

BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY
IN ITS SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL
RELEVANCE IN MODERN THAILAND

SOMDEJ PHRA BUDDHAJINAVAMSA
(PRACHUAB KANTĀCĀRA MAHATHERA PH.D.)

WAT MAKUTKASATRI YARAM
RECTOR OF MAHAMAKUT BUDDHIST UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY : HISTORICAL BACKGROUND, DEVELOPMENT OF THERAVĀDA BUDDHISM IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THAILAND

A. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The Buddha in one of the most famous passages in the pāli canon declared :

Go forth, O Bhikkhus, on your wondering, for the good and happiness of the many folk (bahujanahitāya, bahujanasukhāya) in compassion for the world, for the Good, the welfare and the happiness of Gods and men. Let not twp of you go the same way. O Bhikkhus, proclaim the Dhamma which is beneficent at the beginning, beneficent in the middle and beneficent in the end.(1)

It is clear from the above exhortation that the great Master was not satisfied with the spread of his message only within the narrow circle of his disciples. He wanted them to go and spread themselves out in order to preach his noble message of love and compassion for the benefit of all mankind. It is this basic attitude that makes the Buddha different from his predecessors. This is also that what makes Buddhism a universal religion.

Hinduism had never believed in carrying its message to other peoples. The Hindu religion which spread throughout South East Asia about 1,500 years ago did not have for its message of love and compassion, as Buddhism later did, Hinduism during the medieval history of South-East Asia was a set of beliefs based of Purānic lore, and this may have been one of the reasons why it disappeared from those regions, though it has left many imprints behind. Archaeologists have indeed found many traces of this rich heritage in South-East Asian countries.

Buddhism on the other hand, is still an active and powerful force in South-East Asia particularly in Thailand and Burma, where it has had a profound influence in all walks of life – social, political, educational and economic. The unique emphasis of Buddhism on love, brotherhood and non-violence has conferred a peaceful and harmonious atmosphere in the social and cultural life of these countries. Theravāda Buddhism in particular, by its emphasis on the practical has been particularly beneficial toward achievement of social welfare, in contrast to Mahāyāna Buddhism, which by its over-

conceptualization and by the scholarly and theoretical pursuits of its followers has been rather indifferent towards social welfare. This may also be one of the reasons why Hinduism had less appeal to the population of South-East Asia. Even the six systems of orthodox Indian Philosophy did not have much appeal beyond the borders of India, except in recent years, when some Western and Indian scholars have begun studying these with some seriousness. Moreover, the caste system has made Hinduism quite rigid, and it has become a closed system. And its emphasis on rituals and superstition has made popular Hinduism far less attractive to the sophisticated people than Buddhism.

From the beginning, Buddhism has been known for its uncompromising humanism. Man rather than God occupies a central place in Buddhist thought. Its ethics therefore does not appeal to any metaphysical concept. The overwhelming anti-metaphysical trend of Buddhism has made its ethics somewhat easy to comprehend and to apply in actual practice. It is based on complete negation of violence and use of compassion to solve all social problems. While Islam has spread itself in Asia by the indiscriminate use of the sword and by military conquest, Buddhism by contrast has converted people by persuasion and by compassion.

Students of the history of Buddhism are aware of the noble lives of Asoka and Harshavardhana and how these great kings were responsible for spreading Buddhist thought in the Indian subcontinent and abroad. King Asoka in particular had been responsible for sending missionaries for spreading the message of the Buddha throughout Asia in accordance with the wishes of the Buddha himself. Monkhood has been regarded as an integral part of Buddhism. The Sangha is indeed one of the **Tiratanas** of Buddhism, the others being the Buddha and the Dhamma. Thus, in all Buddhist societies, sangha occupies a unique place in order to guide the society to its moral goal. The Sangha is indeed the pivot of all social, cultural, educational and political activities in any authentic Buddhist Community.

But the order of monks in Buddhism is not empty and secluded and devoted purely to study, as the Hindu **Samnāyasāramais**. Besides intellectual activities, the monks have to perform social service, as in Christianity, but this service is not sectarian or discriminatory. It aims at the well-being of all. But monastic life is not compulsory for all Buddhists. One could practice Buddhism without being a member of the monastic order. As Sukumar Dutt remarks:

The life of lay people was neither expected to be subject to monastic discipline nor directed to the ideals of monastic life. Living with fellowmen in society, their business was to encompass their own **Hita** and **Sukha** consistently with the teachings of the **Dhamma**. The Dhamma was not meant to be their all-absorbing occupation in life, but only a normative and regulative principle in the conduct of life.(2)

In the succeeding pages we have to consider the nature and functions of monastic life in greater detail in its education and cultural context.

B. BUDDHISM AS A MISSION

The Buddha had before his Parinibbāna, asked his disciples to spread his message to all men. Accordingly within 150 years of the Great Master's Parinibbāna the Buddhist religion had spread itself throughout North India. The institution of monkhood which the Buddha had established contribute to a large extent forwards this propagation. As is well-known to all students of Buddhism, the great emperor Asoka (260-239 B.C) consolidated Buddhism in the India subcontinent and besides, sent missionaries to distant lands to spread the noble message of the Buddha. The story of the conversion of this great king is so well-know that it hardly needs to be narrated again here.

Asoka's contemporary, the well-know scholar Moggalliputta Tissa, who is also reputed to be the author of the Pāli text, Kathāvatthu, is said to have first conceived of the nine missions to be sent to various parts of the then known world. The Mahāvamsa (chapter XII) and the Dīpavamsa (chapter VIII) describes in detail in almost identical terms, these missions. They are briefly as follows:

1. To Sri Lanka; Mahinda, Itthiya, Uttiya, Sambala and Bhuddasīla.
2. To Suvarnabhumi (Burma, Thailand) : Sona and Uttara.
3. To Gandhāra : Majjhantika.
4. To Mahisamandala (South India) : Mahādeva.
5. To Vanavāsa : Rakkhita.
6. To Aparantaka : Yonaka, Dhammarakkhita.
7. To Mahārāshtra : Mahā Dhammarakkhita.
8. To Yonaka (Western Border of India) : Mahārakkhita.
9. To Nepal and Northern Himālayas : Majjhima, Sahadeva and Mūlaka.

There seems to be no doubt about the historicity of these missionaries named above. Nor is there any doubt about the existence of the geographical regions described in the above mentioned texts. Some inscriptions (e.g. the inscription at Mahintale in Sri Lanka in old Singhalese script) also confirm the dispatch of these missions to various paths. The above account is also corroborated by another text known as Samantapāsādikā.

