their constant encouragement and help in the preparation of this monograph. I also take this opportunity to thank my former student, Dr. Promsak Jermsawatdi, now Associate Professor in the Department of History, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok (Thailand) for having helped me with his valuable suggestions from time to time. Dr. R. S. Singh, Department of Buddhist studies, Magadh University also deserves my thanks for preparing the index and, finally the proprietors of the Tara Printing Works, Varanasi deserve my thanks for their unfailing co-operation in the publication of this volume.

I crave indulgence of learned scholars for any error of fact or judgement that may have crept up in the present monograph.

Upendra Thakur

12.10.86
ABBREVIATIONS

BSEI : Bulletin de La Societe’ Etudes Indochinoises.
EI : Epigraphia Indica.
IA : Indian Antiquary.
IC : Inscription du Cambodge.
JA : Journal Asiatique.
JBORS : Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society.
JRAS : Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.
I

INTRODUCTION
As is well known, the prospect of acquiring wealth tempted the Indian traders and merchants to explore unknown territories beyond their frontiers. The lands and islands beyond the sea and the hills on the east were reputed to possess fabulous quantities of gold and precious minerals and were called by them *Suvarṇabhūmi* or *Suvarṇa-dvīpa* ("The Land of Gold"). The spices of the east were as great an attraction then as they proved to be fifteen centuries later.

The migrations of the Indians on a large scale to the countries beyond the sea and colonization of this region are echoed in many legends and stories, current in India as well as in the Indianised states. Though these legends cannot be regarded as history, nevertheless they throw interesting light on the objects and motives of the early Indianised states or the new settlers, the routes followed by them and the perils and hardships encountered by them both in land and sea-routes.

The impact of the Indian establishments in South-East Asia which developed under the influence of the Indian trading activities was greatly intensified during the first three centuries of the Christian era. The early settlements of traders gradually developed in wealth and cohesion until the fourth-fifth centuries and they formed separate areas of Indian rule and centres of Indian culture, religious and artistic activities.
A study of the literary sources, Chinese accounts and archaeological evidences found in the course of excavations conducted at the various sites in South-East Asian countries establishes beyond doubt that the Indian merchants followed by the Buddhist and Brāhmaṇa missionaries, adventurous Kṣatriya princes and enterprising emigrants sailed from India and settled down in the main land and islands of Suvarṇabhūmi, or broadly speaking, the present South-East Asia comprising Burma, Vietnam (Campā), Cambodia (Kambuja deśa), Thailand (Siam), Laos and Malay Archipelago (Java, Sumāṭrā, Bali and Bornea, now parts of Indonesia). They introduced Indian customs, manners, religions and philosophy, literature (Sanskrit and Pali), fine arts and polity. While the first phase of Indianisation was effected mainly due to the activities of the Indian merchants and traders, the later phases were dominated by the religious missionaries mainly Brāhmaṇa and Buddhist—who played a very significant part in the diffusion of this new culture in those countries from 4th century A. D. to the fall of the Majapahita empire in Java in the 15th century A. D.

If culture means, as suggested by the eminent anthropologist, Carlton Coon, "the sum-total of things people do as a result of having been so taught" it would be no exaggeration to say that all the higher forms of culture in South-East Asia stemmed from these two religions—particularly Buddhism and its teachings. While the Buddhist tradition in most countries is now centuries-old, the Brāhmaṇical tradition is also equally dominant in some of the islands such as Bali, Java and Sumāṭrā, though they now form parts of Indonesia, a predominantly Muslim country. These two distinct religious traditions live in these countries

1. For a detailed discussion regarding the identification of Suvarṇabhūmi or Suvarṇadvipa, see Promsak Jermsawatdi, Thai Art, New Delhi, 1979, p. 16 ff.
3. S. Dutt, Buddhism in East Asia, New Delhi, 1966, p. 11.
today side by side with urges, more or less pronounced, for modern progress. That tradition and progress can smoothly go together and that a people who clings to tradition and can be progressive at the same time may be a paradox from the western point of view, but it is a moot question “how far this dogma is supported by the history and evolution of peoples that belong to the East.”¹ Japan may just be cited as an instance which, though traditionalist in faith and culture, has demonstrated to the world that traditionalism was no check, no bar on the tremendous progress she has made in every sphere of life. It has, therefore, been rightly suggested that “Buddhism is the main tradition in Buddhist countries where an innovation or progressive measure is tested against this touchstone to find out how it would affect the ‘welfare’ (hita) and ‘happiness’ (sukha) of the people.”²

The tradition of missionary movement in some form or other had already been in vogue since the Vedic period but it was only in Asoka’s time that it was given a new lease of life. As we know, during the time of Asoka, after the latter embraced Buddhism (C. 260-237 B.C.), Mogaliputta Tissa, a high ecclesiastical dignitary and Buddhist leader of the time, conceived the idea of organising “Nine missions”³ to propagate Buddhism not only within Asoka’s empire but also beyond. Of the countries mentioned in the legend, three were outside India—Ceylon (Śrī Laṅkā with which Asoka had some diplomatic contact earlier also), the ‘Yona’ country meaning the country of the Yavanas, i. e., Bactria and Suvarṇabhūmi, a region not exactly located either in Burma or in Siam, but signifying broadly in those days what is now known as South-East Asia with which the present study is concerned. The names, Suvarṇa-bhūmi (The Land of Gold) and Suvarṇa-dvīpa (“The Island of Gold”) were quite familiar to the Indians from a very early period

¹. Ibid., p. 11.
². Ibid., p. 12.
³. For details see Ibid., p. 14 ff.
and they frequently find mention in the Jātakas, the Kathā-kośa and the Brhatkathā as well as in more serious literary works, mainly Buddhist.

But, we do not have any such reference to Brāhmaṇical ‘missions’ organised to propagate the Brāhmaṇical religion as the so-called Buddhist “Nine Missions”, conceived by Mogaliputta Tissa the tradition of which has been so zealously preserved by the Theravāda School of Buddhism. However, there are scholars who take this legendary story of “Nine Missions” to be rather suspect. It is true, we have evidences of a kind of movement with the specific object of spreading the religion in the country and abroad in the reign of Aśoka which found missionary workers but “its schematisation, as described in the legend, is hardly credible. The introduction of Buddhism into the South-East Asian countries by some of Tissa’s missionaries seems also to lack historical evidence except in the case of Ceylon. The legends of Sona and Uttara in Burma and Siam seem to have been borrowed from the stock-legend of Theravāda provenance to give a faked antiquity to Buddhism in these countries.”¹ Among the missionaries of the legend it is only Mahinda (Mahendra) who stands out as an undoubtedly historical figure who took Buddhism to Ceylon.

¹. Ibid., p. 23.
II

BRĀHMAṆA PĀNDITAS
Although we have now enormous literature on the role of Buddhism and Buddhist missionaries in South-East and East Asia, there is no record, worth the name, of the part played by Brāhmaṇa missionaries and Paṇḍitas whose contributions to this great cultural movement were no less great, as they dominated the South-East Asian courts for a fairly long period. The missionary zeal of the Brāhmaṇas and Buddhists caused a steady flow of Indian emigrants to various parts of the Indo-Chinese peninsula and the East Indies. The Brāhmaṇa Paṇḍitas married women of the localities and permanently settled in those far off lands. The influence of their superior culture gradually Hinduised the society with the result that the local people assumed Hindu names and adopted Sanskrit, and later Pali language, and Hindu religion, manners and customs while the Hindu emigrants imbibed local habits and social usages and merged themselves into the local communities.¹

We have a very interesting eye-witness (contemporary) account of a small state in Malay Peninsula which throws light on a colony in making, named Tuen-Suin by the Chinese. It says that its market was a meeting ground between the east and west, "frequented every day by more than ten thousand men, including merchants from India, Parthia, and more distant Kingdoms who came in large numbers to carry on trade and commerce in rare objects

¹. For details see R. C. Majumdar, *Hindu Colonies in the Far East*, Calcutta, 1963, Chap. II.
and precious merchandises. It contains five hundred merchant families, two hundred Buddhists and more than thousand Brāhmaṇas of India. The people of Tuen-Suín follow their religion and give them their daughters in marriage, as most of these Brāhmaṇas settled in the country and do not go away. Day and night they read sacred scriptures and made offerings of white vases, perfumes and flowers to the gods."\(^1\) In Malay Peninsula (Java, Sumātrā, Borneo and Bali) the Brāhmaṇas formed an important element of the population and the Brāhmaṇical rites and ceremonies were in great favour at their courts. And, of these islands, the island of Bali was the most important centre of Brāhmaṇism which still retains its old Brāhmaṇical culture and civilization, at least to a considerable extent. It was here that the onrushing wave of Islam met with a dismal failure and could not penetrate into the soil of this island. Bali still affords "a unique opportunity" to study Brāhmaṇism as it was "modified by coming into contact with the aborigines of the archipelago".\(^2\)

SIAM:

Similarly, Siam was also a stronghold of the Brāhmaṇas in the early-medieval period of its history. The Thai book entitled Raung Nang Nabamasa (The Story of Lady Nabamasa)\(^3\) describes in detail the influence of the Brāhmaṇa Paṇḍitas in Thai Court life. This book is the best source-material for knowing the Brāhmaṇical and other traditions of the Thai royalty. The author of the book was the daughter of a Brāhmaṇa who received patronage in the court of the kings of Sukhodaya.

In Ayudhyā period also the Brāhmaṇa Paṇḍitas exerted tremendous influence in the court. These Brāhmaṇas are

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1. Quoted, Ibid., p. 9.
2. Ibid., p. 26
3. Lady Nabamasa, The Story of Lady Nabamasa (12th ed.), Bangkok, 1964. We have mention of the various Hindu festivals in this work.
said to have been recruited sometimes from Cambodia, sometimes from the Malay Peninsula and mostly from North and South India.\(^1\) These Paṇḍitas (or Purohitas) discharged various functions at the court such as interpreting supernatural omens to the king,\(^2\) helping in the work of calendar-making and fixing auspicious days for State ceremonies. The chief among them used to be a royal chaplain. But, their most important duty was to officiate at the State ceremonials, particularly the anointing and crowning ceremony.\(^8\)

With the destruction of Ayudhya in A.D. 1767 the Brāhmaṇas who had escaped the clutches of the Burmese fled to Nagara Śri Dharmarāja. When the kingdom was re-established, king Tak recalled them and made sincere efforts to collect all that had survived of their ceremonial core. King Rama Tibodi I promulgated the first Thai laws and he was as such revered as a great law-giver, but most of his early registration was later altered by additions from the Code of Manu.\(^4\) All this clearly shows that the Thai kings, though followers of Buddhist faith, paid personal attention towards the welfare of the Brāhmaṇas and did a lot for the development of Brāhmaṇical gods like Śiva and Viṣṇu.\(^5\)

Evidences from various sources make it clear that Brāhmaṇism reached Siam and Indo-Chinese peninsula in the early centuries of the Christian era first through Kauṇḍinya (Hun-Tien), the founder of the kingdom of Funan, and then by the Indian Brāhmaṇas who followed him. This Kauṇḍinya who reached Indo-Chinese peninsula in the first

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century A. D. was a son of Mithilā, and also the founder of the Kauṇḍinya gotra. The member of his clan or gotra played a very significant role in upholding Saivism in Indo-China. It seems that this Kauṇḍinya (of the Funan kingdom) and the Kauṇḍinya of the Cola country were two different persons but both of them were keenly interested in promoting and safeguarding Śaivism at about the same time and as such both of them claimed descent from the same ancestry.

Kauṇḍinya, the founder of the Funan kingdom, is said to have married Liu-Yeh of Funan, and they had a son who succeeded to the throne and thus founded the first Kauṇḍinya dynasty. “Subsequently about the beginning of the fifth century an Indian Brāhmaṇa from P’an in the Malay Peninsula of Thailand, who was either named Kauṇḍinya or bore the name of the earlier Indian immigrant ruler, became the king of Funan.”

The establishment of the first Brāhmaṇa dynasty brought about some very significant changes during this early phase of Brāhmaṇisation in Indo-Chinese peninsula such as the systematization and extension of the worship of Brāhmaṇical deities, especially the worship of Śiva under the name of Maheśvara; the introduction of South Indian alphabet and of the Śaka era which was then commonly used on the south-east coast of India; conception of royalty characterised by Hindu cults; literary expression through Sanskrit language and mythology taken from the epics—the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata, the Purāṇas and other Sanskrit texts containing a nucleus of royal tradition and the traditional genealogies of royal families of the Gaṅgā region and, finally, the observance of the Dharmaśāstras, the

1. For details see Upendra Thakur, Some Aspects of Ancient Indian History and Culture, New Delhi, 1974, Chap. XXI.
2. S. Singaravelu, op. cit., p. 27.
sacred law of Hinduism, particularly the *Mānava-Dharma-śāstra* or the Law of Manu.

G. Coedes suggests that the Indian transmitters of culture were court functionaries, not missionaries. But he forgets that the Brāhmaṇa Paṇḍitas first came as missionaries to Indo-Chinese peninsula, spread their religion and were later honoured by the kings in the courts where they introduced the grandeur style of the Indian courts with the result that only Brāhmaṇas came to be employed to consecrate the king as God in accordance with the ideas and rituals of the Indian classics.¹ And, as we know, this later gave birth to the foundation of the colonies and settlements of the Brāhmaṇas (and also the Buddhists) in important localities.

Though it is difficult to say, in the present state of our knowledge, when Brāhmaṇism entered Siam we can however guess, on the basis of available data that since Siam formed a part of Kambuja empire about 8th or 9th century A.D., she was naturally influenced by the religious condition of that country. It has been, therefore, rightly suggested that Siam received Brāhmaṇism indirectly through Kambuja where it was well established by that time.² It may also be presumed that Brāhmaṇism was introduced in Thailand when historical facts were not recorded.³ But, considering all the facts it seems that the former view is more plausible and nearer the truth.

The Brāhmaṇa priests and scholars (*Paṇḍitas*) played a great role in the cultural progress of Thailand like other regions of South-East Asia. Their presence at the court was indirectly responsible for much of the people's belief in this religion, and most of the royal ceremonies and activities were conducted in accordance with the Brāhmaṇical concept

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² Dawee Daweeewarn, *Brāhmaṇism in South-East Asia*, p. 102. 2500 *Years of Buddhism*, p. 79.
as interpreted by these scholars. In fact, Brāhmaṇism influenced every aspect of Thai life—arts, rites, festivals and ceremonies.\(^1\) The Brāhmaṇa priests officiated at the king’s coronation, tonsorial ceremonies, oaths of allegiance to the king taken by officials, royal weddings, royal cremations, and first ploughing ceremonies. Besides these, they also cast and set the favourable time for ceremonies, analysed parlance, interpreted dreams of the king, predicted victory or defeat in war scarcity, and sufficiency of rainfall.\(^2\)

Although the Thai kingdom of Sukhodaya preferred Buddhism, they maintained those Brāhmaṇical traditions and cults that have been characteristic of the Indianised state of Cambodia. We know from an inscription on a statue of Śiva that in 1510 A.D., Dharmāsoka, the king of Kamphengphet, introduced the worship of Śiva. The Takuapa inscription informs us that as early as the 8th or 9th century A.D. a temple of Viṣṇu was established at Siam.\(^3\) It is now established beyond doubt that Brāhmaṇism preceded Buddhism in Siam where the early Vaiṣṇava tradition is strongly attested by the place-names such as Phra Narai (village of Viṣṇu) or Khao Narai (Mountain of Viṣṇu). This is further confirmed by the finds of Viṣṇu images sometimes on the back of Gauraḍa and sometimes with Lakṣmī.

The kings of Thailand had the attributes of a Brāhmaṇic deity. “Surrounded and protected by impregnable defences of Brāhmaṇic doctrine, magical regalia, sacred ritual, sycophantic officials, he occupied a sacred and remote position.”\(^4\) Though the Thai rulers had adopted Khmer Śaivism including the cult of the Linga with all its paraphernalia, it was during the time of Rāma Kamheng that Brāhmaṇism received a great impetus in Thailand. His wife, Lady Nopamas was the daughter of a Brāhmaṇa priest

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1. For details see, Dawee Daweewarn, *op. cit.*, Chap. V.
and astrologer of the royal court. Though himself a Buddhist, king Khamheng maintained a body of Brāhmaṇa priests in his court who advised him on important matters of state-craft, law and technical aspects, regulated the calendar and cast horoscope, managed the Swinging festival, the first ploughing ceremony and rites for the control of wind and rain, looked after the regalia and arranged the royal progress, performed the ceremonies of tonsure, investiture and coronation for royalty and discharged a host of other tasks.¹ Another Thai king Lu-Thai (Lidaiya) formally consecrated to the throne under the Brāhmaṇical title: Śrī Śūryavāṁśa Rāma Mahādharma Rājadhīrāja.² During his reign both the Śramaṇas and the Brāhmaṇas were respected. "Not satisfied with the creation of the statue of Buddha, the king ordered his artists to make one statue of Parameśvara and another of Viṣṇu and consecrated them on the eleventh day of Pūrvaśādha in the Devālaya (temple) of Mahākṣetra to whom perpetual service was rendered by the ascetics and the Brāhmaṇas."³ Yet another king of Thailand, Lu Tai founded an image of Viṣṇu and one of Mahēśvara (Siva) in the Devālayamahākṣetra (Brāhmaṇa temple) in the mango-grove of Sukhothaya where all the Brāhmaṇas and ascetics performed the rituals of the cult in perpetuity.⁴

In the Bangkok period also, the ruler of the Chakri dynasty pursued and maintained the same court traditions and ceremonies and extended patronage to the popular celebration of festivals of Hindu origin. Of the various festivals, the festival of Tiruvembavai-Tiruppavai⁵ is of the greatest significance, for the ceremonies conducted by the

5. Ruang Phravājaphīdi Siṣbonsduaan (Royal Ceremonies of the Twelve Months of the Year) compiled by H. M. King Culsankarana, 1920, pp. 77-108; Ruang Nang Nabamasa (The Story of Lady Nabamasa), Bangkok, 1964, p. 316.
court-Brāhmaṇa, and sacred hymns recited by them on this occasion are vitally related to the concept of Devarāja. These court-Brāhmaṇas presided over certain royal ceremonies which have been performed in the same way ever since there was a Thai kingdom.

It may be interesting to note that the festival of Tiruvembavai-Tiruppavai is called after the titles of the Tamil Śaivite (Tiruvembavai) hymns of twenty stanzas of saint Manikkavasāgara and of the Tamil Vaiṣṇavite (Tiruppavai) hymn of thirty stages of saint Aṇḍal, which were recited by the court-Brāhmaṇas at the ceremonies connected by the court-Brāhmaṇas at the ceremonies connected with the festival, held in the Brāhmaṇical sanctions of Śiva and Viṣṇu.¹

H. G. Quaritch Wales while describing the coronation and anointing ceremonies of the seventh ruler of the present Chakri dynasty, king Prajadhipok (1925-1935) mentions that the High Priest of Śiva, after rendering homage to the king who was seated on the Bhadrapītha throne, pronounced the Tamil mantra, the Siamese name of which (Poet Pratu Śivalai) meant: “opening the portals of Sivālaya”. This mantra was recited by Mahārāja Gru (Guru) of the Thai Court Brāhmaṇas, also on the occasion of another Siamese State Ceremony, popularly known as Lo Jin-Ja (Trivambavay-Tripavay) meaning “Pulling the Swing” or Swinging Festival. Also, on the seventh day of the same festival which was held annually in Bangkok and in the former capitals of Ayudhya and Sukhodaya as well as in other chief cities of the Thai kingdom such as Nakorn Śrī Thammarat (Ligor) in the first lunar month and later in the second month, yet another mantra, Loripavay was recited by four Brāhmaṇas.²

In fact, the Tamil verses recited at the Thai Coronation Ceremony and the Swinging Festival were from Manikka-

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¹ Dawee Daweewarn, *op. cit.*, p. 240.
vacakara’s *Tiruvempavai*,¹ proved beyond doubt by S. Singaravelu who has made a comparative study of the *Mantra* as recited by Phra Mahārāja Gru, Vāmadeva Muni, the present Chief Brāhmaṇical Priest of the Royal Thai Household and Phragru Asadāchāriyan in the Brāhmaṇa temple in Bangkok with the first eleven stanzas of the *Tirumurai* of the Tamil *Tevaram* as well as with the first ten verses of the seventh *Tirumurai* of *Guntarara*, etc.²

They also performed (and do so even now) other ceremonies on behalf of other members of the Royal family and private citizens who believed (and still believe) in observing the ancient customs. The royal as well as private ceremonies performed even to-day include the Kwan-Duan (first month) ceremony for infants in which the Brāhmaṇa Pañḍita chants Sanskrit *mantras* (verses) and plays a bando (small, two-faced drum with a weight on the end of a string).³

Thus, the Thai coronation ceremony as performed during the Chakri period is “the Anointing and Crowning of the devotional hymns by Chief of the Court Brāhmaṇas (Phra Mahārajagru) thereby inviting Lords—Śiva and Viśṇu—to pervade the person of the king”.⁴ The High Priest of Śiva then gives to the king five principle articles of the royal regalia—the Great Crown of Victory, the auspicious Sword of Victory, Golden Sandals (sanctified by the tradition of their originals having been the symbol of the sovereign power of the ideal ancient Indian king Rāma; the Fan and the Sceptre.⁵ Besides these, the other articles included the

Brāhmaṇa girdle, an attribute of Śiva, the gun and other weapons of the regalia. The king then addressed the High Priest of Śiva extending his authority over the realm, exhorting at the same time all to live in peace. This reminds us of the similar belief behind the establishment and maintenance of the hereditary Brāhmaṇical sacerdotal family of Śivakaivalya in the kingdom of Cambodia.

