

BUDDHIST EDUCATION

In the Tamil Country

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1. THE ENTRY OF BUDDHISM

That Buddhism must have come into the Tamil country during the period of Asoka has been established beyond any dispute.¹ The probability of Buddhism having spread into the Tamil country even earlier than Asoka is high. Even assuming that Buddhism as it passed through the Tamil country *en route* to Ceylon during Asoka's time threw its seeds here and there on the Tamil soil, which in course of time grew up into healthy plants, we have on hand a story which is earlier than the third Sangam, and therefore it is that the influence of Buddhism is identifiable in the literature of the Sangam age. One of the edicts of Asoka specifically mentions not only the passage of the Mission through the Tamil country but also its work in Cola, Pandya and Cera countries². According to a statement of Hiuen Tsang, Kancipuram had been a Buddhist centre for many centuries and an Asoka tope had been erected in that city.³ Says the pilgrim, "Not far from the south of Kanci was a large Sangarama which was a rendezvous for the most eminent men of the country. It had an Asoka tope about a hundred feet high where the Buddha had once defeated Tirthikas by preaching, and had received many into his communion. Near it were traces of a sitting place and exercise walk of the four past Buddhas⁴

Historians of South India are awaiting the accidental unearthing of at least the remnants of an Asokan stupa or stamba with an Asokan edict on it in the Tamil country, particularly in the Tondai mandalam region.

Buddhism had probably an easy entry into the Tamil country, possibly on account of its being simple, and free of the ritualistic element. The Tamil people must have accepted it more as a code of morals with universal application than as a religion. Whatever the circumstances under which the religion began to gain momentum and strength, it enjoyed almost equality of status with Brahminism and Jainism in the Tamil country. There was no conflict among the three religions during the Sangam period.

2. THE BUDDHIST DISCIPLINE - TWO LEVELS

With Buddhism came the Buddhist discipline about which stray details are found scattered over some of the early Tamil works. The most important of these works is the *Manimekalai* by Sittalai Sattanar.⁵ The other work available in fragments is the *Kundalakesi* assigned to the fourth century A. D.⁶ Many other works might have existed as is inferable from later day references, but we do not have them now. The *Manimekalai*, though in the form of a story, is really a guidebook on Buddhist religion as it was practised in the Tamil country and the Buddhist system of education. We shall pick out the salient features of the Buddhist system of education which prevailed in the Tamil country from the *Manimekalai*.

There were two levels in the Buddhist pattern of education. The first concerned the laity who were householders and the second the actual Bikshus or the monks. There was nothing like an organized educational pattern for the laity, who were expected

to grow morally by interaction with the Bikshus. There were certain duties enjoined on the laity in their relationship with the order.⁷ It was they who gave alms to the mendicants. The mendicants were charged not to accept alms from all and sundry but only from persons who were of a good conduct and character. The boycott of the sinning householder by the begging mendicant was one of the means of promoting right conduct among the laity. Manimekalai is assured that Adirai was fit to give alms to her and therefore she could receive alms from her.⁸

The laity had chances to listen to the instruction and sermons of the monks and to visit monasteries during certain occasions.⁹

Excepting these indirect influences provided to the laity, there was nothing like a denominational education designed for them. It seems to be true that there was no ban on members of other religions following the precepts of Buddhism without actually giving up their own religions. An easy mobility from Hinduism to Buddhism and Jainism on account of the absence of severe restrictions or compartmentalization within Buddhism is impressed by the pattern of the society during this period.

3. ESSENTIALLY MONASTIC

Buddhist education proper was monastic. Strict rules of discipline were prescribed for the members of the order. Systematic instruction in the tenets of Buddhism and in the code of right conduct was provided to the monks. The three vows of celibacy,

chastity and poverty were enjoined on each of the monks.¹⁰ The *Manimekalai* mentions most of the requirements relating to the first Ordination, which was the prelude to Monkhood.¹¹ These are arranged in the order in which they are found in the *Mahavagga*.

Mahavagga: Abstinence from (1) taking life, (2) taking what is not given, (3) impure practices, (4) telling lies, (5) intoxicating liquors, (6) eating gluttonously, (7) participation in trivialities like dancing, singing and entertainments, (8) using garlands, scents, ornaments, and attractive dress, (9) reclining on a comfortable couch or seat and (10) receiving gold and silver. These are the Ten Commandments, or *Dasa Siksha Padani* of the initiated. In Canto 21 of *Manimekalai*, Kandippavai Varuvaduraitta Kathai, there is an implied reference to these Ten Commandments.

‘sila ninga seitavattorkku’.....¹²

The Commentary elucidates ‘silam’ as the Ten Commandments in view of the fact that *Manimekalai* was a *Bikkuni*.¹³

The novitiate, after completion of the first stage, called by the name of ‘Pabajja’ in Buddhist monochism, attains the status of monkhood by means of the ordination of *Upasampada*, the period between the two ordination being 12 years.¹⁴ But an age rule was also observed by which the *Upasampada* was not delayed beyond the 20th year of the postulant. Weightage was also given for periods of monkhood in another religion.¹⁵

Manimekalai's period of ordination before the full Bikkuni status must have been a few years judged from the tempo of the developments in her life as described in the story. When she was invited to dance in the festival she was already grown up, because she had attained mastery in the art of dancing. Her renunciation was the result of the tragedy that overtook her father Kovalan and her step-mother Kannaki. Between her mental renunciation and actual discipleship under Aravana Adigal, she faced many a situation of trial and temptation and overcame them all. She took refuge at the feet of Aravana Adigal and became a full-fledged nun after a period of discipleship. All this should have taken not more than four or five years.

Possibly this story reflected in a large measure the Buddhist monachism as it was organised in the Tamil country. The fact that Manimekalai could not only renounce the pleasures of life but also readily choose for herself an Order in which she could find fulfilment for her ideals suggests the wide prevalence of Buddhism in the Tamil country. Besides Kancipuram, Kaverippumpattinam, Uraiyur, and Nagappattinam were famous centres of Buddhism. In the Cera country, the Cera capital Vanji was also a prominent Buddhist centre. In addition to these well known places, a number of smaller places have Buddhistic caves, dating back to the first or the second century of the Christian era.¹⁷

4. THE VIHARA AS THE CENTRE

The educational centre of Buddhist monachism went by the name of Vihara ¹⁸ Kaverippumpattinam

known in early Buddhist' works as Kavirapattinam had a number of Viharas.¹⁹ The antiquity of these Viharas is beyond dispute because one of the Jataka tales has its scene of action in this Tamil city.²⁰ The story identifies Kaverapattinam as a city in the Tamil country. An ascetic by name Ahatti was performing penance on the outskirts of the city. The people of the city went out to see him in large numbers every day out of reverence, but this annoyed the ascetic. He left the place and went away to Jaffna in quest of a peaceful spot for meditation.²¹

There is the belief that Mahendra the religious emissary of Asoka halted in Kavirippumpattinam and erected seven Buddhist Viharas. The references to Viharas in Kavirippumpattinam found in *Manimekalai* and *Silapadikaram* are also revealing.²² From these evidences, it can be asserted that Kavirippumpattinam was a great centre of Buddhist learning.

