

ABSTRACT  
Kumarajiva and his contemporaries  
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The paper first outlines the political background of the period and then goes on to explain the Buddhist philosophical scenario preceding the time of Kumarjiva and his contemporaries.

Although educated in the Hinayana school he renounced it and took up cudgels for Mahayana school, and in doing so he even clashed with his teacher Bandhudatta, the Hinayana scholar.

Kumarajiva suffered humiliation at the hands of cruel kings like Lu Guang of later Liang ( A. D. 386-403 ) and other rulers whom he served in Central Asia and in the Chinese capital.

The earlier Masters who preceded him gained faith and confidence of the rulers not by dint of their superior intellectual power and personality, but by taking recourse to supernatural magic power and personality, the prominent among them being Zhu Fo Tudeng.

Through his masterly exposition of the Buddhist texts and brilliant translation of the Vinaya texts Kumarajiva put Buddhism on firm footing in China.

Among the harbingers of Indianization of China through Buddhism, we must count such monarchs as Zhu Fo Tudeng ( date of birth not known , came to Luoyang, Capital of China in AD 310, expired in 349 when he is said to be 117 years old ). who preceded Kumaraiva ( 344-409/413 ), and Shi Daoan ( AD 312-385), Shi Huiyuan ( AD 334-416 ), and the greatest of them all - Kumarajiva.

While concentrating on Kumarajiva we shall try to bring into focus. the life of some of these great saints, specially Shi Daoan whom Kumaraiva called the Sage of the East.