In fact, the Thai Royal Court looked like an Indian court full of pomp and magnificence and the king was always surrounded by a host of Brāhmaṇa paṇḍitas as officials, priests, purohitas, Rājaguru, ministers and generals and royal physicians. The importance of these Brāhmaṇa paṇḍitas was so great in the Thai Court that it was they who constituted the Luk Khun Sala Hluang or “The Supreme Court of the Brāhmaṇas” or “Judges of the Royal Court” which acted as an advisory body in the reign of king Boromtrailokanātha. The Court consisted of twelve Brāhmaṇas who were well-versed in the Dharmasāstras and quite familiar with the royal decrees and decisions, to which end one of the three copies of the corpus of law texts was, by tradition, placed in their case.¹

The chiefs of these twelve Brāhmaṇas were known as Phra Mahā Rāja Gru Purohit and Phra Maharaja Gru Mahīdhara, each having a Sakdi na grade (meaning “dignity of marks”) of 10,000 equivalent to a Chao Phraya (equivalent to General) which indicated the importance of their offices. They also functioned as judges or assessors (Phy Bikhaḵṣa).

Thus, Siam, like Cambodia, maintained a number of court Brāhmaṇas at Bangkok till recently. From an account of Joseph Dahlmann who travelled in Siam in the twenties of this century we know that there were about 80 families of Brāhmaṇas residing in Siam at the time. Their dwellings were erected round a poorly temple comprising three insignificant structures enclosed by a wall. The Brāhmaṇas differed from the Bonzes by the long flowing hair on their

heads and the white ceremonial gown and the conical cap which vividly bring to our mind the Brāhmaṇas of the island of Bali. Small as is their number by the site of the thousands of Buddhist Bonzes, they still have many privileges conceded to them, as, in spite of all the changes due to Buddhism, the memory of the old Brāhmaṇical royalty is still so deeply rooted in Siamese tradition. To the Brāhmaṇa community is reserved the consecration of the new king, and royalty is held to be properly transmitted to the new ruler only by the completion of such consecration. Simply and solely for this end is this small group of Brāhmaṇas preserved in the midst of the large community of Buddhist Bonzes. At their head stands a guru bearing the proud title, Mahārājaguru. With the consecration of the king goes the consecration of the royal elephant, also reserved to the Mahārājaguru, for what is the Siamese king without his white elephant?¹ There is a published official account in English of the details of ceremonies and mantras employed on the occasion of the coronation of His Majesty King Prajādhipok in February 1926 (B. E. 2463).²

The Brahmaṇa pañḍitas functioning in the Siamese Court in the present time constitute a small body of men who perform duties in connection with those ceremonies of the State that are not wholly Buddhist.³ One can discern in their features a trace of Indian Brāhmaṇa blood but since no female Brāhmaṇas ever accompanied them from India, they intermarried with the people of the county, and so this trace of Indian blood is now but slight. "They wear their hair long, in the form of a Chignon, and on ceremonial occasions don the Brāhmanic cord and wear white (a Siamese lower garment, called pha-nun, together with a white jacket, embroidered with silver flowers in the case of

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the Head Priest). They represent two sects—the Vaiṣṇavas (Brāhmaṇa Brāhmapaśa) and Śaivas (Brāhmaṇa Bidhi), but they have in Bangkok three temples in one enclosure,¹ the larger one (that on the south) being dedicated to Īśvara (Śiva), the middle one to Gaṇeṣa, and the northern one to Nārāyaṇa (Viṣṇu), the houses in which the Brāhmaṇas live being in the vicinity.²

The Court-Brāhmaṇas of Thailand speak only one language—Siamese Sanskrit is now alien to them but they preserve corrupt Sanskrit texts usually written in an Indian character which some of the Brāhmaṇas are able to read. They have also one hymn in Tamil which also they can neither read nor write. From available records we know that in the Ayudhya period there were Brāhmaṇas who did understand these Indian languages. The texts which the Siamese Brāhmaṇas now possess are the Sanskrit and Tamil mantras (hymns) with “instructions in Siamese for the preliminary rites intended to be used in daily worship, and as an introduction to the more important ceremonies.”³ We are told that the ancestors of these Brāhmaṇas, a few decades ago, possessed other manuscripts as well containing instructions for all the State ceremonies, but these were carried off by a certain Brāhmaṇa family who left the royal service and settled at some other place. The then head priest belonged to this family whose name was Um or Om. During the lifetime of this priest efforts were made by the Royalty to recover these manuscripts which finally led to the capture and imprisonment of his mother. Upon this the manuscripts dealing with the preliminary rites were returned of which the National Library at Bangkok has a few copies. But the other manuscripts, though certainly in existence, could not be recovered as the government did not want to create

¹. The author has personally seen and surveyed those temples thrice.
². H. G. O. Wales, op. cit. p. 54.
³. Ibid., p. 55.
ommotion by attempting to obtain them by force. This being the case, the Brāhmaṇas now a days use only those texts that were returned, for all purposes, and since they do not understand Sanskrit they mumble both instructions and mantras indiscriminately.¹

Now-a-days daily worship is not performed in the temple and the Brāhmaṇas perform the State ceremonies without consulting those texts or written instructions since they or their fathers have seen the rites performed in the days when the other books were extant. King Rama V had fortunately access to these texts and he made full use of them in compiling the Roan Brah Raja Bidhi Sipson Do'an ("Ceremonies of the Twelve Months"). Alabaster who had access to a larger range of Brāhmaṇical literature than we have today remarks that there are frequent references to, and (supposed) quotations from, the three Vedas (Veda Traya or Trayā Veda) and the Śāstras. They reject the Atharvaveda as later interpolation as did Manu and other orthodox Hindu thinkers. ³

The only Tamil mantra used by these Brāhmaṇas in Court ceremonies is the "opening the portals of Kailāsa", written in Indian character. There are also yantra diagrams which are used at the time of performing rituals. The Indian script used in the Sanskrit mantras is, in the opinion of L. D. Barnett, Pāṇḍyaṇ which may be ascribed to a period not later than thirteenth century A. D.⁴ The most interesting aspect of the mantras is that they retain traces of metrical composition, and we can easily trace perfectly correct Sanskrit words, for instance, paramarāja which concludes the second mantra. Another interesting aspect of this story is the blending of the two religions in Siam-Buddhism and Hinduism in seventeenth and nineteenth

¹. Ibid., p. 55.
². Compiled by H. M. King Culankaranā, Bangkok, 1961
⁴. Ibid., p. 56.
centuries and therefore it is not surprising to find that the Court Brähmaṇas are also Buddhists and as a rule they have to pass through the novitiate as Buddhist monks before undergoing the ceremony of initiation and wearing the Brähmaṇa girdle. It is also this fact that they are Buddhists as well as Hindus that prevents them from carrying out animal sacrifices in connection with their rites.

The ceremony of initiation to Brähmaṇa priesthood is still performed in Thailand which is known as *Pvaj Brat*. It consists of two stages—(i) taking the cord of three strings and (ii) taking the chord of six strings. The details of this ceremony are described in a manuscript which has been mentioned in the Siamese history of the Ayudhya period.¹ Besides Bangkok, the other two places in Siam where Brähmaṇism is still found are Nagara Śri Dharmarāja and Batalhun in the Peninsula which even now preserve the remnants of the temples. In all the ancient capitals as well as in the main provincial centres in the past there were Brähmaṇa temples. There were ceremonies of consecration for both kings and priests, but whereas the king identified himself with Indra, the Brähmaṇa was Bṛhaspati, the *purohita* of the gods.² The ascendant position attained by the Brähmaṇas in India was maintained for sometime by those who went overseas and settled in the states colonised by Indians in Indo-China.

Despite the fact that the Thais were Buddhists, their kings loved royal pomp and grandeur and surrounded themselves with the appurtenances of Khmer royalty, and recruited their Court Brähmaṇas from Cambodia. For centuries, indeed, Brähmaṇism enjoyed a very significant position in Indo-China in general and in Siam in particular. Although Buddhism was the religion of the State and of the people, fully protected by the kings, Hinduism was still

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considered as essential to the monarchy and so received "a great share of royal favour". The Thai people never became Hindus, but during the Sukhodaya period the kings recruited their Vaiśṇava Court Brāhmaṇas from Cambodia and assumed much of the Cambodian Vaiśṇava Court Ceremonial where "Indian Vaiśṇava Brāhmaṇism" had reached during the early centuries of the Christian era. This intercourse with Cambodia was revived from time to time during the succeeding centuries.

The Ayudhya period marks a turning point in the history of the Court Brāhmaṇas in Siam. As noted above, these Brāhmaṇas were recruited from time to time, both from Cambodia and from the Peninsular (Indian Śaiva Brāhmaṇas). When the kingdom of Ayudhya was finally destroyed by the Burmese in 1767 A. D., the Brāhmaṇas who had escaped the clutches of the Burmese invaders, fled to Nagara Śrī Dharmarāja, from where they were recalled by King Tak, on the re-establishment of his kingdom. He made all possible efforts to collect all that had survived of their ceremonial lore. It was indeed a very difficult task since many of their books had been destroyed by fire at the fall of Ayudhya. Moreover, very few of the court Brāhmaṇas who had officiated at Ayudhya survived and as such the tradition was broken and "most of those who took service at the Court of Bangkok were the descendants of comparatively recent arrivals."\(^1\) Aymonier, while comparing the Brāhmaṇas of Bangkok with those at Phnompenh, the modern capital of Cambodia, observes:

"Unlike the Brāhmaṇas of Cambodia the Siamese Brāhmaṇas are not relics of a once powerful religious caste, but have been brought in later (from Ligó\(^2\) and elsewhere) to construct the court ceremonies in imitation of other courts with an Indian Ceremonial."\(^3\)

Though the modern Court Brähmaṇas of Bangkok are some what indolent, and unintelligent and quite ignorant of the history and significance of the State ceremonies, nevertheless we owe them a certain amount of respect for what they represent. It is true, they do not enjoy the exalted position now as they did before. After the foundation of Bangkok as the capital of modern Siam, the tendency on the part of the kings has been to exalt Buddhism at the cost of the older religion (Hinduism or Brähmaṇism). The result was that many of the pure Hindu ceremonies were discontinued after the fall of Ayudhyā “with consequent diminution in the importance of the Brähmaṇas.”

However, during the Bangkok period itself the status of the priests seems to have changed little; “indeed this would scarcely be possible short of their complete abolition”, and our earliest account of the Bangkok Brähmaṇas, that of Crawfurd, who visited Siam on an embassy in 1821, might almost apply to the present day. Crawfurd has recorded the statement of the Brähmaṇa who claimed to be fifth in descent from his ancestor “who had settled in Siam and who......came from the sacred Island of Ramiseram (Rāmeśvaram) between Ceylon and the Main”.

At the present time some of the Brähmaṇas have a tradition that their ancestors came from Banaras or Vārāṇasī. Possibly both the accounts are true, as Brähmaṇas from different parts of India are said to have gone over to Siam and other countries of South-East Asia in batches at different times. In Bangkok, therefore, there are now descendants of the Brähmaṇas from both North and South India. “In any case, such traditions are certainly interesting as evidence of late immigration from India whereas modern Bakus (Brähmaṇas) have lost all tradition of such immigration. At least,

2. Rāmeśvaram in South India, the famous place of pilgrimage for Hindus. For other details, see S. Singaravelu, op. cit., pp. 35-37.
the head-priest at Phnompenh recently informed Prince Damrong quite seriously that his ancestor came from Mount Kailas (the traditional home of Siva).”

The Brähmaṇas of Siam are also known as Phrams, which is a corruption of the word Brähmaṇa. They constitute a small community of Bangkok who live near their temple Vat Bot Pram meaning “The Pagoda of the sanctuary of the Brähmaṇas.” The sanctuary consists of only three brick temples in an enclosure which contain colossal images of Trimūrti or Trinity (Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśa) which is known as Phra-Maharazakhruvidhi (Skt: Mahārāja Guruviddhi). There are some Brähmaṇa families round about Chaiyya in southern Thailand.

The Siamese sculptors even now draw inspiration from Brähmanical traditions and make images of Yamarāja, Māra, Indra and other deities. “The Brähmanic idea of Mount Meru as the centre of this universe is accepted in Siamese religious books and paintings. The greatest symbolic aspects of the glory of Brähmaṇism still remain in many parts of Thailand, though the country is purely a Buddhist one.”

As in India, in Siam and Cambodia also, at an early period, the office of Purohita was held by a Brähmaṇa but this was not the case during the Bangkok period. Under the old regime there was an office of Purohita, but when the government came to be modernised, the Brähmaṇas lost their power. The history of the Ayudhya period frequently refers to various supernatural omens which were interpreted by the Brähmaṇas, and the king always embarked on important undertakings such as military expedition after making sure that his soothsayers considered day and hour propitious. Besides, even now good omens such as the advent of white elephant were eagerly looked for, while in the State Cerem-

2. P. N. Bose, Indian Colsng of Siam, p. 110.
mony, at least the First Ploughing, soothsaying still exists in its ancient form, and these features have been retained on account of their popularity with the masses.

As the office of Purohita was abolished long ago and that of astrologer has now passed into non-Brâhmaṇa hands, the present Siamese Brâhmaṇas now perform only the duties of officiating priests. Although the institution of the Court Brâhmaṇas is now fast vanishing, nonetheless, "so long as State Ceremonial retains its present form, a corps of Court Brâhmaṇas will remain essential and in making it possible for the king to continue to maintain the pomp and dignity inseparable from absolute monarchy, these priests still perform a very important function for the benefit of the society as a whole." 1

Thus, the Brâhmaṇas, the priests and the scholars have played a great role in the all round progress of Thailand 2 The presence of the Brâhmaṇas at the Court was indirectly responsible for much of the people's belief in Brâhmaṇical and Hindu deities and Indian magico-religious practices. As we have shown above, most of the ceremonial activities of the king and the royal court were conducted in accordance with the Brâhmaṇical concept as interpreted by these Brâhmaṇas. Brâhmaṇism, in fact, had considerable influence over Thai culture, particularly its arts, rites and ceremonies. 3 From the Sukhodaya period up to the present day most of the State Ceremonies have been a combination of the two religions—Brâhmaṇism and Buddhism. Even at the present time Brâhmaṇical faith and rites are practised in Thailand. 4 Thus, the available evidence justifies the assumption that the region around the Bay of Bandon was the cradle of Further

Eastern Culture inspired by waves of Indian culture spreading across the route from Takua Pa. We come across persons of Indian cast of features on the west coast near Takua Pa, while colonies of the Brāhmaṇas of Indian origin survive at Nakhon Śrī Dhammarat and Patalung who trace the arrival of their ancestors from India by an overland route across the Malay Peninsula.¹

KAMBUJA DEŚA

As we know, apart from their literary merits the Kambuja inscriptions are invaluable as testifying to the importance of Brāhmaṇas in religious and spiritual life of the land. One of the interesting characteristics of the Kambuja Court-life is the very intimate association between the secular and the spiritual heads. As a matter of practice, the Kambuja kings in general received their instructions in early life from eminent religious ācāryas (Brāhmaṇa Paṇḍītas²). The predominance of the priestly families who supplied royal priests for successive generations, such as that of Śivakaivalya, is "both an index and a cause of the spiritual outlook of the king and the people."³ The tutelary deity of the kingdom with the cult of Devarāja placed in charge of a long line of High Priests who were 'the gurus or preceptors of the kings must have helped to a great extent in moulding the whole view of life in the kingdom."⁴

Moreover, the frequent intermarriage between the royal and priestly families was further responsible for tremendous increase in the power and prestige of the Brāhmaṇas in the Cambodian society, and for this credit goes to Brāhmaṇa Kauṇḍīnya⁵, the founder of the kingdoms

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of Funan and Kambuja, who first of all married the Cambodian princess, Somā. A tradition current in Khmer suggests that a group of Brāhmaṇas came to Kambuja from Java and established their kingdom there. The first group of the Brāhmaṇas are said to have come from Vārāṇasī (Uttar Pradesh, India) who were mostly dark-complexioned with long hair.¹ As we have noted above, Chinese tradition informs us that there were one thousand Brāhmaṇas in village Tuen-Suin who married the daughters of the local inhabitants and gradually converted them to their own religion.²

An inscription dated 713 A. D. records the marriage of a daughter of king Jayavarman I with Śakrasvāmin, a Śaiva Brāhmaṇa who was born in India³, and was well-versed in the doctrines of Vedānta and Taittirīya. One of the queens of Jayavarman II, Bhūsasvāminī, was the daughter of a Vaiṣṇava Brāhmaṇa.⁴ Another Brāhmaṇa Divākara Bhaṭṭa who was born on the bank of the river Kālindī, sacred with the association of Kṛṣṇa's boyhood, married Rājalakṣmī, the daughter of Rūjendravarman and the younger sister of Jayavarman V.⁵ We further learn from the Prah Bat Stele inscription that a Brāhmaṇa named Agastya married princess Yasomati⁶ Yet, another Brāhmaṇa, named Hṛṣikeśa of Bharadvāja gotra who had become the royal priest of Jayavarman VII, married his elder daughter to Jayavarman VIII.⁷ The sister of king Bhavavarman I, the first king of Chenla, was married to an Indian Brāhmaṇa

2. Upendra Thakur, op. cit., Chap. XXI.
5. R. C. Majumdar, Inscriptions of Kambuja, Calcutta, 1953, No. 60, p. 76, V. 3.
and the couple are said to have made a gift of the Rāmāyaṇa, the Mahābhārata and the Purāṇas to a temple situated on the bank of the Mekong river.¹ These evidences clearly reveal the exalted social position of the Brāhmaṇas and their dignified status in the Cambodian courts. Moreover, the matrimonial alliances of the Indian Brāhmaṇa Pañḍitas with the royal families of Kambuja led to the birth of a new class of people in the Cambodian society who came to be known as Brahmakṣatra.²

Thus, we find that Cambodia was effectively Brāhmaṇised where the kings, nobles and priests bore Sanskrit names. The Pañḍitas of the court wrote inscriptions in elegant Sanskrit some of which are quite long compositions. The princess received their education in grammar (Siddhānta-Kaumudi of Pāṇini), Dharmasyāstras and Sā̄dharśana (six systems of Indian philosophy). Sāstrotsavas (literary assemblies) were very often held in which Brāhmaṇa ladies also participated and were honoured for their learned discourses. A sixth century inscription mentions how the Vedas were studied and how the Rāmāyaṇa, the Mahābhārata and the Purāṇas were daily recited without interruption. The libraries in the royal court were stocked with books on all śāstras.

Similarly Cambodia's social life was also greatly influenced by the Brāhmaṇical way of life. The Indian Brāhmaṇas, because of their very respectful position in the society were married to the royal princesses and Khmer brides as a result of which a new class of people—known as Brāhma-Kṣatra, noted above, sprang up. The kings used to participate actively in the organisation or re-organisation of the caste-system on the advice of the Brāhmaṇa Pañḍitas. Even now some of the "Brāhmaṇa families preserve books of Vedic mantras (with Vedic decent) written in Bengali script, books on Purāṇas like the Bhāgavata

¹. Ibid., No. 13, p. 18 ff.
². Ibid., No. 62, p. 56, Verse 1.
Purāṇa, or books on astrology written in Burmese language or a book in Sanskrit Cāṇakya-śāstra”.

