THERAVĀDA BUDDHISM IN BURMA

NIHAR-RANJAN RAY

UNIVERSITY OF CALCUTTA
1946

THERAVĀDA BUDDHISM IN BURMA

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF
THERAVĀDA BUDDHISM IN BURMA

A STUDY IN INDO-BURMESE HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RELATIONS FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO THE BRITISH CONQUEST

BY

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To

PROFESSOR BENIMADHAV BARUA

WHO INITIATED ME INTO

INDO-BURMESE STUDIES

IN DEEP ESTEEM AND ADMIRATION

CONTENTS

Subjects		Pages
CHAPTER ONE		
EARLY TRACES : FROM THE ALLEGED ASOKA-MISSION TO THE FALL OF THATON		1-87
I.	The Background	1-7
II.	The Asoka-Mission : Legend and History	7-13
III.	Buddhism in the Kirata country ..	14-18
IV.	Buddhism in Lin-Yang ..	18-24
V.	The Buddhaghosa Tradition : Legend and History ..	24-33
VI.	Buddhism in Old Prome ..	33-46
VII.	Buddhism in Old Prome (*contd.*) ..	46-55
VIII.	Buddhism in Old Prome (*contd.*) ..	55-57
IX.	Buddhism in Old Prome (*contd.*) ..	57-73
X.	Buddhism in Pegu	73-75
XI.	Buddhism in Thaton	76-83
XII.	A Resumé	83-87
CHAPTER TWO		88-168
EFFLORESCENCE : FROM THE INTRODUCTION OF THERAVĀDA BUDDHISM IN PAGAN IN 1057 TO THE FALL OF THE PAGAN DYNASTY, C. 1287 A.D.		
I.	Sources and Source-materials ..	89-97
II.	The Early Phase	97-110
III.	Maramma Samgha and Sihala Samgha	110-118
IV.	The Religion in the Talaing country	118-122
V.	The Dimming of the Religion ..	122-125
VI.	Monastic Scholarship	125-132

	Subjects	Pages
VII.	*Durenidana* and *Avidurenidana* Stories	133-141
VIII.	Further Corroborative Archaeological Evidence	142-147
IX.	Religious Eclecticism of Pagan ..	147-151
X.	Inscriptions of Pagan : A Postscript	151-168
CHAPTER THREE		169-195
	THE GREAT REFORMATION AND ITS PREAMBLE : FOURTEENTH AND FIFTEENTH CENTURIES	
I.	The Fourteenth Century ..	169-174
II.	Religion and Scholarship in the Talaing country	174-176
III.	The Fifteenth Century ..	177-182
IV.	Dhammaceti's Reformation of the Samgha	182-192
V.	A Monastic Library	192-195
CHAPTER FOUR		196-216
	CLOUDS GATHER : SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES	
I.	Marammaratttha	196-204
II.	The Burmans and the Talaings ..	204-216
CHAPTER FIVE		217-236
	A GREAT CONTROVERSY : EIGHTEENTH CENTURY AND AFTER	
I.	The Background	217-218
II.	Beginning of the Controversy ..	219-223
III.	The Crushing of the Talaings ..	223-226
IV.	The Peak of the Controversy ..	226-233
V.	Re-organisation of the Samgha ..	233-236
CHAPTER SIX		237-249
	BURMA'S RETURN GIFTS TO CEYLON : NINETEENTH CENTURY AND AFTER : THE "AMARAPURA SAMGHA" OF CEYLON	

Subjects		Pages
CHAPTER SEVEN		250-277
SUMMARY AND RETROSPECT		
I.	Summary	250-260
II.	Character and Ideal of the Religion	260-262
III.	What Buddhism has done for Burma	262-266
IV.	The Samgha and the Society ..	266-269
V.	The Samgha and the King : Political Activities	269-272
VI.	The Samgha and its Constitution : Samgharaja	272-276
VII.	The New Conditions	276-277
Select Bibliography	..	279-288
Bibliographical Index	..	289-292
General Index	..	293-302
Additions and Corrections	..	303-306

PREFACE

This book was written in 1934, in part fulfilment of the scheme of Indo-Burmese studies in which I had engaged myself since 1928. For reasons beyond my control and of no particular interest to the reader, the book could not be published earlier. But this delay has enabled me to alter the text and make additions to it from time to time in such way as to incorporate the results of latest literary investigations and archaeological finds, to the extent that the following pages may be said to represent our up-to-date knowledge of the subject. Between the first draft and what appears in print, the text thus suffered so many additions and alterations that I am afraid, one may find the book rather loosely knit and unequal reading in parts. While I crave indulgence of my readers for this short-coming, I plead that it could not be helped. Since 1936 I have been drawn to other fields of studies and academic activities, and inspite of repeated attempts. I have not been able to get back to my original sphere of work. Indeed, since 1934 I have not been given the opportunity to visit Burma, not even to check the draft of this book on the spot which I feel was so very necessary. Moreover, the war that intervened has left Burma in such a state as not to allow, I am afraid, resumption of historical and archaeological activities in another couple of years or so. I have therefore thought it advisable to present my study of the subject as it is, that is, without trying to improve upon it. Since I do not claim this book to be anything more than a mere introduction to

the subject, I would leave that to scholars more favoured and well-equipped than myself.

Notwithstanding the wide range of subjects covered by a handful of European and Burmese scholars and the valuable work done by them in the domain of Burmese history and archaeology, there has yet been very little study in the history of Buddhism and the extent reached by that religion in Burma. Yet Buddhism of the Theravada school has been for centuries and is even to-day a most vital factor in Burmese life and a great social force in the country. Buddhism indeed is the tie that binds Burma with India, and whatever is of any account in Burmese life and society is derived from that great religion. Not only from the view point of Burma alone, but from that of the history of the religion as well its career in Burma where it is still a living faith is well-worth a study; for, it is in Burma alone, besides Ceylon and Siam, that we can yet find a nearest approach to the earliest and purest form and expression of the religion. But to this subject of absorbing interest few unfortunately have devoted their time and attention. An admirable beginning was made by Dr. Mabel H. Bode by her edition of the *Sasanavamsa* in 1897, and later by her monograph on the *Pali Literature of Burma* in 1909. Her introduction to the *Sasanavamsa* may well be regarded as an important contribution to the subject; no less remarkable is her later monograph which incidentally gives an outline of the history of the religion. But her scope was admittedly limited and it was outside her scheme to give a systematic study of the career of the religion through centuries. Moreover, she began her account with the middle of the eleventh century and ignored the earlier centuries altogether. Besides Dr. Bode, notable direct and indirect contributions to the subject have been made by Messrs. Charles Duroiselle, G. E.

Harvey, Pe Maung Tin, G. H. Luce, C. O. Blagden and a few others.

To all these scholars, especially to Dr. Bode, my indebtedness is obvious. I have fully utilised their valuable publications and used many of their findings to my advantage ; these I have everywhere fully acknowledged in footnotes. But if one cares to read the following pages he will find in them much that is entirely new and original. He will see that the early history of the religion, of which very little is known so far, has been reconstructed, as far as possible, from epigraphic, archaeological and literary sources. This has been attempted perhaps for the first time. Here I have laid under examination all available Pali and Sanskrit inscriptions relevant to the subject and presented well-known traditions in a new perspective. In respect of other periods as well, more particularly up to about 1500, I humbly claim to have utilised a much greater mass of materials in the shape of epigraphic records, native chronicles in Burmese and Talaing, Pali texts, etc., in a much more comprehensive manner than it had been within the scope of Dr. Bode or any body else to use in this or similar connection. For the rest of the period covered I have depended mainly on the *Sasanavamsa* and a few contemporary European accounts. I have been able, I hope, to achieve a more or less complete and connected narrative which it has always been my aim to present in a new manner and perspective consistent with the evidence furnished by the huge mass of materials. I have critically examined my sources and have cared to give my readers an idea about their nature and character. The more important events in the history of the religion have been elaborately described and the significance, as I understand, of the reform movements effected in the church clearly brought out.

Throughout, it has been my aim to bring out in prominent relief the character and ideal of the religion in Burma, the relation of the Samgha and the king, the literary and scholarly activities of the monks, and the place of the Samgha in the life of the people. All these I have sought further to summarise in the concluding chapter of the book.

I have, however, chosen to leave out any interpretation of the doctrines of the religion or tracing their evolution and transformation as may have taken place in Burma. This has been owing partly to the fact that such evolution and transformation have not been of any very great consequence in the history of Burmese Buddhism nor have given it any significant orientation, and partly to their not being strictly within the scope of this work.

It will be seen too, that I have often made extensive quotations from inscriptions, native chronicles and contemporary or almost contemporary accounts. This has been because I wanted the story to be told more by the people of the land than by myself; I wanted it to be more of the soil, and to instil into it a bit of the atmosphere of old.

I never entertain the vain hope that all my findings and conclusions will endure and stand the test of more scholarly criticism or further researches in the field. What I have attempted is to fill up a void and supply a starting point on a subject which has long been as good as not worked upon in any critical and comprehensive manner. If I have succeeded in it I would feel myself amply justified in the attempt.

It remains for me to acknowledge my obligations. I acknowledge with thanks and gratitude the willing help and co-operation I have received, whenever sought for, from Mr. Charles Duroiselle, Dr. C. O. Blagden,

Prof. G. H. Luce, Prof. Pe Maung Tin, Mr. G. E. Harvey, Prof. B. M. Barua, Mr. S. N. Mitra and the Superintendent of the Archaeological Survey of Burma. To my young friends Mr. Devaprasad Guha and Mr. Sukeschandra Chandra, who gave me ungrudging help in reading the proofs and in preparing the Index, my affectionate thanks are due. To Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee and Dr. Bimala Churn Law whose active interest in my literary and scholarly pursuits has always been a source of inspiration to me my moral indebtedness is too deep and abiding for words.

I crave the indulgence of my readers for the many errors and misprints that escaped my eyes. Such errors and misprints as are of grave consequence have been corrected in the Additions and Corrections.

December 20, 1945. NIHARRANJAN RAY

THERAVĀDA BUDDHISM IN BURMA

CHAPTER ONE

EARLY TRACES

FROM THE ALLEGED ASOKA-MISSION TO THE FALL OF THATON IN 1057 A.D.

I

THE BACKGROUND

On the map, at first sight Burma looks like an outstretched hand of the Indian continent, but a little closer scrutiny shows that it is geographically a part of the Indonesian peninsula and is intimately connected with Malayasia, Siam and Indo-China. Ethnologically also the peninsula is more closely connected with Indonesia than with India proper. Lower or peninsular Burma which forms one unit with Malayasia is cut off from the Indian continent by wide seas, while the upper or continental Burma is separated from the main land of India by the highly inaccessible Assam and Manipur hills as well as by the Arakan hill ranges; but neither the hill ranges nor the wide sea could prove to be insuperable barriers to the early Indian traders and colonists. Lower Burma especially, known to early traditions as well as in early Indian literature as Suvaṇṇabhūmi, lay open from very early times to the maritime traffic between China on the one hand and India, Arabia, Egypt, Greece and Romę on the other. In fact, the geographical position of Suvaṇṇabhūmi along with Malayasia invested the peninsula with a high degree of commercial importance, nor did the

hilly regions of upper Burma remain immune from onslaught from either the Indian side or Chinese through the difficult mountain passes. We have now more or less definite evidences of occasional though difficult intercourse between India and Burma through Assam and Manipur. But doubtless the sea route was easier and more popular. Regular maritime intercourse between India and the Far East is testified to by various sources from at least as early as the first century A.D., and if Pāli tradition is to be given any credence this intercourse goes back to at least about 6th or 5th century B.C. A volume of literature has grown around this interesting topic of early Indian maritime intercourse between India and the Far East and it is needless to refer to it in detail. It is sufficient to refer our readers to the author of the *Periplus of the Erythrean Sea* and to that celebrated geographer, Ptolemy, who have preserved for us a detailed account of this intercourse.

It is, however, necessary to speak in some detail about references to Suvaṇṇabhūmi in early Indian literature and tradition. These references no doubt point more or less exclusively to trade and commercial activities which undoubtedly were for a long time the primary, if not the only incentive to these difficult maritime adventures, but they also help to serve as the background of later Indian religious and missionary activities through which Buddhism flowed into the peninsula. Traders and merchantmen came first and along with their merchandise they brought also elements of their culture. And, it was almost always later when adventurous Kṣatriya princes came to seek their fortunes, or individual monk or bands of missionaries came to propagate their religious doctrines. We have evidence of both, but all such evidences point to a later period. The subsequent history of individual colonies show that this peaceful penetration of the Indians resulted in the fusion of Indians with diverse races inhabiting the colonies and in the evolution of a new culture

that partook of elements of both. The dominant race imposed its language, religion and social customs, but could not efface all traces of indigenous elements in respect of any of these. As years went on and the contact with India grew less and less, the native elements again asserted themselves, but could not wholly supplant the imported ones.

That lower Burma including a portion of the Burmese hinterland was known in medieval times as Suvaṇṇabhūmi is testified to by the Kalyāṇī inscriptions of king Dhammaceti (1476 A.D.).[1] The same inscription gives another name to Suvaṇṇabhūmi, namely Rāmaññadesa (Suvaṇṇabhūmi natta-saṃkhata Rāmaññadesa).[2] In the Po-U-Daung inscription (1774 A.D.) of Burma we have reference to a country called Suvaṇṇāparanta which means the western end or extremity of Suvaṇṇabhūmi. Suvaṇṇāparanta included the country between the lower Irrawadi and Chindwin and the Arakan Yoma.[3] Suvaṇṇabhūmi, therefore, seems to include a large portion of Burma, both inland and peninsular. It is convenient here to refer to Ptolemy's account of this part of India Extra-Gangem. Ptolemy refers to two countries: Chryse Chora = golden land and Chryse Chersonesus = golden peninsula. He clearly distinguishes them as two different regions, both adjoining Besyngeitai.[4] A similar distinction is also hinted at by the *Periplus of the Erythrean Sea*.[5] Dr. R. C. Majumdar has shown that Ptolemy's Chryse Chersonesus points to the Malay Peninsula and his Chryse Chora a region to the north of it, that is, Suvaṇṇabhūmi,[6] which is exactly the Sanskrit counterpart of the Greek Chryse Chora (Chryse = gold = suvarṇa, and Chora = land = bhūmi).

1 *EP. Birm.*, Vol. III, p. 11.
2 *Ibid.*; also *Ind. Ant.*, XXII, p. 151.
3 Majumdar, *Suvarṇadvīpa*, Vol. I, p. 47.
4 Coedes, *Textes*, pp. 38-43, 53, 56, 60, 66.
5 Schoff's edn., paras. 56 and 63.
6 Also see Majumdar, *ibid.*, pp. 38-48.

Suvaṇṇabhūmi or the land of gold as a rich source of wealth and a big centre of commercial enterprise was known to Indians from very ancient times. The country is celebrated in several Jātaka stories. According to the Mahājanaka Jātaka, prince Mahājanaka led a band of merchants in a ship to Suvaṇṇabhūmi.[7] His evident object was to gather riches there. According to the Suppāraka Jātaka another band of merchants had come to Bharukacca from Suvaṇṇabhūmi and initiated a journey of Indian merchants to Suvaṇṇabhūmi.[8] Kauṭilya in his *Arthaśāstra*[9] also refers to this land of gold which was evidently a source for the valuable product of *aguru*, while the *Milindapañha* makes an interesting reference to Suvaṇṇabhūmi across the high seas, along with Takola and Cīna.[10] The *Mahākarmavibhaṅga* makes a reference to merchants who used to sail to Suvaṇṇabhūmi from Mahākosali and Tāmralipti.[11] The *Divyāvadāna* describes the difficulties one has to face to reach the great Suvaṇṇabhūmi (Ed. Cowell, p. 107). But the most important reference to Suvaṇṇabhūmi is to be found in the celebrated Buddhist work, the *Mahāniddesa*. In giving a long list of countries and islands along the south-eastern seas the author of the *Niddesa* cites the name of Suvaṇṇabhūmi in a context that reveal a very intimate knowledge of the region now covered by Burma, Malayasia, Indo-China and Insulindia. The passage of the *Mahāniddesa* has been elaborately commented upon by M. Sylvain Levi[12] who has drawn attention to the points of agreement between the list of the *Mahāniddesa* and that of Ptolemy. He has also suggested that both must belong

7 Vol. VI, p. 22. Jātaka references are to the Fausböll's edn.

8 Vol. IV, p. 86; also read along with it *Jātakamālā*, No. XIV, and *Jātaka*, III, p. 124.

9 *Arthaśāstra*, Bk. II, Chap. XI.

10 *Milindapañha*, p. 359; S.B.E., XXXVI, p. 269.

11 *Mahākarmavibhaṅga*, Ed. S. Lévi, p. 50 ff.

12 *Etudes Asiatiques*, II, pp. 1-55, 431.

approximately to the same period. But Dr. R. C. Majumdar [13] thinks that the list of the *Niddesa* must have been drawn up between the end of the first and the beginning of the third century A.D. The Arab writers also seem to have been acquainted with the name Suvarṇabhūmi along with Suvarṇadvīpa. In one place Alberuni says that "The island of the Zabaj is called by the Hindus Suvarṇadvīpa that is the gold-island," while in another he says: "The island of the Zabaj is called the gold-country (that is, Suvarṇabhūmi), because you obtain much gold as deposit if you wash only a little of the earth of that country." Still in another place Alberuni includes Suvarṇabhūmi, evidently following the *Bṛhatsáṃhitā*, in the list of countries in the South-East.[14]

Dr. Majumdar has rightly drawn pointed attention to the fact that "the contrast between Suvarṇabhūmi and Suvarṇadvīpa that is gold-land and gold-island which we meet with in the Indian sources is also faithfully reflected in the nomenclature used by the western authors, some of them calling it an island and the others, either a land or a peninsula." This is evident not only in the account of Ptolemy and in the *Periplus* but also in that of Alberuni. These accounts along with the old tradition of a land whose soil was golden, lying along the coast of the eastern sea, were no doubt derived from India. Not only the *Purāṇas* refer to a country outside Bhāratavarṣa the soil and mountains of which consist of gold, but the *Divyāvadāna* also refers to a region beyond the seas where the soil is golden. Suvaṇṇabhūmi was thus undoubtedly the generic name which included not only Suvarṇa-

[13] *Suvarṇadvīpa*, pp. 56-61, where there is an excellent analytical summary of Lévi's discussion as well as a discussion of the extraordinary routes leading to Suvaṇṇabhūmi and Suvaṇṇapura culled from the *Purāṇas*, the *Vimānavatthu*, the *Jātakas*, the *Milindapañha*, the *Niddesa*, the *Bṛhatkathāślokasaṃgraha*, the *Gaṇapāṭha* on Pāṇini and Kātyāyana's *Vārtika*.

[14] For accounts of Arab writers on this topic, see, Ferrand, *J.A.*, XX, pp. 52 ff.

dvīpa but also places like Suvarṇapura, Suvarṇakuḍyaka, and other places connected with and reminiscent of the tradition of the golden soil. On the whole, therefore, Dr. Majumdar seems to be right when he says that there are "definite evidences that Burma, Malay Peninsula and Sumatra had the common designation of Suvarṇabhūmi, and the name Suvarṇadvīpa was certainly applied to Sumatra and other islands in the Archipelago."[15] But, in view of the fact that the term Suvaṇṇabhūmi or Suvarṇabhūmi was later on applied only to the main land as distinguished from Suvarṇadvīpa which stood for the island or islands adjacent to Suvarṇabhūmi one is led to assume that a time came when the generic term Suvaṇṇabhūmi came to be applied in a limited sense to the main land alone to distinguish it from Suvarṇadvīpa.

The story of the evolution of this relation between India and countries and islands beyond the seas has been admirably summarised by Dr. Majumdar and no apology is needed to quote extracts from this summary.[16]

"It is quite clear that from a very remote time the Indians possessed a vague idea of the countries in the Far East across the sea. The relation, no doubt, originated in trade, and the tradition of fabulous wealth earned by that trade gave rise to all sorts of mythical stories about the golden land * * *

"The steady development of this trade is reflected in the *Jātakas*, *Bṛhatkathā*, Kauṭilya-*Arthaśāstra* and *Milindapañha*, where we have not only a more definite idea of the region, now called Suvaṇṇabhūmi, but also a knowledge of important localities within it. This intimate intercourse may be referred to the two or three centuries immediately preceding the Christian era.

"During the first two centuries of the Christian era, the mercantile relations led to colonisation on a fairly large scale. This is evidenced both by the various stories as well as by Sanskrit names applied to many localities within this region. Ptolemy and *Niddesa* represented this stage of development which may thus be regarded as an accomplished fact of the second century A.D.

"The literary evidence leaves no doubt that the trade was the chief stimulus of this intercourse between India and the Far East. Missionary and political activities must have followed in the wake of trade * * *

[15] *Suvarṇadvīpa*, p. 48. The whole chapter indeed is very interesting and is well-worth close study, pp. 37-64.

[16] *Ibid.*, pp. 61-62.

" Indeed the evidence of a commercial origin of this intercourse with the Far East must show by every step .. Some traditions, no doubt, represent Kshatriya adventurers from India as having conquered territories in the Far East, but they must have followed in the wake of merchants."

It is against the background of this commercial intercourse between India and Suvaṇṇabhūmi going to as far back as the sixth and fifth centuries B. C. that we have to read the traditional story of the mission of Soṇa and Uttara, alleged to have been sent by Asoka, to evangelise Suvaṇṇabhūmi. This tradition, loud and insistent, is the starting point of the history of Buddhism in Burma.

II

THE ASOKA MISSION : LEGEND AND HISTORY

There is hardly any tradition so universal in the Buddhist monastic organisation of Burma and so often repeated in her chronicles as the story of the first introduction of the religion of Gautama, the Buddha, by thera Soṇa and thera Uttara, sent by Moggaliputta mahāthera, the teacher of Asoka, to evangelise the land. The tradition rests primarily on the authority of the two Sinhalese chronicles, the *Dīpavaṃsa*[17] and the *Mahāvaṃsa*,[18] the latter containing a more detailed version of the narrative.[19]

" When the thera Moggaliputta, the illuminator of the religion of the Conqueror, had brought the (Third) Council to an end, when looking into the future, he had beheld the purging of the religion in adjacent countries, (then) in the month of Kattika he sent forth theras, one here and one there. The thera Majjhantika he sent to Kāśmīra and Gandhāra ; the thera Mahādeva he sent to Mahisamaṇḍala. To Vanavāsa, he sent the thera Rakkhita; and to Aparāntaka the Yona named Dhammarakkhita; to Mahāraṭṭha (he sent) the thera Mahādhammarakkhita; but the thera Mahārakkhita he sent into the country of the Yona. He sent the thera Majjhima to the Himalayan country, and to Suvaṇṇabhūmi he sent the theras Soṇa

17 Geiger, *Dīpavaṃsa*, VIII, 1-13.
18 Geiger, *Mahāvaṃsa*, XII, 1-54.
19 *Ibid.*, XII. The chapter on " The Converting of Different Countries."

and Uttara. The great thera Mahinda, the theras Iṭṭhiya, Uttiya, Sambala and Bhaddasāla, his disciples, these theras he sent forth with the charge 'Ye shall found in the lovely island of Laṇkā, the lovely religion of the Conquerer." [20]

The account goes on into details regarding each of the missions. In respect of Suvaṇṇabhūmi it is laid down :

"Together with the thera Uttara, the thera Soṇa of wondrous might go to Suvaṇṇabhūmi .....Many were the people who came unto the (three) refuges and the precepts of duty; sixty thousand were converted to the true faith. Three thousand five hundred sons of noble families received it likewise. Thenceforth when a prince was born in the royal palace, the kings gave to such the name Soṇathera." [21]

With these traditional accounts preserved in the name and to the credit of religious teachers, one may also read the accounts of missionary activities recorded by Asoka himself to his own credit. Besides organising a proselytising band of zealous missionaries to carry the message of the Master to every nook and corner of Jambudvīpa, he is said to have sent missionaries "to Taṃbapaṇṇi (Ceylon), as well as to all his neighbours as far as six hundred leagues, where the king of the Greeks named Antiochus lives, and beyond that Antiochus (where live) the four kings named severally (Turamaya) Ptolemy, (Aṃtekina) Antigonos, (Maga or Maka) Magas, and (Alikasudara) Alexander....."

The historicity of the mission to the Greek countries [22] and Ceylon [23] has hardly been doubted, since they have been recorded by Asoka himself in his Edicts (RE. V and XIII). The story of the missions to the Himalayan countries and Kāśmīra is also generally believed.[24] Gandhāra,

[20] *Mahāvaṃsa*, p. 82.

[21] *Mahāvaṃsa*, p. 86.

[22] Rhys Davids doubted the authenticity of Asoka's missions to Greek countries (*Buddhist India*, pp. 298-99) ; but his arguments are no longer seriously advanced.

[23] Geiger in his introduction to the *Mahāvaṃsa* adduces very important arguments not only in favour of the mission to Ceylon but of the general historicity of all the missions referred to in the Ceylonese chronicles.

[24] *Mahāvaṃsa*, Introd., pp. XIX-XX, Rockhill, *Life of the Buddha*, p. 167; Cunningham, *The Bhilsa Topes*, pp. 267, 289, 319.

Mahisa-maṇḍala, Vanavāsa, Aparānta and Mahāraṭṭha were all within Asoka's dominions, and Asoka himself claims, in his edicts, to have left no place in Jambudvīpa out of his missionary campaigns and activities. These direct and indirect corroborations from independent sources of practically all the missions referred to in the Sinhalese chronicles naturally warrants the presumption that the story of the one mission not yet upheld by any independent evidence, *i.e.*, the one to Suvaṇṇabhūmi, is also true in its main outlines. It is admitted that the account of the Sinhalese chronicles may not as historical evidence, commend itself wholly to scholars, but there is also nothing absurd in the story of Moggaliputta Tissa's mission to Suvaṇṇabhūmi headed by the two chief theras, Soṇa and Uttara.

But Vincent Smith dismissed the tradition as 'mythical,' and Kern 'felt grave suspicions' concerning its authenticity.[25] Kern wrote in 1896 and Smith within a decade of that date. Much light has since been thrown by historical and archæological researches on the interesting problem of early Indo-Burmese commercial, historical and cultural relations. But though nothing has been found definitely to establish the historicity of the mission itself, the force of the opposition seems to have subsided to a considerable extent.

Kern's objections are easily met. He suspects the duumvirate Soṇa-Uttara, and thinks that the chroniclers confused the thera Soṇuttara or simply Uttara of Duṭṭhagāmaṇī's time with the theras alleged to have been sent by Moggaliputta. But one fails to understand why the chroniclers should confuse any one of the two theras or both with the thera Soṇuttara or Uttara living in the time of Duṭṭhagāmaṇī (101-77 B.C). Soṇa and Uttara of Asoka's time were removed by at least a century and a half from

[25] Smith, *Asoka* (1901), p. 55; *Ind. Ant.*, 1908, pp. 198 ff; Kern, *Manual of Buddhism*, 1896, p. 117.

Soṇuttara or Uttara of Duṭṭhagāmaṇī's time ; and there is hardly any evidence in the Sinhalese chronicles of such a curious confusion. As to the later name Soṇuttara or Uttara, it is not unusual to adopt names of earlier theras, sometimes of single individuals, sometimes of two jointly. Kern further argues that the duumvirate Soṇa and Uttara are unknown to northern Buddhists. This argument is at best an example of *argumentum ex silentio*. Majjhima, Kassapa and Majjhantika and their missions are also equally unknown to northern Buddhists, nor are they mentioned in any of the edicts of Asoka; but there is no more any room for doubting their authenticity. (See, Geiger's Introduction, pp. xix-xx, to his edition of the *Mahāvaṃsa*.)

Vincent Smith's objections are more substantial. Much of his statements and arguments would not have, it is certain, been repeated to-day had he lived to tackle the problem now after a lapse of about half a century. What remains to-day of his long discourse may be summarised in two arguments : (*a*) Rock Edict Nos. V and XIII give a list of the countries to which he sent missionaries to propagate the religion, but there is absolutely no mention in this list of the mission to Suvaṇṇabhūmi. " The silence of the edicts concerning the alleged fact goes a long way towards disproving its reality, for Asoka seems to have intended to give a complete account of his missionary operations, and if he had really sent emissaries to Suvaṇṇabhūmi previous to the publication of the Rock Edicts, it is inconceivable that he should have omitted to mention in them an event of such importance..." Elsewhere he states, "Facts vouched for by the inscriptions of Asoka may, therefore, be accepted without question, because the testimony is good on the face of it, and no better can be looked for. When the evidence of the inscriptions differs from that of later literary traditions, the epigraphic authority should be preferred without hesitation." (*b*) There is no mention of the mission of Soṇa

and Uttara also in the Kalyāṇī inscriptions (1476 A.D.) which give a summary of the history of the introduction and progress of Theravāda Buddhism in Burma. Of the two arguments the first one still holds good, but the second is practically of no force to-day. For, it has recently been pointed out by Dr. Blagden, the learned editor of the Kalyāṇī inscriptions, that a reference to the mission of Soṇa and Uttara does occur in the celebrated records. We shall, therefore, meet the second argument first, though it is less material in view of the fact that the story of the history of the introduction and progress of Buddhism in Burma as recorded in the Kalyāṇī inscriptions is not original and independent, but seems rather to have been brought from Ceylon by the monks who were sent by king Dhammaceti (1460-91) to the island to re-introduce a canonically valid monastic succession in lower Burma where the Order had long been split up into schismatical sects. Moreover, the evidence of the Kalyāṇī inscriptions, in respect of its historical value, is no better than that of the Ceylonese chronicles; it is also about nine centuries later in date. The crux of the question rests finally, therefore, on the value of the Ceylonese chronicles themselves.

It is to the credit of king Dhammacetī of Pegu that the present Buddhist Church and organisation of Burma stands as it is to-day. This reformer-king caused a long detailed history of Buddhism in Burma to be recorded in the celebrated Kalyāṇī inscriptions (1476 A.D.) of Pegu. The story is prefaced by a good deal of historical matter relating to earlier periods in the long history of Buddhism and particularly to its vicissitudes in Ceylon and its introduction and development in Burma.[26] These interesting details are introduced by a statement regarding Asoka's reformation of the Buddhist church and the mission of Soṇa and Uttara to Suvaṇṇabhūmi.

[26] *Ep. Birm.*, Vol. III, Part II, p. 82.

"At the conclusion of this Council (the Third Buddhist Council convened by Asoka) Moggaliputta Tissa mahāthera reflected that in the future the religion would be established in neighbouring foreign countries and sent such theras as Majjhantika thera with the injunction: "Do you establish the religion in those neighbouring foreign countries ?" Of these theras, he sent out lord Mahinda thera to establish the religion in the island of Tambapaṇṇi, and Soṇathera and Uttara-thera to establish the religion in the Môn country which was also called Suvaṇṇa-bhūmi." [27]

Here is then a definite mention of the Asoka-mission otherwise than in Ceylonese chronicles. Dr. Blagden would have us, therefore, believe the statement of the Kalyāṇī inscriptions to be not 'altogether devoid of any foundation.' "Soṇa and Uttara," he says, "have long been claimed by Burma as founders of their branch of the church; and though the tale has been embellished with many legendary accretions in the course of ages, it can hardly on that account be dismissed. Evidence is gradually accumulating from various different quarters which tends to show that Indian influence made itself felt in Indo-China from about the beginning of the Christian era, or possibly even two or three centuries before that date; and there seems to be nothing antecedently improbable in the story of a Buddhist mission being sent there at a relatively earlier period, though it may well be hazardous to fix that date exactly."

We now turn to the first argument of Smith. That argument is convincing so far as it goes, but it does not go very far. There is no gainsaying the fact that when 'the evidence of the inscriptions (of Asoka) differs from that of later literary traditions, the epigraphic authority should be preferred without hesitation.' We, therefore, must accept first of all and without reserve the testimony of Asoka's Rock Edicts V and XIII in respect of the list of countries

[27] *Ep. Birm.*, Vol. III, Part II, p. 185, Text A, lines 3-6. The identification of Suvaṇṇabhūmi with the Môn country rests on this passage. Dr. Blagden adds a note and states, "So far as can be conjectured from the fragmentary remains of the Môn text, it probably expresses itself in this way—*In Suvaṇṇabhūmi which is the Môn country.*

where missionaries were sent. But, we may go also one step further, for, we have already seen that the tradition with regard to at least two of the countries, namely, Kāśmīra and the Himalayan countries to which, according to the Sinhalese chronicles, Asoka is said to have sent missions, are not mentioned in the list as supplied by the Edicts, but is nevertheless upheld by other independent sources, already well-known. The evidence of the chronicles has, therefore, some claim to be considered at least as supplementing that of the Edicts. The other side of the argument involves a well-known logical fallacy. That 'the silence of the Edicts concerning the alleged fact' does not go very far towards disproving the reality of any of the missions referred to in the *Dīpavamsa* and *Mahāvaṃsa* is shown by the historicity of the missions to Kāśmīra and the Himalayan countries to which no reference is made in the records of Asoka. The omission, therefore, of the mission of Soṇa and Uttara in the records of Asoka does not prove or disprove the authenticity of the Sinhalese tradition. Moreover, it must be remembered that Asoka claims in his edicts to have sent missionaries to other countries as well besides those which he chose to mention by name.

If an attempt has been made above to meet the arguments of Kern and Smith, it is not intended to assert that the Sinhalese story of the mission to Suvaṇṇabhūmi is absolutely certain, or to say that it is definitely established. All that is suggested is that once the general historicity of the story of the missions listed in the Sinhalese chronicles is accepted, and we have seen that there is hardly any difficulty in accepting it, the presumption will always be in favour of the Soṇa-Uttara tradition.[28]

[28] "The scepticism with which modern scholars have received it is perhaps unmerited, but the preaching of these missionaries, if it ever took place, cannot at present be connected with other historical events. Nevertheless, the statement of the *Dīpavaṃsa* (and also of the *Mahāvaṃsa*) is significant. The work was com-

III

BUDDHISM IN THE KIRĀTA COUNTRY : 3RD CENTURY A.D.

An interesting side-light on the probability of the introduction of Buddhism in Burma towards the early centuries of the Christian era seem to be thrown by one of the inscriptions discovered at Nāgārjunikoṇḍa in the ancient Andhra country of the Deccan. The record was inscribed in the 14th regnal year of a king Māḍhariputa who seems to be identical with king Māḍhariputa Śrī Virapurisadata of the Ikṣvāku dynasty (3rd century A.D.), and belonged to a shrine stated to have been dedicated "for the benefit of the fraternities (of monks) of Taṃbapaṃna who had converted Kāśmīra, Gandhāra, Cīna, Cilāta, Tosali, Avaraṃta, Vaṃga, Vanavāsī, Yavana (?), Damila (?) Palura (?) and the Isle of Taṃbapaṃni."[29] It will be seen that some of these countries already find mention in the Sinhalese chronicles among the regions won over to Buddhism after the Third Council; these are Kāśmīra,

posed in the fourth century A.D., and taken from older chronicles. It may, therefore, be concluded that in the early centuries of our era, Burma had the reputation of being a Buddhist country." Eliot, *Hinduism and Buddhism*, III, pp. 50-51.

M. Louis Finot, who is, however, gravely suspicious of the Buddhaghosa tradition, also thinks that the historicity of the Asoka mission has been contested without much convincing reason, *JA.*, XX, 1912, pp. 121 ff. In this connection, Tāranātha's testimony also, I think, deserves consideration. According to him Hinayānism in the Koki land (which, he states, included Pukham=Pagan, and Haṃsāvatī=Pegu) was preached from the days of Asoka onwards, but Mahāyānism was not known until the disciples of Vasubandhu introduced it.

The *Mahākarma-vibhaṅga* credits a mythical hero Gavampati with the conversion of Suvaṇṇabhūmi (p. 62); the voyage of Gavampati to Suvaṇṇabhūmi is also referred to in the *Sāsanavaṃsa*, though it does not say that it was he who converted the land to Buddhism (p. 36). The evidence of the *Mahākarma-vibhaṅga* shows however that the conversion of Suvaṇṇabhūmi to Buddhism was known to early Buddhist tradition.

[29] *Ep. Ind.*, XX., pp. 22-23, Second Apsidal Temple, Insc. F.

Gandhāra, Vanavāsa, Aparāntaka and Yona.[30] Some of these regions are also referred to in two passages of the *Milindapañha*[31] as having been often visited by Indian traders for purposes of trade. In the *Mahāvaṃsa* as well as in the text just referred to, the region mentioned along with Cīna is Cilāta[32] which is important for our purpose.

The Cilātas are evidently none other than the Kirātas, well-known to Sanskrit literature, particularly to the authors of the *Mahābhārata*, *Harivaṃśa* and the *Purāṇas*. The *Pañcatantra* characterises the Kirātas as dishonest traders. They seem also to have been known to Greek and Roman traders and geographers. Ptolemy, for example, locates the Cirrhadae "beyond the Ganges mouth called Antibolei" He says: "Beyond this (Dosarene), the course tending towards the north there are many barbarous tribes, among whom are the Cirrhadae, a race of men with flattened noses, very savage." The Cirrhadae of this passage, are evidently none other than the Kirātas. In another passage, included in his chapter on Trans-Gangetic India,[33] Ptolemy describes the Tiladai (alternative reading, Piladai) also called the Saesadai, as hairy dwarfs, with a flat face and a white skin. The Tiladai also are none other than the Kirātas, Tiladai being evidently a rendering in Greek of the word Cilāda or Cilāta.

The *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, in one place, locates the Kirātas in a region lying to the east of what we know as India,[34] while in another place they are referred to in the north, along with the Jāguḍas, Aupadhas, Aupamadhas, Tāmasas, etc., all of whom seem to have inhabited a region 'along

30 *Mahāvaṃsa*, XII; *Dīpavaṃsa*, VIII.

31 Trenckner's edn., pp. 327, 331.

32 The reading in the *Milinda* text is Vilāpa, but Prof. Lévi has rightly shown that it is an error for Cilāta.

33 Ptolemy, VIII, 2, 15.

34 *Mark P.*, LVII, 6-8. See also in this connection Pargiter's edn., p. 284, notes on 7-8.

the greater part of the southern side of the Himalayas,' [35] and evidently were members of the rude Tibeto-Burman group of races. In a third place they appear in a list of tribes 'resting against the mountains,' obviously the Himalayas,[36] while in a fourth, among the tribes inhabiting the western regions, along with the Barbaras, Pāradas, etc. The Kirātas in the western region are evidently out of place; but their location along the southern slopes of the Himalayas as well as in north-east India along with some other rude little known tribes [37] may be taken to indicate that Indian tradition used to designate all semi-barbarous rude Mongoloid people under the composite appellation Kirāta. But when the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* locates them along the eastern boundary of India they at once come to be invested with a wider denotation and presumably point to the Mongoloid peoples inhabiting the coastal regions of Arakan and lower Burma. And, furthermore, when both Epic and Puranic traditions are set against the background of the references made by Ptolemy, and specially against the ethnic description of the people as given by that Greek geographer, it becomes apparent that the flat-faced, flat-nosed and white-skinned Kirātas are none other than the members of the Môn-Khmer group of peoples of the Indonesian sub-continent inhabiting the regions contiguously to the east of Bhāratavarṣa and lying along the coast. We know that the Pyus and the Talaings, the earliest known exponents of Indian religion and culture in the Burmese Peninsula belonged to this group of Mongoloid races with white skin, flat nose and flat face, and it is not unreasonable to think that Indian tradition knew these and other allied tribes, rude and savage in Indian eyes, of the eastern regions as Kirātas. That the realm of the Kirātas lay along the eastern

35 Pargiter, *op. cit.*, p. 322, note on Kirātas.
36 *Mark. P.*, LVII, 57.
37 *Mark. P.*, LVIII, 50.

coastal regions of the Bay of Bengal will be evident from the following passage of the *Rāmāyaṇa* :

> Āmamīnāśanāścāpi Kirātā dvīpavāsinaḥ ।
> antarjalacarā ghorā nara-vyāghrā iti smṛatāḥ ॥

The Kirātas are here described as dvīpavāsinaḥ, *i.e.*, island-dwellers, but in view of the references in Ptolemy and the *Purāṇas* cited above in this section and elsewhere in a previous one, *dvīpa* here may safely be taken to mean 'peninsular region' which is also another dictionary meaning of the word *dvīpa*. That the Kirātas belonged to the main land of the peninsular region and not to any island will also be evident from the fact that both in the *Milindapañha* and the Nāgārjunikoṇḍa inscription referred to above, the Cilāta country is invariably mentioned along with Cīna with whose people they had deep racial affinities as well. In the *Kurmavibhāga* section of the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* also, the Kirātas are mentioned along with the Cīnas.

Coming back to the passage of the Nāgārjunikoṇḍa inscription, we find that this Kirāta or Cilāta country was along with other countries converted to the faith of the Buddha by the fraternities of monks of Taṃbapaṃna which has generally been taken to be identical with Sīhala or Ceylon, but which may also be taken to mean the region in southernmost India through which flowed the river Tāmraparṇī, *i.e.*, the Pāṇḍya country. The fact that the fraternities of monks of Taṃbapaṃna is stated to have converted the 'isle of Taṃbapaṃni' seems to indicate that Taṃbapaṃna and the isle of Taṃbapaṃni were two different regions. Moreover, one may also point out the difference in spelling between the two words Taṃbapaṃna and Taṃbapaṃni in one and the same sentence, besides between mere 'Taṃbapaṃna' and 'isle of Taṃbapaṃni,' again in the same sentence. We know that there was a

river in the Tinnevelly region of the Far South called Tāmraparṇī which is sometimes identified with the Taṃbapaṃni mentioned in the R. E. II and XIII of Asoka. It is not therefore, unlikely that the Taṃbapaṃna of the Nāgārjunikoṇḍa record is the country through which flowed the river Tāmraparṇī. The Taṃbapaṃni of Asoka may or may not be the region of the Tāmraparṇī river, but the Nāgārjunikoṇḍa record seems to suggest that there must have been some difference between 'Taṃbapaṃna' and the 'isle of Taṃbapaṃni,' the former standing for the Far South of India while the latter may be taken to be identical with the island of Ceylon. This is however merely a suggestion; but the fact remains that as the inscription is dated in the regnal year of the Ikṣvāku kings of the eastern Deccan who flourished in the third century A.D., the conversion of the Kirāta country by the fraternity of monks of Taṃbapaṃna must have taken place sometime before that date.

If the identification of the Kirāta country with the regions now known as Arakan and lower Burma (*i.e.*, Suvaṇṇabhūmi of the Pāli texts and medieval tradition) stand to reason, we have then in the Nāgārjunikoṇḍa record a definite reference to the prevalence of Buddhism in Burma sometime before the third century A.D.

IV

BUDDHISM IN LIN-YANG: C. 250 A.D.

Early Chinese texts speak often of a country, among others of Indo-China, called Chin-lin or "Frontier of Gold." Prof. Pelliot long ago drew attention of scholars to these texts, and it is to him that we are indebted for information from Chinese sources regarding the islands and countries of the Far-East including Campa, Kamboj, Siam, Laos, Java, Sumatra, Borneo and even some parts of Eastern India. Here we shall concern ourselves with only a few

references from Chinese texts that directly refer to our present subject.[38]

About the beginning of the third century A.D. Fü-nan, which included modern Cambodia and the major portion of Siam, was gradually expanding its power. One of its kings, (Fan)-wan, a brave and capable man, attacked and subdued the neighbouring kingdoms and took the title of the Great King of Fü-nan. He then boarded a few great ships and traversing the vast ocean attacked more than ten kingdoms including Ch'u-tu-kun, Chin-chih and Tien-sün, thus extending the kingdom of Fü-nan five or six thousand *li*. Then he projected a subjugation of the kingdon of Chin-lin or Frontier of Gold; but as he fell ill, he could not achieve his end.[39] The date of the death of (Fan)-wan, the Great King of Fü-nan, is shown by Prof. Pelliot to have been c. 225-30 A.D.[40] Moreover, in the time of Wu (A.D. 222-80), Chu Ying and K'ang Y'ai, Prof. Pelliot points out, were sent on an embassy to the country of (Fan)-hsun. The date of this embassy is fixed by him to have been c. 245-50 A.D.[41] "The kingdoms, which they passed through or heard of, were a hundred and several tens;"[42] but the evidence as given in the *Liang Shu* (ch. 54, f. 2 *recto* and *verso*) does not warrant such a long list. It includes Tu-K'un, Chu-li, Tun-Hsun and Chin-lin;[43] Tu-K'un and Chu-li must be looked for somewhere in the Malay Peninsula, Tun-Hsun (Tien-sün) has been identified with Tennasserim, and Chin-lin or the Frontier of Gold with Suvaṇṇabhūmi of Pāli literature. The

[38] Pelliot's researches are mostly contained in his masterly contribution, Deux Itineraries, published in the *BEFEO.*, IV, 1904. See also, in this connection, Luce, *JBRS.*, XIV, Part 2.

[39] *BEFEO.*, 1903, pp. 256-57.

[40] *Ibid.*, p. 303.

[41] *Ibid.*, p. 303, p. 430.

[42] *Ibid.*, pp. 275-77.

[43] For Pelliot's discussions on the identifications of these regions see *Ibid.*, pp. 263-69; also see Laufer, *JA.*, *Iuin-Aout*, 1918, pp. 24-31.

identification of the last-named country is generally accepted.[44] Chin-lin thus refers to the region of the gulf of Martaban which is certainly the same as the 'great bay of the Frontier of Gold' referred to in the Chinese texts.[45]

The kingdom of Chin-lin was also called Chin-ch'en. The *T'ai-p-'ing yu lan* (ch. 790, f. 23) has two quotations, Prof. Pelliot points out, about the kingdom of the Frontier of Gold. The first is taken from *Iwu chih* according to which Chin-lin is called Chin-ch'en. It is above 2000 *li* from Fü-nan. The second extract is taken from the *Wai kuo ch'uan* according to which one can reach Chin-ch'en by going west for more than 2000 *li* from Fü-nan. Prof. Pelliot sees in Chin-ch'en a graphic alteration of Chin-lin.[46] That the two are identical is also proved by Prof. Luce who points out that "the variants Chin-lin and Chin-ch'en, both perhaps of equal antiquity, are sufficiently close in sound to suggest that the name may be a transcription, and not a translation, of the native names; and this would explain the variant writings of *lin*, one of which, Chin-lin has no semantic value... If the *I wu chi* is the *Nan chou i wu chih* of Wan chen, the identification of Chin-ch'en with Chin-lin is as old as the third century; the name Chin-ch'en is also said to occur in the *Wai Kuo ch'uan* which may be the actual work of K'ang

44 Pelliot, *Ibid.*, p. 266, n. 5, where the reader would find his arguments in favour of the identification.

45 For additional arguments in support of the identification see *JBRS.*, Vol. XIV, Pt. II, p. 153, where Prof. G. H. Luce remarks: "Chin-lin, quite irrespective of its meaning or connection with Suvaṇṇabhūmi, might be placed on geographical grounds on the Gulf of Martaban. Chin-ch'en, or Chin-lin, is said to be more than 2000 *li* west of Fü-nan; Pieu-ton, Tu-Koun, Chu-li and Pi-Sung are 3000 *li* south of Chin-lin on the one hand; Tu-K'un and Tun-hsün over 3000 *li* south of Fü-nan on the other. It seems a natural conclusion that Tu-K'un, etc., were somewhere on the Malay Peninsula, roughly equidistant from (the capital of ?) Fü-nan (Cambodia) on the one side, and the Gulf of Martaban on the other. The mention of the 'great bay' is a strong argument; and the reference to the white population of these parts tallies with Ptolemy's similar account of Chryse."

46 Pelliot, *Ibid.*, p. 266, n. 5.

Tai (BEFEO., 1904, p. 270, *n.* 3), and in the fifth century *Fü-nan chi* of Chu Chih.''[47]

It is in the last-named text, *i.e.*, the *Fü-nan chi* of Chu Chih that there is an interesting reference to what may be said to have an important bearing on our present subject of study. Here is Prof. Pelliot's version of the portion of the text as quoted in the *Shui Chīng Chu* (ch. 1, *f*, 7, *verso*) : "The kingdom of Lin-Yang (old pronunciation : Liem-(d) iang) is 2000 *li* by land-route from that of Chin-ch'en. One goes there by carriage or on horseback; there is no route by water. *All the people worship the Buddha.*'' This kingdom of Lin-Yang is the subject of a paragraph in the *T'ai p'ing yu lan* (ch. 787, f. 13); it is mentioned, according to the report of the travels of K'ang T'ai, as being 7000 *li* south-west of Fü-nan, and according to the *Nan chou i wu chi* of Wan Chen, as being the same distance, but west. In the time of K'ang T'ai there were already in this country, according to his report, " *several thousand Śramaṇas.*''[48] K'ang T'ai, according to Prof. Pelliot, should be referred to the middle of the third century A.D. It is thus evident that Buddhism was already a flourishing religion at that time in the kingdom of Lin-Yang. But which is the region referred to as Lin-Yang in the Chinese texts ?

The kingdom of Lin-Yang is said to be 2000 *li* by horse or carriage from Chin-ch'en or Chin-lin which is Suvaṇṇa-bhūmi or Thaton region of Burma on the gulf of Martaban. Chin-lin again is said to be of the same distance to the west from Fü-nan that included modern Cambodia and the major

47 *JBRS.*, Vol. XIV, Part II, p. 153.

48 How unreliable are these measurements of distances as given in these texts is apparent in this statement. From Fü-nan Chin-lin is described to be 2000 *li* and from Chin-lin to Lin-Yang the distance is the same. The two distance lines thus form the two arms or sides of equal length of a triangle whose third side may be said to be supplied by the distance line of 7000 *li* from Fü-nan to Lin-Yang, an impossible proposition from the geometrical point of view. For the third side (7000 *li*) cannot be greater in any case than the other two sides taken together, *viz.*, 4000 *li*.

14563

portion of Siam. From Fü-nan, Lin-Yang was, however, 7000 *li* to the west or south-west. From these data as well as from the statement that it could not be reached by water, Prof. Luce infers that Lin-Yang might have been situated in the north or centre of Burma.[49] I do not follow why Lin-Yang should be located so high up in the peninsula as in the north, though one may possibly be disposed to locate it in the centre. It is difficult to ascertain from where all distances in respect of Fü-nan were counted; was it from the capital or from the nearest borderland—and what again should be our attitude with regard to the distances and directions as stated in the texts which are our only source of information? Should we interpret them literally or accept merely their sense? That they are sometimes absolutely unreliable is well known. These are some of the difficulties with respect to any identification of Lin-Yang; but let us go by the facts as they are stated. If, then, the identification of Chin-ch'en or Chin-lin with the Thaton region is correct, and Prof. Luce admits that it is so, the capital of Fü-nan from where presumably all distances in respect of that country were counted or the nearest border region of that kingdom, must be situated, on the authority of the *I wu chih* as quoted in the *T'ai p'ing yu lan* referred to above, some 2000 *li* east of Thaton.[50] The distance of Lin-Yang from Chin-ch'en is also stated as 2000 *li*, but the direction is not given. It cannot, however, be southwards from Chin-ch'en, for that way stretches the Malay Peninsula which borders on the sea, nor can it be direct westwards

[49] *JBRS.*, Vol. XIV, Part II, p. 154.

[50] The capital of Fü-nan was at T'e-mu, and was 500 *li* from the sea, evidently the South China Sea. We should, therefore, search for it somewhere, probably on the Mekong up Vien Tiane. Peiliot would, however, locate it between Chandone and Phnompenh, perhaps near Vyādhapura (Angkor Borei). *BEFEO.*, 1902, p. 128; 1903, p. 247, 269-90; 1904, p. 214. The difficulty with regard to the identification is that Chin-lin is not due west from such a location; the distance too is more than 500 *li*.

from Thaton. According to Cunningham's computation one Chinese *li* in Hsüan-Chuang's time was equivalent to one-sixth of an English mile;[51] if it is assumed that Chinese *li* measured the same distance in the third century as well, we have roughly over 300 English miles as the distance from Chin-ch'en or Thaton to Lin-Yang. But this distance must not be measured as the crow flies, for cart or horse tracks in those days lay necessarily in a zigzag .course. Nor should they, I think, be taken too literally. If we take this into consideration and allow some concession as to the measurement of the distance in *li*, I think, we cannot go higher up northwards than Hmawza, the site of the capital of the old kingdom of Prome. In fact, I infer that the kingdom of Lin-Yang may be the same as the kingdom of old Prome that lay, even in those days, much to the interior at considerable distance from the coast, and could not be reached by water especially from the region of Chin-ch'en. The identification with Prome may also find support from the fact that only two centuries later we have definite evidence of the prevalence of Buddhism in the capital city of this old kingdom where Pāli canonical literature was studied in its doctrinal and most intricate aspects.

But whether the identification of Lin-Yang with Prome stands or is just a mere conjecture, we cannot doubt that this kingdom must be sought for somewhere in Burma, either in the region of Prome or higher up in the central districts of the peninsula,[52] where Buddhism was already in the middle of the third century very well established with several thousand śramaṇas adhering to the Faith, and the whole people subscribing to the worship of the Buddha. If the

51 Cunningham's *Ancient Geography of India*, App. B., p. 571 ff.

52 But it should be borne in mind that the entire discussion centering on Lin-Yang is based on the identification of Chin-lin (Chin-ch'en) with the region bordering on the gulf of Martaban, which, however, is generally accepted. But see Luce, *JBRS.*, Vol. XIV, Part II, p. 155, *n.* 1.

identifications set forth above are correct, and it seems they are quite plausible, then there can be no doubt that Buddhism was already an established faith in certain places in Burma in about the third century A.D.[53] This piece of evidence and that of the Nāgārjunikoṇḍa record may thus be said to support each other in their assertion of Buddhism having been a prevalent form of religion in Burma in the third century A.D.

V

THE BUDDHAGHOSA TRADITION: LEGEND AND HISTORY C. 400-450 A.D.

Burmese chronicles preserve to this day a strong and insistent tradition current everywhere in the Buddhist hierarchy of Burma that Buddhaghosa, the celebrated Buddhist commentator and author of a number of Buddhist texts, was a native of Burma. Born in Thaton, he is said to have made a voyage to Ceylon in the year of religion 943, *i.e.*, 400 A.D.[54] The Burmans ascribe a new era in their religion to the time when the great scholar reached their country back from Ceylon.[55] He succeeded in his undertaking. He made use of the Talaing characters in transcribing the manuscripts which were written in the character of Magadha. The Burmans lay much stress on that voyage, always carefully noting down the year it took place. In

53 In Tun-hsün (*i.e.*, Tennaserim) Brahmanism was at this time at least one of the prevalent forms of religion, preached evidently by Indian colonists. "The kingdom of Tun-hsün depends on Fü-nan..... In this country there are 500 families of Hu of India, two Fo-t'u, and more than a thousand Brāhmaṇas of India. The (people of, Tun-hsün practice their doctrine and give them their daughters in marriage, so many of these brāhmaṇas do not depart. They do nothing but read the holy books of the heavenly spirits and constantly offer unto them white bases of perfumes and flowers without ceasing, day and night." *BEFEO.*, III, p, 279 ff.

54 Rogers, *Buddhaghosa's parables*, p. xvi, *n.* I.

55 Hardy, *Manual of Buddhism*, p. 532.

fact, it is to Buddhaghosa that the people of the shores of the gulf of Martaban owe the possession of Buddhist scriptures.[56] He is said to have also brought over from Ceylon to Burma a copy of Kaccāyana's Pāli grammar which he translated into Burmese, and to have written a commentary as well upon it.[57] A volume of parables in Burmese is also attributed to him.[58] The Burmese Code of Manu is said to have been introduced into Burma from Ceylon by the same Buddhist scholar, though the Code itself is silent on the point.[59]

Here is an example how the tradition is recorded in the chronicles of the country. It is taken from the *Hmannan Yazawin* which, like most other Burmese chronicles, claims Buddhaghosa to have been a native of Thaton from where he is said to have crossed over to a seaport called Bhangiri in the Deccan. Thence he reached Ceylon by ship. It then proceeds to give an account of his early life and career, and then of his sojourn in Ceylon including the story of the writing of the commentaries These accounts follow on the whole those of the Sinhalese chronicles.