5. BUDDHIST TEACHERS

The Tamil country produced great teachers in the Buddhist religion also. One of the Sangam versifiers has the name Ilambodiyar.²³ His only verse extant is found in *Narrinai* and deals with an *Aham* theme. It is guessed that he could have been a Buddhist teacher.

Sattanar, the monk poet from Sittalai who has become immortal through the *Manimekalai* was one of the greatest teachers of Buddhism.²⁴ Perhaps no other author in Tamil has handled the Buddhist

religion in the masterly way he has done in the Manimekalai. He was a convert to the new religion and his renunciation itself might have been due to the influence of the famous monasteries in the Tamil country.

6 THE USE OF PALI AND TAMIL

Regarding the medium of communication and instruction there is a school of thought that Pali was employed in the Tamil country also as in Ceylon and other countries.²⁵ But the absence of any evidence in the shape of an inscription in Pali in the Tamil country creates a genuine doubt regarding the school. It is possible that the monks learnt the Pali language to be able to study the *Tripitakas* in the original. The *Tripitakas* were the texts that the monks had to study; and a knowledge of Pali was indispensable. But in the communication with the masses of the people and with the Buddhist laity, the language employed must have been Tamil.

7. THE CONTRIBUTION OF EARLY BUDDHISM TO EDUCATIONAL THEORY AND PRACTICE

The contribution of the early Buddhism to educational theory and practice in the Tamil country was considerable. They, along with the Jains, broke the tradition of the Tamils in the indigenous layer of education in respect of institutionalisation and presented a perfect institutionalised pattern of education. The monasteries they set up in the Tamil country must have been replicas of the monasteries in other parts of the country because, Buddhism had evolved a general pattern of monastic system as an

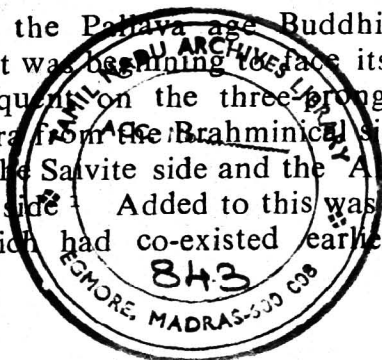
organised religion in which the minutest details of monastic organisation had been furnished even during the life-time of the Buddha. The Vihara was the core and centre of the monasticism of the Buddhists. It was a place of meditation; it was a school where the daily instruction was imparted; it was the dormitory for the brotherhood. In fact it was a self-contained residence cum-college. The discipline enjoined on the monks under training must have impressed the Tamils who had been more moral than religious before the impact of Brahminical influence was felt in any perceptible manner.

One very important result of Buddhist monachism was that the Tamils found in it a means of escape from the sins and sufferings of mundane family life. Asceticism had been the privilege of the Brahmins only, and had not been permitted in Hinduism for the other castes. The Tamils found in the Buddhist religion a means of securing ascetic status. Madhavi and Manimekalai perhaps represent a large number of Tamilians who took to asceticism after having been formally ordained.

BUDDHIST INSTITUTIONS IN THE TAMIL COUNTRY

1. KANCI AS A GREAT BUDDHIST CENTRE

During the Pallava age Buddhism was a live factor, but it was beginning to face its crisis of survival consequent on the three-pronged opposition from Sankara from the Brahminical side, the Nayanmars from the Saivite side and the Alvars from the Vaishnavite side. Added to this was the rivalry of Jainism which had co-existed earlier on friendly



terms.²⁷ Even after the worst had been suffered, the religion seems to have lingered on until the 10th or 11th century A. D. before it got integrated into the parent religion in India, maintaining its individuality outside India.

The impression one gets from the records of foreigners like Hiuen Tsang in respect of Buddhism is that the religion had a continuous period of prosperity from the 3rd century B. C. to the 7th century A. D. Hiuen Tsang's accounts seem to present the whole story in a nut-shell from the beginning. We have also shown earlier that the *Manimekalai* presentation of Buddhism leaves no room for doubting the fact that by the time the *Manimekalai* was written Buddhism had become stabilized in its best traditional form in the Tamil country.²⁸ Therefore, many of the Buddhist institutions referred to by Hiuen Tsang must have had their start much earlier than the Pallava period, possibly much earlier than the Kalabhra interregnum.

The Pallava rule synchronized with the golden age of the Nalanda University. Kancipuram seems to have been a more ancient centre of Buddhist learning than Nalanda, and a continuity of tradition extending over eleven centuries (if the story of Lord Buddha's visit and stay in Kancipuram was historically true) in Kancipuram invests the Tamil Buddhist centre with an importance greater than that usually attached to Nalanda.²⁹ That Nalanda developed to colossal proportions, nobody denies, but it is a very high probability that Kanci's contribution to the growth and fame of the Nalanda University was considerable.³⁰ One of the claims to

greatness by the Nalanda University was that its teaching staff included professors from Kancipuram. While Nalanda turned out brilliant students of Buddhism, Kancipuram turned out great professors of the subject. This was possible because of the great tradition of eleven centuries.

2. HIUEN TSANG'S ACCOUNT

Our main source of information in respect of Buddhist education in the Pallava period is Hiuen Tsang.³¹ A few Pallava inscriptions help us to gain additional insight into the subject.³²

Let us consider Hiuen Tsang first.

Hiuen Tsang's account of Buddhism in the Tamil country must be considered meagre. When he visited the Cola country, Buddhism was a live force; and though the original prosperity of the religion had started waning, many of the Buddhist institutions were functioning efficiently.

We may now list out the places in the itinerary of the Chinese traveller in the Tamil country in which a portion of Andhra is included in the Pallava territory.³³

- I. Andhra (An-ta-lo)
 - i) Vengi (Vingila)
 - ii) Dhanyakataka (To-na-kie-tse-kia)
- II. Cola country (Chuliya)
- III. Dravida (Talopi-cha)
 - i) Kancipuram (Kin-chi-pu-lo)

- ii) A place in the Tamil country, not identified.

Let us consider each one of these separately.

3. VENGI AS A CENTRE OF BUDDHIST EDUCATION

Vingila which we have identified with Vengi was part of the Pallava dominions at one time. Moreover, the Tamil influence over territories north of the traditional Vengodam boundary during the Pallava and later Cola periods was considerable; and Vengi fell within the Tamil sphere of influence. Therefore, Vengi has been brought up for consideration here.

The pilgrim calls it the capital of Andhra. Samuel Beal identifies the place with the old city of Vengi north-west of the Eluru lake, between the Godavari and Krishna.³⁴ Says the pilgrim."