We have references to many Brāhmaṇa Paṇḍitas in Kambuja inscriptions who came from India and settled down in Kambuja. During the reign of Jayavarman V two more Brāhmaṇas are said to come from India, purchased lands and built a temple of Śiva. One of the ancestors of Yaśovarman’s mother was a Brāhmaṇa of Āryadeśa who was well-versed in the Vedas and Vedāṅgas. Similarly Sarvajña-muni, a Brāhmaṇa from Āryadeśa (India), well-versed in the four Vedas and all the āgamas, came to Kambuja during this period. He was a great devotee of Lord Śiva and his descendants occupied high religious offices. Vāmaśīva was yet another great Brāhmaṇa Paṇḍita from India who became the royal priest of Indravarman.

Among the galaxy of Brāhmaṇa Paṇḍitas who adorned the court of Kambuja in early period, Hiranyadāma occupies the foremost place. The Sdok Kok Thom Stele inscription tells us about the activities of this learned Brāhmaṇa who was well-versed in Tantras and other branches of Sanskrit learning. He was an inhabitant of Bhārata-varṣa (India) and was invited by Jayavarman II (A. D. 802–850) to perform the Tantric rites in connection with the installation of the Cult of Devarāja in his new capital. In this inscription the Brāhmaṇa Sadaśiva recounts the history of his family which “possessed an uncontested monopoly in the discharge of priestly office pertaining to the Devarāja cult.” The inscription recounts how king Jayavarman II came from Java to Indrapura in Cambodia. Here he appointed the priest Śivakaivalya as his teacher (guru) and court chaplain (rājapurohita). The capital, after two shifts to Hariharālaya and Amarendrapura, was finally established

2. R. C. Majumdar, Hindu Colonies..., p. 211.
on Mahendraparvata. "At that time there came a Brähmaṇa named Hiraṇyadāma from Janapada (India), a savant versed in magical science (siddhi vidyā). He was invited by his Highness, Paramesvara (posthumous name of Jayavarman) in order to conduct a ceremony (vidhi) which should prevent this land of Kambuja from ever being dependent (āyatta) on Java, and to bring about (instead) that there should be only one single 'Lord of the Lower earth' who would be cakravartin (Universal Lord). This Brähmaṇa conducted the ceremony in accordance with the Vināśikha. He consecrated (Pratiṣṭhā) the Lord of the World, who is king (Kamrateṇ jagat ta rāja=Skt. Devarāja), This Brähmaṇa taught the Holy Vināśikha, Nayottara, Saṁmohā and Śirascheda (Tantras ?) all of which he recited from beginning to end, in order to have them written down and to teach them to Steṇ aṇ Śivakaivalya. He gave instruction to Steṇ aṇ Śivakaivalya, so that the latter could perform the ritual (vidhi) in the presence of (nā) the Kamrateṇ jagat ta rāja. "His Royal Highness Paramesvara and the Brähmaṇa Hiraṇyadāma granted a concession and swore on oath, ordaining that the family-line of the Steṇ aṇ Śivakaivalya should officiate in the presence of the Kamrateṇ Jagat ta rāja, forbidding that other people should officiate. Steṇ aṇ Śivakaivalya, the purohita, appointed his whole family to the service of the ritual. Then His Royal Highness Paramesvara, the king, went back again to be ruler in the royal city of Hariharālaya. His Highness, the Kamrateṇ aṇ ta rāja was conducted (nāṁ) back also. Śivakaivalya, together with his whole family, officiated according to the rules. Steṇ aṇ Śivakailya died during this reign (of Jayavarman). His Royal Highness Paramesvara went to heaven while (residing) in the city of Hariharālaya. The Kamrateṇ Jagat ta rāja moved from place to place accompanying the king to the respective capital cities, in order to protect (cānī) the rule (rāya) of future kings (Kamrateṇ phālai Karon)."1

Then follows a short account describing the activities of the priest Sūkṣmavindu who, after the death of Śivakaivalya became the priest (purohita) of Devarāja under Jayavarman III. We are told that “during the reign of His Royal Highness Viṣṇuloka (Jayavarman III), the Kamrateṅ Jagat ta rāja resided in Hariharālaya and Steṅ aṅ Śūkṣmavindu was purohita of the Kamrateṅ jagat ta rāja. The whole family officiated in the presence of the Kamrateṅ jagat ta rāja”.

The rest of the verses in the Khmer text of the Sdok Kak Thom inscription narrate in almost the same terms the careers of the successors of Śivakaivalya who in the capacity of the royal priest presided over the official ritual of Devarāja under various kings of Angkor till the time of the priest Sadaśiva during the reign of Īdayādityavarman (1050-1066 A. D.) Sadaśiva was the tutor of king Yaśovarman and “his whole family officiated in accordance with the rules in the presence of the Kamrateṅ jagat ta rāja. This grand Brāhmaṇa, according to the inscription, possessed expert knowledge of music, arts, astronomy and medicine, as well as rituals and Tantras. He is said to have learnt Vyākaraṇa (grammar) from his preceptor, Vāgīndra Kavi. We further learn from this inscription that Śivācārya, the penultimate member of the line of priests from the family of Śivakaivalya “offered worship (arcā) daily, full of zeal and excluding other priests” to the Davarāja and that Sadaśiva, the last Chief of the Śivakaivalyas, honoured the Devarāja.

From the Sdok Kak Thom inscription we get a short biography of Sadaśiva, the last Purohita of the Devarāja as known to us. We are told that he was married to the sister-in-law of Sūryavarman I (1002-1050 A D.) and withdrawn from religious functions. Consequently, he was named his

1. Ibid., p. 16.
2. Ibid., p. 16.
3. Ibid., p. 17.
royal chaplain (rājapurohita) and invested with one of the highest state offices.¹ Later on he became the guru of Udayādityavarman II and received the highest royal title: dhūli jeñ vrah kamratei añ and was named as Śrī Jayendravarman.² “Inspite of this dizzy career of Sadāsiva there is no mistaking that his family had forfeited its monopolistic position as the most important priestly family of the kingdom”, and in its place, the Saptadevakula priestly family, connected to Sūryavarman I, by bonds of kingship, advanced further into the foreground under Sūryavarman and his successors.”³ Šanikarapanḍita was the head of this family who was appointed sacrificial priest (hotar) and teacher (guru) of Sūryavarman. During the time of Udayādityavarman he was also given the assignment of the sacrificial priest (yajaka) of the “golden liṅga” installed on the Baphuon temple mountain⁴ which “stood right at the centre of the State cult under Udayādityavarman”⁵ similar to the Tribhuvanesvar Liṅga under Jayavarman. It has been rightly suggested that the “final passing over of the cult in the State sanctuary of the Baphuon seems to have induced Sadāsiva, at the peak of his (no longer temporal) power, to establish, in the Sdok Kak Thom inscription, a lasting monument to the dominant role, which his family had played from the beginning in the State cult of Angkor”⁶ While on the one hand, Sadāsiva “sought to announce the greatness of his family to future generations” through this inscription, on the other he “endowed a Brahmā sculpture for the priest Hiranyadāma and a Harīhara sculpture jointly for his ancestor Śivakai-valya and the priest Śiva-Āśrama, the co-founder of the Śiva-

1. Ibid., p. 38.
2. Ibid., p. 38.
3. Ibid., p. 38.
6. Ibid., p. 38.
Asrama that was so important to the Śivakaivalya family", in the small temple in Bhadraniketana (=Sdok Kak Thom) in which this important inscription was inscribed.²

At the time of the founding of Yaśodharapura, as capital city, the liṅga was consecrated upon the Yaśodhara-giri (Bakheń) and it is said that Vāmaśiva, the (Brāhmaṇa) guru of Yaśovarman (887-910 A. D.), "erected a Śiva-liṅga on the king's request upon the Śri Yaśodhara-giri, equal in splendour to the king of the Mountain Meru".³ Of Iśānam-ūrti, the hotar of Jayavarman IV (A. D. 921-940) it is said that full of devotion (bhakti), he honoured Tribhuvanesvara—the liṅga that Jayavarman IV caused to be erected on the Prosāt Thom in Koh Ker.⁴

From the Prasat Kandröl inscription we learn that a learned Brāhmaṇa named Śivasoma was the guru of Indravarman. He came from a Brāhmaṇa family and is referred to as another Rudra who had acquired pure intelligence based on logic, rhetoric and other sciences. A unique receptacle of all the sciences and the knower of the Vedas, he was also expert in other Śastras such as the Purāṇa, the Mahābhārata, Śaiva grammar and grammar of Pāṇini and other treaties as if he were the author of these classics.⁵ He is said to have learnt the sāstras from Bhāgavat-Śaṅkara whose "lotus feet were touched by the heads of the sages." The reference here is perhaps to the great Śaṅkarācārya whose period is exactly the same as that of Indravarman (A.D. 877-889) whose guru was Śivasoma.⁶ We have reference to yet another Śivasoma in the Pon Ken inscription which dates from 1074 A. D. He is said to have been an excellent ascetic and knower of Yoga which he also practised.

1. Ibid., p. 39.
2. For other details see 39 ff.
3. Ibid., p. 18.
4. Ibid., p. 18.
6. R. C. Majumdar, Hindu Colonies in the Far East, p. 211.
Vidyādeśa was yet another learned Brāhmaṇa whom the Sambor Prei Kuk inscription (A.D. 627) describes as the knower of multiple science and the highest authority on grammar (Vṝkaraṇa), Vaiśeṣika, Nyāya, Sāṁkhya and also Buddhism who set up Śivalinga during the reign of king Īśānavarman I. 1 This inscription further informs us that Durgasvāmin, the great Brāhmaṇa who was married to the daughter of Īśānavarman, possessed expert knowledge of the mantra, the Brāhmaṇas and the Sūtras. 2 Besides, we have mention of Brāhmaṇa Vidyāpuṣpa, a master of Pāṣupata sect (7th century A.D.) who gave “a certain meaning to Śabda (grammar), Vaiśeṣika and Nyāya (logic)” 3; Nāga (8th century A.D.) well-versed in the Vedas; 4 Śakravāmin, a Śaiva Brāhmaṇa in the service of queen Jayadeva and well-versed in Vedānta and Taittirīya; Śrīsvāmin who has been described in the Prasat Kok Po inscription (c. 885 A.D.) as “the Brāhmaṇa who possessed superior knowledge of the Vedas, the Vṝkaraṇa and different philosophical systems and was gifted like Brahmā with unique face”; 5 Amarabhava, an ascetic (yati) having expert knowledge of the texts dealing with Tantra (Śaiva) Jyotiṣa (astronomy), and Vṝkaraṇa (grammar); 6 Śrī Satyāśraya, a matchless astrologer (Horāsāstra); 7 Yogiśvara, also known as Yājñavalkya because of his deep knowledge of the Smṛtis, an adviser to the king before whose feet the princes used to prostrate, and regarded him as another Manu; 8 Caitanyaśiva, “the best acārya and foremost in grammar and Śaivite Śastras” who was in the

1. BEFED, Vol. XXVIII, p. 44.
2. IC, Vol. IV, Verses 3, 27.
4. Ibid., Vol. III, Verses 1, 129.
5. Ibid., Vol. IV, Verses 3, 58.
8. Ibid., Vol. III, verses 8, 201.
service of king Harṣavarman II, a son and successor of Jayavarman IV (942 A.D.); Śikhāsīva, "a master among the masters and the foremost among the yogins (acāryyānām ya acāryyo grāmaniryoginām api)\(^1\), during the reign of Īsānavarman II (925 A.D.); Someśvara Bhaṭṭa, a great Paṇḍita (scholar) of the Brāhmaṇas and the Mīmāṃsā whom king Rājendravarman used to visit\(^2\); Yajñavarūha, a Brāhmaṇa foremost in the knowledge of Patañjali (Yoga system), Kaṇāda (Vaiśeṣika), Akaśapāda (Gautama: the founder of Nyāya system), Kapila (Śaṅkhya), the Buddha (Buddhism) as well as medicine and music and astrology\(^3\), was the guru of the king; Viṣṇukumāra\(^4\); Rājendra Vaidya\(^5\); Kīrtti Paṇḍita\(^6\) Vāgīsvara Paṇḍita\(^7\); Paṇcagavya, expert in Vyākaraṇa (grammar)\(^8\) and Kavīndra Paṇḍita, acārya of Sanskrit literature and interpreter of the various treatises on politly, grammar and religion (āgama) and the epics—Brāhata (Mahābhārata) and the Rāmāyana which he taught to his disciples.\(^9\) We are further told that this Brāhmaṇa-scholar was the revered purohita (chaplain) of king Sūryavarman and was "well-versed in the revealed literature".\(^10\) He is also mentioned in another inscription of king Sūryavarman where he is described as having performed knowledge of six Vedāṅgas, namely pronunciation, metre, grammar, lexicography, astronomy and ritual.\(^11\) Besides these, we have also mention of Śikhāntacārya, the purohita of king Śrī

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Indravarman; Yogiśvara Paṇḍita, guru of king Sūryavarman I; Bhūpendra Paṇḍita, a Brāhmaṇa official under kings Jayavarman VI, Dharaṇindrarvarman and Sūryavarman II who had dived deep into "the five oceans of Siddhānta (astronomy), philosophy (darśana), grammar (Vyākaraṇa) of the sage, Pāṇini as well as the Veda and Polity"; Hiraṇya, a learned Brāhmaṇa; Siddharṣi who possessed knowledge "of the essential significance of all the books on knowledge" Śikhara, reciter of the sacred Dharmaśāstra; Kanṭha Paṇḍita, a Brāhmaṇa who had specialised in Dharmaśāstra; Divākara Paṇḍita and many other Brāhmaṇas who adorned the court of the various kings of Kambujadesa.

Though we can cite only a few actual instances of the learned Brāhmaṇas of India, versed in sacred scriptures, settling in Kambujadesa, and the learned priests of the latter country visiting India, "they corroborate what may be regarded as the only reasonable hypothesis which offers a satisfactory explanation of the thoroughness with which literary, religious and spiritual culture of India was imbibed by the people of Kambuja."

It is interesting to note that the Indian Brāhmaṇas who visited Cambodia during this period were not only received warmly but were also given daughters of the rulers in marriage and vice-versa; for instance, the daughter of Bhavavarman I was married to Brāhmaṇa Somaśarmā.

1. Ibid., Vol. V, verses, 78, 255.
2. ISCC, Vol. XVI, 117.
5. IC, Vol. IV, Verses 17, 255.
6. Ibid., Vol. VI, lines 4-5, 251.
8. BEFEO, Vol. XLIII, lines 28-29, 142.
Indradevi, the mother of Yaśovarman belonged to the family of Agastya who had come to Cambodia from India; Bhāsasvāmini, the wife of Jayavarman II was a Brāhmaṇa girl in whose family the celebrated Yogiśvara Paṇḍita, noted above, was born; both the queens of Jayavarman VII were from the Brāhmaṇa family and Prabhā, the wife of Jayavarman VIII was also a Brāhmaṇa girl. Similarly, the learned Brāhmaṇa Agastya (towards the end of the 7th century A.D.) was married to the younger sister of king Jayavarman. The younger sister of Sūryavarman I was married to Jayendra Paṇḍita, an Indian scholar. The daughter of Sūryavarman I was also married to a Brāhmaṇa scholar, named Vāsudeva.

While discussing the cult of Devarāja, Coedes remarks that “this miraculous liṅga, sort of palladium of the kingdom, is generally considered as having been obtained from Śiva, by the intermediary of a Brāhmaṇa who gives it to the king founder of the dynasty...” The sage Bhṛgu is said to have performed the same service for Uroja, founder of the dynasty of Indrapura in Campā in A.D. 875; Kauṇḍinya, the legendary hero, is credited with having founded the kingdoms of Kambuja and Funan, and Agastya, the legendary saint, seems to have performed a similar service for Java. It is interesting to note that the chief priest of Devarāja was either Śaivite or Viṣṇuite according to the religious leanings

1. Ibid., No., 102, p. 515.
2. Ibid., No., 148, p. 351, verse 11.
3. Ibid., No., 182, p. 515.
4. Ibid., No. 23, p. 29.
5. Ibid., No. 148, p. 355, verse 15.
of the monarchs: for instance, Brāhmaṇa Kṛṣṇapāla Amarendra, called Keśava Bhaṭṭa, is said to have been the chief priest of the worship of Viṣṇu during the reign of Jayavarman III, a Viṣṇuïte king (his posthumous name being Viṣṇuloka).

The function of the hotar sometimes included that of a guru and the closest associates of the monarchs were invariably the chief Purohita or hotar who was assisted by other hotars, the guru and ministers. These purohitas and gurus used to be well versed in the śastras. In fact, several of the royal priests in later times seem to have been of the royal line because of the practice of the monarchs “who took the precaution of binding the Purohita to the royal family by marriage.”¹ Sūryavarman I (1011 A.D.) also is said to have taken this cautious step while making a member of the Śaivite Śivācarya as Royal Chaplain.²

From the above it would be clear that there existed vital connection between monarch and Brāhmaṇism, and although Buddhism soon became the religion of the people as well as of their rulers, Brāhmaṇical consecration formula was still essential to the monarchy. The chanting of these mantras or formulae were mostly observances for which Buddhism had not provided, “for the observances were such as Buddha would have classed them among the ‘low arts’, nevertheless public opinion and perhaps the higher echelons themselves had greater confidence in the skill and power of the Brāhmaṇas.

In Phnom-penh there are Brāhmaṇas in the royal court who are called Paragnas, and they are entrusted with the guarding of the royal court. Though they have now married local women and are slowly being assimilated with the population at large, they are still carrying on the task of the worship of their deities in their own fashion. They still

2. S. Singaravelu, op. cit., 31-32.
wear dhotis (sa kaccha) in north Indian fashion and long white coats with closed collars. Some of them observe even now the holy days of fast when they abstain from non-vegetarian food.¹

Thus, the Brāhmaṇas had almost become an inseparable part of the cultural life of Kambuja whose importance in all walks of social and religious life was unreservedly acknowledged and whose advice was listened to with great veneration. The Vat Prah Enkosei inscription refers to the Brāhmaṇas, famous for their heroism with subtle and penetrating lustre, who had “dissipated the darkness of evil” and possessed deep knowledge of the Vedāṇta and who were “free from passions, disinterested, faithful to their deity, manifested examples of the sight perfection of yoga, guided by the movement of the Sun, uninterruptedly moistened by the nectar of meditation and profoundly versed in the Veda and Vedāṅga”.²

COMPĀ (VIETNAM):

Like Cambodia, Campā was also fully imbued with the Brāhmaṇical culture which is evident from the tremendous influence that Sanskrit language and literature exerted on the royalty as well as the commoners. Almost all the kings of Campā, probably without any exception, took personal interest in the cultivation of Sanskrit language and literature including the two epics—the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata.³

From the details of marriage-ceremony as recorded in the Chinese texts we learn that Brāhmaṇa Paṇḍitas played a very active role in social and cultural life of the people. Marriage ceremony as performed in Campā in early periods bore a close resemblance to that of India, and the matchmakers, as in India, were invariably the Brāhmaṇa astrolo-

2. IC, Vol. 22, 125; V, 176.
3. For other details see Dawee Daweewarn, op. cit., p. 215 ff.
gers who settled the preliminaries. He arrived at the bride’s house with some presents such as gold, silver and jewels and two pitchers of wine and fish. After the proposal was agreed to by the other side, he settled an auspicious day for the ceremony, for the ceremony would take place on certain tithis (dates), as in India. On the fixed day friends and relations of both the bride and the bridegroom gathered at their respective houses and indulged in joyous festivities amid dance and music. Then the bridegroom went to the house of the bride, and the Brāhmaṇa priest after introducing the bridegroom to her, joined their hands together and recited the sacred mantras which marked the end of the ceremony.¹

Though we have no detailed account of the activities of the Brāhmaṇas in the royal court of Campā, as we have in the case of other South-East Asian countries, the stray references to the role of the Brāhmaṇas in social and religious matters clearly point to their significant place in Campā, as in other countries.