" Thus when the great elder Ashin Buddhaghosa had given king Mahānāman a white elephant and sought leave to depart, he brought one out of the three copies of the *Visuddhimagga* which he had made together with the three *Piṭakas,* and crossed over to Jambudvīpa. And Sakka came to him and said : ' In Jambudvīpa, in the middle country, there is no standing place for the religion. The religion should shine. The religion shall stand and shine for five thousand years in such places as the distant jungle settlements in the south-east corner of the middle country, nine hundred (yojana) in circumference=Thārekhittara, Thiripyissaya (and) Rāmaññadesa. Carry it thither ! So he took it and crossed over and reached the city of Thaton, called Sudhammāvatī. And when the tidings were known, there was a general cry throughout all the kingdom of Rāmañña, and king and queen, men and women, monks and laymen, all welcomed the religion with diverse festivals, assemblies, celebrations, and almsgivings. As though the Lord Omniscient had

56 *Ibid.*

57 *Ind. Ant.*, xix, 1890, p. 532.

58 *Ibid.*

59 *Ibid.* In this connection see also Dr. B. C. Law, *The Life and Work of Buddhaghosa*, II, pp. 40-42.

appeared in their midst, they reverently raised the *Piṭakas*, and coming to the city palace they built a tabernacle in a lovely place in front of the golden palace, and there they laid the treasures of the religion.

"At the time the chief elder of the religious order was Ashin Anomadassi. This is his lineage: of the two monks of the Third Council, Soṇa and Uttara, who came to Suvaṇṇabhūmi in the cause of religion, Ashin Soṇa the elder had ten pupils who abode with him, the chief of whom was Ashin Mahāsobhita;—his pupil was Ashin Mahāsomadatta; his pupil, Ashin Sumantissa; his pupil, Ashin Sobhaga; his pupil, Ashin Somadatta; his pupil, Ashin Anomadassi. When Ashin Anomadassi was in charge of the religion, diverse saints and monks who were practising piety in the countries of Burma, Môn, Arakan, Shan Yun, Linzin and Sokkati, came one by one and studied and took away the sacred Pāli and the commentary, which had only been handed down by word of mouth from teacher to teacher; and so in diverse distant places even now the religion spreads and shines. This agrees with the *Sāsanavaṃsa* and the Thaton Chronicle...

"...The Great Chronicle says that it was in the forty-second year after the accession of King Thinlikyaung that Ashin Buddhaghosa crossed over to Ceylon. But in the forty-fourth (?) year of the reign of this king, being the 930th year of the religion or 308, Mahānāman had not even come to the throne; there is a gap of sixteen years. So it was not in the reign of king Thinlikyaung, but in the fifteenth year of the reign of his son Kyaungdwit that Mahānāman became king, in the 946th year of the religion or 324. This is found in the *Dīpavaṃsa* and agrees with the Kalyāṇī inscriptions, and the *Sāsanavaṃsa*.

"The above account has been omitted in the Great and Middle Chronicles, but is here inserted with extracts according to the books. in order to make plain the story of the arrival in Burma of the *Piṭakas*, of the religion."

Thus, so far as legend is concerned here obviously is an example of how the chroniclers of a later date satisfied their natural vanity by claiming as many celebrities of the religion they could as their own. Foulkes[60] and Smith[61] even doubted if there was ever a historical personage as Buddhaghosa. But we can readily ignore that argument now, for the celebrated Buddhist scholar has long been proved to have been a real historical personage. More substantial arguments in opposition are offered by Prof. Hackmann[62] and Prof. Louis Finot.

60 "Buddhaghosa," *Ind. Ant.*, xix, 1889, p. 122.
61 "Asoka's alleged mission to Pegu," *Ind. Ant.*, xxxiv, 1905, pp. 185-86.
62 *Buddhism as a Religion*, p. 68.

" There is ground " says Prof. Hackmann, " for doubting the statement that this man (Buddhaghosa) brought Buddhism to Burma. The chronicles of Ceylon to which we owe the information about Buddhaghosa and which must have been well-informed on the subject, give no account of his journey to Further India. Indeed, one of the most important inscriptions in Burma, which was erected at the end of the 15th century A.D. at the instance of the king of Pegu . makes no mention whatsoever of Buddhaghosa. The Burmese tradition which refers to him does so on account of his translations and writings having become fundamental in the country, probably also because his intellectual influence may have inaugurated a new epoch in Burmese Buddhism."

Prof. Finot, the distinguished French scholar, also speaks in the same strain.[63]

" In Indo-China, he (Buddhaghosa) passes for the grand apostle who brought to those peoples the treasure of the sacred books. Each country of the Peninsula is a claimant; the Burmese make him a monk of Thaton, modern Cambodia places him at the beginning of its religious tradition and has kept his name as one of the most elevated titles of ecclesiastical hierarchy.....The (Burmese) chronicles either secular or ecclesiastical are only the echo of Sinhalese history, altered by an insatiable national vanity. As they make Buddha travel in the valley of the Irrawady for predicting the foundation of diverse capitals, they substitute Thaton for Magadha as the point of departure or of return in the voyage of Buddhaghosa to Ceylon. Not only is this tradition apocryphal, it is not even old; it cannot go back in any case further than the 16th century. We have a decisive proof of it in the inscriptions of Kalyāṇī .. ..If the belief in the introduction of the scriptures to Pegu by Buddhaghosa had asserted at that time, the pious king would have no doubt reserved to it a place of honour in his abridgement of the history of the Church. But he does not mention the name of the great commentator; thus it follows that in his time no connection had yet been established between Buddhaghosa and Thaton."

Who would deny that there is great weight in these criticisms which are just and reasonable? The character itself of the tradition is such as to raise suspicion in a critical mind; and the omission, moreover, of any account of the great scholar's adventure in further India in the Ceylonese chronicles as well as in the Kalyāṇī inscriptions is indeed too serious an objection to overcome. The argument of omission, it is true, does not go very far, but it must be

63 The Legend of Buddhaghosa, translated from the French by P. C. Bagchi, *Cal. Rev.*, 1923, pp. 63-67.

admitted that in the present instance it goes a great way towards confirming the suspicions already created in our minds by the nature of the tradition itself. The omission in the Ceylonese chronicles may, however, be ignored; but not that in the Kalyāṇī inscriptions where the pious and zealous king Dhammaceti made it a point, as it were, to record each and every step in the course of the progress of the religion in the Peninsula up till his reign, and it is indeed difficult to assume that he forgot to record such an important event.

Furthermore, Prof. B. M. Barua[64] has recently introduced us to a second Buddhaghosa, a Buddhist scholar and divine, and an elder contemporary of the Buddhaghosa of the *Visuddhi-magga* fame. Evidence, unfortunately, is so meagre on the point that it is very difficult to establish his identity; we only know that it was at his instance that the younger, but the more celebrated Buddhaghosa undertook to prepare his famous commentary on the *Vibhaṅga*, the *Sammohavinodinī*. It may be argued that the elder Buddhaghosa may have been a native of Burma, and the chroniclers fathered on him all that passed in the name of the younger and the more celebrated one. But such an assumption is unwarranted; and if all that is claimed by the tradition current in Burma is to be believed, it is certain that none else than the younger and the more celebrated, the scholar Buddhaghosa, is meant.[65]

64 "Two Buddhaghosas," *Indian Culture*, I, No. 2, pp. 294-95.

65 "The Burmese tradition that Buddhaghosa was a native of Thaton and returned thither from Ceylon merits more attention than it has received. It can easily be explained away as patriotic fancy. On the other hand, if Buddhaghosa's object was to invigorate Hīnayānism in India the result of his really stupendous labours was singularly small, for in India his name is connected with no religious movement. But if we suppose that he went to Ceylon by way of the holy places in Magadha and returned from the Coromandal coast to Burma where Hīnayānism afterwards flourished, we have at least a coherent narrative." Eliot, *Hinduism and Buddhism*, III, p. 32.

But all this is more destructive or speculative. The tradition so loud and persistent, may not be without a meaning, a significance. Is it not possible to suggest something constructive, something that may help us to see the indication of history through the thick mass of legends? We may not be able to hit upon any positive evidence, but we may be able to throw, though in a small measure, some light on a tradition that has vexed scholars for long.

Recent archæological finds mainly at Hmawza, a small village rich in ancient ruins, five miles south of the present town of Prome, and the oldest seat, so far known, of kingship in lower Burma, have decisively proved that Theravāda or Pāli Buddhism was already well known in and around that country in the fifth and sixth centuries of the Christian era. Here have been discovered a number of epigraphs relating to well-known texts from canonical Pāli literature inscribed on stone and gold plates in what is very closely allied to the Kadamba script, paleographically belonging to the 5th and 6th centuries A.D. Two of these plates begin with the well-known Buddhist formula "*Ye dhammā hetuppabhavā.....*" etc., in Pāli, and refer respectively to the 19 categories of Buddhism, and the equally well-known praise of the tri-ratna as contained in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*.[66] Another epigraph contains an extract either from the *Dhammasaṅgani* or *Vibhaṅga*; while a third which is a gold-leaf manuscript is inscribed with an extract giving the chain of causation or *paṭicca-samuppāda* and other extracts from the *Sutta*, *Vinaya*, and *Abhidhamma-Piṭakas*. All these texts which we shall refer to in detail in the next section belong decidedly to Pāli or Theravāda Buddhism,

[66] It may be noted here that Buddhaghosa in commenting on the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, I. 14. 6, describes the merchant of Ukkala (obviously a form of Utkala) as having been inhabitants of Asitañjana in the region of Haṃsāvatī or Pegu. It shows Buddhaghosa's acquaintance with the region of deltaic Burma. *Vide* Forchammer, *Notes on the Ancient Geography of Burma*, The "Shwedagon Pagoda," Rangoon, 1911.

and the epigraphs prove once for all that this Buddhism was known and practised at old Prome (Hmawza) as early as when those epigraphs were inscribed, *i.e.*, in the 5th and 6th centuries A.D. Images of the Buddha in traditional poses and attitudes and belonging to the same period as well as stūpas and other monuments, belonging to the creed of Theravāda Buddhism by reason of the iconography of the sculptures that embellish them have been discovered in considerable numbers at the same locality. To all these we shall turn in greater detail in subsequent sections. These finds known to scholars for several years are important by themselves, but when we consider the period to which they belong and the tradition of art and palaeography which they are affiliated to on the one hand, and on the other the period when Buddhaghosa flourished and the country or countries which he was more or less associated with, they become at once invested with a deeper significance.

According to Dhammakitti's account in the *Mahāvaṃsa*, Buddhaghosa flourished in the first half of the 5th century A.D. This account is supported by Burmese tradition and other internal evidences from the works of Buddhaghosa himself.[67] Most of his years of activity he lived, it is true, in Ceylon, but tradition strongly connects him with South India as well, more definitely with Conjeeveram or ancient Kāñcīpuram which the great Buddhist scholar and preacher is credited with having developed into an important centre of Theravāda Buddhism. Tradition and history also associate him intimately with the Godāvarī region on the one hand, and the Kāverī region on the other. In fact, if tradition is to be given any value, it is to the credit of Buddhaghosa that Theravāda Buddhism had a new lease of life in South India.

We shall presently see in the sections immediately following, that from the fifth century onwards down to the middle of

[67] Law, *The Life and Work of Buddhaghosa*, pp. 9-11.

the eleventh there is a continuous record of a very flourishing state of Buddhism in and around the kingdom of old Prome, in fact, in lower Burma. The fifth century indeed seems to be very significant from what we shall presently see in the history of Buddhism in Burma. This century saw, in the old kingdom of Prome, a sudden awakening of Theravāda Buddhism a new start, as it were, of an old faith. It found from somewhere a strong impetus, a new urge of life, at about this period, and this new urge expressed itself in a wide outburst of activities in all directions chips of which have come down to us in the shape of a number of Pāli inscriptions, a large number of Buddhist sculptures and Buddhist monuments. Is it or is it not possible to connect this impetus, this outburst of Buddhist religious activity, suddenly in about the fifth century, with the Buddhaghosa legend? In any case the appearance or reappearance of Theravāda Buddhism in the old kingdom of Prome as evidenced by her old epigraphs and sculptures and monuments thus almost coincides not only with the period in which Buddhaghosa flourished, but also with the establishment and development of great centres of Theravāda Buddhism on the Kṛṣṇā-Godāvarī and Kāverī valleys, in places like Kāñcīpuram, Kāverīpaṭṭanam and Uragapuram, all intimately associated with the Buddhaghosa tradition. The coincidence seems rather to be significant, and when we examine the Burmese tradition from this point of view the story of the great scholar's visit may not seem to be altogether without a foundation, though one is conscious that such an argument involves a certain kind of logical fallacy. Besides, one has also to bear in mind the possibility of earlier prevalence of Buddhism in Burma that we have indicated in the previous sections. The surgence of the religion in the peninsula from about the 5th century referred to above suggests that there must have taken place somewhere near before that date a movement that spurred into

activity elements that had already been in existence for some time past.

Along with what has been stated above in this section and in a following one in support of a surgence of Theravāda Buddhist activities in lower Burma in about the fifth and and sixth centuries may also be considered the Môn inscription found at Lobpuri in Siam ascribed to about the same date; references to Thaton, the capital of the Rāmaññadesa or Talaing country, in several passages of Buddhist commentarial literature which in their Pāli recensions are dated about the 5th century A.D.; and references to Haṃsāvatī or Pegu in the Jātaka *Nidānakathā* (VOL. I, p. 37) as " Nagaraṃ Padumottara-Buddhassa " in several places in the *Manorathapūraṇī*, the commentary of the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* (Sinhalese edn., 1904) and other places. Both Thaton and Pegu, it may be remembered, are associated with the Buddhaghosa tradition.

In respect of the Buddhaghosa tradition it may, therefore, be assumed that there are cogent reasons for doubting it, but we must not treat the problem as closed or as decided once for all. There is, indeed, a probability of the tradition having something to do with actual facts, and it is, therefore, more reasonable to keep the door open for more light, and re-examine the legend in the light of evidences that are daily growing in volume and importance in favour of an early introduction of Theravāda Buddhism in Burma. But, Buddhaghosa or no Buddhaghosa in Burma, it is immaterial with regard to our study of the history of Buddhism in the Peninsula. If the tradition be given any value, the great Buddhist scholar must then have made his influence felt in Burma some time in the first half of the fifth century A.D. If it be dismissed, it would matter little, for almost immediately after, we have definite epigraphic evidence of the prevalence of Theravāda Buddhism, the religion of the Master, in its pure and unsullied form, in

lower Burma where Buddhaghosa is said to have established one of his centres of activity.

VI

BUDDHISM IN OLD PROME: C. 400-600 A.D.

EVIDENCE OF PĀLI INSCRIPTIONS

As early as 1897 there were discovered at Maunggan, a small village close to the ancient ruins of Hmawza, two gold plates bearing writings in Pāli inscribed in characters that have long been recognised as having a very close affinity with the Kadamba script of the fifth and sixth centuries A.D. Each of the two plates contains three lines which are in perfect state of preservation and the letters are so distinct as to leave no room for doubt as to their decipherment. They begin each with the well-known Buddhist formula: "Ye dhammā hetuppabhavā tesaṃ hetu....." but differ in the text of the extracts that follow.[68] This will be evident from what follows of the two plates.

First Plate

L. 1. Ye dhammā-hetuppabhavā tesaṃ-hetum-Tathā-gato āha
tesañ-cha-yo-nirodho evaṃvādi-mahāsamano-ti

L. 2. Catvāro-iddhipādā catvāro-samappadhānā catvāro-satipaṭṭhānā catvāri-ariyasaccāni chatuvesārajjāni pañchindriyāni pañcha-chakkhūni chha

L. 3. Asāddhāraṇāni satta-bhojjhaṅgā ariyo-aṭṭhaṅgiko-maggo nava-lokuttarā dhammā dasa-balāni cuddasa Buddha-koni aṭṭhārasa-Buddhadhammāni

[68] *Ep. Ind.*, V, p. 101 ff. For a more correct reading and interpretation see Finot, "Un nouveau document sur le buddisme birman," *JA.*, xx, 1912, p. 121 ff.

Second Plate

L. 1. Ye-dhammā-hetuppabhavā (te)sa(ṃ)-hetu-Tathāgato-
āha tesañ-cha-yo-nirodho evaṃvādi-mahāsamaṇo-ti
iti-pi-so-bhagavā arahaṃ

L. 2. sammāsaṃbuddho vijjācharaṇasampanno sugato-
lokavidu
anuttaro-purisadhammasārathi satthā-devamanus-
sānaṃ
Buddho bhagavā-ti

L. 3. svākkhyāto bhagavatā-dhammo sandiṭṭhiko akāliko
ehipassiko opaṇāyiko pachchattaṃ-veditavvo viññūhī-ti.

It is evident that in the first plate there is, besides the well-known formula, an enumeration of the categories of Saddhamma, evidently from the *Abhidhamma*, in a progressively numerical order. These categories are separately alluded to or discussed in more or less detail, in most of the *Abhidhamma* texts ; but it is probably in the *Vibhaṅga*, one of the seven books of the *Abhidhamma*, that these categories, some of them at least, if not all, are often alluded to and treated in detail. At least in one place the *Vibhaṅga* enumerates as follows some of the categories in a progressively numerical order.

Cattāro satipaṭṭhānā cattāro sammappadhānā cattāro iddhipādā pañcindriyāni pañca balāni satta bhojjhaṅgā ariyo aṭṭhaṅgiko maggo (*Vibhaṅga*, P.T.S. edn., p. 372).

This plate may, therefore, roughly be said to consist of a very short synopsis of some of the contents of the *Vibhaṅga*, a sort of a short note to help the memory or to serve as a guide to a teacher of the religion. The enumeration of the categories in arithmetical progression can also be found in the *Dīgha Nikāya* (P.T.S. edn., III, p. 102), the *Majjhima Nikāya* (P.T.S. edn., II, p. 245), the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* (P.T.S. edn., IV, pp. 125-26) and the *Udāna* (P.T.S. edn., p. 56).

The second plate begins in the same manner as the first; and to any student of Pāli canonical literature it will be evident that the first line is followed in the second and the third by the well-known praise of the Buddha, as described in the *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya*. We may find it, for example, in the *Puññābhisandavagga* of the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*,[69] a book of the *Sutta Piṭaka*, where the continuity of the text, as in our plate, is broken by an introductory and a concluding sentence in each case. This will be clearly evident from the extract reproduced below from the *Aṅguttara*:

Idha bhikkave ariyasāvako Buddhe aveccappasādena samannāgato hoti—iti pi so bhagavā arahaṃ sammāsambuddho vijjācaraṇasampanno sugato lokavidū anuttaro purisadammasārathi satthā devamanussānaṃ buddho bhagavā ti. Ayaṃ bhikkhave paṭhamo puññābhisando kusalābhisando—sukhāya saṃvattati.

Puna ca paraṃ bhikkhave ariyasāvako dhamme aveccappasādena samannāgato hoti—svākkhāto bhagavatā dhammo sandiṭṭhiko akāliko ehipassiko opanāyiko paccattaṃ veditabbo vinnūhīti. Ayam bhikkhave dutiyo puññābhisando kusalābhisando—sukhāya saṃvattati.

A reference to the praise of the Buddha may be found also in the Sāmaññaphala, Ambaṭṭha, Pāṭika and Saṅgīti suttas of the *Dīgha Nikāya*, as well as in the *Pārājikākaṇḍa*, *Sutta Vibhaṅga*, of the *Vinaya Piṭaka*.

A few more important Pāli inscriptions were discovered at Hmawza not earlier than twelve years later. In 1910-11 while clearing the small debris round the base of the Bawbawgyi Pagoda were unearthed two fragments of a stone inscription in Pāli; the third fragment completing the inscription was found the year after close by the same spot. The inscription

[69] P.T.S., Edn., Vol. II, 52, p. 56.

was edited and translated for the first time by Prof. Finot in his very interesting article already referred to.[70] The text runs as follows :

(1) (Samphusa)nā samphus(i)tattaṃ vedanākkhandho saññākhandho saṅkhārakkhandho

(2) ...diṭṭhivipphanditaṃ diṭṭhiayam vuccati chaḷāya-tanapaccayā phasso tattha kataṃ (a) (pha)ssa paccaya vedana yam ceta(s)i(kam).

(3) Saññojanaṃ ga(ho) patilaho patiggaho abhiniveso paramaso mummago.....

Evidently the text is something of the sort of a disconnected note of some of the essentials of Buddhist psychology. That it is an extract from a canonical text, there can be no doubt, and Prof. Finot suggested [71] that it might probably be an extract, not necessarily word for word, from the *Dhammasaṅgani*, a book of the *Abhidhamma*, while M. Duroiselle pointed it out [72] to be an extract from the *Vibhaṅga*, another book of the same Piṭaka. That the subject of the text of our inscription concerns itself directly with those portions of the *Dhammasaṅgani* which deal with the questions of *dhammā kusalā* and *dhammā akusalā* must needs be admitted, but nowhere in the *Dhammasaṅgani* the subject is presented in the way we have in the inscription. Duroiselle's suggestion seems to be rather precise, though in that case also the text of the inscription does not follow the order as we find it in the *Vibhaṅga*. It is evident that the text of our fragments is nothing but a cursory and indifferent note, loosely arranged, of an important article of the *Vibhaṅga*. What purpose these or such notes served or whom these were intended for is somewhat difficult to ascertain; but, as I have already

[70] *An.R.A.S.B.*, 1924, p. 22.
[71] Finot, *op. cit.*
[72] *An R.A.S.B.*, 1924, p. 22.

suggested, it is likely that these short epigraphs, by way of very short notes on essentials of the religion, served the purpose of a guide book, a book of points to help the memory, for those preachers of the faith who early took upon themselves the task of evangelising the land of Suvaṇṇabhūmi. It is not unlikely on the other hand that following the well-known Indian Buddhist custom, these short epigraphs had been enshrined as sacred objects of the religion within the stupas and temples from the ruins of which they were eventually picked up.

But the most important record hitherto discovered of Pāli Buddhism in lower Burma, again from the ruins of old Hmawza, is a book of twenty leaves of gold, exactly of the nature of old palm-leaf manuscripts of India, each inscribed on one side only, placed within two covers of the same metal: This unique record was discovered in 1926 last, and has recently been edited and published.[73] Each of the first eighteen leaves of the manuscript contains, like the Maunggan plates, three lines, the nineteenth four lines, and the twentieth only two. Altogether the twenty leaves contain nine extracts from the different texts of the Pāli Piṭakas: this will be evident from the excerpts quoted below from the reading of Mr. Lu Pe Win.[74]

(Roman numerals within brackets indicate the text number, while Arabic numerals indicate the number of the line on a leaf.)

Excerpt No. 1.

Siddham Āvijjapaccayā saṅkhāra saṅkhārapaccayā viññāṇa (I-1) viññāṇapaccayā nāmarūpaṃ nāmarūpapaccayā saḷāyatanaṃ (I-2) saḷāyatana paccayā phasso phassapaccayā vedanā vedanapaccayā (I-3) taṇhā taṇhapaccayā upādānā upādānapaccayā bhavo bhava paccayā (II-1) jāti jātipaccayā

73 *An R.A.S. B.*, 1938-39, pp. 12-22.
74 *An.R.A.S. B.*, *ibid.*

jarā maraṇaṃ sokaparidevita-dumkhado (II-2) manussupāyāsa sambhavanti. Evametassakevalassa dukkhakhandha (II-3) ssa samudayo hotī ti. Āvijjāya tveva asesavirāganirodhā (III-1) saṅkhāranirodho saṅkhāranirodhā viññāṇanirodho viññāṇanirodhā (III-2) nāmarūpanirodho nāmarūpanirodhā saḷayatananirodho saḷāya (III-3) tananirodhā phassanirodha phassanirodhā vedananirodho (IV-1) vedananirodhā taṇhanirodho taṇhaniradhā upādāna nirodho (IV-2) upādānanirodhā bhavanirodho bhavanirodhā jātinirodho (IV-3) jātinirodhā jarāmaraṇasokaparidevitadumkhadomanassupāyā (V-1) sa nirūjjhantīti. Evametassakevalassa dumkhakhandhassa nirodho (V-2) hotī ti.

Excerpt No. 2.

Udayavaya bhaṅgabhaya adinnava nibbida muṃjana upekkha (V-3).

Excerpt No. 3.

Siddha cattāro satipaṭṭhānā cattāro samappadhāna cattāro iddhipādā (VI-1) pañcindriyāni pañcabalāni sattabojjhaṅgāni ariyo aṭṭha (VI-2) ṅgiko maggo.

Excerpt No. 4.

Cattārimāni bhikkhave tathāgatassa vesārajjāni (VI-3) yehi vesārajjehi samannāgato tathāgato āsabhanthānaṃ paṭi (VII-1) jānāti parisāsu sihanādaṃ nadati brahmacakkamvatteti (VII-2) Katamāni cattāri sammāsaṃbuddhassa te paṭijānāti ime dhaṃmā (VII-3) anābhisaṃbuddhā ti tattra vata maṃ samaṇo vā brāhmaṇo vā devo vā (VIII-1) māro vā koci vā lokasmiṃ sahadhammena paṭicodessantī ti (VIII-2) nimittametaṃ bhikkhave na samanupassāmi. Etaṃ pāhaṃ bhikkhave nimitta (VIII-3) metaṃ asamanupassanto khemāpatto abhayapatto vesārajjāpatto (IX-1) viharāmi. Khīṇāsavassa te paṭijānanto ime āsavā (IX-2) aparikkhīṇāti tattra vata

maṃ samaṇo vā brāhmaṇo vā devo vā (IX-3) māro vā koci vā lokasmiṃ sahadhammena paṭicodessantīti nimittame-(X-1) taṃ bhikkhave na samanupassāmi. Etaṃ pāhaṃ bhikkhave nimittaṃ asa-(X-2) manupassanto khemapatto abhayapatto vesārajjāpatto viharāmi (X-3). Ye kho pana te antarāyikā dhammā vuttā te paṭisevanto nālaṃ antara-(XI-1) yāyāti tattra vata maṃ samaṇo vā brāhmaṇo vā devo vā māro (XI-2) vā koci vā lokasmiṃ sahadhammena paṭicodessatī ti nimitta-metaṃ (XI-3) bhikkhave na samanupassāmi. Etaṃ pāhaṃ bhikkhave nimittaṃ asamanu (XII-1) passanto khemapatto a-[b] bhayapatto vesārajjāpatto (XII-2) viharāmi. Yassa kho pana te atthāya dhammo desito so [nini] (XII-3) yati takka-rassa samma dukkhakhayāyā [ti] tattra vata maṃ samaṇo vā brāhma (XIII-1) ṇo vā devo vā māro vā koci vā lokasmiṃ sahadhammena paṭico (XIII-2) dessantiti nimittametaṃ bhikkhave na samanupassāmi. Etaṃ pāhaṃ bhikkha (XIII-3) ve nimittaṃ asamanupassanto khemapatto abhaya-patto vihā (XIV-1) rāmi. Imāni kho bhikkhave cattāri tathāgatassavesāra (XIV-2) jjānī tīti.

Excerpt No. 5.

Katamehi bhagavā cuddasehi buddhañāṇe (XIV-3) hi samannāgato Tathāgato ? Dum[khe] ñāṇaṃ buddhañāṇaṃ. Dukkhasamudaye (XV-1) ñāṇaṃ buddhañāṇaṃ. Dukkhani-rodheñāṇaṃ buddhañāṇaṃ. Dukkhanirodha (XV-2) gāmini-paṭipade ñāṇaṃ buddhañāṇa. Atthapaṭisaṃbidhe ñāṇaṃ (XV-3) buddhañāṇaṃ. Dhammapaṭisaṃbidheñāṇaṃ buddha-ñāṇaṃ nirutti (XVI-1) paṭi saṃbhideñāṇaṃ buddhañāṇaṃ. Paṭibhānapaṭisabhi (XVI-2) de ṇāṇaṃ buddhañāṇaṃ. Yama-kapaṭiherañāṇaṃ buddhañāṇaṃ (XVI-3) [ma] hākarūṇasa-māpattiyā ñāṇaṃ buddhañāṇaṃ. Sabba [ññu] tañāṇaṃ buddha (XVII-1) ñāṇaṃ. Anāvaraṇañāṇaṃ buddhañāṇa. Imehi bhagavā (XVII-2) cuddasehi buddhañāṇehi samannā-gato ti ti. (XVII-3).

Excerpt No. 6.

Maggānaṭṭhaṅgiko seṭṭho,
saccānaṃ caturo padā,
virāgo se (XVIII-1) ṭṭho dhammānaṃ,
dipadānaṃ ca cakkhumā ti.

Excerpt No. 7.

Siddhaṃ Danto dantehi (XVIII-2) sahapuraṇajaṭilehi vippamuttehi siṃginikasavaṇṇo rajāgaham pavisi bhagavā (XVIII-3). Mutto muttehi sahapuraṇajaṭilehi siginikasavaṇṇo rajāgahaṃ pavisi bhagavā (XIX-1). Tiṇṇo tiṇṇehi saha-puraṇajaṭilchi vippamuttehi siginikavaṇṇo rājāgahaṃ pa (XIX-2) visi bhagavā. Dasabale dasav[ā]so dasadhamma-cupeto so dasasata[ṃ]parivaro rājagahaṃ pavisi bha (XIX-3)-gavā.

Excerpt No. 8.

Yo[v]iro sabbavidanto
suddho appatipuggalo
arahaṃ sugato loke
tassahaṃ paricarako ti. (XIX-4).

Excerpt No. 9.

Iti pi so bhagavā arahaṃ saṃmāsaṃbuddho vijjācaraṇa saṃpanno sugato lokavidu anuttaro (XX-1) purisadaṃmasā-rathī satthā devāmanussānā buddho bhagavā ti. Abhibhavatu (XX-2).

It will be readily seen that the first excerpt relates itself to the very well-known Paṭiccasamuppāda Sutta or the Sutta of the twelve nidānas quoted so often in different canonical texts. This is to be found in the *Majjhima Nikāya* (P.T.S. edn., I, pp. 261, 263-64, III, pp. 63-64), the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* (P.T.S. edn., V, p. 184), the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* P.T.S. edn., II, pp. 1-2, III, p. 135, V, p. 388), the *Vinaya Piṭakam* (Oldenberg's edn., I, pp. 1-2), the *Vibhaṅga* of the

Abhidhamma Piṭaka (Rhys Davids' edn., pp. 135, 138-39, 165-68) and the *Dhammasaṅgani* (P.T.S. edn., p. 229). The second excerpt enumerates the seven kinds of Vipassanā-ñāṇa. "The *Visuddhimagga*, however, on page 639, Volume II of the P.T.S. edn., gives eight kinds and the *Abhidhammattha Saṅgaha* enumerates ten kinds. The text in our manuscript has omitted one, namely, the paṭisaṅkhānupassanā ñāṇa of the *Visuddhimagga* and three, namely, the sammāsanañāṇa, paṭisaṅkhāñāṇa and anulomañāṇa of the *Abhidhammattha Saṅgaha*."[75] The third excerpt is an enumeration of the 37 categories of the saddhamma in a progressively numerical order which can be traced to the *Dīgha Nikāya* (P.T.S. edn., III, p. 102), the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* (P.T.S. edn., IV, pp. 125-26), the *Majjhima Nikāya* (P.T.S. edn., II, p. 245) and the *Udāna* (P.T.S. edn., p. 56). The fourth excerpt classifies the four perfections of the Buddha to be found in the Mahāsīhanāda Suttanta of the *Majjhima Nikāya* (P.T.S. edn., I, pp. 71-72) as well as in the Catukkanipāta of the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* (P.T.S. edn., I, pp. 8-9). The fifth excerpt is also an enumeration of the fourteen kinds of knowledge of the Buddha which can be traced to the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* of the *Khuddaka Nikāya* (P.T.S. edn., I, p. 133). The sixth can be traced to the *Dhammapada* (v. 203) and gives an account of the categories of things that are best. The seventh describes the journey of the Buddha to Rājagaha with his disciples, the three Kassapa brothers. This episode of Buddha's life can be traced to many sources but particular reference may be made to the *Vinaya Piṭaka* (P.T.S. edn., *Mahāvagga*, p. 38) and to the *Jātakaṭṭhakathā* (Fausböll's edn., I, p. 84). The eighth is a verse and can be traced to the *Vinaya Piṭaka* (VOL. I; p. 38, P.T.S. edn.). The last and ninth refer to the well-known praise of the Buddha as described in the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta of the *Dīgha Nikāya*.[76]

[75] *An R.A.S.B., op. cit.*

[76] For these identifications, see also *An. R.A.S.B., op. cit.*

A comparison of these excerpts as well as those of the Maunggan plates and Bawbawgyi fragments with the Pāli canonical texts cited above would show that most of the excerpts, giving due allowance to the scribes' errors and slips, do not correspond word for word or passage for passage with those to which references have already been cited. This would probably warrant an assumption that the monks in Burma had before them texts that have not come down to us.

The citation of the paṭiccasamuppāda sutta in the first excerpt is interesting. It consists of the sutta itself as well as its nirodha, but no vibhaṅga, and the text is just as we find it in the Pāli canon. But what is more interesting is that it is perhaps one of the earliest epigraphic record of the Paṭiccasamuppāda formula in Pāli.[77]

Another gold-leaf, inscribed with characters exactly similar to the one just considered and similarly datable in the fifth or sixth century A.D. was recovered in 1928-29 from the Kyundawza village near Hmawza. The plate, broken in the process of cleaning in several fragments, bears an inscription in two lines. It is in Pāli and contains the first part of the well-known Buddhist formula in praise of the

[77] The Pratītya Samutpāda Sūtra in its Prākrit and Sanskrit versions is mentioned in very ancient texts. The earliest in Prākrit can be found in the Kharoṣṭhī inscription on a Kurram Casket edited by Sten Konow (*C.I.I*, Vol. II, Pt. I, No. LXXX); and the latest in Sanskrit can be found in a Brāhmī inscription on two Nālandā bricks edited by Dr. N. P. Chakravarty, *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. 23. For a very valuable and interesting note on the Sūtra, see *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. 23, "*A Note on the Pratītya Samutpāda Sūtra*" by Dr. P. C. Bagchi. The result of Dr. Bagchi's analysis as to the chronology of the texts as quoted in inscriptions and Chinese texts may in the light of further researches (*J.R.A.S.*, 1938, pp. 547-53) be set forth as follows: Kurram Insc. text (consisting of *Pratītya* alone)—c. 100 A.D.; *Sūtrālaṃkāra* text (consisting of *Pratītya* and *Nirodha*)—*c.* 100 A.D.; Kāsiā Insc. text (consisting of *Pratītya* and *Nirodha*)—*c* 450-75 A.D.; Chinese *Saṃyutta* text (consisting of *Pratītya* and *Vibhaṅga*—414 A.D.; Gopalpur bricks Insc. text (from both *anuloma* and *pratiloma* aspects)—c. 500 A.D.; Nālandā Insc. text (consisting of *Pratītya* and *Vibhaṅga*)—*c.* 520 A.D. and now this Hmawza insc. text (consisting of the *Paṭicca* and the *Nirodha* in Pāli) —*c.* 500 A.D.

Buddha discussed above in connection with the second Maunggan gold-plate and the gold-leaf Buddhist note-book. Though in the latter portion of the second line the letters are not so distinct, the inscription which runs as follows can be read without any difficulty :

1st line : Iti pi so bhagavā arahaṃ sammāsambuddho vijjācaraṇasampanno sugato lokavidū anuttaro purisa(dammasārathi satthā)

2nd line : devamanussānaṃ buddho bhagavā ti.[78]

Whatever be the textual consideration of these and similar other epigraphs, they would hardly affect the general deductions that we are even now in a position to make in respect of the position of Theravāda Buddhism in old Prome. These records were inscribed in a familiar script, long known to our epigraphists as the Kadamba script, of the fifth and sixth centuries of the Christian era. This script was used in the records of the Kadambas and early Cālukyas and was prevalent in the ancient Kuntala

[78] "The formula which is in praise of the Buddha, is a stereotyped one occurring in the *Vinaya* and *Sutta Piṭakas*. The Pyus appear to have had a predilection for copying short extracts from these two Piṭakas especially from the *Abhidhamma*, on gold and silver plates, which were enshrined within pagodas, as well as on terracotta plaques and stones."—Duroiselle, *An. R.A.S.I.*, 1928-29, pp. 108-09.

In the same *Report* (p. 107), Duroiselle informs us of the discovery of some terracotta tablets from a mound at Pyogingyi-Kôn bearing effigies of the Buddha on the obverse. The reverse of some of these contains short extracts from the Abhidhamma. One tablet, of which only the lower half remains, contains on the obverse a short inscription. All these epigraphs are in the same Kāṅāḍā-Telugu script of the 6th-7th century A.D. The short inscription just mentioned, is an extract from the *Abhidhamma* and is quite legible :

(adhi) paṭipaccaya anantara paccayo

The extract is probably from the *Paṭṭhāna* or the seventh book of the *Abhidhamma*. Another tablet contains an extract which appears to be from the *Dhammasaṅgani*, the first book of the *Abhidhamma*. It may be read as follows :—

Kusalā (dhammā aku)
salā dhammā avyāk (tā)
dhammā

(Kanarese district) and Andhra (comprising the valleys of the Kṛṣṇā and the Godāvarī) regions. The affinity of the Hmawza script with the Kadamba script is obvious, but it seems there is also an evident resemblance with the script used in the records of the Ikṣvāku kings found at Nāgārjunikoṇḍa,[79] and Jaggayyepeta,[80] both in the Kṛṣṇā valley, and palæographically datable in the third century. This seems to indicate that the Hmawza script belongs to the Deccanese variety of the Brāhmī script current in the Aṅdhra-Kuṅtala region, and is palaeographically datable in about the fourth and fifth centuries of the Christian era. The language of the above records, we have already seen, is Pāli, and they relate themselves to the doctrines of Theravāda Buddhism. We can, therefcre, safely conclude in the light of what we have discussed above, that (*i*) Buddhism of the Theravāda school was already an established religion, at least as early as the fifth century A.D.; (*ii*) Pāli as the language of Theravāda was known and understood in at least the capital city by a certain section of the people; (*iii*) Pāli canonical texts were known and studied in their doctrinal and most abstruse aspects; (*iv*) and finally, the source from where this Buddhism was fed and nourished was evidently the Aṅdhra-Kuṅtala-Pallava region of the Deccan and South India, from such centres as Amarāvatī, Nāgārjunikoṇḍa, Kāñcīpuram, Kāveripaṭṭanam and Uragapuram where Theravāda Buddhism during these centuries had established famous and flourishing strongholds. All these places incidentally were intimately connected with the Buddhaghosa tradition. It is, therefore, reasonable to assume that Theravāda Buddhism which in Burma to-day is of the Sinhalese form was originally introduced not from Ceylon but from the Deccan and South India, where in the time of the celebrated Chinese pilgrim I-ching (671-95)

[79] *An.R.S.I.E.*, 1916, p. 92; 1927, pp. 71-74.

[80] *A.S.S.I.*, I., pp. 110-111; *Plates* LXII and LXIII.

'all followed the Sthavira nikāya though there existed a few adherents of other nikāyas also.'[81] This will further be evident from what we know of Asoka's missionary activities in the Deccan and the Far South as well as from the evidence of the Nāgārjunikoṇḍa inscriptions discussed above, Hsüan-chuang's itinerary and the Buddhaghosa tradition. All available sources seem to suggest that eastern Deccan and the Far South sheltered, till as late as the 6th and 7th centuries, important centres of Buddhist activities. In fact it seems that it was not till the middle of the twelfth century that Ceylon came to play any important rôle in the history of Buddhism in Burma. It was in 1167 that Panthagu, the then Primate of the Burmese kingdom, chose Ceylon as his refuge, and in 1180 Uttarajīva, the Primate who had succeeded Panthagu, returned from a pilgrimage to Ceylon as the "First Pilgrim of Ceylon." In 1190 Capata, Uttarajīva's disciple, earned the title of the "Second Pilgrim of Ceylon." and on his return tried to convert the whole realm to the Sinhalese form. These missions coupled with Capata's attempts to Sinhalese Burmese Buddhism led to the gradual predominance of Sinhalese Buddhism in Burma and the wiping out of even the memory of the original source. But to this chapter of the history of the religion in Burma we shall have occasion to turn later on.

It is somewhat curious to find that in the whole range of Pāli commentaries and chronicles composed in Ceylon during the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries, there is nowhere any mention of the old kingdom or capital of the Pyus which, as testified to by the Pāli inscriptions and Buddhist sculptures and monuments datable from about the sixth to about the tenth century, was an important centre where Theravāda Buddhism had a flourishing existence. There in the Sinhalese chronicles and in the huge mass of

81 Takakusu, *I-tsing's Records of the Buddhist Religion*, pp. xxiii-xxiv.

commentarial literature incidental references to places, made well-known by their association with Buddhism, are but numerous; one can, therefore, reasonably expect to find a reference to this centre of Buddhism in Suvaṇṇabhūmi in the *Mahāvaṃsa* or at least in the *Cullavaṃsa*, but there is none. It is not unlikely that the place has been mentioned in some name which has not yet been identified; or, as the Buddhism of old Prome was not introduced from Ceylon and had consequently nothing to do with their country, the chroniclers and commentators did not feel inclined to mention it in their works. It may also be accounted for by the secular hostility during all these centuries between the natives of Ceylon and the Indians of the south, a fact that naturally disposed the Sinhalese authors to ignore the work of their enemies.

VII

BUDDHISM IN OLD PROME (*contd.*): C. 675-700 A.D.

The deductions from epigraphic evidence are strikingly corroborated by Chinese literary sources of a period closely following the date of the inscriptions. The most important evidence in this respect is supplied by the itinerary of the celebrated Chinese pilgrim I-ching. But it seems most unfortunate to the student of the history of Buddhism and the different Buddhist schools that this devoted scholar of the religion who travelled by sea from China to India *via* the ancient kingdom of Śrīvijaya, and spent about twenty-five years (671-695) abroad interesting himself in the study of Buddhism could find no opportunity to visit any of the regions bordering the sea-coast of Burma or situated at some distance to the interior. But if he could not actually visit any country in Burma, as he could not do most of the islands of the Malay archipelago and countries of Indo-China of which

he speaks nevertheless,[82] he certainly took pains to acquaint himself about the state of the religion in all these countries lying to the east of the Bay. That he succeeded to some extent is proved by a note in his *Nan hai chi kuei nai fa ch'nan* (ch. 1, f. 3, verso).

"At the (eastern) extremity (of the eastern frontier countries, *i.e.*, East India), there is the so-called 'Great Black' mountain, which is, I think, on the southern boundary of Tu-fan (Tibet, according to Takakusu). This mountain is said to be on the south-west of Shu-Chuan (Ssu-Ch'uan) from which one can reach this mountain after a journey of a month or so. Southward from this and close to the sea-coast there is a country called Śrīksetra (Shih-li-ch'a-ta-lo); on the South-east of this is Laṅkāsu (Lang-chia-shu); on the east of this is Dvā (rā) pati (She-ho-po-ti); at the extreme east Lin-i. The inhabitants of all these countries greatly revere the three Gems (evidently the *Buddha*, *Dharma* and *Saṃgha*). There are many who hold firmly to the precepts and perform the begging *dūhta*[83] which constitutes a custom in these couniries."[84]

[82] Takakusu, *I-tsing's Records of the Buddhist Religion*, pp. 8-11.

[83] The begging dhūta is one of the thirteen dhūtaries which are enumerated in Pāli in the following order:

a. Paṃsukulikaṅgaṃ
b. Tecīvarikaṅgaṃ
c. Piṇḍapātikaṅgaṃ
d. Sapadānacārikaṅgaṃ (begging from door to door)
e. Ekāsanikaṅgaṃ
f. Pattapiṇḍikaṅgaṃ (begging with a bowl)
g. Khalupacchābhattikaṅgaṃ
h. Āraññakaṅgaṃ
i. Rukkhamūlikaṅgaṃ
j. Abbhokāsikaṅgaṃ
k. Sosānikaṅgaṃ
l. Yathāsanthatikaṅgaṃ
m. Nesajjikaṅgaṃ

Of these Nos. *d* and *f* are not found in the Sanskrit list of Dhūtaṅgas (for Chinese counter-terms, see Takakusu, *Ibid.*, pp. 56-57; Childers, Dhūtaṅgaṃ). I-ching's reference perhaps includes all the three kinds of begging.

[84] Takakusu, *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10; Pelliot, *BEFEO*, 1904, pp. 405-06; Chavannes, *Religieux Éminents*, p. 58 n.

As to the state of the religion in Lin-i, there is a further reference in I-ching's *Record* (Takakusu, *op. cit.*, p. 12): "Setting out from Kwan-chou (Huan-chou), a district in Annam, right to the south one will reach Pi-king after a journey of rather more than half-a-month on foot, or after only five or six tides if aboard ship; and proceeding till southwards one arrives at Campā, *i.e.*, Lin-i. In this country Buddhists generally belong to the *Āryasammitinikāya*, and there are also a few followers of the *Sarvāstivādanikāya*."

Of the countries alluded to in the above passage, Lin-i has been sought to be identified with Campā, She-ho-po-ti with Dvārāvati (mod. Ayuthia in Siam), Shih-li-ch'a-ta-lo with Śrīkṣetra or the old kingdom of Prome (whose capital is represented by the ruins of the village of Hmawza, 6 miles to the south of the present town of Prome), and Lang-chia-shu with the kingdom of Chia-mo lang-chia or Kāmalaṅka of Hsüan-chuang.[85] Of these, the identifications of Lin-i, She-ho-po-ti (also mentioned by Hsüan-chuang as To lo-po-ti) and Shih-li-ch'a-to-lo are generally accepted, the latter country having also been mentioned by Hsüan-chuang as situated to the north-east of Samataṭa by the side of a great sea in a valley of mountains.[86]

But it is difficult to be equally definite with regard to Lang-chia-shu or Laṅkāsu, though I have elsewhere sought to identify the place with the entire Tennasserim division (*Sanskrit Buddhism in Burma*, pp. 24-29). It is generally assumed that I-ching's Lang-chia-shu or Laṅkāsu is the same as Hsüan-chuang's Chia-mo-lang-chia or Kāmalaṅka, the reason being that Lang-chia-shu is placed by I-ching exactly in the same relation to Śrīkṣetra and Dvārāvatī (To-lo-po-ti) as Chia-mo-lang-chia is placed by Hsüan-chuang in relation to the same two kingdoms (*i.e.*, Śrīkṣetra and Dvārāvatī).[87]

85 For these identifications, see Takakusu, *op. cit.*, pp. li-lii; Phayre, *History of Burma*, p. 32; Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, Vol. II, p. 200, n. 34; Chavannes, *op. cit.*; and above all Pelliot's "Deux Itineraires" in *BEFEO.*, 1904.

86 "Hsüan-chuang's orientation of Śrīkṣetra is evidently wrong; for it lies far to the south-east, not to the north-east of Samataṭa. The only solution that occurs to me is that Śrīkṣetra means (as is not improbable), not the capital, but the kingdom presumably of the Pyu; that at the time of Hsüan-chuang the Pyu kingdom extended, not as Phayre conjectured; "for a few miles north and south of Prome, but as in 806 A.D., over upper Burma; and that the road into Burma from Samataṭa started in a north-easterly direction, probably leading through Manipur and joining the Kāmarūpa route detailed by Chia Tin (785-805 A.D)" (*JBRS.*, XIV. II, p. 161).

87 "Thence north-east (*i.e.*, from Samataṭa) beside the great sea in a valley of the hills, is the kingdom of Shi-li-ch'a-ta-lo; thence to the south-east, in a

There can thus be no objection to the two kingdoms being the same; nor can there be any valid argument against their being identified, as has been done,[88] with Pegu and the deltaic region of the Irrawady. But as Lang-chia-shu has been identified with a considerable number of similar names found in Chinese and other sources, possibilities of identification of the kingdom with other regions in Indo-China have very naturally suggested themselves, and it is difficult to ignore them. It is pointed out that Lang-chia or Lang-chia-shu is mentioned several times by I-ching as a port visited by the pilgrims whose lives he records, on their way to India To quote one such passage :

" Tao-lin, a Chinese pilgrim, was tossed on shipboard over the seas of the south. He passed the pillars of Copper and reached the kingdom of Lang-chia. He crossed the kingdom of Ho-ling (Java) and traversed the country of the naked people (Nicobar) .....After several years he reached Eastern India, in the kingdom of Tan-mo-li-ti (Tāmralipti)." [89]

It seems clear from this passage that I-ching's Lang-chia (-shu) " was on the west coast of the Peninsula, on the route somewhere between Annam and Java; and if so, how can it be both south-east of Śrīkṣetra and west of Dvārāvatī which is placed on the basin of the Menam ? I-ching, when he sent his *Lives of the Pilgrims* back to China, had lived about eight years in the seas of the south, mostly at Palembang. Could he have made any mistake about the position of Lang-chia-shu.....? Or did he know, without troubling to distinguish them, two kingdoms of the name Lang-chia (-shu), the one somewhere in Tennasserim, the other on the east side of the Peninsula south of the Isthmus of Kra ? Or is I-ching here merely echoing

corner of the great sea is the kingdom of Chia-mo-lang-chia; thence in the east, is the kingdom of To-lo-po-ti." This is from Hsüan-chuang's *Records*; compare it with I-ching quoted above.

[88] *Op. cit.*

[89] Chavannes, *Religieux Eminents*, p. 100.

Hsüan-chuang, but substituting for Kāmalaṅka (a name unknown to him), one that was familiar, Lang-chia-shu, without much regard for geographical accuracy ?'' [90] These are some of the very pertinent questions that have been raised, and they have to be considered very carefully.

Meanwhile, Lang-chia-shu has been taken to be identical with the kingdom of Lang-ya or Lang-ya-hsun which is referred to in the *Liang shu* (ch. 54, f. 3 verso) and with that of Lang-ya-hsü mentioned in connection with Ch'ang Chun's embassy to Ch'ih-t'u kingdom in 607-08 A.D. (*Pei Shih*, ch. f. 3 recto; *Sui shu*, ch. 82. f. I. verso).[91]

Without going into the details of these texts which have been ably weighed and considered by Chavannes, Schlegel, Pelliot and Luce,[92] it may be said that the position of these kingdoms as described in the Chinese texts referred to, seem to be quite in accordance with that of I-ching's Lang-chia-shu, *i.e.*, they were situated somewhere in the east coast of the Malay Peninsula south of the Isthmus of Kra in the southern sea. Furthermore, Lang-chia-shu has also been identified with Ling-yu-ssũ-chia mentioned by Chau-ju-kua (1225) [93] as one of the fifteen dependencies of San-fo-ch'i (Palembang = Śrīvijaya = Sumātrā), which again, Çœdès thinks,[94] is the same as (*a*) Ilaṅgāsogam of the Tanjore Tamil inscription of Rājendracola (1012-1042), and (*b*) the Lēnkasuka, a dependency of the Majapahit, mentioned in the old Javanese poem Nāgarakṛtāgama (14th century). Prof. Pelliot thinks that Lang-chia-su = Lang-ya-hsiu = Lang-ya-hsü = Ling-ya-ssũ (-chia) = Lēnkasuka were one and the same

[90] Luce, *JBRS.*, *op. cit.*, pp. 162-63.

[91] *Ibid.*, pp. 164-65.

[92] Pelliot, *op. cit.*, *BEFEO.*, 1903 and 1904; Chavannes, *op. cit.*; Schlegel, *T'oung Pao*, IX, 193; Luce, *op. cit.*

[93] Chau-ju-kua, Ed. by Hirth and Rockhill. This kingdom is also referred to as Ling-ya-ssū.

[94] *BEFEO.*, 1918, No. 6.

kingdom [95] which he identifies with Tennasserim. Ferrand agrees with him but further identifies it with Ilaṅgāsogam, Locac of Marco Polo [96] (end of the 13th century), and finally with Lang-sakā of an Arabic manuscript of the 16th century, situated on the east coast of the Malay Peninsula.[97] He, therefore, fixes the position of the kingdom on the Isthmus of Ligor. But Çœdès, while finding in Lang-chia-shu of I-ching, Lang-ya-hsiu of the *Liang shu* and the Lang-ya-hsü of the *Sui shu* one and the same place, sees in the Ilaṅgāsogam of Rājendracola's inscription, the Ling-ya-ssy-chia of Chau-ju-kua and the Lēṅkasuka of the Nāgarakṛtāgama quite a different place.[98] He identifies the former with Tennasserim just as Prof. Pelliot does, and the latter with Gunong Jērai or Kedah Peak, in the south of the Kedah state.

I have in short reproduced above the various identifications of I-ching's Lang-chia-shu and the data on which they are based. None of them evidently is free from objections. Prof. Pelliot was obviously influenced by the fact that I-ching located the kingdom south-east of Śrīkṣetra and west of Dvārāvatī which one cannot certainly ignore. But I do not understand Ferrand's arguments for placing it on the Isthmus of Ligor; his identification does neither suit the statement that it was situated south-east of Śrīkṣetra and west of Dvārāvatī nor the fact which I-ching elsewhere seems to indicate, according to some, that it was on the opposite coast of the Peninsula somewhere on the route between Annam and Java. The first identification of Çœdès is understandable but the distinction he makes between the two sets of names is open to objections which have been

95 *BEFEO.*, 1904, pp. 405-407.
96 Yule and Cordier's edn. Vol. II, p. 276.
97 *JA., Juillet-Aout*, 1918, pp. 134-45, 153-54.
98 A translation of the Keddah Annals, *J. Ind. Arch.*, III, pp. 11-13.

ably pointed out by Prof. Luce.[99] For the present, however, I am rather disposed to agree, though it is not conclusive, with Prof. Pelliot, and identify I-ching's Lang-chia-shu with at least that portion of the present Tennasserim division which extends from Tavoy to Tennasserim, *i.e.*, the region watered by the Tennasserim river which is really to the south-east of Śrīkṣetra and west of Dvārāvatī (in the lower valley of the Menam).[100] As for other references by I-ching[101] to Lang-chia-shu, I think they can be reconciled in the following way : the boats that carried the Chinese Buddhist pilgrims kept generally to the coast line till they passed Fü-nan (or Chen-la as it was then called) whence they did no longer follow the coast line, but favoured by the current crossed the gulf of Siam almost diagonally till they came to anchor somewhere at the head of the gulf on the east coast of the peninsula, whence they crossed over to Ho-ling or Java, and thence *via* Nicobar to Tāmralipti. For the rest, we can safely assume that the kingdom of Lang-chia-shu extended from coast to coast of the peninsula.

Accepting this identification for the present, we are now in a position to use more or less definitely I-ching's data as to the state of Buddhism in the countries we are concerned with in our present subject of study. Of the various countries in Indo-China that practised Buddhism in his time,

99 *JBRS.*, XIV, II, pp. 168-69.

100 Personally I would like to assume that Lang-chia-shu was practically identical with the entire Tenasserim Division of to-day extending from Thaton to Tenasserim. The position then of the various kingdoms (not of the islands but of the continent) bordering the southern seas may be stated briefly as follows : First, Shi-li-ch'a-ta-lo or Śrīksetra, *i.e.*, the old kingdom of Prome of the P'iao or Pyu ; second, Lang-chia-shu or Chia-mo-lang-chia (Kāmalāṅka) to the south-west of Śrīkṣetra and west of Dvārāvatī ; third She-ho-po-ti or To-lo-po-ti (Dvārāvatī) on the lower valley of the Menam in modern Siam ; fourth, P'an-p'an to the south of Dvārāvatī and south-west of Lin-i (Campā) in a corner of the sea ; fifth, Chen-la or old Fu-nan (Cambodia) to the east and south-east of P'an-p'an ; and lastly, Lin-i to the extreme east extending as far as the coast.