Of particular interest to this thesis is the dispatch of Sona and Uttara to Suvarnabhūmi. The well-know historian R.C. Majumdar in a monograph on Suvarnadvīpa thinks that the far-eastern regions of Asia were very well-know to Indians during the time of Asoka. Majumdar remarks that the names 'Suvarnabhūmi' and 'Suvarnadvīpa' (Gold-land and Gold-island)

Occur in the old popular stories such as have been preserved in the Jatakas, Kathākosa and Brhatkathā, as well as in more serious literary works, mainly Buddhist.(3)

There is no doubt that ancient Indians were adept in sea-voyages and Majumdar thinks that these names refer to Burma (then also known as Ramaññadesa and inhabited by the Mon tribes), Malaysia and Indonesia. King-Anawrahta is known by tradition, to have helped in the propagation of Buddhism in Suvarnabhūmi.

The Thai scholars are aware even today of the works of Sona and Uttara in propagating Buddhism, though some scholars (e.g. Sukumar Dutt) (4) doubt the authenticity of the legend. The legend becomes doubtful in view of the fact that till the 15th century, Thailand was overwhelmingly Hinduistic in tradition. The legend was perhaps true of Burma. It is most likely that Sona and Uttara's field of activity was Burma, rather than Thailand and Cambodia. But it appears to be wrong to say that this legend was 'faked', there is no evidence that it was a faked one, though no conclusive proof can also be given as to its authenticity. Further investigation into historical records supported by archaeological and epigraphical finds are essential for progress in the study of antiquity of Buddhism in South-East Asia.

Buddhaghosa, the great Buddhist scholar has drawn our attention to an interesting situation in the history of Asoka's reign.(5) The emperor was so liberal that he admitted into the Sangha a large number of men, who were not sufficiently loyal to the tenets of the Buddha. Moggalliputta Tissa, Patriarch opposed this and resigned his position as the Head of the Sangha. Because of the admission of the heretics, the monastic order became seriously affected. Asoka sensing

this serious situation sent one of his trusted ministers to investigate into the matter; this minister instead of quietly expelling the heretics from the monastery, massacred a number of those whom he thought to be heretics. Asoka was shocked at this senseless act of murder and himself went again to the monastery – Asokārāma in Pataliputra , to settle the matter. He disrobed a number of monks whom he thought were not adherents of Theravada or Vibhajjavada. Indeed the Buddha himself characterized his own doctrine (in Majjhima Nikāya) as “Vibhajjavāda” (6)

Hence, the Theravādins claim that Theravāda is the true doctrine of Buddhism, as is shown in the above incident narrated by Buddhaghosa. The expulsion by Emperor Asoka of the monks as mentioned above is claimed by them to have been an act of purification, although this incident is not referred to either in the Edicts of that great Emperor nor in other works. The incident is claimed to be quite authentic by some Sri Lankan scholars. The missionaries to various countries referred to above were sent primarily to spread the Theravada doctrine.

Obviously, because of Emperor Asoka’s efforts, Buddhism first became popular outside India in the island of Sri Lanka, during the reign of Devānampiya Tissa (247-207 B.C.) the first Buddhist king of Ceylon; he even adopted the title ‘Devānampiya’ used by Emperor Asoka to refer to himself. The spiritual conquest of Sri Lanka is aptly described in Asoka’s chronicles as ‘Dhamma-Vijaya’ a victory of Dhamma. Apart from Mahimda, the emperor is also recorded to have sent his own daughter, who later became a nun, with a sapling of the Bodhi tree, and got it planted at Anurādhapura, where the tree is to be found and worshipped till this day.(7) The Mahavamsa is a chronicle of the mission sent by the great Emperor Asoka. Account of Sri Lankan Buddhism during its early years is also to be found in the text, Dipavamsa, Samantapāsādika, Nikāya-Samgraha and Culavamsa.

It is not necessary to go into further details of the history of Buddhism in Sri Lanka, as they are not relevant for our purposes. But it has to be pointed out that the missionary activity of the Buddhists first took its root in Sri Lanka, thanks to the patronage of some of the enlightened rulers of that country during the early years of the Buddhist era-notably by Voharika-Tissa (269-291 A.D.), Mogallāna (496-513 A.D.), Mogallāna II (513-522 A.D.) and others. They had to fight constantly against incursions from Cola kings and their armies from South India. Indeed the Cola army had occupied and plundered the island. The Hindu influence still survives in the island today and

as is well-known to students of contemporary history, is the root cause of the communal conflict and violence today. The courage of Vijayābahu and Parakkamabāhu I in defending and invigorating Buddhist religion in Sri Lanka (8) in the ancient period is well-known. Many of the later Buddhist kings like Parakkamabāhu II and Parakkamabāhu IV were not opposed to Hinduism and had actually built temples for Visnu, Siva and other deities in the capital city, Pollonaruva-sometimes within the Buddhist Vihāras themselves. This historical fact has been described by historians like James Cartman and W.Rahula.(9) Sri Lanka Buddhism has become quite dynamic and later in this work, we may have to refer to its achievements in the cultural and educational fields.

C. SPREAD OF BUDDHISM IN SOUTH EAST ASIA, BURMA

We have already referred to the missionaries Sona and Utrara sent to the region then known as 'Suvarnabhūmi' This name occurs in many texts and inscriptions and in all probability referred to Rāmaññadesa, comprising of the southern part of Burma and the eastern part of modern Thailand. Though one cannot say conclusively about the extent of the popularity of Buddhism during the early part of the Christian era, still there is some evidence to suggest that Buddhism did indeed reach that part of the world. Buddhaghosa travelled not only to Sri Lanka but is said to have travelled also to Burma. Whether this is true or not, we have still no doubt about the contribution of this great Buddhist scholar to Burmese Theravāda Buddhism. As K.L. Hazra has remarked :

Pāli being the common language of intercourse among the Theravāda countries, Buddhaghosa's translation of the Singhalese commentaries into Pāli made these texts available to the Buddhists of Burma as well. We may, therefore surmise that Buddhaghosa's endeavours gave an impetus to the development of Theravāda Buddhism in Lower Burma. (10)

Besides the travel diaries of the famous Chinese traveller I-Tsing who is reputed to have spent 25 years in these parts in (A.D. 671-695) refers to the various schools of Theravāda popular in the Burmese region during his time. The capital of the then Burmese States was Prome. The Thais are said to have occupied some parts of upper and lower Burma early in the 9th century. Hazra cites exhaustive sources for this view.(11) Which leaves us in no doubt of the popularity of Theravāda during this time.