"the soil is rich and fertile; it is regularly cultivated and produces abundance of cereals. The temperature is hot and the manners of the people fierce and impulsive. Their language and arrangement of sentences differ from mid-India. But with reference to the shapes of the letters they are nearly the same."

The pilgrim testifies to the existence of twenty Sangamas accounting for nearly three thousand priests.

"Within the place there are thirty Hindu temples with many heretics."³⁵

From this the inference is that Buddhism had already started feeling the assaults of its parent in the Andhra country also. The reference to thirty Deva (Hindu)

temples must indicate the triumph of Brahminical education, and Brahminism being pitted against Buddhism.

The pilgrim's description of a Sangarama near Vengi is interesting. It was a large one "with storeyed towers and balconies beautifully carved and ornamented."³⁶ The pilgrim found one of the most beautiful figures of the Buddha in this convent, and naturally pays his tribute to the sculptor. He also found a colossal stone stupa, several hundred feet high. The convent was perhaps the work of an Arhat called Achala who constructed one of the Ajanta Sangaramas. Near the Sangarama in the vicinity of Vengi was an Asokan Stupa indicative of the spread of Asoka's teachings in the area. The pilgrim states that the Tadataga (Buddha) taught many persons in this place at one time and acquired a number of converts.

South-west of the Sangarama, on a solitary mountain, there was a stone stupa marking the teaching of a jina Bodhisatva who composed a text entitled *Heturidys Sastra*.³⁷ This Bodhi Satva was a person of great wisdom, and his heart overflowed with compassion for the suffering humanity. It was this compassion that drove him to the lovely mountains where he could meditate in peace and compose his monumental textbook. In all probability the Sangarama was a sub-denominational School of Buddhism propagating the teachings of the Bodhisatva, because there is a detailed account of how the Bodhisatva secured royal support for the propagation of Hetu Vidya.³⁸ In all probability the Buddhism of this Sangarama was of the Yoga School.

4. DHANYAKATAKA

Strictly speaking Dhanyakataka falls within our purview, and therefore, a brief look at the institutions of this region as presented by the Chinese pilgrim is not uncalled for.³⁹

In Dhanyakataka there were a large number of Sangaramas in ruins, and only twenty with a strength of a thousand inmates were in a good condition. One of the famous convents was called Poorvasila and this was situated to the east of the city near a mountain. Another convent by the name of Avara sila lay to the west of the city close to a mountain.⁴⁰ The origin of both the convents is traced to the piety and munificence of a former king who honoured the memory of the Buddha. He sanctified the valley, laid a road and constructed a large number of buildings. Since that time every year a thousand people and the priests made these their winter-time residence. A century before Hiuen Tsang's arrival, the mountain was subject to frequent disturbances of a geological nature with the result that the popularity of the monastery began to wane.

To the south of the city was a cave monastery. One Bhavaviveka is mentioned as in residence in spirit form in this cave. He was a teacher of elegant scholarship and belonged to the Nagarjuna School.⁴¹ As his desire to meet Dharmapala Bodisatva of Magadha was not fulfilled, and as he wanted to get his doubts cleared at any cost from Maitreya Bodisatva, expected to return to this world as perfect Buddha, he cast off his mortal remains in the cave, and awaited the return of Maitreya there.⁴²

The impression that is gained from a close study of the pilgrim's account of Dhanyakataka is that Buddhism was facing serious opposition from a number of rivals and only a few of the old Buddhist institutions were working satisfactorily. Regarding the identity of Poorvasila and Avarasila, Dr. Meenakshi would suggest the possibility of Bezwada being the venue of both the monasteries. The fact that many of the Buddhist caves were inhabited by spirits instead of live persons must also point to a situation of deterioration for Buddhism.⁴³

5. THE COLA COUNTRY

Hiuen Tsang's reference to Chuliya could be to the country between Bezwada and Kancipuram because, when the Colas went underground during or as the result of Kalabhra interregnum in the Cola country proper,, a dynasty of Telugu Colas came on the scene as if to constitute some kind of a link between the early Colas and the later Colas.⁴⁴ In all probability, the country round about Nellore might have attained reputation as the Cola country. Otherwise it should be absurd to imagine a jump over Kanci which is the next in order after Dhanyakataka.

In the country of the Cola, the Sangaramas were ruined and dirty. the priests were badly off probably in the sense that they had to face a lot of difficulties in the propagation of their doctrines. There was a city within the Cola domain, with an Asoka Stupa. To the west of the city was an old Sangarama. This must have been famous at one time from its association with an Arhat called

Uttara who possessed the six supernatural powers and the eight Vimokshas.⁴⁵

6. BUDDHIST INSTITUTIONS IN DRAVIDA

From the Cola country, after passing through a forest region, the pilgrim found himself in Dravida, whose capital was Kancipuram.⁴⁶ The pilgrim pays a tribute to the honesty and integrity of the residents of Dravida, and makes special mention of the regard which Dravidas have for learning. Probably the pilgrim came across a number of persons writing in Sanskrit. Hence his statement that the writing of the people in this country differed little from that of the people in mid-India. In Kancipuram there were a hundred convents or Sangaramas with a total strength of 10,000 scholars. "They study the teachings of the Sthavira School under Mahayanism." A careful excavation of Buddha Kanci may reveal the splendour that Buddha Kanci was during Hiuen Tsang's visit.⁴⁷

After his sojourns in Dravida the pilgrim proceeded to Malakuta. The identification of this region is rendered very difficult by the possibility of associating Malakuta with Malyaketu, Malayakuta etc. But we should be in trouble if we locate Malakuta outside the Tamil country, because that was the last place that the pilgrim visited prior to embarking for Ceylon. South of Kancipuram, Buddhist learning had been prospering in a number of places such as Kaverippumpattinam, Uraiyr and Nagapattinam. Nagapattinam seems to be all right for a possible identification of Malakuta because it is a seaport and it had been a great centre of Buddhism. The

pilgrim's association of mountains with the sea-port of Malakuta makes Nagapattinam improbable. Without going into an elaborate argument over the question, we could accept the position that Malakuta was some Buddhist centre either on the east coast or on the west coast in the Tamil country, more probably on the west coast.

The importance of this unidentified place in the Tamil country arises on account of the mention of an old convent in complete ruins. The convent is said to have been built by Mahendra, the brother of Asoka.⁴⁸ It may be noted that the *Silappadikaram* mentions seven Indra Viharas, and scholars have identified them as the work of Asoka's emissary Mahendra after whom these had been named. One wonders if more Indra Viharas had been constructed elsewhere in the Tamil country. If Malakuta were to be identified with some place on the west coast, the ruined condition of the institution could be explained in terms of the new Brahminical upsurge with the establishment of the Advaita School by Gaudapada.⁴⁹ This neo-Brahminism was positive in its development of the spirit of the old Vedic religion and negative in its making headway by the denunciation of all rivals, including Buddhism.