101 See Chavannes, *Religieux Eminents*, pp. 57, 78, 100.

one, *i.e.*, Śrīkṣetra is definitely included in Burma; and the other also we have, for the present, identified with a region that is included in the same country. According to I-ching, 'the inhabitants of both these countries greatly revere the "Three Gems", and many of them hold firmly to the precepts and perform the begging *dhūta* which constitutes a custom in these countries.' That in one of the two countries, namely, Lang-chia-shu, Chinese Buddhist priests used to be received in those days with honour and treated with a great deal of respect will be evident from the two following passages which we quote on the authority of Chavannes :

> I-lang, Chih-ngan and I-hsüan, three Chinese pilgrims, having reached We-lei (a small sea-port west of Pakhoi in Canton) sailed on a merchant ship ..... They passed Fü-nan, and anchored in the country of Lang-chia-shu; and were treated by the king of that country with ceremony that is usually accorded to very honoured and distinguished guests.[102]

Further, Tao-lin, another Chinese pilgrim, also visited the kingdom of Lang-chia; he too was welcomed by the king of the country with the greatest courtesy, and was treated with utmost care and respect.[103]

It now remains to be considered : to which school this Buddhism of Śrīkṣetra and Lang-chia-shu (in the 7th century) really belonged ? On this point, I-ching himself, I think, gives us a very illuminating and a most definite lead. He speaks of the four nikāyas or schools of Buddhism in his time : the *Āryamahāsaṅghika nikāya*, the *Āryasthavira nikāya*, the *Āryamūlasarvāstivāda nikāya*, and the *Āryasammiti nikāya*, though " which of the four schools should be grouped with the Mahāyāna or with the Hīnayāna is not determined." In South India generally and Ceylon exclusively 'all follow the *Sthavira nikāya*,' or *Theravāda*, which was certainly included in the *Hīnayāna*. *Sammiti*

102 Chavannes, *Religieux Eminents*, p. 57
103 *Ibid.*, p. 100

nikāya also evidently was a Hīnayānist school.[104] I-ching seems also to include the *Sarvāstivāda nikāya* in *Hīnayāna*. For, when he speaks of the "Islands of the Southern Sea, consisting of more than ten countries, where the *Mūlasarvāstivāda nikāya* has been almost universally adopted," he states rather baldly that "Buddhism is embraced in all these countries, and mostly the system of the Hīnayāna (Smaller Vehicle) is adopted except in Malayu (Śrī Bhoja = Śrī Vijaya = Sumātrā) where there are a few who belong to the Mahāyāna (Larger Vehicle)." And on this point I-ching certainly could not misstate facts, for he himself subscribed to the school of the Sarvāstivādins.[105] This is more clear in the statement he elsewhere makes: "In Northern India (where 'all belong to the *Sarvāstivāda nikāya*, though we sometimes meet the followers of the *Mahāsaṅghika nikāya*') and in the islands of the Southern Seas they generally belong to the Hīnayāna, while those in the Divine Land or Red Province (meaning in both cases China) devote themselves to the Mahāyāna; in other places (obviously excluding South India and Ceylon where *Sthavira nikāya* was followed) some practise in accordance with one some with the other."[106] It, therefore, follows that I-ching

[104] Hsüan-chuang, the older pilgrim, definitely labels the Sammitīya school as Hīnayānist. Watters, *Yuan Chwang*, II, pp. 178, 242, 246, 247, 249, 252, 256, 258, etc.

[105] "In I-ching's time the Sarvāstivāda school flourished most in North India and in Magadha in Central India (Madhya-deśa), and had also some followers in East and West; but was entirely absent in Ceylon and had very few adherents in South India. No other school, so far as we can ascertain, ever flourished so widely as the Sarvāstivāda, either before or after the seventh century; though its adherents in India alone, in Hsüan-chuang's time were not so numerous as those of other schools" *JRAS.*, 1819, p. 420; Takakusu, *op. cit.*, xxii.

[106] I-ching's line of distinction between the two Buddhist systems, Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna, is likely to be considered liberal from the orthodox point of view. "Those who worship the Bodhisattva and read the Mahāyāna Sūtras are called the Mahāyānists, while those who do not perform these are called the Hīnayānists. There are but two kinds of the so-called Mahāyāna: the Mādhyamikas (of Nāgārjuna) and Yoga (or Yogācāra of Asaṅga)." *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

considered, and rightly so, *Sarvāstivāda nikāya* as belonging to the Hīnayāna, though he does not expressly say so.

From I-Ching's clear and somewhat detailed account of the distribution of the different schools of Buddhism, we are thus, I think, in a position to assume that the two countries of Burma (Śrīkṣetra and Kāmalaṅka or Laṅkāsu), where Buddhism was practised in his time, belonged to the Hīnayāna which included not only the Theravāda, or *Sthavira nikāya* as I-ching calls it, but the *Sarvāstivāda nikāya* as well. The prevalence of the latter sect may, in our present state of knowledge, seem somewhat startling, but, I think, we have somewhat independent evidence to prove its existence, at least in the capital of the old Prome kingdom in about the seventh and eighth centuries, and at Pagan in the subsequent centuries, till the twelfth (see, my *Sanskrit Buddhism in Burma*, 1932). As to the prevalence of the Theravāda, the Pāli inscriptions found at Hmawza and discussed elsewhere bear ample and eloquent testimony.

VIII

BUDDHISM IN OLD PROME (*contd.*)

EVIDENCE OF T'ANG CHRONICLES: C. 800 A.D.

But before we take leave of the information afforded by valuable Chinese sources we have to consider one or two relevant passages relating to the kingdom of P'iao (Pyu), in about the eighth century, from the chronicles of the T'ang dynasty of China (618-907 A.D.),[107] so far as they relate to our

Hsüan-chuang also very loosely distinguishes between the two, though he had great personal leanings towards Mahāyāna. This explains why he sometimes describes even the Sthavira schooi as belonging to Mahāyāna. See Watters, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 136, 198, 234, 241.

[107] *Chin-t'ang-shu* of Li Hsu, etc., and *Hsin-t'ang-shu* of Ou Yang Hsin and Sung Ch'i.

present subject of study. The *Hsin-t'ang-shu* (ch. 222 c, f. 2 verso) mentions eighteen kingdoms as vassal states of P'iao who are mentioned elsewhere in the same chronicle as having thirty-two chief settlements that were presumably distributed over the region extending from at least the mouths of the Salween in the south to so far north as to include the whole of Upper Burma.[108] The capital of the P'iao or Pyus has long been successfully identified with Hsüan-Chuang's Shi-li-cha-ta-lo (Śrīkṣetra) or Prome; the evidence therefore of the T'ang chronicles in respect of the religion of the country is certainly of interest inasmuch as it follows close upon that of I-ching.

" When the P'iao King goes out in his palanquin, he lies on a couch of golden cord. For long distances he rides an elephant. He has several hundred women to wait on him. The wall of his city built of greenish glazed tiles, is 160 li round, with twelve gates and with pagodas at each of the four corners.[109] The people live inside...*They dislike taking life.* They greet each other by clapsing the arm with the hand. They know how to make astronomical calculations.[110] *They are Buddhists and have a hundred monasteries,* with bricks of glass . embellished with gold and silver vermilion, gay colours and red kino.. *At seven years of age, the people cut their hair and enter a monastery ; if at the age of twenty they have not grasped the doctrine they return to lay estate .* For cloths they use skirts made of cotton, for they hold that silk should not be worn as it involves the taking of life ..." [111]

The annalist continues, "There is a huge elephant (or image) a hundred feet high; litigants burn incense and kneel

[108] See, *BEFEO.*, 1904, Pelliot's *Deux Itineraires*, p. 223; also Ferrand, *JA.*, *Marz-Avril*, 1919, p. 251; Luce, *JBRS.*, p. 161.

[109] The remains that are clearly defined of this extensive wall can still be seen round the ruins of the city; and three of the four pagodas at the four corners can perhaps be traced in the Bawbawgyi, the Payagyi and the Pyama stūpas.

[110] This probably refers to the Brāhmaṇa court astronomers whose influence in the Buddhist courts of Indo-China was considerable. They are again and again mentioned in Môn Inscriptions of the 11th-13th centuries. It is not improbable that the Buddhists had some knowledge of astronomical calculations learnt from the Brāhmaṇa priests whose existence in the old capital of Prome during these centuries is proved by the discovery of Brahmanical images mainly Visnuite. Ray, *Brahmanical Gods in Burma*, Calcutta, 1932.

[111] Parker, *Burma with special reference to the relations with China*, 1893, p. 12.

before it, reflecting within themselves whether they be right or wrong, and then they retire. When there is any disaster or plague, the king also kneels before it and blames himself.''

The evident conclusion is that during the eighth and ninth centuries Buddhism in the capital city of Prome continued as strong as ever, and claimed—this at least is the impression left by the passage quoted above—the large majority of the population, each individual member of which was required to spend some specified years of life as a monk, a custom that is still widely prevalent in Burma. The reference to a hundred monastic establishments need not be taken literally, but it certainly indicates a flourishing state of the religion in the country where the doctrine of 'non-killing' had taken so deep a root as not to escape the notice of even foreign sojourners.

IX

BUDDHISM IN OLD PROME (*contd.*)

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE : C. 500-950 A.D.

What is indicated by epigraphic and literary evidences discussed in the preceding sections receives direct and definite corroboration from what is revealed by archaeological finds made at the ruined site of old Prome. These finds range from at least about the beginning of the sixth to about the end of the tenth century A.D., and consist of a number of ancient monuments, a large number of stone and bronze images, terracotta tablets with or without inscriptions and reliquaries, all at and around Hmawza, a village full of ruins, five miles to the south of the modern town of Prome, and belonging definitely to the Buddhist creed. Out of this huge mass of evidence that

has been collected in the small local museum and in the office of the Archaeological Survey of Burma and described in the Annual Reports of the Archaeological Survey of Burma and India, a few only of the significant ones will be discussed here.

A consideration of the sculptures in the small brick monuments that still stand in the midst of the ruins of the old city and of the relics yielded by excavations round and about their bases, notably the Bebe, the Lemeythna and the Yahandagu, enables us to ascertain that these monuments were all dedicated to the worship of the Buddha; and judged from their sculptural and architectural style they cannot be assigned to a date later than the seventh or eighth century A.D. It is possible further to assume tentatively from a consideration of the art and iconography of the images that these temples were in the main patronised by the followers of the Theravāda faith. And, if the Pāli stone inscription fragments found from the debris of ruins of the railings and base of the famous Bawbawgyi stūpa had originally formed part of the monument which, it seems, they did, then we can assuredly count the Bawbawgyi also as one of the many religious foundations of the Theravādins at Hmawza. So must also have been the monuments from the ruins of which the longer Pāli epigraphs discussed in a previous section were recovered, since such records, whether on terracotta tablets or gold leaves, were presumably deposited inside the shrines as sacred relics. Other monuments such as the East Zegu, the Mahtaw village stūpa, the Payagyi and the Payama stūpas were also evidently dedicated to the worship of the Master and his faith.

The stone figure sculptures attached to some of these temples and terracotta votive tablets recovered from their relic chambers or from their debris of ruins do not all seem to have belonged to the contemporary tradition of art of the regions whence the Pāli epigraphs described in the previous section

or below in this section seem to have owed their inspiration, namely the Andhra-Pallava zone of India. A considerable number seems, however, to affiliate themselves with the north-east Indian tradition of the later Guptas, and not unoften have inscriptions on them in early eastern Nāgarī characters. To select only one example at random, the main image of the East Zegu temple is one of the Buddha himself flanked by what appears to be two bejewelled and crowned attendants. The attitude is one of preaching and the wheel flanked by two gazelles and two worshippers in the attitude of adoration on the pedestal seem to relate the incident to the famous *dharmacakrapravartana* at the Mṛgadāva at Sārnāth. This piece of sculpture plainly and frankly derives its style and iconography from the familiar East Indian tradition. "It can hardly be assigned to a later date," says Sir John Marshall, "than the seventh century A.D. and may be earlier."[112] Such scenes from the Buddha's life on terracotta tablets or stone reliefs recovered from the ruins of old Prome are by no means rare and the majority of them belongs to the east Indian tradition of art and iconography, and may safely be ascribed to a date ranging from about the 6th to about the 10th century A.D. Apart from the monuments referred to above, every year the excavator's spade is bringing to light the ruins of large and small brick monuments that appear from the contents of sculptures, terracotta votive tablets and other relics recovered from their ruins to have been dedicated to the faith of the Buddha, and almost all of them by reason of the style of the sculptures or the paleography of the epigraphs on the votive tablets may safely be ascribed to a date between the 6th and the 10th century A.D.

The ruined site of the old capital of the Pyus extending over many miles have so far yielded to the excavator's spade

[112] *An.R.A.S.B.*, 1909-10, Art. 33.

a very large number of sculptures in stone and bronze, terracotta votive tablets and other objects that are evidently affiliated to the Buddhist creed. Not unoften the sculptures, and in most cases the votive tablets bear short epigraphs on them in Pyu or Pāli or Sanskrit or sometimes in Pyu and Pāli or Pyu and Sanskrit written in either the Kadamba-Telegu script of the Andhra-Pallava region or in later Gupta-Brāhmī of north-eastern India. It is not necessary here to refer to each one of such finds whose number is legion and descriptions of which can be gathered from the *Annual Reports of the Archaeological Surveys of India and Burma*; for our purpose it would be enough if we could bring out the significance of some typical and representative objects. But before we can turn to a consideration of these archaeological documents it is necessary to take notice of the few faint lines of the political history of the kingdom of Prome during the four centuries, from about the seventh to about the tenth, of the Christian era, to which period the monuments, sculptures, bronzes, terracotta tablets, etc., may be assigned, stylistically and paleographically.

Besides casual references in the chronicles of the T'ang dynasty to the eighteen vassal states of P'iao and thirty-two different settlements to which reference has already been made in a previous section, there has been found from the ruins of Hmawza a number of epigraphs in the little known Pyu language referred to above. They are embossed or inscribed on earthenware funerary urns or on stone, and record the names of certain kings of old Prome with endings in 'varman' and 'vikrama.' The first set of these names were found recorded in a number of inscriptions on several funerary urns recovered in 1911-13 from an ancient vault near the Payagi pagoda; these inscriptions record the names of kings Sūriyavikrama, Harivikrama and Sīhavikrama, evidently of Hmawza, who ruled according to Dr. Blagden, the learned editor of these inscriptions, presumably in the seventh and eighth centuries

A.D.[113] The second set of names which, by the way, happens to be the names of a king Śrī Prabhuvarmā and his queen Śrī Prabhudevī were found recorded in another one line Pyu epigraph inscribed around the lower rim of a votive stūpa. This stūpa, it should be mentioned, has another line of Pāli inscription around the rim of the top of the cover, in a script which has long been recognised by M. Finot for the first time,[114] to have very close affinities with the Kadamba script (Kanāḍā-Telegu, according to Bühler) of South India, of the fifth and sixth centuries of the Christian era. The significance of Pāli epigraphs in this particular script will be discussed in a succeeding section; for the present we shall confine ourselves to the importance of these Pyu epigraphs with special reference to their bearing on the subject of our study.

The name-ending 'varman' led M. Duroiselle very naturally to surmise[115] that the ruling dynasty or dynasties, apparently of Indian blood, had their original home somewhere in South India, evidently in the Cola-Pallava country where royal dynasties with name-endings in 'varman' were rather common; in fact, the kings of the Pallava dyanasty had their name-endings in 'varman.' There are also reasons for assuming that there were two ruling dynasties, a 'varman' (*e.g.*, Śrī-Prabhuvarman) and a 'vikrama' dynasty[116] (*e.g.*, Sūriyavikrama, Harivikrama, etc.), both having their original home in South India. A long inscription, not in Pyu or Pāli, but in Sanskrit and interspersed with

[113] Blagden, *Ep. Ind.*, VII, pp. 127-32. Dr. Blagden told me in 1936 that he was no longer sure about these dates.

[114] Finot, "Un nouveau document sur le buddhisme birman," *JA.*, XX, *Juil-Aout*, 1912-27, pp. 121 ff.

[115] *An.R.A.S.I.*, 1926-27, p. 172 and plate XXXVIII, *e*. These inscriptions have not yet been edited, but a short notice appeared in above.

[116] The kings of the South Indian Kadamba dynasty had their name-endings in "vikrama." *Cf.* the nigamana of the *Abhidhammāvatāra* of Buddhadatta who was a native of Uragapura (Uraiyur) and flourished during the reign of king Acyutavikrānta or Acyuta-vikrama.

Pyu words and phrases which are nothing but translations of the Sanskrit version, in clear north-eastern Gupta-Brāhmī script of about the sixth and seventh centuries was very recently recovered from the ruins of the old city.[117] This record is important from more than one point of view. It supplies a definite starting-point in the political history of old Prome and throws considerable light on the contemporary history of Buddhism in the capital city. Moreover, it contributes substantially to the elucidation of the origin of the Pyu script.

It may now definitely be stated that the Pyu script is nothing but a local adaptation of the Indian Brāhmī script; and so far as the evidence of the few inscriptions discovered up to date may help us to ascertain, it seems that this adaptation took place sometime about the fifth century A.D.; for Pyu alphabets and numerals show a very close resemblance with those of Brāhmī of the Gupta period. But it is not yet possible definitely to ascertain whether it was the north-eastern or southern Brāhmī that served as the source for the newly-evolved script, though it may be pointed out that the elongated character of the alphabets is more southern than north-eastern.

The epigraph alluded to above is inscribed on the four sides of the pedestal of a torso of a Buddha image seated in *dhyānamudrā* and *vajraparyaṅka* attitude. Stylistically the image is definitely of late Gupta tradition and may safely be ascribed to exactly the same period as determined by the palæography of the inscription. The record in beautiful Sanskrit verse seems to have been set up by king Jayacandravarman at the instance of his religious teacher (ārya) with

[117] This important record, the first of its kind in Burma, is still unpublished. But the courtesy of Mr. K. N. Dikshit of the Archæological Survey of India, has enabled me to study the record, a summary of the results of which I am incorporating here. I acknowledge Mr. Dikshit's kindness and courtesy with thanks. A notice of the inscription appears, however, in *An. R.A.S.I.*, 1927-28, pp. 128, 145.

the express purpose of establishing and enhancing peace, amity and good-will, it seems, between Jayacandravarman, the king and his younger brother (*tasyānuja*) Harivikrama who had built two cities (*puradvayam*), evidently side by side, and one for each, even in one day (*ekaikadivase*). The import of the record allows us to arrive at some tentative conclusions : *first*, there presumably have existed some rivalry between the two brothers Jayacandravarman and Harivikrama, and the rivalry was put an end to it by providing two cities, one for each, from where they ruled, probably side by side and contemporaneously, so that there could be no loss of peace and good-will between the two brothers. *Secondly*, Jayacandravarman and Harivikrama both belonged to one and the same dynasty, not to two different dynasties by reason of their having had different name-endings, though it is possible that they had branched off in two different lines and ruled separately. There was thus no 'vikrama' or 'varman' dynasty in Prome as hitherto assumed. The different sets of names so far known of this Indianised dynasty of Prome can be provisionally arranged, in the light of the above assumption, in the following way :—

First line		Second line
...		Sūriyavikrama (688 A.D. ?)
Jayacandravarman *tasyānuja*		Harivikrama (695 ?)
Śrī Prabhuvarma(n)	...	Sīhavikrama (718 ?)
Śrī Prabhudevī		...

Thirdly, the dynasty seems to have become Indianised to the extent of not only accepting Buddhism as their religion but also Indian names, a practice that was becoming universal in Indonesia and Insulindia. They had also adopted an Indian script and an Indian language, in the present instance north-eastern Brāhmī of about the seventh century and Sanskrit respectively. It should be mentioned in this connection that

the image round whose pedestal the epigraph is found inscribed belongs to the late Gupta tradition of art. *Fourthly*, and this is important from our point of view, the dynasty to which these 'varman' and 'vikrama' kings belonged was evidently a Buddhist dynasty. This is proved *firstly* by the Pyu inscription round the silver-guilt reliquary stūpa, referred to above, on which there are images *repousse* in high relief of the four last Buddhas, with their names inscribed in Kadamba script, respectively below them.[118] They are Konāgamana, Kakusandha, Kassapa and Gotama with their attendants Kasab (Kassapa), Maulāna (Moggallāna), Sāri (Sāriputta) and ...da (Ānanda), the four disciples of the Buddha. It is significant that the names are given in their Pāli form, and that these names are followed by a short extract consisting of what seems to be words and phrases taken from Pāli scriptures. The characters of the record suggest that the source of inspiration of the subject of the record was the Pallava-Kadamba region of South India. This is also strikingly confirmed by a stylistic consideration of the images moulded in high relief on the stūpa; they belong to an art tradition having remarkable Pallava affinities. A further and more definite evidence of the cult professed by the initiator of these images and the epigraph is provided by the Sanskrit inscription round the pedestal of the Buddha image, just referred to above. As the record was set up by the king himself who chose the pedestal of a Buddha image for recording an important episode of his family, it may safely be assumed that Jayacandravarman and his dynasty professed the Buddhist creed. The kingdom of Prome was thus ruled over during, roughly speaking, the seventh, eighth and ninth centuries by an Indianised Buddhist dynasty of kings; and it was presumably under the ægis of this dynasty that

[118] It is unfortunate that these inscriptions have not yet been edited, nor their contents made known in any detail. For short notices, however, see *An.R.A.S.I.*, 1926-27, pp. -17273.

most of the monuments of the capital of the kingdom were probably built, epigraphs inscribed, sculptures modelled, bronzes cast, and terracotta tablets moulded.

We may now turn to the sculptures themselves. Apart from the ones already referred to attention may be drawn to several sculptures and their fragments depicting scenes from the life of the Buddha. Such sculptures though not so numerous as from Pagan of a later period are nevertheless unearthed from time to time, and are really significant. One such is a scene carved on a piece of stone representing the well-known story of the Buddha about to partake of the food offered to him by the two merchants, Trapusa and Bhallika, which is detailed not only in the *Jātakas* but in the *Mahāvastu* and the *Lalitavistara* as well. Following this story and connected with it in an inseparable way is that of the four Lokapāla devas who brought four stone bowels from which the Master was to eat the food offered by the two merchants. This story is depicted in another relief in which the Buddha is represented as seated in *bhūmisparśa mudrā* on a lotus pedestal, and on his left is placed what seems to be an alms bowl. He is flanked by four standing personages, two on either side, and each of them holding a bowl in both hands. Presumably they are the four Lokapāla devas in the act of offering bowls to the Buddha.[119] What also seems to be a *Jātaka* story is represented on a plaque where the main figure is dressed in crowns and armlets as a prince and is seated cross-legged on a lion-throne with his hands in *dhyānamudrā*. He is flanked by two standing figures turned towards him; that on the proper left is, as if it were, in the act of striking with a club held in both hands, the other on the right seems to be scratching the prince's arm. It is tempting to identify the scene as a representation of

[119] *An.R.A.S.I.*, 1927-28, p. 129; for two other scenes in Buddha's career, *Ibid.*, pp. 130, 131, plate LV, figs. 4 and 10.

the *Mūgapakkha Jātaka*.[120] On another terracotta votive tablet [121] the Buddha is flanked by two figures on each side, those to the right are in monkish dress, and to the left in secular dress. Below them are represented six persons, three on each side of what seems to be the *dharmacakra*. Lower below are two gazelles flanking the Wheel of Law which helps us at once to locate the scene at the Deer Park or Mṛgadāva of Benares; and if the five figures to the right are all monks, the scene must refer itself to the story of the first five converts of the Master, the *Pañcavaggīya bhikkhus*. There are also other fragments of stone and terracotta which depict the main scenes in the life of the Master. Such examples and numerous others mostly in stone and terracotta which represent the Buddha in one or other of his traditional *mudrās* and *āsanas* and with or without his disciples and attendants, may stylistically be said to derive their inspiration from the familiar Gupta tradition of eastern India, and ascribed on the same consideration to a period ranging from the sixth to about the ninth century of the Christian era. They are indubitable proofs of the existence of Buddhism in the old kingdom of Prome during these centuries.

Some of the Buddha images in stone—and there is a good number of them, fairly large in size—are frankly works of local artists and craftsmen. Such examples are almost invariably seated in *paryaṅkāsana* with the right hand in *bhūmisparśa mudrā* and the left placed on the lap and holding an almsbowl. This limited and orthodox iconographic type may perhaps be said to afford some argument for these images to be considered as belonging to the orthodox or Theravāda school, an assumption which is supported not only by their facial and physiognomical features, distinctly local as opposed to Indian, but also by the stylised

120 *An.R.A.S.I.*, 1926-27, p. 171.

121 *Ibid.*, 1909-10, p. 123, plate XLIX, fig. 8.

rendering of the artistic and iconographic type traditionally inherited from the Indian masters. One such image can still be seen carved on a large slab of stone [122] in the Bebe pagoda which is a small square building surmounted by a pyramidal roof in three stages superimposed by a *śikhara*. The Buddha is seated in *paryaṅkāsana* and is flanked by two figures seated cross-legged with aureole round their heads, their hands raised to the chest and clasped in adoration. They are evidently disciples. But what is interesting in this piece of sculpture is to see the Buddha's left hand, not the right, in *bhūmisparśa mudrā*, and the right placed on the lap and holding the alms bowl. This example is one good evidence to show how the local craftsmen while translating on stone the first lessons in iconography they received from their Indian teachers made mistakes that obviously the local converts did not consider grave. Another example of similar figures—the iconography is, however, quite correct in these instances—may be seen sculptured in groups on a large rectangular slab of stone [123] at the Yahāndāgu pagoda. Eight images here sit cross-legged in a row, all with their right hand in *bhūmisparśa mudrā* and the left placed on the lap and holding an almsbowl. The schematic curls of the hair are treated in mass; and the *saṅghāti* is indicated only by its edges as also by the fold treated in mass that hangs from the left shoulder. Figures of the Buddha of similar iconographic type but belonging probably to a different artistic tradition may be seen at the Lemyethnā temple, also another small rectangular structure whose roof is supported by a heavy square obelisk in the centre. Facing the cardinal points there appear originally to have been slabs of stone with figure sculptures executed on them in bold relief embedded in the square pillar. Two only of these slabs, those on the south and west,

[122] *Ibid.*, 1909-10, p. 120, fig. 3 on p. 121.
[123] *Ibid.*, 1909-10, Plate LI.

remain ; that on the south bears on it an image of the Buddha represented as seated cross-legged on a throne with what seems to be three flower vases in front.[124] The sculpture has suffered so badly that the image has lost its head, and the two accessory figures flanking him, portions of their body as well. The right hand of the principal figure is placed on the right knee with the palm down and the fingers raised upwards which probably suggests that it is in what may be called the *varada mudrā*. The standing figure on the right is probably that of a male, and that on the left of a female, but it is difficult to identify them owing to their very bad state of preservation. On the stone facing west the Buddha is flanked not by two human figures but by two *caityas*, and is provided with an aureole round the head. He is, moreover, seated on a lotus throne " with the feet, not the legs, crossing each other, thus showing the sole of one foot, that is the right foot which is placed just above the other, instead of both soles. The left hand is placed on the lap, but the right hand instead of being placed over the right leg with the fingers pointing to the earth and the palm inward, is stretched out and placed over the right knee." [125] Duroiselle has rightly suggested an iconographical affinity of this type with the Buddha images of Amarāvatī in South India ; [126] and, I think, that his assumption is supported by artistic considerations as well.

Recent explorations at Hmawza have brought to light a few more stone sculptures that are significant from our point of view. One slab depicts the famous story of the taming of the infuriated elephant Nālagiri at Rājagaha, while three others represent respectively the birth of the Bodhisattva Gautama, the scene of the conquest of Māra

[124] *Ibid.*, p. 120, pl. XLVII, fig. 6.
[125] *An.R.A.S.I.*, 1924-25, p. 26, Plate III, fig. 2.
[126] *Ibid.*, p. 27.

and the twin miracle at Sāvatthi.[127] Stylistically they can be assigned to about the 7th or 8th century A.D. and seem to affiliate themselves to the contemporary east Indian tradition though the impress of local craftsmanship is but too apparent on them. A comparison of similar scenes as depicted in the later reliefs from Pagan would show that the Hmawza ones must have been the prototypes of those from Pagan.

Another stone slab recovered from one of the three stūpas south of the Bawbawgyi shows an arched niche containing the image of the Buddha seated in *dhyāna mudrā* and flanked by two worshippers. The slab is inscribed, partly in Pyu and partly in Sanskrit, both in the well-known Andhra-Kadamba script of about the sixth century.[128] A Buddha in bronze seated in *bhūmisparśa mudrā* contains the first five letters of the Buddhist formula *ye dhammā* incised in east Indian Gupta-Brāhmī.[129] Another stone Buddha image has the central portion of its throne inscribed similarly with the first few letters of the Buddhist formula.[130]

Amongst other sculptures from Hmawza may be mentioned a good number of stone reliefs representing the Buddha seated or standing and flanked by two Bodhisattvas, Avalokitesvara and Maitreya. It is now well-known that these two Bodhisattvas were recognised as members of the Hīnayāna pantheon in Burma. The iconographic representation of such reliefs from Burma has an exact parallel in contemporary sculptures of eastern India.

Besides stone sculptures,[131] almost a deluge of small terracotta votive tablets has been unearthed from the ruins of the old capital, and every year the spade brings fresh hordes

127 *Ibid.*, 1938-39, pp. 7-9, Plate III, figs. *b* and *c*.

128 *A.R.A.S.I.*, 1934-35, p. 45.

129 *Ibid.*, p. 47, pl. XXII, i.

130 *Ibid.*, p. 71.

131 See also, in this connection, Ray, *Sanskrit Buddhism in Burma*, Chap. III, pp. 40-49, Chap. VI, pp. 88-91.

on the surface. These tablets easily fall into several well-defined types. A good number of them are embossed with short epigraphs recording the well-known Buddhist formula of the extolment of the qualities of the Buddha beginning with "*iti pi so bhagavā arahaṃ...*"[132] already known to us from the longer Pāli epigraphs discussed in a preceding section. There is besides a small number of such tablets that bear on them short legends in Pyu. But the script in both these types is the well-known east Indian script of the 8th-10th centuries. Still a smaller number, with or without any epigraph, represent gods and goddesses of the Sanskrit Buddhist pantheon. The large majority of the tablets, however, bear on them the popular Buddhist formula *ye dhammā...*,etc., in Pāli embossed invariably in east Indian characters of the 8th-10th centuries. Such tablets with the formula in Pāli but paleographically somewhat later in date (11th-12th) have also been picked up from the ruins of old Prome and Pagan. But they all seem to have been locally copied to order from Sanskrit originals. Of such Sanskrit epigraphs recording the Buddhist formula in Nāgari script we have literally a deluge both from old Prome and Pagan as well as from other sites, for example, from Sameikshe near Thazi. These tablets were generally deposited, probably as relics inside the relic chamber housed within the shrines and was also sometimes used by wandering devotees as moving shrines, a practice still not unknown among wandering preachers. Exactly similar tablets with the Buddhist formula inscribed in Sanskrit have been found in large numbers in Eastern India, at Sārnāth, Bodhgayā, Nālandā and other places; and not in a few instances the tablets found in Burma were presumably bodily carried over by Indian emigrants to Burma and by Burmese pilgrims who came to pay homage at the sacred sites sanctified by association with the Master.

[132] For a short notice of these records, see *An.R.A.S.I.*, 1927-28, p. 145.

It is evident from a stylistic examination of the sculptures and the terracotta tablets that they are affiliated to two different traditions. A small number of stone sculptures frankly owe their artistic inspiration to the Andhra-Pallava zone whence came also the impress of the Kadamba-Telegu script of those records that are written in Pāli. These undoubtedly belong to the Theravāda. But the large majority of stone sculptures and terracotta tablets seem to hāve derived their inspiration from the contemporary art tradition of eastern India. This is corroborated by the use of contemporary east Indian Nāgarī script in a large number of epigraphs inscribed or embossed on them. Those sculptures and tablets using Sanskrit or representing Bodhisattvas and their Śaktis, must be held to belong to one or other of the various schools and sects of Sanskrit Buddhism. Those that use Pāli, in whatever script can safely be said to have belonged to the Theravāda.

It is strange that from what have up-to-date been recovered by research and exploration in the shape of inscriptions, sculptures and terracotta tablets from the ruins of the old capital, it becomes apparent that during the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries the Pyu kingdom was in intimate relation more with the Andhra-Pallava-Kadamba zone than with any other part of India. But from about the seventh, eastern India seems to have come into more direct relation with realm of the Pyus and Talaings. In fact, east Indian influences on the art and iconography of the sculptures, terracotta tablets and Sanskrit epigraphs of Hmawza are only much too evident. This is a fact that has hardly yet been fully recognised. It is not the place here to go into a detailed discussion of the problem, but the fact remains that besides the Pāli epigraphs discussed in a preceding section, a few terracotta tablets bearing Pāli writings, and a small number of sculptures, there has been

recovered from Hmawza hardly any object that can definitely be said to betray south Indian influences, whereas there has been picked up from the huge mass of ruins a countless number of sculptures and terracotta tablets that frankly derive their style from the familiar Post-Gupta and Pāla sculptures of Eastern India. In inscriptions as well, without in any way under-estimating the value in this respect of the Pāli records in South-Indian script, one can point out that the importance of the long Sanskrit inscription recovered from Kān-wet-khaung-kôn and the numberless votive tablets with Sanskrit epigraphs, all in north-east-Indian script, is not much the less. A systematic study of the monuments of Prome is yet to be made, but here also as elsewhere, one may point out that not only the stūpas like the Bawbawgyi but also the rectangular edifices like the Bebe betray north-east-Indian traits as revealed respectively in the contemporary Dhāmek stūpa of Sārnāth and replicas of rectangular temples with *śikharas* sculptured on some of the reliefs of Bihar and Bengal, no doubt of a later date.

The sculptures and monuments referred to above by no means exhaust even a small fraction of what the old site of the ruined capital has yielded to archæological research and exploration. It has been possible for us to make notice of only a few, just to show that with very few epigraphic records and reliable chronicles at our disposal, these sculptures, bronzes, terracotta tablets and monuments constitute in fact the main, if not the only data for re-writing the very little known account of the early history of Buddhism in Burma. The main conclusion as revealed by a study of these documents is now well determined, and it may be stated that Buddhism during the centuries from the sixth to at least the tenth was a popular and flourishing religion in the capital city of the old kingdom of Prome, and presumably at other centres of the kingdom as well, expressing itself in numerous monuments, votive tablets and images in stone and bronze,

and deriving its inspiration not only from south India but from eastern India as well.

X

BUDDHISM IN PEGU. C. 1000-1050 A.D.

We have so long confined our narrative mainly to the capital city of the Pyus whence hail almost all archæological sources of our information. But this does not necessarily mean that the neighbouring realms of Pegu and Thaton, both included in the ancient Suvaṇṇabhūmi, were left untouched by the waves of the great faith. Pegu or Haṃsāvatī was well-known to the early Buddhist tradition, at least amongst those who followed the Lower Vehicle or the Hīnayāna. It has already been pointed out that the place is referred to in the *Dūrenidāna* section of the *Jātaḳas*, and is frequently mentioned in the *Manorathapūraṇī*, the commentary of the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*. Sujātā, the first lay woman convert was, it is said, born at Haṃsāvatī in a previous existence. Cittā, the Upāsikā and a number of other important personages of the Buddhist Order are said to have been born there. This intimate association of Haṃsāvatī or Pegu with early Buddhist tradition probably points to the fact that the realm had already come to achieve some sanctity in the eyes of the Buddhists by about the 5th and 6th centuries of the Christian era when the large mass of Buddhist commentarial literature in its Pāli recension came probably to be recorded down.

But Buddhism does not seem to have been the only religion in the realm of Pegu as it was neither in the capital city of the Pyus nor in Thaton or Suddhammāvatī. In Śrīkṣetra, the capital of the Pyus, Brahmanical Hinduism was a strong rival,[133] and the same condition

133 See, Ray, *Brahmanical Gods in Burma*, Cal. Univ., 1932.

seems to have prevailed in Pegu and Thaton as well. In Pegu, moreover, it seems to have sometimes claimed homage and patronage from the reigning kings; and the two religions at times even came into conflict with each other. The tradition of such a conflict is preserved in the *Slapat Rajawan*, a local Burmese chronicle. There is much of legendary element in the story which is reproduced at some length below, but to any careful reader its historical value is obvious. The following story which relates itself to king Tissa of Pegu, assigned according to local or Burmese reckoning to the middle of the eleventh century (1043-57), affords a key to the position of Buddhism in Pegu during his reign, and shows how it was sometimes persecuted; but that seems to be an attempt of the chroniclers who were all Buddhists of a much later date at proving the superiority of the religion they themselves professed.

" Tissa was a heretic king of Pegu. He...made no obeisance to the Buddha, to the Law he hearkened not, he honoured the Brāhmaṇas. He threw down the images of the Buddha and cast them away into ditches and marshes.

" Now there was a certain merchant's daughter who clung to true religion. Bhadrādevī was this maiden's name. From her tenth year she went out to listen with her parents and hearkened continually to the Law. She had exceeding great joy in the Three Gems (Triratna) Daily she said the Three Names of Refuge (*Buddha, Dhamma, Saṃgha*) with care. And it came to pass that the time when she was in her first youth was the time when the king cast down the images of the Buddha. At that time the maiden went down to bathe, and by chance she thrust her hand against an image of Buddha. And she drew it up and it glistened with gold. She asked, ' who has caused this image to be cast away?' And the old slave-woman made answer, ' Lady, this king follows the word of false-teachers. Verily it is the king who has caused this image of Buddha to be cast away ? Whoever greets, honours or bows before Buddha at the pagodas, him the king causes to be slain and to be brought to naught, thus said the slave-woman.' When the maiden had heard these words, she spake on thiswise, ' I obey the Three Gems. I can endure death. First wash the image clean, then set it up at a pagoda.' She herself and the slave-woman washed it and set it up at a pagoda.

" Now as she was setting up the image, these things were told to the king. And he sent runners to call her. The maiden, that ring adorned with gems beyond price, spoke to the king's runners saying, ' Let me abide here before the image.' And she made haste to wash every image of Buddha as many as were there, and to set them up every one. And, after a time he sent more runners. When the maiden came before him, she spake unto him. But he listened with anger and spake in

thiswise, 'Take her to the elephants that they may trample her to death.' Then the maiden caused gentleness to soften the king and the elephants and the elephant-men, and continually she said, 'I take refuge in the Lord' and she called on the Three Names of Refuge. And the elephant dared not tread on her, but he roared with his voice, neither could the elephant-men make him run at her.. So men told the king in fear. When the king heard these things, he spake in thiswise, 'Cover her with straw for the funeral pyre. But the maiden caused gentleness to work again, and she called on the Three Names of Refuge. Men stirred themselves to burn her, yet she burned not. So they told the king in fear. Thus spake the king, and he said, 'O maiden, when I see the image of Buddha, thy teacher fly up into heaven, then mayest thou live. But if from the image of thy teacher there fly not up seven images, eight images, I will have thee cut into seven pieces.' And he had her led to the foot of the ditch .....and she prayed on thiswise, 'O image of the Lord of Bliss! I, thy hand-maiden, set up thy images. Buddha is lord everywhere, his Law is lord everywhere, his *Saṃgha* is lord everywhere. As Buddha, his Law, his Church are everywhere lord, so may eight images of Buddha fly up into heaven at the king's hall.' And in the twinkling of an eye there flew eight images up into heaven . towards the king's hall. And the maiden returned and pointed it out to the king ..Then said the maiden, 'O earthly king, Buddha, my teacher, is gone to Nirvāṇa. Thou hast been able to see only his images fly up into heaven in his stead. Thou hast followed false teachers and called them better. Let thy hand-maiden see them fly up.' Then the king commanded them to fly. But the false teachers could not fly. And the king drove them away...and he caused the maiden to bathe, and he raised her to be his chief queen .....and he returned thanks and followed true religion ever after." [134]

Thenceforth Tissa became a faithful follower of Buddhism and proved himself to be a patron of the Faith. Here is another passage, from another chronicle :

" In Benares land there was an ancient pagoda on the top of the river Ganges-bank. When the bank was washed away men picked up the relics and holy images that had been enshrined there, and gave them to their children to play, for there was no longer anyone to worship them. Now Nga Dula, a ship's captain, saw this, and he thought, 'The folk of the east country deem these images divine and worship them. I shall get gain if I sell them to the folk of east country.' So he bought them for a fitting price and came with them to the landing stage at Pegu..... Men told king Tissa...and he rewarded Nga Dula richly and ennobled him." [135]

Incidentally it gives an idea of the attitude of the Peguan people towards Buddhist images; they considered these images divine, and worshipped them.

[134] Schmidt, *Slapat Ragawan datow smin ron. Buch des Ragawan,, des Konigsgeschichte*, Vienna, 1906.

[135] *Shwemadaw Thamaing.*

XI

BUDDHISM IN THATON: C. 1050-57 A.D.

Like Pegu or Haṃsāvatī, Thaton or Sudhammāvatī, the capital of Rāmaññadesa or the Talaing country, seems to have been well-known to the Buddhist tradition of about the 5th and 6th centuries of the Christian era. The city is referred to in several passages in the commentaries which in their Pāli recension are generally dated about that time. But in the absence of any archæological finds of such an early date or of other evidences to which a more or less early and definite date can be assigned, it is difficult to further press the assumption. Indeed, not before the middle of the eleventh century, 1057 to be more exact, do we have any idea of the state of the religion in this part of peninsular Burma. But when in 1057 the curtain is lifted before us we achieve a clear view not of faint traces but of a vast panorama in which life as in Buddhism is in full play. This view is provided by the story of the introduction of Theravāda Buddhism in Pagan in Upper Burma following the conquest of Thaton by King Anawrahta in 1057.

Anawrahta's conquest of Thaton is described in detail in all the standard Burmese chronicles as well as in the *Sāsanavaṃsa*, and is rightly given the importance it deserves. The long Kalyāṇī inscriptions, however, make a short reference; the reason is obvious, for king Dhammaceti's primary object was to record the history of the reformation of the Order by himself, and everything else was only of secondary importance, coming in only as an introduction to his own great work. The successful march on Thaton is viewed with importance by all later chroniclers, not so much for the actual conquest of the Talaing country and assertion of Burmese supremacy, as for the introduction of Buddhism in its purest form into Upper Burma and the consequent beginning of actual intercourse of the Marammadesa with

the outside world. The introduction of the new religion produced a general outburst of faith, and kings and ministers, rich and poor, queens and maids, nobles and commons vied with one another in devoting themselves to works of merit, and to the erection of sacred edifices of diverse plans and styles which stand to this day, in various stages of decay, as silent witnesses to the religious zeal that pervaded the whole country for nearly three centuries. It is therefore very interesting to read in the chronicles the rapid and dramatic march of events which led to this great awakening of faith and enthusiasm.

Shin Arahan was a young Talaing monk of Thaton well-versed in the sacred books of Theravāda Buddhism. Burning with the zeal of a fervent proselyte and with the intent of preaching the Law to the people of 'Tampadīpa' [136] he came to Pagan, and dwelt in a forest 'not near, not far' from the capital. One day he was brought to the capital before Anawrahta, the then reigning monarch of the realm of Pagan.

".....And Anawratha said, 'Master, of what race art thou? Whence comest thou? Whose doctrines dost thou follow?' And Shin Arahan made answer 'My race is that of the Lord Buddha, possessor of the nine qualities beginning with sanctity, the six glories beginning with lordship, and the four incomprehensible beginning with intuition. Thou sayest, whose doctrine do I follow? I follow the doctrine of the sermon of authority, most fine, subtle, difficult and profound, preached by the Lord—the Lord Buddha.' And the king was full of joy and rapture, and spake again, entreating him, 'My Lord, preach me somewhat—yea, but a little—of the Law preached by the Lord, the Master.' And

136 According to a seventeenth century inscription, quoted by Burmese diplomats in negotiation with the British Government and translated for his Government by Colonel Burney, at that time Resident at Ava, Tampadīpa included the districts of Pagan, Ava, Pinya and Myingyan. Yule, *Mission to the Court of Ava. The British Burma Gazetteer*, however, equals Tampadīpa with the upper portion of the Theyet district, on the east bank of the Irrawady. (Vol. ii, p. 746.)

Shin Arahan preached the Law...When he had made an end of preaching the king spake again: 'Where is my Master, the Lord—the Lord Buddha? How much is the sum of the Law preached by the Lord? Liveth there any disciple and son of the Lord save thee, my Master?' "

To all these Shin Arahan made adequate and satisfactory replies.

" And when Anawrahtaminsaw heard the words of Ashin Arahan, he was seized with an ecstasy of faith unbounded, and he said, 'Master, we have no other refuge than thee! From this day forth, my Master, we dedicate our body and our life to thee! And Master, from thee I take my doctrine!' And he built and offered him a monastery in the forest.....When the king and all the people forsook their own opinions and were established in the good Law, the Ari lords lost their gain and honour and bore great hatred against Shin Arahan. And the king fearing that the Ari would practise ill against him, took good heed and appointed guards enough to defeat the thirty Ari lords and their sixty thousand disciples. At that time there came many saints and novices from Thaton, and made saints and ghostly counsellors of those who were faithful in the religion..." [137]

But the religion that Shin Arahan had introduced could not thrive, there being no sacred text in Pagan, for, 'without the scriptures there can be no study, without study there can be no intuition.' But where were the scriptures to come from? And Shin Arahan said, 'In the country of Thaton are thirty sets, the three Piṭakas in each set. There are also many sacred relics!' So Anawrahta sent a wise minister with a store of gifts and presents to Manuha, the king of Thaton, to beg of him certain sacred texts and relics. But Manuha grew jealous, and 'answered ill': " It is not seemly to send the three Piṭakas and the relics to such as

[137] *Glass Palace Chronicle*, pp. 73-75.

you, who hold false doctrines—even as the fact of the maned lion can be kept in a bowl of gold and not in a vessel of clay."[138] It was a direct hint at Anawrahta's former patronage of the Samaṇakuttaka heresy, and an insulting refusal. Anawrahta grew furious and marched on Thaton with a huge force, by land and sea, and laid seize to the city. The rest of the story is briefly told. Anawrahta's men captured Manuha with his family and ministers who were all taken captive to Pagan. But Anawrahta's objective was still something more than Manuha himself or his kingdom; he wanted scriptures, and learned teachers to explain and preach all that was contained in them. He therefore "brought away the sacred relics which were kept in a jewelled casket and worshipped by a line of kings in Thaton; and he placed the thirty sets of Piṭakas on the king's thirty-two white elephants and brought them away... Moreover, to the Noble Order acquainted with the books of the Piṭakas he made fair appeal and brought them away."[139] Manuha was perhaps at first treated with consideration and allowed to pass the rest of his days at Myinkābā, in the outskirts of the royal capital, where he built two edifices, the Nanpaya which contains his throne room, and the other named and still known after him and where there is a colossal figure of the Buddha entering the *parinirvāṇa*. Later on, Anawrahta seems to have dedicated him and his family as slaves to the Shwezigôn pagoda, thus rendering them outcasts for ever.[140]

138 *Sāsanavaṃsa*, p. 62. Sadhammapurindo Manohari nāma rājā pi maccheracitto hutvā tumhādisānaṃ micchādiṭṭhinaṃ ṭhāne piṭakattayaṃ sarīradhātu ca pahiṇitum na yuttā tilokaggassa hi sammāsambuddhassa sāsanaṃ sammādiṭṭhīnam ṭhāne yeva patiṭṭhassati yathā nāma kesarasīharājassa vasā suvaṇṇapātiyaṃ yeva na mattikābhājane ti.

139 *Glass Palace Chronicle*, pp. 78-79.

140 *The New Chronicle*, however, denies this, and adduces an interesting reason: "Various chronicles say that Anawrahta dedicated Manuha, king of Thaton, to the Shwezigon ..... If Manuha was so dedicated his grandson would not have been married to king Narapati's daughter." The *Sāsanavaṃsa* too seems to suggest that Manuha (or Manohari) was not ungenerously treated by Anawrahta. (pp. 63-64). See also Forchammer's *Report*, Jan., 1891, pp. 7-8.

Shin Arahan had now got all that he wanted to have, and his mission received, as a result, a wonderful fillip. He had now at his service a large band of monks devoted to his cause, and a library of sacred texts[141] at his disposal. The abominable Aris—the heretic Samaṇakuttakas, as the *Sāsanavaṃsa* would call them—were already at bay; the king with his counsellors and ministers had already been won over; and the field was ready for the Arhanta to sow his seeds. And he lost no time. With the king and the court behind him and all the resources they could command, with the services of a devoted band, but above everything, with the zeal and fervour of a preacher and reformer and the will to win, his work of propagation of the sacred religion of the Śākyamuni went apace till within a very short time he had won thousands of converts to his side. Hundreds came forward to receive ordination, and entered the sacred Order, burning with the zeal and enthusiasm of new converts. At the head of them all, to guide them all was Shin Arahan, the primate of a kingdom daily growing and expanding.

This, in short, is the account of the introduction of Theravāda Buddhism in Pagan in Upper Burma. From this account it is evident that in the middle of the eleventh century Theravāda Buddhism had a very flourishing existence in the Rāmaññadesa, the land *par excellence* of the Talaings; and its capital Thaton[142] in the land of Thudammawadi (=Sudhammāvatī)[143] swarmed with hundreds of monks who lived in monasteries that must have housed libraries

[141] The scriptures that were brought from Thaton were all housed by Anawratha in a library-hall specially built for the purpose. This building known as the Bidagataik (=Tripiṭaka taik or Tripiṭaka library), an edifice of wooden origins, stands to this day in the midst of the jungle of ruins of Pagan.

[142] Thaton was anciently known as Sudhammapura or Sudhammanagara (Taw Sein Ko, "Preliminary Study of the Kalyāṇī Inscriptions," *Ind. Ant.* Vol. xxii, p. 17).

[143] *Paklat Talaing Chronicle.*

containing not only the books of "the Three Piṭakas but also the Four Books of Divination" [144]

...And the king of Arimaddanapura, having possession of king Manuha, took away the saintly monks, who were full ol learning and piety; he took away the monks who knew the Three Scriptures and the Four Books of Divination... he took them all to the land of Arimaddana (Pagan)." [145]

Moreover, the kings of Thaton were

"famous and mighty kings who upheld the religion of the Lord; all the people followed the command of almsgiving and all other commands of righteousness." [146]

There were in Thaton also different orders of monks besides the one to which Shin Arahan himself belonged.

"And thou hast asked—is there any monk of the Order, save myself, a disciple of the Lord? Yea, verily; besides myself there are the Paramattha Order and Samuti Order." [147]

Pāli as the language of the religious texts must have been known there and understood by the entire body of monks and at least by a section of the lay people; Pāli literature, mainly canonical and commentarial, was also presumably more or less widely read. It is evident that this reputation of Thaton as centre of the religion of the Buddha was not built in a day; it must have taken some time to enable Thaton to attain the glory she came to share with Kāñcīpuram and Kāverīpaṭṭanam in South India on the one hand and Ceylon on the other which incidentally, were the three other contemporary centres of Theravāda Buddhism. We may, therefore, start with the assumption that Theravāda Buddhism was introduced into Suvaṇṇabhūmi, the land of the Môns or Talaings, at least several centuries earlier, and gradually established itself not only at Thaton, but also at other places in lower Burma.

144 *Ibid.*
145 *Ibid.*
146 *Hmannan*, I, 252.
147 *The Glass Palace Chronicle* (Hmannan), p. 74.

But at the same time it must also be borne in mind that all our sources of information regarding Anawrahta's sack of Thaton and consequent introduction of Theravāda Buddhism in Upper Burma—the Kalyāṇī inscriptions, the *Hmannan* and other Burmese chronicles—belong to a much later date. In fact the Kalyāṇi inscriptions are the earliest datable record alluding to this important historical event, and they cannot be dated earlier than the 15th century. In recent years quite a large number of inscriptions from Pagan in Môn, Pyu and Burmese and datable from the 11th to the 14th century, have been discovered and deciphered, and it is strange that not even one of them contains any reference to this important and glorious historical event, glorious of course from the Pagan point of view. It is difficult to explain the silence of contemporary and almost contemporary records of the Pagan kings and the nobility to whose credit must have been due the vigorous religious and cultural drive that we witness in Pagan during the reign of the Anawrahta dynasty. Indeed the omission is so significant as to lead one to doubt the authenticity of the whole story as contained in later inscriptions and chronicles. Yet one must reasonably account for the deluge of epigraphic records pervaded by the unmistakable spirit of Buddhism, the countless number of temples, stūpas, monasteries, all dedicated to that noble faith and containing images of gods and goddesses belonging to the Buddhist pantheon, and stone reliefs and terracotta tablets bearing stories and legends of the Buddhist faith that suddenly begin to crop up at Pagan onwards from about the middle of the eleventh century. One cannot help feeling that this sudden outburst must have been due to some outside contact, some event or achievement that brought Pagan in touch with the march of a civilised and cultured life unknown to these northern barbarians who had swooped from their hilly retreats on to the torrid plains of the Upper Irrawady. And strangest of

all strange things, the Pagan records do not make any mention of any such contact, any such historic upheaval. It is indeed a pity that one has to fall back upon an explanation contained in records that are at least four centuries later than actual events. But it is almost impossible not to admit that these records, though late, offer on the whole a trustworthy and perhaps convincing explanation.

XII

A RESUME

In the foregoing pages has been traversed a wide expanse of time covering a period over twelve hundred years in an attempt to find out traces of Buddhism, mainly of the Theravāda denomination, in Burma up to Anawrahta's conquest of Thaton and consequent introduction of Theravāda Buddhism in Pagan in about the middle of the eleventh century of the Christian era. Not all the traces of footprints of the march of the religion through all these centuries are, it is true, equally distinct and pronounced; some of them are beyond reasonable doubt and may be treated as authentic, some are less certain since they rest on certain assumptions not yet definitely proved, but accepted none the less as working hypotheses; some even are based merely on traditions which fall far short of history, but critically considered they have strong claims to be recognised as containing germs of sober and authentic history that lie enmeshed in the thick web of mythical and legendry details. On the whole, we are thus able to present at least some unconnected facts in the early history of the most important school of Buddhism in Burma. These facts may be summarised as follows :—

(*a*) Asoka sends an ecclesiastical mission headed by Soṇa and Uttara to evangelise the land of Suvaṇṇabhūmi

(C. 250 B.C.). This is based on a tradition recorded five hundred years later. Circumstantial evidence lends no doubt a colour of probability to the tradition, but it cannot as yet be accepted as a fact of history. It cannot be dismissed outright either. The correct historical attitude would be to keep the door open for further research and investigation.

(*b*) Along with China, a part of Burma, known to Indian tradition as the land of the Kirātas or Cilātas, seems to have been converted to Buddhism by a fraternity of monks from Taṃbapaṃna (before C. 250 A.D.). This fact rests on the proposed identification of the Cilāta or Kirāta country with a part of Burma, an identification that appears to be upheld by all available sources of information.

(*c*) Chinese travellers see Buddhism a flourishing religion at Lin-Yang, identical with either Prome or some region in central Burma (C. 250 A.D.). This point rests on the identification of Chin-Lin with Chin-ch'en which has so far been generally accepted.

(*d*) Buddhaghosa or one of his celebrated contemporaries infuses new life into the religion in Lower Burma (C. 400-450 A.D.). The character of the tradition is suspicious, but circumstantial evidence leads a colour of probability to it. At least there is nothing antecedently improbable in the Buddhaghosa tradition.