There is of course no archaeological or epigraphic evidence for identifying parts of Burma as Suvannabhūmi, but quite a few texts prior to and contemporaneous with Asoka refer to Suvannabhūmi or golden land. Kanai Lal Hazra has in his scholarly work (12) cited many of these sources by which Rāmaññadesa is so identified : Kalyāni Inscriptions (Suvannaphūmi ratta – samkhāta Rāmaññadesa, I A XXII p. 151) Jātaka tales, Kathākosa, Brhatkathā, Milindapañhā, Divyāvādāna, Mahānamavibhanga, Sāsanavamsa, the Purānas, kautilya’s Arthasāstra and even Ptolemy. From these sources cited by Hazra, it is quite clear that there was indeed an area known as Suvannabhūmi and it can be safely inferred that Buddhism was indeed propagated there by Asoka’s missionaries. Of course From 6th century A.D., Buddhism was definitely flourishing in Burma. From there, it should not have taken very long to spread to its neighbouring geographical area-Thailand and the Indo-Chinese peninsula.

It is not possible therefore to agree entirely with Sukumar Dutt’s view about the authenticity and sources of Sona’s and Uttara’s mission to Suvannabhūmi:

If we accept the tradition of the ‘nine mission’ it is still permissible to doubt whether they ever reached the countries of their assignment. We can be certain only about the mission to Ceylon. Sona and Uttara figure no doubt in the legends of Burma and Siam, but scarcely more than as lay figures. About their missionary activities, nothing in particular is said in the legends.

In the third century B.C. Buddhism would have had a poor chance to grow in the regions to which the missions are said to have been sent. Except in Sri Lanka where there was a large mass of immigrants from India, they had no contact with Indian thought or philosophy. Besides, there was a little chance of exchange between the missionaries and the local people for lack of a common linguistic medium. There were insuperable difficulties of other kinds too. For one thing, the world-view presented by Buddhism must have been more or less unintelligible to those unfamiliar with Indian ways of thought. The first lesson in Buddhism would be wasted on them.(13)

In view of the overwhelming evidence of texts, both in Pāli, and Sanskrit as cited by Hazra, the view of Sukumar Dutt cannot be accepted. Moreover, if Buddhism could be accepted as the official religion of those countries, surely they could have been accepted as such as understood earlier also. What after all, is so unintelligible about Buddhist world-view that is intelligible now, but not in the time of Asoka.(14) Hence the account of the missions of Suvannabhūmi, as described in Sri Lankan chronicles cannot be by-passed as ‘fanciful’

as Dutt does.(15) It is admitted however that the Sri Lankan and the Burmese accounts of the Sona and Uttara mission are conflicting and do not, because of the antiquity of the actual event, throw much light on its nature and work.

Scholars are agreed in the richness of the Pya civilization (with its capital at '*Srī Ksetra-Therakhittara*' in Burmese). Much of their culture has been lost, after its destruction by king Anawrahta during the middle of 11th century. But it is clear that both Brāhmanism from India influenced the Pya culture and that their Buddhism was a form of Theravāda. Its language is now extinct. Remains of this-civilization have been discovered by archaeological excavations at Hmawaza and even Sukumar Dutt admits that portions of the Pāli canon (written in a South Indian script) have been unearthed and dated as belonging to 5th century A.D. The Chinese traveller Huien Tsang has recorded the existence of Srī-Ksetra (which he calls Shi-li-cha-ta-lo) in his chronicles.(16)

The other tribes of Burma are the Mons (who still survive under the name Talaing in Burma) and the Thai race Myanma who gave Burma its present name. The Mons developed a culture and language of their own, quit rich in its own way, and built great temples. Their literature is rich with narratives about their great kings. They are said to have been concentrated around the towns of Pegu, Martaban and Thaton in the southern part of Burma. Their literature and religious practices show the overwhelming influence of Theravāda Buddhism.(17) Mons ruled over Southern Burma and part of present-day Thailand till in 11th century when the first great Burmese king, King Anawrahta (also called Aniruddha in the inscriptions to be found at Pagan in the Shwedagon Pagoda built by him) established his powerful kingdom.

In Burma, Buddhism reached its glory under King Anawrahta also called Aniruddha (1044-1077 A.D.) His reign saw the moulding of the Burmese nation into one. His capital was Pagan, the walls of which were built earlier in 849. King Anawrahta was himself a convert to Buddhism and contributed a good deal to the spread of Theravāda in that country, He conquered many territories, but is reputed to have been very generous to the defeated. Maung Tin and Luce in their edition of the **Glass Palace Chronicles** (18) record the various expeditions of the king to various other territories to collect manuscripts of the only texts of Buddhism. He got Pitaka texts transcribed from Mon script to the Burmese script. He established contact with the Theravāda institutions of Sri Lanka.

In fact, Burmese Buddhism has been so closely linked with that of Sri Lanka that Sukumar Dutt remarks that:

The religious literature of Burma is characterized by its deliberate secondariness to the Ceyloness. It shows little originality. To the development of the Philosophic side of Theravāda – its Abhidhamma, its doctrines and categories the contribution of Burmese monk-scholars has been by no means outstanding. To them Buddhism as presented in the Pāli canon and expounded and amplified in the commentarial and original works in Pāli, became since the early thirteenth century on, unquestionably definitive.(19)

After king Anawrahta, there was a brief period of Mongol occupation, but after the reign of Dhammaceti (1460-1491 A.D.). Buddhism in Burma flourished under various kings. There was also held, a great Buddhist council in 1871 A.D., convened by king Mindon. Then came the British occupation of that country till 1942 and then very brief Japanese occupation and the country became fully free in 1946. It is now one of the important Theravāda states of that region.

Buddhism came to Cambodia in 5th century A.D. but for a long time, the country was under the domination of the Hinduism. The kingdom was founded by a Brāhmin called Kaundinya (Him-t'ien in Chinese) in Funan province. His successors were Jayavarman (478-574 A.D.) and Rudravarman (514-539 A.D.) These kings were all Buddhists by conviction and contributed much to the development of Buddhism in that part of the globe. They had friendly relations with the rulers of the Liang dynasty of China. After the Kaundinya dynasty was overthrown by Bhavavarman, Cambodia fell under the Saivaitis domination, who however not opposed to the propagation of Buddhism. Under Isānavarman and Jayavarman I Mahāyāna Buddhism grew steadily in influence. The people of Cambodia have been called Khmers and they are a tribe bearing close ethnic linkage with mons. Till 1431 Cambodia was Hinduistic. The well-know French historian, G. Coeds calls all the states of the region then existing as 'Hindu States' and very much similar to the Hinduism of the Indian sub-continent, including in its polity, jurisprudence and caste system. The Bayon Temple and the great temple at Angkor bear testimony to the glory of this bygone age.