MALAYA ARCHIPELAGO (INDONESIA)

After the commercial intercourse of the first century and the traces of a somewhat deeper penetrating Indian influence from the beginning of the second century, colonisation appears to have become an accomplished fact in the fourth century A. D., and by the beginning of the fifth century A. D. Brāhmaṇanism had already firmly implanted itself in the Malay Archipelago. From Fa-hien’s account (414 A.D.) we learn that in Java “flourish the heretics and the Brāhmaṇas but the doctrine of Buddha is hardly worth mentioning.” In other words, the Chinese pilgrim found manifestly a Hinduised society consisting mainly of the Brāhmaṇas who formed the great majority. Similarly, Huen-tsang also frequently denominates the Brāhmaṇas and heretics beside each other, and reckons the Śaivite sect of


Paśupatas to be under those heretics, at least in one passage. A very strong Brahmanic tradition is noticeable in the Indonesian society which under its official Hindu-exterior preserved the Indonesian peculiarities in "strong measure and represented the peculiarities so clearly even in the highest functions of public administration." This fellowship between a strong attachment to Hinduism and the emergence of Indonesian elements in the highest functions of the State is not to be viewed as the result of a reaction. It is rather the natural manner by which the existing Indonesian organisation adapted itself to the voluntarily and conventionally adopted superior culture of the foreigners who had become their country-fellows.

The Brāhmaṇa as a representative of Indian culture finds his Javanese counterpart in the Brāhmaṇa Tritresta "who would have brought his religion and time-calculation in Java and whose son would have been a king there; a different tradition ascribes the time-calculation, even as the Javanese alphabet, to a certain India-arrived Aji Śaka, a lucid name which signifies no other than the Śaka era itself."

We have two most valuable Old-Javanese chronicles the Nagarakṛtīgama and the Pararatan from which we get some information about the role of the Brāhmaṇas in Javanese court as well as in society. The Pararatan (book of Kings, composed in 1613 A. D.) narrates the story of kings from Ken Angrok, the ancestor of the Majapahit the ancestor of the Majapahit monarchs to the fall of the Majapahit empire in 1478 A.D. The Nagarakṛtīgama though starts from the same period stops in 1365 A.D. during the reign of Hayam Wuruk. Its author was Prapañca, a learned Brāhmaṇa who received patronage as the court-poet of that great monarch.

In the *Pararatan* we have a graphic description of the adventures of Ken Angrok who is said to have ousted the Kediri king, Kṛtajaya from the throne and became ruler instead. But, more interesting than this is the specimen of priestly penegyric which tells us that one day while Ken Angrok was sitting in a gambling den, he met a Brāhmaṇa who had come from India for the sole purpose of meeting him as he had come to know from supernatural sources that Lord Viṣṇu had incarnated himself in Java in the person of Ken Angrok. In another passage Ken Angrok is described as the son of Brahmā and a near relation of Śiva. It was with the help of this Brāhmaṇa that Ken Angrok got into the service of the prince of Singasāri, killed the prince and seized the throne and later married the queen of the prince, who was as beautiful as Padmini. The legend clearly points to the influence of the Brāhmaṇa priests in the Javanese court during the Majapahit days.

In fact, the beginnings of the Brāhmaṇical influence in Indonesia are indeed shrouded in mystery. It is only from the inscriptions of the fifth century A.D. that we learn that Sanskrit and Brāhmaṇical religion had already found their way into the archipelago. We have no positive information about the factors that led to the introduction of Brāhmaṇic culture, nor do we know the names of those Brāhmaṇa teachers and scholars who inspired king Mūlavarma of Kutei to eternise the performance of a bahusuvvarṇaka sacrifice through erection of stone yūpas and engraving seven inscriptions thereon which also refer to other sacrifices and donations. But, there is no doubt that the inscriptions do point to the dominance and influence of the Brāhmaṇa Paṇḍitas in the royal court of Java and Borneo. This is further attested to by the legal system of Java which was mainly of Brāhmaṇical origin, though

modified by local tradition. The written law-codes in Java and Bali closely resemble the Dharmasāstras or Smṛtis, the Brāhmaṇical law-books, both in form and substance. The cult of Agastya in Java and the erection of a sanctuary for him as mentioned in Dinaya inscription (760 A.D.) probably attest to the intimate relations between the dynasties in power and the cult of Śiva liṅga as well as close connections between the court-Brāhmaṇas and the Liṅga cult. This supposition is indirectly corroborated by an information contained in an old Javanese poem—Harivan-ṃśa (c. 1150 A.D.) about a royal poet, probably also a court-Brāhmaṇa—who is said to be an incarnation of sage and his patron, being an incarnation of Viśṇu.

After the fall of the Majapahit empire at the hands of the Muslim conquerors, Hindu culture sought refuge in Bali which played the same role as the last refuge of Hinduism in Indonesia as Tibet did for Buddhism in India. According to tradition, a number of Śaiva Brāhmaṇas came to Majapahit (probably from India) just before its fall and fled to Bali. The Brāhmaṇas of Bali trace their descent from Padaṇḍa (Pāṇḍita), Vahu Rauh— a name which means ‘the newly arrived.’ In fact, the five subdivisions of Brāhmaṇas in Bali are supposed to have descended from him and his wife.

The Brāhmaṇisation of Bali was so complete that even now “the traveller finds himself surrounded by a real Indian atmosphere.” According to Swellengrebel, “Many recent Balinese books treat religion, philosophy, ethics, worship, all in the Hindu vein...There is little possibility today of a flight to Islam”.

1. For further details see Dawee Daweewarn, op. cit., p. 265 ff.
2. F. D. K. Bosch, De Sanskrit inscriptie on den steen Van Diraja en, Vokenkunde, 57, p. 410 ff & 64, p. 227 ff.
3. Harivan-ṃśa (ed. & tr.) by Teeuw, A. I. 2; 53, 1 ff.
texts found in Bali into the following categories—(i) *Veda* (not the real *Veda*, but the text known as the *Nārāyaṇātha- 
rvāśīrsvaṇiṣaṇaḥ*); (ii) Āgama (*Dharmaśāstra* literature); (iii) 
*Varīga* (*Jyotisa*); (iv) *Upadeśa*, (v) *Kāṇḍa* (grammar), (vi) 
*Usada* (medicinal literature); (vii) *Itihāsa* (including *Kakvin*, 
i. e., Vernacular *Kavyas* in Sanskrit metres and Kidung or 
Vernacular verses in native metres), (viii) *Babāds* (historical 
works), and (ix) *Tantris* (tales). While describing these 
different categories of Sanskrit works Sylvain Levi remarks: 
"If he (the traveller) happens to be admitted into the house 
of a local priest (*Pudantra*) he will witness a regular *Sandhyā* 
one of the names of goddess Durgā or evening) prayer, he 
will hear Sanskrit *mantras* recited in the Indian fashion 
accompanied with the regular accompaniments of *Mudrās* 
(mystic gestures). His wonderment which reaches climax 
when he becomes aware that those people...do not under-
stand the Sanskrit texts which they read and chant."

Another point of great significance in this connection 
is the main Balinese temple, Pura Basuki in which Mahādeva 
is the deity worshipped. We are told that in March 1963 
when in a centenary ceremony, the *Ekādaśa Rudra* was to be 
performed in Pura Basuki, the long silent Gunung Agung 
(volcano) suddenly erupted. "As the priests, decked in 
magnificent robes, were going through the rites, the mount-
ain roared, and black smoke rushed up in awe-inspiring 
columns. It was decided to send a special group of priests 
up to the crater to appease the mountain god."

In other words, the Brāhmaṇas had, and have even 
now, in Bali the highest status in the society or in the 
hierarchy of the four *Varṇas*, the next being the king and 
there being no outcastes. In the communal or religious 
gatherings the Hindus take their seats *Varṇa* wise; the

1. Sanskrit Texts from Bali (ed.) with an Introduction by Sylvain 

2. Cf. A. Mathews, *The Night of Purnama*, 1965; B. R. Chatterji, 
*op. cit.*, p. 38.
Brāhmaṇas and the Kṣatriyas to the north and the rest to the south and west, but in ordinary functions such as National Day celebrations no such distinctions are maintained. "Śarmā" was most common surname of the Brāhmaṇas in Bali till the ninth century A.D., and Pundit (Pāṇḍita: learned) among the Brāhmaṇas was most venerated by the kings and the commoners alike when Bali was independent. Only the Brāhmaṇa Pāṇḍitas could move about holding his dāṇḍa, popularly known as Padaṇḍa, meaning ‘the holder of the sceptre of dharma’. He would not take meat though other Brāhmaṇas and even the members of his family could take it. “He would not visit any body’s house uninvited, not even the king’s palace or court, and when invited the inviter had to go to him personally and accompany him along with his other relations, forming a procession, so to say, from the Pāṇḍita’s house to his own.”

The Pundit (Pāṇḍita) sitting exclusively on a decorated high pedestal (which would be higher than even the seat of the king), would preside over all ceremonies, whether in a temple or in any one’s house and the pujārī (pemangku) and or other Brāhmaṇas would act according to his directions there.

The Pāṇḍita alone knows the Sanskrit mantras, recites them and also decides what should be the auspicious day for holding a ceremony which is final. Now, there are only a few Pāṇḍitas in Bali who are very rich and it is interesting to note that the Pāṇḍitas would never ask for alms or money, but it is customary for every body to offer by leaving some money near him of which the Pāṇḍita takes only a portion as he chooses and leaves the rest “as a token of his refusal”. But, in temples the pemangku (Pāṇḍita) is a paid public servant whose main duty is to perform daily worship to the

1. Bambang Sumadja (ed), Sejarah Nasional Indonesia, 11, Jakarta, p. 171.
3. Ibid., p. 48.
4. Ibid., p. 48.
deities. Any private household, if he so wishes, can also engage a pujaři for worshipping the family deities, for every Hindu house in Bali has even now its own temple of family deities, besides the public temples for each village and each district, apart from the special built temples which constitute a great attraction for all Balinese.

Another interesting feature which we come across in Bali is the institution of Varna-priests in each varṇa who perform rituals for their particular clan, and not for the whole varṇa.\(^1\) Though there are no castes like jāti in India, there is, however, sub-division in the varṇa, varṇa-sa-wise or gotra-wise or on the basis of the place or origin such as the "Brahminklings"\(^2\). Similarly there are also Pujařis who worship the family deities of their own varṇa. Moreover, there are also non-Brāhmaṇa Pujařis who are engaged in doing the daily worship of some of the minor deities in public temples or inside a public temple complex. But, then a Tāntrika Sadag (sādhaka) can be of any varṇa who is revered by virtue of his reputation as an austere saint and foreteller.\(^3\)

The above discussion unmistakably points to the tremendous influence the Brāhmaṇa Paṇḍitas exerted in Indonesia, particularly in Java and Bali. Though we have a few names of such scholars from Sanskrit literature and inscriptions, and their number is much smaller than that in similar records found in Kambuja and Campā, we know something about the great role the Brahmaṇas in general played in the evolution and growth of culture in those lands. It is true, the historical informations we obtain from these inscriptions are comparatively meagre, nonetheless they commemorate almost without exception, occasions of building of temples or of pious donations. The Javanese inscriptions do not mention the Pallavas, but Kañcipuram, the capital of the

\(^1\) Ibid., p. 49
\(^2\) Ibid., p. 49.
\(^3\) Ibid., p. 49.
Pallavas, is mentioned in the Old Javanese chronicle *Nagarakṛtāgama* which was composed by poet Prapañca, in honour of Hayam Wuruk, the king of Majapahit, in Śaka 1287 (1365 A.D.). In the 93rd canto of his poem the poet says, of course with some exaggeration, that all Paṇḍitas in other countries composed eulogies in honour of his patron who, among others, included the illustrious Bhikṣu Buddhāditya who lived in Jambūdvīpa (India Kāncīpura with six vihāras\(^3\)). It appears from this description that the “Trusted Five” (the Cabinet of Majapahit), consisted of all Ārya (the learned Brāhmaṇas), besides the two Chief Judges who were “so ārya as to deserve imitation”,\(^2\) and the Rṣis and the Brāhmaṇas who thronged his court.

As we know, the penetration of Hindu culture in Far East took place along the peaceful lines of trade and traffic. As noted above, Fa-hien found Brāhmaṇas settled in Ye-po-ti (Yadvīpa or Java) and “the merchants on the vessel which brought the pilgrim home from his long voyage were partly at least—he says so, Brāhmaṇas.”\(^3\) In the Kotei inscriptions (one of the earliest documents in the Archipelag referring to Indian civilisation) of Mūlavarman, the celebrated king of Java, the Kotei stones are described as *Yūpa* (sacrificial posts—generally made of wood). We have only three instances of stone *yūpas*, the earliest one being set up by a Brāhmaṇa near Mathurā in the reign of Vāsiśka (c. 102 A.D.), which is an exact copy in stone of the actual sacrificial post used in ancient India corresponding exactly to the description of the *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa*. The second and third stone *yūpas* are in Bijaigarh (372 A.D.) and Mysore (undated) respectively. The Kotei *yūpas*, however, are not copies of the wooden *yūpa* of the Vedic ritual: on the other hand, they are four roughly dressed stones of irregular shape. But, they definitely represent sacrificial posts

which is clear from the inscriptions which state that the creation of these yūpas was due to the assembled twice-born (dvija) priests on whom king Mūlavarman had bestowed rich gifts in gold, cattle and land. Thus, here we meet with the Brāhmaṇas who had carried their ancient civilisation to Borneo as well as to Java and Sumātrā. This is further corroborated by the Tugu inscription (West Java) of Pūrṇavarman which speaks of his gift of a thousand cows to the Brāhmaṇas.1 In the Dinaya inscription (Central Java) king Gajayāna is eulogised as "the benefactor of Brahmaṇas, the worshipper of Agastya (the great sage) with the help of the ascetics and his nobles caused to be constructed the lovely Maharsibhavana ...in which the image of Agastya Kumbhayoni was consecrated in the Śaka year 682 (760 A. D.)"2 with the assistance of the officiating priests (Brāhmaṇas) versed in the Vedas etc.3 The concluding lines of this inscription tend to suggest that blessings should be showered "on the descendants of Agastya who were living in Java." Though we cannot be very certain about this statement in the inscription, there is no doubt that the Agastya cult was prevalent in the island. It has been rightly pointed out by Bosch that in Campā, Kambuja as well as in Java we find a tradition tracing a close connection between a Śiva-liṅga, a famous Brāhmaṇa and the ruling dynasty. While in Kambuja it is king Jayavarman II and the Brāhmaṇa Hiraṇyadāma who introduced the Cult of Devarāja (Śiva); in Campā it is Uroja, the traditional ancestor of the royal dynasty and also the introducer of the Śiva-liṅga cult and in Java it is Agstya—suggesting clearly a common origin for all this which is also to be found in the Devadāru Mahātmya in the Skanda Purāṇa.4

1. For Text and Trans. see B. R. Chatterji, op. cit., pp. 131-32.
2. Ibid., pp. 141-42.
4. Ibid., p. 142; also see Infra, p. 38.
Though a Buddhist country, Burma could not escape the influences of Brähmanical religion. From the records and finds of a number of images we know that there was a considerable number of followers of the Brähmanical religion, not exclusively Brähmaṇas, but of other three castes as well. Some of the place-names of both Upper and Lower Burma unmistakably point to the Brähmanical influence there. For instance, one such name is Bissunomyo (or Viśṇupura or the City of Viṣṇu)—a name applied to Old Prome or Hmawza, a centre of Vaiṣṇavite influence. The Mahayazawin, a late Burmese chronicle, associates the foundation of the ancient city of Prome with Viṣṇu and his vāhana (vehicle) Garuḍa, as also with Cāndi and Paramesvara (Durgā and Śiva) respectively. The Mahayazawin does not mention the name of Viṣṇu directly, but refers to a ṛṣi. This tradition is probably an adaptation from Talaing records. But, while doing so it has retained only the epithet ṛṣi—of the founder of the city and does not mention the name of the ṛṣi. That the name of the ṛṣi was Viṣṇu is evident from the early Mon records most of which record the story of the foundation of Sisit or Śrīkṣetra, the sacred name of modern Puri in some detail.

These instances clearly point to the existence of a considerable number of Brähmanical population (mainly Vaiṣṇavite in creed) in Burma at an early period. They had their own gods whom they worshipped in accordance with their own religious rites. The Old Hmawza, known as Bissunamyo or Viṣṇupura, seems to have been a prominent centre of the Brähmaṇas, during the 6th-7th centuries A. D.

1. For a detailed study see Upendra Thakur, “Elements of Hindu Culture in Burma”, in India’s Contribution to World Thought and Culture, p. 421ff.
where different types of images of Lord Viṣṇu, along with those of Brahmā, Gāṇeśa and other Brāhmaṇical deities have been found in large numbers.¹

The early Mon records are full of references to the Brāhmaṇas who officiated as priests in all the religious ceremonies of the royal court. This is not at all surprising as we know that these Brāhmaṇas always played an active and influential role in the royal courts from Burma to Campā as well as in Java, Sumatra and Bali, no matter whether the religion was Brāhmaṇism or Buddhism. These Brāhmaṇas in the Buddhist courts of Burma were evidently worshippers of Viṣṇu who is also mentioned as Nārāyaṇa in the early Mon records. The Tharaba Gate inscription² has numerous references to Brāhmaṇa, in connection with king Kyanzittha’s royal anointment. They are mentioned as being constantly engaged in bringing water of lustration in vessels of gold, silver, brass and earthen ware. The inscription also says that they invariably worshipped Nārāyaṇa before they performed any priestly duty:

“(At) all these seventeen places they (Brāhmaṇa astrologers) made a decoration of plantains and adorned with young plantains (and) sugarcane (and set ?) water (in) vessels of gold (and) silver (and) water (in) conch-shells wherein (they) put cleaned rice (and) dūbha grass (and) spread mats (with) golden flowers, altar oblations and altar candles. Having (arranged them ?) they made in honour of Nārāyaṇa, a decoration of plantain (called) ‘Oxnose’ adorned with young plantains (and) sugarcane (and) within it (set) boiled rice in cup-shaped vessels with candles stuck in it, (and) altar oblations, (and) they....(brought ? water (in) vessels of gold (and) silver, spread mats (and) offered . golden flowers (and) altar candles ?). Then the Brāhmaṇa astrologers wor-

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shipped Nārāyaṇa. At the auspicious, ...godhūli (being) lagna, the expert Brāhmaṇa astrologers bathed the side pillars, the yas pillars, etc. . . ." 

"The expert Brāhmaṇa astrologers wore loin cloths, sukhoy cindraw (and) sukhoy ular with kucom skirts of white. Then they went and worshipped Nārāyaṇa (at) all the ten points; they made decorations of plantains (and) altar oblations; water (in) vessels of gold and silver, (and) water in conch-shells wherein (they) put cleaned rice (and) dūḥha grass, they arranged nearby."

It is interesting to note that this ceremonial is detailed again and again in the inscription almost invariably in the same form which unmistakably points to the wide popularity of Nārāyaṇa worship with all its peculiar rites among the Brāhmaṇas. From the context of the inscription it is clear that this was an indispensible item of all court ceremonies. The repeated mention of the god, Nārāyaṇa, in the inscription shows that he was daily worshipped by the Brāhmaṇas in Burma, as in India, which is further confirmed by the remains of the only extant temple in Pagan, known locally as Nāt-hluang Kyaung, in which there were once housed, images of the ten avatāras of Viṣṇu and of the God himself.

This mention of Nārāyaṇa-worship probably refers to the worship of Nārāyaṇa-śilā. As one knows, the Nārāyaṇa-śilā was, and still is, the most important object of daily worship in every orthodox Brāhmaṇa house, both in north and south India, and probably the god was like-wise worshipped by the emigrant Brāhmaṇa, especially on the eve of their performing priestly duties.

1. Ibid., pp. 41-42.
An inscription recording the erection of the Viṣṇu temple at Pagan, referred to above, informs us that a Vaiṣṇava saint, named Ṛayiran Sirīyan, a resident of Magodayarpattanam in Malī Maṇḍalam and a disciple of Śrī Kulaśekhara “made a maṇḍapa, gave a door” in the temple of Nānādeśī Vinnagara Alavār at Pukam, i. e., Arivattanapuram. According to Hultsch, “Nānādeśī Vinnagara means the Viṣṇu temple of those coming from various countries. This name shows that the temple was situated in the heart of the Buddhist country of Burma and had been founded and was resorted to by Vaiṣṇavas from the various parts of the Indian peninsula.” The influence of the Brāhmaṇas was so great in the Pagan Court that king Anawrahta allowed this prerogative (of establishing a temple of Nārūyaṇa or Viṣṇu) to the most honoured Brāhmaṇa priests of his court who approached him with their request and whom the king did not want to displease.