(*e*) Pāli as the language of Theravāda Buddhism is known and understood, and Pāli canonical texts, at least the more important of them, are studied in their doctrinal and metaphysical and most abstruse aspects (C. 450-500 A.D.). Early Buddhalogy also seems to have been more or less a familiar subject, at least in the old Pyu capital, *i.e.*, old Prome. This point is beyond doubt.

(*f*) I-ching testifies to the prevalence of Buddhism in Śrīkṣetra (old Prome) and Lang-chia-shu or Laṅkāsu

(=Tennasserim) (C. 675-700 A.D.). This point is absolutely certain; the identification of Laṅkāsu with Tennasserim is, however, tentative.

(*g*) T'ang chronicles refer to Buddhism as the religion of the people in the capital of the kingdom of P'iao (=Pyu), identical with old Prome (C. 750-850 A.D.). This is as good as sober history.

(*h*) Sculptures, bronzes, terracotta votive tablets, epigraphic documents and monuments of the ruined capital of old Prome point to a very flourishing condition of the religion (C. 550-1000 A.D.). This is definite.

(*i*) Burmese chronicles refer to the prevalence of Buddhism in Pegu where it sometimes came into conflict with Brahmanical Hinduism (C. 1000-1050 A D.). This tradition seems to contain germs of sober and authentic history.

(*j*) And lastly, the story of Anawrahta's conquest of Thaton points to a very flourishing state of the religion in the Talaing kingdom towards the middle of the eleventh century (C. 1057 A.D.).

It is readily seen that from about the fifth century onwards we are on more definite grounds. Epigraphic documents prove beyond doubt the prevalence of the orthodox school of Buddhism, and the texts they quote reveal that the religion stressed the doctrinal and metaphysical aspects more than anything else. All the quotations are significant and refer to the fundamental creeds and tenets of the religion. Onwards from that date the continuity of archaeological evidence is maintained throughout, but they no longer yield materials that throw light on the character of the religion, nor can one say with any amount of certainty that the wealth of archaeological materials in the form of sculptures, bronzes, terracotta tablets and epigraphs all belong to the Theravāda denomination. In fact, it is now evident that by about the seventh and eighth centuries, Mūlasarvāstivāda was one of the *nikāyas* in practice in the capital city

of the Pyus. This is testified to not only by I-ching but also by a number of archaeological objects recovered from the ruins of the city. And, if the style and iconography of the gods and goddesses represented in sculptures and bronzes and on terracotta tablets and the paleography of the embossed epigraphs are any indication, then it must be recognised that Mahāyānism of the east-Indian affiliation was also well-known in old Prome by at least about the ninth and tenth centuries of the Christian era.[148] It is, however, difficult to say in what relations Theravāda stood in the realm of the Pyus in respect of the other *nikāyas* of Buddhism.

If the identification of Cilāta or Kirāta country with a part of Burma stand to reason, and if we lay aside the claim of the Asoka-mission, we have then to admit that Burma received the message of the Buddha for the first time from the hands of a Buddhist fraternity of southern India. The Pāli epigraphs in the Andhra-Kadamba script also point unmistakably to the fact that contemporary Theravāda Buddhism of the Pyu capital was directly affiliated to such centres of Buddhism in South India as Amarāvatī, Nāgārjuni-koṇḍa, Uragapura, Kāñcīpura, etc. Other *nikāyas* of Buddhism which we have evidence of at the Pyu capital, *e.g.*, Sarvāstivāda and Mahāyāna, seem to have been affiliated to the respective east-Indian religious traditions. This is determined by the style of art of the sculptures and terracotta tablets as well as by the paleography of the writings on most of them.[149]

But Sarvāstivāda and Mahāyāna were not the only religions Theravāda Buddhism had to measure steps with. Brahmanical Hinduism was also another Indian religion that had to be taken into account from at least about the sixth or seventh century A.D. Archæological explorations have

[148] For both Sarvāstivāda and Mahāyāna in old Prome see my *Sanskrit Buddhism in Burma*, Cal. Univ., 1936.

[149] *Ibid.*

up to now brought to light several Brahmanical sculptures from old Prome and Thaton that can be dated on stylistic grounds from about the sixth or seventh to about the tenth or eleventh century A.D. Burmese tradition in respect of Pegu referred to in a preceding section, and Chinese tradition as recorded by Prof. Pelliot in respect of Tun-hsün or Tennasserim seem to point to the same conclusion.[150] Existence of Brāhmaṇas and prevalence of Brahmanism in the realm of the Pyus and Talaings from very early times seem now to be beyond doubt,[151] but at no period of Burmese history does it appear to have achieved any considerable importance, and the account of the sack of Thaton by Anawrahta as preserved in the Burmese chronicles seem to reveal that Theravāda Buddhism which used to receive patronage of the Talaing royalty was the most dominant faith in the realm at that time.

[150] Pelliot, *BEFEO.*, 1903, p. 279.

[151] See my *Brahmanical Gods in Burma*, Cal. Univ., 1932, and *An. R. A. S I.*, 1930-1937.

CHAPTER TWO

EFFLORESCENCE

FROM THE INTRODUCTION OF THERAVĀDA BUDDHISM IN PAGAN IN 1057 TO THE FALL OF THE PAGAN DYNASTY : C. 1287 A.D.

Whoever has cared to study the local chronicles of Burma must have taken notice of one characteristic feature common to almost all of them. He must have seen that with the occupation of the Pagan throne by Anawrahta the chronicler becomes infused as it were with new life; his account becomes fuller with details, events begin to move with force and vigour, the narrative becomes more vivid, lively and continuous, information more definite, and the chronicle comes to stand against a more or less secure chronological background. It is from this time that the chronicler seems to give us a more or less exact history of the peninsula. In fact, there is in these chronicles and *thamaings* (prose histories of pagodas, monasteries and towns) and in the historical ballads a continuous history of Burma, full of details, not unoften with interpretations thereof, from the conquest of Thaton down to the British conquest of Burma; and on the whole the information and the interpretation furnished by them are reliable. This has been amply demonstrated by the chronicles and *thamaings* themselves agreeing with one another on all essential points as well as with independent archæological and monumental sources of information. A good deal of caution is indeed necessary in dealing with evidences from such sources, but that is more or less true of all literary and semi-historical materials; even then such

sources can be turned to the best advantage if the husk can be carefully separated from the grain.

A modern historian attempting to write a history of Burma from 1057 onwards has therefore reasons to be more happy about his materials which are far from scanty and are generally of reliable authenticity. It is thus possible for him to present his readers with a detailed, complete and continuous readable account whether of political or religious history without burdening it with discussions of details and examinations of materials that are otherwise necessary. The story of the religion from the memorable event of the sack of Thaton and eventual introduction of Theravāda Buddhism into Pagan onwards is, therefore, told with less difficulty.

I

SOURCES AND SOURCE-MATERIALS

A series of inscriptions originally engraved on ten upright stones at the Kalyāṇīsīmā, Pegu, for example, constitute a most important evidence, and may be considered to be a dependable foundation on which a structure of the events of Buddhism during the four centuries and a half from C. 1057 to C. 1500 A.D. can be built.[1] They are, moreover, our earliest sources, and since they devote themselves entirely and exclusively to recording the events and vicissitudes of the religion irrespective of any political or military activities of contemporary kings and dynasties they go to furnish us with an exhaustive and a most dependable account, simply and faithfully told. These inscriptions, it is well-known, were set up at the instance of king Dhammaceti of Pegu (1472-92) to record the re-introduction by the king, referred to in the inscriptions as Rāmaññādhipati, of a canonically valid monastic succession from Ceylon where, according to him, such a succession had been preserved,

[1] See Appendix to this chapter.

while in his own realm it had long been split up into schismatical sects. The validity of such succession depends on the ordination, strictly in accordance with the rules of the Vinaya, being handed down by successive ordinations on the one hand, and on the previous and proper consecration of the places where such ordinations are carried out. Dhammaceti had sent a mission of twenty monks to Ceylon to receive their re-ordination at the hands of the great *theras* of the Mahāvihāra. When they came back and when an adequate number of validly ordained monks had become available, king Dhammaceti caused them to consecrate in due form a *sīmā* or ordination site at Pegu. To this he gave the name of Kalyānīsīmā to commemorate the fact that the monks who had been sent to Ceylon had received their *upasampadā* ordination in a *sīmā* on the Kalyāṇī river. When the king had thus succeeded in creating a good deal of interest in the great work he had performed, large numbers of monks of his realm came flocking together to receive re-ordination at the hands of the monks already re-ordained in Ceylon. Dhammaceti was thus able to bring about a closing down of all schisms and effect an unity in the Buddhist Order of Burma on the basis of a canonically valid succession. In recording an account of this good and great achievement, the inscriptions begin no doubt with a full reference to king Asoka's reformation of the Buddhist Order and the mission of Soṇa and Uttara to Suvaṇṇabhūmi, but then take a long jump over more than 1200 years and at once refer themselves to the reign of king Manohari or Manohar (Manuha) of Sudhuim (Thaton) and the eventual conquest of Sudhuim and introduction of the religion into Arimaddanapura by king Anuruddha (Anawrahta). It is, in fact, from the account of the origin and consequences of the schismatical divisions of the Order in Burma, in Burma proper, *i.e.*, in the realm of Pagan, but with special reference to the Môn country, that the narrative becomes full of minute and exhaustive details

furnishing a complete record of the great work king Dhammaceti had so successfully performed.[1a]

Of other standard sources for a religious history of the period mention must be made of the *Mahāvaṃsa*, the *Cullavaṃsa*, the *Gandhavaṃsa*[2] and the *Sāsanavaṃsa*,[3] the last a Pāli work written in Burma by a Burmese scholar, and the *Piṭakaṭṭha-main*,[4] a twentieth century work. All these books have been utilised by Dr. Mabel Bode as furnishing elaborate bibliographies of Pāli literature of Burma and Ceylon; they are indeed the indigenous accounts of the Pāli literature of Burma furnishing us with an almost complete record of more or less well-known authors and their works. But at the same time they also throw much welcome light on the history and vicissitudes of the religion, and have a more or less complete record of the religious activities that were responsible for bringing into existence such a store of Pāli literature in Burma. The *Gandhavaṃsa* which is the earlier chronicle belonging to about the seventeenth century is not so full of details as the later *Sāsanavaṃsa*; it is in fact very sparing of information with regard to the period and chronology of the works it enumerates. The *Gandhavaṃsa* thus suffers from a serious drawback which is further

[1a] The Pāli text of the Kalyāṇī inscriptions with a translation and some notes as well as an introduction was first edited and published in 1893 by Mr. Taw Sein Ko in the *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. xxii; some additional notes were appended in the two years following under the title—"Some remarks on the Kalyāṇī Inscriptions" (Vols. xxiii, xxiv). These publications were issued in separate form, which, however, was further supplemented by a transcript in the Burmese character of the actual Pāli text, as it survives in a fragmentary state on the stones.

The Môn text of the inscriptions was edited in a most admirable manner by Dr. C. O. Blagden (*Ep. Birmanica*, Vol. III, part II, 1928, Rangoon). He gives a full reading of the Môn text, tested and verified by the Pāli text, and portions of it by two copies of a palm-leaf manuscript in the possession of the Kahnyaw monastery, Bilugyun, and the Bernard Free Library. This is prefaced by a very good descriptive account and followed by an able translation based upon the Môn text and its Pāli counterpart.

[2] *Gandhavaṃsa*, Ed. by Minayeff, *JPTS.*, 1886, Index, 1896.

[3] *Sāsanavaṃsa*, Ed. by Dr. Mabel Bode, *JPTS.*, 1897.

[4] *Piṭakkatthamain* (in Burmese), Rangoon, 1906.

complicated by the very meagre information it gives of the events and vicissitudes of the faith in Burma. But much more useful from our point of view is the *Sāsanavaṃsa* which fully utilises the older Burmese chronicles, for example, the *Rājavaṃsa*, which is most often referred to, the *Mahārājavaṃsa* or the national chronicle, the *Aṭṭhakathā* and even the inscriptions of the Kalyaṇīsīmā. It has, moreover, a reliable chronological sequence and even assigns dates to events, authors and their works which are verifiable with reference to other independent sources. Its value lies in that it enables us to present a brief but connected account of the religion. But the *Sāsanavaṃsa* has its limitations : "It is confused, rambling and prejudiced. The author (Paññasāmī) who dates his book 1223 B.E. = 1861 A.D., was the tutor of King Mindon-min and himself a pupil of the Saṃgharāja, or Head of the Order at Mandalay, a high ecclesiastic of Mindon-min's reign, belonged by all his convictions and traditions to the Sīhala Saṃgha (as distinct from and opposed to the Maramma Saṃgha or Burmese School) an important school or sect, having, as the name shows, a close connection with the Buddhist fraternity of Ceylon. As for the other communities whose spiritual forefathers refused to look on the Mahāvihāra (of Ceylon)... as the very centre and hearth of orthodoxy, they interest him only moderately... Therefore, we must beware of considering the *Sāsanavaṃsa* a complete record of monastic work. Nevertheless, the author's own point of view is instructive, and we have no right to say that he does not try to be impartial."[5]

The *Sāsanavaṃsa* professes to be a general history of Buddhism and begins, therefore, with the birth of the Buddha and gives a short and running summary of events in the light of the Sinhalese tradition up to the sending

5 Bode, *Pali Literature of Burma*, Introduction, pp. xi-xii.

forth of missionaries by Asoka, more definitely by Moggaliputta Tissa Mahāthera, to nine different countries. The later history of the religion is then followed in these nine countries, a separate chapter being given to each; but it is with only two of these nine that we are concerned, *viz.*, Chapter III dealing with Suvaṇṇabhūmi (*i.e.*, lower Burma for all practical purposes) and Chapter VI dealing with Marammamaṇḍala (*i.e.*, Burma proper) in Aparānta-raṭṭha (*i.e.*, Upper Burma with its centre at Pagan or Arimaddanapura). The account of Suvaṇṇabhūmi together with that of Sīhala (Ceylon) is far more complete and shows more knowledge of the subject than those of Yonakaraṭṭha, Vanavāsa, Kāśmīra, Gandhāra, Mahiṃsakamaṇḍala, Cīnaraṭṭha and Mahāraṭṭha. But even the account of the religion in Suvaṇṇabhūmi is meagre compared to that of Marammamaṇḍala (Chap. VI) which practically occupies three-fifths of the entire *Sāsanavaṃsa*, and which is by far the longest and most important chapter.[6] But what is interesting is that neither of the accounts of the two realms gives us any exact detail (besides referring to the Asoka mission in Suvaṇṇabhūmi and vaguely speaking of the Samaṇakuṭṭaka heresy at Arimaddana) of the vicissitudes of the religion before the occupation of the Pagan throne by Anawrahta and the subsequent conquest of Thaton. It is only with the historical event that the *Sāsanavaṃsa* begins to be interesting and convincing. From this point it promises a fuller and detailed narrative, not only with regard to Marammamaṇḍala alone, but with regard to Suvaṇṇabhūmi as well which, by the way, included, according to the *Sāsanavaṃsa*, the Rāmañña country (Thaton), Haṃsāvatī (Pegu) and Muttima (Martaban).[7]

[6] For an account of the arrangement and contents of the *Sāsanavaṃsa*, see PTS edn., Introduction, pp. 1-10.

[7] *Sāsanavaṃsa*, p. 35.

The *Piṭakkatthamain* is a twentieth century (1906) Burmese bibliography of Buddhist works written in Rangoon, and is dependable as a book of reference. It is of little importance as a chronicle of the events of the religion and as such is not indispensable, but it is useful with regard to dates and authors of Buddhist works, and as it records the tradition of older chronicles it has its importance in the history of Pāli literature of Burma.

Apart from purely ecclesiastical works we have at our disposal a number of standard chronicles,[8] one of which, the *Yazawingyaw*, a work of Shin Thilawantha, goes as far back as the fifteenth century. Its historical value is almost nothing, as it speaks more of the history of Buddhism in India and Ceylon than in Burma. Other chronicles are the sixteenth century *Razadarit Ayedawpon* by Binnya Dala, and the *Pawtugi Yazawin*. The most important chronicles belong, however, to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; such are the *Great Chronicle* by Maung Kala, the *New Pagan Chronicle* written in 1785, the *New Chronicle* written towards the end of the eighteenth century by Twinthin Mahasithu and lastly the *Hmannan Yazawin* compiled by a royal commission in 1829. Besides these, there is a number of other chronicles of lesser importance such as the *Tagaung Chronicle*, the *Rakhaing Chronicle*, the *Tharehkittara Chronicle*, the *Hngeppyittaung Chronicle*, the *Pagan Chronicle*, the *Vaṃsadīpanī* and perhaps yet others which may be included in this list. There are still others which deal with particular periods or aspects of history; such, for example, are the *Talaing Chronicles*, *Pegu Chronicles*, *Tavoy Chronicle*, *Cetivakathā*, *Cetivaṃsa*, and so forth. But since I have not been able to examine for purpose of my study chronicles other than the standard ones, it is hardly of any

[8] For an account of these chronicles and their value see Harvey, *History of Burma*, pp. xvi-xix; Maung Tin and Luce, *The Glass Palace Chronicle*, pp. xiii-xxii.

use giving a long list. But this is just to impress on the reader that there is indeed no reason to complain about the dearth of historical materials in Burma, though one may, however, doubt their quality or standard.[9]

Of the standard chronicles enumerated above and which I have been able to consult, the *Hmannan Yazawin* is by far the most complete and authoritative. The first two chapters of this chronicle are devoted to a mere repetition of the story of Buddhism and of the Buddhist kings of India, but with the third chapter, the story moves to Burma where it opens with the history of the three kingdoms of Tagaung, Tharekittara and Pagan, and in a string of several chapters it brings the history of Burma with the main outlines of her political and religious vicissitudes down to 1752. It was compiled by a committee of scholars consisting of learned monks, learned Brāhmaṇas and learned ministers appointed under the orders of king Bagyidaw in 1829. "The king of the Law seeing many discrepancies and repetitions in the former chronicles gave thought to the matter. Being convinced that a chronicle of kings should be the standard, a balance, so to speak, for all duties of the king, for all affairs

9 Mr. Harvey in evaluating the quality and standard of the Burmese chronicles in the introduction of his admirable work, *History of Burma*, writes, "Our main authority is the standard Burmese chronicles. It is impossible to study these especially in conjunction with the other native records without acquiring considerable respect for them. No other country on the main land of Indo-China can show so impressive continuity. The great record *of substantially accurate dates* goes back for no less than nine centuries, and even the earlier legends have a substratum of truth. But that which gives continuity also gives false perspective; the record is that of the Burmese, the energetic and the dominant minority who possessed an abiding place and a continuous tradition. Written in the shadow of the throne, the chronicles tell little of general conditions and their story is not that of the peoples of Burma, or even of the Burmese people, but simply that of the dynasties of Upper Burma. In a land of centrifugal tendencies, facts are distorted to fit into a centripetal scheme, and the Burmese capital is made to occupy the whole of the canvas, while races such as the Shans who for centuries were of at least equal importance, and the Talaings, who were probably the leaders of civilization to the very end, are scarcely mentioned save as a foil." (*Ibid.*, p. xix.)

of state, *for all matters of religion*, and not a thing full of conflicting and false statement, he assembled his ministers and ecclesiastical teachers...and caused the chronicle to be purified by comparing it with other chronicles and a number of inscriptions each with the other, and adopting the truth in the light of reason and traditional books." The *Hmannan* is indeed based largely on earlier sources, *e.g.*, a large number of inscriptions, almost all the standard chronicles and those of lesser and local importance and a large number of *thamaings*, besides Pāli chronicles and Burmese poetical literature. Discrepancies among the chronicles there are, but they are never vital and do hardly affect the fundamental facts or factors of history except in one or two minor details, and those even only with regard to very early times. From our point of view and with regard to the period under survey agreement rather than difference among the different standard chronicles is the general rule; events of the religion in the one is practically repeated in the other with very few minor discrepancies. I have, therefore, thought it convenient to draw largely upon one chronicle, the *Hmannan*, which practically contains all that is given in the earlier chronicles, especially with regard to all matters concerning the vicissitudes of the religion. Like all other sources, the *Hmannan*, too, is very sparing of details so far as it relates itself to happenings before the days of king Anawrahta, but with him the account of the *Hmannan* becomes more lively and interesting and more full of details, connected and complete.

There is another class of Burmese historical literature called the *Thamaings*, important from both political and religious points of view. They are frequently very late, but as they profess to be based on older materials it is not unoften that they contain valuable tradition. Their contents are mainly of a religious nature, and they are generally associated with the foundation and history, usually of a

pagoda or monastery and sometimes even of a town. The account in most of the *thamaings* is a queer admixture of legends and facts, but incidentally it sometimes throws welcome light on some political or religious event or events. The *Shwemadaw Thamaing* is perhaps one of the earliest, and the *Shwesandaw Thamaing* probably follows close. Among other *thamaings* may be mentioned the *Thaton Shwezayan Hpayazyi Thamaing*, the *Shwenattaung Thamaing*, the *Hop-u-Thamaing* and the *Zat-ngaya Thamaing* which are all based on the older *Shwesandaw Thamaing*, and the *Ke-Hkayaina Thamaing*, which was written only about two decades ago. The majority of the *thamaings* are written in prose, but some, for example, the *Shwezigôn Thamaing Linka*, are also written in verse. But I have not been able to find the *thamaings* to be of much use for purposes of my present study; in fact I have not found it possible to use any of them to any very good advantage. They do not seem to contribute much towards the history of Buddhism of the period under review.

II

THE EARLY PHASE

The story of the introduction of Theravāda Buddhism in Pagan in Upper Burma as a sequel to the conquest of Thaton in 1057 by Anawrahta has already been detailed in the preceding chapter. That memorable sack of Thaton, if we are to believe our available sources, is indeed a significant event in the history of Burma: it marks the starting point of authentic Burmese history. Before 1057 there is hardly any exact history of the peninsula; available records speak but very little of the activities of its people prior to this date, and even the scanty information that can be gleaned with difficulty are so wrapped in mist and woven with myths that a reconstruction of the history of that period means but a

careful knitting together of some hypothetical guesses confirmed in a very few instances by literary or archæological evidences. From the Burmese point of view there is in fact little importance attributed to the period prior to Anawrahta's conquest of Thaton; local chronicles of which we have a very good number from about the fifteenth century onwards dismiss the pre-Pagan period of their accounts in one or two chapters which are but composed of hazy and indefinite half-historical, half-legendary tales thinly interspersed with stray notices of happenings unconnected with one another. The information supplied is meagre, and the sources for the chroniclers who sat down at a much later period to record them down must have been still more so. Events of great importance must have taken place, and the course of history must have been as vigorous and as full of life as it was afterwards, but our sources have hardly any record of them except in stray and meagre, often unintelligible, references. But it is as if by a magic touch that the situation changes with that memorable year of 1057. With the occupation of the Pagan throne by Anawrahta the chronicler becomes infused as it were with new life, his account becomes fuller with details, events begin to move with force and vigour, the narrative becomes more vivid, lively and continuous, information more definite, and his chronicle comes to stand against a more or less reliable background. It is from this date that the chronicles seem to give us a more or less exact history of the peninsula in matters political, religious and cultural.

We have already seen that the most important trophy of the conquest of Thaton was Shin Arahan himself at the head of a large fraternity of Talaing monks brought over to Pagan and the great faith of their Master recorded in the Tripiṭaka, the repository of Buddhist wisdom. As a result of the zeal, enthusiasm, energy and sincerity with which Shin Arahan, with Anawrahta always ready by his side to add strength to

his elbows, had devoted himself to his noble mission of evangelising the land of Pagan, the work of propagation of the pure and simple religion of Śākyamuni went apace till within a very short time he had won thousands of converts to his side. Hundreds from all parts of the country came to receive ordination and entered the sacred Order, burning with the zeal and enthusiasm of new converts. The fame of Pagan as a centre of Theravāda faith was thus firmly established. It spread even outside and crossing the sea reached Ceylon where the religion had suffered from Brahmanical persecution of the Damilas (Tamils) of South India. The Damilas were none but the Coḷas who were at the zenith of their power at this time and they were making themselves felt in Ceylon. The Sinhalese king Vijayabāhu (1065-1120) sought Anawrahta's aid against the Coḷas, but before any help was available he was himself able to inflict a defeat on the Coḷas. But the ravages on the religion the Coḷas had done needed repair. Scriptures had become so rare and monks so few that it was difficult to convene a chapter and make valid ordinations according to the rules of the Vinaya. Vijayabāhu, therefore, sent ships to request Anawrahta for scriptures and monks [10] and the Pagan king gladly complied with. He not only sent the monks and scriptures asked for, but added a white elephant as a present for the king of Ceylon, asking in return the tooth-relic of the Buddha which was the property of the Sinhalese king. Vijayabāhu was

[10] The story is referred to in the Kalyāṇī inscriptions, and elaborated in the *Hmannan* (I. 264) and the *Mahāvaṃsa*, LV. 4 and LVIII 8. Müller, in his *Ancient Inscriptions in Ceylon* (1883) fixes the date of Vijayabāhu's request for monks and scriptures at 1071 A.D. or just after. According to the *Hmannan*, the name of the Sinhalese king was Dhātusena; while according to the *Great Chronicle* the Ceylon king was Sirisaṃghabodhi, which however, is argued against by the *Hmannan*. The *Cullavaṃsa* states that Vijayavāhu wrote with his own hand in Pāli a letter of great merit to the king of Arimaddana, that he made great friendship with the latter, and that he gave great delight to the monks that dwelt in Laṅkā and Arimaddana.

not slow to return the courtesy; he parted with the sacred relic and made a present of it to Anawrahta.

But this was not the only sacred relic that Anawrahta claims to have come in possession of. Earlier he is said to have secured some relics from Tharekittara. These relics he enshrined in the great Shwezigôn stūpa which he had begun to build at the advice of Shin Arahan. When he had finished the three terraces, there arrived from Ceylon the tooth-relic which also was enshrined in the great stūpa.[11] But the monarch did not live to see the completion of this great undertaking.[12] The great stūpa was completed by his worthy son Kyanzittha. Anawrahta built quite a good number of other shrines, all dedicated to the religion to which he became devotedly attached. All these are said to contain the sacred tooth-relic of the Buddha which in reponse to Anawrahta's prayer were miraculously reproduced from the tooth-relic of Ceylon !

Anawrahta's contribution to the new faith was yet something more than building of these shrines and these mad campaigns and prayers for sacred relics. He sent four ministers of the religion to bring copies of the Three Piṭakas from Ceylon, and having brought them, he had them compared by Shin Arahan with the copies of the Piṭakas brought by the latter from Sudhammanagara or Thaton. Shin Arahan also edited and corrected them in the light

11 *Hmannan*, pp. 88-89.

12 The Shwezigôn " is a solid Pagoda of the kind so common all over Burma; yet it attracts worshippers daily, while the finer temples built by his successors are deserted Its popularity is due to the exceptional sanctity of the relics, and to the shrines of the entire pantheon of the thirty-seven Nāt spirits who, as if were, have come circling round in homage to these relics. If any one doubts the debt Burma owes to Buddhism, or wishes to see what she would have been without it, let him wander here and contemplate these barbarous images of the heathen god. Asked why he allowed them, Anawrahta said, ' Men will not come for the sake of the true faith. Let them come for their old gods, and gradually they will be won over'." Harvey, *History of Burma*, p. 33.

of the copies brought from Ceylon which admittedly were more reliable.[13]

Anawrahta's is a heroic and remarkable personality in the history of Burma. In a single lifetime he had established and spread a true religion throughout a large portion of his dominions, and suppressed all heretical sects and beliefs; from a chieftainship he raised his principality to the position of the most powerful political authority in Burma, and by introducing the Talaing culture of lower Burma to civilise the north, he set the people of Maramma-desa (as distinct from Rāmaññadesa) on the road to culture and civilisation that made the annals of the Pagan dynasty a most glorious record in the history of mankind.

Anawrahta was unfortunate in his successor, Sawlu; for according to the *Hmannan*, he "lived only in the enjoyment of worldly pleasures. He preferred not his father's work of merit." But in Kyanzittha Buddhism found a loyal and devoted servant.

He completed the building of the Shwezigôn, but his chief work of merit was the building of the Ānanda Temple, the one monument which has spread the name of Pagan beyond the boundaries of Burma, and which, with its white garb bathed in the tropical sun, shines as the crown-jewel on the head of Eastern architecture. There at the end of the western aisle in the darkness of the lofty but narrow vaults stands a colossal statue of the Buddha flanked by two kneeling figures with hands clasped in adoration. One is a crowned head, that of the devout founder-king Kyanzittha; the other a shaven head, that of the royal primate, Shin Arahan, the teacher of Kyanzittha and the man who led him to the throne by the hand at

13 Anuruddharājā yeva cattāro mahāyodhe Sīhaladīpaṃ pesetvā tato piṭakattayaṃ ānesi. Sīhaladīpato ānīapitakattayenā Sudhammapurato ānītapiṭakattayaṃ aññamaññaṃ yojetvā saṃsandetvā Arhantathero Vimaṃsesi. *Sāsnnavaṃsa*, p. 64.

the time of his coronation. Inside the first corridor formed by the outer and inner walls of the temple there are eighty niches containing sculptures representing the incidents of Buddha's own life until the attainment of the *bodhi*. The series begins with the request of the gods in the Tusita heaven asking the Boddhisattva to be reborn in his very last existence and to become the Buddha, and the succession of scenes follows the *pradakṣiṇa*. Besides these, there are in each of the four porticoes sixteen sculptures, mostly repeating themselves, but representing like those of the corridors, scenes from the last existence of the Master. They include scenes like the Pārileyya incident, the descent from the Trayastriṃśa heaven, the subjection of the Nālagiri elephant, etc. In the small vaulted passages intersecting the corridors more stone sculptures are found representing scenes mostly belonging to the *dūrenidāna* cycle and illustrating the anterior lives of the Buddha, *i.e.*, the *Jātakas*. The eighty scenes in the outer corridor of the Ānanda Temple are devoted to represent the principal events of the Bodhisattva's last existence, from the time of his birth to that of his attainment of the *bodhi*. A few of the events of this subsequent career up to the *Parinibbāna* are also represented, but they are all on the walls of the four porticoes. It has been very ably argued by M. Duroiselle that the present arrangement and distribution of the scenes on the sculptures of the porticoes were not the original one, and he has been able to show that all the events subsequent to the attainment of Buddhahood must certainly have been represented in the sixty-four scenes of the porticoes. Whatever that may have been, the arrangement of the scenes on the walls of the corridor as well as those few of the porticoes follows a very well-known order, that of the *Nidānakathā*. It proves, therefore, that in addition to every important event in the life of the Master which had by this time become well-known in Upper Burma, the *Nidāna-*

kathā was also known and studied at least by those who ministered to the religious needs of the people.

But it was not the incidents of the last existence alone of the Master that were known to the new converts of the faith; the *Jātaka* stories also were equally well-known by this time and the Ānanda bears eloquent testimony to it. The basement and the walls and the terraces of the temple are ornamented with a huge wealth of glazed terracotta plaques. The plaques on the basement walls relate themselves to two important phases of the Buddha's attainment of the *bodhi*, namely, the attack of Māra and his retinue on the Buddha, and the eventual jubilation among the gods who came to glorify him. Each plaque is inscribed at the bottom with a short legend in Talaing. The second story is also similarly embellished; here also there is a wealth of glazed tiles illustrating five hundred and forty-seven *Jātakas*, the entire series of *Jātaka* stories. But the most interesting thing in the Ānanda is that on the walls of the upper terraces there are nearly four hundred bas-reliefs which illustrate the last ten great *Jātakas*, so that each *Jātaka* story occupies, on average, about forty bas-reliefs for itself, each relief being explained by a legend in Talaing inscribed at the bottom. M. Duroiselle finds this series to be a most interesting and unique feature which is found only at the Ānanda. According to his counting, the number of these reliefs from the basement to the uppermost terrace is one thousand four hundred and seventy-two.[14]

My purpose in giving an account of the stone-sculptures and terracotta plaques of the Ānanda is to show the extent to which Theravāda Buddhism with its myths and legends

[14] Duroiselle, *The Stone Sculptures in the Ānanda Temple*, *ARASI.*, 1913-14, where he gives a long and full description of the temple and the stone sculptures inside it. An elaborate account of the bas-reliefs and the explanatory epigraphs is, however, contained in *Ep. Birminica*, II, i and ii.

had already taken root in Pagan in less than two scores of years since it had been introduced for the first time in the royal capital. These sculptures and terracotta plaques served as illustrative texts to hundreds of those who daily flocked to worship at the temple. In employing them as such, Kyanzittha and Shin Arahan only adopted an usual and well-known method of popularising the religion among the ordinary people and it was perhaps one of their methods for the propagation of the faith. The same method was also employed in later temples and stūpas, obviously with the same object in view, for example, in the Petleik temples, in the Shwezigôn, in the Mingalazedi, in the Nagayôn and others. These sculptures and the terracotta plaques are of special historical importance inasmuch as they afford us indubitable proof of the knowledge of the *Jātakas* and the *Nidānakathā* in Upper Burma in the last quarter of the eleventh century.

It was in the seclusion of the Ānanda Temple that Ācariya Dhammasenāpati, according to the *Gandhavaṃsa* (pp. 63, 73), wrote his *Kārikā*, a grammatical work in Pāli. He is also said to have composed two other works, the *Etimāsamidīpanī* and the *Manohāra*. The same source tells us that Dhammasenāpati wrote his *Kārikā* at the instance of the monk Ñāṇagambhīra who was a resident of Pagan.[15]

What a softening influence Buddhism wielded on the lives of these sturdy and swarthy tyrants will be evident from an extract from one of the inscriptions set up by Kyanzittha.

> " With loving kindness ..... shall king Kyanzittha wipe away the tears of those who are parted from their trusted friends.. ..his people shall be unto him as a child to its mother's bosom.....he shall soften the hearts of those who intend evil. With wisdom, which is even as a hand, shall king Kyanzittha draw open the bar of the Gate of Heaven, which is made of gold and wrought with gems." [16]

[15] Bode, *Pāli Literature of Burma*, p. 16 and fn. 1.

[16] The Great Talaing Inscription of the Shwezigôn Pagoda, *Ep. Birminica*, I, ii, 90.

It ranks almost as literature, and the typically Buddhist sentiment in it is unmistakable. It is a pity that neither the local chronicles nor the *Sāsanavaṃsa* dwells at any length on the service Kyanzittha rendered to the cause of the religion. The *Sāsanavaṃsa* has not even a passing reference to the great personality or to his work. Yet, besides being personally deeply influenced by the new religion and performing various works of merit, it was he who was the first Burmese king to restore the holy shrine at Bodh-Gayā, and who in his zeal and enthusiasm for the new faith exhorted a Coḷa king to accept Buddhism. His exhortations were successful.

" King Kyanzittha gathered together gems of diverse kinds and sent them in a ship to build up the holy temple at Bodh-Gayā, and to offer lights which should burn for ever there. Thereafter, king Kyanzittha builded anew, making them finer than before, the great buildings of king Asoka for they were old and in ruins. In this respect no other king is like king Kyanzittha. Thereafter, he presented all the lords of the Saṃgha who dwelt in the city of Arimaddanapura with four necessaries on every occasion. In that respect, too, no other king is like him...[17]

" At the same time king Kyanzittha heard that a Coḷa lord had arrived, and he bethought him that apart from the Three Jewels there is no other single thing that can give great happiness in this world or in the world to come, or confer Nirvāṇa upon all beings: the Three Jewels alone can give it. Therefore, he wrote concerning the grace of the Jewel of the Lord (Buddha), the Jewel of his Law (Dhamma) and the Jewel of his Clergy (Saṃgha), with vermilion ink upon leaf of gold and sent it unto the Coḷa Lord. Thus hearing the grace of the Buddha, the Law and the Clergy by reason of king Kyanzittha's sending word unto him, the Coḷa Lord with all his retinue cast off his adhesion to false doctrine; he saw, he was pleased, he was happy..." [18]

Kyanzittha was fortunate in his love-child born of Thambula in exile. For when having reigned for 28 years he fell sick unto death, this son, Yazakumāra, made solemn offerings and set up a stone-post which is still in its place, at the Myazedi pagoda, south of Pagan.

The post is inscribed on its four faces with the same matter in four different languages—Pāli, Talaing, Pyu and

[17] The Third Talaing Inscription of the Shwesandaw Pagoda, *Prome, Ep. Birminica*, I, ii, 153.

[18] *Ibid.*

Burmese. Extracts from it are worth quoting for the sentiments expressed, as well as for incidental references to a number of venerable theras of the time, and to the practice of dedication of slaves to the shrines.

"Glory and honour be to Buddha! In the one thousand six hundred and twenty-eighth year of religion (1084 A.D.) Kyanzittha became king in this city of Arimaddanapura.....Now the king having reigned twenty-eight years fell sick unto death. Then Yazakumāra... . remembering the benefits wherewith the king had nourished him, made a golden Buddha and went into the presence and showed it to the king saying, 'This Golden Buddha have I, thy slave, made to assist my lord. The three villages of slaves which my lord gave unto me, I now dedicate unto this Buddha. May my lord approve!' Then was the king well pleased and said, 'Well done! Well done!' And in the presence of the image, of the primate, of the venerable lords Moggaliputta Tissa, Sumedha, Brahmapala, Brahmadiw, Soṇa, and very learned Saṃghasena, in the presence of all these venerable lords the king made offering of poured water. When it was done, the son of the beloved queen made this cave-temple with a golden spire and enshrined therein the golden Buddha. And in dedicating this shrine and Buddha, the queen's son, brought up the men of Sakmunalon, one village, Rapay, one village, Henbuiy, one village, all those three slave villages, and made offering of poured water for the golden Buddha and the shrine wherein he had enshrined it; and thus he prayed, 'May this act of mine be unto me for the attainment of divine wisdom! If any hereinafter, be it my son, grandson, kinsman, or any other, oppress the slaves whom I have dedicated unto this Buddha may he never behold the most high Buddha Arimittiya (Maitreya)."[19]

Shin Arahan, the Primate, had grown old, and his days were gradually drawing to a close. Early in Alaungsithu's reign (1112-67) he breathed his last, about the year 1115 A.D.,[20] full of years—he was about 80—and full of glory. Few are destined to witness so successful an achievement of the ideals and missions of their lives. Shin Arahan perhaps achieved more than he had dreamt; his was a record of unbroken chain of success. It was a mere chance that brought him before the king, and once the king was won over, the rest followed almost as a matter of course till finally he saw himself as the Primate of the kingdom and the acknowledged head of a church organi-

[19] Myazedi Inscription, *Ep. Birminica*, I, i.
[20] *An. Rep. A.S.B.*, 1915, p. 23.

sation that embraced within its fold hundreds of monasteries and thousands of monks ready to carry the message of the religion into the remotest parts of the far-flung kingdom. He performed almost a miracle; in almost a lifetime he with the help of his patrons was successful in keeping the degenerate Aris at bay and putting a definite check to their vile and abominable practices, and in establishing in the place of crude and primitive beliefs in heathen 'Nats,' one of the purest faiths mankind has ever known. It is due to him than to anybody else that Burma owes to-day her allegiance to Theravāda Buddhism and the Burmese people their admission into the world of culture and civilization.

Shin Arahan was succeeded by Panthagu, son of Seinnyekmin, as Primate. His royal disciple, Alaungsithu, was a devout and faithful follower of the religion. Along with the elevation of Panthagu to the position of Archbishop 'the king presented the elder Ānanda and the elder Bodhi, both men fulfilled with all virtuous qualities, with golden litters of state and pole and ပဲးဒိုင် awning.' He also exhorted Letyaminnan, the prince of Arakan, who was restored by the Pagan king to the throne of his fathers, to repair the shrine at Bodh-gayā which had fallen to decay. Letyaminnan, therefore, under the guidance of Panthagu, the Primate, sent an envoy with men and money to Bodh-gayā to do all that was necessary to repair the sacred shrine at Vajrāsana. The work was executed with care and the fact is recorded on stone at the spot.[21] He built the great Thatpyiññu (Sabbaññā—All-knowing or Omniscient, *i.e.*, the Buddha) temple in 1144, and the Shwegu which stands close by. In this small but beautiful temple he was destined to die, and on its walls can still be read the long inscription recording in Pāli verse the beauti-

[21] Rajendralal Mitra, *Buddhagayā;* Furgusson, *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, I, p. 78; *An Rep. A.S B.*, 1911, p. 181.

ful and typically Buddhist ideas and sentiments of the king :

" By this my gift, whatever boon I seek,
It is the best of boons, to profit all ;
By this abundant merit I desire
Here nor hereafter no angelic pomp
Of Brahmas, Suras, Māras ; nor the state
And splendours of a monarch ; nay, not even
To be the pupil of the conqueror.
But I would build a causeway sheer athwart
The river of Saṃsāra, and all folk
Would speed across thereby until they reach
The Blessed city. I myself would cross
And drag the drowning over. Aye, myself
Tamed, I would tame the wilful ; comforted,
Comfort the timid ; wakened, wake the asleep ;
Cool, cool the burning ; freed, set free the bound.
Tranquil and led by the good doctrines I
Would hatred calm. The three immortal states,
Greed, hate, delusion, rooted all in self,
O may they die, wherever born in me !

* * * *

" As the best of men
Forsaking worldly wealth and worthless fame
Fled, for he saw their meaning...so would
All worldly wealth forsaking draw me near
Religion and the threefold course ensue.
I would fulfil hereafter great and small,
Those rules the Teacher gave for our behoof.
Borne through the elements the spotless moon
Outdazzles all the constellated stars ;
So I delighting in the Master's Lore,
The Saint's Religion, virtuously yoked,
Would shine among disciples, I would know
Sutta, and *Abhidhamma, Vinaya*
The Master's mind, his ninefold Doctrines fraught
With words and meaning. By the Conqueror's Law
I would do good to others and myself.
What the great Sage forbids I would not do.

* * * *

" By merits of this act I would behold
Mettaya, captain of the world, *endowed*
With two and thirty emblems, where he walks
Enhaloed on a rainbow pathway fair.

* * * *

" There might I hear good Law, and bending low
Offer the four things needful to the Lord
And all his monks, till clad in virtues eight,
Informed by such a Teacher, I become
Buddha in the eyes of spirits and men.''[22]

Alaungsithu's death was followed by a fratricidal struggle between the two brothers, Narathu and Minshinsaw. At the request of Narathu, Panthagu, the Primate, had to intervene, but the intervention led to unfortunate results and Panthagu in scorn and disgust left the shores of Burma and went to Ceylon, refusing to live in a kingdom ruled over by so vile a king as Narathu. The incidents leading to this unhappy sequel is briefly but vividly related in the *Hmannan*, and it is difficult for a modern historian to improve upon the narrative. When Minshinsaw heard that his royal father, Alaungsithu, was no more, he began marching with his army towards Pagan to occupy the throne. Narathu scented danger, and designed a secret plot by which he was to secure the throne without shedding a drop of blood. So he went to Panthagu who "was worshipped like the Lord by the whole country of Pagan," and said :

" ' It will take long if thus he (Minshinsaw) marcheth with his army, and the home affairs of the kingdom will suffer. Lo ! I, thy servant, am here already. Call my brother, and let him come speedily with a sword and a horse only and ascend the throne !' But Panthagu, the elder replied : ' If I call him and he come, and thou abide without raising him to be king, I have sinned against the saintly law.' So Narathu swore a mighty oath that he would shoulder his brother's sword and set him on the throne. And Panthagu the elder believed the oath sworn by Kalagya and went to the place of Minshinsaw and told him all. And Minshinsaw, hearing the words of the elder, trusted them, and he set him on a single barge of gold and came downstream. When he reached Lappan port, Narathu, according to the oath he had sworn, went down to the boat and shouldering his brother's sword, he raised and set him on the throne. After his anointing, his food was poisoned and that night he died."

Next day Narathu was crowned king and the whole people came to offer allegiance to him. But Panthagu,

[22] *J B.R.S.*, 1920, English rendering in verse by Maung Tin and Luce, *Shwegugyi Pagoda Inscription*.

though old, would not do so. When he heard that Minshinsaw was poisoned and dead, he burnt with fury and anger, and going to the palace cried :

"'Thou vile king! Thou foul king! Thou fearest not the woe thou shalt suffer in Saṃsāra. Though now thou reignest, thinkest that thy body shalt not grow old, not die? A king more damned than thou there is not in all the world!' 'Nay Master,' said Narathu, 'I shouldered my brother's sword and set him on the throne.' But the noble master made reply : 'A man more vile and foul than thou there is not in the world of men! And he departed and went to the island of Ceylon'." (1167)

And he did not come back so long as Narathu was in the land of the living.

III

MARAMMA SAMGHA AND SĪHALA SAMGHA

Narathu was succeeded by Naratheinka (1171-73). He had, it seems, neither the mind nor the opportunity to do anything for the religion which his fathers served and patronised with such great care and devotion. But his successor Narapatisithu's reign (1173-1220) [22a] is important for more than one reason. He will be remembered for his noble patronage of the religion, and more for the fact that his reign saw the first formation of the Sīhala Saṃgha or Sinhal Order in Burma and the beginning of the long and bitter rivalry between the Sīhala Saṃgha and the Maramma Saṃgha or Burmese Order that continued to disturb the Buddhist clergy of Burma till it ended three hundred years later in the final triumph of the Sīhala Saṃgha.

[22a] An inscription from Saggaing in the Saggaing district refers to the gift of a plot of land by Zeyathura Mingyi in 533 Sakkarac which is equivalent to 1171 A.D. Zeyathura Mingyi is king Narapatisithu. This inscription therefore seems to prove that Narapatisithu was already on the throne in 1171. *An. R.A.S.I.*, 1936-37, p. 115.

Narapatisithu himself was a king of advanced views, and devoted to the new religion; 'in order that men might follow the Path and reach fruition in Nirvāṇa' he built a number of 'works of merit,' setting up colossal images of Buddha in all of them. Among the bigger temples he built for the furtherance of the religion were the majestic Gawdawpalin, the Sulamani and the Dammayazaka; of smaller but nevertheless beautiful works were the Mimalung-kyaung and the Chaukpala. "He succoured with the things needful scholars of the noble Order learned in Pāli, in the commentaries and sub-commentaries, who practised piety throughout all the homeland, and they gave instruction in the books.''[23] Narapati's reign was peaceful and prosperous, and was one of the brightest epochs of monastic scholarship in Burma.

Panthagu, the Primate, lived in self-banishment for only a few couples of years. From his refuge in Ceylon he heard of the devoted patronage of the newly-crowned king, Narapatisithu, and soon after the accession of this monarch he returned home (1173) hoping to spend the rest of his days in peace amidst the purer atmosphere of a more prosperous and benevolent rule. He was warmly received and was again treated as Primate; but he was already old—about ninety—and did not live long to enjoy the king's patronage.[23a]

Panthagu was succeeded in the Primateship by a Talaing monk, Uttarajīva by name, a pupil of Shin Ariyavaṃsa, the

[23] *Glass Palace Chronicle*, p. 142.

[23a] An inscription in Burmese recovered from the ruins near Kotheinnayon at Pagan and recording the dedication of slaves to a monastery before several monks mentions the name of one Panthagugyi as one of the monk witnesses. This took place in 1247 A.D. It has been suggested that Panthagugyi is the celebrated Primate Panthagu. But Panthagu in about 1175 was already ninety and if he really continued to be alive in 1247 it would mean he was then about 162 years of age—obviously very difficult to believe. Panthagugyi of this insc. may have been some other individual. *An. R.A.S.I.*, 1936-37, p. 114.

elder of Thaton. Uttarajīva, like Shin Arahan, claimed to belong to the direct line (ācariyaparamparā) of Soṇa and Uttara. The religion in Ceylon had for some time been in disrepute, and had " fallen into soilure and decay," as the *Hmannan* puts it, perhaps again owing to Brahmanical persecution by the Tamils (Dramiḷas). But Parakkamabāhu proved himself to be a strong and resolute king; he saved the religion from Tamil persecution, and initiated a reformation of the church organisation. This led to a reawakening of religious activities in the island. The fervour rose to such a height that the fame of the church reached the Burmese capital,[24] where it roused the eagerness and enthusiasm of Uttarajīva for pilgrimage to the island. He took with him

> " many disciples of the Order and went to worship the Mahāzedi pagoda in the island of Ceylon. Among these disciples was a novice of about twenty years of age from the village Capata, on the outskirts of the Bassein town.[25]...When Uttarajīva the elder, Capata the novice (so named from his native village), and the many disciples of the Order reached the island of Ceylon, they had conversed with the elders of Ceylon concerning the religion, and, inquiring of each other's lineage, they found that the elders in Ceylon island were heirs of Shin Mahinda, the noble saint, and Uttarajīva the elder was of the lineage of Shin Soṇa the elder and Uttara the elder. Then they ordained Capata the novice, saying, ' let us perform a priestly act of pure validity." [26]

Capata was thus received into the Sinhalese religious brotherhood.

The ordination of Capata was to have far-reaching results; in fact, it was the first frank admission of the superiority of the Sinhalese over the Burmese Order. Evidently the elders of Ceylon did not consider the ordination ceremony by the Burmese brotherhood as a priestly act of pure validity

[24] Evidence of a very active maritime intercourse between Ceylon and Burma during this time is afforded by Sinhalese Chronicles as well as by Burmese inscriptions of the period. See, also *Mahāvaṃsa*, lxxvi, 10-75, for a quarrel between Ceylon and Burma in about 1180 A.D. when the Sinhalese king despatched an expedition against Burma.

[25] *Glass Palace Chronicle*, pp. 142-43.

[26] *Ibid.*, p. 143.

and the Burmese monks were not, therefore, considered to have been validly ordained, since, according to the Kalyāṇī inscriptions, the *Sāsanavaṃsa*, the *Hmannan* and other chronicles, they belonged to an ācariyaparamparā of lesser aristocracy. However, a section of Burmese monks must have had a very great respect for the Sinhalese brotherhood and their monastic conduct and learning, for, when Uttarajīva, after the ordination of Capata, came with his disciples back to Burma, he was hailed as the "First Pilgrim of Ceylon." Already Shin Arahan had admitted the comparatively better reliability of the Sinhalese Piṭakas than those he had brought from Thaton; and now was admitted the superiority of the Sinhalese Order itself.

Capata did not return home with his teacher Uttarajīva; the latter stayed behind in Ceylon and for full ten rainy seasons he studied and acquired a full knowledge of the Three Piṭakas and their commentaries. He thus earned the designation of a mahāthera.

"Being now desirous of returning to Pugāmā he reflected thus: 'If I were to return home alone, and if, in the event of the death of Uttarajīva mahāthera, I did not wish to associate with the monks of Pugāmā in the performance of ecclesiastical ceremonies, how could I, in the absence of *pañca-vaggagana*, perform such function separately? It is perhaps proper, therefore, that I should return home in thes company of four other monks, who are well versed in the Tipiṭaka.'[27] After reflecting thus, he appointed Mahāthera Sivili, a native of Tamalitthi (Tāmralipti in Bengal), the Mahāthera Tāmalinda the son of the Rājā of Kamboj, the Mahāthera Ānanda, a native of Kāñcīpura, and the Mahāthera Rāhula, a native of Ceylon, to accompany him."[28]

Capata with his four colleagues returned to Pagan (1181-82) after having observed the *vassa* in a monastery at Bassein. These five monks of the Order were called the "Second Pilgrims of Ceylon."[29]

[27] The Pāli text of the Kalyāṇī inscriptions, *Ep. Birm.*, III, ii, p. 190, footnote 6. The passage in the *Hmannan* (p. 143) is similar in purport.

[28] The Môn and Pāli text of the Kalyāṇī inscriptions, *Ep. Birm.*, III, ii, pp. 190-91.

[29] *Glass Palace Chronicle*, p. 144.

Now, Uttarajīva had died in the meanwhile and was buried a few days before Capata and his company could reach Pagan. So, when they arrived they went to the chaplain's grave and worshipped there. The demise of Uttarajīva gave rise to a very curious situation in the Burmese church organisation, due no doubt to the high-brow and supercilious attitude of Capata. But it is best told in thè Kalyāṇī inscriptions which is quoted almost *verbatim* in the *Glass Palace Chronicle*. Capata is said to have addressed his companions thus :

"'As the Mahātheras of Ceylon associated with our teacher the venerable Uttarajīvamahāthera (at the time of his visit to Ceylon), in the performance of ecclesiastical ceremonies, it is proper that we should now perform such functions after associating ourselves with the monks of Pugāmā, who are the spiritual successors of Soṇathera and Uttarathera. However, our teacher, the Mahāthera Uttarajīva, who was a native of the Môn country, was formerly the sole head of the Church, but now that the Burmese monks have become supreme, we do not wish to associate with them in the performance of ecclesiastical ceremonies.' Thus, through pride, the Mahāthera Capata declined to associate with the monks of Pukhām in the performance of ecclesiastical ceremonies and he performed such functions separately." [30]

It was thus that the Sinhalese Church or the Sīhala Saṃgha, as it has been called in the *Sāsanavaṃsa*, came to be established in Pagan. According to the Môn text of the Kalyāṇī inscriptions, this event took place " in the 124th year that had elapsed since the introduction of the religion into Pukām (Pagan), the Burmese country, from Sudhuim (Thaton) in the Môn country," [31] *i.e.*, in 1181-82 A.D.

When Capata had come back to his own country, he evidently returned with a strong faith in Sinhalese orthodoxy. He also believed that it was the Mahāvihāra alone of Ceylon that could claim to have kept the ācariyaparamparā direct from the thera Mahinda, and that the Sinhalese Order

[30] *Ep. Birm.*, II. ii, pp. 191-92; *ibid.*, footnote 7 of p. 191, *Glass Palace Chronicle*, p. 144.

[31] *Ep. Birm.*, III, ii, p. 192.

could alone confer the valid *upasampadā* ordination. Naturally enough, he was eager to establish the Sinhalese Order in Burma, evidently to bring the Burmese Order in the direct ' line of descent.' But it was equally natural that the older Burmese school would resent and resist this claim of the Sinhalese church. They could argue, and perhaps they did, with equal force and logic that since they belonged to the direct line of descent from Soṇathera and Uttara-thera, they had as good an authority to perform a valid ordination as the Sinhalese school itself. But their argument seems to have carried little weight, and their influence was gradually on the wane.

From the very outset the Sinhalese church was fortunate in receiving the warm patronage of the king. The reigning king Narapatisithu ' conceived a feeling of great esteem and reverence for the five Mahātheras,' he ' caressed and regarded them beyond measure,' and he gave all the patronage he could to this newly-founded church. He caused a raft of boats to be put together on the river Irrawady and requested the five Mahātheras to confer *upasamp dā* ordination on the many monks who desired to receive it.

Many novices were ordained as monks. Thus they multiplied in the course of time till their influence and their following grew in numbers. The school thus founded by Capata and his colleagues came to be known as *paccagaṇa* or the later school while the Burmese school was known as *purimagaṇa* or the earlier school.[32]

But dissensions were soon in sight among these five Mahātheras which resulted in the splitting up of the Sīhala Saṃgha into four factions. The stories of these dissensions, not without their human interest, are elaborately told in the local chronicles, for example, in the *Hmannan*, and in the Kalyāṇī inscriptions, and are briefly summarised in the

[32] *Sāsanavaṃsa*, p. 67.