Certain generalizations can be made on the basis of our study of the pilgrim's accounts:

- i) Buddhism was still popular in the Tamil country, though in the northern part, of the process of decline had set in.
- ii) The rise of a large number of temples under the Agama School, evidenced by

the pilgrim's frequent reference to the temples of Devas, and the growth of a powerful Nigrantha (Jain) opposition had shattered the stability of Buddhism and its institutions, and when Hiuen Tsang visited South India, the religion was in the last phase of its prosperity.

- iii) The Mahayana school of Buddhism flourished in the Tamil country.
- iv) The most popular school of Buddhist philosophy was the Sthavira School, and in Kanci alone 10,000 scholars were specializing in it. ⁵⁰

SECTION II

GREAT BUDDHIST TEACHERS OF THE TAMIL COUNTRY DURING THIS PERIOD

1. DIGNAGA

Dignaga was undoubtedly the greatest among the Buddhist teachers raised in the Tamil country. ⁵¹ He is assigned to the 5th century A. D. He was born in Kancipuram, the capital of the Pallavas. He seems to have had his education under Vasubandhu, one of the greatest thinkers of the time. After completing his studies he took up a teaching post in Nalanda. He was the greatest representative of the Vasubandha School of scholarship. He is reputed to have produced a hundred original books of which the *Nyayapravesa* is the only one extant in Sanskrit. He may be considered the father of Indian logic. The greatness of Dignaga

had been recognized in his own times. His fame had spread so widely that there was demand for his works even in distant China. In 557 and 559 A.D. Chinese translations of his works were published in China and Tibet. Some of his works are still available in their Tibetan translations. ⁵²

2. DHARMAPALA

Dharmapala was perhaps the greatest among the teachers of Buddhism in the Tamil country. ⁵³ Hiuen Tsang refers to him as the son of a minister.

“From his childhood he exhibited much cleverness, and as he grew up it increased and extended. When he became a young man, the king and queen condescended to entertain him at a (marriage) feast. On the evening of the day, his heart was oppressed with sorrow, and being exceedingly afflicted, he placed himself before a statue of the Buddha, and engaged in earnest prayer (supplication). Moved by his extreme sincerity, the spirits removed him to a distance, and there he hid himself. After going many hundred *li* from this spot, he came to a mountain convent, and sat down in the hall of Buddha. A priest happened to open the door, and seeing this youth, was in doubt whether he was a robber or not. After interrogating him on the point, the Bodhisatva completely unbosomed himself and told him the cause; moreover he asked permission to become a disciple. The priests were much astoni-

shed at the wonderful event, and forthwith granted his request. The king ordered search to be made for him in every direction; and at length finding out that Bodhisatva had removed to a distance from the world, driven by the spirit (or spirits), he redoubled his deep reverence and admiration for him. From the time that Dharmapala assumed the robes of a recluse, he applied himself with unflagging earnestness to learning. ⁵⁴

This story is reproduced as an evidence of the legend he had become even in his own life time. He was a pupil of Dignaga and was one of the most famous professors of Nalanda University of which he was for sometime the Kulapati or Vice-Chancellor.⁵⁵ He has the added reputation of being the author of a number of books on *Yogacara* philosophy, *Stotras* and *Stavas*. His ordination was by a great teacher by name Dharmadasa.

Dharmapala was a great orator and debator, besides being a preacher. For a short period of time he taught in Gaya. The most memorable event of his life was the debate in which he participated near Kausambi where he convinced and defeated many Hinayana teachers who had long challenged him.

Here is part of the speech that Dharmapala delivered in the famous debate before silencing his opponents:

“Ignorant through I am, yet I request permission to say a few words. Verily I am ready to answer immediately to the king’s summons. If, by my lofty argument (discourse), I obtain the victory, this will prove spiritual protection; but if I fail in the subtle part of the argument, this will be attributable to my youth. In either case, there will be an escape, so that the law and the priesthood will suffer no loss,”⁵⁶

With the above speech Dharmapala started his refutation of the arguments of the ‘heretics’, and at the end when the Hinayanists accepted defeat, their spokesman was about to cut off his own tongue as agreed upon at the beginning. Dharmapala stopped him saying, “It is not by cutting out your tongue that you could show repentance. Change your obstinacy, that is the true repenting.” Not only did he tender this advice, but also, like the true teacher that he was, explained the law. The king of Kausambi who had all along supported Hinayanism embraced Mahayanism, and became a disciple of Dharmapala.

Dharmapala’s pupil was Silabhadra who also rose to eminence, and presided over the Nalanda University as a distinguished successor to his own preceptor.⁵⁷

3. ANOTHER DHARMAPALA

There was another Dharmapala in the Tamil country before the period of the Dharmapala of Nalanda fame, who taught Buddhism in Kancipuram.⁵⁸ He was a native of the Tirunelveli

district, and migrated to Kancipuram, evidently for his studies. Ultimately he became the head of a Vihara in Kancipuram. It is possible that this was one of the hundred monasteries seen by Hiuen Tsang in that city. The authorship of some commentaries on Buddhist texts including the *Paramartha Manjusha* is attributed to him.

4. VAJRABODHI

Another eminent teacher of Buddhism in the Tamil country was Vajrabodhi (661 - 730 A. D.) who was a native of a place in the Pandyan country.⁵⁹ From his name it is evident that he was a follower and exponent of the Vajrayana School. One of his famous disciples was Amogavajra. Vajrabodhi was also a widely travelled missionary.⁶⁰ He spent sometime in Nalanda, possibly making further studies. He visited Kapilavastu, sacred to the memory of the Buddha. He also made extensive tours in Ceylon. An ardent student of his own School of Buddhism, he learnt the Chinese language to gain direct access to authoritative works in Chinese. He undertook a tour of China carrying with him the text of the *Mahapragna paramitha* to China. He is credited with having translated many Buddhist works in Chinese.