Theravāda Buddhism came to Cambodia in the 15th century A.D. though it existed in some form of the other earlier than this date. The inscriptions after this date are to be found in Pāli and not Sanskrit, as earlier, King Jayavarman Parameswara (Circa 1330) seems as the

inscriptions show (20) to have played a dominant role in the inversion of Theravāda Buddhism to Cambodia. There seems to be no doubt that the Thai monks had played a dominant role in the introduction of Theravāda Buddhism and the elimination of Hinduism from Cambodia. The contrast between the two faiths had become obvious to people. As Sukumar Dutt puts it, Theravāda Buddhism :

Emphasized the worth of man as man, laid stress on Bhāvanā (Becoming) that is, the process of an individual's growing through self-culture and self-knowledge from more to more, and, for refuge in life's trials and tribulations, substituted for the old stone-hewn gods the holy trinity of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha.

The monk-preachers of the new-religion were also of different breed from the high-brow priests from whom they used to learn the sanctions and injunctions of religion. The monks did not speak to them ex Chatherdra, but as men to men. They were simple and lowly, intimate with common people, sympathetic and helpful, and naturally more after their hearts. (21)

The Zenith of Khmer architectural glory was achieved during the period of Jayavarman VII (1181-1209 A.D.) His achievements include the construction of great temples at Angkor Tom and Bayon. Enormous quantity of wealth and a great number of people were used to build and maintain temples and his army. D.G.E. Hall in his well known History of South-East Asia remarks :

Thousands of villages were assigned for the upkeep of the great temples, while tens of thousands of officials and hundreds of dancers were employed in their service, not to mention the army of labourers, masons, sculptors and decorators required for the constructional work. Jayavarman III may have been the greatest of Khmer monarches, and it may be claimed that his reign represented the apogee of Cambodia, but he impoverished the people with heavy taxation and insatiable demands for forced labour and military service. (22)

A wealth of material has been discovered by French archaeologists to prove the glory of Khmer State. Jayavarman VII is regarded as a very pious Mahāyāna Buddhist, but his Buddhism was strangely mixed with the worship of Purānic deities of Hinduism. In Angkor Wat for

example, the images of Shiva (in the form of the Lingam), Visnu and Devaraja are to be found side with images of the Buddha, Lokesvara, Trailokanath, Prajnāparamita, etc., while are all Mahāyānist representation of the various forms of the Buddha. But there is proof that some form of caste system prevailed there, with the radical glorification of priestly class and their separation from and suppression of labourers, peasants and others. The king himself was a despot, in the style of the great Hindu kings of Indian sub-continent. Sankrit language occupied a very important place and its literature, grammar, philosophy, medicine and the sciences were studied assiduously. Khmer language occupied a subordinate place; there is no evident at all of Pāli being in vogue, till the incursion of Theravāda Buddhism later in Khmer history, i.e. after the 15th century.

Contemporaneous with the Khmer Hindu empire, we also find the Hindu Kingdoms of Java and Sumātra; the name of Sri Vijaya is well-known. Here again Buddhism was mixed with popular Hinduism. The Sumatran kingdom was closely connected to the kingdom of South India, in particular with that of the Colas. Burmese of Buddhist influence, the traditional opposition to sea-voyages disappeared and people began to take to sea-adventure. The rush towards Land of gold was necessitated by commercial needs and Buddhism (23) helped in the elimination of superstition and prejudices. G. Coedes confirms this :

This enterprise (viz. search for gold through seavoyages) was helped in by the birth and spread of Buddhism, which by abolishing the barriers of caste and the exaggerated concern for radical purity, suppressed at the same stroke, for Hindus converted to the new religion, the fetters which the fear of pollution from contact with barbarians had formerly put upon their voyages beyond the seas.(24)

It is interesting to see, in the Indo-Chinese Peninsula, how the different religions and cultures from different parts of Asia have moulded the thought and life of the people. Ethnically perhaps, the Mons, the Khmers and the T'ais are related to the Mongols from the north, but culturally they have been everwhelming influenced by the religions, language, philosophy and the social system of the people of the sub-continent. Hinduism, Mahāyāna Buddhism and later, Therāvada Buddhism have helped to shape the culture of the land. In recent years, Islam has also made inroads into Java and Malaysia.

It has to be noted that the culture and religion of Sri Lanka in particular had a profound influence of the development of Theravāda

Buddhism, especially after Buddhism had declined in the land of its birth in the centuries immediately prior to the Islamic conquest of the Indian sub-continent. Hinduism did not destroy Buddhism, but as, Phra Rājavaramuni puts it, only indunized Buddhism :

When the Mahāyāna became stronger, the monks were devoted more and more to philosophical speculations and religious celebrations. Hindu ideas and practices crept in. The member of Bodhisattavas, gods and goddesses increased together with various modes to worship and a new literature to explain them. Superstitious beliefs, devotionism and the use of magical charms and rituals were encouraged while there was a decline in the importance of ethics...Before long it made Buddhism nearly indistinguishable from Hinduism. (25)

The situation in the Indo-Chinese peninsula before the entry of Theravāda Buddhism was somewhat like the one in India before the 10th century – a strange admixture of Hinduism in its various forms – Saivism, Vaisnavism, Tantrism etc. – with Mahāyāna Buddhism. It may therefore be said that Theravāda Buddhism gave a certain amount of purity and morality to society, which however is still free from dogmatism and tolerant of other faiths.

The above brief survey would not be complete without an account of the development of Theravāda Buddhism in Thailand and its influence on thought and culture of Thailand. Thailand in recent years has become, along with Burma and Sri Lanka as a bastion of Theravāda Buddhism while in Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos, Buddhism is in the danger of extinction. In Java, Sumatra and Malaysia, Buddhism and its brother religion, Hinduism disappeared long ago under the onslaught of Islam. It is in the face of this social reality, that Thai culture and its Theravāda Buddhism have become very fundamental.