Sāsanavaṃsa. Of the four Mahātheras that accompanied Capata to Pagan, Rāhula was the most erudite, but his learning was of little avail; for, in a great almsgiving ceremony held by Narapatisithu in their honour, Rāhula fell desperately in love and lost his heart to a beautiful girl. "He lusted after her and delighted no more in the law of the clergy but strove to quit the Order" He longed to be a layman and made preparations to carry out his object. The Mahāthera Capata and three other Mahātheras "repeatedly expounded religious discourses to him, in a body entreated him to turn away from the course he had resolved to take." But nothing could prevent Rāhula from taking his course; he became a layman and went to Malayadīpa (Malay peninsula). There the king of Malaya received from him instructions "in the meaning of the text of the whole Vinaya" and studied the *Khuddakasikkhā*, a compendium of the Vinaya written in Ceylon, with its commentary. Pleased with Rāhula, he made valuable presents to him which the thera accepted, and as a consequence quitted the Order, became a layman, married, finally settled down in the country, and was no more heard of. Rāhula's deflection was certainly a severe blow to the monastic discipline of the newly-established Sīhala Saṃgha.

Soon after this Capata died, and Sivali (or Sivili), Ānanda and Tāmalinda (or Tamulinda) remained to continue "to maintain the religion in splendour at Pukhām." But differences of opinion on questions of monastic discipline arose among them, and readily they fell out and each founded a new school for himself.

On a certain occasion king Narapatisithu presented the three Mahātheras each with one elephant. In pursuance of the rules of the Vinaya, Sivali and Tāmalinda liberated their elephants in a forest but Ānanda shipped it off and made a present of it to his relatives in Kāñcīpuram, an action which Sivali and Tāmalinda considered to be against

the rules of monastic discipline. This led to the secession of Ānanda who thenceforward performed his ecclesiastical ceremonies separately from Sivali and Tāmalinda.

A long while thereafter Sivali and Tāmalinda disagreed on a more important question of discipline. The latter "sought to advance the welfare of his pupils who excelled in wisdom, strength and courage, and by word-suggestion obtained for them" from the pious laity the four things needful. Sivali took strong exceptions to this indirect process of receiving gifts, referred to by a technical name *vacīviññatti* in the *Sāsanavaṃsa* and the Kalyāṇī inscriptions, saying that the Buddha had disapproved of such gifts.[33] After some argumentation which proved useless, Sivali refused to have any relation with Tāmalinda, and both of them founded separate schools.

> "From that day forth four several sects of the Order were known in the kingdom of Pagan. One sect of the Order was of the race of Shin Arahan . . . ; one sect of the Order was of the race of Sivali the elder; one sect of the race of Tāmalinda; one of the race of Ānanda. Of these four sects that of the race of Shin Arahan who first came from Sudhamma city was called the Former Order. Of the three elders who came from the island of Ceylon were called the Latter Order."[34]

The Former Order or the monks who were of the religious succession of those that came from Thaton has been referred to in the *Sāsanavaṃsa* as the Maramma Saṃgha or Burmese Order as distinguished from the Latter Order referred to as Sīhala Saṃgha in the *Sāsanavaṃsa* and the Kalyāṇī inscriptions, for the monks of that Order belonged to either of the three sects of the religious successions of those who had returned from Ceylon.

33 For the opinion of the Vinaya on this point, see *Vinaya Piṭaka* (Oldenberg's Edn.), III, pp. 227, 256, V, p. 125.

34 *Glass Palace Chronicle*, pp. 146-47; see also Kalyāṇī inscriptions, *Ep. Birm.*, III, ii, p. 195.

Sivali and Tāmalinda had already attained *Nirvāna* when Ānanda died in 1245-46 (the year 607 of the Common Era).[35] But their deaths did not mean the cessation of the work, namely the spread of the influence of the Sinhalese fraternity, they had begun in so right earnest. Among their disciples and followers, especially of Sivali and Ānanda, there were at least one or two who grew to be as wise as their *gurus* and who were ready to carry the message of the religion outside the Marammamaṇḍala or upper Burma. Indeed, even during their lifetime Ānanda and Sivali had the satisfaction of witnessing the prestige and influence of the Sīhala Saṃgha spreading in the Môn or Talaing country and the Martaban (Pāli : Muttimā ; Môn : Mattama) region under the willing patronage of king Narapatisithu.

IV

THE RELIGION IN THE TALAING COUNTRY

One might assume that the carrying away by Anawrahta of all sacred texts and almost the entire clergy of Thaton had practically strangled Buddhism in the Talaing country, and the realm had reverted to its primitive faith or faiths. Anawrahta's sack of Thaton was no doubt a severe blow to the religion in the Talaing country, but there is hardly any reason to think that the light that once burnt bright was altogether extinguished. Indeed, there must have been centres of the religion and monastic scholarship in the interior regions of the realm where Anawrahta's fury hardly penetrated. Conquering raids in ancient days were often confined

[35] *Ep. Birm.*, III, ii, p. 195.

§ 15. It (recognition) cannot be regarded as lacking in validity, since the lack of discrepancy (which is the criterion of validity) is present in it. If an occasional occurrence of discrepancy (e.g., in the case of growing hair, nail, flame, etc.,) were to condemn it as a whole kind to invalidity, the same issue would be unavoidable in the case of perception also. Moreover, if the identity of the self and the like, as determined by the evidence of recognition, were to lack objective reality (as a rule), the logical justification of bondage and emancipation (as states of the same ethico-religious aspirant) would become absolutely impossible. If it is the self-same person who suffers bondage and achieves liberation, it is possible that the person in bondage feeling himself to be subject to the misery (of bondage) can be expected to put forth the requisite labour to achieve the joy of freedom. If, on the other hand, there was no personal identity and one is unhappy and another achieves happiness, who will labour and for what end? It follows, therefore, that recognition is a valid organ since the sense of identity can have a lease of life only if there is recognition to validate its claim, and it is this sense of identity, again, which is at the root of all secular and spiritual activity. (IV)

§ 16. Now the author is propounding definition of Inductive Reasoning :

(Aph.) Inductive Reasoning is the knowledge of universal concomitance conditioned by observation and non-observation. (IV)

1. 'Observation' in this context stands for valid cognition as such, and not for perceptual cognition alone, since the middle term (probans) may be an object of inference also, and there is no incompatibility in the fact of universal concomitance obtaining between terms known by inference as (between

with the injunction: 'Do you maintain the religion in splendour in the Môn country'."[36]

"Dhammavilāsa proceeded to the Môn country, and taught the Dhamma and the Vinaya to a great many monks in Dala. The people of the Môn country called the fraternity of these monks at Dala the "Sīhalapakkhabhikkhusaṃgha," and designated as the "Ariyārahaṅtapakkhabhikkhusaṃgha," the fraternity of monks *who were already in the country* and were of ecclesiastical successors of Soṇamahāthera and Uttaramahāthera."[37]

It is permissible, I think, to identify this Dhammavilāsa-thera with one Dhammavilāsa mahāthera who is mentioned as the donor of a number of stone images of the Buddha seated in *bhūmisparśa mudrā* recovered from the ruins of a stūpa at Thiyipyitsaya, five miles from Pagan. The name of Dhammavilāsa mahāthera is inscribed on the pedestal of these images and paleographically considered the images may be said to belong to about the twelfth or thirteenth century A.D. If this identification be correct, then here is another confirmation of the tradition recorded in the Kalyāṇī inscriptions and in the *Sāsanavaṃsa*.

The "Ariyārahantapakkhabhikkhusaṃgha" came later on to be known as the "fraternity of the Mahāthera of the Krom (Kamboja) Market," and still afterwards as the "fraternity of the Krom Market," and finally simple as the "Krom fraternity."[38] However, at that time in the city of Dala, there were two fraternities, the Ariyārahanta fraternity and the Ceylon fraternity.

36 *Ep. Birm.*, III. ii, p. 196; *Sāsanavaṃsa*, p. 41. The *Sāsanavaṃsa* account is a bit different, but seem to be more plausible. Sāriputta at that time had grown extremely old and feeble. The king, out of consideration for him, did not like to burden him at that age with the heavy and responsible work of the royal ācariya. He, however, presented him with offerings and conferred the title of Dhammavilāsa on him. The king also charged him with the work of purifying the religion in the Môn country which meant that he was to represent the Ceylonese Church there.

37 *Ep. Birm.*, III, ii, p. 196.

38 *Ep. Birm.*, III, ii, pp. 196-97, where an explanation is given why the fraternity was so named.

The Sinhalese fraternity established itself also in the Martaban region where the Krom or Kamboja, *i.e.*, the Ariyārahanta fraternity had already been in existence. But very soon the Sinhalese fraternity in Martaban came to be split up into five different sects. It may be observed that the local, *i.e.*, Maramma Saṃgha or Arahanta Saṃgha, whatever we may like to call it, so long as its power and influence counted in the religious life of the country, was one undivided Order and was never split up into sects, while the Sīhala Samgha from the very beginning though believing in the common Mahāvihara orthodoxy and firmly holding to the Sinhalese tradition, showed signs of dissensions within itself that led to the splitting up of the Order into different sects. It was so in Pagan, it was the same story in Martaban. It is no doubt very difficult to find out what was there in the tradition of the Sinhalese fraternity that led to such dissensions ; but it may be argued,—and this is indicated by the Kalyāṇi inscriptions—[39] that the Sīhala Saṃgha was more concerned with the Vinaya, *i.e.*, with the rules of conduct of monastic life; and any infringement of the rules, or any new interpretation of the rules other than the traditional and generally accepted ones by any leading member of the fraternity, led to dissensions, and eventually to the founding of new sects, of course within the Order.

In Martaban the successors of Sivali (or Sivili), Ānanda and Tāmalinda, all of the Sinhalese fraternity, established three different sects. Besides these, there were two other sects founded respectively by Buddhavaṃsamahāthera and Mahāsāmīmahāthera otherwise known as Mahānāga. Both of them were preceptors of the chief queen or aggamahesi of Muttima, and both had received their training in Ceylon.[40] They thus came to belong to the Mahāvihāra

[39] *Ibid.*, pp. 198-99.

[40] *Sāsanavaṃsa*, p. 42; *Ep. Birm.*, *op. cit.*, pp. 198-99, fn. 5, p. 198.

ācariya-paramparā; but when they came back to their native country, they began to perform their ecclesiastical ceremonies separately, and thus gave rise to two more sects. No reason of their separation is given, but presumably it was on certain rules of monastic conduct. This will be evident from the fact, noted in the Kalyāṇī inscriptions, that "the Ceylon clergy who were of the fraternity of Ānanda[41] screened (themselves with a) cloth to eat (their) rice. When people invited (them to a) stead, they were not able to eat in the house, (but) returned to eat (in the) monastery." And "the Ceylon fraternity who were successors of the pupils of Mahātherā Tāmalinda were styled teachers of the minister of the silk-cloth screen",[42] which suggests that they used the silk-cloth as a screen. Strangely enough, it was on such flimsy and trivial monastic rules that dissensions took place and eventually gave rise to contending sects. Naturally, therefore, these sectarian differences on petty questions of procedure and discipline led to the degeneration of the Order. Such an unfortunate state of the religion is reflected in the Kalyāṇī inscriptions which relate rather candidly:

> "In all these sects of clergy.....there were none who were well-versed in Tipiṭaka, that were wise (and) qualified to come (and) investigate (and) ascertain matters concerning ecclesiastical ceremonies. The clergy of these various fraternities.....would say, 'We, indeed, are the wise and qualified'".

Each of these sects would perform their ecclesiastical ceremonies according to their own light, each fraternity went its own way and performed the ceremonies separately.[43]

V

THE DIMMING OF THE RELIGION

Narapatisithu died in 1210, and was succeeded by Htilominle (1210-34), one of the five sons whom the dying king

41 *Ep. Birm.*, *op. cit.*, p. 198, fn. 7.
42 *Ibid.*, p. 199, fn. 2.
43 *Ibid.*, p. 199, fn. 5 and 9.

had enjoined to rule with mercy and justice and together in perfect amity and good-will. Htilominle was a devout Buddhist and the religion flourished in his reign, though not with equal brilliance as in that of his father. He was the builder of the Sittana pagoda and of the Mahābodhi, an unsuccessful imitation of the temple at Bodh-Gayā, and the Htilominle temples, all in Pagan. He also completed the unfinished temple of his father, the Gawdawpalin. No wonder he was hailed as a good patron of the religion.

But his son, Kyaswa (1234-50) was even more devout than his father. It was perhaps the Pagan Samgha that gave him the significant title of "Dhammarāja."

"He had compassion on all the people, both layman and monks, as though they were children of his house. He read the Three Piṭakas nine times over, diverse interpretations of the Pāli commentaries and sub-commentaries, he pondered on them, in the meeting of questions there was none to equal him. Seven times a day he studied with the noble Order. For the sake of the palace ladies he composed the *Paramatthavindu*, that they might know of mind and the qualities of mind, matter, nirvāṇa, forms of being and personality. He would not even lend an ear to affairs of the villages or kingdom. Whenever there was any enquiry to be made, power exercised, he caused his son Uzana, the heir-apparent, to dispose thereof." [44]

According to the *Piṭakatthamain*, the *Gandhavaṃsa* and the *Sāsanavaṃsa* Kyaswa was the author of another book, *Saddavindu*,[45] a treatise on grammar. Kyaswa's daughter seems to have been very much interested in Buddhist learning; to her is ascribed the authorship of a book, *Vibhattyattha*, a little work on Pāli Vibhaktis or case-endings.[46]

Kyaswa was indeed the last great patron and protector of the religion and religious scholarship in the long line of kings of Pagan. He was unfortunate in his successors: his

[44] *Glass Palace Chronicle*, p. 185.

[45] *Piṭakatthamain*, pp. 45, 70; *Gandha.*, pp. 64, 73; *Sāsana.*, p. 76. See also Dr. Bode, p. 25.

[46] *Sāsana.*, p. 77, Bode, p. 25.

son Uzana (1250-54) was a pleasure-seeker while the grandson Narathihapate (1254-87), the last king of the dynasty, a swarthy tyrant. He built the Mingalazedi pagoda in Pagan, and set up an inscription which, though written in self-glorification, is unwittingly of course, a sarcastic commentary written by himself on his life. What more could one expect from a pompous glutton who speaks of himself in the following way :

"King Narathihapate styled Siritribhuvanātitya-paramadhammarāja, the supreme commander of a vast army of thirty-six million soldiers, the swallower of three hundred dishes of curry daily, being desirous of attaining the bliss of Nirvāṇa, erected a pagoda. In it he enshrined fifty-one gold and silver statuettes of kings and queens, lords and ladies, and over those he set up an image of Gautama Buddha in solid silver one cubit high, on the full moon of Kahson 636 (1274 A.D.). A covered way was made from the palace to the pagoda, with bamboo matting, whereon were laid rush mats, and on these again were spread pieces of cloth each twenty cubits in length, and at each cubit's distance on the way there was a banner. During the ceremony the princes, princesses and lords cast pearls among the statues."[47]

How far removed in attitude and sentiment is this from the Great Talaing Inscription of the Shwezigôn Pagoda of king Kyanzittha, or the Myazedi inscription of Thambula, or the Shwegugyi inscription of Alaungsithu !

With Kyaswa's death, therefore, the light that shone in splendour in Pagan for more than two centuries began to grow dim; and though life in the monasteries no doubt went on undisturbed, monastic scholarship which depended mainly, if not solely, on royal bounties and patronage, suffered a great deal, while the activities of the Saṃgha, now without the favour and protection of the king, were perforce limited and curtailed. Thus, weak and emaciated, the

[47] Mingalazedi Pagoda Inscription, Pagan, of the year 1274, *Inscriptions of Pagan, Pinya and Ava*, 1892, p. 199.

"The Mingalazedi is a large stūpa so common all over Burma. Its coarse execution seems to symbolise the exhaustion of a realm; it was built in blood and sweat. For two centuries Pagan had witnessed the spectacle of a whole population filled with a passion for covering the earth's surface with pagodas and now she was perishing to the drone of prayer." Harvey, *History of Burma*, p. 63.

Samgha faced a new danger; the country began to show signs of political unrest which meant unsettled condition of life, at least in the royal capital. These political disturbances reacted unfavourably on the religious life of the country and contributed their share, a large share indeed, to the 'dimming of the religion,' as the chronicles put it, at this time. But before we proceed to deal with that phase of the religion we must turn back to have an idea of the monastic life and scholarship during this brilliant period of active patronage of the religion by the kings of the Pagan dynasty.

VI

MONASTIC SCHOLARSHIP

Dr. Mabel Bode in her excellent work, *The Pāli Literature of Burma*, gives a very good and complete account of monastic scholarship in Burma from the reign of Anawrahta down to the reign of Min-don-min. But no account, it seems, can give us a vivid picture of the literature and scholastic activities of the Kynazittha Onhmin or the Kyaukku Onhmin or numerous other monasteries of Pagan and the interior regions where away from the din and bustle of ordinary life, the bhikkhu conforming strictly to all the duties of the monastic Order, strove hard to master the sacred texts of the religion. There in the darkness and solitude of the library hall of the monastery he devoted whatever time he could, day in and day out, in reading the works most suited to his line of study, and writing down on palm leaves the thoughts and comments of his own, not for any earthly fame or gain, but as a work of merit. The *Gandhavamsa*, the *Sāsanavaṃsa* and other chronicles give a long list of such monk-scholars and philosophers, and a longer list of their works, but even these lists must represent only a fraction of the good and continuous work that was carried on in the network of monasteries

spread all over the country. No subject was too unworthy for their study; and though naturally Buddhism in all its various aspects and branches demanded the most serious and careful attention, subjects like grammar, logic, medicine, astrology, astronomy, polity, law, prosody, metres, and even war, etc., claimed their time and labour, grammar being one of the most important.[48] This may help to give us a rough idea of the busy but silent scholastic life in the monasteries that continued through generations of thera-paramparā.

I have already referred to Dhammasenāpati, the author of the *Kārikā* who flourished during the reign of Kyanzittha and worked in the monastery attached to the Ānanda temple. But the golden period of monastic scholarship in Pagan began with the reign of Kyanzittha's successors, in fact, from the reign of Narapatisithu.[49] Narapati's tutor, Aggavaṃsa, was a learned thera, one of the most noted who dwelt in the monastery on the plateau to the north above Pagan. Aggavaṃsa wrote a grammar of the Tipiṭaka called *Saddanīti* (1154) which is still regarded as classic in Burma. Uttarajīva, when he crossed over to Ceylon on a visit to the Mahāvihāra, took with him a copy of this work which was 'received with enthusiastic admiration, and declared superior to any work of the kind written by Sinhalese scholars.'[50] Capata, otherwise known as Saddhammajotipāla, the disciple of Uttarajīva, was also interested in grammar, besides the Vinaya and the Abhidhamma. He is credited by the *Gandhavaṃsa*, the *Sāsanavaṃsa* and the *Sāsanavaṃsadīpa* to have been the

[48] *Cf.* the list of texts in the inscription of the Common Era 804 (1442 A.D.). See also texts mentioned in other records in *Inscription of Pagan, Pinya and Ava*, Ed. by Taw Sein Ko and translated by Tun Nyein, Rangoon, 1899.

[49] A full list of authors and their works is given in *Pāli Literature of Burma*, by Dr. Bode. What I am attempting here is only a bare catalogue with a view to giving an idea of the scholarly activities of the monks just to give a complete account of the religion during the period. This catalogue is gleaned mainly from the *Sāsanavaṃsa*, the *Gandhavaṃsa* and the *Piṭakatthamain*. My indebtedness to Dr. Bode in this connection is obvious.

[50] Dr. Bode, p. 17; *Gandha.*, pp. 67, 72; Fausböll, *Cat. Ind. Mss.*, p. 49.

author of the *Suttaniddesa* (or *Kaccāyanasuttaniddesa*) which was composed at Arimaddana (Pagan) at the request of his pupil Dhammacāri.[51] He was also the author of *Samkhepa-vaṇṇanā*,[52] a commentary on the *Ābhidhammattha-saṃgha* of Anuruddha, the *Sīmālaṅkāra* or *Sīmālaṅkāraṭīkā*,[53] a commentary on a Ceylonese work on boundaries and sites for religious ceremonies, the *Vinayasamuṭṭhānadīpanī*,[54] a work on monastic discipline written at the request of his preceptor, the *Vinayagulatthadīpanī*,[55] an exposition of the abstruse passages of the *Vinayapiṭaka*, the *Nāmacāradīpanī*,[56] the *Mātikatthadīpanī*, the *Paṭṭhānagaṇānaya*,[57] all dealing with Abhidhamma subjects, and the *Gandhisāra*[58] or *Gaṇṭhisāra*, a condensed collection of important texts. Forchammer thinks, however, that the *Suttaniddesa*, the *Saṃkhepavaṇṇanā* and the *Nāmacāradīpanī* were not the works of Capata, but were introduced by him from Ceylon.[59] Of these, the *Nāmacāradīpanī*, according to him, was a book on ethics, and not on Abhidhamma.[60] According to the *Piṭakatthamain*, Capata was the author of another work, the *Visuddhimaggagaṇṭhi*,[61] a commentary on the difficult passages of Buddhaghosa's great encyclopaedia.[62]

51 *Gandha.*, pp. 64, 74; *Sāsana.*, p. 74; *Sāsanadīp.*, verses 1274-8; *Piṭakatthamain*, p. 66.

52 According to the *Gandha.*, this work was the only one written in Ceylon. The *Piṭakatthamain* classes this work under Abhidhamma works, p. 50. See Oldenberg, *Pāli MSS. in the India Office*, JPTS., 1882, p. 85; Fausböll, *Cat. Mand. MSS.*, JPTS., 1896, p. 39.

53 *Gandha.*, p. 62; *Sāsanadīp.*, vv. 12-13; *Piṭakatthamin*, pp. 43, 49.

54 *Gandha.*, pp. 64, 74.

55 *Piṭakatthamain*, p. 44.

56 *Gandha.*, p. 74.

57 *Ibid.*

58 *Gandha.*, p. 74.

59 Forchammer, *Jardine Prize Essay*, pp. 34, 35.

60 *Ibid.*

61 *Piṭakatthamain*, p. 37.

62 For Capata's Works see Dr. Bode, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-19.

The introduction of the Sīhala Saṃgha by Capata intensified the enthusiasm among monks for scholastic work, and we find monk-scholars busying themselves in writing treatises mostly on grammar. Saddhammasiri, a monk of Pagan, wrote a grammatical treatise called *Saddatthabhedacintā*,[63] a book based on the Pāli aphorisms of Kaccāyana, and perhaps also on Sanskrit texts on grammar. According to the *Sāsanavaṃsa*, he was the translator of the *Bṛhaja*, which evidently is the *Bṛhajjātaka* of Varāhamihira, into Burmese, probably one of the first works in the vernacular.[64]

Vimalabuddhi (also called Mahā-Vimalabuddhi), another thera of Pagan, was the author of another important grammatical work known as *Nyāsa* or *Mukhamattadīpanī*, a commentary on the *Kaccāyanayoga*. He also wrote a *ṭīkā* on the *Nyāsa*,[65] and to him is also ascribed the *Abhidhammatthasaṅgahaṭīkā*.[66]

Aggapaṇḍita, a native of Burma and resident of Pagan, wrote a treatise named *Lokuppatti*,[67] an important book which is not on grammar. But treatises on grammar closely followed one upon another. Subhūticandana, Ñāṇasāgara and Uttama, all of Pagan, were the authors of *Liṅgatthavivaraṇa*, *Liṅgatthavivaraṇappakāsaka* and *Liṅgatthavivaraṇaṭīkā*.[68] *Uttara* also wrote a *ṭīkā* on *Bālāvatāra*, the grammar of Vacissara of Ceylon, while the authorship of *Liṅgatthavivaraṇavinicchaya*, another work on grammar, is unknown.[69]

Earlier, a scholium on *Nyāsa* entitled *Nyāsappadīpaṭīkā* was composed by a noble man whose name is not given, but who was a grammarian of repute.[70] A very interesting

63 *Gandha.*, pp. 62, 72; Forchammer, *List*, p. xix.
64 *Sāsana.*, p. 75; *Piṭakatthamain*, p. 68.
65 *Gandha.*, pp. 63, 73.
66 *Sāsanadīp.*, v. 1223.
67 *Gandha.*, pp. 64, 67; *Sāsana.*, p. 74; *Piṭakatthamain*, p. 60.
68 *Gandha.*, pp. 63, 67, 72, 73.
69 *Ibid.*, pp. 65-75.
70 *Sāsanadīp.*, v. 1240.

but intensely human story is told about this author in the *Sāsanavaṃsa*,[71] which seems to indicate that he had been a noble man of rank when he fell violently in love with one of the princesses royal. Narapatisithu, the reigning king, agreed to give his daughter in marriage to the noble man if he could produce a scholarly work. The noble man then presumably entered the Order and took upon himself the responsible task of writing the work referred to above. On the completion of the work the king evidently gave him the hand of his daughter, and he returned to the layman's life and was conferred the title of Rajjuggāhamacca.

Dhammadassi was another important grammarian of Pagan. He was a sāmanera when he wrote his work on *Vaccavācaka* or *Vācāvācaka*,[72] on which Saddhammanandi wrote a *ṭīkā*.[73] Thera Abhaya, also of Pagan, wrote his *Mahāṭīkā*,[74] a commentary on the *Saddatthabhedacintā* of Saddhammasiri, and the *Sambandhacintāṭīkā*,[75] a commentary on the *Saṃbandhacintā* of Saṃgharakkhita, a scholar of Ceylon.

Scholastic activities in the monasteries of Pagan continued unabated even after Narapatisithu's reign. We have seen that Kyaswa himself was an author of repute, while his daughter was also the authoress of a little work in Pāli cases called *Vibhattyattha*.[76] It is no wonder, therefore, that important treatises continued to be written. Sāgara, or Guṇasāgara as he is called in the *Gandhavaṃsa*, wrote the *Mukhamattasāra* [77] as well as a *ṭīkā* on his work, at the

[71] *Sāsana*, p. 75; Forchammer, *List*, p. xxiii.

[72] *Sāsana*, p. 75. According to the *Piṭakatthamain*, the *Vaccavācaka* was written by an author whose name is unknown.

[73] *Cat. Mand. Mss.* mention three *ṭīkās* on the *Vaccavācaka*, but Saddhammanandi is the only author mentioned, p. 50.

[74] *Gandha*, pp. 63, 73; Forchammer, *List*, p. xxi; *Report*, p. 2.

[75] *Cat. Mand. Mss.* p. 50; *Piṭakatthamain*, pp. 69, 71; Forchammer, *List*, p. xxi.

[76] *Sāsana*, p. 77.

[77] *Sāsana*, p. 76; *Gandha*, pp. 63, 73. Forchammer in his *List* gives the name as Guṇasāra, p. xxiii.

request of the Saṃgharāja who was also the preceptor of the king. Besides grammar, Abhidhamma was also an important subject of study. The *Sāsanavaṃsa* gives us a short story of the old monk Disāpāmokkha who took so seriously to the study of this subject that he mastered it thoroughly within a very short time. The other theras were astonished at this, and the earnestness of the old man was rewarded by the king who appointed him as his ācariya.

It is strange that we have practically no information of the state of monastic learning and scholarship in the Talaing country during all this time. I have already argued that there is no ground for assuming that with the taking away of sacred texts and many learned monks from Thaton by Anawrahta, Buddhism and Buddhist learning had become a thing of the past in the Talaing country. The reason of our having no information about the state of the religion or religious scholarship in that country after the memorable sack of Thaton for well-nigh one century and a half must be sought for elsewhere. All our sources of information hails from the Sinhalese school or from some other quarter having a great leaning towards that school, the Kalyāṇī inscriptions being no exception. The *Sāsanavaṃsa*, the most important source in this respect, is frankly of Sinhalese affiliation, and it is clear that it does not take any notice of any scholar or scholarly work, except in a few instances, that does not belong to that school. The Talaing country, on the other hand, owed allegiance all this time to the older school to which belonged Shin Arahan himself. It is easy to imagine that this Saṃgha which was known as Ariyārahanta Saṃgha had a history of its own even after Anawrahta had robbed the Talaing capital of much of its political and religious glory. It may also be imagined that during all this time the Talaing country had not been without its history of monastic learning and scholarship. But all our

sources ignore this history altogether. When therefore, the veil is lifted once more and we get a glimpse of the Talaing country after about one hundred and fifty years, we find the Sinhalese school already firmly established there. Naturally, therefore, the first Buddhist scholar whom we meet with as devoting himself in furthering the cause of the religion in the Talaing country is Sāriputta Dhammavilāsa, a resident of Rāmaññadesa, but ordained in the Sīhala Saṃgha by thera Ānanda. The one-sidedness of all our main sources of information is nowhere so clearly brought to prominence than in this instance. The *Sāsanavaṃsa* and the Kalyāṇī inscriptions so relate the story as to suggest that Dhammavilāsa was the first scholar and divine of the Talaing country after Shin Arahan, a fact palpably absurd in a country where Buddhism had been a living religion for centuries and where a flourishing Saṃgha was all the time in existence. We must therefore lament that no scholar or chronicle belonging to the Talaing school or having at least sympathies with that school left for us any account of the religion to enable us to give a more complete history of the vicissitudes of the religion in Burma through the centuries.

Sāriputta Dhammavilāsa is not known to have written any work on Vinaya or Abhidhamma or even on grammar. His most interesting and important work was on law ; in fact, his *Dhammathat* or Law Code was one of the earliest in Burma, and was the source and model of practically all later Pāli and Burmese law texts written in Burma.[78]

It is interesting to note that the monkish scholars devoted themselves so rigorously to the study of grammar. Readers may have noticed that a considerable number of works of this

[78] Forchammer, *Jardine Prize Essay*; also his *Notes on Buddhist Law*. Dhammavilāsa's *Dhammathat* can no longer be traced; the book exists only in quotations of extracts in a commentary written in 1856, and in a Burmese translation of 1768. *Essay*, p. 29. Also, Furnivall, "Manu in Burma: some Burmese Dhammathats" in *JBRS*. 1940, pp. 351-70.

period, and also of later periods, are on grammar, apparently an uncreative subject of study for monks who are expected to be more concerned with deeper aspects and problems of life, and as such, with psychology, ethics and metaphysics. It is strange that so late a scholar, holding so important a position as that of the Saṃgharāja, Paññāsāmī, the author of the *Sāsanavaṃsa*, interests himself in grammar almost out of all proportion. He cannot conceal his predilection towards the subject in preference to others; indeed, he delights in relating the accounts of those scholars who are interested like himself in the subject. In one place he is almost enthusiastic in recording how popular was the study of grammar even among women of all ages, and how even busy mothers of families of Pagan could find time to study grammar ;[79] in another place he relates with pleasure how witty women disputed with monks on Pāli accidence. This extraordinary interest in grammar may have been due to the fact that for all who were interested in the religion—and a very considerable section of the community undoubledly was—a knowledge of the sacred texts was almost the first requisite, and knowledge of the texts presupposed a good knowledge of Pāli grammar. But perhaps more than this, it was due to the peculiar orthodox attitude of the Sinhalese school, an attitude which also explains their very strict adherence to the triflest rule on the day to day conduct of life as laid down in the Vinaya. Dr. Mabel Bode has a very significant passage[80] on this attitude; it explains fully the interest in grammar of the Sinhalese school :

"To the orthodox, scriptural warrant is everything, in the settlement of religious difficulties. From the word of the ancient texts, expanded in the Aṭṭhakathā, and further explained by ṭīkās and aṭṭhayojanās there is no appeal. So the actual 'word' becomes the rock on which right believing and right living rest, and generation after generation of teachers devote themselves passionately to the study of Pāli grammar. The 'science of words' is held to be vital to the cause of Truth, and the writing of grammatical treatises rises to the height of a religious duty."

79 *Sāsana*, p. 78.

80 *Sāsana*, Introduction, p. 56.

VII

THE DŪRENIDĀNA AND AVIDŪRENIDĀNA STORIES IN BURMA

In a preceding section we have incidentally referred to the representation of the entire repository of Jātaka stories numbering 547, on the glazed plaques adorning the walls of the Ānanda temple. "The Jātaka stories embodying, as they do, their moral and ethical teachings in the form of charming tales and fables," says M. Duroiselle, "were one of the most potent means for pressing the claims of Buddhism among the peoples of Indo-China; they have left a deep impression wherever the religion has become established. This is true of all the Jātakas, but especially of the last ten long ones; and the most prized and read among these ten are: Sāma, Mahājanaka, Mahosadha (Mahā-ummagga) and Vessantara; they have been translated in prose and verse, and turned into theatrical plays in the case of Vessantara. This predilection explains the great prominence given to these ten stories in the plaques of the Ānanda, for, while the lesser Jātakas have only one plaque to each, these ten are illustrated by 389. In Burma, they form the subject of a voluminous literature, both in Talaing and in Burmese."[81] Out of the total number of 547 Jātakas 537 plaques contain 537 shorter Jātaka stories and the number and the order of the stories are the same as we find them in the Pāli recension preserved in Ceylon and other countries professing Pāli Buddhism. The last ten, *i.e.*, the Mahānipāta stories as we find them on the Ānanda do not follow the traditional order. The reason is difficult to guess.[82] Nevertheless, it is evident that already by about the end of the eleventh century the entire corpus of Jātaka literature was made familiar to the Buddhist fraternity of Upper Burma, and it is natural to

[81] *Ep. Birm*, I, part One, pp. v-vi.

[82] *Ibid*, pp. iv-v.

imagine that through these stories Buddhism made its appeal to the rude common people of the north and rapidly won their heart.

But it is not the Ānanda alone in Pagan that was embellished by pictorial representations of Jātakas. The temples that according to tradition and epigraphic evidence[83] seem to be earlier than even the Ānanda, namely the two Petleik pagodas, were also similarly decorated with the complete series of representations of Jātaka stories. In all editions of Jātaka stories, the number is 547, and in all other Pagan temples that had their walls similarly decorated, *e.g.*, the Shwesandaw built by Anawrahta, the Shwezigon finished by Kyanzittha, the Dhammarājika built by Narapatisithu, the Mingalazedi built by Tarukpyemin, etc., the number is the same. The traditional number in Burma is however 550, and it is interesting to note that the Western Petleik numbers its plaques up to 550 which agrees exactly with the tradition. The three additional Jātakas are: 497 Velama-Jāt (Jātaka), 498 Mahāgovinda Jāt, and 499 Sumedhapaḍita Jāt. The legends on the plaques on the two Petleik pagodas, the Ānanda and the Shwezigon are all written in Pāli giving the name of the Jātaka followed by its number, while those on the plaques of the Dhammarājika, the Mingalazedi, the Nandawye at Myanzaine near Kyaukse (c. 1300) and the Shwezigon between Mandalay and Kyaukse (c. 1300), the legends are both in Pāli and Burmese, Pāli giving the name of the Jātaka and the Burmese the state of existence in which the Bodhisattva had been born in that particular story.[84] A few titles differ slightly as to spelling, while certain other Jātakas have been given a name altogether different from what we find in Faüsboll's edition. For "Dīghitikosala Jātaka," for example, we have "Kosalarāja

[83] *An.R.A.S.I.*, 1912-13, p. 89.
[84] *Ibid.*, p. 91.

Jātaka," for "Aggika Jātaka" we have "Aggikabhāradvāja Jātaka," for "Rādha Jātaka" we have Poṭṭhapāda Jātaka, Poṭṭhapāda being the name of the younger parrot and Rādha that of the elder in the story.[85]

The complete series of 547 Jātaka stories is also found painted on the interior walls of the Kubyaukkyi temple at Wetkyi-in, between Nyang-U and Pagan, belonging to about the twelfth century A.D., as well as on those of another temple at Nyang-U, also belonging to the same date. In the former, out of the entire series 210 only remain. The legends are in Pāli and Burmese which latter is followed by the serial number of the Jātakas in each nipāta, the whole collection being divided into 22 nipātas.[86]

We have seen above that the number and order of the Jātakas follow rigorously the Pāli version of Southern Buddhism which had been known to the Talaings of Lower Burma already for several centuries. From this it is permissible to assume that Pagan was admitted into this wonderful realm of edifying tales of Buddhism, as in those of so many other elements of culture and civilisation, through the Talaings, a very large number of whose monks, artists, craftsmen, sculptors and architects were brought over to Pagan as captives by Anawrahta.

"Eventful is that," says M. Duroiselle, "the Burmese, victorious in the field, were intellectually the conquered; for it is from that period that the wonderful architectural and literary activity, which made Pagan for a time the Buddhist metropolis of China, is to be dated. Nearly three centuries of Northern and North-Eastern Indian active influences had slowly prepared the Burmese thoroughly to assimilate the Talaing civilisation introduced by King Anawrahta's conquest; from that time writing was adopted to common use by the adoption of a foreign alphabet to represent Burmese sounds, and inscription on stone or brick, in Talaing and Burmese appeared at Pagan; the Tipiṭakas are transliterated into the newly adopted alphabet. Sanskrit is definitely abandoned as a vehicle of religious teaching and, with it, the form of Mahāyānism then extant at the Burmese capital, and superseded by Pāli; the court and the people receive the teaching of Hīnayānism

[85] *Ibid*, p. 91.
[86] *Ibid*, p. 93.

at the feet of Talaing monks, and under Indian and Talaing supervision the most magnificent temples are built in rapid succession.[87]

The earlier inscriptions belonging to the eleventh and greater part of the twelfth centuries are almost all in Talaing, not in Burmese, and a closer examination of a very large number of Burmese words of the labels of Jātaka legends would show that their spelling had not yet then become standardised and the form of writing was just at its beginnings. It was not very easy to represent adequately the phonetics of Burmese speech through the characters of Talaing. That the Talaings themselves helped the Burmese to a very great extent in achieving this would be evident from a very large number of early Burmese words and sounds that are nothing but phonetic transcriptions of original Talaing.

Besides those already referred to there are also other temples in Pagan that contain pictorial representations of Jātakas. Mention may be made for instance of the wall-paintings of the Abeyadana and Kubyaukkyi temples of Pagan proper. Both temples seem to belong to about the third quarter of the eleventh century. The large majority of the paintings inside the Abeyadana represent gods and goddesses of the Brāhmanical, Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna pantheons, the solitary exception being that of a Jātaka story—the Mahā-ummagga Jātaka. Panels in the porch outside however seem all to belong to the Hīnayāna. All the scenes, where-ever the paintings are still traceable, bear each a legend in both Pāli and Talaing. A number is also attached to each with the numbers of the nipāta given after each series. The number and arrangement of the Jātakas follow very closely those given by Faüsboll and noticeable in so many other temples in Pagan. The Kubyaukkyi temple also, like the Abeyadana, is a repository, so far as the wall paintings are concerned, of Brāhmanical, Mahāyāna, Vajrayāna,

[87] *Ibid*, p. 91.

Tantrayāna and Hīnayāna divinities and fully and adequately illustrate the eclectic religious life of the Burmese metropolis which was not very much unlike what one finds in Bihar and Bengal from about the seventh to about the tenth century A.D. Here also we find on the walls paintings depicting scenes from the Jātakas and stories from the life of the Buddha as known to Pāli literature.

Like the Dūrenidāna or Jātaka stories, the Avidūrenidāna or the life-stories of the Buddha also became very popular in Burma during this period and continued to be so ever since. Already we have seen the ruins of Old Prome yielding relief sculptures narrating important episodes from the life of the Master. We have also seen that the complete cycle was elaborately represented on the walls of the terraces and corridors of the Ānanda. Archaeological exploration and research in Pagan during the last forty years have yielded a large number of sculptures, terracotta tablets and painted panels representing important episodes of Buddha's life beginning from that of the request of the gods in the Tusita heaven, but more often from that of the dream interpretation, to the story of the Mahāparinibbāna. Such sculptures and painted panels are but too numerous to enable us to take individual notice of them.[88] One or two representative examples brought to light by recent explorations may just be referred to; but the most important repository of Avidūrenidāna stories in Burma is of course the Ānanda where one finds the richest store of sculptures and glazed terracotta tablets representing the entire series of events and episodes of the Master's life beginning with the request of the gods in the Tusita heaven and ending with the Parinibbāna, including the various miracles he performed in his last existence and also other incidents connected with his life and activities. Nowhere else in Burma except

[88] *An.R.A.S.I.*, 1913-14, Duroiselle, The stone sculptures in the Ānanda Temple at Pagan, pp. 63 ff.

in the Ānanda is the Avidūrenidāna cycle so elaborately represented, though from a number of temples hail reliefs that stylistically and iconographically may be considered more or less as replicas of those of the Ānanda.

But Pagan has also yielded stone slabs and terracotta reliefs in which several scenes are clustered together round a principal central scene, all co-ordinated into one relief-composition. Reliefs representing such scenes belong almost invariably to the East Indian tradition of India and the iconographic presentation is in most cases a veritable copy of similar presentations from Sarnath and other centres in Bihar and Bengal. Take, for example, two stone reliefs unearthed from the ruins of a temple at Thyipyitsaya, five miles from Pagan illustrating several scenes from the Buddha's life. The central figure is of the Buddha seated in bhūmisparśamudrā in vajrāsana which represents the story of Illumination at Bodh-gayā where he called the earth to witness a most important event of his life. From his right are arranged the following episodes in order of sequence from the bottom : (2) nativity or the birth of the Bodhisattva, (3) the First Sermon, (4) taming the Nālagiri elephant, (5) descent from the Trayatriṃsa heaven, (6) the Sāvatthī miracle, (7) the presentation of honey by the monkey, and last of all (8) the Parinibbāna which is placed on the top of the slab. Going round in the same order the first panel in the inner row represents : (9) feeding the Buddha, (10) the Buddha in dhyānamudrā, (11) the Buddha with both his hands in abhayamudrā, (12) Buddha standing, (13) repetition of No. 10, and (14) the Mucalinda incident.[89] In a good number of such slabs, the first eight principal scenes are represented in almost the same order. For instance, a small stone slab recovered from a field close to the Shwezigon pagoda, Pagan, represents in the centre the principal figure

[89] *An.R.A.S.B.* 1928-29, pp. 30-31, plate III, fig. 1.

of Bodhisattva Gotama seated in bhūmisparaśamudrā under the Bodhi tree at Bodh-gayā and flanked by the two Bodhisattvas, Maitreya and Avalokiteśvara, a common feature in Burma. Just above the head of Maitreya and Avalokita, in a vertical row will be seen Māra's retinue which suggests that the Bodhisattva is just on the threshold of attaining the Buddhahood. It will be noticed in all such reliefs from Burma that the Bodhisattva is represented in princely attire which is explained in Burmese and Siamese tradition by the introduction of a story that is unknown to Indian Buddhalogy. The story represents Buddha Gotama as Jambupati or a Rājachakkavattī whose dress he assumed when he appeared before a certain king who was very proud of his wealth and power, and it was to curb his pride that the Buddha appeared in a princely resplendent attire.[90] Round the principal figure beginning from the bottom left are represented the following stories: (2) Nativity scene, (3) the First Sermon, (4) taming of the wild elephant Nālagiri, (5) descent from the Tusita heaven, (6) Miracle at Sāvatthī, and (7) above the principal figure, the Mahāparinibbāna.[91] An exactly similar slab was unearthed from the *debris* of a ruined pagoda at Myinpagan. Here also the principal figure is that of the Bodhisattva Gotama seated under the Bodhi tree in bhūmisparśamudrā and flanked by Avalokita and Maitreya as well as by the army of Māra, and the seven other principal scenes are arranged in exactly the same sequence. But in this instance around the central figure there is a vertical row in between the principal figure and the outer row of seven scenes. This vertical row represents six other scenes which are exactly similar to those of the stone slab from Thyipyitsaya described above. Here too the Mucalinda incident is clearly indicated by a seated figure with cobra hoods above its head immediately on the

90 *Ibid*, pp. 30-31.

91 *Ibid*.

left of the standing figure of the Bodhisattva on the left side of the central figure. [92]

It would be evident from the reliefs described above that the eight principal scenes as we find them on these and similar other reliefs were very popular in Burma. Of the reliefs representing individual scenes, finds from Pagan indicate that the most popular incidents of the Master's life were those of his birth, the Bodhi, the First Sermon, the taming of the elephant, and the stories relating to the Pārileyyaka forest, Mucalinda, and the ogre Āḷavaka. The birth story was so very popular that in some cases the different stages of the story have also been represented. For example, on a stone relief in one of the corridors of the Kubyaukgale temple at Myinpagan is represented the birth of the Bodhisattva and the incidents that immediately followed, *viz.*, (1) four chief Brāhmaṇas receiving the new-born infant on a golden net-work, (2) four Lokapālas receiving him on a black antelope's skin from the hands of the chief Brāhmaṇas, (3) four men receiving him on a piece of cloth from the hands of the Lokapālas, and (4) the new-born infant making the first seven strides, flanked on his left by Brahmā holding the white umbrella over his head and on his right by two devas. Such representations can also be seen with but slight variations at the Ānanda as well as in the wall-paintings and stone-slabs in other temples in Pagan. An interesting feature of the Kubyaukgale relief is that on the top of the head of Māyādevī is a small figure seated cross-legged with the right hand placed on the right knee, palm downwards, and the left hand on the lap, palm upwards. This must represent the Bodhisattva, and the representation of the incidents are in accordance with Burmese Buddhalogy.[93]

[92] *An.R.A.S.I.*, 1930-34, p. 180.
[93] *An.R.A.S.I.*, 1935-36, p. 73-75.

Not only on stone reliefs and terracotta votive tablets but in wall-paintings as well we have a large number of representations of stories from Buddha's life. The walls of a large number of temples of Pagan were originally decorated with paintings; but ravages of men, time and nature have been successful in obliterating them in most cases. Few that remain show that the people of Pagan had a very intimate knowledge of the entire cycle of stories pertaining to Buddha's life. Such representations are often found along with those of Brāhmanical, Mahāyāna, Vajrayāna and Tantrayāna gods and goddesses. Examples may be cited from two temples, one from among the earliest monuments, namely, the Patothamya, and another from among the latest of the Pagan period, namely, the Payathonzu. The Patothamya paintings illustrating stories from the Buddha's life are provided with legends in Môn in characters of about the eleventh century. These legends help us to identify the stories, one of which represents the prediction by the sage Kāḷa-devala, while another shows the Buddha in the midst of his Śākya kinsmen exhibiting the Yamaka-pratihārya.[94] Among the Payathonzu temple drawings the following scenes may easily be identified : (1) descent from the Trayatriṃsa heaven, (2) birth of the Bodhisattva, (3) the seven strides, (4) adoration of the relics, (5) walking near Gandhakūṭi in Jetavana, (6) Buddha in the Pārileyyaka forest, (7) Bodhisattva proceeding to the Bodhi tree, and (8) Buddha seated on the Vajrāsana at Bodh-Gayā.[95] In one of the paintings on the walls of the Sayambu temple one notices a representation of the story of the ogre Āḷavaka'[96]

94 *An.R.A.S.I.*, 1935-36, p. 139.
95 *An.R.A.S.I.*, 2935-36, p. 80-81.
96 *Ibid*, p. 81.

VIII

FURTHER CORROBORATIVE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

The story of Theravāda Buddhism as related in the previous sections finds confirmation in the history and art of the hundred and one monuments that came to cover every available inch of ground of the torrid plains of Pagan. One should bear in mind all these large and small edifices dedicated to the glorification of the Master and his faith were reared up in course of about 250 years, from about the middle of the eleventh to about the closing of the thirteenth century A.D. These monuments that pierce the Pagan sky furnish an undying testimony to the efflorescence of Buddhism during those eventful two centuries and a half when the kings of the Anawrahta dynasty sat on the throne. Remains of dozens of monasteries strewn all over the metropolis and its suburbs suggest that there were thousands of monks who went about with their begging bowl from door to door, brought relief and succour to those physically and mentally afflicted, taught the message of the Master to those who had been given up to heathen gods and spirits, and retired to their regulated and disciplined duties of daily life in the seclusion of their cells inside the monasteries. Inscriptions only in dozens testify to the donations of villages, lands, books, slaves, cattle and other necessities of monastic life towards the regular upkeep and maintenance of temples and other monastic establishments, and such donations were made not by the kings and members of the royal and noble families but by well-to-do members of the lay public as well. Two inscriptions in Burmese, for example, recovered from the ruins of a temple south-east of the Nagayon, Myinpagan, record the dedication of lands, slave and cattle to some stūpas and temples by an ordinary citizen. One of these inscriptions is dated in the Burmese Common Era equivalent to

1081 A.D.[97] Another old Burmese inscription recovered from the ruins near the Sinbaung Temple, Thyipyitsaya, Pagan, records the dedication by a revenue officer and his wife, of lands and slaves to a pagoda and a monastery and of certain objects for the use of monks of that monastery. It is dated 595 S.E. = 1233-34 A.D. The interesting point in the inscription is that the dedication was made in the presence of 8 monks headed by "Sklin Singhuim," a description that presumably stands for a Sinhalese monk.[98] These are but specimens of many such inscriptions brought to light by archaeological research and exploration at Pagan and other important centres in Upper Burma. If further corroborative evidence is needed, it is furnished by the numberless stone and stucco images of the Buddha in different attitudes that adorn the niches and sanctums of hundreds of stūpas and temples as well as by the deluge of terracotta votive tablets bearing effigies of the Buddha and Buddhist epigraphs. Such epigraphs on tablets belong to different categories. One category whose number is by far the largest bears the name of King Anawrahta, the man responsible for the introduction of Theravāda Buddhism in Upper Burma. The epigraph is either as follows :

Ye dhammā hetuprabhavā hetum tesam Tathāgatohavadat
tesaṃ ca yo nirodha evamvādī Śrī Aniruddhadeva

in Sanskrit or Pāli or in mixed Sanskrit and Pāli, but invariably in East-Indian characters of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. This is the well-known Buddhist formula snatched from the lips of the Mahāsamaṇa and put into those of Aniruddhadeva (King Anawrahta). Or, in other instances, it runs as follows :

Oṃ deyadharmo'yaṃ saccadānapati
Mahārāja Śrī Aniruddhadevasya

97 *An.R.A.S.I.*, 1930-34, p. 190.
98 *Ibid*, 1934-35, pp. 71-72.

in the same East-Indian characters of the same date. Whether they are in Sanskrit or Pāli or in mixed Pāli-Sanskrit, doubtless they were all locally moulded to order. In the second category fall those that bear on them the Buddhist formula as such without the name of any body, either in Pāli or Sanskrit but always in East-Indian characters of the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Those in Sanskrit may have been carried over to the metropolis from such centres as Sarnath, Bodhgayā, Nālandā and other places in Eastern India, but those in Pāli were probably locally moulded to order. The third category includes those tablets that begin with Ye dhammā hetuppabhavā and ends with "dānapati Śrī Mah(i)syadevī" or with the name of some other individual. There is a fourth category which does not quote the Buddhist formula but record only the name of the donor of the particular tablet and the fact and aim of the donation. Such legends are in Môn or Pāli or in mixed Môn and Pāli, in East-Indian characters of the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The legends are of various kinds. For example, one says that the image of the Jina, the Buddha, was made by an ācariya or monk; another contains a prayer expressing a hope that his work of merit (*i.e.*, having the tablet moulded) might be a help to obtain omniscience. A third of which the first half is in Môn means that a particular tablet was made by Yasa, while the other half which is in Pāli means "with his own hands." Still a fourth would have another legend in Môn which means "made by Samben (or Minister)", and a fifth which reads in Pāli: "eso bhagavā Trilokavataṃsaka Mahādeviyā kata vimuttatthaṃ sahatthen'evāti" which translated would be "This tablet was made by Trilokavataṃsaka, the chief queen, with her own hands, with a view to attain salvation." The last is indeed a pattern often found employed in votive tablets by Anawrahta and others, the only variation being in the names of donors; for

example,one tablet depicting the Buddha in bhūmisparśamudrā has the following inscription: "eso bhagavā Samben Jesalyena kata vimuttathaṃ sahatthen'evāti." [99]

In respect of Theravāda Buddhism in Pagan and other important centres in Upper Burma during the suzerainty of the Anawrahta dynasty evidence has indeed been overwhelming, and the account narrated from traditions and chronicles stands fully corroborated by epigraphic documents, sculptures, paintings, terracotta votive tablets and not the least by the most splendid array of monuments that are a real glory to the culture and civilisation of Burma. But the growth of Pagan as the most important centre of religion in Burma and carrying over to Pagan of monks, artists, artisans, and sacred texts and relics of the religion from Thaton, did not and could not possibly extinguish the light that had been burning in the Talaing realm for centuries past. I have already drawn pointed attention to the fact that nothing could be further from truth, and have also tried to give in a preceding section an account of the religion in the Talaing country after the cruel fate that attended her in 1057. It is true, the religion suffered a great set back; robbed of royal patronage and heavily affected by transference of political authority, the religious fraternity must have found itself in deep sea. Fortunately it turned out to be but a temporary eclipse, and soon we find the monks and monastic establishments of the country showing renewed signs of life and movement. This finds striking confirmation from archaeological finds made at Thaton and Rangoon and dateable from about the eleventh to about the thirteenth century A.D. In recent years attention has been drawn to seven stone slabs, all bearing inscriptions and belonging at the Shwezayan pagoda, Thaton. The Shwezayan in its present form is a monument not older

[99] For references, see *An. R.A.S. I.*, 1930-34, pp. 178-178, 188-89.

than about the fifteenth or sixteenth century, but the inscriptions, in Pāli and Môn, seem to be older than the monument itself. They were not all inscribed at one and the same period, for, while, paleographically speaking, the earliest of them can be dated in about the eleventh century, the latest probably belong to about the fifteenth. They have not yet been deciphered and edited, but even a cursory glance at them would prove that their subject-matter is Buddhistic. But more important is the evidence afforded by the terracotta plaques of the Thagyapaya stūpa in the very heart of the Thaton town. Originally there seem to have been a total of 61 plaques, but now only a few remain. In my *Brahmanical Gods in Burma* (1932) I had suggested that these probably represented stories from the *Rāmāyaṇa* or the *Purāṇas*. I am now convinced that they represent Jātaka stories, and among the very few reliefs that are still extant, the following stories have already been traced : the Vessantara Jātaka, the Vidhura Jātaka (2 plaques), the Mahāummagga Jātaka (2 plaques), the Bhuridatta Jātaka (2 plaques) and the Temiya Jātaka.[100] Stylistically these terracotta reliefs can be assigned to a period not later than the 12th century A.D. Further, round the Kalyāṇīsīmā, Thaton, there stands a row of sandstone pillars depicting stories from the Jātakas carved in relief. The Mahājanaka, the Sāmā and the Nemi Jātakas can at once be recognised; the Vidhurapaṇḍita Jātaka is illustrated on two pillars, while another pillar found broken in two parts seem to represent scenes from the Vessantara Jātaka, so very popular in Burma. These reliefs can stylistically be dated between the 12th and 13th centuries.[101] In Rangoon also where excavation was undertaken for the first time in 1938-39 last, important finds have been made that go to prove the prevalence of Buddhism in that part of the Talaing country from about the eighth or

100 *An.R.A.S.I.*, 1930-34, pp. 196-203.

101 *Ibid*, pp. 203-4.

ninth to about the thirteenth century A.D. The most important of these finds is a terracotta votive tablet, not unlike those from Pagan, bearing on the obverse a representation of the Buddha seated in vajrāsana inside a temple and on the reverse a five-line Pāli inscription, deciphered and translated as follows :

1. ..... (buddha) rūpa s ... .
2. ..... n (i) naga (l) e ne .....
3. .... (Sa) nsāramuccanattha .....
4. ..... na karitan-ti
5. ..... ther bilah... '

" This image of the Buddha.....in the Nāga cave..... has been caused to be made by.....for the sake of deliverance from Saṃsāra (*i.e.* round of rebirths)—(Signed) The Thera Vilasa." [102] The inscription is in Burmese and may paleographically be assigned to about the twelfth century A.D. The remains of a stūpa and a very large number of terracotta votive tablets unearthed from the site which is not very far from the Tadagale railway station, may also be safely assigned to the same date. On a large number of these tablets can be seen effigies of the Buddha in several rows; on others a single Buddha seated in vajrāsana within a small temple surrounded by stūpas. Another variety represents the Buddha seated in bhūmisparśa-mudrā, while a fourth depicts the twin miracle of Sāvatthī or the Yamaka-pratihārya.[103] A bronze statue of Dīpaṅkara Buddha in a standing position, stylistically dateable in about the eighth century, is also another interesting and perhaps the earliest find from the same site.