A study of the early Mon records, as shown above, clearly speaks of the great reverence in which the Brāhmaṇas were held in Buddhist courts of Burma. We have an interesting story of one of the most celebrated kings of the Pagan dynasty—Kyanzittha who in his former births was once Viṣṇu, and on another occasion was born in the family of Rāma, king of Ayodhyā. The legend is unique in as much as it shows a distinct blending of the Buddhist theory of re-birth with purely Brāhmaṇical legends. Moreover, we come across a remarkable portion of loan words of Sanskrit

1. Magodayarpathanam in Male Mandalam is Cranganore in Malabar, South India.
2. Pukam is Pugam of the Kalyani inscription (Pukhan or Pugan of Chinese travellers).
3. Arivattanapura is Arimathanapura, another name of the royal city of Pagan.
origin in early Mon records which definitely accounts for the presence of a large number of Brāhmaṇas who, as we have noted above, played a very significant part in all the Indo-Chinese courts from Burma to Campā. An essentially Brāhmaṇical custom was made use of in a Buddhist coronation ceremonial presided over by Brāhmaṇa priests when the different pillars, referred to in the Tharaba gate inscriptions, were bound by sacred Brāhmaṇical threads in a hundred and eight spools. “The thread wherewith they bound up the pillars, tender maidens, young damsels, daughters of Brāhmaṇas had spun (it and) made (it on) a hundred and eight spools. Then the Brāhmaṇa astrologers recited and sprinkled water and after that they bound up pillars.”

These and numerous other similar references clearly indicate the existence of a considerable number of Brāhmaṇas in Burmese courts as priests, astrologers and experts in house-building who occupied a very prominent position among the nobles and courtiers. While solemnly declaring his pious wish, a king says: “All the monks shall be full of virtue and good conduct. All the Brāhmaṇas who know the Vedas, they shall fulfil all the Brāhmaṇa Law. All the princes shall carry out the law altogether. The ‘four castes’ shall fulfil their law also.” Blagden, however, believes that the mention of ‘four castes’ is a merely conventional phrase used to denote ‘people in general’ and there is “no reason to believe that apart from Brāhmaṇas who were of foreign introduction, any real division into castes was recognised.”

1. For other details see Dawee Daweewarn, op. cit., p. 220.
3. Ibid., pp. 50-51.
There are even now in Rangoon and Mandalay residential quarters of Brähmanas, which are called Pona-basti. As noted above, many of these people practised in early times as astrologers and held important positions in the royal court of Burma.¹

It would not be out of place to mention here that the Burmese law-books or Dhammathāta², which are still recognised as legal authority regulating inheritance and other domestic matters, are essentially Brähmanic in origin. They do not in the least betray any trace of Simhalese influence “although since 1750 there has been a decided tendency to bring them into connection with authorities accepted by Buddhism.”³ The earliest of these codes are those of Dhammavilāsa (1174 A. D.) and of Waguru, king of Martban (1280 A. D.), which, based on the authority of Manu, correspond pretty closely to the Mānavadhamaśāstra or Manusmṛti (the “Code of Manu”) in matters of legal topics. Scholars generally believe that “the law-books, on which these codes are generally based, were brought from the east coast of India and were of the same type as the Code of Nārada (Nāradasmṛti) which, of unquestioned Brähmanic orthodoxy, is almost purely legal and has little to say about religion.”⁴ In subsequent years a subsidiary literature grew up embodying local decisions, summarised by a Burmese nobleman Kaingza (c. 1040 A. D.) in the Mahārājadhamaṃmathāt, which earned for him the title of Manurāja by the king, and the name of Manu was connected with his code.⁵ The Code superseded all the older law-books, and during the reign-

4. Ibid., p. 67.
period of Alompra who "remodelled his administration, several other codes came to be formulated which also preserved the name of Manu."\(^1\)
III

BUDDHIST MISSIONARIES
The story of the spread and dissemination of Buddhism in South-East and East Asia is a thrilling story of Indian Buddhist missionaries whose brilliant exploits in those far-off lands constitute a fascinating chapter in the cultural history of the world. These missionaries undertook the perilous journey through different routes and it is to them that the cultures of those countries are deeply indebted. Unfortunately the early Indian records have almost nothing to say about the activities of these noble sons of India. It is from the Chinese chronicles as well as the epigraphic records of those lands that we know how their selfless work had built up a common civilization for nearly three quarters of the Asiatic continent. The friendly relation between India and these lands encouraged Indian missionaries to visit those areas in a great number and attract pilgrims from those countries to visit India.

The urge to propagate Buddhism in regions where it was unknown, was "a primitive urge in Buddhism" which impelled monks to wander far and wide regardless of all hardships and privations. Mid Asia or Central Asia was in their orbit, and we have a few names on records of early Indian missionaries in this part of Asia and China. But, we have no such record of missionaries who went to propa-

gate Buddhism in South-East Asia. Like the Kambuja inscriptions which give a long list of Brāhmaṇa Paṇḍītas who adorned the court in various capacities, we have a few names of Buddhist missionaries in the epigraphic records of Indonesia (Malay Archipelago), but they are like a few drops in the vast ocean.

BURMA

Though the political history of Burma begins from its Thai conquest, archaeological evidences confirm the existence of Buddhism there, both in faith and in institutional forms, long before the Thai came to rule over the land. We have many fantastic legends pertaining to the origin and development of Buddhism in Burma which find prominent mention in almost all Burmese chronicles. While one legend identifies Thaton with Suvaññabhūmi (Suvarṇabhūmi) where Tissa's missionaries—Sona and Uttara were sent to propagate Buddhism, the other identifies Suvaññabhūmi with Chiengmai in Siam where Sona and Uttara are said to have come from Burma. But, historically speaking, the first appearance of Buddhism in Burma may be seen among the Pyu people who, though not of Indian origin, had come under the influence of Indian civilisation at some stage of their history. They had their kingdom round Hmawza (Old Prome) in Central Burma. How Buddhism spread among them is not known, but there is no doubt that as early as in the fifth century A.D., about five centuries before Anawrahta (Aniruddha), the first Burmese king of Burma who is regarded as a semi-legendary figure in the chronicles—there were

1. For details see Maung Tin and Luce, Glass Palace Chronicle, Burma Research Society, (2nd edn., 1960), pp. 1-3, 6-7, 30 etc.; Intro. p. xv; Mahāvagga, i.4.
2. See Historians of South-East Asia, School of Oriental and African Studies, Univ. of London, Oxford University Press, 1961, p. 54. For the latest view, see Promsak Jermisavatdi, op. cit., Chap. II.
3. S. Dutt, op. cit., p. 52. For other details, p. 52 ff.
Buddhists in Burma and "the traditions of Pyu Buddhist city of Śrīkṣetra survived among the Burmans, incorporated later into their national chronicles."\(^1\)

The remarkable trait of Burmese Buddhism is to attempt to transfer to the soil of Burma the important events and localities associated with Buddhism. The Burmese legends go so far as to describe the many places in the country visited by the Buddha and narrate the various episodes in his career as found in the scriptures which are supposed to have taken place in various localities in Burma. Sometimes the Buddha is also made "to prophesy the growth of important cities like Pagan and Mandalay"\(^2\) Some of the ruling dynasties of Burma claim their descent directly from the Śākyya clan of which the Buddha was a member, and to explain the origin of the royal family they adopt a Jātaka story with suitable modifications of localities.

As noted above, Sona and Uttara are claimed to have been the pioneers of Buddhism in Burmese and Siamese Buddhist legends, and different localities in those countries are believed to represent the venue of their missionary activities.\(^3\) But, we have no reliable historical record of their activities in those countries. The Burmese chronicles record the story of a wandering Indian ascetic in the forest of Thaton, Shin Arhan by name, who was escorted by a huntsman to king Anawrahta at Pagan, who encouraged him to spread Theravāda Buddhism in his kingdom.\(^4\) This ascetic turned out to be the wandering Buddhist monk Dhammādassa by name, but he was known at the capital as Shin Arahan (Venerable Arhat).\(^5\) When Buddhism in

\(^{1}\) R. C. Majumdar, *Hindu Colonies in the Far East*, p. 246.
\(^{2}\) Ibid., p. 19 ff.
\(^{3}\) Ibid., p. 19 ff.
\(^{4}\) *Glass Palace Chronicle*, p. 71 ff.
\(^{5}\) Shin in Burmese is equivalent to *Thera* in Ceylon (signifying an elderly monk of high standing) and *arhan* is a variant of *arhat.*
India began to decline, the Mons maintained spiritual contact with South India and Ceylon, the land of Theravāda Buddhism. Shin Arhan was a disciple of the Kāñchi School who came to Pagan and met the king.\(^1\) The distinctive and honorific designation of Shin Arhan was bestowed on him when his fame spread at Pagan. The king was so impressed with his worth that he appointed him as his own instructor in religion and as primate of the kingdom, with the result that “the king and all the people forsook their own opinions and were established in the Good Law.”\(^2\) The king under the guidance of this venerable Arhat took all possible steps to spread and consolidate Buddhism in Burma and “advanced the welfare of the religion, his own welfare and that of the generations of his sons, grandsons and great grandsons....”\(^3\)

After the death of the king, Shin Arhan spent the remaining part of his life in instructing the Burmese people in Buddhism. The Ceylonese influence had not yet reached Burma and therefore it is difficult to say whether the religion preached by him was exactly the Theravāda Buddhism of Ceylon. It seems to be a “somewhat hybrid Mon-Thaton variety of Buddhism, combining in it the worship of Hindu deities and the practice of Hindu rituals.”\(^4\)

As we know, at the instance of Shin Arhan, king Anawrahta brought the scriptural texts from Thaton to Pagan “on the backs of 32 white elephants” which were preserved with great care and veneration at the capital. The Burmese chronicles inform us that it was Buddhaghosa, the great Indian Buddhist thinker who had brought those scriptures to Thaton from Ceylon in the time of the Ceylonese king Mahānāma. The Burmese Glass Palace

*Chronicle* describes the activities of Buddhaghoṣa in a way as if he were an inhabitant of Burma who crossed the sea from the Burmese port of Bassein to the ‘middle country’ (Magadha) in India and then from there went to the island of Ceylon by sea.¹

The identity of this Buddhaghoṣa is shrouded in mystery. From a study of the Burmese chronicles it is clear that in the minds of the writers of these chronicles he got definitely identified with the famous Pali scholar who was the author of the *Visuddhimagga* and commentaries on the Canon. He flourished towards the end of the 4th and the beginning of the 5th century A. D. The life-story of this great scholar as described in the Ceylonese and Burmese legends, though parallel to some extent, is divergent. The *Culavamsa* records the Ceylonese legends which also find mention in the *Buddhaghosuppatti* (The Advent of Buddhaghoṣa), a Pali work written in Burma. But, not a word is said about Buddhaghoṣa’s connection with Burma “nor of his presenting the works of Pali scripture to the king of Thaton—an event colourfully described in the Burmese chronicles.”² The Kalyāṇi inscriptions of Dhammaceti of Pegu³ which give a brief account of the development of Buddhism in Burma do not mention Buddhaghoṣa, nor is the story of his representation of books at Thaton referred to in this record. Thus, the evidence seems to be negative. It appears that some ancient monk of Burma brought these Pali Buddhist texts to Thaton at a time when Buddhism was spreading among the Mons, and that this monk was a namesake of the more famous Buddhaghoṣa who had gone to Ceylon from India to propagate the *dhamma* and wrote most of his works in Anurādhapura during the reign of king Mahānāma (A. D., 409-413) of Ceylon.⁴

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3. Reginald Le May, *The Culture of South-East Asia*, pp. 53, 162.
The capture of Thaton by Anawrahta was a very important event in the history of Buddhism in Burma which paved the way for wider intercourse between Burma and Ceylon and led to the birth of a vigorous Ceylonese monk-organisation in Burma called the Siṃhala Samgha, which later played a key role in diffusing and consolidating the Ceylonese Theravāda Buddhism throughout South-East Asia.¹ With the establishment of this Saṅgha there was a regular flow of monks from Burma to Ceylon and vice-versa. The Kalyāṇī inscriptions of king Dhammaceti of Pegu describe the enormous labour and expenditure involved in equipping two ships to carry in each a party of 22 monks for fresh ordination to Ceylon which was organised at Kalyāṇī (now Kelania). This became a regular cultural and religious intercourse between the two countries, as a result of which the Ceylon Theravāda Buddhism became the State-recognised faith of the Burmese people since the time of Dhammaceti. But, we have no such record of Indian Buddhist monks visiting Burma during this period. As we know, it was during the time of Kaniṣka in the second half of the first century A. D. that the Mahāyāna sect of Buddhism flourished in northern India which later spread to Cambodia, Sumatra and Java. It seems, a group of Indian monks from Magadha² tried to propagate the Mahāyāna sect in Burma and among the Mons all the way to Dvāravatī (Siam), but the teachings were not accepted by the people in those areas.

Thus, there was an extra-ordinary activity in religion, architecture, sculpture and painting and practically everything bears the stamp of Indian workmanship. Constant and intimate intercourse between India and Burma was an

¹ For a detailed study see “Kalyāṇī inscriptions of Dhammaceti”, Epigraphia Burmanica, Vol. III, pts 1–2; “Medieval Mon Records” (Ibid., Vol. XII).
important feature in the evolution of Burmese civilisation and we find "streams of merchants, artisans, soldiers and astrologers and Buddhist missionaries from India visiting and settling in different parts of Burma. On the other hand, the Burmese also visited India in large numbers to pay visit to holy shrines."^1

SIAM & LAOS

It is generally believed that Buddhism was introduced in Siam (Thailand) during the reign of king Aśoka who is said to have sent missionaries to the various countries of South-East Asia. There are others who believe that Buddhism was introduced much later.^2 But, judging from archaeological remains and historical evidences it is clear that Buddhism came to Thailand when the country was inhabited by the racial stock of Thai people about 3rd century B.C. The great pagoda (cetiya) at Nagar Pathom Province and other historical findings testify to this fact that Buddhism reached Thailand in four waves at four different times in the forms of the Theravāda School of the Hīnayāna, the Mahāyāna School, the Hīnayāna of Pagon and the Ceylon Order.^3 Though we have a somewhat detailed record of how Buddhism spread to Thailand and became deep-rooted in the course of centuries, we do not know the part played directly by the Indian missionaries in the dissemination of this new culture in this land, except the hackneyed legendary account of Sona and Uttara.

As we know, the Mons were the original people of Siam who had settled in ancient times in the valley of Menom and along the lower reaches of its tributaries, known as Central Siam. Lopbury or Lopaburi was the centre of Mon life and culture. Dvāravatī was yet another Mon kingdom to its south in the seventh century A.D.

1. R. C. Majumdar, Hindu Colonies in the Far East, p 249.
3. Ibid., p. 3.
The second capital of Siam was named Dvāravatī—Ayudhya—which was the kingdom of king Rāma I. These Indian names of Mon localities indicate that a source of Indian contact during 5th-6th centuries was open to the Mons of Central Siam through its south-pointing peninsular extension. But, it is difficult to ascertain how far this intercommunication was on a cultural level. There is no doubt that it was from the south that both the Indian faiths—Brāhmaṇism and Buddhism—spread among the Mons, and Buddhism seems to have been more popular and more widespread. But, who were the Indian missionaries who planted this new culture on this new soil, we shall perhaps never know. In later times, however, a group of Indian monks from Magadha tried to propagate the Mahāyāna sect in Burma and among the Mons all the way to Dvāravatī which is evident from the discovery of the images of Boddhisattva Avalokiteśvara of Dvāravatī style showing that Mahāyāna had some adherents in Dvāravatī area around the 8th century. It had also some adherents at Pagan in Burma from the 11th to 13th century though both the places were predominantly Theravāda.

It would not be out of place to mention here that we have no mention of Indian Buddhist monks in the chronicles of South-East Asia, except those of Vietnam (Campā), which explicitly refer to a large number of Buddhist monks going from Burma, Mon, Siam, Cambodia and Laos to Ceylon to investigate the new sect of Buddhism, called "Ceylon Order" or "Laṅkavamsa Buddhism"³, and to get ordained in the new Order. They also invited Ceylonese monks to their countries in order to strengthen the propagation of the Buddhist doctrine according to the Ceylon way. This ‘Ceylon Order’ was introduced in Siam for the first time in 1257 A. D., which paved the way for the regular intercourse between the Siamese and the Thai monks.

1. S. Dutta, _op. cit._, p. 72.
For the first time during the reign-period of king Loethai we have mention of a high priest named Phara Srisatharajajulamuni who is said to have gone to visit India and Laṅkā to study Buddha's teachings. He spent ten years in those countries and when he returned to Sukhothai, he brought with him the Buddha-relics and Bodhi tree from Laṅkā and constructed a large number of Buddhist structures such as pagodas, monasteries, sanctuaries, Buddha-images, Buddha-footprints and plantation of Bodhi trees. He was honoured with the title of Phramahāsami Srisatharajajulamuni Sripatana-laṅkāteepa, i.e. the Lord Patriarch of Sukhothai.\(^1\) We have no mention of any other Thai monk coming to India during this period.

As Ceylon was regarded in that age the “well of Buddhism undefiled” by the countries of South-East Asia, learned monks of that country were invited to Sukhothai.\(^2\) Udāmaragiri Samgharāja was one such eminent learned monk of Siam who is famous in the history of Siam for the alignment he gave to Siamese Buddhism to the Siṃhalese Theravāda form. He belonged to the forest-dwelling Bhikkhu community of (draññaka) of Ceylon who were looked upon as the model in Siam and were held in highest reverence. His arrival at Sukhothai was “the occasion for a grand and well-organised ovation.”\(^3\) Though a high ranking Siṃhalese therā, it is difficult to say anything about the exact identification of this Samgharāja. He came probably from South India at a very young age and settled down in Ceylon where he devoted his whole life to the cause of Theravāda Buddhism.

LAOS:

A perusal of the history of Laos, “the land of the million elephants and of the white parasol” would show that

1. A Group of Stone Inscriptions, Pt. I, pp. 28-30,
the Thais spread to Laos which became a kingdom in the Upper Mekong Valley three years after the foundation of Ayudhya in 1350 A.D. by Fa Ngum, the most outstanding figure and ‘hero’ of Laotian history. Brought up in his youth in the Angkor Court he had married the daughter of the Khmer king Jayavarman Paramesvara (1327-57 A.D.). It was during the time of Jayavarman that Cambodia (Kambuja desa) had come under the influence of Siamese kings. He is said to have exhorted Fa Ngum, his son-in-law, to rule over his dominion (Laos) according to Buddhist principles. Later a Ceylonese statue of the Buddha was installed by Fa Ngum at Luang Prabang, then in Laotian territory, who established the Ceylon school of Theravāda Buddhism as the state religion of Laos, which is practised in Laos in this form even today.¹

In the course of time a considerable Buddhist literature grew up in Laos, and the Paññasa jātaka, a collection of fifty Jātaka tales in Pali in three versions is a monumental example which was accomplished by the Laotian monk-scholars.² Though there was a frequent exchange of monks between Siam and Laos in early days, we have no mention of any Indian Buddhist monk going to Laos for the propagation of this religion. However, the Ceylonese Theravāda School of Buddhism is both studied and preached, though of late the religion has fallen on evil times on account of political upheavals there.

CAMBODIA:

When Burma and Siam came under Thai rule, Buddhism existed in these countries both as faith and culture. Having taken it from the conquered people, the Thai rulers raised Buddhism to the position of State religion, “erecting temples, pagodas and convents to perpetuate the

² Ibid., pp. 60-65, S. Dutt, op. cit., pp. 85-86.
ministrations of the religion." But, in Cambodia the situation was quite different. We do not exactly know about the religious beliefs and social customs prevalent among the Mon-Khmers of Cambodia before their conversion to Hinduism, but there is no doubt that Hinduism became the most predominant religion of the country not because the people welcomed it gracefully but because it came through the dominating influence of kings, priests and men of high rank in society. The state and society in Cambodia adopted the Hindu pattern, though Mahāyāna Buddhism had also a distinct place in this pattern. There were also persons among the royalty and the aristocracy who preferred Mahāyānist Buddhism as then understood and practised in India. It was under these conditions that the civilization of ancient Cambodia evolved but the Cambodians took no time in discarding it outright when Theravāda Buddhism appeared on the religious horizon of the country "as an independent religion, not like Mahāyānism, a faith that subsisted under the franchise of Hinduism."