D. THERAVĀDA BUDDHISM IN THAILAND

The Thais are regarded as ethnically different from the Mons and the Khmer. It is generally thought that they emigrated to Thailand from South China about 2,000 years ago. (26) It is not relevant in this work to go into their origins or into their early history. As has already been described, Indian influence in the Indo-Chinese peninsula has been strong since the time of Asoka, who sent two missionaries Sona and Uttara to that part of the world, then known as Suvarnabhūmi. The Indians who were also traders were

attracted to that part of the world by its gold, spices and perfumery and they taught the local population the art of rice cultivation and irrigation. Rong Syamananda in his History of Thailand observes :

The Indians intermarried with the natives and in the Indo-Chinese peninsula, they mixed with the Mons, the Khmers and the Lawas who were attracted to Brahmanism as well as Buddhism and finally they embraced them. Possessed of a bitter knowledge than the natives as has already been mentioned, their descendants began, in due course to wield considerable power in the various kingdoms which were founded, namely Funan, Dvārāvati, Chenla, Champa, Srikshetra, Sudhammavati and Srivijai. (27)

Among the first kingdom of this region, Funan is most well known as existing around 1st century A.D. Its capital is said to have been near Pnom-Penh in Khmer and extended from the present South Vietnamese coast to the upper part of Malay Peninsula including Menam valley. King Jayavarman (as his name indicates) was the most famous Hindu ruler of Funan state, which is said to have maintained friendly relations with China and Indian kingdoms. The kingdom of Funan gave place to Chenla kingdom, which was later integrated with the Khmer kingdom. The Lawa tribe gradually disappeared, being integrated with the neighbouring tribes. After this, the Mons established the kingdom of Dvārāvati (To-to-po-ti in Chinese) with Nakhon Pathom (Nagara prathama) as its capital. The Chinese traveller Hiuan-Tsang, who travelled to India during the time of king Harshvardhana of Kanauj, records that it was a very prosperous and flourishing kingdom. A few coins (perhaps in Tamil script) have been discovered near Nakhon Pathom. The Pallavas and the Colas seem to have had close relationship with the kingdom of Dvārāvati. The other important kingdoms in this region were those of Champa, Srivijaya, Srikshetra and Sudhammavati, all of which were subjugated (like the kingdom of Dvārāvati) by the Khmer empire at various periods between 800 and 1000 A.D.

The kingdom of Srivijaya, who were based in Sumatra practised Hinduism mixed with Mahāyāna Buddhism. During the 10th, century, the Khmers (under king Yasovarman-I) had extended their empire from the Malaysian peninsula to the present borders of China. King Aniruddha (or Anawrahta) of Burma (1044-1077) defeated the Khmer and occupied part of the present day Thailand. Later the Burmese were driven out by Suryavarman-II (1113-1150), who reestablished Khmer domination over the area. He was a powerful king and a great warrior and subjugated the Thais and the Mons. He is reputed to

have first built the temples at Angkor. As we have already seen, the Khmers also built other great temples at Bayon and Lop Buri.(28)

One important effect of king Aniruddha's invasion of Thailand was the introduction of Theravāda Buddhism into that country. Traditionally the Burmese and the Thais have not been very friendly with each other and so the role of the Burmese in introducing Theravāda Buddhism should not be overestimated. In fact, the credit for making Theravāda Buddhism a flourishing faith should rather go to the missionaries of Sri Lanka. Earlier the Mahāyānists from India had some influence, which was replaced by Sri Lankan missionaries. Between the 2nd and the 12th centuries, all the three faiths – Brāmanism, Mahāyāna Buddhism and Theravāda Buddhism flourished in this part of the world. One or the other of these faiths became supreme at various periods of history.

Thus, in the 13th century, the kingdom of Haripunjaya was a centre of Theravāda Buddhism. Quite a few inscriptions (both in Pāli and Mon Script) have been discovered at Haripunjaya proving the allegiance of Mons to Theravāda Buddhism. Around this time, the Thais (29) had already immigrated into this part of world and had established themselves around Sukhodaya (Sukhothai). Theravāda Buddhism seems to have flourished after the Sri Lanka came into close contact with the kingdom of Sukhothai in 13th century A.D. Even before that the Mons had introduced Theravāda Buddhism into Thailand. Inscriptions have been discovered at Wat don, Wat Kukat, and Wat Sen Khaot-to have conclusively proved the establishment of Theravāda Buddhism in the Sukhothai kingdom earlier than 13th century.

K.L. Hazra referring to the contact of Sri Lanka with Thailand during this time remarks :

The earliest known sources refer to Siam's first contact with Ceylon in the reign of Rocaraja of Sukhodaya in the second half of thirteenth century A.D. There is evidence to show that from the middle of the thirteenth century onwards after the establishment of the Sukhodaya, there was regular intercourse between Ceylon and Siam.(30)

Hazra cites, (31) various epigraphical archaeological and other evidences in Support of his view. Prince Phrom (born in 1098 A.D.) son of Puncaraja, the king of Chieng Saen (near the modern Chiang Mai) was the first great hero of the Thais. He defeated the khmers and established an efficient, though despotic form of government. After

the death of King Phrohm in 1177 A.D., there was some confusion in the area and the Thais gradually moved from Fang, the capital first to Pab city in the province of Khamphaeng Phet and then to Nakhon Pathom and finally to Nakhon Thai in the Phisanulok province.

The Khmers has become quite weak and the other tribes gradually began to assert their independence. The two Thai princes, Khun Bang Klang Haow and Khaun Pha Muang declared their independence from Khmer rule and expelled the Khmers from Sukhothai in 1283 A.D., establishing the first Thai kingdom of Sukhothai. Khun Bang Klang Haow became the first king of Thai kingdom of Sukhothai, assuming the title Sri Intratit (Sri Indraditya), who also became known by the title which the Thai tribe gave him – ‘Phar Ruang’ – ‘the glorious prince. The well-know French historian G. Coede’s calls Sri Intratit’s dynasty.

The first Thai dynasty. It has a double claim to this title, both because its eradle was precisely in the country designated by foreigners as Siam, and because it is this dynasty which, by freeing the Thai principalities from Cambodian yoke and by gradually extending its conquests as far as the Malay peninsula, paved the way for the formation of the kingdom of Siam properly so-called. Its role in the history of Indo-Chinese arts and institutions is not less important than its political role, inheriting as it did the succession of the Khmer Kingdom, which sank in part beneath the blows that it administered, it transmitted to Siam of Ayutthaya a good number of Cambodian art forms and institutions which still subsist in the Siam of today. (32)

The greatest king of the Phra Ruang dynasty was Ramkamhaeng the great who came to the throne in 1279 A.D. He was not only a brave warrior, but a wise administrator. His benevolence was due to his Buddhist piety. He was kind to all without distinction with regard to their tribe or birth. Theravāda Buddhism became firmly established during his time; King Ramkamhaeng was himself influenced by Sri Lankan Theravāda Buddhism, which had by this time made inroads into South-East Asia. Archaeological remains at Sukhothai bear testimony to the influence of Theravāda Buddhism on the rulers and people of that kingdom. Ramkamhaeng himself was reputed to have been a scholar of Pāli and besides, gave Thai people their own script, which survives till today . The Thai language consists of 44 consonants, 32 vowels and 5 tonal marks. Invention of the new script made available to the masses the vast literature and doctrines of the Theravāda Philosophy and can be regarded as one of the many notable achievements of Ramkamhaeng. Influenced by the underlying compassionate script of Buddhist, Ramkamhaeng the Great carried

out many economic reforms (including the invention of a coinage) for the welfare of his people. Rice cultivation developed through-out the Sukhothai kingdom. There is evidence that monasteries were organized along strict lines, and a number of temples were built.