IX

RELIGIOUS ECCLECTICISM OF PAGAN

Theravāda Buddhism, the religion of the state and a large majority of the people though it was during the two

[102] *An.R.A.S.B.*, 1938-39, p. 5.
[103] *Ibid*, p. 6.

hundred and fifty years the Anawrahta dynasty wielded power in the land, was not the only religion in the metropolis of Pagan. All the kings of the dynasty were zealous Buddhists, faithful and sincerely devoted unto the cause they had made their own, and the people also seem to have responded fully and well to the lead given by the royal family, the court and the nobility. But it was difficult for the different classes of people to bid good-bye all at once to the old faiths they had dearly held and practised for centuries, namely, their age-old faith in the primitive Nāt-spirits, or in Brahmanism, Mahayanism, and Vajrayāna and Tantrayāna Buddhism brought in by Indian traders, adventurers, scholars, monks and all other kinds of people who resorted to the place on their respective missions and vocations. Anawrahta introduced Theravāda Buddhism into Pagan; he as well as Sawlu and Anawrahta were sincere Theravādins—there cannot be any doubt about it—and so were their descendants, but elsewhere I have shown[104] that the court-rituals were all deeply tinged with Brahmanical religious practices in which Nārāyana had a place of honour and gods like Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Gaṇeśa actually found place, admittedly as minor deities in the orthodox Buddhist pantheon of Burma. In fact, the temple built at Myinpagan for Manuha, the Talaing king, seem to have been one in which Brahmā figured very prominently. Also, not only there was the Nat-hlaung-Kyaung, a Viṣṇu-Daśāvatāra Temple[105] in the very heart of the city, but there has also been unearthed or picked up a considerable number of images that tend to show that Brahmanism was a considerable factor in the religious life of Pagan and claimed at least a certain section of the people. This is further corroborated by the fact that besides Brahmanical images in stone and bronze

104 Ray, *Brahmanical Gods in Burma.*

105 *Ibid*; also see *An.R.A.S.I.*, 1930-34, pp. 191-92.

picked up from the ruins of Pagan and now housed in the Pagan Museum or found installed in the niches or at the corners or other places of some of the frankly Buddhist stūpas and temples we have in the wall-paintings of temples like the Abeyadana and the Kubyaukkyi representations of Brahmanical divinities like Brahmā, Śiva, Viṣṇu, Gaṇeśa, Yamunā and others,[106] and nobody can say that these two temples are not frankly Buddhist ones. Indeed, if tradition is to be believed they were both built either by Anawrahta or by Kyanzittha. In any case they were built between 1050 and 1100 A.D. when Theravāda Buddhism was just making its appearance in Pagan. Of such Brahmanical divinities, Brahmā, Viṣṇu or Nārāyaṇa, Śiva and Gaṇeśa seem to have enjoyed special favour, most of all Gaṇeśa.[107]

But if Brahmanical Hinduism claimed a certain section of the people besides the Hindu colonists themselves, the different schools of Sanskrit Buddhism, namely Mahāyāna proper and its offshoots, Vajrayāna and Buddhist Tantrayāna along with Mantrayāna and Kālacakrayāna did even more. I have elsewhere gone into details to find out the extent achieved by these cults in Pagan[108]; here it would suffice to mention that Mahayanism and its allied cults had been well-known in Pagan and claimed a considerable section of the population from at least one or two centuries before Theravāda came to make its influence felt there. And even after the introduction of Theravāda, Mahāyānistic Tāntrik influences continued to flow in from Bihar, Bengal, Tibet and Nepal yet for some time more. The followers of frankly Tantrik-Buddhist rituals and practices came to be known to Burmese tradition as Aris or Samaṇakuṭṭakas whom successive Burmese kings sought to suppress. Not only has there been picked up from the ruins of Pagan a considerable number of images in stone

106 *An.R.A.S.I.* 1930-34, p. 184.

107 *Ibid*; also see *An.R.A.S.*I., 1935-37, pp. 165-66.

108 Ray, *Sanskrit Buddhism in Burma*, 1936.

and bronze of frankly Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna affiliation and dateable from about the tenth to about the twelfth centuries, but wall-paintings of such temples as the Patothamya, Abeyadana and Kubyaukkyi, represent gods and goddesses like Avalokiteśvara, Mañjuśrī, Tārā, Maitreya, Hayagrīva, Lokanātha, etc., and Bodhisattvas with their Saktis in sensuous and sometimes frankly erotic postures and positions. More sensuous and erotic are the representations on the walls of the Payathonzu and the Nandamañña temples that are admittedly of Tāntrik origins. Considered from the point of view of nature and style of the sculptures and paintings as well as of the monuments containing such representations, it appears that Mahayanism and its allied cults coninued to flourish in Pagan at least till the end of the thirteenth century A.D.

It is thus evident that when Theravāda was introduced into Pagan it found itself pressed by ancestral Nāt worship and Brahmnical Hinduism on one side and Mahāyāna and allied cults on the other. But Theravāda from the very beginning was fortunate in having the devoted patronage of the court backed by the resources of a kingdom, and we have already seen with what rapid strides it spread itself far and wide and won the heart of the larger section of the entire populace. But in doing so it could not ignore all the elements of the contending cults that had already been in existence in the metropolis. The ancestral Nāts whom one can see still guarding the entrances and points at the Shwezigon came to claim their share; some of the Brahmanical divinities also came to be incorporated into the orthodox Theravāda pantheon, and court rituals and ceremonies also came to be deeply tinged with Brahmanical practices.[109] With regard to Mahāyāna and its allied cults

[109] *Op. cit. Brahmanical Gods in Burma*, Chap. I.

the attitude of Theravāda was a bit otherwise. This I have elsewhere summarised as follows:

"Mahayāna Buddhism and its allied cults in Pagan, when we see them in existence, were after all practised by only a section of the people who, we may infer, had a full-fledged organisation of their own, but the Theravāda being the much more popular and powerful religion could well afford to look at its vanquished rival with a confident smile. The two faiths seemed to have lived side by side till at last the Theravāda, always with the support of the throne, was able to emerge completely triumphant and wipe out even the memory of its rival. But in course of centuries of close neighbourhood, the Theravāda of Burma came to absorb some of the elements of its sister faith, and some of the gods of the Mahāyāna pantheon, *e.g.*, Avalokiteśvara and Maitreya, were even adopted by the Theravādins. This is perhaps why Tāranatha says that in the Koki countries the "Mahāyāna and the Hīnayāna were not always distinguishable." [110]

X

INSCRIPTIONS OF PAGAN: A POSTSCRIPT

By far the most reliable and important documents that furnish a detailed and authentic picture of the state of religion in Upper Burma, especially in Pagan, is the long series of Pāli, Môn and Burmese inscriptions of the kings of the Pagan dynasty and the countless monuments reared up by them or during their suzerainty, with their wealth of Buddhist images, narrative reliefs, and terracotta plaques all representing Buddhist subjects. The long and unique series of epigraphic records reveal unmistakably the extent to which the members of the Anawrahta dynasty were touched and inspired by the faith they had lately adopted, their attitude towards the religion and the motive that brought into being the glorious monuments of the royal citadel and the surrounding country. They also furnish a vivid picture of the social and economic life against the background of which the religion shone and sought to mould the new fabric of life of a rude and semi-barbaric people. Here

[110] *Op. cit. Sanskrit Buddhism in Burma*, p. 93.

in these records we read of Buddhist rites and rituals heavily tinged with those that were essentially Brahmanical and perhaps also with those of primitive Nāt and Nāga worship, of Brahmanical priests and astrologers taking part in the religious observances of kings who were frankly Buddhists, and of Brāhmaṇas who carried purificatory water for the recitation of the *paritta*, a typically Buddhist ritualistic formula invoking protection. "At sunset, *godhūli* being the *lagna*, the Saṅkrān (saṃkrānti?) Brāhmaṇas who carried litters',' so runs a passage in the Tharaba gate inscription,[111] "beat the foremost drum. The Brāhmaṇa astrologers went (and) drew water for the reciting of the *paritta*." In one and the same ceremony offerings were made to the statues of the Buddha along with those of Nāgas, Indra, Nārāyaṇa and other gods of the Brahmanical pantheon. It is interesting to note that some at any rate of the Brāhmaṇas referred to came from the Môn country, just as some of the Buddhist monks also evidently did. Here in these records we not only find reference to the Three Piṭakas and the Abhidhamma,[112] but at least in one early Môn record from the Shwesandaw pagoda, Prome,[113] we read that Kyanzittha effected a revision of the Buddhist canon, "the three holy Piṭakas which had become obscured." The same inscription also refers to a

> "mission to India with funds for the restoration and endowment of the temple at Bodhgaya, liberality to the monks, relation with other princes and in particular with a certain 'Coli' prince whom the king claims to have converted to Buddhism...This episode is followed in the record by details of the offerings made by the people of Pagan and its neighbourhood on festive occasions of a religious character, and stress is laid here (as in some of the other inscriptions) on the fact that the king himself delivered didactic addresses to his subjects who appreciated them highly...There is an interesting passage illustrating, as it would appear, the Buddhist doctrine of kindness to animals. It seems that certain birds were the

111 *Ep. Birm.* III, part One, p. 1ff.

112 For example, in the Great Shwezigon inscription and the Tharaba gate inscription, *Ep. Birm*, I, part Two and III, part One,

113 *Ep. Birm.* I, part Two, p. 158 ff.

objects of the king's special favour and enjoyed his protection, while (from another passage) it may be inferred that animals in general were secured generous treatment and some provision of food; a strong tinge of ethical and religious sentiment pervades the inscription..."

A very strong religious and ecclesiastical flavour also pervades the great and well-known Shwezigon inscription[114] which begins with a Pāli exordium followed by a *nissaya*; this is equally true of a good number of other Môn, Pāli and Burmese records of Pagan. Indeed, the Pagan kings, vainglorious tyrants as they were, were sincere and ardent Buddhists as well; and it is evident from the inscriptions that they strove hard not only to make Buddhism a living faith with themselves and their people over whom they were destined to rule, but a really potent social force as well in the country. To what extent they succeeded in their efforts would be evident from the fact recorded in numerous inscriptions that sometimes even a whole family participated in the foundation of a Buddhist establishment, one vying with the other; sometimes they dedicated themselves or were done so by their masters as slaves to one or other of their religious foundations, and often made gifts to them of lands, books, clothes and all other requirements of a modest monastic life. Of many such examples, not unoften full of Buddhist sentiments and essentially Buddhist phraseology, here is one from an inscription found at Kyaukse and belonging to about the twelfth century. The inscription records the foundation of a *baddhasīma* at Kyaukse (Klok sa) that was set up by the chief monk of the locality with the assistance of certain other persons whom he apparently dedicated to that service. A grant of land made by some local official or officials to the founder was also transferred to his foundation.

114 *Ep. Birm.* I, part Two, p. 80 ff.

"I, the Chief Monk . Loṅ, when I came to dwell at Klok sa, I informed the Chief Monk of Pagan, I informed the king there, that I was building a *baddhasīma*. These (are the persons) who together with her with myself worked (for this temple?): the junior monk Mahādew, his father, his mother, his (grand father?); (...?) the mother of Na Lwoy, Ya Wāṅ, son of Na Mrik, Na Gan Dā : these I dedicate to the temple, who worked together with myself. The great (donation?) of (7 measures of) arable land, which the Kon Sambeṅ daleṅ gave to me, I also give to the temple (May ?) the, accumulation of merit (offering and worshipping) .. (conduct ?) for (all beings)."[115]

But, it is curious that nowhere in the contemporary inscriptions is there any evidence that may be reasonably interpreted to explain how the new faith was introduced into Pagan, and was accepted by the ruling dynasty, or how it fared and thrived during the two centuries and a half the Pagan dynasty had its overlordship recognised throughout Burma. They seem to know nothing of the very dramatic and eventful story of the introduction of Theravāda Buddhism as related in the fifteenth century Kalyāṇī inscriptions and following them, in the later Burmese chronicles. There is, for example, no mention in these records, frankly Buddhist in affiliation and sentiment, of Shin Arahan, the central figure in that eventful drama, nor of any other name or names of monks, or of events and episodes mentioned or narrated in the Kalyāṇī inscriptions. Two monks, Tāmalin and Dhammavilāsa, find mention in the Pagan inscriptions as well, but it is difficult to say if the two pairs of names were identical. There is no warrant in the Pagan inscriptions for the story that Tāmalin was the son of a ruler of Kamboja or had ever been to Ceylon, as Tāmalinda is alleged by the Kalyāṇī inscriptions to have been. As regards Dhammavilāsa it is difficult to ascertain if he was the same as the Dhammavilāsa of the Kalyāṇī inscriptions. There is a Capata pagoda, a stūpa of Sinhalese type, at Nyangu in Pagan, but since the date of its foundation is uncertain, it cannot with absolute certainty be associated with the monk Capata of the Kalyānī inscriptions or of

[115] *Ep. Birm.* III, part One, p. 70 ff.

the *Sāsanavaṃsa*. The Kalyāṇī inscriptions refer in some detail to a mission sent by Anawrahta to Ceylon; one would imagine, it may be argued, that the *Cullavaṃsa* which purports to be a history of the island would dilate on this mission, but this history merely states that Vijayabāhu wrote with his own hand a letter of great merit to the king of Arimaddana with whom he made a great friendship. He is further credited with having given great delight to the monks that dwelt in Laṅkā and Arimaddana. From all these one may be disposed to hold that the account of the introduction of Theravāda Buddhism to Pagan including the story of Shin Arahan and the subsequent history of the Buddhist church in Burma as narrated in the Kalyāṇī inscriptions are but pious fictions concocted not earler than the fifteenth century by the zealous Buddhist king Dhammaceti.

But such an assumption would indeed be the height of scholarly scepticism. It is difficult to believe that Dhammaceti created a fiction out of nothing, and that the story of the introduction of the faith and the subsequent history of the Saṃgha with its different monkish orders were just figments of his imagination. Burmese tradition ascribes the story of Shin Arahan and the sack of Thaton to 1057-58 A.D., and it is not a little curious that not even one of the long series of Pagan inscriptions can be dated earlier than the third quarter of the eleventh century from which time, roughly speaking, the art and momumental activity centring round Buddhism also seems to have taken its start. Indeed Burmese culture as distinguished from Pyu and Talaing cultures dates from this period and it is significant that its earliest centre was Pagan. There can hardly be any doubt that this simultaneous bursting forth of vigorous Buddhist religious and all round cultural activity in the Pagan kingdom from about the third quarter of the eleventh century was due to Pagan's coming into contact with the Pyu and Talaing cul-

ture and civilisation of Central Burma and Suvaṇṇabhūmi. Or, otherwise the great historical upheaval remains entirely unexplained, at least so far as our present knowledge goes. Racially, the Talaings were different from the Burmese; the rude Burmese barbarians who considered the Talaings as their sworn and eternal enemies through centuries had wrested political power from the latter, and yet whatever culture and civilisation they came to acquire including Buddhism itself, were the gifts directly of the Talaings themselves. As not unoften happens in history, the Burmese have always been very careful not to admit the debt they owed to their enemies; indeed, even the nineteenth century chronicler Paññasāmī was not free from anti-Talaing feelings. There is more than one evidence in the history of Buddhism in Burma of wilful suppression of facts in respect of religious activities amongst the Talaings and of Talaing contribution to the history of the religion in the peninsula. It is, therefore, not at all unlikely that the Burmese and their early champions, the Pagan kings, deliberately ignored or suppressed whatever the Talaings had contributed towards the introduction and propagation of the faith in Pagan and upper Burma, including the activities of Shin Arahan, the Talaing monk who happened to be the harbinger of a new way and ideal of life and cuture to the uncultured Burmans of the north.[116] Dhammaceti, a Môn sovereign himself, had

[116] It cannot be said with absolute certainty that Shin Arahan is not at all mentioned in the Pagan inscriptions. Môn Inscription No. IX (Ep. Birm. III, Part I) mentions one Mahāthera Arahan on several occasions along with one hundred and eight 'lords of the Church' in connection with the ceremonial for the consecration of the royal palace of Kyanzittha. It is most likely that this Mahāthera Arahan is no other than Shin Arahan. If non-mention in the inscriptions of Pagan can be pressed forward as a valid argument, then it would stand to reason to argue that the Ānanda was not built under the patronage of king Kyanzittha since the fact is not mentioned in the inscriptions of Pagan, nor can it be said that the two kneeling figures before the standing Buddha in the main sanctum of the Ānanda represent the crowned king Kyanzittha and the shaven-headed Buddhist monk Shin Arahan. Yet both tradition and all available evidence of a later date would have us believe otherwise.

the centre of his kingdom in the heart of the Talaing country amongst the Talaings themselves, and it was natural for him that in an account of the history of the religion in the peninsula he would refer, however briefly, to the great work of Shin Arahan and the subsequent history of the faith not only in the Marammamaṇḍala but also in Suvaṇṇabhūmi, *i.e.*, the Talaing country.

Moreover, not one of the inscriptions of Pagan is directly concerned with giving us any account of how Buddhism came to Pagan or how it fared and flourished during the two centuries and a half of the Anawrahta dynasty's rule. The large majority of the inscriptions concerns themselves with recording of religious benefactions and foundations and other activities of the proud and conscious royalty and the nobility. Personal names of monks or references to monkish orders are rare in them, indeed there was not much scope for such mention. If, therefore, there is hardly any reference in the inscriptions of Pagan to the names of monks known from the Kalyāṇī inscriptions, there does not certainly lie in a negative evidence like this an argument for dismissal of the Kalyāṇī tradition as mere fiction. As regards Tāmalin, it may be argued that the context in which he has been mentioned in one of the Pagan inscriptions hardly calls for a reference to his parentage or to his having once visited Ceylon. If there is no warrant for his identification with Tāmalinda of the Kalyāṇī inrcriptions, there is also nothing to suggest that the two were not identical. The same argument holds good in respect of Dhammavilāsa. Moreover, I have tried to point out that Dhammavilāsa thera of the Kalyāṇī inscriptions may be the same as the Dhammavilāsa mahāthera who is mentioned as the donor of a number of stone images of the Buddha recovered from the ruins of a stūpa at Thiyipyitsaya, five miles from Pagan. It is true, nothing definite is known about the foundation of the Capata pagoda, but the fact that the name of this monk, described

in the Kalyāṇī inscriptions as one of the "Second Pilgrims of Ceylon," came to be associated with a stūpa of the typical Sinhalese form, is significant and points probably to the fact that the Kalyāṇī epigraphs correctly recorded down the tradition current in Pagan in the fifteenth century. As regards Anawrahta's mission to Ceylon it cannot be argued absolutely that the *Cullavaṃsa* should have dealt with it in some detail. From the author's point of view and for his purpose it was enough to say that Vijayavāhu was in most friendly terms with the king of Arimaddana, that he wrote a letter with his own hands to the latter and that he was a great friend of the Buddhist monks of Ceylon and Pagan. After all, the story of Anawrahta's mission to Ceylon was not much of an achievement from his side and one may not expect that the author would dilate on the event.

All that is sought to be argued is that the Kalyāṇī inscriptions furnish for the first time a rational and convincing explanation of the introduction of the faith into Pagan and its subsequent history; incidentally they also seem to offer a convincing explanation of the great religious and cultural upheaval Pagan witnessed from about the third quarter of the eleventh to about the end of the thirteenth century. The absence of any such explanation in the contemporary inscriptions of Pagan may have been due to the bitter racial and political hatred of the Burmese towards the Talaings. All later Burmese records, chiefly the chronicles, followed the Kalyāṇī tradition and on certain points of detail even extended and amplified it, on what authority it is difficult to say. In the foregoing pages the tradition has been related as a whole, not because every detail of it is accepted as historical but because it reflects the attitude with which the Burmans themselves viewed the great religious upheaval that brought culture and civilisation to their doors.

Few records in the ancient East offer such valuable and complete picture of any religion as do the long series of Pagan inscriptions in respect of Buddhism. I have already referred to the eclectism of the religious life of not only Prome, the centre of Pyu culture and civilisation and other centres of Lower Burma, but of the capital city of the Anawrahta dynasty as well. Besides tribal and primitive faiths and practices under disguise reference is made in these records to the notorious Ari monks and the "jungle monasteries" which they seem to have inhabited. It is difficult to say whether the Buddhist sīma built on Mt. Turaṅ, eight miles east of Pagan, by Caw Rahan, the only king before Anawrahta mentioned in the inscriptions, refers to a foundation belonging to the religion presumably of the Ari monks or to Mahayanist Tantrik Buddhism that must have penetrated Pagan and its adjoining regions by about the ninth, tenth and eleventh centuries. There is no doubt that inspite of repeated mention of Brāhmaṇas mainly of Visnuite persuasion and of Brāhmaṇa astrologers, of lands and *mahādān* fields being offered to them as gifts, of their great influence at the court, of even a Brāhmaṇa village and of presumably a Brāhmaṇa chief minister (minister of war ?) named Caturaṅgavijay "well-versed in the Three Piṭakas and in Sanskrit, Vyākaraṇa and Astrology," the number of Brāhmanas was not considerable and Brahmanism as such must have been confined to only the Indian section of the population.

The Pagan inscriptions are mostly dedicatory records. All kinds of dedications to pious foundations and religious establishments were made with various objects and motives ; but all bears the stamp of a deep religious fervour and enthusiasm that is unmistakably Buddhist. The spirit and language of the inscriptions are surprisingly simple, direct, graceful and dignified. In most cases the dedications were made by those who were "of boundless faith, desirous of escaping

the misery of the round of rebirths and of attaining nirvāṇa''; in certain cases such dedications were just made as thank-offerings or out of gratitude; still in certain other cases in commemoration of a beloved or of a happy and memorable event. Dedicated objects included lands and houses, gardens, wells, tanks, cattle like goats, buffaloes, horses, and elephants, rice and paddy, boats, gold, silver, ruby, iron, lead, copper, robes, cloth and garment, libraries with manuscripts, fans and umbrellas, betel and betel-nuts, betel-boxes, oil lights, flowers, pots and utensils including bowls, spitoons, bells, trays, basins, lamp-stands, chains, etc., and the most important of all, slaves. All the pious foundations, remains of which we see even to this day in Pagan and hundreds of which were brought to being by anybody who could afford to do so, had to be maintained by thousands of slaves that were dedicated along with lands, fields and other necessities of an active monastic life. Literally, hundreds of names of these slaves—quite as many women as men amongst them—are mentioned in the inscriptions. Prof. Pe Maung Tin has attempted an admirable picture of the donor and the slave from this long series of inscriptions: "It is true that the picture of the donor may be one-sided, since we catch him in a religious mood. But since the religious mood is so pervading, we catch him in other moods also, as when he appears in a law suit over the ownership of some dedicated slaves. The picture we get of the slave, though faint, is fairly representative, since we read of dedicated slaves, who are painters, wood-carvers, turners, black-smiths, gold- and silver-smiths, masons, washermen, gardeners, cow-herds, elephant-herds, dancers, singers, musicians, scribes, weavers, cooks, etc. And we shall see that women played a most important part in the life of the people, both of donors and of slaves alike.'' [117] Not infrequently, a

[117] *JBRS.*, 1935, 149 ff. Pe Maung Tin, "Women in the Inscriptions of Pagan."

whole family including babes was offered as slaves; a few slaves were even literates. Just as lands were dedicated earmarked for the Three Piṭakas, the Three Gems, or one Gem in particular, so the same was done for slaves as well. Their usual work consisted in sweeping and cleaning the shrine-yard and the temple and monastery, lighting lamps, preparing food for, and doing other services of, the monks. At least one inscription mentions women slaves as dealers in rice, curries, meat, betel-nut and statues. In another there is specific mention of the duties of the dedicated slaves: "all these slaves are offered in order that they may wash the feet and hands of the ariya monks and draw water for them to bathe and drink, that they may cook the rice alms, sweep the area and remove the rubbish." Sometimes donors offer themselves with their wives and children also as slaves. There is at least one instance of a woman figuring as a nun, religious teacher, reciting the *paritta* prayer along with others in religious ceremonies; some of the women figuring in the inscriptions were women of letters holding responsible positions in society. There can be no doubt that women played a very important part in the religious life of Pagan; indeed their prayers recorded in the inscriptions of Pagan have a flavour of their own, charmingly simple and humane and revealing the extent to which they were touched and inspired by the teachings of their Lord the Buddha.[118]

A few extracts taken at random from the inscriptions would reveal much more of how Buddhist sentiment and ideology pervaded the contemporary life of Pagan than it would be possible to convey through a modern historian's

118 For a detailed treatment of the subject, see Pe Maung Tin in *JBRS.*, 1939, pp. 149-159, and *JBRS.*, 1936, pp. 52-70; Luce, *JBRS.*, 1936, pp. 131-138. The translations of Burmese extracts that follow are all from either Pe Maung Tin or Luce.

commentary on them. In one of the inscriptions[119] a queen says :

"I wish to abandon a body oppressed by countless miseries,—the misery of birth, the misery of old age, the misery of death, the misery of living with those we do not love, the misery of separation from those we love, the misery of not getting what we want. So I have resigned my dear and precious gold, silver and other treasures, and built a monastery. And I have offered all my fields, gardens and slaves, excepting none, for the happiness of monks, pupils of the Lords who dwell therein, pure in piety, and ever seeking the three graces of peace, holiness, and wisdom. May the merit of our deed go first to the king, ruler of us all and lord of land and water. By virtue of this act may he live long seeking the increase and happiness of all who live in the realm and upholding this foundation. May the queens also, and all the ladies-in-waiting share it. May they look at one another with eyes of love, without one speck of anger or cloing. May those who desire worldly prosperity get it. May those who prefer to do good deeds, do them. For myself I pray that I may never be covetous, insatiate, wrathful, bullying, ignorant, dull, disagreeable, mean, unfaithful, frivolous nor ungrateful. But I would cross *saṁsāra* full of these good graces – modest in my wants, easily satisfied, mild of temper, pitiful, wise, conscious of causes, generous, large-hearted, faithful, earnest, unforgetful and considerate, and may I win deliverance in the very presence of Lord Mittarya (Maitreya)."

In another,[120] 'The tragic mother of Racasū, powerful Lady Acaw laments :

" My mother and father, my grandparents and great grandparents have all gone, abandoning their inherited property. And now my beloved son, my lovely one too has gone abandoning his inherited property and even his own mother. Now I too know that I likewise cannot take away with me this inherited property which they have left because they could not take it. And I will even dedicate it so that it may help my mother and my father and my son and all my relatives to attain Nirvāṇa. The merit of this my dedication, may my grandfather king Klacwā, my grandmother, my lord the king my husband, His Majesty my lord the king my son, my royal mother, my father, my two beloved sons by the king, my uncle, my aunt, my elder sister, my three brothers, my two younger sisters, all my slaves and servants, all the Ministers in the royal presence, and all the concubines and maids of honour get it. As far as heaven above, as far as hell below, may all the endless universes in all the four directions get it. I too, for as much as I have done this work of merit, and now my mother, father and all my family are dead, and I alone am left, I pray that it may last throughout 5000 years of Religion—when I die and pass from hence, may I become a heavenly spirit worshipping night and day inseparately the Lord's Tooth Relic. Meantime, before I reach the boon I long for, I would fulfil the Ten Perfections which all the Bodhisattvas must fulfil."

119 A. S. Burma,. *List of Inscriptions found in Burma*, No. 311.
120 *Ibid.*, no. 384.

In another[121] a married but childless lady says: 'I have no son, and there is none fit to inherit my property. Therefore let the Exalted Buddha look after it in my stead.' Still in another[122] the foster mother of king Klacwā in dedicating her own house for the purpose of a monastery says :

" 'I knew not my mother. My step-mother nourished me so that I grew up. My step-mother is my mother...' so saying the King built me a house and also gave me a family of slaves and fields. I lived in the house. I employed the slaves. I ate the fields. It would be better if the pious and learned monks were to dwell in the house than I. Thus I chanced to think and I made a cave. When it was finished, I informed the Future Lord saying : 'My noble Lord ! Very pleasant was the house that was built for thy servant. Better that the clergy should dwell in it than thy servant. So I have made a cave. The house is now a monastery. And thy servant has dedicated the family of slaves and fields which Your Majesty gave me.' When I said thus, the King said, 'Let my step-mother instal such of the clergy as she thinks fit. "

Punishments for offences of various nature in the royal courts of Pagan were, not unoften as everywhere in the middle ages, very cruel and inhuman; the kings set up codes of punishments that must be considered contrary and repugnant to the very spirit of Buddhism. It is not, therefore, striking that there should be at least one or two good Buddhist kings who would try to mitigate, to an extent, the treatment meted out to offenders. In a royal edict king Kyawsa is seen complaining that the kings of old put thieves to death 'by impaling them and in various ways'. It seems that he aimed at the abolition of capital punishment. His remarks in this connection are worth quoting :

" People in this world should respect these words of mine, believe them and obey them strictly, inasmuch as these words of mine are not invented with ingenuity, but are uttered in reliance on the omniscient word of the Exalted Buddha. Kings of old put thieves to death by impaling them and in various ways. Not desiring the destruction of such creatures but thinking of all creatures as myself, I have spoken these words of mercy. Therefore they should be respected and obeyed...."

121 *Ibid*,, no. 191.
122 *Ibid*., no. 289.

Works of merit were brought into existence from various motives, and if generally the patrons were all humility and devotedness in their attitude there are instances of those who were vain and much too self-conscious and were actuated by motives other than of love and devotion. Here is one such example :

"On Thursday, moon-death, the 14th waning of Nadaw 604 Sakkrac, my lord and husband Gaṅgasū passed away. I, lord Gaṅgasū's wife, am a lady of high lineage, beyond reproach for seven generations, both on my mother's and my father's side. I am the daughter of lord Ñoṅramkrī. When lord Gaṅgasū died, my beloved husband, my very life, the apple of mine eye, I suddenly felt the law of impermanence, and I was frightened, and built sites for the Three Gems, on Sunday, the third waxing of Pyatho." [123]

Sometimes the dedications conclude with curses to those who dare violate them, and not infrequently the Avīci and other seven major hells and the traditional six heavens as in Buddhism are enumerated. Here are a few more extracts from dedications; they will incidentally give some idea of the character of the religion and of the transformation Buddhism brought about in centemporary Burmese way and ideal of life and society :

"I, Nātoṅmyā the king, have built a splendid temple, a library and a monastery, and offered a troupe of dancers, gold and silver popcorn, oil-lamps and rice-alms, in order to cause my lords the monks to apply their minds to amity and goodwill (mittābhāvanā)." [124]

Another dedication, after the enumeration of the various offerings made to a cave, proceeds to explain to the dedicated slaves the wherefor of their dedication :

"It is not because I do not want to employ you and your families that I cut you off. It is because I wish the pagoda to be attended tothat I give you and your families....It is because I wish to provide for the support of the Buddha and the Law that I hand over you all." [125]

123 *Ibid.*, no. 259.
124 *Ibid.*, no. 273.
125 *Ibid.*, no. 184.

" I, Gloria, have built a monastery, and on the full moon of Tabaung 560 Sakkarac, I dedicated 3 monasteries, 3 tanks altogether, monastic robes, 6 calabastes, 1 lump of lime, a wishing tree, a cow. Wheresoever I wonder in *Saṁsāra,* I want misery, I don't want hell. I want the grace of perfection. And at the end of *Saṁsāra*, I want to reach Nirvāṇa. May all the coolies share my merit. I have given oil-lamps, and I have given *kathina* robes; 40 sets of *kathina* requisites, 20 kettles of food, 4 cups, 5 almsbowls, 1 bell, etc. I do not want to know the slightest little bit ! " [126]

" ... Ere I reach Buddhahood I want the happiness excited by drum and trumpet, and the five instruments of music. Therefore I dedicate the following players on big drums and small.... Whensoever I am born, I do not want the misery of hunger and thirst. Therefore I offer to Lord Buddha and the monks living in this monastery the following paddy-fields...I want to rebel against the world of slavery to appetite. Therefore I offer also a hundred slaves to serve the needs of the Lord Buddha and the monks." [127]

But frivolous and vainglorious Queen Caw's dedication breathes a different spirit altogether :—

" Meantime, before I reach Nirvāṇa by virtue of this great work of merit I have done, may I prosper as a man, and be more royally happy than all other men. Or as a spirit, may I be full of colour, dazzling brightness and victorious beauty, more than any other spirit. More especially I would have a long life, freedom from disease, a lovely complexion, a pleasant voice, and a beautiful figure. I would be the loved and honoured darling of every man and spirit. Gold, silver, rubies, corals, pearls and other lifeless treasure, elephants, horses and other living treasure—may I have lots of them. By virtue of my power and glory I would be triumphant with pomp and retinue, with fame and splendour. Wherever I am born, may I be fulfilled with noble graces, charity, faith, piety, wisdom, etc., and not know one speck of misery; and after I have tasted and enjoyed the happiness of men and the happiness of spirits, when the noble law of deliverance called the fruit of Sanctity blossoms, may I at last attain the peaceful bliss of Nirvāṇa." [128]

Temples, shrines and monasteries were evidently built on large scale and at heavy costs, and their dedication and consecretion were usually an elaborate affair. An idea of the cost involved, the complexity of the whole affair including planning and construction of the shrine and the monasteries and the accessories of worship may be gathered from a number of inscriptions, notably from nos.

126 Ye-ngwe Insc. Mahlaing, *JBRS.*, 1936, p. 135.
127 A. S. Burma, *List of Insc.* no. 123.
128 *Ibid.*, no. 334.

105, 190, 235, 242 and 276 of the *List of Inscriptions found in Burma* (A. S. of Burma). Incidentally, Inscription no. 242 refers to the representation of the 550 Jātakas in a certain temple built in 598 Sakkarac, and several inscriptions refer to the foundation of libraries with sets of the Three Piṭakas. The full anthropomorphic worship of the Buddha image is elaborated in several inscriptions, notably in no. 254.

The offerings to monks and religious foundations of various material objects including lands and fields and slaves recorded in the inscriptions show clearly that the members of the Saṃgha were well-cared for and were kept elaborately supplied with all their material needs and requirements. Undisturbed they were left to their own religious and scholarly pursuits. Not only they studied the sacred texts of Buddhism in the libraries provided for them and scrupulously performed their religious observances, but there are inscriptions that reveal their intimate knowledge of the ethical and metaphysical concepts of the religion. Mention is made in the records of the *Paticcasamuppāda* (no. 105), the *Patisambhidā* (no. 90), the three existences of *kāma*, *rūpa* and *arūpa*, the threefold division of a *Buddha-khetta*, namely *jāti khetta*, *visaya khetta* and *āṇa khetta* (no. 105), and the five qualities of *Saccam*, *dhammo*, *dhiti*, *cāgo* and *bodhicittam* (no. 191), etc. The Jātakaṣ collectively and, several important and popular Jātakas, separately are frequently mentioned, but most frequent is the mention of the Three Piṭakas which were housed in libraries built for the purpose.

Some rough idea of the monkish organisation of contemporary Pagan can also be gleaned from the inscriptions. The clergy as a whole was known as the Saṃgha, *ariyasaṃgha* or *rahansaṃgha*; and the monks were individually referred to as *sḳhiṅ ariya* or simply *ariya*. The chief monk of a monastery was called *thera* or *mahādhi* in Burmese, and special offerings in certain cases were made for him. Pe

Maung Tin has shown that the Burmese word *Saṅkri* was often used to designate the elder thera of a company of monks or lay men or lay women. The king had his own *ācariya* who was known as *Mahādhi Rājaguru* or simply *Rājaguru*, or *Mahādhī Dhammarājaguru* who presumably used to be the Primate or the *Saṃgharāja* of the realm. The title of *Rājaguru* was not however always confined to one monk at a time.[129] Lands and fields once made over as gifts by or on behalf of kings to monks and monasteries were held to be inalienable and nobody, not even the descendants of the chief monk, had any right to sell or dispose of it in any other way.[130] Even a king had no right to seize lands once dedicated to monks and religious foundations by his forefathers.[131] Once a certain individual named Zeyyaput offered in dedication to a forest monastery, in the name of the Buddha, Dharma and the Saṃgha, 750 fields that he had once received as *mahādān* from the king. When the king's son prince Klacwā ascended the throne in 597 Sakkarac he seized all the *mahādān* fields in the upper country and the lower country, and those 750 fields were amongst them. The head of the clergy concerned with the gift represented the case personally to the king who forthwith caused an enquiry to be made by a committee. The enquiry revealed that the king's father had indeed given these fields to Zeyyaput and that the latter had also offered it to the pagoda. The king had therefore to admit the claim of the clergy and the fields were restored to the forest monastery.[132]

Of venerable Buddhist monks participating in grave matters of contemporary political life, the case of Panthagu the Primate has already been cited. In recent years Pe Maung Tin has drawn our attention to another example,

129 *JBRS.*, 1936, pp. 59-62.
130 A. S. Burma, *List of Insc.* no. 287.
131 *Ibid.*, no. 230.
132 *JBRS.*, 1936, p. 63.

a more detailed and certainly a more interesting one, presented in a brilliant and colourful narrative, in one of the Burmese inscriptions of Pagan.[133] It appears that at the approach of the Taruks, *i.e.*, the Mongol invaders, Tarukpyemin destined to be the last king of Pagan, took to flight to a place near Prome whence he was trying to find out the movements of the enemy. His generals dared not contact them; in the midst of the prevailing panic and confusion there was at least a Buddhist elder, thera Disāprāmuk[134] who was not only unnerved but had the courage and self-confidence to take upon himself, on request from the king, the task of contacting the enemy and negotiating terms with them. This he did at considerable risk to himself and with great tact and intelligence. The story related by Disāprāmuk himself is characteristic, and is remarkable for its simplicity and directness as well as for its local colour and atmosphere.

133 A. S Burma, *List of Insc.* No. 376; *JBRS.*, 1936, pp. 63-64.

134 Disāprāmuk is presumably Disāpāmokkha of the *Sāsanavaṃsa*, and if this be so, then here is one more instance of the general authenticity of Paññasāmī's narrative. For Disāpamokkha, see p. 130 of this book.

CHAPTER THREE

THE GREAT REFORMATION AND ITS PREAMBLE

Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries

I

THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

Narathihapate had reigned for about a quarter of a century when the Pagan throne came to be threatened by the Mongol marauders of the north. Ten years later, in 1287, the city of Pagan actually fell at the blow of the army of Kublai Khan. Almost at the same time the Talaing provinces revolted under the leadership of Tarabya, the Governor at Pegu, and overthrew the Burmese power. But it was neither the Mongol invasion nor the successful revolt of Tarabya that destroyed the Pagan monarchy. The Tartars rather tried to re-establish the old dynasty in its place and to help the country to revert to its normal conditions. But this was not to be. The Shans, a virile race of nomadic habits from the north, were fast spreading south, east and west; they practically swept the whole of Burma, swamping Burmans and Talaings alike, and hardly caring anything for religion and culture. Both Upper and Lower Burma thus passed over to the Shans who at first serving as chiefs at Myinsaing, Mekkaya and Pinle under Chinese authority, established their capital at Pinya (Pāli: Vijayapura) and then at Ava (Pāli: Ratanapura) in 1312. They founded another centre at Pegu in Lower Burma in about 1287 under the leadership of Wareru (1287-96), a Shan pedlar, who had wrested power from Tarabya, the successful rebel. All these naturally had their

repercussions on the life and activities of the Order which being intimately connected with the royal authority, could not remain uninfluenced by such changes in power. Monastic scholarship and activities sank down, as a result, to a low ebb, though the daily round of the life of a bhikkhu continued as usual in many a monastery.

The Shans could not long resist the appeal the religion of the country made to them; indeed, within a generation after their first settlement in the country, one of their kings took initiation into Buddhism. He was Thihathu, one of the three Shan brothers who had come in virtual control of upper Burma after the Mongol conquest, admittedly under the formal authority of the Chinese Court. Thihathu's elder brothers Athinkaya and Yazathinkaya were also probably Buddhists, for, according to the *Hmannan*, the three brothers are credited with having built a monastery at Myinsaing, besides building the Nandawye pagoda at the same place.[1] The *Sāsanavaṃsa* does not speak of this monastery, but mentions that a good many monks belonging to the three sects founded by Shin Arahan, Capata and Ānanda settled at Myinsaing, evidently at the instance of the Shan brothers, but that no works were produced there.[2] Nineteenth century chroniclers regard Thihathu not only as a Buddhist, unlike some of his successors who were nothing less than savages, but also as a builder of pagodas, and a devout follower of the religion. He had a monk as his teacher.

Even after the tragic fate that befell Pagan in 1287, glory still clung to her for some time. As late as the year 1343, Narathihapate's daughter Mi saw U who was queen to her

1 *Hmannan*, I, 368. This may not be altogether improbable, for the three Shan brothers, sons of a hill chief who had fled in about 1260 to Myinsaing where there was already a Shan colony, were brought up and trained in Narathihapate's court, and thus came presumably under the great influence Buddhism exerted at that time in Pagan.

2 *Sāsana*, p. 82.

brother Kyawswa (1287-98) and afterwards to his supplanter Thihathu (1312-24) pined for her early days in Pagan and built a monastery there.

" This realm of Pagan is so named because it is the fairest and dearest of lands. It is also called Arimaddana because its people are warriors who vanquish their foes, and even its name is terrible. Its folk are free from pain or danger, they are skilled in every craft, they are wealthy, the revenues are past telling, and the land is full of useful things. Verily it is a land more to be desired than fairy land. It is a glorious realm and its people are famed for their splendour and power. The monastery I have built stands to the east of the capital." [3]

Scholarly activities were pursued in the monasteries of Pagan yet for sometime, so that we hear of works written by monks of Pagan roughly throughout the fourteenth century. Saddhammañāṇa, ascribed to the early part of this century, [4] is said to have written the *Vibhatyattha*, a book on Pāli cases, but his more important works were the *Chandasāratthavikāsinī* [5] (called also *Vuttodayapañcikā*), a work on metres, and the *Chapaccayadīpanī* [6] a book on prosody. He is also said to have translated the Sanskrit *Kalāpa Vyākaraṇa* into Pāli; it follows, therefore, that this learned scholar besides knowing Pāli was also well conversant with Sanskrit. Not much later than Saddhammañāṇa came Maṅgala who wrote a work on grammar entitled *Gandhatthi*, [7] and Sirisaddhammavilāsa who wrote a *ṭīkā* on Kaccāyana, named *Saddhammanāsinī*. [8] Another fourteenth century author who worked and flourished in Pagan was Saddhammapāla, referred to as Saddhammaguru in the *Sāsanavamsa* (p. 90) which states that he worked at Pinya. But the *Gandhavamsa*, the earlier work, says (p. 67) that he worked

3 *Inscriptions of Pagan, Pinya and Ava*, 1899, p. 134.

4 Forchammer, *Essay*, p. 36; Faüsboll, *Cat. Mand. MSS*, p. 50.

5 *Piṭakatthamain*, p. 74; Faüsboll, *op. cit.*, pp. 51, 52; Forchammer, *Essay*, p. 86, *List*, p. xxiii.

6 Forchammer, *Essay*, p. 36.

7 Forchammer, *Report*, p. 2; *List*, p. xx.

8 *Cf. Cat. Mand. MSS*, p. 48, where Saddhammavilāsa's work is referred to as *accāyanasāraṭīkā*; Forchammer, *Ibid.*

in Pagan, which is supported by the *Piṭakatthamain* (p. 71) and by Forchammer as well (*Essay*, p. 36) who says that he worked in a monastery of the Burmese Order near the capital city. Saddhammapāla was the author of *Saddavutti* or *Saddavuttipakāsaka*, a work on grammar. He was also probably the author of *Niruttisāramañjusā*, a commentary on the *Nirutti*, ascribed to Kaccāyana. (*Cf.* Faüsboll, *Cat. Mand. Mss.* p. 49).

Thihathu, youngest of the three Shan brothers, finds a place in the *Sāsanavaṃsa*[9] for his patronage of Buddhism and Buddhist scholarship. He chose Pinya as his capital which he founded in 1312. A new era of comparative peace and good government ensued, and the religion began to flourish in Pinya where a large number of monasteries had been founded and thousands of bhikkhus had settled down. Literary activities were also gradually revived. Sirisumaṅgala or Sirimaṅgala, according to the *Piṭakattha-main*, was a learned scholar and divine of this time who engaged himself in preparing commentaries on Buddhaghosa's *Samantapāsādikā*, *Aṭṭhasālinī* and *Sammohavinodinī*.[10] But it was during or immediately after Thihathu's reign that the Samaṇakuttaka heresy which had been suppressed by the combined efforts of Anawrahta and Shin Arahan received a new lease of life.[11] The identity of the Samaṇakuṭṭakas with the Aris is strengthened among other arguments by the specific mention of the Aris (after their overthrow by Anawrahta) about this time (1314) in connection with Thihathu's son Sawyun who counted the Aris among his armed retainers.

Besides the revival of the Samaṇakuṭṭaka heresy, an ugly discord among the bhikkhus also undermined the

9 In the *Sāsanavaṃsa* he is named Sīhasūra, p. 82 ff.
10 *Piṭakatthamain*, p. 40.
11 *Sāsana*, pp. 82-89, 86-87.

prestige of the Order at this time. The bone of discord was the due share of the produce of the monastery lands which the monks used to receive from the tillers of the soil. For the monks this was certainly an unseemly behaviour, and the *Sāsanavaṃsa* account seems to indicate that the quarrel was carried so far as finally to lead to the founding of a new sect whose members left the vihāras and retired to the solitude of the forests.

Thihathu's step-son, Uzana, was also an upholder of the religion. He built seven great monasteries (vihāras) along with gifts of land attached to them and gave them unto the theras, among whom there were a few who belonged to the sect founded by Ānanda,.[12] Uzana's nephew Kyawswa-nge (1351)[13] proved himself to be a patron of monastic scholarship. An important officer of his court, a Caturaṅgabalāmacca, wrote a commentary or *Saṃvaṇṇanā* on the *Abhidhānappadīpikā* of Moggallāna.[14] He also wrote two other commentaries, one on the *Koladdhaja* and another on the *Daṇḍippakaraṇa*.[15] Nāgita, a monk of Sagu, otherwise known as Kaṇṭaka-khipa,[16] wrote the *Saddasāratthajālinī*, a work on Pāli grammar. Navavimalabuddhi, otherwise known as Culla-vimalabuddhi,[17] wrote a *ṭīkā* on the *Vuttodaya* of Saṃgharak-khita [18] (of Ceylon), and another work called *Abhidhamma-paṇṇarasaṭṭhāna*,[19] being a commentary on some of the passages of the Abhidhamma. Among other monk-scholars of this period may be mentioned the names of Vepullabuddhi

12 *Sāsana*, pp. 83-84.

13 *Sāsanavaṃsa* names him Kīttisīhasūra, p. 86.

14 *Cat. Mand. MSS.*, pp. 46, 51.

15 *Sāsana*, p. 88; *Gandha*, pp. 63, 73.

16 *Sāsana*, p. 88; *Gandha*, p. 74; Forchammer, *List*, xx.

17 According to Forchammer, *Report*, p. 2; *List*, p. xxiii, and the *Piṭakattha-main*, p. 74, he worked in Pagan; but see *Gandha*, p. 67.

18 *Sāsana*, pp. 34, 75.

19 *Gandha*, pp. 64, 74.

and Cullavajirabuddhi who wrote on grammatical, exegetical and metaphysical subjects.[20]

From Pinya the Shans moved their capital to Saggaing, and next to Ava in 1364 when Thadominbya was the king (referred to in the *Sāsanavaṃsa* as Sativa-rāja). Thadominbya was primitive in his instincts, and had no respect for Buddhism. But his successor Minkyiswasawke (1368-1401) seems to have some concern for the religion. He built the Shwethetlut pagoda at Thayetmyo in 1373,[21] and appointed an Arakanese monk as his primate. It is difficult to say if the Shwethetlut was the same as the Ca-nah-khuṃ cetiya mentioned in the *Sāsanavaṃsa* as having been built by Mana-kri-cek, *i.e.*, Minkyiswasawke. The name of the Arakanese monk who was made the head of the Order is given in the *Sāsanavamsa* as Khemacara.

II

RELIGION AND SCHOLARSHIP IN THE TALAING COUNTRY

In the Talaing country Wareru had already established a Shan principality in about 1287 with its centre first at Martaban (till 1363) and then at Pegu (after 1369). With the rise of Wareru Buddhism seems to have had a new lease of life; the new king soon became converted to Buddhism and began to take interest in the scholarly work of the monks.[22] Following Dhammavilāsa he compiled a code of Law, the Wareru *Dhammathat*, the earliest law-book that still survives in Burma. There is no reason to suppose that this code was

[20] For the works of these two scholars and the confusion regarding them, see Bode, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-29.

[21] Tun Nyein, *Inscriptions of Pagan, Pinya and Ava*, pp. 146, 159.

[22] "With the rise of Wareru, king of Martaban, a new impulse had been given to native learning, and Buddhism again had attained to exclusive predominance in the shores of the Gulf of Martaban." Forchammer, *Notes on the Early History*, etc., ii, p. 8.

any original contribution by Wareru to legal literature; it was rather compiled from the traditional laws of the Hindus brought to the peninsula by colonists and emigrants where it survived in the writings of the Talaing monks. "Wareru made his monks produce the collection known by his name. It is Hindu, but not Brahmanical, and the sacredotal element is ignored, marriage no longer being treated as a sacrament; it forms the basis of Burmese law literature."[23] We have seen in the preceding section that towards the end of the thirteenth or beginning of the fourteenth century two important Buddhist sects were founded in Martaban by two notable Talaing theras named Buddhavaṃsa and Mahānāga. Both of them had gone to Ceylon where they admitted themselves into the fold of the Mahāvihāra tradition and became believers in the Sinhalese views of orthodoxy.

A pilgrimage to Ceylon had become almost a regular practice among the more important theras in Burma. Indeed, both Burman Burma and Talaing Burma had come to learn by this time to look to Ceylon for religious guidance and inspiration. Medhaṃkara was a noted monkish celebrity in the Talaing country of this time; he had also sojourned for some time in Ceylon undergoing a course of study there and probably also imbibing the same Mahāvihāra tradition. He came to live afterwards at Martaban where he was appointed religious preceptor of queen Bhaddā, mother of Binnya U (mentioned in the *Sāsanavaṃsa* as Setibhinda), the king (1353-85) who had succeeded Wareru at Martaban. Medhaṃkara was the author of *Lokadīpasāra*, 'a collection of chapters on different subjects, arranged according to a cosmological scheme.'[24] The work is well-known in Burma even to-day. After Medhamkara, the *Sāsanavamsa* (p. 48) names three monk-

[23] Harvey, *History of Burma*, p. 111; Forchammer, *Essay*, p. 37; See also *JBRS*, 1940, pp. 351 ff.

[24] Oldenberg, *Pāli MSS. at India Office*, p. 126. Medhamkara is called Nava-Medhaṃkara in the *Gandhavaṃsa*.

scholars, all residents of Haṃsāvatī (Pegu), and perhaps belonging to the same period. They were Ānanda thera who wrote the *Madhurasāratthadīpanī*, a Saṃvaṇṇanaṃ on the *Abhidhammaṭīkā*, Dhammabuddha thera who composed the *Kavisāra*, a treatise on Chanda, and Saddhammalaṅkāra-thera who wrote the "*Paṭṭhānasāratthadīpanīṃ nāma pakaranaṃ*.

Another important monk-scholar who probably belongs to the reign of Binnya U is Mahāyasa, a grammarian of repute.[25] He wrote the *Kaccāyanabheda* and the *Kaccāyansāra*, the former dealing with the grammatical aspect and the latter being a short sketch of the great grammarian Kaccāyana.[26] He also wrote a *ṭīkā* on his own work, the *Kaccāyanasāra*. A book on Abhidhamma topics entitled *Apheggusāra*[27] was written about this time in Pegu (Haṃsāvatī) by a monk whose name is omitted in the *Sāsanavaṃsa*.

Binnya U sent a mission to Ceylon whence they brought a relic which was enshrined by the king in a pagoda built on the spot where he had defeated a hostile army from Chiengmai. He also repaired the Shwedagôn pagoda of Rangoon, raising it to a greater height. He was succeeded by his son Razadarit (1385-1423), referred to as Rājādhirāja in the *Sāsanavaṃsa*. We do not know what he did for the promotion of the religion other than erecting several pagodas, one of which was the famous Shwemawdaw of Pegu built as a thank-offering for the repeated defeats he inflicted on the Burmese army. He held a seven days' festival in course of which he fed a thousand monks and offered them his weight in gold!

[25] For the date of Mahāyasa, see Bode, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

[26] *Gandha*, p. 74; *Sāsanadīp*, V., 1250. Forchammer gives the name Rasa, an inhabitant of Thaton, to the author of these two works. *List*, pp. xx, xxi; *Gandhavaṃsa* says that Dhammānanda was the author; but the *Piṭakatthamain* gives the name as Mahāyasa.

[27] *Sāsana*, p. 48; *Cf.* Forchammer. *List*, p. xviii.

III

THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

The fifteenth century opened with king Minhkaung (1401-22) on the throne at Ava. The *Sāsanavaṃsa* knows him as Adhikarāja who appointed his ācariya as Saṃgharāja; but it is somewhat curious that Paññāsāmī excludes him from the *theraparamparā*.[28] It was during the reign of Adhikarāja that Razadarit, king of Rāmañña (Pegu), threatened a siege of his capital, but what is interesting is that the king invited his counsellors as well a number of bhikkhus to parley with his ministers as to what could be done to resist the impending attack. It interests us to read further that one of the monks convinced the king and took upon himself to meet the invader in his own camp. He did so and exhorted Razadarit (how, we are not told) to return to his country without attempting the siege. The story is interesting in so far as it shows the extent of the influence the bhikkhus often exercised in the royal court and in political and secular matters.

Adhikarāja or Minhkaung was followed by Thihathu (1422-26), Kalekyetaungnye (1426-27) and Mohnyintha (1427-40). It is probably the last king who is referred to in the *Sāsanavaṃsa* as Mriññaṇa. It was during his reign that two mahātheras from Ceylon came to Ava and settled there to advance the cause of the religion.[29] The other theras of his own country belonging to the Arahantagaṇa of Pagan prevailed upon the king to change the era [30] that had so long been in use in Burma.

28 "Tassa pana ācariyo Saṃgharāja lajjipakkam na bhanj ti. Ten'eva theraparamparāya esa na saṃgahitabbo." *Sāsana*, p. 94.

29 *Sāsana*, p. 95.

30 *Ibid.* According to the *Rājavaṃsa*, it was Saddhammarāja who changed the era because of an evil omen. Dr. Bode comments on this change of era:

A next king, Narapati (1443-69), was also a good patron of the religion. Besides building the Thupārāma (Tupayan pagoda) cetiya, he appointed Mahāsāmīthera as his ācariya. Mahāsāmī went to Ceylon where he studied under the great thera Sāriputta and thus came to belong to the Later Order, *i.e.*, the Sihala Saṃgha.[31]

All this time the country had been in a state of constant political turmoil; the chroniclers have hardly anything to record but petty intrigues and court-squabbles, attacks and counter-attacks, not always without a dramatic interest. But the Saṃgha does not seem to have suffered much from this unsettled state of affairs which were more or less the concern of the capital, the court, the army, the royalty and the nobility. The ruling families, for acquiring merit, or as a matter of age-old practice, or for drawing the support of the Samgha which often proved to be a great source of strength, continued to patronise the Order and gave it whatever help they could in the shape of land, money, copies of sacred texts, and other requisites of monastic life. The example of the royal families was followed by the nobility and the rich. We, therefore, find monastic learning and scholarship in a flourishing state even during these turbulent times, and meet with a number of learned theras among whom three names, those of Ariyavaṃsa, Sīlavaṃsa and Raṭṭhasāra, stand out prominently.