It is interesting to note that much before the advent of Theravāda Buddhism in Cambodia there was not only a Buddhist population, but even Buddhists of high rank holding offices on commissions in Funan, a purely Hindu state, out of which Cambodia emerged as an independent kingdom under its original name, Kambuja. From the early annals of the land we learn that a king of Funan deputed one Nāgasena, the Indian Buddhist missionary who had made a brief sajourn at Funan while on way back to his country, to the court of the Chinese emperor in the 8th century A. D. The Chinese records inform us that Nāgasena reported to the Chinese emperor that Brāhmaṇism and Buddhism were flourishing side by side in Funan. This clearly indicates that there existed a lively intercourse bet-

1. Ibid., p. 88.
3. Reginald Le May, op. cit., p. 112.
ween Funan and Kambuja even after their separation, and if there were Buddhists in Funan, they must have been there in Kambuja also. ¹ From a study of the inscriptions we learn that their Mahāyānaism was of purely Indian brand which had developed in India in contact with Hinduism, as a result of which there was little or almost no distinction between the developed Mahāyāna Buddhism and Hindu Brāhmaṇical religion. As some of the deities were interchangeable and the forms of worship alike, Mahāyāna Buddhism was easily accommodated within the frame-work of Hinduism and Hindu culture that prevailed in those countries of East Asia. As we know, some of the kings of Angkor were Buddhists who, while proclaiming their Mahāyānist faith in their inscriptions invoked the Buddha along with the Brāhmaṇical deities: or only the Buddhist trinity—the Buddha, the Dharma and the Saṃgha. An inscription of Udayārkavarman, dated 939 shows how the Brāhmaṇical and Buddhist deities were syncretically treated.² As a matter of fact, a study of the Kambuja inscriptions of the period clearly shows that there was “a total lack of awareness of any distinction between the divinities of Hinduism and those of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Their votaries were regarded not as belonging to two different religions, but representing two different sects. The custom of providing accommodation for Buddhists in the āśramas round the temples also indicates this attitude of mind.”³

From a study of the epigraphic records it seems that Buddhism had entered Cambodia as early as sixth century A. D. if not earlier. The Vat Prei Var inscription of Jayavarman I (587 A. D.) refers to two Indian Buddhist missionaries—Ratnabhānu and Ratnasena—who were autho-

1. S. Dutt, op. cit., p. 92.
2. For details see R. C. Majumdar, Inscriptions of Kambuja, p. 399; S. Dutt, Monks and Monasteries of India, pp. 195-97.
3. S. Dutt, Buddhism in East Asia, p. 93ff.
risedithe king to propagate their religion. It was also during the reign of Jayavarman that two Buddhist monks of Funan-Saṅghabhadrā (or Saṅghapāla) and Mandrasena (or Mandra) had gone to China to translate the scriptures. The former knew Sanskrit and many other languages and had come to Funan from India to spread the messages of the Lord.

But it was during the time of Śrīyavarman I (A. D. 1002-1048) that Mahāyāna Buddhism made great strides in Cambodia. He also made liberal donations to various āśramas including the Saugatāśrama, meant mainly for the Buddhists. Though Rajendravarman II could not be influenced by Buddhist doctrine and rejected it, he was not hostile to this religion. It is interesting to note that Kaviandrārimathana, his great minister, was probably the first Buddhist minister of Indian origin in Kambaja who is credited with having constructed a new capital and religious centre at Yaśodharapura, where the kingdom later shifted, and also the first great Buddhist sanctuary—Vat Chum of the Angkor period. Similarly Jayavarman V had also a Buddhist minister of Indian, origin named Kṛttī Pāṇḍita who had also served under his father. He put in maximum efforts to establish Mahāyāna Buddhism by bringing many treatises and commentaries on this sect. However, he does not seem to have achieved much success in his mission.

1. R. C. Majumdar, Inscriptions of Kambuja, No. 29, p. 38.
It was during the time of Jayavarman VII (A. D. 1181-1201) that Mahāyāna Buddhism made tremendous progress. A Mahāyānist Buddhist of the same type as other Angkor kings, he was the famous builder of the Bayon temple where Viṣṇu and the Buddha are identified, though more usually the latter was identified with Śiva. An interesting thing we learn about him from the inscription is the existence of Buddhist convents among the āśramas at Angkor. Devarāja cult seems to have lost favour with many of the rulers of Angkor who had now accepted Mahāyāna Buddhism. This change in the royal attitude led to the birth of another cult, the Buddharañja cult. New names and titles like Mahāparasaṃsāgata Jayabuddha, Prajñāpāramitā, Nirvāṇapada etc. now came to be adopted by the kings instead of Paramarudraloka, Paramaviśṇuloka etc. This new trend was further responsible for the gigantic faces representing the Bodhisattva, Avalokiteśvara, Lokiteśvara etc. on the towers of Bayon, Bantay Kdei and Bontay Chmar.

It is, however, interesting to note that we have no such description of the establishment of the Buddharañja cult as we have in the case of the Devarāja cult in an inscription of Jayavarman II (A. D. 802-869) which relates how a Brāhmaṇa, named Hiraṇyadāma from India came to the king’s court to perform the rites and other formalities related to it. We do not know if ever a Buddhist preacher were invited from India in connection with the installation of this new cult.

The advent of Theravāda Buddhism in Cambodia brought about a revolutionary change in the socio-religious

4. R. C. Majumdar, op. cit. (Ins. No. 188 of Indravarman, pp. 533-535.
life of the people, which is evident from an inscription (1230 A. D. ?) of Indravarman II, a Buddhist king, in a private temple. Partly in Pali and partly in Khmer the inscription invokes the triratna (the Buddha, the Dharma and the Saṅgha) and mentions king Siri-Indavamma (Śrī Indravarman) who gave permission to a upāsikā (a lady, a lay devotee) to build a vihāra and instal a Buddha image. The king also donated four villages to the shrine and eight plots of land to the priests. The Khmer part of the text gives to the image the name ‘Śrī Śrī Indra Mahādeva’ and tries to bring the foundation into line with the Devarāja cult, though it was not at all a Śiva or Mahādeva temple. “The great significance of this inscription lies in the fact that it is written in the sacred language of Theravāda Buddhism and its text proclaims that the temple is intended for Buddha-worship (Buddha-pūjā).” This significantly points to the coming of Theravāda Buddhism in Cambodia.

But, we do not know anything about its initial progress. We cannot say who were the pioneers, how was it propagated and how it reached in only a century’s time “from poor men’s cottages to the exalted throne of Angkor kings.” By the time king Jayavarman Parameśvara came to the throne in A. D. 1327, a century after the establishment of the Buddha temple, the religion was so well-established in Cambodia that in spite of his upbringing in the traditional faith and ideology of Angkor monarchy, he embraced the new religion of the people. We have noted above how he advised his son-in-law Fa Ngun of Laos to govern according to the Buddhist principles and gave him a gift of codex of Pali scripture. Another significant change during his reign was the acceptance of Pali as the official language, Sanskrit going practically out of use, though at Angkor itself the royal patronage of Sanskrit learning was retained, but without any zest or real purpose.

1. Ibid., verse V.
It seems that unlike Mahāyāna Buddhism which was propagated by the Indian missionaries in Cambodia, the pioneers of Theravāda Buddhism were the Siamese monks, though it is vehemently denied by the Cambodian monks who are reluctant to give Siam the credit for introducing Theravāda Buddhism into their country. They are not prepared to accept that Chou Ta-Kuan’s reference\(^1\) is to the Siamese Buddhist monks.

Cambodia has at present two sects of Theravāda Buddhism which differ in certain forms of Vinaya observance, not in doctrines. The older is the Mahānikāya and the other is the Dhammayutī both regarding some Siamese texts as fundamental. The Maṅgalatthadīpīṇī is an outstanding text (1469 A. D.) which was written by Siri Mangala (Sīri Maṅgala), a venerable monk, well versed in the three piṭakas and also a solitary meditator (vivekavirata) living in a solitary place at Navapura (Chiengmai, formerly in Laos, now in northern Siam) which deals mainly with Buddhist ethics. According to some scholars, the prestige this work enjoyed among the Buddhists of Cambodia definitely points to the continuing Siamese influence in that country. But, the Cambodian monks point out that as this work was written in Laos, and not in Siam, it may be properly treated as a Laotian rather than as a Siamese work. Moreover, a few old inscriptions of Cambodia testify to the existence of Theravāda Buddhism in the country long before 1230 A. D.\(^2\)

This new faith brought about revolutionary changes in the outlook of the common people. Unlike the Mahāyāna Buddhism which had “existed only under the franchise and

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1. Chou Ta-Kuan was a Chinese envoy who had gone to the Court of Angkor at the end of the 14th century. He has given a description of the Buddhist monks in Cambodia which is usually taken to refer to the Siamese Buddhist monks (D. G. E. Hall, A. History of South-East Asia, p. 115), Also S. Dutt, op. cit., p. 99.
allowance of the Brāhmaṇical State-religion", it had come "independently to the people and stayed in its own right", and "struck at the roots of caste, priesthood and the cult of the divinity of kingship by its simple message of the power of karma (deed), unheard before by the Khmers." The new faith emphasized the "worth of man as man, laid stress on bhāvanā (becoming) that is, the process of one individual's growing through self-culture and self-knowledge from more to more", and for "refuge in life's trials and tribulations, substitute for the old stone-hewn gods, the holy trinity of the Buddha, the Dharma and the Saṅgha."

The monk preachers of the new religion seem to have come mainly from South India and the Eastern coast who did not hesitate to undertake long journey by sea. They spread the message of the Buddha among the Mon population of the deltas of the Irrawaddy, the Salwin, the Chao-Phraya rivers and among the coastal plain of South Cambodia. They were of a different breed from the high brow priests of the Mahāyāna sect. They were "simple and lowly, intimate with common people, sympathetic and helpful, and naturally more after their hearts." They did not speak to them ex cathedra, but as men to men. Thus, the Theravāda Buddhism released the common people of Cambodia "from the service of the 'greedy gods' whose yoke had so long been so crushing a burden."

INDONESIA:

From the available records we know that Buddhism had very little impact on the people of Indonesia till the beginning of the fifth century A.D. Fa-hian who had visited

2. Ibid., p. 101.
3. Ibid., p. 102.
5. S. Dutt. op. cit., p. 102.
6. Ibid., p. 102.
Java in c. 414 A. D. while giving an eye-witness account of the state of religion there says; "In that land flourish the heretics and the Brähmanas, but the doctrine of Buddha is hardly worth mentioning." It was due to the effort of the Indian monk, Guṇavarman that within twenty-five years of Fa-hian’s visit, the Hīnayāna form of Buddhism was introduced into that country in the early part of the 5th century A. D. This school of Buddhism must have existed till the end of the 7th century A. D. The observation made by I-ši-šing in this regard is very valuable. According to him, "most of the islands including Java (Ho-lin), Malayu or Śrīvijaya and Borneo in the South Seas followed the Mūlasarvāstivādin and Sāṃśkritiya Schools. There was not much of Mahāyāna Buddhism there except to a certain extent in Malayu (Sumatra or Śrīvijaya)."

Thus, the inferior position of Buddhism in Java changed soon after the departure of the Chinese pilgrim, as the account of the preaching of Guṇavarman, which has been incorporated in the *Kao-seng-chw’en* (‘biography of an eminent religieux’) of 519, shows. This prince from Kashmir, taken into the Buddhist monks’ Order, settled himself in Ceylon and from there set out for the land Cho-p’o (Java). Supported by the queen-mother, he propagated Buddhism over the whole land. In 424 A.D. he again left Java on an invitation from the Chinese emperor and died at Nanking in 431 A. D.

Guṇavarman translated a text of the sect of the Dharmaguptas, a sub-division of the Mūlasarvāstivāda school which, a couple of centuries later, as we find in I-tsing’s reference, noted above, excluded almost every other text and was followed in the islands of the southern ocean, and that everybody there, with one small exception, adhered to Hinayāna. This great expansion of the Hīnayānist Buddhism was surely, at least for the island of his special activities, an upshot of the advent of Guṇavarman.¹

Thus, we find that the Hīnayāna form of Buddhism was prevalent all over Suvarṇadvīpa towards the close of the seventh century A. D. The next century, however, saw a great change, at least in Java and Sumatra. The Hīnayāna form was practically ousted by Mahāyāna which had a triumphant career in Sumatra and Java during the period of the Śailendra rule.² It became a very popular religion in Java and Sumatra among the masses. In Java it led to the erection of the world famous monument—the Stūpa of Borobudur and several other magnificent temples. In the Buddhist iconography of Java the entire hierarchy of the Mahāyānists gods makes its appearance. Thus, it may be safely presumed that as in the old days, Suvarṇadvīpa, on the whole, continued to be a strong centre of Buddhism whose international character gave it a status and importance and brought it into intimate contact with India, China and other Buddhist countries.

Sumatra, the “gold-island” such as it is now called,³ followed like the rest of the Archipelago, almost exclusively

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the Hīnayāṇa practice, with one exception, Malayu (Sṛvijaya) where some people still adhered to the Mahāyāṇa form.¹ We know that Dharmapāla, a celebrated Indian Buddhist scholar of Mahāyāṇa taught in Sumatra.² He belonged to Kāñcī (South India) and after teaching for thirty years at the famous University of Nālandā (7th century A.D.), repaired to Suvarnadvīpa or Sumatra.³ He was a contemporary of Huen-Tsang and was probably the same person whom I-tsing designates as a contemporary of Bhaṭṭharī who died in A.D. 651-52.⁴ Dharmapāla was a disciple of the famous Dignāga, the great Mahāyānist logician who, in his turn, was a disciple of a person no less than Aśaṅga, the founder of the philosophical school of the Yogācāryas. Thus, Dignāga must have lived before the sixth century⁵, and Dharmapāla should therefore be placed earlier than the seventh century. This will make him "merely a disciple in spirit, not in flesh, of the logician, in any case the foot-hold of the Māhāyāṇa can be brought in connection with his activity in Sumatra, and, in this way, he could have gathered about himself some disciples probably at Malayu."⁶ It is remarkable to note that Dignāga is again cited as an authority in the domain of Yoga later in Javanese Mahāyāṇa which is so closely connected with the Mahāyāṇa prevalent in Sumatra.⁷

It cannot be denied that a great centre of learning like the University of Nālandā exerted tremendous influence on the Buddhist world of the age which was in continuous contact with it. Catholic in spirit the Buddhistic scientific

⁵. H. B. Sarkar, *op. cit.*, p. 68.
men there readily subjected all creeds to test to their full advantage, and this was precisely the reason which accounted for the swift propagation of the new dogmas preached there. It should be viewed as a natural upshot of the influence of Nālandā. This influence, above all, must have been great on general cultural domain. "The scholars and pilgrims travelling hither and thither, the study of the Buddhists from all lands in that centre, the coming over of those who were there initiated into the doctrines to other regions where Buddhism lived, must have created ample opportunity for diffusing far and wide various kinds of usages and conceptions which governed at Nālandā, also in domains other than religious". Nālandā certainly deserves to be viewed as one of the foremost points in Buddhist lands wherefrom, in the wake of Buddhism, "waves of Hindu-culture also surged out elsewhere, notably towards the Archipelago."  

In the early part of the 8th century Śrīvijaya again saw a famous traveller, Vajrabodhi, the South Indian monk who went to China and established a separate Esoteric School of Buddhism in China. He belonged to a Brāhmaṇa family and studied at the Nālandā University as well as in Western India and was famed for his mastery in the Tripiṭaka and Tantric Buddhism. From South India he started his journey towards Ceylon from where in 717 A. D. he sailed with 35 Persian ships, and his halting point was Śrīvijaya (Palembong) where the king received him with the greatest respect and where he was compelled to stay for five months due to hostile winds. Among his disciples was Amoghavajra, a great name in Tantric Buddhism of which he fixed the dogma and ensured its triumph  

1. H. B. Sarkar, op. cit., p. 69.  
2. Bosch, op. cit., pp. 528-63. Other centres were founded at Samatata and Harikela.  
4. For details see Upendra Thakur, op. cit., pp. 289-90.
Atīsa Dīpaṅkara (11th century A. D.), the celebrated Buddhist monk and scholar of Bengal, who later became chief of the Vikramāśila University and heralded a new era in the history of Buddhism in Tibet, was yet another great preacher who had gone to Indonesia (Sumatra) in the early years of his life to take lessons in Buddhism from Candragārtha (＝Dharmakīrti), the chief monk of Suvarṇabhūmi.  

Dīpaṅkara Śrījñāna popularly known as Atīsa, constitutes a landmark in the history of Buddhism both in India and Tibet. He was the last great ādīrya in India who is remembered in Tibetan tradition as the greatest of the teacher-reformers of Tibet, besides being a towering figure in the history of world Buddhism. It was at the age of 31 that Dīpaṅkara went to Suvarṇadvīpa and met Dharmakīrti (or Dharmapāla) and learnt from him for twelve years the practice of bodhi citta, both prāṇidhāna and avatāra. According to Rāhula Sāṅkrātyāyana, he started his voyage in A. D. 1012 and travelled for fourteen months before reaching Suvarṇadvīpa which at this time was the headquarter of Buddhism in the East, and its High Priest, Dharmakīrti was considered to be the greatest scholar of his age. He stayed at Suvarṇadvīpa for twelve years “in

1. P. V. Bapat. op. cit., P. 67. From the Tibetan sources we know that his name was Dharmakīrti (Chos-kyi-grags-pa), though in the colophon of his work preserved in the bstan-gyur, the name occurs as Dharmapāla (A. Chattapadhyay, Atīsa and Tibet, pp. 81-85).
2. A. Chattopadhyaya, Atīsa and Tibet, p. 85.
3. 2500 Years of Buddhism, pp. 202-03. According to Rāhula, his name was Dharmapāla (p. 202).
5. Suvarṇadvīpa in this case means Śrī-vijaya, the Sailendra kingdom, now modern Indonesia (A. Chattopadhyaya, op. cit., pp. 87-9) which in those days comprised a large part of Malay Archipelago and Malay Peninsula including Sumatra and other Islands.
order to master the pure teachings of Buddha of which the key was possessed by the High Priest alone."1

As noted above, Atiśa started his voyage for Suvarṇadvīpa in A. D. 1012 and reached Sumatra in A. D. 1013. The Tibetan sources repeatedly assert that he spent twelve years in Suvarṇadvīpa under ācārya Dharmakīrti. In other words, he started his return journey to India in A. D. 1025—a date which coincides with that of the fall of the Śailendra empire.

What happened to ācārya Dharmakīrti or to his monastery of Śrīvijaya after the fall of the Śailendras, we do not know. From the Sum-pa,2 we learn that he was living up to the age of 150 in Suvarṇadvīpa when Atiśa was appointed the High Priest of the Vikramāśila monastery in India. However, the decline in the fortunes of the Śailendras must have affected guru Dharmakīrti as the latter is said to have not only received their patronage but also belonged to the royal family of Suvarṇadvīpa.3 There is unfortunately nothing definite either to corroborate it or to reject it. But, there is no doubt about his stature as a teacher and exponent of Buddhism. It was during his stay with Dharmakīrti that Atiśa became a master of the Mahāyāna philosophy and logic which is clearly evident from the colophons of at least two of the important philosophical works of Dipaṅkara (Atiśa)—the Satya-dvaya-avatāra and the Bodhicaryā-avatārabhāṣya which express “direct inspiration to the teachings of Dharmakīrti, and this as the continuer of the tradition of the Mahāyāna philosophy represented by Nāgārjuna, Maitreyanātha and Candrakīrti”.