5. BODIRUCI

Bodiruci was yet another great Buddhist teacher of the 8th century. He was a very intelligent student of the Buddhist texts as his name might imply. He was well versed in Chinese. He migrated to China in the early days of the T'ank

dynasty and made it his home. He translated a large number of Buddhistic texts. He is known as one of the longest lived scholars of the world. When he died in his 156th year (727 A. D.), naturally the number of Sanskrit books he had translated by then into Chinese was incredibly large.⁶¹

6. BUDDHANANDI AND SARIPUTTA

Both these teachers who were contemporaries were residents of Bodhimangai Village in the Cola country. There is the interesting story of how these two teachers challenged the Tamil saint Sambandar to a debate as the saint passed through their village with his *entourage*.⁶² Sambandar accepted the challenge and an assembly was summoned with Buddhanandi as the chairman. When the debate was in progress lightning struck Buddhanandi and killed him. The disciples of Buddhanandi charged the Saivite group with having invoked the use of Mantra to kill their teacher. The Saivite agreed to the continuation of the debate under the chairmanship of Sariputta. Sambandar and Sariputta were the chief participants. According to the *Periapuranam*, the Buddhists ultimately accepted defeat.⁶³

SECTION III

THE OUTCOMES OF BUDDHIST EDUCATION AND ITS BEARING ON EDUCATIONAL THOUGHT AND PRACTICE

1. THE IMPACT OF BUDDHIST MONACHISM ON THE LIFE OF THE COMMON PEOPLE

Ten centuries of monastic prosperity in the Tamil country had its impact both on the people of

the Tamil country and on the educational institutions maintained by the Tamils. Buddhist monachism, along with Jain monachism, influenced areas like government and administration, trade and commerce and the social organization.⁶⁴ As a moral force, the religion upheld the ideals of a virtuous life; and the Tamils, even without professing the religion, were grateful for its service in the cause of the common people. The principles of Buddhism were easy to understand and follow. They were also not different from the moral principles that the Tamils were following. So the first outcome of Buddhist monachism was a popular awareness of the ingredients of a religious life without there being any need for elaborate rituals and a pantheistic system.

Buddhism was undoubtedly one of the most powerful agencies of popular education. In the days when monachism maintained its full purity, the monks were close to the common people, and were ready to offer them spiritual solace: Madhavi, Manimekalai and Kundalakesi, their historicity apart, were certainly representative of the large numbers of the populace who sought and secured mental solace from monks like Aravana Adigal.⁶⁵ The Buddhist Viharas were also close to the common people. The life of the monks was an open life; and the mention of the seven Viharas in Kavirippumpattinam and one hundred convents in Kancipuram, is proof of how these institutions, though exclusively for the education and residence of the monks, were not without their community extension activities.⁶⁶ Even individual ascetics performing penance in caves or other solitary placed

were sought after by the common people eager to secure spiritual advice. The story of the Buddhist ascetic Ahatti being visited by the people of Kavarippumpattinam every day to the extent of vexing him is significant in this connection.⁶⁷

2. THE PROPAGATION OF DISCIPLINED LIFE

The contribution of Buddhistic education to the development of educational thought and philosophy and also to methodology is indeed substantial. The Buddhist monastery was an example of perfect organization which left nothing to doubt or chance. It is sufficient to know the subjects treated in the *Vinayapitaka* to be able to understand the admirable set-up of each monastery and the discipline enforced in it. Here is the list of the more important subjects treated in the *Mahavagga* and the *Cullavagga* relating to monastic discipline.⁶⁸

1. The rules of admission to the Order of the Bikkus;
2. The rules regarding the duties of Upadyaya;
3. The Upasatha ceremony and the Patimokkha;
4. Consecration of the boundaries for a Bikku community;
5. Residence during the rainy season;

6. Rules regarding the use of articles made of skin;
7. Rules regarding the use of medicaments;
8. Rules regarding food;
9. Rules regarding dress;
10. Rules for Bikkus guilty of violation of propriety;
11. Rehabilitation of Bikkus guilty of offences;
12. Questions to be settled among the fraternity;
13. Detailed regulations regarding the daily life of the Bikkus;
14. Regarding buildings, furniture and sleeping places;
15. Rustication of the incorrigible;
16. Regulations for different classes of Bikkus.

The *Vinayapitaka* constituted the book of directions for every one of the monasteries.⁶⁹

The transfer value of the organizational perfection and the strict discipline of the Buddhist monastic system was great. One would suspect, with sufficient justification, that the growth of Mathas in Hinduism within a short period of the decline of Buddhism was due to the inspiration

of the Buddhist monastic system that had for long evoked the admiration and respect of the Hindus.⁷⁰

3. TAMIL ASCETICISM IS INSPIRED

The moral basis on which Buddhist and Jain monachism rested also appealed to the Tamils, who from a secular and practical approach to education slowly evolved a pattern of education with the emphasis on a religious life. No doubt, in the Brahminical system of education asceticism was not to be had for persons other than the members of the Brahmin community. Therefore, the Tamils while they invested their education with a religious basis in the Pallava and Cola periods, preferred the Buddhistic pattern to the Brahminical pattern. The Mathas that they set up, though not replicas of the Buddhist monasteries, were based on the same philosophy and purpose as those of the Buddhist monasteries. A system of non-Brahminical, Saivite asceticism, evolved on Buddhist inspiration can be easily identified.⁷¹

4. THE TEACHER

Perhaps the best contribution of Buddhist monachism was in the domain of methodology. The Buddhist Upadhyaya and Acarya were the centre of the whole educational system.⁷² Their qualifications were the highest conceivable. From the qualifications of teachers like Dharmapala and Silabhadra of Nalanda, we can form an idea as to the degree of scholarship that an Acarya had to possess.

He had to be well versed in all the Buddhist texts; he had to possess fluency of expression; he had to be a skilled debator; he had also to be an able expositor; he had to be an original thinker and his contributions to knowledge had to be substantial. Some of the Buddhist teachers learnt the Chinese language; and what a feat it should have been will be clear when one understands that a mastery of the Chinese language with its uncountable symbols and complexities was not easy of achievement even for the Chinese Pandits themselves.⁷³ The Upadhyaya who was the higher educator than the eminently qualified Acarya was to teach the texts. Strict rules governed the recruitment of the Upadhyayas. The Upadhyaya was to possess ten years' experience to be recruited, whereas the Acarya needed only six. The word Thera designated a respectable man.⁷⁴

Thus the most vital aspect of methodology, namely, the teacher, was taken care of splendidly.

5. THE TEXTBOOKS

As regards the methods, the teacher's exposition of the texts constituted the main technique. It is evident that most of the teachers prepared their own commentaries or notes on the texts without doing injustice to the main truths of the religion as given forth by the Buddha after his enlightenment. There is a work called the *Atthasalini* (the *Expositor*) which is Buddhagosha's exposition of the *Dhammasangani*, the first book of the *Abhidhanma Pitaka*.⁷⁵ One is reminded of the Later-day comment-

aries of such works as *Tirukkural* and the *Tolkappiam* when one goes through this work.⁷⁶ This is only a sample of an exposition by a great teacher. A study of this work reveals an important principle of the method of exposition. No room was left for any ambiguity about any concept in the textbook, and clear and elaborate explanation was furnished for each concept.⁷⁷

It was not a mere one way process of the teacher teaching John Latin. Discussions were not only allowed but positively encouraged.⁷⁸

It may be true as R. K. Mookerji states that, in the beginning, the method of instruction was oral-aural as in Brahminical education.⁷⁹

Memorization of the texts was through this method, but the use of texts seems to have become the vogue in course of time.