Ramkamhaeng's friendly relations with a sister country, Sri Lanka are reflected in the various invitations he issued to the Sri Lanka monks to visit Sukhothai. Among the Sri lankan monks who made such visits, the most well-know as Udumbaragiri Sangharaja, who introduced the institution of Aranyaka Bhikkhus into Thailand. He was welcomed with great ceremony and pomp at Sukhothai.(33) Historians identify this distinguished visitor as Medhākara Sanghanāyaka, the author of Lokappadīpa-Sāra. (34) This Sanghanāyaka or Sangharāja later became the Guru of king, Lithai, the son successor of King Ramkamhaeng. About this time, Theravāda Buddhism had become firmly entrenched in Sri Lanka and there were frequent visits by Sri Lankan monks to Thailand after this.

The King Ramkamhaeng's passing away, the Sukhothai kingdom was defeated by the armies of vassal states of Luang Prabang and Nan. There were also internal dissensions. King Lithai (Dhammarājā I) reestablished the glory for sometime. A Ceylonese monk was appointed the head of the Buddhist Church at this time (Sangharājā). He also built many wats or monasteries and strengthened communications by building roads. Many of the Buddha images and statues he got made survive till this day as masterpieces of Buddhist art of the Sukhothai period.

The successors of King Lithai (Dhammarājā II, Dhammarājā III and Dhammarājā IV) were subjugated by the kingdom of Ayuthaya and become its vassals. Henceforth, Theravāda Buddhism was to be preserved by the king of Ayuthaya. After the death of the last king of Sukhothai, the entire kingdom was incorporated into the kingdom of Ayuthaya, under whom Buddhism began to flourish and achieve a very high degree of development. Great quantities of records and chronicles must have existed prior to the sacking of Ayuthaya by the Burmese in 1767. The kings of Ayuthaya became powerful, but at the same time were quite devout in their observance of Buddhist virtues, rites and ceremonies. As R. Syamananda remarks the autocracy of the king the Ayuthaya was "tempered by the observance of ten Buddhist kingly duties – liberality, piety, charity, freedom from wrath, mercy, patience, rectitude, mildness, devotion, and freedom from enmity.(35) The legal codes were systematized and the legal institutions strictly followed those enumerated in Dhammasat Skt. Dharmasāstra). Though still threatened by Cambodian kings, There was a great

amount of stability, especially under King Ramathibodi-I (1350-1395). King Ramesuan (1388-1395). King Boromtriloknat (1448-1488) and King Ramathibodi-II (1491-1521) It was during the end of the reign of the last named king that the Portuguese first entered into the political history of Thailand. They had by this time discovered the ultimate sea-route to the far east through the cape of Good Hope and had occupied Malacca. The Europeans began wielding some influence over Thai government. Its effect on Buddhism, helped only to stagnate its development. Moreover the incessant warfare with the Burmese further weakened the kingdom of Ayuthaya. Ayuthaya however again had its periods of glory under King Naresuan, the Great (1590-1605) who became free from the Burmese and made Thailand a strong nation. King Narai (1656-1688) was the last great king of Ayuthaya. From the accession of Ramathibodi in 1350 till the sacking of Ayuthaya by the Burmese in 1767, Ayuthaya was ruled by as many as five dynasties. The European colonies began to intrigue in the Thai court and their representatives began to exercise great influence with the kings, without helping them in anyway in their struggle against the Burmese. During this period, Theravāda Buddhism became somewhat dormant, although Buddhist art and literature flourished to a great extent.

The sack of Ayuthaya by the Burmese in 1767 had tragic consequences. The great literary artistic and religious wealth of that kingdom was destroyed at one stroke by the co-religionist from Burma, who showed absolute indifference to their own religion. Very little literary wealth remains now and artistic treasures have been lost forever. There was, besides a great amount of sacrilege of religious institutions by the Burmese. As one historian, W.A.R. Wood puts it :

The victors behaved like Vandals. The palace, the principal Buildings, and thousands of private houses were soon a prey to flames, and their sacrilegious lust for destruction did not permit the victors to spare even the temples dedicated to the cult of their own faith. All the largest and most beautiful images of Buddha were hacked in pieces and many of them were burnt for the sake of the gold leaf with which they were coated. (36)

The Burmese had subjected Chiang Mai in the north to similar fate. It is recorded that even copies of the Tipitaka were so depleted that not one complete copy existed after this anywhere in Thailand. This was undoubtedly a serious set-back to the development of Theravāda Buddhism in Thailand. History of Ayudthaya could only be reconstructed fragmentarily from the available scanty historical and

religious records. Till the Thai nation reestablished itself in Bangkok through the Chakri dynasty in 1782, there was chaos brought about by incessant warfare.

E. THERAVĀDA BUDDHISM IN MODERN THAILAND

It is not intended to undertake to give in this passages, an account of the political history of Thailand or even a history of Buddhism in Thailand. Such accounts are already found in many learned works (37) and we need not repeat them here. It is intended here only to give a historical background to Theravāda institution in modern Thailand, highlighting the religious and the educative function of Thai religion which is prominent in Thailand today.

The strength of the Theravāda Buddhism in modern Thailand is due mainly to the piety and enthusiasm of the Chakri dynasty, which has been ruling Thailand ever since General Chao Phya Chakri saved the country from the Burmese marauders and reestablished the kingdom at Bangkok, himself assuming the crown in 1782, at the request of the Thai people. He became Rama-I (or Rāmāthibodi). Since then there have been eight kings, all of whom are known as Rāmas, including the present reigning monarch, His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej (Rama IX), who ascended the throne in 1946.