Of the six works attributed to Dharmakīrti the first one, i. e. Abhisamaya-alamkāra-nāma-prajñāpāramitā-upadesa-

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1. S. C. Das, Life of Atiśa (JBTS. I. i. 8-9).
4. Ibid., p. 95.
Śāstra-vṛtti-durbodha-ālokanāma-ṭikā appears to be his magnum opus which was translated by Ratnabhādra (Rin-che-bzaṅ-po), the greatest of the Tibetan translators under the direct supervision of Dīpaṃkara. It is a stupendous work on Mahāyāna philosophy which is mainly devoted to the clear exposition of the highest Paramitā conceived by the Mahāyānists, namely the Prajñāpāramitā. “In bulk the work is about forty times that of Dīpaṃkara’s Bodhi-patha-pradīpa.” This work alone stands out as one of the most outstanding representatives of the Mahāyāna philosophy of the 10th century A.D. And, it was at the feet of this celebrated master in Suvarṇadvīpa that Atīśa acquired great proficiency in Mahāyāna philosophy and logic, before returning to India and joining the Vikramāśīla monastery as its High Priest.²

From the Sum-pa we further learn that ācārya Dharmakīrti had some other notable Indian students (Buddhist monks from India), besides Dīpaṃkara. Kamala or Kamalarakṣita, was yet another illustrious Indian monk who was a student of Dharmakīrti. Though we do not have much account of the life of Kamalarakṣita in the Tibetan sources, nevertheless, he was a significant Buddhist writer which can be judged from the fact that about nine of his works are preserved in the bsTan-gyur. It is, however, remarkable to note that the Sum-pa does not mention Kamalarakṣita at all in the list of the outstanding students of Dharmakīrti or Dharmapāla: it mentions only four eminent students of gSer-glin-pa (Dharmakīrti) and they were: Śāntirakṣita, Jo-bo, Jñānasrīmitra and Ratnakīrti.³

As we know, the Śailendra kings of Śrīvijaya were in

1. Ibid. p. 95.
2. Also cf. Atīśa: A Biography of the renowned Buddhist sage, trans. from Tibetan Sources by Lama Thubten Kalsang, Bankok, 1974, pp. 31-43.
3. A. Chattopadhyaya, op. cit. p. 93- Also cf. Rāhula Sāṅkrtyāyana, in 2500 Years of Buddhism, pp. 202-03,
close touch with the political powers of India and the Buddhist preachers from Bengal exerted great influence on Javanese Buddhism. They were great patrons of Mahāyāna Buddhism and we are told that one of the Śailendrā kings had as his guru (preceptor) a Buddhist monk from Gauḍa (Bengal). This close contact with Bengal was also responsible for the popularity of the degraded form of Tantric worship in Java and Sumatra.¹

We meet with the later phases of Mahāyāna Buddhism of India in Java also, such as the adoption of Hindu gods in the Buddhist pantheon; introduction of minor and miscellaneous divinities, some of a terrible appearance; the development of the Tantric mode of worship and the gradual rapprochement between Mahāyana and Brāhmaṇical religion. One of the most characteristic features of Javanese religion was the close association between Śiva and Buddha. In modern Balinese theology, the Buddha is regarded as a younger brother of Śiva and there is a close affinity between the two doctrines. A similar Śiva-Buddha cult existed in Java.² Similarly Śiva, Viṣṇu and Buddha were all regarded as identical and so were their Śaktis.³

We have evidences to show that besides Java and Sumatra, Buddhism was preached and spread by Indian missionaries in also some other islands of Malaysia, particularly Bali and Borneo. But, as Brāhmaṇism was a more vigorous and widely popular religion in those areas Buddhism could not make much stride and disappeared from the scene very soon.⁴

VIETNAM:

Vietnam is a long and narrow country with its shape like the letter “S”. It is bounded on the west by Cambodia

1. V. P. Bapat, op. cit., p. 67.
4. V. P. Bapat, op. cit., p. 67.
and Laos, and on the north, east and south by the Chinese colossus, Pacific Ocean, the Gulf of Thailand, Burma and the easternmost reaches of India. It has a coastline wandering along a distance of nearly 2,500 kilometres from the Mong-Cay (Gulf of North Vietnam) to the Cambodian border (Gulf of Thailand). It formerly comprised the regions known to early history as Funan and Campā, which lay on the Indochinese Peninsula between India and China, the two great thickly populated and highly civilised countries in Asia which have strongly influenced its politics and culture. The Vietnamese people often contrast the form of their country with that of the "two baskets of rice attached to the two ends of bamboo-pole used by the Vietnamese peasant to carry his load." This comparison is quite apt because the geographical character of Vietnam is dominated by the two fertile rice producing deltas—The Red River Delta in the north and the Mekong Delta in the South—which are joined by the Truong Song range.

The Vietnamese is generally a religious people and "religion dominates him since his birth, guides him to the tomb, and even after his death, keeps him under its influence." In Vietnam we have a variety of religions, and almost all the principal religions of the world are found here such as Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Christianity etc. Besides these, the cult of ancestors originating from the filial piety and that of the gods or deities are also followed by him.

It appears, Buddhism was introduced into what was in those times known as Giao-Chi (New North Vietnam) by the monks who came from India and China by land and sea-routes. We are told that towards the end of the second century A. D., during the reign period of Si-Nhiep or Shiti Hsieh (187-226 A. D.), Giao-Chi was an important Buddhist cultural centre which had grown up parallelly with the affluence of the Indian merchants trading in that area. The influence of Buddhism on the development of Indian navigation in ancient time can well be judged from the fact that the mighty junkos of maritime tradesmen always travelled under the protection of the Dipamkara Buddha or “Calmer of the Water”\(^1\) and often brought along with them in their long voyages the monks who served at the same time as priests, physicians as well as sorciers. Moreover, Giao-Chi (modern North Vietnam) served as an important meeting place for the Indian, Chinese and other foreign travellers and missions during third-seventh centuries A. D.\(^2\) It also served as the rest-station for these merchants and Buddhist missionaries of the time, who travelled by sea between India and China, and China and India. Thus, from second century A. D. onward Giao-Chi (Giao-Chau or North Vietnam) came to be a very important centre of contact for the pilgrims and foreign monks coming from India, China and Indo-Scythian empire who studied and propagated Buddhism there. It was in the wake of these hectic missionary activities that several monasteries came to be constructed for the first time during the reign-period of Si-Nhiep to meet their religious requirements. Of these the earliest monasteries were those of Phap Van (or Dau) situated at Khuong Tu village

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in the Luy Lâu citadel (present-day Hà Bạc province in North Vietnam), of Phúc Nguyên at Mạn Xã village (modern Hà Bạc province) and Phap Vu (vulgarly called monastery of Dau) in the present-day Thuong Tin prefecture, province of Hà Dong (North Vietnam).  

We learn on the authority of a Vietnamese source (written in Chinese in the 14th century A. D.) that towards the end of the reign-period of the Chinese emperor Linh De or Ling-Ti (168-188 A. D.) of the Eastern Han (25-220 A. D.) two Indian Buddhist monks named Ma Ha Ky Vuc (Skt. Mahājivaka) and Khâu Dâ La (Skt. Kṣudra or Kaudra)—a Brāhmaṇa, arrived at the same time in Luy Lau, the capital or Giao-Chi, which was then ruled by the Chinese Commandery-Chief of Si-Nhiep. It was here that the two monks met a lay disciple (Skt. Upāsaka) from Khmer kingdom, named Tu Dinh who requested them to live in this country. But Venerable Mahājivaka turned down his request whereas Venerable Kṣudra accepted it and came to stay at his residence where he is said to have practised asceticism and observed fasting for days together to purify his body and soul.

From the Chinese source, however, we learn that Mahājivaka went to Giao-Chau towards the year 294 A. D. and returned to India in about 306 A. D. Yet

another Chinese author, Hui Hao (died 554 A.D.) informs us that this Indian monk came from India to Funan and from there, went along the coast and arrived in Giao-Chau and Quâng Chau or Kuâng Chou (present-day Kuangtung province in South-East China). Towards the close of the reign-period of Chinese Emperor Hui Ti (290-306 A.D.) of Western Tsin Dynasty (265-317 A.D.) he is said to have arrived at Lac Duong (in modern Honan province of East Central China). Later he returned to India, and since then nothing is known about him.

The first Chinese Buddhist preacher to reach Giao-Chi, after the two Indian monks, was Mâu Bác (also known as Mâu Tu or Mou Po), a Toist by faith followed by one Tibetan monk, Kang-seng-Houci. Towards the end of the reign-period of the Chinese emperor Linh De or Ling Ti (168-189 A.D.) there broke out rebellion in China resulting in serious political chaos and crises which compelled Mâu Bác with his mother and many other Chinese scholars and Taoist monks to leave China in 189 A.D. and settle in Giao-Chi, then considered as a safe and peaceful country under king Si-Nhiep. It was here that Mâu Bác studied Buddhist doctrines from the Indian monk, Kṣudra who, after his mother's death, professed Buddhism (194-195 A.D.) along with many other Chinese. Thus, the two Indian monks—Mahâjivaka and Kṣudra together with the Chinese Buddhist Mou Po (or Mâu Bác) and the Tibetan monk were the first promoters of Buddhism in Vietnam towards the close of the second century A.D.4

1. Hui Hao, Cao Tang Truyen (Ch. Kao Seng Ch’uan) or Biographies of Eminent Monks (compiled in 519 A.D.); also see S. Dutt, Buddhism in East Asia, New Delhi, 1965, p. 104.
2. Nion Cha'ng, Phat to Lieh Dai Thong Tai (Ch. Fo Tsu Li Tai Tung Tsai) or A History of Buddha and the Patriarchs Through the Ages (compiled). This Chinese writer (Nion Cha’ng) flourished during the Yuan Dynasty (1280-1368 A.D.).
3. S. Dutt, Buddhism in East Asia, pp. 104-05.
Mou Po (Mậu Bác) was followed by two other monks namely Khang Tang Hoi (Chinese: K'ang Şeng Hui) and Cuong Luong Lau Chi (Skt. Kalyāṇarūci; Chinese: Chiang Liang Lou Chih) who propagated Buddhism in Giao-Chi (North Vietnam) during third century A. D. Khang Tang Hoi was born in India in c. 185-200 A. D. and came to Giao-Chi with his father who carried on business in that part of Vietnam. But, when he was only ten, his parents died and he entered monastery and devoted himself to the study and practice of Buddhism. In the course of time he not only mastered the Buddhist doctrines but also specialised in other secular subjects such as literature, administration, divination and astronomy, and subsequently came to be revered as a great Buddhist preacher. He is also credited with having translated several Sanskrit Buddhist works into Chinese, but only the Satpāramita-Saṁgraha-Śūtra translated by him is now available.

In 247 A. D. he went to China and propagated Buddhism among the people and converted them to this faith. He was thus the first India-born Vietnamese Buddhist monk who spread Buddhism in China. He died in 280 A. D.\(^3\)

The other monk Cuong Luong Lau Chi or Kalyāṇarūci was of Indo-Scythian origin who had spent several years in Giao-Chau.\(^3\) He is said to have worked there on the first translation into Chinese of the Sanskrit Buddhist text Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka-Samādhi-Śūtra in 255-6 A. D.\(^4\)

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1. According to Chou Hsiang Kuang he was born in Giao-Chi (A History of Chinese Buddhism, Allahabad, 1955, pp. 28-29.)
As noted above, the first Buddhist centre in ancient Vietnam was established at Luy Lau, the then capital (modern Hà Bạc province in North Vietnam) with its famous monastery of Phap Van. Buddhism during this period (2nd-3rd century A. D.) witnessed the predominance of the Giao Ton (Skt Ágama, Ch, Chiao Tsung) or "the School of Doctrine", also known as Thien Thai Tong or "The lotus school" whose founders were the above mentioned monks—Mou Po (Mậu Bạc) and Khang Tang Hoi.¹

The coming to power of King Dinh Tien I:oang, the founder of the Dinh dynasty (968-980 A. D.) of Vietnam and a great protector of Buddhism, heralded a new era in the history of Buddhism in Vietnam. The period is remarkable as this king is credited with having created for the first time in 971 A. D. a hierarchy of the Buddhist priests and it was since then that Buddhism came to be recognised by the Royal Court.²

In the succeeding period under the Earlier Le dynasty (980-1009 A. D.) Buddhism continued to enjoy favour with and support from the Royal Court. The great Buddhist master, Khuong Viet was highly respected by the emperor Le Dai Hanh who sought his advice before taking important political and military decisions. It was during this period that a Vietnamese mission was sent for the first time in 1007 A. D to the Chinese court of the Northern Sung dynasty (A. D. 960-1126) by King Le Long Dinh (A. D. 1005-1009) in order to collect the Three Baskets of Buddhist canon (Tripitaka)³. The famous Buddhist monk living during this

1. Trần Văn Giap, op. cit., p. 59; Truong Xuan Binh, op. cit., p. 94.
3. Truong Xuan Binh, op. cit., p. 126.
time was Zen Master Phap Thuan (914-990 A.D.) who belonged to the tenth generation of the Vinītaruci Meditation School.\(^1\)

As Buddhism became a predominant religion and all the emperors of the Later Ly dynasty (A.D. 1009-1225) were devoted Buddhists, several laws issued during this period were considerably influenced by the compassionate spirit of Buddhism, with the result that almost all the "instruments of torture"\(^2\) were ordered to be destroyed.

The founder of the Later Ly dynasty, king Ly Thai To was brought up since his childhood at monastery, and his enthronization was executed through the support of the Buddhist monks of whom the most important figure was the Meditation Master, Van Hanh. It is, therefore, not surprising to find that the rulers of this dynasty were ardent supporters of Buddhism which made this religion quite predominant at court and also among the masses. Infact, Buddhism reached its climax during this period.

From the Vietnamese annals we learn that in 1010 A.D. king Ly Thai To (A.D. 1009-1028) issued order for the construction of eight monasteries at Thion Duc prefecture or modern Hà Bạc province of North Vietnam. At the same time he also ordered to repair all the damaged village Buddhist temples in the country. In 1018 A.D. two envoys Nguyen Deo Thanh and Pham Hae were sent to the Chinese Court of the Northern Sung Emperor Chan Tong (998-1022 A.D.) to collect the Three Baskets of Buddhist Canon (Tripiṭaka) which was re-copied in 1023 A.D. and was then deposited in Đai Hung Library.\(^4\) This was the

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second time that the *Tripitaka* texts were brought to Vietnam (the first time when king Le Long Dinh of the earlier Le dynasty was ruling: A.D. 1005-1009).

In 1031 A.D. emperor Ly Thai Tong (1028-1054 A.D.) ordered to erect 150 monasteries, and in 1034 A.D. Ha Thu and Do Khoan were sent as ambassador to China to receive the *Tripitaka* which was preserved by the Northern Sung Emperor (Jen-Tsung: A.D. 1023-1063) and it was re-copied in A.D. 1036. This was the third time the *Tripitaka* texts were brought to Vietnam from China. In A.D. 1040, a festival of *La Han* (Sk. *Arhat*) or “A worthy One” was celebrated to inaugurate a thousand wooden Buddha-statues and a thousand Buddha paintings as well as ten thousand sacred Buddhist banners.¹

Again, in A.D. 1055, king Ly Thanh Tong (A.D. 1034-1072) ordered to build the Tinh Lu monastery at Mount Dong Cuu in North Vietnam and in A.D. 1056, the Sung Kharh monastery in modern Hanoi city of North Vietnam, with its large bell. In A.D. 1063 he decreed a monastery to be erected at Mount Ba Son in North Vietnam in order to pray for a son.² Again in 1081 A.D. Emperor Ly Nhau Tong (A.D. 1072-1127) sent a monk to the Northern Sung Emperor, Than Teng (Shen Tsung) to bring the Buddhist canon, and in A.D. 1086 he ordered the Dai Lam Son monastery to be built up at Lam Son village (in the modern Hải Bạc province of North Vietnam). And, in A.D. 1118 the palace (Thien Phat) which housed a thousand Buddha statues was inaugurated as Thang Nghiem Thanh Tho monastery in the south of Hanoi in North Vietnam.³

It was during the reign-period of emperor Ly Thanh Teng (A.D. 1054-1072) that a Chinese Meditation-Master

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1. Truong Xuan Binh, *op. cit.*, p. 149.
Thao Duong arrived in ancient Vietnam from Campā. His arrival at that time marked an important event in the history of Vietnamese Buddhism. He possessed innate gift of learning Buddhist “way” and was able to understand thoroughly the numerous Buddhist texts. He was conferred the title of Quoc Su (Master of Kingdom) by the Ly emperors, and died while in meditation in the Lotus posture.\(^1\)

He is traditionally regarded as the founder of the Third Meditation School of Vietnamese Buddhism during his stay at Khai Quoc monastery in, Thang Long (now Hanoi) capital and soon after he was awarded the title of ‘Master of the Kingdom’. This new sect is said to have lasted from A. D. 1089 to A. D. 1205 and was transmitted to five generations including 19 members both laymen and monks among whom many members belonged to the Royal family.\(^2\)

Besides this, there was a large number of Vietnamese Meditation—Masters living during the reign-period of the Later Ly dynasty of whom the following deserve special mention:

(i) Zen Master Van Hanh\(^3\) who belonged to the 12th generation of the Vinītaruci Meditation School and wrote some books on Buddhist philosophy.

(ii) Dinh Huong\(^4\) who belonged to the sixth generation of the Vo Ngon Thong Meditation-School and was the wisest disciple of Zen Master Da Bao of this school.

(iii) Hue Sinh\(^5\), who belonged to the 13th generation of the Vinītaruci Meditation School, was highly regarded for his

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2. For details see Trần Văn Giap, op. cit., Chapt. VI, pp. 137-141 and 143. (Chart 3: The Meditation-School of Thao Duong 1096-1205, A. D.)
3. For details see Ibid., Chap. IV, pp. 107 & 115 (Note 13).
4. Ibid., p. 122.
5. Ibid., p. 168.
superb eloquence and literary ability and was called "Flesh Buddha" by the people of the time because of his unusual meditation lasting from five to seven days. He was also conferred the title of *Tang Thong* (Head of the Saṅgha) by emperor Ly Thanh Tong (A. D. 1054-1072);

(iv) Vien Chieu (A. D. 99-1090)\(^1\), who was famous for his practice of the "Three Methods of Contemplation" as well as his study of *The Sūtra of Complete Enlightenment* is credited with having composed four important Buddhist works in Chinese\(^2\), which explain and comment on the Buddhist scriptures (*sūtras*) and were published for the first time in ancient Vietnam.

(v) Man Giac (A. D. 1052-1096)\(^3\), who knew well both Buddhism and Confucianism, was so widely respected by the people that after his death his bones were collected and placed in a *stūpa* (pagoda) which was built at Sung Nham monastery in the An Cach village (North Vietnam) for the worship of the people. He wrote only a small verse, entitled *The Chung (To Everybody)* in Chinese in which he speaks of the illusion and changing of all things in the universe. They are like the flowers which fall when spring goes and which bloom when spring comes. So is the life of man. He is absorbed in seeing the current things which pass before him and does not know that he himself has now become old. However, we should not think that after spring, all the flowers are completely faded. Those who know how to follow the right path of Buddhism, practise in their life the Buddha’s teachings and attain enlightenment, can liberate themselves from the changing and impermanent laws of the Universe and from the constant round of death and rebirth.

(vi) Khanh Hy (A. D. 1066-1152)\(^4\) belonged to the 14th generation of Vīñārūci Meditation School. He was

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2. For details see, Tneong Xuan Binh, *op. cit.*, pp. 159-60.
3. For details see Tran Van Giah, *op. cit.*, p. 125.
highly respected by emperor Ly Anh Tong (A. D. 1138-1175) who conferred on him the title of Tang Luc (Vice-Principal of the Religious Affairs at Court) and Tang Thong (Head of the Sangha). He composed a book, entitled, *Collected Poems and Songs on the Awakening of the Truth* which is still very popular in Vietnam.

(vii) Vien Thong (A. D. 1080-1151) belonged to the 18th generation of the Vinétaruci Meditation-School and was given the title of *Ouoc Su* (Master of the Kingdom) in A. D. 1143 by Emperor Ly Nhan Tong in recognition of his vast learning and scholarship. He is credited with having composed three works which deal with the origins of the Buddha and Buddhist doctrines, mostly in verses.

(viii) Thoung Chieu (A. D. 1203) who belonged to the 12th generation of the Vo Ngon Thong Meditation School. He received *Dharma* from the Zen-Master Quang Nghiém. Later he retired to an ancient monastery where he devoted himself to teaching and propagating Buddhist doctrine among the masses and converted a large number of people to Buddhism. After his death, his body was cremated and his relics were placed in a *Stûpa* (pagoda) for worship by his disciples. He wrote two books in Chinese: (1) *A Chronological Description of the Northern School*, now lost and (ii) *The Classical Instructions of Buddhist Religion*.