6 THE ART OF WRITING

As in the Christian monasticism of the early times, copying of manuscripts became one of the duties of monks. For this, the writing skill was developed among the monks; and it is patent that regular exercises were provided daily in monastic education. Buddhism being intended for the masses of the people, all the devices were utilized for taking the teaching of the religion to the very doors of the people. The begging mendicant was a constant influence for the laity and others not belonging to the religion.⁸⁰ Frequent sermons to the common folks also became a regular feature; but messages through the written word were equ-

ally important.⁸¹ Such messages were believed to last for ever; and the spread of Asoka's Dharma throughout the length and breadth of India through his rock and pillar edicts evidences the great importance attached to writing. It is no accident that the earliest Brahmi inscriptions in Tamil country are of Buddhist origin.⁸²

The Buddha himself recognized the value of writing. The *Saddhamma Sanga*, a later-day Ceylonese work on Buddhist tradition contains an interesting conversation allegedly having taken place between the Buddha and the Thera Ananda.⁸³ The Exalted One was lying in his bed of Para Nirvana, the ultimate Moksha. He called Ananda and said to him. "There are eighty four thousand units of texts propounded by me during forty five years from the time of my renunciation. I am to go alone. Now I instruct you and admonish you; but after I am gone, these eighty four thousand units like eighty four thousand Buddhas will instruct and admonish you." Thus the Buddha emphasised the need for reducing his teachings to writing.

"Each letter in the Pitakas is equal to a Buddha. A wise man should write down the Pitakas."⁸⁴

From all this, it should be clear that copies of texts were prepared in large numbers and libraries were maintained by each monastery.

7. QUESTION-ANSWER TECHNIQUE

To the monk, formal education in a convent was only the beginning of education which continued throughout his life. Quite a number of techniques helped the monk to improve his worth as a scholar and a teacher. One of these is the question-answer technique in Buddhism as in other Indian religions. Questioning was for the sake of leaving nothing in doubt. Questions on points of doubt drew out answers to areas either not brought up in detailed exposition or not clearly understood. There is a work entitled *Puggala Pannatti* (designation of human types) which is fully in the question-answer form.⁸⁵ Here is another resemblance to the Christian monastic pattern. The concept of *Prasna* and *Uttara* signified more or less the same as Catechism.⁸⁶

8. DEBATES: DISCUSSIONS AND COUNCILS

Debates and discussions in which the monks participated after full ordination also helped to develop insights and to broaden their outlook. These must have been conducted according to regular principles; but it is patent that in the 7th and 8th centuries their standards showed deterioration. The *Kathavathupakarna Attakatha* (the *Debates Commentary*) is a book embodying a large number of debates carried on, and the techniques of debating are clearly obtainable from that book.⁸⁷

The Buddhist councils summoned periodically by kings also provided opportunities to scholars and teachers of Buddhism to gain new insights.⁸⁸ Councils were an opportunity to listen to points

of view other than one's own and to discuss with fellow teachers. They were the occasions when differences were settled, newer interpretations of texts were presented and stock was taken of the progress of Buddhist knowledge.

Thus Buddhism had much to give to education in general. Most of its techniques of instructions are still valid and deserve to be re-examined for being fed again into the contemporary educational system.

SECTION IV

THE ALTERED TRENDS IN THE MONASTIC ORDER IN THE IMPERIAL AGE AND THE DECADENCE OF THE BUDDHIST MONASTICISM

Buddhist monachism was in its downward trend in the Pallava period after at least eight centuries of triumphant progress and unshaken stability in the Tamil country. Buddhist education in the Tamil country is believed to date from the period of the Buddha himself. There is every possibility that the Buddha came over to Kanci whose reputation as an ancient centre of learning is borne out by references in some of the earliest Sanskrit works⁸⁹. Whatever the historicity or otherwise of Buddha's association with Kanci and his teaching in that city, it is an indisputable fact that Asoka sent his emissaries to the Tamil country and established many centres of Buddhist learning. Mr. Ramachandran, formerly Director-General of Archaeology, to whom we owe much of the initial labours in the deciphering of Brahmi inscriptions

of Ramnād and Madurai districts, says that these inscriptions are Buddhist in respect of their origin and subject matter⁹⁰ Upto the end of the Kalabhra rule it was a period of spectacular gains for Buddhism in the Tamil country. The religion did not have to answer the challenges of the other religions with which it co-existed. There was perfect harmony among all these religions, free mobility of ideas from one religion to another and the total absence of fanaticism. But in the Pallava period the religion had to be on the defensive. By then, Brahminism had become a powerful factor to reckon with in the Tamil country. An indigenous form of Saivism had begun to evolve, no doubt with the ingredients of the Siva cult of the North and the Brahminical philosophies. (Details of this religion and its educational system are given else-where in this volume.)

Vaishnavism was the third important factor to reckon in the religious life of the Tamils. Like Saivism it was an indigenous product based on the cult of Vishnu, no doubt a North Indian cult.

Buddhism and Jainism had, thus, three powerful rivals in the imperial age. But it was not these rivals that caused the worst damage, but its own mushroom off-shoots. The Mahayanism in its pristine purity and as a single entity had long ago ceased to exist. A large number of sub-denominations developed and ate, like the canker worm, into the strength of the original Mahayanism. Disputations and controversies within the religion throughout India presented the picture of a great house divided against itself.⁹¹ This was an all-

India trend and was reflected prominently in the Buddhism of the Tamil country.

One result of the appearance of these sub-denominational tumors on the body of Buddhism was a lowering of the standards of monastic purity and public conduct on the part of Buddhist workers. The monasteries which had been concerned only with pure studies began to provide for instruction in the denunciation of rival creeds.⁹² The development of the science of debate or *Tarka* had no doubt a fruitful application in the development of knowledge, but *Tarka* not infrequently degenerated into *Kutarka* during disputations between Buddhism and other religions. Debates were debased. An instance in point is the challenge of Buddhanandi and Sariputta to Sambandar. The level of the studies in the monastic institutions naturally fell further when the concept of proselytism began to gain ground in Buddhism. Conversions in the earlier periods had been through conviction. Lower techniques were practically unknown. Moreover, there was no rigidity in respect of the pursuit of the Buddhist laity. Rigidity was applied only in monastic life.

Buddhism being free of the ritualistic elements and idolatry (unless the worship of the Buddha in images in Mahayanism should be considered idolatry) the Buddhist laity were practically free to get interested in any welcome features of other creeds. In other words, to the Buddhist laity Buddhism had been more a code of morals applicable in day-to-day life than a religion. The Buddhist monks and spiritual leaders made no bones about how the laity app-

roached the religion. Naturally a large number of the Tamil population, whether they labelled themselves Buddhists or not, became deeply interested in the principles of the religion because they were very valuable as guide-posts of life.