Of the three, Ariyavaṃsa was certainly the most eminent. A dignified character with a magnanimity all his own, and a humility possessed only by the truly wise, Ariyavaṃsa's story is told with pride and enthusiasm in the *Sāsanavaṃsa*.[32]

" it is an interesting and an usual mention (in the *Sāsanavaṃsa*) of theras acting as astrologers (their advice to the king is given on the story of the Vedasattha). There is no hint that these two were wanting in sacred knowledge, though in another passage a distinction is severely made between the higher learning and secular science." *Sāsanavaṃsa*, Intro., p. 30.

31 *Sāsana*, p. 95.

32 *Sāsana*, pp. 95-98. Ariyavaṃsa's career which gives us a glimpse into the life of a monastic scholar of these days, has been summarised by Dr. Bode in her *Pali Literature of Burma*, pp. 41-42, and need not be recounted here.

He was a native of Pagan and belonged to the Capata sect, but came to settle in Ava in the reign of king Narapati. He wrote a commentary on the *Abhidhammatthavibhāvanī* (itself a commentary on the *Abhidhammatthasaṃgaha*) called *Maṇisāramañjusā*. As he wrote the different chapters of his work, he read them out to the monks assembled on uposatha days on the courtyard of Puññacetiya, and invited their criticism. His other works were the *Maṇīdīpa*, a *ṭīkā* on the *Atthasālinī* of Buddhaghosa, the *Gandhābharaṇa*, a treatise on grammar, and the *Jātakavisodhana*, a study on the Jātakas. All these works were in Pāli; but he wrote also in the *Marammabhāsā*, or Burmese, and was thus perhaps one of those pioneers who began to write in the vernacular of the country. He wrote an *aṭṭhayojanā* or interpretation of the *Anuṭīkā* on the Abhidhamma, generally ascribed to Dhammapāla. He is also said to have written, according to the *Gandhavaṃsa*, another work called *Mahānissara*. Following a very well-practised custom of which the *Sāsanavaṃsa* affords numerous examples, Narapati established Ariyavaṃsa in a vihāra where the learned thera held his teachings. The king himself was interested and occasionally came to the vihāra to hear him.

Closely on the heels of Ariyavaṃsa came Sīlavaṃsa or Mahā-Sīlavaṃsa, who was a native of Pabbatabbhantaranagara (Taung-dwin-gyi in Magwe district). There in his native town he wrote at least three poetical works, the *Sumedhakathā*, evidently based on the story of the ascetic Sumedha incorporated in the Nidāna of the *Jātakas*, the *Buddhālaṃkāra*, probably on the life of the Master himself, and the *Pabbatabbhantarapaṭisamayutta*, evidently on his native town. With these three books to his credit he came to Ava (Ratanapura) at the age of thirty in the reign of Sirisudhammarājādhipati (probably Minhkaung II, 1481 1502). There the king settled him in the Ratanavimāna near the Thupārāma pagoda, where he not only held regular

teachings on the sacred texts, but also composed an *aṭṭhayojanā* of the *Nettipakaraṇa*, and the *Parāyaṇavatthu*, both in the vernacular (Marammabhāsāya). Besides being a poet, he was thus a scholar also who could deal equally effectively with religio-philosophical subjects.[33]

Born in 1468 (*Kaliyuge tiṃsādhika aṭṭhavassasate kāle jāte*) at Ratanapura, Raṭṭhasāra, like Sīlavaṃsa, wrote in verse, and composed poetical versions of the *Bhuridattajātaka*, *Hatthipālajātaka* and the *Saṃvarajātaka*.[34] It is interesting to note that Paññāsāmī does not view with appreciation these attempts of Sīlavaṃsa and Raṭṭhasāra—namely, composing works, even religious works, in verse. In fact, both of them receive his censure. On Paññāsāmī's authority we learn that it is for this reason that both were excluded from the *theraparamparā* by the ancient chroniclers. According to them as well as to Paññāsāmī, composing or reciting poems was a transgression of Vinaya rules, and as such, was a matter of discipline which they expected all monks strictly to follow. Paññāsāmī refers his readers to the *Uposathavinicchaya*, a work on Vinaya by himself, where, he says, the subject has been discussed in detail.

The Talaing country in the fifteenth century seems to have produced very few religious celebrities; at least, we have record of only a few of them, and whomsoever we meet with belongs invariably to the Sinhalese tradition. Sevāsuvaṇṇasobhana, a noted thera of Martaban, whom the

[33] According to Harvey, Shin Thulawuntha (Sīlavaṃsa) was expelled from the monastery at Taung-dwi-gyi for his composing works in poetry which the monks considered profane. He is also said to have written a grammatical work, and "poems such as *Hsutaungganpye*, *Taungdwinlapyo*, *Tadā-u-ti-mawgun*, and the *Yazawingyaw chronicle*, the earliest history extant." Among other vernacular writers may be mentioned the names of Shin Uttamagyaw 'who for twenty years remained a monk, and then went to Ava where he was often invited to the palace for consultation on the scriptures' and Shin Agyathamahdi (1479) who wrote poetic versions of Jātakas. *History of Burma*, p. 104.

[34] Raṭṭhasāra (or Mahāraṭṭathera) also composed the *Keganpye* and *Meiktila Kanbidemawgun*, in Burmese verse.

Sāsanavaṃsa places after Medhamkara thera,[35] may probably be ascribed to the middle of the century. He, too, like Medhaṃkara and some of his predecessors of the Talaing country, went to Ceylon and there at the Mahāvihāra sat at the feet of learned theras receiving anew (*puna sikkhaṃ gahetvā*) instructions in the sacred texts. He came back to Martaban, but simple and unostentatious, eager to learn and intelligent, he chose to live and practise the religion in the solitude of the forest. Suvannasobhana lived to see the great reformation of Dhammaceti and played the part of upajjhāyà in the upasampadā ceremony after the return of Dhammaceti's mission from Ceylon. We shall have, therefore, occasion to refer to him later on. However, after his return from Ceylon he settled down at Martaban where he established a new sect. Medhaṃkara and Sevāsuvaṇṇasobhana are together said to have introduced the *ācariyaparampará* from Ceylon for the sixth time.[36]

Towards the end of the fifteenth century the Talaing country or the Rāmaññadesa, which, by the way, included Haṃsāvatī (Pegu), Muttimā (Martaban), and Suvaṇṇabhūmi (Thaton), was approaching a great religious awakening. Dhammaceti, a monk and a man of character, had by an accident come to the throne of Pegu in 1472. Even as a monk he saw the corruptions that had crept into the Saṃgha and watched with displeasure the various contending sects into which the Saṃgha had come to be divided. He also saw how the various sects had allowed themselves to drift from the original teachings of the Master and violated the rules of the Vinaya. When, therefore, he came to the throne, he resolved to give a definite lead to the disorganised Order to which he had once belonged. He thus sought to effect a reformation of the religion at a time when it was

35 *Sāsana*, p. 42.

36 *Sāsana*, pp. 42-43.

most needed. But a separate section must be reserved for an account of that very important reformation, the way how he affected it, and its implications and results.

IV

DHAMMACETI'S REFORMATION OF THE SAMGHA: TRIUMPH OF THE SINHALESE SCHOOL (1476-80)

Dhammaceti's is a unique career and personality in the whole range of Burmese history. He was one Burmese monarch whose fame travelled beyond the frontiers of his realm, not only as an able king and statesman, but also as one of those few heroes who by their piety and reforming zeal carved out a place for themselves in the history of Buddhism. He was an ordinary monk, evidently residing in one of the monasteries of Ava, when he together with another monk helped Shin Sawbu, the daughter of Razadarit of Pegu, to take to flight from Ava where she had been taken as one of the queens of Mohnyinthado (1427-40). This lady, first married to Thihathu (1422-26), was later made over to the lord of Pagan during the upheavals that followed Thihathu's death. When she was taken as the queen of Mohnyinthado, she had already become disgusted with this sort of life as well as with upper Burma, and was therefore thinking of getting out of the royal palace. She took the help of two Talaing monks who had taught her letters, and managed to escape to Pegu. One of these monks came later on to be known as Dhammaceti. Shin Sawbu eventually became queen of Pegu (1453-72), and when she had ruled for several years she wanted to retire, and retire in favour of one of the two monks. " In doubt as to which she should choose, she left it to Providence. One morning when they came to receive the royal rice, she secreted in one of their bowls a *pahse* (layman's dress) together with little models

of the five regalia ; then, having prayed that the lot might fall to the worthier, she returned the bowls. Dammaceti, to whom the fateful bowl fell, left the Sacred Order, received Shin Sarobu's daughter in marriage, and assumed the government.'' [37] Shin Sawbu went in retirement to Dagôn where she occupied herself with the religion. It is to her care and munificence that the Shwedagôn became what it is to-day.

Dhammaceti left the Order, but did not forget it, far less neglect it, once on the throne as he was. On the contrary, he resolved to do something for the religion which as a monk he had neither the courage nor the opportunity to do. The monkish zeal for propagation and reformation of the religion was still fresh in his mind. He not only built a number of works of merit, such as the Shwegugyi and the Kyaikpon at Pegu, but sent a mission to Bodhgayā in 1472 to take plans of the Bodhi tree and the Mahābodhi temple, obviously to serve as models for temples at Pegu.[38] But the greatest service he rendered to the religion was the reformation of the Saṃgha.

Away from the midst of the Saṃgha of which he had once been a member, he could look at it from a better perspective and have a better view of real state of affairs of the Saṃgha and its constituents. The first point which caught his eye must have been the various contending sects into which the Saṃgha had become divided, and the bitter rivalry among the different sects. The next point was probably the laxity in the rules of discipline among the monks of various sects which meant that the original orthodoxy was gradually yielding place to the growing pressure of individual tastes and preferences. As to the first, the only remedy lay in bringing all the sects together under one ecclesiastical authority through

37 Harvey, *History of Burma*, pp. 117-118.
38 *An R.A.S.B.*, 1914, p. 11.

one standard and absolute upasampadā ordination. The remedy as to the second was to follow as a consequence.

Hailing from one of the Ava monasteries, Dhammaceti, by training and perhaps by conviction as well, belonged to the Sīhala Saṃgha and held fast to orthodox views. Moreover, numerous pilgrimages and missions of Burmese monks to the Mahāvihāra of Ceylon during the last four centuries had built up a tradition in Burma which held that the religion in its pure and unsullied form existed there alone, and it was only the Mahāvihāra of Ceylon that one might go to seek guidance and inspiration from. When, therefore, Dhammaceti thought of effecting a reformation of the Order, he had naturally his face turned towards that island ; and it may be assumed that he thought of unifying the contending sections by re-introducing the upasampadā ordination from the Mahāvihāra of Ceylon and making it absolute, and thus restoring the succession of theras which he thought had been broken in the Rāmañña country. This is what he actually did.

We have already referred in a previous section to the unfortunate state of the religion ; at one time in Martaban alone there were as many as five different sects, each one claiming supremacy over the other. The degeneration was so complete that " in all these sects," the Kalyāṇī inscriptions state, " there were none who were well-versed in the Tripiṭaka." The number of these sects gradually increased with increasing rivalry amongst themselves, and though scholarly works from monks continued to be produced there was dearth of real wisdom, for there was none " qualified to investigate and ascertain matters regarding ecclesiastical ceremonies." The trouble arose in connection with the question of right consecration of a sīmā and valid conferment of the upasampadā ordination. In respect to these two ecclesiastical ceremonies each one sect had its own opinion, and they performed the ceremonies in their own way. Dhammaceti wanted to put an end to this, for,

"The upasampadā ordination is dependent on that of pabbajjā, and the basis of the religion itself is the *upasampadā* ordination, which in order to be appropriate, inviolable and valid must be possessed of five characteristics, namely, *Sīmāsampatti*, *Vatthusampatti*, *Ñattisampatti*, *Parisāsampatti* and *Anusāvanasampatti*. Of these characteristics there exists means of attesting the validity of *Vatthusampatti* and *Ñattisampatti*, owing respectively to the ability of a candidate for the pure form of upasampadā ordination to fulfil the conditions of the former, and to the accessibility of qualified ācariyas, who would recite the *Kammavācā* with correct intonation." [39]

The king also repeatedly 'investigated and considered the ruling of the Vinaya as regards the consecration of a *sīmā* which would be in conformity with the intention of the Blessed One'. At last he personally came to a decision in regard to these two and other ecclesiastical ceremonies, evidently in accordance with Vinaya rules. But he was not sure if the theras of his realm would argue in the same manner and accept his decision. He, therefore, invited the leading monks and asked them to give a ruling based on the Vinaya in regard to the problems he set forth before them. Eventually it was agreed upon that the religion had become 'impure and corrupt,' and that they must set themselves to reform it. With this end in view

"King Rāmādhipati (Rāmaññādhipati, *i.e.*, Dhammaceti) invited twenty-two theras, headed by Moggalāna, and addressed them thus: 'Revered Sirs, the upasampadā ordination of the monks of the Môn country now appears to us to be invalid. Therefore, how can the religion, which is based on such invalid ordination, last to the end of 5000 years ? Reverend Sirs, from the establishment of the religion in the island of Ceylon up to the present day, there has been existing in that island an exceedingly pure sect of monks, who were the spiritual successors of the monks, of the Mahāvihāra, a Chapter, who are pure and free from censure and reproach; receive at their hands the upasampadā ordination in the Udakukkhepasīmā consecrated on the Kalyāṇi river, ... and if you make this form of the upasampadā ordination the seed of the religion, as it were, plant it (after you return here from that island), and cause it to sprout forth by conferring such ordination on men of good family in this Môn country, who have faith and are desirous of taking orders, the religion will become pure and last till the end of 5,000 years. Reverend Sirs, by your going to the island of Ceylon, much merit and great advantage will accrue to you." [40]

[39] *Ep. Birm.*, iii. ii., p. 203.

[40] *Ep. Birm.*, iii. ii., pp. 220-21,

So, one day (January 9, 1476) twenty-two theras with their twenty-two disciples embarked on two ships consigned to the care of two missionaries, Citradutān and Rāmadutān. In Citradutān's ship went eleven theras headed by Mahāsīvalī, while Rāmadutān's carried another eleven theras headed by Moggallāna. A month's voyage took Citradutān's ship to the island and on February 23, 1476, Citradutān along with the theras handed over to Bhuvanekabāhu, the king of Ceylon, Dhammaceti's letter written on gold-plate and other valuable presents which the latter had sent for the king of Ceylon. The next day was handed over to the clergy of Ceylon the letter of Dhammaceti meant for them together with some other presents. Handicapped by adverse winds and adverse circumstances Rāmadutān's ship arrived a few months later (14th June, 1476).

To cut a very long story short, the king of Ceylon directed the clergy of the Mahāvihāra to make arrangements for the ordination of the twenty-two monks with their twenty-two disciples. "In conformity with the custom followed by the Sinhalese Mahātheras of old, whenever monks from foreign countries were ordained, the forty-four Môn monks were first established in the condition of laymen, and then admitted to the Order as Sāmaṇeras," through the act of Vanaratanamahāthera who presented them with yellow robes, and accepted their profession of faith in the Three Refuges. It then took four days to confer the upasampadā ordination on all the forty-four theras, the last day being given to the twenty-two younger monks (July, 17 to 20, 1476). On the first day Dhammakittimahāthera and Pañcapariveṇavasimaṅgalamahāthera were respectively the upajjhāya and ācariya. On the second and third days Vanaratanamahāthera and Pañcapariveṇavasimaṅgalathera acted as the upajjhāya and ācariya respectively, while on the last day Pañcapariveṇavasimaṅgalathera and Sīharājayuvarājacariyathera were respectively the upajjhāya and ācariya. The names of the

twenty-two elder monks who were ordained are given in the Kalyāṇī inscriptions and may be of some interest to us. They were Moggallāna, Kumārakassapa, Mahāsīvalı, Sāriputta, Ñāṇasāgara, Sumana, Kassapa, Nanda, Rāhula, Buddhavaṃsa, Sumaṅgala, Khujjānanda, Soṇuttara, Guṇasāgara, Dhammarakkhita, Cūḷasumaṅgala, Javanapañña, Cūḷakassapa, Cūḷasīvalī, Maṇisāra, Dhammarājika and Candanasāra. After the ordination the king invited them to a meal, presented them with niceties that could be given to monks, and conferred various titles on the twenty-two elder monks.

In time one batch of eleven theras with their eleven disciples sailed back to their country (August 21, 1476), and Dhammaceti received them with due ceremony. The other batch of eleven theras with their eleven disciples suffered a series of misfortunes that led to the death of six theras and four young monks away from their country; the rest of the party reached home three years later (November 12, 1479). However, after their arrival, the king carefully selected a gāmakhetta where a pure sīmā was duly consecrated according to the rules of the Vinaya for the performance of the uposatha, pavāraṇā, upasampadā and other ceremonies. "Inasmuch as this sīmā...was consecrated by our lords who went to the island of Ceylon and received the upasampadā ordination in an udakukkhepasīmā arranged on the Kalyāṇī river, it was called the Kalyāṇīsīmā."[41] The king then invited all monks of the realm 'who possessed faith and desired to receive the upasampadā ordination at the hands of the monks ordained in Ceylon,' to come to the Kalyāṇī sīmā and receive ordination. 'Let those who have not faith and do not desire to receive the upasampadā ordination of the Sinhalese,' he decreed, 'remain as they are!'

[41] *Ep. Birm.*, III, ii, p. 249.

But who was to serve as the upajjhäya of the ordination ceremony ? None of the monks who had just returned from Ceylon had yet completed ten years since their ordination and could not therefore serve as upajjhāya. The choice then fell on Suvaṇṇasobhana, 'a worthy monk, one who received the upasampadā ordination of the succession of Ceylon, a man who is modest, remorseful, an observer of the precepts, a dweller in the forest, with few desires, easily satisfied, eradicating his sins, and an observer of the dhutaṅgas.' The upajjhāya in his ordination in Ceylon was Vanaratana, while Rāhulabhadda was the ācariya, and twenty-six years had already elapsed since he had received the upasampadā ordination of the Sinhalese in an udakukkhepasīmā.[42]

All arrangements were now complete, and what now began was nothing short of a mass ordination so that after five days the number of monks newly ordained rose to 245, while the king himself kep twatch.

"Then His Majesty Rāmādhipati sent word to all the clergy and throughout the whole extent of this Môn country. His Majesty caused them to make agreements and make appointments in this wise: 'What is past, let it be done with ! But as for monks in the future, after these, let all clergy who ordain them hereafter see that the candidates for ordination are satisfactory, and then ordain them ....."

He proceeded in his declaration to ban all monks who were without faith and devotion, who were not perfect in limbs, who practised medicine or lived by tending people's diseases or by following some arts or crafts or by reciting the Dhamma aloud or who transgressed in any way even a trifle of the Vinaya rules, who possessed goods, paddy, rice, slaves, cattle, or any kind of material wealth, and threatened them all with expulsion from the Order. Upasampadā ordination could in no way be conferred on them. "If you do not act thus, but confer the upasampadā privily, the mother

[42] For Suvaṇṇasobhana, see *ante*. p. 181.

and the father of those who receive such ordination, as well as their relatives, and likewise their lay supporters, will be visited by us with royal penalties."

"Thus did His Majesty Rāmādhipati entirely purge and expel the impurity and corruption of religion that had arisen, and caused all the clergy who were in this Môn country *to form one single sect.* All the clergy who dwelt in villages or in the forest, who lived within this Môn country .. ..came and received the upasampadā ordination of the Sinhalese; without intermission they kept on coming and receiving it"

till the number swelled by thousands (fifteen thousand six hundred and sixty-six). To cope with the increasing requests from monks for the new ordination, Dhammaceti consecrated hundreds of sīmās (a list of which is given in the inscriptions) throughout the Môn country.

"Such deeds as these did His Majesty Rāmādhipati do, because he took great delight in the religion; desiring that those who received the upasampadā oadination should be firm and steadfast. Hereafter, also, for the term of life of His Majesty, for every Sāmaṇera who shall desire to receive the upasampadā ordination, His Majesty will make preparation in like manner.....Inasmuch as that is so, may the princes who are replete with faith and with wisdom, who shall wield the sovereignty of the city of Haṁsāvatī hereafter, also impart strength to the religion!"

None of Dhammaceti's successors took the same great care of nor devoted themselves so steadfastly to the cause of the religion. Through the process of a valid upasampadā ordination, he was able to purge the Order of all impurities and corruption that had crept into it and to bring all contending sects under one banner, to 'form one single sect', as Dhammaceti himself puts it. He had indeed achieved a great object which for all practical purposes brought to a close, at least for another couple of centuries, the dissensions between the Maramma Saṃgha and the Sīhala Saṃgha. It was a complete triumph for the latter, and as such, for the orthodox school. We have seen that Dhammaceti held Sinhalese views of orthodoxy and it is not surprising to find that he helped the Sīhala Saṃgha become supreme, indeed, the one officially

recognised Order, in the land. Henceforth we shall hear less of the Maramma Saṃgha, the older school that maintained the religion in the country presumably from the time when Soṇa and Uttara introduced the religion to the day when Cāpata returned from Ceylon with the message of the Mahāvihāra.

We had occasion to point out how the Sinhalese School strove to adhere strictly to the rules of the Vinaya. Even the transgression of a trifle monastic rule was considered to be a grave offence, and hence was not to be tolerated. Unfortunately, the various sects into which the Sīhala Saṃgha saw itself divided were gradually drifting from the orthodox Mahāvihāra tradition, and were slowly moving towards what was evidently a relaxed interpretation of the Vinaya rules. What Dhammaceti attempted to do was rigidly to enforce the Vinaya rules according to orthodox interpretation; this he did by reviving the Mahāvihāra tradition through a valid upasampadā ordination. This explains why the Kalyāṇī inscriptions contain repeated requests to monks to conform strictly to the rules of the Vinaya; indeed, the king himself frequently refers to Vinaya texts and decides everything accordingly. It is interesting to note in this connection how Dhammaceti wanted all Sāmaṇeras to study the Vinaya rules carefully and minutely with special emphasis, it seems, on the *Khuddakasikkhā* and the *Pātimokkha*,[43] and to lead a strict life according to orthodox rules of discipline, with a view to qualify themselves for ordination. Standard authorities on Vinaya subjects which the king himself consulted and in which he caused research and investigation to be made by the monks are also mentioned. They were, among others, the *Vinayapāli*, the *Vinayaṭṭhakathā*, the *Vinayaṭīkā* called *Sāratthadīpaṇī*, the *Vinayaṭīkā* called *Vimativinodanī*,

[43] *Ep. Birm.*, III, ii, pp. 258-59, 261, 283.

the *Vinayaṭīkā* written by Vajirabuddhithera, the *Māṭikaṭṭhakathā* called *Kaṅkhāvitaraṇī* together with its *ṭīkā*, the *Vinayasaṅgahapakaraṇa*, the *Sīmālaṅkārapakaraṇa*, and the *Sīmālaṅkārasaṅgaha*. It is significant that all these treatises are of Sinhalese authorship.

It is also interesting to make a note of the part played by Dhammaceti himself in the great reformation. The initiative came not from the Order of monks but from the king himself, and in all the acts of that great drama he was the one and only hero ; the monks, even the most venerable ones, to whom nevertheless he showed throughout the most devoted and respectful consideration, were completely at his bidding. They followed him loyally and allowed themselves to be guided and protected by him. This gives us at once a glimpse into the hold the king had on the Order, as well as into the relations between the Saṃgha and the royal authority. We shall see later on that the nature and character of these relations were always more or less the same.

No less interesting is the fact that even from the very introduction of the Sīhala Saṃgha into Burma, the royal authority had always lent its support to the new Order in preference to the old and indigenous fraternity, and thus showed decided preference for the more orthodox school. But for Narapatisithu's active help and support the Sīhala Saṃgha within a few years after its introduction, could not have achieved the prestige and position which it did during his reign. And every king that followed on the throne of Pagan or elsewhere chose their ācariya usually from among those who subscribed to the Mahāvihāra tradition, and bestowed their bounties mostly on them alone. Their benevolence, real and sincere, was not impartial. The last stage was reached when Dhammaceti openly and frankly identified himself with the Sīhala Saṃgha.

Dhammaceti's reformation is an important event in the history of Buddhism in Burma. It reveals the whole

character of the religion in Burma, not only during the four centuries that were left behind, but also during the centuries that lay ahead. Indeed, that character was now determined once and for all. Dissensions will take place and controversies will in future lead to sectional feuds within the Order, laxity of discipline will from time to time disturb the fraternity, the relation between the Order and the king will give cause for anxiety, but everything will at last be decided in consonance with the nature and character brought forth by the history of the religion so far pursued, *i.e.*, beginning from the introduction of the Sīhala Saṃgha to the reformation of Dhammaceti. The rest of the history has, therefore, its factual interest alone; it would only go to confirm what we already know of the nature and character of the religion.

V

A Monastic Library

A very interesting glimpse into the studies in which the monks engaged themselves during the period under review is afforded by a well-known inscription recovered from the ruins of Pagan. The record is dated B.E. 804 (1442 A.D.) and is of considerable value inasmuch as it furnishes a picture of monastic scholarship in upper Burma in the fifteenth century. It commemorates a gift to a monastic establishment of Pagan by the ruler of Taungdwin and his wife. They built for the monks, as was often the practice with the royalty and the rich, a monastery, and made over to them a garden, paddy lands, monastery slaves, and a large collection of texts of which a full list is given in the inscription.[44] Such gifts of texts to monkish orders were by

[44] Forchammer, *Inscriptions of Pagan, Pinya and Ava.* The list has often been reproduced, *e.g.*, in Bode, *Pāli Literature of Burma*, pp. 102-09, or mentioned, *e.g.*, in Pelliot, "Deux Itineraires," *B.E.F.E.O.*, V, p. 183. Dr. Bode stresses

no means unusual. The monastic libraries as much as the monasteries themselves depended on the bounties of the rich; and whence could the monks get their books for study and reference unless the laity provided the Order with them? But it must be admitted that extant records of such gifts are rare; indeed the Taungdwin record is unique in this respect. It gives us a clear idea of the subjects that were generally studied in the monasteries of upper Burma, and presumably also of lower Burma, in the fifteenth century.

A careful analysis of this list shows that it is not without a system and a significance. It will be seen that at the head of the list are the Vinaya books which number as many as twenty. This is not accidental, but just as one would expect to find in Burma, since Vinaya was the most important subject Buddhism in Burma was concerned with, and the Vinaya texts had already come to play a most important part in the life of the average Burmese monk. It was but natural that they should be given the place of honour in a monastery library. The Vinaya list is followed by seventeen Abhidhamma texts[45] which also have a profound influence on Burmese Buddhists who like the Buddhists of Siam and Kamboj look upon the Abhidhamma with great respect. But the number of Sutta texts that follow those of the Abhidhamma are by far the largest. With their rich store of stories, legends, verses and edificatory discourses, all tinged with a deep human interest, the Sutta texts naturally commanded the widest popularity, not only among the members of the Order but also among those of the laity. Whoever has had any opportunity of coming in intimate contact with the Burmese people must have noticed what a deep influence the Sutta texts exercise on their life

the aid afforded by the list to 'form some notion of the point reached by the Sanskrit scholars in Burma in the fifteenth century.'

[45] Some Abhidhamma texts are also mentioned down in the list, *e.g.*, Nos. 111, 112, etc.

and culture even to this day. The whole idea of a young Burman about good and bad, merit and demerit is, indeed, drawn from these texts. After the Sutta texts, almost in a natural sequence, come the Jātaka and Apadāna texts, and then are listed historical chronicles, etc. Then follow texts on grammar, lexicography, philology, law, polity, medicine and pharmacology, astrology, rhetoric and prosody, logic and other minor texts, not always strictly according to subject. Texts on grammar and lexicography, and even philology and rhetoric were almost indispensable for a thorough understanding of the sacred texts, and from what we know of the syllabus of Buddhist monastic studies in India it is not surprising that Burmese monks interested themselves in texts on such secular subjects as Medicine and Pharmacology, Polity and Astrology, and even Military Science, etc.

Readers will notice in this list titles of a good number of Sanskrit works as well. It is difficult to say if they were translations of Sanskrit originals or the originals themselves under the disguise of Pāli and even Burmese names. These works relate themselves to such subjects as Grammar and Rhetoric, Astrology and Medicine, Law and Polity, Lexicography and the like. It is common knowledge today that Sanskrit learning though not widely practised was yet quite familiar in Burma. This learning was in the keeping of Brahmanical priests, court-astronomers and ministers who were all held in high esteem in the courts of Burmese kings and were persons of influence. It is not unlikely that the Burmese laity, following the Hindu colonists, interested themselves in this learning as well, specially in Hindu Polity, Law and Astrology and similar other subjects, perhaps to help themselves to secure positions of influence with the king and the ruling class. The Taungdwin record shows, however, that even Buddhist monks were interested in this essentially Brahmanical learning and took pains to study

Sanskrit texts on secular subjects. That the monks did really study such Brahmanical texts along with their own sacred books is proved not only by a good number of Burmese translations of several Sanskrit works but also by the epithet '*Vedasatthakovida*' (expert in *Vedasatthas*) sometimes applied to certain monks. More than once the *Sāsanavaṃsa*[46] refers to learned monks who were experts in *Vedasatthas*, *i.e.*, in the secular learning of the Brāhmaṇas.[47] Needless to say, this Brahmanical learning was not favoured by certain sections of the monastic Order; in fact, if the *Sāsanavaṃsa* is to be believed, the Order as a whole frankly disapproved of them. According to Paññasāmī, these *Vedasatthakovidas* were *pariyattipaṭipattīsu mandā*: they were deficient in the knowledge and practice of the religion, and the old chroniclers did not consider them eligible to be reckoned in the *theraparamparā* (*theraparamparāya na gaṇenti porāṇā*).[48]

[46] *e g. Sāsana*, pp. 95, 105-109. When Saddharmarāja changed the era he was advised by two learned theras who acted as astrologers, and the advice was given on the strength of *Vedasatthas*.

[47] These *Vedasatthas* had, however nothing to do with Vedic texts, or even rahmanical religious literature as such, e.g., the Upaniṣads, Purāṇas, etc. Frankly, the Burmese knew Brahmanical texts on Astronomy, and Astrology, perhaps also on Polity, Law, etc., as *Vedasatthas*, and anybody who had proficiency in these texts came to be known as '*Vedasatthakovida.*' See, Jardine, *Notes on Buddhist Law IV*. Intro. by Forchammer, p. 17, Forchammer, *Report*, pp. 5 ff. Bode, *Pāli Literature*, pp. 50-51.

[48] *Sāsana*, p. 105.

CHAPTER FOUR

CLOUDS GATHER

SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES

I

MARAMMARATTHA

Burma, after the fall of Pagan, became for more than two centuries and a half a victim of separatist tendencies. She was ruled over by contending dynasties of kings and princes who had their centres at different places of the country. Even when Dhammaceti effected the reformation of the religion, the country had been in the same state of political disruption. His reformation could not therefore achieve an all-Burma character. But it must not be supposed that its effects were confined within the boundaries of the Rāmañña country alone The *Sāsanavaṃsa*'s express testimony is that the reformation went deep into the hearts of the people of Marammaraṭṭha as well whence bhikkhus flocked to the Kalyāṇī sīmā to receive the upasampadā ordination.

But clouds came hovering to enmesh the religion in the Marammaraṭṭha into a dense darkness. In 1527 a new king sat on the throne of Ava. He was Thohanbwa (called Sirihaṃsvā or Sahantva in the *Sāsanavaṃsa*), son of Sawlon. Thohanbwa was a downright brute and full-blooded savage. He considered all temples and sacred shrines as so many secret chambers where people concealed their treasures. He therefore pillaged all those that were within his reach and appropriated whatever he could get hold

Sāsanavaṃsa, p. 47.

of. He robbed the monasteries of sacred texts and set them in flames and also burnt many temples and pagodas. The monks he considered as so many conspirators who whenever opportunity offered itself, gathered followers round them and instigated them to rebel against the king. At least this was how he viewed their activities. To him they were a band of men without wives and children, and were thus all the more dangerous. He therefore contrived to put end to them. At Ton-bhi-luḥ (Taungbalu) near Ava he erected a big *maṇḍapa* where he slaughtered cows, pigs, buffaloes, fowls, etc., for a feast to which he invited a good number of monks from Pinya, Ava, Myinsing and Saggaing. When the monks were all inside the *maṇḍapa*, he had them surrounded and then effected a wholesale massacre. The *Sāsanavaṃsa* says that he succeeded in killing three thousand monks. Buddhism in Burma had never suffered so terrible and so shocking and devastating a savagery !

Thohanbwa met the fate he deserved. Minkyiyanaung, a Burman officer of the old Ava court and the right-hand man of Thohanbwa killed him (1543), for, Minkyiyanaung being a man with sincere faith in the religion and respect for the Order could no more stand the atrocities of his master. " He reveres not the Three Gems, he regards not human life, he respects not other men's wives, and the fear of the Lord is not in him. We shall be destroyed unto the seventh generation." And so Minkyiyanaung destroyed him, but did not want to take his throne. He was a man of finer taste, religiously disposed, and of peaceful temperament. So, eventually he forsook the world that had tempted him so much with pomp, power and position, and retired to a forest monastery near Mekkaya in the Kyaukse district, and there passed the remaining days of his life in the peace of monastic seclusion. Where in those days when violent political convulsions, dynastic plots and court intrigues were the usual order, could one with finer nature

and with faith in the religion escape than in the seclusion of the monasteries ? Even in such dark days monasteries were numerous in Ava and they always gave asylum to those who sought refuge in them. It was in these monasteries alone that the torch of learning and culture and religion was kept burning, sometimes dim and pale, but never quite extinct.

There was indeed no dearth of devoted monk-scholars. Two of them are known to us, evidently from Ava; they were Saddhammakitti and his pupil Tisāsanadhaja, who somehow seem to have escaped the cruel persecution of Thohanbwa. But they had to seek for safety elsewhere. Both of them came to Ketumatī (Toungoo), the capital of an independent kingdom where Saddhammakitti maintained the scholastic tradition and compiled the well-known vocabulary, the *Ekakkharakosa*. Tisāsanadhaja has been styled Mahā-sādhujjana; though not an author he seems to have been a holy man of repute. After the death of Saddhammakitti he went to Haṃsāvatī in the reign of Anekasetibhinda (Bayinnaung). Later, he repaired to Jeyyapuranagara (Saggaing) where he made his abode in a cave near the Jetavanavihāra. Afterwards when Bayinnaung conquered Ava, he built a vihāra which he made over to Tisāsanadhaja.

The Toungoo fraternity, which was in comparative peace, was at this time being disturbed by a very interesting controversy. It centred round the question of fermented drinks which was forbidden for the monks, according to the Vinaya. But the commentaries on the Vinaya seemed to suggest that the juice of the palm and cocoanut trees might be taken even by monks. As usual, opinions among the monks of Toungoo differed in respect of the commentarial interpretation on this point. The matter was then referred to the thera Mahāparakkama who gave a ruling that the juice of the palm or cocoanut trees might be taken just after it had been taken down from the tree, *i.e.*, when

fermentation had not yet set in. His ruling seems to have put an end to the drink controversy. Mahāparakkama afterwards wrote a book, *Surāvinicchaya*, in which he discussed the question in detail. At this time the king of Toungoo was Mahāsirijeyyasura (Minkyinyo, 1486-1531) who was a protector of the religion and built cetiyas and vihāras, as the *Sāsanavaṃsa* would have us believe.

Pinya which seems to have survived the vandalism of Thohanbwa contributes to the history of monastic scholarship of this period at least three important treatises on grammar by two reputed theras. One Saddhammaguru wrote the *Saddavutti*, a treatise on grammar; and another Vijitāvī, wrote the *Kaccāyanavaṇṇanā*, a commentary on the *Sandhi* section of Kaccāyana's grammar, and the *Vacakopadesa* which 'treats the grammatical categories from a logical point of view.' [2]

Minkyinyo was succeeded by a young prince of worth and valour, Tabinshwehti by name (1531-50). He captured Pegu in 1539 by recourse to a stratagem and without even striking a blow, and later took Martaban and Prome. The Talaing kingdom at last lay at the foot of the Burmese king and at the mercy of the Burmese army. During his reign Ava was being ruled by a Shan prince who, following on the footsteps of one of his predecessors, Thohanbwa, very cruelly persecuted the monks, and made the monasteries his target of pillage and plunder.

Brighter days were however in store for the religion during the reign of king Bayinnaung (1551-81) of the Toungoo dynasty. Starting his life as a king without a kingdom Bayinnaung first captured Pegu and strangled Talaing opposition. He then set out on a career of conquest and within a few years brought the whole of Burma including even the Shan States under his control. He bestowed liberal

[2] *Cat. Mand. MSS.*, p. 45. *Sāsana. dip.* v. 1242; Forchammer, *List*, p. xxii Oldenberg, *Pāli MSS. in the India Office Library*, p. 104.

bounties on the viharas of the Talaing country where monastic scholarship came to receive a new impetus. We therefore hear of such scholars as Saddhammālaṃkāra, Ānanda and Dhammabuddha, all of Haṃsāvatī. Ānanda wrote the *Madhurasäratthadīpaṇī*, a commentary on the *Abhidhammaṭikā*, while Saddhammālaṃkāra wrote a *pakaraṇa* entitled *Paṭṭhānasāratthadīpaṇī*. They are both placed by the *Piṭakatthamain* in the reign of Bayinnaung.[3] Dhammabuddha wrote the *Kavisāra*, a treatise on *Chanda*.

But Bayinnaung was a zealous patron of the religion and he did something more than mere bestowing bounties on the Saṃgha. On more than one occasion he went on pilgrimage to the Shwedagôn at Rangoon, the Shwesandaw at Prome, and the Shwezigôn at Pagan. At the Shwezigôn he once made offering to as many monks as there were years in his life. There he set up a great bronze bell (1557) that bears an inscription in three languages, Pāli, Burmese and Talaing. Bayinnaung's record is a long one, and typical of him; every line of it breathes the pride he felt in his wide conquests and in the work he did for the religion. Like Asoka, it seems, he decreed that within his realm there should be no animal sacrifices, not even during the *Bakr-id* of the Mussalmans or by the foreign settlers in the land. "In Onbaung, Momeik and the rest of the Shan country when a *sawbwa* died, following heathen doctrine, men used to kill his slaves and the dear, horses and elephants that he rode, and bury them in the grave with him. His Majesty forbade such evil practices." Among the people of the villages round the Popa hill there was a custom of sacrificing such animals as goats, pigs, fowls, buffaloes, etc., to the Mahāgiri spirit. He also put an end to this custom.[4]

[3] *Sāsana*, p. 48. The author of the *Madhusāratthadīpanī* was Mahānāma, according to the *Piṭakatthamain*, pp. 40, 41.

[4] *Hmannan*, II. 312.

"Moreover, seeing that religion was not firmly established, he built pagodas at Onbaung and Momeik, and dedicated lands to religion, and built monasteries of three stories with ten surrounding monasteries, each at Onbaung and Momeik, and invited learned monks to abide there practising religion. The *sawbwas* with all their counsellors and captains listened to the preaching of the Law four holidays a month, and learned virtue. His Majesty placed one half the scriptures at Onbaung and the other half at Momeik." [5]

Bayinnaung unified both upper and lower Burma into one empire, and throughout his realm, on all his subjects—Burman, Talaing, Shan, Muslim, Portuguese—he imposed the religion he himself professed. It was indeed a most unreal thing, but he strictly enforced at least an outward profession of Buddhism by all.

Bayinnaung sought the help of the monks and dignitaries of his realm to prescribe an official collection of law books. The Wareru *Dhammathat* was accepted as the standard authority, and the monks and officials compiled the *Dhammathatkyaw* and *Kosaungchok*.[6]

Like some of his predecessors Bayinnaung made presents of copies of sacred texts to monasteries, organised regular feeding of monks and built works of merit wherever he could throughout his conquered territories, even as far as Ayuthia (Siam).[7]

He adorned the spires of the Shwedagôn and Shwemawdaw pagodas with jewels of his crown—a royal custom—and repaired the Shwedagôn, adding a new spire, after the earthquake of 1564. Around many an important pagoda he built as many monasteries as there were years in his life. On many an occasion he bore the cost of the ordination of monks, and himself supervised mass ordination ceremonies at the Kalyāṇī sīmā near Pegu. His chief work of merit was the Mahāzedi pagoda at Pegu, an imposing monument, where he is said to have enshrined a begging bowl and a tooth relic sent by a Sinhalese prince.

5 *Hmannan*, II. 324.

6 Forchammer, *Essay*, p. 67.

7 *Hmannan*, II. 376.

It is curious that the *Sāsanavaṃsa* is very reticent about him. The only important fact recorded is that Bayinnaung (Anekasetibhinda) appointed his eldest son Anuruddha the viceroy of Yonakaraṭṭha (which included the countries of Haribhuñja,[8] Kamboja, Khemavara and Ayuddhā[9] with the cities of Sokkataya[10] and Kapuṇṇa),[11] and sent him there with a large number of counsellors to rule as his representative. Bayinnaung also appointed a learned thera named Saddhammacakkasāmī to accompany the prince to the conquered territory for the 'purification of the religion' there.[12] Saddhammacakkasāmī's work seems to have been crowned with success; for, soon we read of important treatises in Pāli being written by the monks of that country. Two names at least are mentioned in the *Sāsanavaṃsa*, those of Ñāṇavilāsa who was the author of the *Saṅkhyapakāsaka*[13] and Sirimaṅgala who wrote the *Maṅgaladīpaṇī*, a commentary, and a *tikā* on Ñāṇavilāsa's work. We have already referred to a wise thera, Tisāsana-dhaja who flourished during Bayinnaung's reign. Tisāsana had a large number of disciples some of whom were special experts in *Pariyatti* (*pariyattikovidā*). An interesting incident is recorded of his times in the *Sāsanavaṃsa*. A bhikkhu belonging to the Arhantagaṇa went about with a headgear and used a palmyra fan coloured in variegated hues, a practice that went against the rule of the Vinaya. The incident is briefly touched upon, but its significance cannot be lost sight of (p. 102).

Bayinnaung's son Nandabayin (1581-99) was much unlike his father. Himself a Burman, he had a deep hatred of the

8 Haribhuñja is certainly Haripuñjaya of Tibetan texts and the Maināmatī copperplate of Raṇavaṅkamalla.

9 Ayuddhā is modern Ayuthia in Siam.

10 Sokkataya is certainly Sukhodaya in Siam.

11 *Sāsana*, p. 49.

12 *Sāsana*, p. 57.

13 *Hmannan*, III. 118.

Talaings though he had his capital in the heart of the Talaing country, and lived surrounded by the Talaings. He introduced conscription and branded them on the right hand with their names, rank and village. Once he instituted a large scale massacre of them and practically brought about a reign of terror among them. To evade his cruel persecution many of them fled to Arakan and Siam. Quite a good number took refuge in the Order, but even then Nandabayin would not let them escape his wrath. He had them hounded out and compelled them to give up their yellow robes. He did not even trust the old and venerable Talaing monks whom he got rid of by banishing them in Ava and the Shan States.

Pegu was gradually losing her importance. Frequent invasions and the vandalism of her own rulers were mainly responsible for it; but the Arakanese inroads of 1599-1600 all but destroyed the Pegu city. The rest was the work of Philip di Brito, a Portuguese adventurer who successfully sought his way to official recognition. These were dark days for the Talaings and for the religion. Di Brito pleased himself by regularly pillaging the pagodas and monasteries and appropriating the riches for himself. He would take the precious stones and all the gold from the images and sell them.[14] To such a downright barbarian religion and religious establishments were no consideration, and it is only likely that the monks did not fare well in his hands.[15]

This "sacrilegious wretch" was done to death by Mahādhammarāja (Anaukpetlun, 1605-28) who seems to have been a good patron of the religion. The king's bounty was responsible for the building of a good number of

[14] *Hmannan*, III. 118.

[15] Di Brito, nicknamed Nga Zinga, had taken an Arakanese wife by whom he had two daughters, Nandabhaya and Supabhādevī. The two co-operated in building a pagoda in the Henzada district. Perhaps they wanted to atone for the sins of their father! See, *An. R.A.S.B.*, 1915, p. 33.

monasteries which he made over to celebrated theras like Mahāsaṃghanātha. Some of them were experts in the knowledge of the *Pariyatti*, and perhaps also wrote works in Pali, which, however, are not unfortunately mentioned. Two works in Burmese written by monks residing in the monasteries built by him find honourable mention; one is the *Maṇikuṇḍalavatthu* by Varābhisaṃghanātha, and the other, *Sattarāja-dhammavatthu*, by another monk whose name is not given. Mahāsaṃghanātha was a great expert in *Pariyatti* (*ativiyapariyattivisārado*) and it was perhaps for this reason that Mahādhammarāja, the king, appointed him Saṃgharāja.

Three or four lines of the *Säsanavaṃsa* in connection with Mahādhammarāja's reign introduces us to a very interesting point in the history of the religion of this time. Two monks who had come from the Rāmañña country gradually gained, we are not told how, the favour of the king for their knowledge and aptitude for affairs of the world (*lokadhammesu chekataya*). For them the king built two vihāras. They were also *vedasatthakovidas*, i.e., experts in Brahmanical learning, but were weak in the knowledge of *Pariyatti*, and hence were excluded from the *theraparampará*.

II

THE BURMANS AND THE TALAINGS

Ever since the coming into power of the Anawrahta dynasty holding sway also over the Talaing country a keen rivalry had grown up between the Burmans and the Talaings which manifested itself in courtintrigues, dynastic squabbles, and even in open fights and large scale massacres. This rivalry was the keenest when the Toungoo dynasty came to occupy lower Burma and choose Pegu to be their centre of administration. For about a century (1539-1635) they lived in the heart of the Talaing country, sometimes befriending, but often fighting with and effecting a massacre of them, or

treating them so cruelly as to oblige them to seek shelter in other lands. Like the Pagan dynasty the Toungoo dynasty also effected an unification of Burma, and moreover, it had its seat of government in the midst of the Talaings, but the two races could not evolve a better understanding between themselves. On the contrary, every succeeding generation witnessed the bitterness grow from more to more till at last the Burmans, being a more virile race owing to periodical infusion of new blood from the north, drove the Talaings to a position of least importance. Yet the Talaings were the people who had transmitted their finer and superior culture and civilisation to the rude Burmans of the north.

Even the monks themselves were not free from this racial rivalry. It is evident from the *Sāsanavaṃsa* which is written frankly from the Burmese point of view that Paññasāmī hardly cares to give a full account of the religion or of monastic activities among the Talaings ; indeed his knowledge of the activities of the Talaing Saṃgha is extremely meagre. Burmese monks had no very high regard for the religion or religious scholarship in the Talaing country ; nor had the Talaing monks any better idea of, or regard for, the monks of upper Burma, *i.e.*, the land proper of the Burmans. A very interesting glimpse into this racial rivalry is afforded by a story recorded in the *Sāsanavaṃsa* which will presently be alluded to.

The story refers to the reign of king Ukkaṃsika, otherwise known as Thalun (1829-48), an important figure in the history of the religion. He was personally interested in the welfare of the religion and built a number of monasteries, mostly in upper Burma which he made over as gifts to learned and venerable theras of his time. Of these monks Tipiṭakālaṃkāra, Ariyālaṃkara, Tisāsanālaṃkāra, Aggadhammālaṃkāra, Tilokaguru and Jambudhaja were the foremost. Ukkaṃsika came to the throne with the blessings of the Order as it were, for, when the king was consecrated and

took the title of Sirisudhammarājamahādhipati, a learned thera, expert in Sanskrit, rhetoric and poetics, Mahāratanakara by name, composed the Rājindarājabhidhayyadīpaṇī,[16] a book of Pāli verses eulogising the king.

Both Tipiṭakālaṃkāra and Ariyālaṃkāra must have enjoyed wide reputation, for, the *Sāsanavaṃsa* gives a comparatively more detailed account of their work and career. Of the two, Tipiṭakālaṃkāra was undoubtedly the more versatile, and his career more interesting. He was originally named Badaravanavāsi thera, expert in the knowledge of the *Pariyatti* and belonged to the Capaṭa sect. Born in 1578, he entered the Order at the age of thirteen. He then came to Prome and even when he was fifteen composed a poetical version of the *Vessantara Jātaka*, the most popular of the birth stories in Burma. At twenty he received the *upasampadā* ordination at Śrīkṣetra under the patronage of king Veravijaya. Not long after Prome fell into the hands of the kings of the Toungoo dynasty of Ratanapura (Ava), and Badaravanavāsi was brought by the king to the royal capital where on the banks of the Irrawaddy the younger brother of king Surakīṭṭi, eldest son of Bayinnaung, built for him a vihāra, while the king himself gave him the title of Tipiṭakalāṃkāra. Here Tipiṭakālaṃkāra seems to have lived for a long time ; but as he grew old he chose to retire to a life of peace and solitude. So, at the age of sixty he withdrew to the Tiriyapabbata where in sylvan seclusion he gave himself up to the study of the Vinaya and produced a book named *Vinayālaṃkāra*. But he could not long remain in his peaceful retreat. Even while at Prome his fame had already spread far and wide and now it was almost impossible for him to keep himself away from active life. Two years later, therefore, the king called him back, built for him a new vihāra, this time at Jeyyapura (Saggaing) on the Irrawaddy. While

[16] *Sāsana*, p. 102.

residing here he engaged himself in the study of the Abhidhamma and brought out a commentary of the introductory verses of the *Aṭṭhasālinī*. He also wrote another work, the *Yasavaddhanavatthu*, at the request of the king who happened to be the younger brother of king Surakīrtti.

White with age, Tipiṭakālaṃkāra was at the height of wisdom and glory when Ukkaṃsika transferred the dynastic seat of administration from Pegu to Ava in Burma proper. Ukkaṃsika was not slow to recognise his merit and to honour. him accordingly. He chose him to be one of his trusted advisers and always sought his good counsel.

Of the same age and temperament was the thera Ariyālaṃkāra, also residing at Ava. But while the former was a versatile intellect expert in many sacred texts, the latter was more interested in grammar. Both of them however became the preceptors of king Ukkaṃsika. Ariyālaṃkāra had a disciple, known as the second or younger Ariyālaṃkāra, who also, evidently by his learning and character, made himself known and attracted the attention of the king who built for him a monastery.

At this time, once while king Ukkaṃsika was sojourning at Pegu he heard the Talaings (Rāmaññaraṭṭhavāsina) remark, "The monks of the Maramma country are experts neither in the *Pariyatti* (sacred texts) nor in the Vedasātthas". Naturally the king, himself a Marammaraṭṭhika, felt his racial pride hurt. He therefore sent a message to the thera residing in the large vihāra of his city to send to him at Pegu several bhikkhus between thirty and forty years of age and well-versed in the sacred texts and the Vedasātthas. The thera accordingly sent Tipiṭakālaṃkāra, Tilokālaṃkāra and Tisāsanālaṃkāra with thirty disciples to Haṃsāvatīnagara (Pegu) where they settled themselves in a vihāra built for them by the king. Then on uposatha days he invited the monks of the Rāmaññа country to the Sudhammasālā to hold discussions with the theras who had come

from the Maramma country. After several discussions the Talaing monks admitted that the Burmese monks were not so devoid of wisdom as they had considered them to have been. And they said, "Formerly we thought that in the Maramma country there were no monks learned in the sacred texts and in the *Vedasāṭṭhas*; now we find that they indeed are great experts in the texts and the *sāṭṭhas*." This was indeed a triumph for the Burmese monks; but they themselves were all humility. Before leaving Pegu they went to see and pay their respects to the wise and venerable Talaing thera, Tilokaguru, the chief among the theras of the Rāmaññaraṭṭha. Tilokaguru had a discussion with them and he was evidently very much impressed by their character and wisdom.

At this time Ukkaṃsika's younger brother died, and his death was followed by a dramatic episode which forms part of a well-laid court intrigue. As a political incident it has very little importance, but in the *Sāsanavaṃsa* it is described in some detail, evidently to bring forth in prominent relief the very important role Buddhist monks often played in court and state affairs. The story is therefore of interest and may be recounted here.

On the death of the king's younger brother, the king's son, the governor (bhojaka) of Uccanagara conspired to dethrone his father and suddenly sieged the palace. Taken by surprise the king fled, taking away with him some of the precious royal jewels and accompanied by two *amātyas*, Nandajeya and Rājayodha. When they came upon the river (evidently the Irrawaddy) they saw a sāmaṇera about to cross it; they therefore entreated him to take them on his boat. Eventually he agreed and when they had crossed the river they went to the four-storied vihāra where they disclosed their identity and relating the whole story to the thera-in-charge sought the protection of the vihāra. And the thera of the four-storied vihāra spoke thus to the king, "O king, we are samaṇas, we are not able to prevent this calamity.

But there is one way out. The thera living in the Nisinna-vihāra is very clever and intelligent in worldly matters (*gihi-kammesu ativiya cheko*). You would therefore do well to go to him and discuss matters with him." So the king with his *amātyas* went there and explained to the thera the whole affair, on which the latter replied, "O king, you have no reason to fear" and so saying gave him shelter. The thera did also some thing more; he called together all the bhikkhus of his own vihāra as well as those of another vihāra close by, and arming them with *daṇḍas* posted them on all sides of the vihāra in such a way as to form a stout barricade. The king's son and his followers were not prepared for such a defence ; they were overawed and outwitted and went back. The attempted *coup* failed ; the king went back to the capital and mounted again on the throne.[17] As a mark of gratefulness and rejoicing he invited his saviours the theras to the palace and treated them to a feast. And more, he built a number of vihāras and made them over to wise and venerable theras on some of whom he also conferred honours and titles; for example, he installed a bhikkhu expert in the *vedasātthas* in one of his newly-built vihāras and conferred on him the title of Dhammānandarājaguru. But Ukkaṃsika's bounties did not end there. In fact the *Sāsanavaṃsa* devotes a number of pages in giving an account of his work for the religion and monastic scholarship during his reign. Nor were his bounties confined to upper Burma. He erected the Rājamaṇicūḷa cetiya at Sirikhettanagara, on four sides of which he again built four vihāras. One of these was destroyed by fire, while the three others were made over to three theras learned in sacred texts. The mahāthera residing in the Dakkhiṇavanārama expounded in Burmese a commentary of the *Kaccāyanagandha* while the thera residing in the western monastery brought out an edition of the *Nyāsa*.

17 The story of the *coup* as given in the *Rājavaṃsa Yazawin* is slightly different. See, Phayre, *History of Burma*, pp. 135-36.

Ukkaṃsika was also privileged to extend patronage to another learned thera named Jambudhaja of Kukhānanagara (or Pukhānanagara ?=Pagan) for whom the king built a vihāra. He was introduced to Ukkaṃsika by the thera dwelling in the Tiriyapabbatavihāra, evidently Tipiṭakālaṃkāra himself; the latter was greatly impressed, in course of a discussion, with the learning and wisdom of Jambudhaja (named by the king as Jambudīpadhaja). Jambudhaja was a saddhivihārika of Dhammānandathera who in his turn was the monk-brother of Jotipuññathera, and all of them belonged to the Arhanta sect. Jambudhaja is credited with having written a commentary in Burmese of the *Vinayaṭṭhakathā*.[18] One of his colleagues, Maṇiratana thera translated in Burmese, evidently for those who could not read the Pāli texts, the *Aṭṭhasālinī*, the *Sammohavinodanī*, the *Kaṅkhāvitaraṇī*, the *Abhidhammaṭṭhavibhāvanī* and the *Saṅkhepavaṇṇanā*.[19]

Ukkaṃsika's successor Sirinandadhammarāja-pavarādhipatirāja (Pindale, 1648-61) continued the work of his predecessor, and the tradition of monastic learning was kept alive in the vihāras that the king's bounties had reared up. He made over one vihāra to Tilokālaṃkāra thera and another at Saggaing to Dāṭhānāgarājaguru thera. The latter wrote a *ṭīkā* called *Niruttisāramañjusā* of the *Nyāsa*.