Apart from Rama-I (General Cho Phya Chakri) who established his reputation not only as an outstanding soldier and statesman, but also as a literary genius. He wrote the Thai version of the Rāmāyana (Rāmākhien as it is called in Thailand). He also took interest in bringing out an authoritative edition of the Pāli canon and reorganized the Theravāda Sangha in Thailand. The Pam leaf edition of the Pāli canon which he brought out still to be found in the archives of the Royal Palace at Bangkok. His decrees (38) to reorganize the Sangha will be considered later. Rama-II was also a poet like his father and is credited with the reorientation. The Thai classical ballet, for which he adapted the Rāmākien and the Inoh, both of which have become household treasures in every Thai home. He continued the work of his father in the reorganization of the Thai Sangha. In fact, all the kings of the Chakri dynasty have been taking a profound interest in the Sangha, building supporting and restoring many monasteries or Wats (temples). Many of the great temples which they helped to build are inspiring Thai today and are regarded as rich treasures of the Thai Buddhist heritage. The king of Thailand is the only Buddhist king of the World adhering to the Theravāda doctrine in true spirit. Fortunately, Thailand since 1800 is less threatened from the Burmese and the Southern side than before. But the influence of Western

thought and institutions has been growing, culminating in the establishment of constitutional monarchy of June 24, 1932 instead of an absolute one.

The greatest kings of the Chakri dynasty in the last century were King Rama-III (1824-1851) Rama-IV also called King Mongkut (1851-1868) and King Rama-V also called King Chulalongkorn (1868-1910). King Rama III distinguished himself by educational reforms, besides encouraging art and letters and he himself, was a writer of distinction. Early in the 19th century, we also find the growing influence of missionaries, both Protestant and Catholic, in Thailand. We would be considering their effect on Thai Buddhism later in these pages, but the menace of Christian missions was coupled with foreign political pressure and Thai Buddhism had to face tremendous challenge during these years.

But foreign contacts also helped to modernise Thailand under the Kings Mongkut and Chulalongkorn Administrative, legal and political institution were modernized and these helped them to set up a strong government at Bangkok against growing challenges. It was also an era of social, economic and educational reform. There was also challenge from urbanization, industrialization and technology. How the Theravāda Sangha has been able to face all these challenges during the past 100 years will be discussed in one of the subsequent chapters of this work.

The Thai kingship itself has passed through many vicissitudes during the last 1,500 years. But it may be said that throughout its history, Thai monarchy has been influenced by the sacred Thammasat (Dhammasātra in Sanskrit). Prince Dhani Nivat is of the view (39) that the inspiration for this is traceable to the Pāli canon itself (especially to Dīgha Nikāya Pātikavagga of Aggaññasutta (40). As Prince Dhani Nivat himself interpret it :

The ideal monarch abides steadfast in the ten kingly virtues, constantly upholding the five common precepts and on holy days the set of eight precepts living in kindness and good will to all beings. He takes pains to study the Thammasat and to keep the four principles of justice namely : to assess the right of wrong of all service of disservice rendered to him, to uphold the righteous and truthful, to acquire riches through none but just means and to maintain the prosperity of his state through none but just means.(41)

These ideals conform to what is presented in the Buddhist tradition through the ages. We shall be considering these in the next five chapters.

Note

- 1 **Mahāvagga** I.II.I See also **Some Sayings of the Buddha** Tr.F.I. Woodward, Oxford University Press, London, 1973. p.22 **The Book of the Discipline** Tr.Horner, I.B., Vol.III, (S.B.B. Vol.IV) (Lizac & Company Ltd, London, 1951), p.28.
Caratha bhikkhave cārikam bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya lokānukampāya atthāya hitāya sukhāya devamanussanam Mā ekena dve agamitttha. Desetha bhikkhave dhammam ādikalyānam majjhekalyānam pariyośanakalyānam.
2. Sukumar Dutt: **Buddhism in East Asia**, (Indian Council for Cultural Relations, Caxton Press, New Delhi, 1966) p.9.
3. R.C. Majumdar: **Suvarnavīpa** (Calcutta, 1938) p.37 f.
4. Cf. Sukumar Dutt in **Buddhism in East Asia** : op.cit. p.23 “ The introduction of Buddhism in South-Asian countries by some of Tissa’s missionaries seem also to lack historical evidence except in the case of Ceylon. In the legend, the countries outside India, except Ceylon are indicated only by descriptive names. The legends of Sona and Utra in Burma and Siam seem to have been borrowed from the stock-legend of Theravāda provenance to give a faked antiquity to Buddhism in then countries”.
5. Please see Oldenberg: **Vinayapitaka** Vol. III, Samantapāsādikā portion for a fuller account of this incident.
6. Subha Sutta of Majjhima Nikāya (**The Further Dialogues of the Buddha**, Vol. II, P.T.S. London, 1926) pp.113-114: and also see H. Oldenberg in his introduction to the **Vinayapitaka** Vol. I (P.T.S. London, 1964) p.XLII : R.C. Childer : **Dictionary of the Pāli Language** (Trubner London, 1875, First Indian Reprint by Cosmos Publication New Delhi, 1979) p. 565; George Grime : **The doctrine of Buddha ; the Religion of Reason and Meditation**, Grimm M.K. and Hoppe M. (Eds.) Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, Reprint 1982) p.28.
7. The first monastery in Sri Lanka is also said to have been established here according to **Dīpavamsa**, 13, 36 f – “Imam pathamam vihāram Lankādvīpe sāsanasuhanatiya pathamam pathavikampānam”.
8. Ref. Pandita Vicent’s Article on :Buddhism during the Polonaruva Period” in **Ceylon Historical Journal**, Vol.IV, 1954-1955, p.11.
9. Walpola Rahula : **The History of Buddhism in Ceylon** (The Anurādhapura Period 3rd Century B.C. -10th Century A.C.) M.D. Gunasena & Co.Ltd., Colombo, first edition, 1956; J. Cartman : **Hinduism in Ceylon**, Colombo, 1957, pp.39 f.; Meneis: **The Early History of Ceylon**, Calcutta, 1955; Hirth : **History of Ceylon**, Colombo 1959, S. Dutt : **The Buddha and five After Centuries**, London, 1957.
10. Kannai Lai Hazra : **History of Theravāda Buddhism in South East Asia**, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt, Ltd., Delhi 1981.
11. Ibid., p. 66 f.
12. K.L. Hazra, op. cit., p. 58 f. the texts cited above have been investigated into by Hazra. Ramaññadesa perhaps ment “the country of the Mons”; The Burmese perhaps belonged to the original Thai race called “Myanma”
13. Sukumar Dutt: **Buddhism in East Asia**, op.cit., p.21.
14. Ibid., p.52.
15. Ibid.
16. **On Yuan Chaing**, by Watters and Rhys Davids, Vol.II (London, 1905) p.188.