But with the development of a large number of denominations within Buddhism, a tendency to gain numerical strength on the part of each denomination became manifest during the Pallava period.⁹³ Naturally, missionaries were trained to undertake tours and convert the people. The monasteries became training institutions for Buddhist propagandists. So long as Buddhism remained a moral force within the Tamil country, leaders of the other religions not only let it prosper but also treated it with respect. In fact, great Brahminical leaders like Sankara did not hesitate even to borrow from Buddhism.⁹⁴ But when proselytism started, the leaders of other religions naturally reacted. Normally there could be nothing wrong in propagating a set of doctrines. But when the propagation is done with ulterior motives and is linked to quick results, naturally resort is made to techniques far from proper. The fact that there was such an excitement among the Brahmins, Saivites and Vaishnavites over the methods of the Buddhists must show that Buddhism had ceased to be an educative force and had entered the arena of politics in its final struggle for survival.⁹⁵

Another reason for the decadence of Buddhistic monachism could be seen in the entry of permissiveness in the life of the monks. The monks were not to eat meat, drink intoxicating drinks and swerve

from the vow of celibacy. The monasteries had been the most hallowed places. But the *Mattavilase Prahasanam* account of the depraved levels of the Buddhist monastic order is a significant pointer to how the order killed its own purity and austerity.⁹⁶ No wonder Hiuen Tsang found many of the monasteries either in ruins or in a miserable condition.

NOTES

- 1 In his rock edict No.3, Asoka says that his Dharma had spread into the Cola and Pandya territories. His son (?) Mahendra had a successful mission of Buddhist propagation in the Tamil country.
- 2 *Ibid.*
- 3 Hiuen Tsang's reference to Kancipuram in his itinerary.
- 4 *Ibid.*
- 5 The *Manimekalai* contains the earliest statement of the tenets of Buddhism in Tamil. Sittalai Sattanar must have had a thorough orientation into the religion as the Buddhist tenets brought up in his *Magnum opus* are almost exact Tamil versions of the original Buddhist texts.
- 6 This work is one of the five cpies of Tamil (*Aimperum kappiam*). But the work is almost lost to us, but for some fragments quoted in other works.
- 7 The *Manimekalai* contains a few of these woven into the main incidents of the plot.
- 8 *Manimekalai*, Bool XV, P. 151. Dr. S. Krishnaswami Ayyangar's *Manimekalai in its Historical Setting* (Luzac).
- 9 This is enforced not only by a study of the *Manimekalai* but also from the Buddhist sources.
- 10 *Manimekalai* observes the three vows during the period of her initiation. The last chapters of *Manimekalai* contain a detailed statement of the doctrines of Buddhism.
- 11 *Manimekalai*.
- 12 *Ibid.* (esp. canto 21)
- 13 Silam has been explained in the commentary as the Ten Silams. These are the first five fundamentals and the remaining ones;

1. Ahimsa 2. Satyam 3. Asteyam 4. Brahmacharyam
5. Asangraham. In addition to these, the others, also mentioned in the *Mahavagga*, are also important:

1. avoiding elevated seats 2. avoiding sandal and garland
3. not touching gold or silver 4. not cultivating a taste for music or dance 5. not eating before sunset.

14 Radhakumud Mookerji, *Ancient Indian Education*, Part II

15 *Ibid.*

16 Manimekalai's ordination may have slightly deviated from the original rules to suit the new environment. (See Dr. S. Krishnaswami Ayyangar's *Manimekalai in its Historical Setting*)

17 These are found all over the Tamil country, and can be identified by the presence of Brahmi inscriptions. There are caves in the village of Arittappatti, in Madurai district. It is not improbable that these caves were sanctified as the residence or place of meditation of Maha Aritta of Ceylon who helped Mahendra in his mission in the Tamil country.

18 The meaning of vihara in Sanskrit is "distribution or transposition" (see, Apte's *Dictionary* P. 293) In Buddhism it meant a monastery or temple or a sacred place.

19 Mahendra is reputed to have constructed seven viharas in Kaverippumpattinam. The Indra Vihara mentioned in the *Silappadikaram* might be one of the Viharas.

20 Kaverippumpattinam is referred to as Kaverapattanam in the *Jatakas*.

21 *Ibid.*

22 *Silappadikaram*, Puhar Kandam, Kanattiram Uraitta Kadai. *Manimekalai* ch. 26, 1.55. The seven Viharas mentioned may be those of Mahendra.

23 Ilambodhiyar means the young teacher of Buddhism.

- 24 Sittalai Sattanar was undoubtedly the best Buddhist scholar and teacher of the age among the Tamils though he belonged to the merchant community. He must have been well versed in all the philosophical systems in vogue. He must also have been a great Sanskrit scholar. The last chapters of the *Manimekalai* are a masterly compression of the doctrines of Buddhism and the main ingredients of the Buddhist philosophy.
- 25 Some of the Buddhist scholars whom I have had the privilege to meet in connection with this study tried to convince me that Pali was in *currency* in the Tamil country about the time the *Manimekalai* was composed. Their contention is that even as the Brahmins brought Sanskrit along with their religion, the Buddhists brought Pali. Moreover, the Tamils who followed Buddhism had necessarily to study the original texts. My friends told me that in important centres of Buddhism like Kavirippumpattinam, Pataliputram and Bouddhapuram there were great Pali scholars. In spite of the very convincing tone of their assertions, I remain with the belief that Pali was not so popular in the Tamil country. Some Pali words and expressions may have got absorbed in Tamil as the result of the interaction between Buddhist leaders and the Tamils in the Tamil country.
- 26 While Buddhism, had, by this time, become a very old cultural and social factor in the Tamil country with the unhealthy accretions of centuries and a suicidal complacency, these three new factors, no doubt developing out of indigenous nucleus and manifested a dynamism and vibrancy that became the chagrin of the older factor viz., Buddhism that had never before met such formidable rivals.
- 27 The Kulabhra interregnum, as we have pointed out elsewhere, gave such boosting to a stagnant Jainism that it not only developed to incredible proportions but also tangibly affected the fortunes of Buddhism. The Kalabhra rule, it has been accepted by many historians, was a Jain theocracy.