Thus, the Early Ly Dynasty (544-602 A. D.) witnessed great Buddhistic activities in North Vietnam with the arrival of the first Indian meditation master—Venrable Ti Ni Da

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3. Trần Văn Giáp, “Les Chapitres...” in *BSEI*, Tome XIII, No. 1, Saigon, 1938, p. 90, No. 95, p. 94, No. 104, etc,
Luu Chi (Skt. Vinītarūci : Ch Wei Ni To Liu Chih)¹, the most illustrious name in the history of Vietnamese Buddhism. A Brāhmaṇa from South India (according to some, a native of Ujjain in North India)² Vinītarūci is said to have travelled widely in Western India to study Buddhism. He then went to Truong An or Chang An (in North-Central China) in 574 A. D. but as Buddhism was being persecuted by the Chinese Emperor Vo De or Wu-Ti (561-577 A. D.) of the Bac Chu (Pei Chou) or Northern Chou dynasty (557-581 A. D.) at that time,³ he was forced to proceed southward to the territory of Yeh or Nghiep (in modern Honan province of East-Central China) where he met venerable Tang Xan or Seng-Tsan, the third patriarch of Chau (Meditation) School of Chinese Buddhism who accepted his disciple.⁴ After receiving Dharma from his patriarch he went to Southern China on the advice of his teacher to avoid persecution. He resided at the Che Chi monastery (in modern Kwang-tung province) where he translated many Sanskrit books relating to Buddhism into Chinese. In 580 A. D. (six years later) he went to North Vietnam (Giao-Chau) where he stayed in Phap Van monastery, noted earlier, and translated the original work Mahāyāna Vaipulyadharanī Sūtra into Chinese, known as Tai Fang Kuang Tsung Chip Ching. After having transmitted his doctrine (Dharma) which he had received from his Chinese patriarch⁵ to his

2. Chou Hsiang Kuang, op. cit., p. 111; Truong Xuan Binh, op. cit., p. 95.
3. According to Chou Hsiang Kuang, Vinītarūci came to India in 582 A. D. during the reign-period of the Sui (Tuy) dynasty (581-618 A. D.).
5. Vinītarūci belonged to the Chinese Chaan School of Buddhism founded in China by the great Indian preacher Bodhidharma.
disciple, Phap Hien who is regarded as its first patriarch in Vietnam, he died in 504 A.D.\textsuperscript{1} Thus, Vinītarūci is traditionally regarded as the founder of the First Zen (Meditation) Sect of Vietnamese Buddhism\textsuperscript{2}, which was known as \textit{Meditation School of Vinītarūci}. It was transmitted to nineteen generations including thirtyone Zen masters\textsuperscript{3}, the most eminent among them being. Phap Thuan, Van Hanh, Huo Sinh and Vien Thong\textsuperscript{4}, all of whom flourished during 7th-12th centuries A.D. This school is prevalent to this day mostly in North Vietnam.\textsuperscript{5}

As noted above, another great Zen Master belonging to the fourteenth generation of Vinītarūci-Meditation School was Khanh Hy (1066-1142 A. D.)\textsuperscript{6} who is said to have been the son of a Brāhmaṇa (Sn. Vn. Ba La Mon). He belonged to Co Giao village (modern Co-Dieu village) in the Thanh Tri sub-prefecture in the Ho-Dong province of North Vietnam. A vegetarian since childhood he was highly respected and greatly admired for his deep knowledge of scriptures both by the king and the commoners. He is credited with having composed the \textit{Collected Poems and Songs on the Awakening of the Truth} (Vn. Ngo Dao Thi Ca Tap-Volume I) which is popularly known in Vietnam. Unfortunately, only one poem of this popular work is now available in Vietnam.\textsuperscript{7} He died at the age of 72 in 1142 A.D. The lineage of this Zen Master is quite interesting as it indirectly suggests how deep rooted the institution of caste-structure had become in Vietnam which was introduced

\textsuperscript{1} For details about the Zen Master Phap Hien, see Tran Van Giap, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 103.
\textsuperscript{2} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 45, 102; Truong Xuan Binh, \textit{op. cit}, p. 97.
\textsuperscript{3} Tran Van Giap., \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 104-13, 118.
\textsuperscript{4} \textit{Ibid.}, also cf. S. Dutt, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 104.
\textsuperscript{5} S. Dutt, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 104.
\textsuperscript{6} For details see Tran Van Giap, \textit{Les Chapitres Bibliographiques de la Qui Den et de Phau Hue Chu}, in \textit{BSEI}, Nouvelle Serie, Tome XIII, No. 1, Saigon, 1938, pp. 109 & 177. (Note 26).
\textsuperscript{7} Tran Van Ciap, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 60, No. 34.
there by the Indian settlers whose historicity in South-East Asia goes as far back as second century A. D., if not earlier.

It is most likely that other Indian monks broke their long and arduous journey at some Vietnamese port, during the periods of T'ang and Sung in China, before proceeding to their destination, and their teachings spread among the common people of the land. They were exponents not of Chinese, but of Indian Buddhism—Mahāyānist and Sarvāstivāda.

The history of the spread and growth of Buddhism in Vietnam, like many other countries of Asia, has two distinct phases. In the first, it was the Indian Buddhist monks who, braving the hazards of long and strenuous journey by land and sea, reached Vietnam and succeeded tremendously in implanting this great religion in that country—a thrilling story of untold adventure, indomitable zeal and courage and unrivalled religious devotion and determination which we have attempted to narrate in brief in the preceding pages. The second phase unfolds the story of the same zeal and devotion on the part of the Vietnamese Buddhist monks who travelled through thick forests, hostile lands and violent seas to reach India to pay homage to the great founder of their religion.

As we have noted earlier, Giao-Chau or Annam (North Vietnam) served as a meeting place of the various Buddhist missions and pilgrims going to and coming from China and India.² I-Tsing (Nghia Tinh: 634 A. D.—713 A. D.) informs

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1. Tran Van Giap, _op. cit._, p. 60, No. 34.
2. For details see I-Tsing, _Ta T'ang Hsi Yu Chiu Fa Kao Seng. Chuan_ (Biographies of Eminent Monks of the T'ang Dynasty who went in search of Dharma in the Western country), in _Taisho Shinshu Daizokya_ ("The Canon of Buddhist writings published in the Taisho Era"), in 100 volumes published in Tokyo, 1924-34 (Taisho, Vol. 51, p. 30). Also see Howard J. Sosis, Introductory Notes on..., in _Zen Notes_, Vol. XIV, Nos. 6, 7-8, July-Aug., 1967, New York, pp. 11-2 (fn. 1, 6 & 20.).

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us that during the reign-period of the Tang, six Vietnamese pilgrims of Annam travelled along with Indian and Chinese pilgrims through South Seas and reached Ceylon and India\(^1\), besides a host of eminent Vietnamese monks who are known to us through the poems which were addressed to them by the brilliant poets of the T'ang. Those monks greatly contributed not only to the development of Buddhism in Annam, but also to the propagation of the doctrine abroad. Some of them are reported to have been invited by the Chinese emperors to come to China in order to expound Buddhist scriptures in the T'ang Imperial Palace.\(^2\)

A native of Goa-Chau, Ven. Van Ky possessed good knowledge of Sanskrit and travelled widely along with Chinese Meditation Master Dam Khuen. He took higher ordination (\textit{Upasampadā}) with Ven. Tri Hien (Sk. \textit{Jñanabhadra}) at Java (Island of Southern Sumatra in Indonesia). In Giao-Chau he preached Buddhism to the monks as well as the laymen. Later he returned to secular life and resided in That Li Phat Tho or Śrīvijaya (modern Palembang seaport in south-eastern Sumatra of Indonesia). I-Tsing says that Ven Van Ky was still alive when he visited India and, according to Ven, Thích Mat The, he died at the age of thirty.\(^4\) Beyond this we have no other information about his activities in India.

Zen Master Ven, Dam Nhaun (Ch. Tan Jun), a native of La Yang (modern Honan province of East Central China), had deep knowledge of the Buddhist rules (\textit{Vinaya}) and is said to have spent several months in Giao-Chi. Later he also embarked southwards with the sole intention of

2. See Truong Xuan Binh, \textit{op. cit.}
coming to India but on reaching Java he fell ill suddenly and died at the age of 30.\textsuperscript{2}

Ven. Giai Thoat Thien or Mokṣadeva was a native of Giao-Chau who had travelled extensively by boat in Southern Seas and visited several countries. He then went to India and visited Bodhgaya (Bihar State) and many other holy Buddhist places there. He died at a very early age of 25.\textsuperscript{3}

Ven Khuy Hung, popularly known as Citradeva (Vn. Chat Dat La De Ba\textsuperscript{4}), was an inhabitant of Giao-Chau and was the disciple of Chinese Meditation-Master Minh Vien (Ch. Ming Yuan)\textsuperscript{5}. This Chinese Zen Master, whose Sanskrit name was Chintadeva (Sn. Ven. Chan Da De Ba) had studied and practised Buddhism since his childhood and had deep knowledge of all the Buddhist sacred canons. But, as Buddhism was then scorned and forbidden in China, he felt sad and went to Giao-Chau. From there he travelled to Java, Ceylon, and India where he visited the Mahābodhi temple at Bodhgaya. And, while thus travelling he died but the actual date of his death is not known.\textsuperscript{6}

Ven. Khuy Hung is said to have been endowed with great intelligence and he possessed thorough knowledge of all the Buddhist texts. He travelled widely with his great teacher (Ven. Minh Vien) by boat in the Southern Seas, then landed at Ceylon and from there came to western and central India where he visited Bodhgaya and worshipped the Bodhi-tree (Pipala tree). Then he proceeded to Rājagha

\begin{itemize}
\item 1. Trần Văn Giap, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 80.
\item 2. Trần Văn Giap, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 77-8; \textit{Revue Indochinoise}, Hanoi, No. 36, pp. 77-8.
\item 3. \textit{Revue Indochinoise}, Hanoi, No. 27, p. 65.
\item 4. \textit{Revue Indochinoise}, No. 28, p. 65; Also cf. Trần Văn Giap, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 81.
\item 5. \textit{Revue Indochinoise}, No. 28, pp. 65-6; Trần Văn Giap, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 81.
\item 6. \textit{Ibid.}, No. 29, p. 66.
\end{itemize}
(Vuong Xa Thanh: modern Rajgir in Patna district) where he suddenly fell ill and died at the famous Venuvana (Vn. Truc Lam) or “Bamboo-grove” at the age of 30 only.¹

Ven. Hue Diem, a native of Giao-Chau was the disciple of the Chinese Meditation-Master Vo-Hanh (Ch. Wu-Hsing). He is also said to have travelled to Ceylon and India with his teacher Vo-Hanh but we do not know any thing about the year of his death. I-Tsing also does not enlighten us on this point.² We have, however, some information about Ven. Vo-Hanh whose Sanskrit name was Prajñādeva (Vn. Bat Nha De Ba). He came from the province of Kinh-Chau or Ching Chou (modern Ho Bac province of north-eastern China). After having extensively travelled in China, he is reported to have retired to a deep cave to devote himself to reciting the Saddharma Puṇḍarika Sūtra or “The Lotus Scripture”. Then he went to Giao-Chau and after having stayed there for a year went to the kingdom of Śrīvijaya (now Palembang in Indonesia). Later he went to India and met I-Tsing at the great university of Nālandā and from there both of them proceeded to the East. At that time he was about 50 years old and died at the age of 56.³

The fifth Vietnamese monk who is said to have visited India was Ven. Tri Hanh, who also bore the Sanskrit name of Prajñādeva, like the Chinese Meditation-Master Vo-Hanh. He was an inhabitant of Ghau Ai (modern Thanh Hoa province of north-central Vietnam). He reached Central India after crossing the sea and visited many holy Buddhist places. After that he is said to have come to stay at a monastery named Tin Gia in the north of the Gaṅgā where he passed away at the age of 50. Unfortunately, however, we are not in a position to identify the actual location of this monastery nor can we determine the Indian variant of its Vietnamese name in the present state of our knowledge.

1. Ibid., p. 66.
2. Ibid., p. 66.
3. Ibid., No. 62, pp. 138-57; Trần Văn Giáp, op. cit., p. 77.
The last Vietnamese monk to have visited India was the Meditation-Master Dai Thang Dang whose Sanskrit name was Mahāyāna-Pradīpa (Vn. Ma Ha Gia Na Bat Diape Ba).\(^1\) He was originally an inhabitant of Chau Ai, and became a Buddhist monk at Dvāravatī (Dvārakā in Gujarat, India).\(^2\) He came to the Chinese capital Truong An or Chang An (in present-day north-central China) in the company of Diem Tu, a Chinese envoy, where he received higher ordination (Upasampatti) from the great Master Hıuen Tsang or Yüang Chhwang at the Tu An Monastery. He had studied almost all the Buddhist texts during his stay at China.\(^3\)

After some time he returned to Giao-Chau, and then crossed the Southern Sea and reached Ceylon. From this place he proceeded to Southern and Eastern India and stayed at Tāmralipti (Modern Tamluk in Midnapore district, West Bengal) for twelve years where he studied Sanskrit and mastered it fully. Moreover, it was here that he translated several Sanskrit Buddhist works including the Nidāna Śāstra (Ch. Yuan Shang Lun; Vn. Duyenn Sinh Luan) or The Treaties of Primary Cause into Chinese. He met I-Tsung later and accompanied him to Central India. They first visited the Nālandā monastery at Nālandā, the Vajrāsana (or the Mahābodhi monastery) at Bodh-Gayā (Gaya district), and proceeded to Pho Xa Li or Vaiśālī (now a district in Bihar), the most ancient seat of republic in India, graced on many occasions by Lord Buddha. He then went to Cau Thi Na Quec or Kuśinagara (Modern Kāśi in Gorakhpur district of Uttar Pradesh) and visited almost

2. For the identification of Dvāravatī, see N. L. Dey, *The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Medieval India*, 3rd Edn. 1971, Delhi, p. 58.
3. For details, see Chou Hsiang Kuang, *op. cit.*, p. 116; P. V. Bapat, in *2500 Years of Buddhism*, pp. 231-41.
all the holy Buddhist places in India along with the Chinese Meditation-Master Vo Nanh or Wu-Hsing. It was at the monastery of Parinirvāna (Vn. Bat Niet Ban) in Kuśinagara that he passed away at the age of 60.¹

From the above survey it would appear that during this period there were many eminent Buddhist Vietnamese monks who are known to us through the poems which were addressed to them by the brilliant poets of the T'ang.² These monks mostly travelled to India to visit the Buddhist holy places and greatly contributed not only to the development of Buddhism in Annam (i.e. North Vietnam) but also to the propagation of the doctrine abroad. Some of them were so reputed as to be invited by the Chinese Emperors to come to China to expound Buddhist scriptures in the T'ang Imperial palace.

But the most remarkable feature about Vietnamese Buddhism is that while Buddhism attracted kings in other countries of South-East Asia, who “endowed it with royal munificence and aided its growth and propagation as a system of culture approved by the State”³, in Vietnam the State of things was quite different. It never clung to any canon nor evolved one of its own.⁴

The impact of Buddhism in Vietnam was so great that it influenced almost all the walks of Vietnamese life. Even the Vietnamese music was not immune from this all pervading influence. We have an interesting account in Vietnamese annals as to how an Indian Buddhist monk along a hundred Cham royal dancers and musicians was brought to Vietnam as war-prisoners by emperor Le De Hanh after the defeat of Campā. Cham music during this period was very much influenced by Indian music, and for this the

2. Truong Xuan Binh, op. cit., p. 120.
4. Ibid., p. 108.
Indian Buddhist monk who had come to Campā to spread religion were solely responsible.\(^1\) This was the period (10th cent. A. D.) when the Vietnamese music and dance are said to have taken a concrete shape.

It is interesting to note that of the eight musical instruments used by the Vietnamese musicians in the official and religious ceremonies, at least six are of Indian origin: for instance, the *Ovoid*, Lute or Ty Ba (Sino-Vn) or *P’ip’a* (Chinese) or *Biwa* (Japanese)—a four-string pearshaped lute (*Vīnā*) used in the Bombay region in the 7th century A.D.;\(^2\) the *Ho Cam*, the three-stringed lute;\(^3\) the *Ong Sao*, the traverse flute;\(^4\) the *Ong Tieu* or *Siao*, the straight flute;\(^5\) the *Prāch* (Vn) or the *P’o* (Chinese), the wooden costanets, resembling the one which we come across between the hands of an Indian musician on a painting in a cave at Bagh\(^6\) in Madhya Pradesh; and the *Sand-Class shaped Drum* resembling the Indian *Ḍamarū*.

Most of these instruments were carried first to China or Java and then to Vietnam by the visiting Indian monks and laymen and they are popular even now in those countries. Of the many factors, leading to the intercourse between these two countries the most effective was music which easily won the hearts of the people and established close rapport between the two distant cultures.

Moreover, the two countries which contributed most to the propagation and spread of Buddhism in Vietnam were China and India. A close study of Buddhism in Vietnam

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would unmistakably point to its two distinct forms—(i) The Religion of the North and (ii) the Religion of the South. The Chinese provenance can be explained by the fact that the two countries had close political and cultural contacts for a thousand years through migrations of Chinese Buddhists into North Vietnam in early Christian centuries and also the easy access from China to the Red River Valley which constituted the original Vietnamese Colony. But, India being far off, there were few contacts between the two countries. It has been rightly pointed out that “early Vietnamese contacts with India were in part commercial and in part religious because of Buddhist pilgrims’ journeys in both directions. Sea-borne missions from India stopped in Vietnam enroute to China proper, and Vietnamese pilgrims subsequently obtained copies of the sacred Buddhist texts from cultural centres in South Sumatra. But, for various reasons Chinese culture took precedence over Indian in Vietnam.”

Under the Ly kings, Hanoi, besides becoming the capital of Vietnam, rose to be an important Buddhist centre, and near it was a seaport for voyages from India and back which was used by the Buddhist monks from India on the sea-way to China during T’ang—Sung dynasties of China. At some places in Vietnam there were probably small Indian settlements of mercantile origin. It is true, in the history of Vietnamese Buddhism no Indian names stand out except Mahājivaka, Kalyāṇāśrī (Kolyāṇarūci) and Vinītarūci, but it is also equally true that Indian influence is traceable in the art, culture and religion of its people. And, “thanks to Chinese monks, and especially to Indian monks, Budd-

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1. Ibid., p. 171.
2. S. Dutt, op. cit., p. 110.
4. S. Dutt, op. cit., p. 110.
5. Ibid., p. 110.
Fig. No. 1
Brahma (12th A.D.), Java.
Fig. No. 2
Bot Brahm (Brāhmaṇical Temple).
Located at Bangkok, Thailand.

Fig. No. 3
The shining Hall of Bot Brahm (Brāhmaṇical Temple), Bangkok.

Fig. No. 4
Group figure showing Umā, Śiva and goddess Gaṅgā at Prasat Bakong. Prah Ko. Cambodia.
Fig. No. 5
Angkor Thom.
(857-907 A.D.),
Cambodia.

Fig. No. 6
A lintel of Prasat Banteay Sarei, showing Rāvaṇa raising Kailāśa. Cambodia.

Fig. No. 7
General view of Angkor Vat.
Cambodia
Fig. No. 8

Fig. No. 9
Ganesha. Angkor Vat Style.
(1007-1157 A. D.) Cambodia.

Fig. No. 10
Bas-relief. Angkor Vat Style. (1007-1157 A. D.). Cambodia. Churning of the Ocean (Samudramanthana)
hism has gradually spread over the country—yet, with no organisation”. Though eighty per cent of the people in Vietnam are Buddhist, the *Samgha* (monk fraternity) is not as organised as in other parts of South-East Asia.

Thus, the voyage of Buddhist missions to South-East Asian countries and to China gives us valuable evidence of the historical development of Buddhism in those countries. Further, it also provides with specific instance of cultural relations of these countries between India on the one hand and China on the other.
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Yaśodharapura and Yaśomati are listed under the letter Y. Yaśovarman appears in several pages, indicating a significant figure or place mentioned throughout the text.
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