17. Ref. D.G.E. Hall, (**History of South East Asia**.) Macmillan St. Martial Press, New York, 3rd ed. 1986, p.110 f.
18. Maung Tin and Luce: **Glass Palace Chronicle (Burma Research Society, Rangoon,1960)**, p. 74. The Chronicle may be regarded as authoritative and throws light on early history of Buddhism in Burma.
19. Sukumar Dutt: **Buddhism in East Asia**, op,cit.,p.61.
20. Ref. D.G.E. Hall, **History of South East Asia**, op,cit.,pp.95 f. R.C. Majumdar : **Inscriptions of Kambuja** (The Asiatic Society of Bengal, Monograph Series VIII, Calcutta, 1953) pp.530 f.
21. Sukumar Dutt: **Buddhism in East Asia**,op,cit.,p.102.
- 22.D.G.E. Hall, **History of South East Asia**, op,cit.,p.111.
23. Cf. Sylvain Levi : “A Large number of stories from the Pāli Jatāka deal with sea adventure; the sea and navigation clearly held a high place in the life of Indian at the time when these stories were put into stape”, G. Coedes in his lecture on “The Empire of the South Seas” in the 50th Anniversary Commemorative Publication of the Siam Society Vol.II, Bangkok, 1954, p.147.
24. G. Coedes : Lecture delivered before the Thailand Research Society on “The Empire of the South Seas” on the 18th Jan. 1943. Reproduced in the 50th Anniversary Commemorative Publication of the Siam Society Vol.II, Bangkok, 1954, p.147. Translation by Prince Dhani Nivat.
25. Phra Rājavarāmaṇi : **Thai Buddhism in the Buddhist World**, Unity Progress Press, Bangkok, 1985,p.43.
- 26.Rong Syamanandain **A History of Thailand**, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, 3rd ed., 1977, p.6) quotes several authorities without giving any reference to explain the origin of their people. A few of these may also be quoted here:
- a) Khun Vichitmatra (in Lakh Thai).... “ no one knows exactly where the Thai people originated. Broadly speaking, they had their original home in the vicinity of the Altai mountains where the Mongols to which they belonged originated. Afterwards they spread towards the south.....”
- b) Herald J. Wiens (in Chinas March towards the tropics) “ In the headwaters area of the Yana-Tzu, we come to a branch of the T'ai family known variously as Lao' Ailao or Ngailao.....Chinese historians also mention a T'ai tribe called the great Mung' inhabiting the western part of Ssuchwan during the period over 2000 B.C.”
- c) Prince Dhani Nivat (in an-outline of Siamese cultural History):
 “The Siamese form a section of the great Thai which people, an extensive territory stretching from the valley of the Yang Be to the seaboard of South Eastern Asia.”
 Other authorities quoted by Syamananda – W.C. Dodd (in Tai Race) Phya Anuman Rajadhon (in the Cultures of Thailand), Likhit Hoontrakul (in the Historical records of Chinese-Siames Relations) Hall (in his History of South-East Asia) and others hold more or less the same opinion as above.
27. Rong Syamanandain **A History of Thailand**, op.cit.,p.15.
28. G. Coedes records that Hinayāna Buddhism was the predominant religion at Lop Buri as more Buddha image and monuments have been discovered here than at any other place (Quoted by K.L. Hazra,op,cit., p.133).
29. The Thais were known originally as the Sayamese or Siamese (originating probably from the Sanskrit 'Shyama') which term was first used by the Khmers do describe a sevarthy, golden coloured race. The name 'Siam' was changed to Thailand by a government proclamation on 24 th June, 1939.
30. K.L. Hazra, **History of Theravāda Buddhism, in South-East Asia**, op.cit.,p.135.
31. Ibid., pp. 135-136.
32. G.Coede's: **Origin of the Sukhothai Dynasty**, Quoted by R.Syamananda : **A History of Thailand**, op.cit., p.21.
33. Please see the inscription quoted by Prince Dhani Nivat in his **History of Buddhism in Siam**, (Prachandra Press, Press,Bangkok,1959,Reprint 1960) p.6.
34. Ref.S. Paranavitana in his article “Religion intercourse Ceylon and Siam : **Journal of Royal Asiatic Society** (Ceylon branch) XXXII no.85 part 2, 1982, Vol.I Pt.II, p.754. Prince Dhani Nivat : **A History of Buddhism in Siam**, op.cit., pp. 9 f. Ref.also to **Jinakālamāli**, (Pāli text and Siamese translation,Sobhon Press,Bangkok,1909) a Pāli text ascribed to Ratanapāñṇā Thera (c. 16 th century) for further details about the contact between Sri Lanka and Thailand (Buddhadatta,AP.(Ed.) Pāli Text Society, London, 1962, Translated into English by Jayawickrama, N.A. under the title **Epoch of the Congueror**, Pāli Text Society, London,1978.

35. R. Syamananda: **A History of Thailand**, op. cit., p.33.
36. W.A.R. Wood, **A History of Siam**, T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1926, p.249.
37. Some important histories of Thailand in English are :- J.F. Cody : **South East Asia: Its Historical Development**, New York, 1964. D.G.E. Hall : **A History of South-East Asia**, London, 1955. W.A.R. Wood : **A History of Siam**, T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1926; **Land of Smiles**, Krungdeborragan Press, Bangkok 1955. Sir John Bowring : **The Kingdom and People of Siam**, 2 Vols., London, John W. Parker and Son, 1857 ; De la Loubere, S. **The Kingdom of Siam**, (1st ed. 1693, London) Oxford, University Press, 1969. Ernest Young : **The Kingdom of the Yellow Robe**, Archibald, Constable, Westminster, 1898. Blanchard, Wendell et al.: **Thailand : Its People, Its Society, Its Culture**, Human Relations Area Files Country Survey Series, HRAF Press, New Haven, 1958. R. Syamananda : **A History of Thailand**, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, First Edition 1971, Third Edition, 1977.
38. A detailed account of these decrees 10 in number is also to be found in Prince Dhani Nivat : **A History of Buddhism in Siam**, op.cit., p.26 f.
39. Ref. to Prince Dhani's article, 'The Ole Siamese Conception of Monarchy' in **The 50th anniversary publication of Siam Society**, Vol.II. Bangkok, 1954, pp. 160 f.
40. D.Pt. 11/51-72/87-107.
41. Ref. to Prince Dhani's article, 'The Ole Siamese Conception of Monarchy' in **The 50th anniversary publication of Siam Society**, Vol.III. Bangkok, 1954, pp. 163.