“It looks as though the Jains had themselves invited the Kalabhras with a view to establish Jainism more firmly in the country. The period of the Kalabhras, and that which succeeds it must, therefore, be considered as the period when the Jains had reached their zenith. (*Studies in South Indian Jainism* by M. S. Ramaswami Ayyangar. p. 56)

- 28 The technical coinages in Tamil employed in the *Manimekalai* must indicate an excellent growth based on popular support for Buddhism. See the concluding sections of the *Manimekalai*.
- 29 See the interesting essay by Dr. S. Krishnaswami Ayyangar entitled “A School of South Indian Buddhism in Kanci” p. p. 773 - 799. (*Ancient Indian Culture*)
- 30 That is what the accounts of Hieun Tsang about Kanci would suggest.
- 31 Hieun Tsang.
- 32 Cf. The records of Sivaskandavarman (R. Gopalan: History of the Pallavas of Kanci p. 38)
- 33 Hieun Tsang
- 34 *Buddhist Record of the Western World* by Samuel Beal p. 217
- 35 *Ibid* p. 218
- 36 *Ibid*.
- 37 *Ibid*
- 38 There were many sub-denominations.
- 39 Samuel Beal, *op. cit*.
- 40 *Ibid*
- 41 *Ibid*

- 42 *Ibid.*
- 43 Dr. Minakshi, C. *Administration and Social Life under the Pallavas.*
- 44 K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *Coblas*, p. p. 102-103.
- 45 Samuel Beal, *op. cit.*
- 46 *Ibid.*
- 47 *Ibid.*
- 48 The relationship of Mahendra and Asoka is often a matter of confusion. Historians would call him the brother of Asoka, and some foreign accounts, the son. It is immaterial within the larger scope of our discussion.
- 49 The identification of Malakuta is not, however, definite; and from the order in which it is mentioned in the itinerary, it could be a place on the West Coast.
- 50 Dr. S. Krishnaswami Ayyangar, *op. cit.*
- 51 According to Dr. S. Krishnaswami Ayyangar, Dignaga is roughly assignable to 400 A. D., and there had already developed an indigenous school of Buddhism in Kanci which is expounded in the *Manimekalai*. Dignaga may have had the inspiration of this school. Whatever the degree of possibility of such a position, his preceptor Vasubandhu was a Brahmin scholar of Peshawar who became a Mahayanist late in his life. Therefore instead of regarding Dignaga as a student of an indigenous school, it would be more accurate to class him as the creator of a new school.
- 52 Taranatha, the Tibetan historian, pays a glowing tribute to the genius of Dignaga.
- 53 He was a prince of Kancipuram. See p. 776 Dr. S. Krishnaswami Ayyangar *op. cit.*

- 54 Samuel Beal *op. cit.*
- 55 H. D. Sankalia *The University of Nalanda* (B. G. Paul and Co.)
- 56 Samuel Beal *op. cit.*
- 57 H. D. Sankalia *op. cit.*
- 58 B. C. Law in his *Geography of Early Buddhism* would consider this Dharmapala as a native of Tanjore. But as the Tambaratthan prefix to the name would suggest, Tambaraparani or Tirunelveli origin for this teacher would be more logical. Incidentally it may be pointed out that there was a little chieftaincy called *Tanajai* in Tirunelveli district and in all probability this was the home of this Dharmapala.
- 59 Vajrabodi might have been a Tamilian in spite of his Sanskritic name. His father (name, not known) was also a reputed teacher. see B. C. Law *op. cit.*
- 60 There is a romantic fervour about the sojourns of this teacher when he planned to go to China. The king of Kanci advised him against the plan with the argument that the winds were not always helpful and sea-voyages were hazardous. The teacher disregarded the advice and the king did not stand in his way. He sent through the teacher a copy of *Mahaprajna Paramitai* as gift to the Chinese King. The experiences of the teacher *en route*. should do credit to a hero of a geographical exploration.
- 61 In such a work, he had the patronage and support of the members of the T'ang dynasty.
- 62 See Sekkilar's *Periapuranam* for the life of Sambandar
- 63 *Ibid.*
- 64 As Buddhism had been accepted as a moral code, rather than a religion, by the Tamils in the pre-Pallava period, they did not hesitate to accept and follow such of its teachings as had general social and moral application.
- 65 Such monks were respected by all religions in the Tamil country. Aravana Adigal's close interaction with people in

large cities and towns might indicate a Buddhist monachism that believed in close contact with the people. One is tempted to say that the Jain and Buddhist monachism in the Tamil country was more dynamic, people.-centred and free from denominational aloofness *at least until the Pallava age*.

- 66 It is also interesting to note that even some of the monasteries were located in the heart of cities.
- 67 This is narrated in the *Jataka Tales*.
- 68 see Mahavagga (any edition)
- 69 *Vinaya Pitaka; Itsing P. 104*
- 70 See, section on Saiva Siddhanta and Education.
- 71 *Ibid.*
- 72 These are terms taken from the Hindu educational system But, while the Acarya in the Hindu system was not necessarily a monk, the Acarya and Upadhyaya in Buddhism were monks.
- 73 Even teachers from the Tamil country like Bodhiruci and Vajrabodi mastered the Chinese language.
- 74 This word got assimilated into Tamil.
- 75 See, *Attasalini*
- 76 The later-day Tamil commentaries reflect the same techniques and thoroughness as those of the expositions of Buddhist texts.
- 77 One has to study the Buddhist's commentaries to be amazed at the semantic thoroughness of the expositors.
- 78 The science of debating was one of the subjects of study.
- 79 Ancient Indian Education by R. K. Mookerji, p. 450. (Macmillan.)

- 80 Begging was not just a matter of collecting alms for one's livelihood. The begging monks should discriminate between good and bad households and accept alms only from approved households. The definition of an approved household is; "Rich in faith, though poor in goods." This discriminative character naturally induced every household to deserve the begging of a monk.
- 81 The Jatakas emphasize the importance of writing. The various types of writing mentioned in the Jatakas are- letters; inscription on gold plates; inscription on the walls of a hermitage etc.
- 82 References to these have already been made.
- 83 *Saddhamma Sanga* (Buddhist chronicle)
- 84 *Ibid.*
- 85 *Puggala Pannathi*
- 86 The Catechitical method was universally known. Socrates is often regarded the first to have used this method. But long before Socrates, it was current in India.
- 87 This book appears to be the oldest book written on the science of debating. No other religion or literature has a book of this level of thoroughness and detail.
- 88 The councils were a unique feature of Buddhism and Jainism. The council technique to keep the religion a live force was first introduced by the Buddhists and Jains, and Christianity adopted it later. The Christian Synods of the early periods of Christianity helped resolutions of controversy and restoration of the purity of the faith.
- 89 This is a tradition handed by Hieun Tsang lacking any foundation on earlier sources.
- 90 Story of Buddhism by A. Ayyappan and P. R. Srinivasan (Govt. of Madras 1960) page 52.

- 91 Hiuen Tsang refers to these. See Samuel Beal, *op. cit.*
- 92 Many of the later-day monasteries, as we understand from Hieun Tsang, were founded on narrow denominational ideas.
- 93 One could suppose that it was only in the Pallava period that conversion on a mass scale was launched by the Buddhists.
- 94 Even though Sankara was criticized by some as a crypto-Buddhist, he was convinced that the technique of hoisting the engineer with his own petard was an effective technique in the establishment of a creed.
- 95 The *Tevaram* and *Prabandam* hymns contain numerous references to what are described as the "undesirable customs" and practices of the Jains and the Buddhists. It seems to be true that as Buddhism was just about to fade out, it showed a tendency to resort to violence.
- 96 This drama by Mahendravarman, the Pallava emperor, is a satire on contemporary Buddhism.

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