A clear glimpse of the primitive *Nat*-worship durring Pindale's reign is afforded by a passage of the *Sāsanavaṃsa*. The date is given as 1012 of the Burmese era (=1650) when the king and his people were troubled by an evil omen that suggested the leaving of the capital by the tutelary gods or

[18] He is also said to have been the author of the *Saṃvaṇṇananayadīpanī*, the *Niruttisaṃgaha* and the *Sarvajñānayadīpanī*. See, Nevill, *Catalogue*. Another book ascribed to him is the *Rūpabhedapakāsanī*. Fausböll. *Cat. Mand. Mss.*, p, 50.

[19] The first two, being Buddhaghosa's commentary on *Dhammasaṅgani* and *Vibhaṅga*, are concerned with the *Abhidhamma* ; so are the last two which are later *ṭīkās* on the *Abhidhamma*. The third alone, being Buddhaghosa's commentary on the *Pātimokkha*, is concerned with the *Vinaya*.

the *Nat* spirits of the city. Terror-stricken the people offered worship to the gods ; but nothing could avert the danger that came hovering over the political horizon of the country, and threatened the peaceful career of the religion. Chinese free-booters swarmed downwards and trampling all opposition reached as far as Taungbalu and Tada-U near Ava. They plundered the villages, slaughtered the men-folk, carried off women and burnt monasteries, while the monks fled in terror to the woods. For three years the Chinese continued their depredations carrying their ravages as far down as Pagan. The incident is only touched upon in the *Sāsanavaṃsa* and a line is added to say that as a result of these Chinese raids the religion was dimmed as the moon by clouds (*Tasmiñ ca kāle Cīnarāññho yodhā āgantvā Maraṃmaraṭṭham dūsesum. Sāsanam abbhapaṭicchanno viya cando dubbalam ahosi*). The comment of our chronicle is brief, but it is not without significance. Times were really bad and troublesome, and not at all conducive to peaceful scholarly pursuits ; indeed, at times it seemed that monastic learning and activities would come to a standstill. It is therefore important to read in the *Sāsanavaṃsa* itself that once the thera residing in the Tiriyapabbata vihāra (doubtless, Tipiṭakālaṃkāra), said, perhaps half seriously and half in jest, to Aggadhammālaṃkāra, "After my death you will be the only scholar in the world well-read in sacred texts." Tipiṭakālaṃkāra perhaps hinted at the unfortunate state of monastic scholarship that he lived to witness ; he may have exaggerated in jest the real state of things, but it appears there was some truth in his utterance. Aggadhammālaṃkāra in his humility did not accept the compliment so proffered, and pointed out to Ariyālaṃkāra thera who alone, he thought, had a legitimate claim to such a compliment.

But no calamity seems to have been so overpowering as to curb the zeal and ardour of the kings of Burma for their

religion; they were good Buddhists, and never did they waver from their kingly duty of acting as the patron-guardian of the faith of the country. Moreover, whatever their numerical strength, the monks were the real spokesmen of the people and the monasteries were the popular assemblies as it were; and each king that came to the throne sought to win the monks over to his side. We therefore see kings building new vihāras even in the midst of great political turmoil and social and economic trouble and extending generous bounties to the Saṃgha. Pindale was no exception; it was at his instance that one of the vihāras to the east of the royal city was made over to the great thera Aggadhammālaṃkāra. In the seclusion of his vihāra he brought out Burmese translations of *Kaccāyana*, the *Abhidhammaṭṭhasaṅgaha*, the *Mātikā* (of the *Dhammasaṅganī*), the *Dhātukathā*, the *Yamaka* and the *Paṭṭhāna*. It also fell to his lot to be a chronicler, for, at the request of the next king (Mahāpavaradhammarāja, 1661-72), he wrote the *Rājavaṃsasaṅkhepa*, a summary of the *Rājavaṃsa* or the Chronicle of Kings. Among other wise and venerable theras of this time were Jināramathera, Guṇagandhathera, Guṇasārathera, and Sujātathera, the last having been a disciple of Guṇagandhathera.

The next king Narawara (1672-73) styled Mahāsīhasuradhammarāja) even within the span of about a year that he lived to reign built several vihāras and became the patron of venerable theras like Tilokaguru (or Tilogagaru), his comrade (*Saddhivihārika*) Tejodīpa, and of Tilokālaṃkāra. Tejodīpa is said to have written a *ṭīkā* on the *Paritta* during the reign of Narawara. Perhaps it was also during his reign that a thera, a resident of the Pubbārama vihāra of Mūlavasagāma (in the Ava district) wrote the *Gulaṭṭhadīpanī* and the *Visuddhimaggaganthipadattha* in Pāli, and translated the *Nettipakaraṇa* in Burmese. A very curious tale is told about him which throws some light on the strictness of monastic discipline in those days. The thera, contrary to

Vinaya rules, used to reside within the boundaries of the village, and comfort himself by using a head-covering (sīsaveṭhana) and a palmyra fan (talapattāni). Doubtless, other theras did not like this kind of Vinayavilomācāra, and the thera had afterwards to give up these practices and go to live in the forest. The *Sāsanavaṃsa* gives him a compliment when it says that he was nevertheless deeply learned and was an expert in grammar.

Narawara's younger brother who came to the throne was equally an enthusiast in the cause of the religion. The kingly duty of building vihāras was continued, and at least two wise theras received his good patronage. They were Sirisaddhammathera and Devacakkobhāsathera ; of the two, Devacakkobhāsa endeared himself to the king more, perhaps for his expert knowledge of the *vedasāṭṭhas*—he was admittedly weak in the knowledge of sacred texts. But whatever may have been the extent of his knowledge, his proficiency in the Abhidhamma and his system of teaching the *Paṭṭhāna* (*Pakaraṇa*) [20] was very much admired by the king. He commanded that the *Paṭṭhāna* should be studied in all the monasteries in Marammaraṭṭha as well as in Rāmaññaraṭṭha.

But in spite of books being written and vihāras being built, the religion itself was languishing ; inwardly it was showing signs of devitalisation, owing perhaps to monks themselves often behaving contrary to Vinaya rules and kings distributing patronage indiscriminately. In fact, the *Sāsanavaṃsa* refers to such indiscriminate distribution of patronage by the last few kings of the Toungoo dynasty.[21] The succession of the theras no doubt continued unbroken, but laxity in discipline and occasional transgression by monks of Vinaya rules were only symptoms of a deeper trouble brewing up within the Order.

20 The seventh book of the *Abhidhamma*.

21 From Narawara, 1672-73 to Mahādhammayazadipati, 1773-52.

It was the old story of conflict between the orthodox school that always strived to conform to the spirit and letter of the Vinaya code of discipline and the heterodox school (ācariyapaveṇi) that drifted more and more from the original *buddhavacanam* to their own interpretation of them. The *Sāsanavaṃsa* frankly disapproves of this heterodox school,[22] and says that the moon of the religion was not very clear at this time (*jinasāsanam abbhantare cande viya atiparisuddham na ahosi*).

This brings us almost to the end of the seventeenth century (1698), and we may now pause to review the main traits of our account of the religion during the two centuries we are leaving behind. The sixteenth century started with the drive of a religious reformation that was still fresh in memory ; it was yet potent to keep the purity of monastic tradition alive for a few more decades. There was no particular dissension within the Order, and no disturbing movement of any importance ; but as years rolled on the Saṃgha began to show signs of disruption and disintegration. Controversies centering round questions of monastic discipline gave rise to factions within the church and even before the seventeenth century was out, the Order divided itself into two large contending sections that came to engage themselves in a long struggle. In course of the struggle the Saṃgha effected a purging of the undesirable elements that had accumulated during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The history of Burma during these two centuries is but a series of petty squabbles, intrigues and counter intrigues and wars and rebellions in which the kings always played the most important role ; yet it fills one with admiration to see that even in the midst of such unsettled state of affairs the kings found time and interest in the activities of the religious order to which they never shirked their duty, whatever

[22] *Sāsanavaṃsa*, p. 117.

the motive of their rich patronage and vigilant care. Vandals and sacriligious wretches some of them indeed were, but they were not many ; and persons were not wanting to repair the damage done to the religion by such people.

And, because the majority of the kings were good Buddhists we hear of the realm being continually studded with cetiyas and vihāras in whose seclusion the monks carried on their scholarly pursuits. It is often tedious to detail their names and works and the foundations to which they belonged, but it is only in this way that we may get an idea of the monastic life of the times and the branches of learning in which they were interested. A careful analysis of the subjects dealt with by the monks will show that though grammatical treatises continued to be written interest in grammar which had been the main subject of study in the preceding centuries had comparatively thinned. The main interest now centred round the more abstract study of the Abhiddhamma, and the large majority of the works of this period relates to that subject. It is permissible to assume that not individual theras alone but collectively all samaṇas in the monasteries in upper Burma during the seventeenth century interested themselves more in the Abhidhamma than in anything else.[23]

Another point to be noticed in this connection is the growing number of scholars writing or translating works in Burmese. This may have been due, it seems, more than anything else to the widening circle of readers interested in the study of the sacred texts of the religion, and to the growth of the vernacular language itself which had by this time reached a stage so as to be able to express the most abstruse ideas of metaphysics. Moreover, the teachers of the religion perhaps thought, and rightly so, that they should be able to reach a wider public through a language they

[23] This has also been enphasised by Dr. Bode, pp. 58-59, 61.

learnt from the cradle than through Pāli which required at least a few years of strenuous study. Incidentally, this gives us an idea of the numerical strength of the Order which seems to have grown larger, as well as of the people who were outside it but no less interested in the religion. It was probably due to the fact that not unoften members of the laity joined the Order in numbers not always for the love of monastic life, but just to escape from the stormy and calamitous days in which their lot was cast.

CHAPTER FIVE

A GREAT CONTROVERSY

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY AND AFTER

I

THE BACKGROUND

With the coming to the throne of King Sirimahāsīhasūra-sudhammarāja (Sane, 1698-1714), son of his predecessor Myinrekyawdin, the history of Buddhism in Burma enters a new chapter. We have seen that the few events of importance that turned the course of this history or enthused the Saṃgha into creative activity were all concerned with the preservation or resuscitation of the original disciplinary purity of the faith, and centred therefore round the Vinaya rules of monastic discipline. That history was to repeat itself. The dawn of the eighteenth century found the Saṃgha in Burma divided into two opposing camps, plunging itself into a century-long feud that came essentially to centre round certain Vinaya rules, and not in regard to any deep ethical or metaphysical question or speculation in respect of the religion. To men outside the Order, the rules whose transgression caused so much heat and controversy may have appeared trivial and uninteresting, but to those who were inside it and took sides willingly or otherwise, the controversy raised issues which appeared to be so vital that they could even lay down their lives and make of themselves martyrs to their cause; indeed, some of them did really stake their lives for their convictions. To one who reads

through the whole length of the *Sāsanavaṃsa* account of the Pārupaṇa-Ekaṃsika controversy, as it is conveniently called, the story would seem to be not only tedious but out of all proportion, since it carries hardly any import of real significance for the modern reader. But at the same time it brings forth at once the importance that contemporary Buddhist church of Burma attached to it. We must not forget that the *Sāsanavaṃsa* account is rendered by a member of one of the two opposing factions of the Order, namely Paññasāmī who flourished some fifty years after the curtain had been finally dropped on that eventful drama. It is likely that other members of the Order also felt equally strongly about it. This will be evident from the passionate zeal with which the participants in the feud fought for their respective causes. To the Order, therefore, the struggle was as real as it was momentous. It is clear that Paññasāmī relates the whole story in a partisan spirit, an ardent upholder of Pārupaṇa viewthat he was, but nevertheless he helps us to form a correct idea of the struggle and its importance.

It will further be seen that the story of this controversy occupies the whole canvas of the history of the religion for more than a century, even to the exclusion of any account of monastic scholarship, nothing to speak of political vicissitudes that affected the Saṃgha. This was evidently due to the fact that it was the only important event which the Saṃgha was all this time interested in, so much so that the history of the feud was really the history of the Saṃgha. Moreover, the Saṃgha was so wholly taken up with the controversy and politically the country was in such a state of chaos and anarchy that scholarly pursuits in the monasteries and other activities of the Order could hardly have a flourishing existence. Mention is made of a large number of theras, but of their scholarly activities that can be compared with those of the preceding centuries there is hardly any evidence.

II

BEGINNING OF THE CONTROVERSY

In or about the year 1700 when Sane was on the throne at Ava, a thera named Guṇābhilaṃkāra, residing in the village of Tunna, indulged, while in his daily round in the village, in the luxuries of using a head-covering and a palmyra-fan.[1] Moreover, he used to, and this was a most objectionable practice, wear the *uttarāsaṅga* or upper robe in such a way as to leave his one shoulder uncovered. Guṇābhilaṃkāra's indulgence in such forbidden luxuries emboldened some of his comrades to follow in his steps, and soon he gathered around him a considerable number of followers who came to be known as Ekaṃsikas (*i.e.* those who covered only one of their shoulders). The Ekaṃsikas, moreover, it is alleged in the *Sāsanavaṃsa*, were not strong in the sacred texts. The heterodox practices of the Ekaṃsikas were obviously not liked by the orthodox sections of the Order who presumably constituted the majority. They, under their leaders Buddhaṅkarathera, Cittathera, Sunandathera and Kalyāṇathera, continued in their old and usual practice, *i.e.*, they used to cover both their shoulders when out on their daily village rounds for alms, and uncovered one only when they met a superior, to show him respect. They thus came to be known as Pārupaṇas. The Pārupaṇas had sanction of their practices, so they held, in their sacred texts; in fact, they clung strictly to the rules of the Vinaya. It was here that the Ekaṃsikas were at a disadvantage, for they had really no authoritative sanction of their practices in any of the sacred texts. To get over this disadvantage the Ekaṃsikas did some-

[1] Readers will remember that an exactly similar transgression of Vinaya rules took place in one of the vihāras of Ava during the reign of Narwara (1672-73). It appears that there was a definite movement among certain sections of the Saṃgha against the more orthodox sections.

thing that not only revealed the inherent weakness of their cause, but brought as well their own defeat. They asserted (a false assertion, no doubt) that they followed the practices taught by an orthodox thera named Saddhammacāri who had once visited Ceylon; but what was worse, they bribed a monk of disreputable character, one who had long left the Order, and had a book written by him supporting their view and practice. When the controversy between the Ekaṃsikas and the Pārupaṇas was slowly brewing up, the Saṃgha came to be disturbed further by another dispute.

A certain thera became the leader of a group of monks residing in the villages, and began to persuade the monks residing in the solitary retreat of forests to leave their forest abodes and come to the village vihāras. The matter took such a turn that the king had to issue an order asking the monks residing in villages not to enter the precincts of monks residing in forests. The Pārupaṇa-Ekaṃsika controversy had not yet, however, been brought to a fighting point to engage the attention of the king.

It was about this time—in 1709—that Captain Alex. Hamilton visited Syriam. He pays a striking tribute to the hospitality and kindness of the Buddhist Saṃgha of Burma; his account also furnishes an incidental picture of the life of average Burmese monks:

"When shipwrecked mariners come to their Baws, they find a great deal of hospitality, both in food and raiment, and have letters of recommendation from the Priests of one Convent to those of another on the road they design to travel, where they may expect vessels to transport them to Syriam; and if any be sick or maim'd the Priests, who are the Peguers' chief physicians, keep them in their Convent, till they are cured, and then furnish them with letters, as is above observed, for they never enquire which way a stranger worships God, but if he is human, he is the object of their charity."

The reign of the next king (Mahasīhasūradhammarājādhirāja (Hshinpyushin, 1714-33) introduces us to a learned thera, Ukkaṃsamāla, who had been installed in a large monastery at Ava built by a certain high military official.

Ukkaṃsamāla was an expert in sacred texts and in other books, and wrote the *Vaṇṇabodhana* and the *Likhananaya*, both evidently being treatises on grammar. He was a Pārupaṇa and the recognised leader of that party; he tried to prove that the Pārupaṇa practice had its sanction in ancient sacred texts, but the Ekaṃsikas opposed his claim saying that the Pārupaṇa practice was against their own traditions.

The king now felt called upon to intervene. He appointed a committee of four theras, including among others, Suhatthathera and Buddhaṅkurathera, and asked them to give a decision on the basis of evidence to be put forward by the representatives of both parties who were to be invited to present their case before the committee. But the members of the committee were not well-read enough in the sacred texts, and being favourites of the king wanted only to please him. However, the Ekaṃsikas could not convince the king of the justness of their cause, and the question remained unsettled.

The year 1733 saw Mahādammayazadipati (1733-52) on the throne at Ava. He was a weak personality and always allowed things to drift. His reign suffered severe military reverses from various quarters, and at last saw the final extinction of the dynasty to which he belonged. Nor did he fare better in his role as referee in the religious dispute that was daily growing bitter. But he seems to have been a good patron of the faith. The *Sāsanavaṃsa* refers to his religious foundations and patronage of religious teachers, one of whom was the wise thera Ñāṇavara. Ñāṇavara hailed from the village of Jālasutta near Kukhānanagara (evidently Pagan) whence he was brought by the king and installed as his ācariya. Coming to the capital, he devoted himself to scholarly pursuits and for the benefit of his pupils he first wrote a *gaṇṭhipadattha* (a commentary on the difficult words) of the *Abhidhammaṭṭhasaṃgaha-pakaraṇa*. Next he wrote two other books, one a glossary on the difficult

words or a *gaṇṭhipadattha* of the *Aṭṭhasālinī*, and another the *Surāvinicchaya*. Ñāṇavara's scholarship drew the admiration of the king, and as a good Buddhist he asked his ācariya to bring out in Burmese a commentary on the *Abhidhānappadīpikā* which he did with evident pleasure; he also brought out, obviously to please his patron, the *Rājādhirājanāmatthappakāsinī*, a book on the naming of kings, an essay in royal eulogy.[1a] But with all his scholarship and royal patronage at his back he proved himself to be an unsuccessful spouse of his party in the great religious dispute of his time.

Ñāṇavara was a Pārupaṇa, and as he was the royal ācariya he naturally led the party holding Pārupaṇa views, while the Ekaṃsikas found a leader in Pāsaṃsathera. They engaged themselves in a bitter strife which was referred to by the king to one of his favourite theras for decision. This thera was thoroughly incompetent for the responsible task that devolved on him. He was ignorant of sacred texts; the *Sāsanavaṃsa* states with bitter sarcasm that his knowledge did not go beyond being able to turn the plough's head to the east or west (*yathā pana ayaṃ puratthimadisā ayaṃ pana pacchimadisā ti evam ādinā disāvavatthānamattaṃ yeva kātuṃ samattham naṅgala koṭiyā saṃvaddhantam*...) and that he had hardly the capacity to decide which of the two views was right (*tesaṃ dvinnam pakkhānam dvīsu vādesu ayaṃ bhūto ayaṃ abhūto ti vattuṃ na sakkā*). Paññasāmī bitterly comments on the ignorance of the man who is compared by him with a buffalo that cannot distinguish between the music of the playing of a *vīṇā* by a devagandhabba and the striking of a bamboo stick by a village boy (*Seyyathā pi nāma mahiṃso attano samipe ṭhatvā devagītaṃ gāyitvā devavīṇam vādentassa devagandhabbasa veḷusalākaṃ paharantassa ca gāmadārakassa saddesu kiñci visesaṃ na*

[1a] According to the *Piṭakatthamain* (p. 41) Saradassi who too was a resident of Pagan, was a contemporary of Ñāṇavara, and wrote the *Dhātukathāyojana*.

jānanti). Such being the position the king had no other way than to issue a communique asking the bhikkhus to observe whatever practices they liked. This was evidently no decision at all, and the religious dispute stood where it did (*tesaṃ vivādo tadā na vupasami*).

When the Saṃgha was still thus being disturbed by internal strife, the political horizon became dark with overhanging clouds. Ava was destroyed in 1113 Kaliyuga (=1751), by whom, the *Sāsanavaṃsa* does not tell us. In fact, Paññasāmī relates, in about half a dozen sentences, how at last a certain king was able to restore peace in the second year (evidently of his reign) after having brought the whole of Burma including the Rāmañña country under his rule. But the situation was far more serious than the *Sāsanavaṃsa* seems to suggest, and deserves therefore a fuller narration.

III

THE CRUSHING OF THE TALAINGS

We have seen in a previous chapter how the Burmans and the Talaings fostered between themselves a deadly enmity against each other, and how the former persisted in their cruel campaigns to crush the Talaings. But the Talaings did not take them lying down; they burned with rage within themselves and sought every opportunity to avenge the indignities wrought on them during the past centuries. Now, with the weakening of the Toungoo dynasty came their chance. Mahādammayazadipati was already being troubled by Manipuri invaders as well as by the Shans when the Talaings began to stir themselves up at Pegu under their leader Smim Htaw Buddhaketi (1740-47) who had been elected king. They soon came to hold Prome and Toungoo and began an annual raid of upper Burma as far as Ava. In 1747 the Talaings set up as king, first a thera named Neko, and then, a few days later, Binnya Dala, an efficient

and capable leader of men (1747-57). It was under his kingship, if not his leadership, that Ava was sacked in 1751-52, and the Ava dynasty put an end to. But the Burmese themselves had not come to the end of their resources. From the ranks there arose a man who proved himself to be the saviour of the race. He was Alaungpaya (1752-60), hailing from Shwebo where he was born in 1714. Here was one who refused to do homage to the small Talaing detachment who was there to exact the oath of allegiance. He did something more; he drove out the Talaing detachment and stood to resist their inroads, and thus plunged himself in a big offensive which he alone could lead. His people were roused to enthusiasm and rallied round him, hailing him as their king. It was only a question of days not only to drive away the Talaings from all their northern outposts, to quell the Shans and Manipuris, and to bring round the French finally to his aid, but also to advance as far as Rangoon which he besieged. Finally in 1756-57, he laid siege to Pegu itself, the last hold of the Talaings whose efforts to resist the Burman hero were in vain. At last, in despair, they sent out a deputation to Alaungpaya in which Shan, Burmese and Talaing monks figured most prominently. Alaungpaya gave them all a cordial reception and spoke to them nobly and with humility, as kings always did to monks. The monk-deputationists argued for peace lest the religion should be in danger and cited the precedent of king Razadarit who at the time of his invasion of upper Burma yielded to the intercession of monks. But Alaungpaya pointed out that Razadarit's was no precedent, for the Burmans had even then been fighting on equal terms and Razadarit had not yet established his claims on any territory, while he himself had practically annexed Pegu, and there could be no talk of withdrawing his army. Moreover, the monks, he argued with them, had nothing to fear from him; they did not stand to lose anything, since after all he

was a Buddhist king, and more, he was a divine incarnation and wanted to become a Buddha himself by not only being a patron of the religion, but himself practising the religion and upholding the cause of mercy, justice and truth![2] No intercession was thus of any avail, and Alaungpaya with his Burmese detachments, each individual soldier crying for the blood of Talaing dogs as the Burmans characterised the Talaings burst headlong upon the city, and in their fury spared not women and children, nor even monks.' Binaya Dala was killed with his sons, daughters and wives. And since the monks had helped the town to resist,

> ..... he threw more than 3,000 of them to the elephants, the elephants trampled on them, the elephants killed them. Their velvet and satin robes, the officers of Alaungpaya wore; their cotton robes, men used for pillows, rice-bags, and towels to wipe their feet. They were strewn over the face of the earth, the holy robes; their alms bowls were turned into household pots. The monks who still lived fled east of the Sittang river to the towns of Sittaung, Pan, Shweyyin, Martaban, Labun, Zimme, Yodaya and to the Shan towns. The Burmese soldiers seized all the people of the Talaing country, men and women, and sold them .....and made merry with the price. Sons could not find their mothers, nor mothers their sons, and there was weeping throughout the land.[3]

Thus were the Talaings crushed and the whole of modern Burma brought under Alaungpaya's scepter. For the Burmans themselves it was a singular triumph; we are told in the *Sāsanavaṃsa* that all in the Maramma country was very much pleased, so much so that Alaungpaya's conquest of the Talaing country and consequent unification of Burma are considered by Paññasāmī almost as a religious event of importance. The people of Burma are reported to have shouted out in glee. 'O, our king veritably is a Bodhisattwa'! Racial hatred dies hard, even in a Buddhist Saṃgha, even amongst men who are supposed to have dedicated themselves to the service of love and piety.

[2] For Alaungpaya's career see *Alaungpaya Ayedawbon*, Hanthawady Press, Rangoon, 1900, and *Konbaungset Yazawin*, Mandalay Taing Press, Mandalay, 1905.

[3] Sayadaw Athwa III, 148. Translated in Harvey, *History of Burma*, p. 235.

Paññasāmi was a wise and a learned thera, but even he clean managed to forget the unfortunate end of hundreds of his own Order; he even hailed the man who was responsible for the horrible crime, no doubt because the victims happened to be Talaings and he himself belonged to the race of the conqueror.

But Alaungpaya was a clever man; determined to leave for himself a name in the history of the religion. The *Sāsanavaṃsa* chronicler tells us that he invited to the palace on every *uposatha* day (four such days in every month) the entire bhikkhu-saṃgha of the royal city and entertained them to feasts. At that time all amātyas and members of the royal household were required to observe *uposatha* and were given opportunities for study and discussion with the monks. Somehow, conditions were again such as to foster an atmosphere for religious activities, and the time came when the Pārupaṇa-Ekaṃsika dispute raised its head again.

IV

THE PEAK OF THE CONTROVERSY

Thera Atula Yasadhamma was the king's preceptor[4] at this time and since he was an ardent Ekaṃsika he fully exploited his position to make the Ekaṃsika practices popular. With the leading theras of the Pārupaṇa party—by far the larger party—this was a matter of grave concern. They therefore addressed a letter to the king setting forth their views, and requesting the king to arbitrate in the matter. Atula thera on behalf of the Ekaṃsikas retorted by saying that the controversy had definitely been settled during the previous reign and could not be re-opened. Alaungpaya

[4] Alaungpaya had also appointed him as the Saṁgharāja or Head of the Order. See, "A Preliminary Study of the Po: U: Daung Inscription." *Ind. Ant.*, Vol. xxii, p, 8. "Atula Sayadaw retained his office throughout the reign of five kings, and was removed by Bo-do-p'aya for his schismatic doctrines."

was, however, willing to go deeply into the whole matter, so we are told by Paññasāmī, but he wrote back to the contending parties to say that as he was just then very busy with state affairs that required immediate attention he was unable to do as requested. He, however, assured them that he would take the matter up after having done with state affairs. In the mean time he directed them to follow the views and practices of his own ācariya, *i.e.*, of Atula (*Idani mama vijite sabbe pi bhikkhū mama ācariyassa maliṃ anuvattitvā carantu ti*).

The king's decree placed the Pārupaṇas in an awkward position. They had either to give up their views and practices and obey the royal command or face the inevitable fate that disobedience meant. The royal order was generally obeyed, but there were at least a few among the Pārupaṇas who were built of sterner metal. Two theras of Sahassarodhagāma held steadfastly to their old practices and preached their old views. This was too much for Atula who had them brought to the capital and tried to discredit them before the people, but was thwarted in his attempt, the *Sāsanavaṃsa* wants us to believe, by some supernatural power.

Another passive resister was thera Munindaghosa of Nīpagāma near Pagan where he had a very large and influential following. His disobedience was brought to the notice of the king who summoned him to appear in the Sudhammasabhā before the king, the royal preceptor and other learned theras. Undaunted, Munindaghosa appeared before the assembly and when accused of his guilt he told them that he was treading the right path laid down by his Master. When further asked who his Master was, he turned to the Buddha image installed in the Sudhammasabhā and paying his respectful homage, said with folded hands, 'Here is my Master. So long as there is life in me I shall serve him and shall not swerve from what I have learnt from him'. The king perhaps was not prepared for such exhibition of courage by a thera, and though a despot,

dared not take his life. He decreed, however, that he should not be allowed to live within his kingdom, and banished him to a distant place in the frontiers.

Munindaghosa's was indeed an undaunted spirit ; in his banishment he devoted himself to the cause of teaching amongst those who clustered round him from all quarters, and what else could he teach than the views and practices he himself held dear and practised with devotion. There in banishment he translated the *Abhidhammaṭṭhasaṃgaha* into Burmese, evidently for the benefit of his own students, but even there he was not allowed to rest in peace. The king heard that he had gathered a following even in banishment and had been continuing in the defiance of his decree. He was again summoned before the king to answer his charge. Munindaghosa was sure that the king was intent to kill him ; nevertheless he appeared before him, and laying aside his monastic vows and putting off his monkish garb, said, 'You have summoned me with the intent of slaying me, so be it. But if you slay me while I am still holding my monastic vows and putting on my monkish garb you will be guilty of heavy sin. I have therefore laid aside my vows and put off my robes. Now, if you want to slay me, slay.' But the king dared not. He only flung him into prison and then marched on to Siam on a military call. That was his last campaign, for he died on his way back home. Munindaghosa also is heard of no more.

Alaungpaya was succeeded by his eldest son, the crown prince, who became king under the name of Siripavanamahā-dhammarāja (Naungdawgyi, 1760-63). He had to forsake Ava but rebuilt Saggaing, and brought from Taungdwin a learned thera named Ñāṇa or āṇālaṃkāra-mahādhammarāja whom he appointed as his own ācariya. Ñāṇa held Pārupaṇa views, and the Pārupaṇa party naturally hoped to get the king on their side. But Atula thera who had not yet lost his influence frustrated their attempt saying that the

matter had already been decided. The question, therefore, remained unsettled. Ñāṇālaṃkāra seems to have been a learned thera; he could teach nine or ten chapters a day, and brought out a number of works; the *Padavibhāga*, evidently a book on grammar, and commentaries in Burmese on the *Nyāsa*, the *Yamaka*, and the *Mahāpaṭṭhāna* amongst others unknown to us.

Siripavara-sudhammamahārājindādhipati or Setibhinda (Hsinbyushin, 1763-76) who succeeded Naungdawgyi, transferred his capital to Ava. He proved himself to be a generous patron of learning ; he had Brahmins brought from Benares with whom he discussed matters of State. The Maungdaung Sayadaw whom the king had appointed for the purpose took their help to translate into Burmese a number of Sanskrit works on astrology, polity, law, medicine and grammar.[5] The monks played a large part in the Pāli and Burmese translations of Hindu legal codes ascribed to Manu. The king appointed Candovara whom he renamed Jambudīpa-Anantadhaja, as his tutor; he wrote a commentary on the *Vinayavinicchaya*. We hear nothing of the Pārupaṇa-Ekaṃsika dispute during his reign; but reference is made in the *Sāsanavaṃsa*[6] to a certain kind of heresy in practice which was severely dealt with, and the heretics were compelled to conform to the true faith. It is idle to speculate what was the kind of heresy practised or who were the people who practised it ; but one may be interested to read that "about fifty years ago a class of metaphysicians arose in Ava called Paramata who respect only the *Abhidhamma* and reject the other books that the Buddhists consider as sacred, saying that they are only a compilation of fables. The founder of the sect, Kosan, with about fifty of his followers, was put to death by order

5 Forchammer, *Jardine Prize Essay*, p. 104.

6 *Sāsana*, p. 128. *Tassa rāñño kāle ekacce manussā-diṭṭhi-vipallāsā ahesuṃ; te pi pakkosāpetvā sammādiṭṭhiṃ gaṇhāpesi*).

of the king.'"[7] Spence Hardy wrote these lines, first brought to notice by Dr. Bode, in or about 1850, and his remarks refer to the end of the eighteenth century. It is not improbable that the Paramats were the heretical sect that was put down by Hsinbyushin. The Po: U: Daung inscription refers to one meritorious act of the king; this was the crowning of the Shwedagon at Rangoon.[8]

Hsinbyushin was succeeded by his nineteen year old son Mahādhammarājādhirāja (Singu, 1776-82). A man of ordinary talents Singu nevertheless interested himself in the cause of the religion. He built a vihāra for a thera Māyāvattaka by name, and gave him the title of Guṇamunindābhisāsanadhammarājādhirājaguru. Early he came under the influence of another thera named Nandamāla, who in the retreat of his vihāra near Calaṅganagara had devoted himself to the teaching of the sāmaṇeras entrusted to his care. The king, through the medium of a strange dream, so we are told, came to know of him and had him brought to stay near him. He belonged to the Capata sect and even not long after he had taken the *upasampadā* ordination he translated into Burmese such sacred texts as the old *Vinayavinicchaya*, the *Suttasaṃgaha* and the *Mahāvaggaṭṭhakathā*. He also wrote the *Sāsanasuddhidīpikā*, a manual regarding the purification of the religion, evidently a book on Vinaya.[9] It seems from the works he chose to write or translate that he interested himself and specialised in questions of monastic discipline, and as such it was likely that he would have his own opinions on the Pārupaṇa-Ekaṃsika controversy. Such indeed was the case. Nandamāla himself held Pārupaṇa views, and now that he was so near the king he sought to

[7] Spence Hardy, *Eastern Monachism*, p. 331. See also, *Sāsanavaṃsa*, Dissertation by Dr. Bode, pp. 42-43, note.

[8] This fact is not mentioned in the *Sāsanavaṃsa*.

[9] Nandamāla may have also been the author of another book, a commentary on the *Vinayasaṃgaha* which is mentioned in the *Piṭakkatthamain* as having been written by the preceptor of king Singu, at Ava, p. 43.

win the latter to his views. He convinced him that Pārupaṇa p:actices were upheld by the sacred texts while those of the Ekaṃsikas had no textual authority on their side. Successfully did he try to interest the king who at last summoned the leaders of both parties to a discussion. In the debate that followed the Ekaṃsikas were worsted; they were unable to show any textual authority on which they could reasonably base their views and practices, and thus lost their cause. The king issued a decree forbidding Ekaṃsika practices and imposing Pārupaṇa practices on all the members of the Order. Nandamāla got his reward; he was appointed Saṃgharāja or the supreme head of the Order. But strangely enough the dispute did not end here.

When Bodawpaya (1782-1819), the fifth son of Alaungpaya, came to the throne, the question was again revived, and this time by the king himself. He held that his predecessors had not been able to decide the controversy in a satisfactory manner, since the discussion or debate was always held in the king's assembly hall in the presence of the king himself which was fair to neither party. In the circumstance few dared speak freely according to their conviction. He, therefore, planned to send itinerant commissioners to the vihāras all over the country to gather reliable first-hand evidence locally from the theras who, it was expected, would in that case state their views without fear of intimidation or prospect of favour. As he planned, so he worked; the commissioners over whom the king appointed a high military official (*antoyuddhanayaka*) as their leader, were sent out on their mission. It turned out, strangely indeed, that the leader of the Ekaṃsika party deposed that their views and practices had no sanction of sacred texts, but were authorised by *ācariyapaveṇi*, i.e., by tradition handed down from teacher to teacher (*amhehi vuttavacanaṃ pāli-ādisu na dissati. Atha kho pana ācariya paveṇivasen' eva mayam carimhā ti anujāniṃsu.*) The deposition of the Ekaṃsikas practically sealed

the fate of their cause, and the king issued a decree enjoining strict conformity to Pārupaṇa practices throughout the kingdom. The controversy for the time being seemed closed for good.

What Bodawpaya held about the decisions of those that had gone before him was undoubtedly true to a very great extent, and what he planned was also the right thing to do. But it is really very strange that the Ekaṃsikas who had fought obstinately for generations for recognition of their views and practices would at their deposition before the commission so readily agree to what practically was an admission of defeat. This on the very face of it arouses suspicion that grow as one acquaints himself more and more with king Bodawpaya's ways and methods. Bodawpaya secured the throne through blood, iron and fire, making a clean sweep of his rivals and their followers, servants and children, and burning women of the harem alive with their babies in arms. He had no faith in mortal man, not even in his nearest kin or in the wisest monk. Nothing was too mean or cruel for him, and coercion and intimidation were his usual methods; disregard of his will meant death, death in a manner that ensured maximum of pain. It is, therefore, hard to believe that such a king as Bodawpaya happened to be used no means of coercion or intimidation to have the Ekaṃsikas to depose as they did. In fact, Bodawpaya seems to have been won over to the Pārupaṇa side before the holding of the commission was decided upon; for Ñāṇa thera, whom he had appointed his preceptor and given the high sounding name of Ñāṇābhisāsanadhajamahādhammarājaguru, was himself a Pārupaṇa, and it is only likely that he had already influenced the king's opinion in the matter.

Ñāṇa thera hailed from Sahassarodhogama, the village whence came the first passive resisters after Alaungpaya had decided in favour of the Ekaṃsikas. He was a great favourite

of the king who built for him a monastery. Meanwhile Bodawpaya had transferred his capital to Amarapura where he was consecrated with due ceremony. He then asked his preceptor to commemorate the event; and Ñāṇa edited and corrected (*parisodhetvā*) the *Rājābhisekagandha*, adding a commentary to it in Burmese.

Bodawpaya was a man of curious opposites. The number of religious foundations he reared up and maintained seems to have kept proportion with the amount of blood he shed not only in war but in atrocities perpetrated to satisfy his whims. Paññasāmī gives a long list of vihāras he built for theras who were reputed for their piety, learning and wisdom, and adds that he could give a still longer list but refrained lest his book would grow in length ! It is noteworthy that in this work of merit the entire royal family and the nobility participated along with the king.

A report, being the " Observations on the present state of the kingdom of Ava and Pegu and the means of joining them to the British dominions in India," drawn up by a Frenchman, Melchior La Beaume, dated 16th January, 1730, refres to the reign of Bodawpaya and throws welcome light on the condition of the Saṃgha in Burma during his reign :

> " The clergy is very well-regulated. Every person may embrace that profession, but must perform a noviciate to learn theology and the sciences which they afterwards teach to all grades. By their institution the Talpoons (Talapoins) make the vow of celibacy, poverty, mortification, humility and all other mental and corporal exercise. They are much respected, and by means of the alms they receive, they are as well fed, lodged and clothed. They quit their profession the moment they are disposed to do."

V

RE-ORGANISATION OF THE SAMGHA : END OF THE CONTROVERSY

Bodawpaya may not have had any motive in the re-organisation that he effected of the administrative machinery

of the Saṃgha. He appointed four aged and wise theras to each of whom he gave the title of Saṃgharāja, and charged them with the work of the purification of the religion. To help those who were old and weak he appointed four others with evidently the same status and designation. Over this group of eight[10] was placed his preceptor Ñaṇābhisāsanadhajamahādhammarājaguruthera with the title Mahāsaṃgharāja. All this he did for the purification of the religion, so we are told; and Ñāṇa, the supreme head, did his part of the work well. He was an active teacher, and though placed at the head of the church organisation, he condescended to visit one by one, by rotation, all the vihāras assigned to his care and used to teach the inmates thereof the precepts and practices of the religion.[11] He was ripe with wisdom and was vastly learned; within five years of his *upasampadā* ordination he had already written a *ṭīkā* called *Petālaṁkāra* on the *Nettipakaraṇa*. At eighteen he became Saṁgharāja and not long after wrote a *ṭīkā* entitled *Sādhujjanavilasinī* on the *Dīghanikāya*. Among his other works were the *Ariyavaṃsālaṁkāra*, a commentary on the *Jātakaṭṭhakathā* at the request of the king, the *Catusāmaṇeravatthu*, the *Rājovādavatthu Tigumbathomaṇa*, the *Chaddantanāgarājuppattikathā* and the *Rājadhirājavilᵽsinī*,[12] the last with the help of the materials supplied by the king himself.

10 Kavindābhisaddhammapavaramahādhammarājaguru,
Tipiṭakālaṃkāradhaja .... ,
Cakkindābhidhaja ..... ,
Paramasirivaṃsadhaja ..... ,
Janindābhipavara ..... .
Mahajñāṇābhidhaja .... ,
Ñāṇālaṁkārasaddhammadhaja ..... , and
Ñāṇābhisāsanadhaja ..... ,

11 He directed the monks in the study of both the *Vibhaṅgas*, and himself daily practised at least one of the (thirteen) *dhutaṅgas*. It shows how deeply interested he was in the Vinaya, not only in the studies of monastic discipline, but also in observing the discipline himself.

12 For comments on this work, see Bode, pp. 79-82.

Now that a new organisation of the Saṃgha had been effected, the Ekaṃsikas hoped to get a better hearing. They knew that the king's preceptor whose views had hitherto been the most important factor in all religious disputations was a Pārupaṇa, but now that eight other theras were also there to influence a decision they thought they would rather take a chance. So long they had no scriptural authority ; now they found out one. Their leader Atula who had still some influence with the king addressed an epistle to the latter pointing out that the wearing of the upper robe with one shoulder bare and of a girdle round the body had been sanctioned in a text named *Cūlagaṇṭhipada*. The king now summoned another assembly to which he invited the leaders of both parties. In the debate that followed Atula represented the Ekaṃsikas, and presented their case ably and well. He argued that the *Cūlagaṇṭhipada* was a work of the venerable thera Moggallāna who had long ago sanctioned the Ekaṃsika practices. These facts, he maintained, could be gathered from the *Piṭakattayalakkaṇa-gandha*, a text alleged to have been brought to Burma by Buddhaghosa from Ceylon. But the leader of the Pārupaṇa party pointed out that the text which Atula referred to was the *Vinayagaṇṭhipada* and not *Cūlagaṇṭhipada*, written by a thera Moggallāna who flourished during the reign of king Parakkamabāhu (1153-1184), and not by the old and more famous Moggallāna. Once a fraud was hinted at, Atula was attacked by volleys of questions to none of which he could give satisfactory reply. The account of the debate as recorded by Paññasāmi is long,[13] but it does not contain much that is of historical interest, though somewhat of a dramatic element at times enlivens the record. We find that Atula suffered three successive series of defeats in each of which he was put into a very tight corner. For the Pārupaṇas

[13] *Sāsana*, pp. 136-142.

it was a decisive victory; and the king who had always his sympathy with the Pārupaṇas lost no time in issuing a decree imposing strict observance of Pārupaṇa practices throughout his realm. Thus ended a long and bitter struggle that had agitated the Saṃgha for well nigh over a century. Scriptural authority was eventually upheld, orthodoxy finally emerged triumphant and the pristine ideal of monastic discipline was once more held aloft.

CHAPTER SIX

BURMA'S RETURN GIFTS TO CEYLON

NINETEENTH CENTURY AND AFTER : THE "AMARAPURA SAṂGHA" OF CEYLON : BODAWPAYA, BAGYIDAW AND MINDON-MIN

The final settlement of the Pārupaṇa-Ekaṃsika dispute was not, however, the most important religious event of Bodawpaya's reign; more significant was the establishment of the "Amarapura School" of Buddhism in Ceylon. The religion in that island was under a temporary eclipse. During latter half of the eighteenth century the Sinhalese Saṃgha had adopted certain disciplinary measures, presumably at the instance of the royal authority, that were frankly contrary to the original teachings of Buddhism. Naturally, there were monks within the Order who did not like such interference with their code of conduct, and they sought help and guidance from the fraternities of monks in other realms. They turned first to Siam where, they presumed, the religion retained its purity and where persecuted Talaing monks had already from time to time found an asylum. But now they thought of sending their missions to Burma, and two missions came during the reign of Bodawpaya, one in 1800, and another in about 1812. The first mission was indeed significant. The Sinhalese king Kīrti Siri Rāja Siṃha (1748-78) had issued a decree, presumably approved and authorised by the Saṃgha, that none other than belonging to the highest caste (mainly, the agricultural class) could receive the *upasampadā* ordination and be admitted into the Order. This roused considerable indignation among the sāmaṇeras of the lower castes, who, smarting for some time

under the royal decree, at last thought of receiving their ordination elsewhere. This time they decided to go to Burma. For, there alone, they thought, the religion shone purest in spite of periodical attacks on its orthodoxy. They had also probably heard of the scholarly reputation of the Burmese Saṃgharāja Ñāṇābhivaṃsa and of his deep knowledge of the Vinaya. They were perhaps also actuated by the idea that the *theraparampara* could only be maintained in an unbroken line by their receiving the consecration at the hands of the Burmese Saṃgha. So, in 1800, according to Paññasāmi, a group of bold Sinhalese novices belonging to lower castes and headed by a thera named Ambagahapati came to the Burmese capital where they were given a cordial and magnificant reception by the king himself. They were presented with due ceremony to Ñāṇābhivaṃsa, the Saṃgharāja, who gave them the *upasampadā* ordination. They then returned to Ceylon (1802) with a full chapter of five Burmese monks, a letter from Ñāṇābhivaṃsa to the Ceylonese Saṃgharāja, and a large number of Pāli sacred texts. On their arrival they proceeded to ordain many more novices who sought it, and eventually came to establish what is known to this day in Ceylon as the "Amarapura Saṃgha" or "Buramagāma." Their aim is to hold strictly to the pristine purity of the religion; they allow ordination to all castes, high and low, and go about with both shoulders covered, just as the members of the Maramma Saṃgha do, [1] while the members of the older Siamese school known as the "Siyamagāma" who had already adopted heterodox practices restrict ordination to higher castes alone, and go about with one shoulder uncovered. [2]

1 Spence Hardy, *Eastern Monachism*, pp. 328-29.

2 *Sāsana*, Dissertation, p. 37, note 2; for the history of the inauguration of the "Amarapura Saṃgha" or 'Buramagāma" in Ceylon, see, Spence Hardy, *Eastern Monachism*, pp. 327-29; Tennent, *Christianity in Ceylon*, pp. 224-226; Despatch from Governor General of India to Court of Directors, dated March 4, 1812, para. 29.

The establishment of the "Amarapura School" in Ceylon is a significant event in the history of Buddhism in Burma. Six hundred and ten years ago a Burmese sāmaṇera, Capata, received his ordination at the hands of the fraternity of monks of Ceylon, returned to his native land with a full chapter of monks ordained in that island, and was instrumental in founding what came to be known as the "Sīhala Saṃgha" in Burma. For six centuries Burma maintained, though not always with vigour or without opposition, the purity and orthodoxy of the Mahāvihāra tradition and therewith the *thera-paramparā* in unbroken succession. Now that the tradition had become weak in Ceylon itself, her sons turned to Burma and became instrumental in founding the "Burama-gāma" or the "Amarapura Saṃgha" in Ceylon. It was indeed the first return gift of Burma to Ceylon.

Bodawpaya solicited the favour of the Saṃgha, as all kings did in Burma, but he had hardly any consideration for the monks, nor had he any faith in their honesty and sincerity. He was sure of his position as the Protector of the Order so long as the Saṃgharāja was by his side, and neither the Saṃgharāja nor the Saṃgha itself seem to have protested when the king was once seized by the idea that the clergy were getting more than they could really claim to. At once he ordered a collection of all dedicatory inscriptions throughout his realm, recording gifts of lands to the Saṃgha and their share of produce.[3] We do not know what came out of the scrutiny, but we are told that certain church lands were confiscated; but the Saṃgha do not seem to have suffered much so far as their resources were concered. He was indeed

[3] In all there were not less than 1000 records collected, now deposited in the galleries of the Arakan Pagoda, Mandalay, and in those of the Patodawgyi Pagoda, Amarapura. These records were published in two sets; the first in two volumes containing those deposited in the Arakan Pagoda were published in 1897, and the second containing those of the Patodawgyi Pagoda in 1913.

jealous of the monks, for they were the people, he thought, that received the homage and respect of the people, not the king and his court, and the monasteries were the real source of power and prestige. He therefore sought to deprive the monks of some of their honours, and directed that no monk should use the title of 'Phongyi' which meant 'Great Glory.' He was not the man to share glory with monks, and wanted therefore to keep it entirely for himself! On another occasion he thought that monks were too numerous in the country: he therefore caused an enquiry into the conduct of the monks majority of whom were found to spend their time without doing anything, not even caring to learn the sacred texts. We are not told if he had them turned out of the Saṃgha, but we gather that he decreed that no monk could be the head of a vihāra unless by virtue of his personal conduct, character, learning and wisdom, he was a fit person to adorn that position. Perhaps, he was not very wrong in his estimation of the Burmese monks of the time. In any case he thought that he had reasons to impose these restrictions, since his own Saṃgharāja had once failed to solve some of the religious and metaphysical questions that were distubing him. A very interesting, somewhat curious incident, is told of him by the European sojourners in Burma in the nineteenth century. Once he thought, seeing that most of the monks could not satisfy his queries, that Buddhism was not good enough a religion, and began to enquire if there was anything better. He was told that Islam was so strict and orthodox a religion that a follower of the faith would rather die than take pork. He felt a sort of admiration for the faith which he might well adopt. But before he did so he invited the *maulvis* of his capital to a dinner at his palace, and had pork served before them. At once the *maulvis* realised what the king was after, but to disregard his command was to court death which they were not prepared to do. So they ate the pork, and the king's admiration for the faith vanished

forthwith.[4] He often executed Burmese religious heretics,[5] and prescribed death for those who drank intoxicants; even selling of liquor was prohibited. Smoking of opium and killing of ox or buffalo or any large animal were also grave offences and were punished with death.[6]

Bodawpaya, we have seen, was a builder on a large scale; he built pagodas by scores, and the largest was doubtless the Mingun in Saggaing district, an unfinished edifice that impresses only by its heaviness. When he was engaged in the building of the pagoda, it was revealed unto him one day that he was the Bodhisattawa Arimittiya or the future Buddha. He seriously claimed to be recognised as such, but the Saṃgha resolutely resisted the claim and refused to confer on him the sought-for distinction.[7] They must have been bold enough to resist such a king as Bodawpaya; and this was sufficient indictment for one who, the people and even the clergy knew, could wring opinions from them just as he wished, on pain of death.[8]

Siritribhuvanādityapavaramaṇḍita (Bagyidaw, 1819-37) who succeeded Bodawpaya was a charming and dignified personality, exceptionally kind, and was loved and revered

4 For the many curious eccentricities of the king that include the few noted above, see Sangermano, *A Description of the Burmese Empire*, 1885, p. 92; Cox, *Journal of a Residence in the Burmese Empire*, 1821, p. 230; Crawfurd, *Journal of an Embassy from the Governor General of India to the Court of Ava*, 1834, Vol. I, p. 399; Gouger, *Personal Narrative of Two Years' Imprisonment in Burma*, 1860, pp. 96-100.

5 Gibson, *Meiktila Settlement Report*, 1900, p. 51.

6 Sangermano, *op. cit.*, p. 68; Gouger, *op. cit.*, p. 278.

7 Sangermano, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

8 But Bodawpaya had some admirable qualities among which was his sincere patronage of literature. Among the nobility of his court there was a number of literary men who produced works, mainly in Burmese, on history, law and other subjects. The most important from our point of view was the translation by Twinthintaikwun, first the monk-tutor of Bodawpaya and later a high official of the State, of 66 *Jātākas* in Burmese, and a very fine Burmese prose-rendering by Awbatha, a monk, of the *Mahājanaka Jātaka*.

by all. He changed the capital from Amarapura to Ava. The *Sāsanavaṃsa* records a few of his religious foundations which were made over to venerable theras. Paññasīha was one of such theras; he was made the royal preceptor. given the long title of Munindābhisirisaddhammadhajamahā-dhammarājādhirājaguru and appointed also as the head of the Order. Bagyidaw seems to have had some concern for the religion; the *Sāsanavaṃsa* devotes some space in recording three discussions in which the king showed his deep interest in the affairs of the Saṃgha. The last two are concerned with a subject that vitally affected the resources of the Saṃgha and are therefore worth recording here. We have seen that Bodawpaya took a stock of church lands and made a scrutiny; he was frankly jealous of the temporal possessions of the monks. But Bagyidaw seems to have been drawn in to these discussions by sheer curiosity. He enquired about the earliest king that made grants of lands to *cetiyas* and *vihāras*, and wanted to know how the later kings dealt with those land-grants made by earlier kings, in other words, what the respective rights of the king and the clergy were with regard to these lands. He was told that such grants of lands had been in vogue as far back as the days of Bhagavata Sujāta, and further on the authority of the *Vinaya* and the *Aṭṭhakathā*, that the lands, once granted to *cetiyas* and *vihāras*, *i.e.*, to the Saṃgha, always belonged to the Saṃgha. The later kings could not therefore claim any land (or its produce) that had been once donated to the Saṃgha by earlier kings. The king also held a discussion in respect of his duty to the fraternity.

Bagyidaw's last days were tragic. In 1824 the English declared war and two years later annexed Lower Burma. Suffering from terrible depression and melancholia, he was dethroned by Tharwaddy-Min (Siripavarādityalokādhipati-vijayamahādhamma) who succeeded him in 1837. Probably not long after, Tharwaddy issued a decree announcing the

appointment of his preceptor, Sūriyavaṃsathera, as the supreme head of the Order, and gave him as usual a long title. Sūriyavaṃsa seems to have been respected by the king and the people, for, when he died great funeral honours were heaped on him. His pupil Ñeyyadhamma was then appointed head of the Order, and it was during his time that another Sinhalese mission headed by thera Paññatissa who was accompanied by bhikkhu Sunanda and novice Indasāra visited Amarapura. The Saṃgharāja obliged the mission with his religious teachings and advice. Paññatissa however died a year after while he was yet receiving instructions from Ñeyyadhamma at Amarapura. After the death of Paññatissa the task of receiving the highest teaching and transmitting it to his pupils fell naturally on bhikku Sunanda. Ñeyyadharma also ordained the sāmaṇera Indasāra, and then a year after sent both Sunanda and Indasāra back to Ceylon accompanied by an *amātya* of the city-mayor (nagarajeṭṭha) of Bassein. Ñeyyadhamma emended the text of the *Saddhammapajjoṭikā*, a commentary on the *Mahāniddesa*, and translated it into Burmese.

Tharwaddy-Min died insane and was succeeded by his son Pagan-Min (Siripavarādityavijayānantayasamahādhammarājādhirāja, 1846-52) in whose reign religious scholarship seems to have received a fillip. Paññājotābhidhaja, a disciple of Sūriyavaṃsa, was apppinted Saṃgharāja. He wrote a commentary in Burmese of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* and its *ṭīkā*. Ñeyyadhammābhivaṃsa, another scholar of this time, brought out a Burmese translation of the *Saddhammavilāsinī*, the commentary on the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*. Maṇiyotasaddhammālaṃkāra and Medhāvivaṃsa, two other monk scholars, wrote two commentaries in Burmese of the *Saṃyuttanikāya* and *Dīghanikāya*, respectively, along with their *ṭīkās*. Ñeyyadhamma's chief disciple Paññasāmi (who later became the author of the *Sāsanavaṃsa*) began to come into prominence even from this time. Within

five years of his ordination he translated in Burmese a commentary (*Gaṇṭhipadatthavaṇṇanaṃ*) of the *Saddatthabhedacintā*. Another five years later he brought out a Burmese translation of the commentary on the *Abhidhānappadīpikā*, the text of which he had emended after having compared it with other existing versions.

We are now drawing towards the close of the mediaeval age in Burma as well as of the characteristically mediaeval outlook that has so long marked the religion in that country. Another quarter of a century and the old order will fade out of our vision and a new order will gradually emerge under new conditions. But before the narrative is closed with the passing away of the old order, one is happy to dwell on an era of all-round peace and progress for the religion. The short span of twenty-five years (1852-77) that Mindon-Min (son of Pagan-Min) was given to rule was indeed a golden era for the Order that came to enjoy sincere and vigorous patronage of the king. He infused new life into the Saṃgha by not only interesting himself but all around him in the affairs of the Saṃgha. Religious studies were pursued with zeal and vigour and the enthusiasm thus aroused filtered down to the common people who began to take a renewed interest in matters religious and vie with one another in observing the precepts of the Master. It is no wonder, therefore, that Paññasāmi, who later on succeeded his teacher Ñeyyadhammābhivaṃsa as the royal preceptor and became more over the supreme head of the Order, extends a most sincere and dignified compliment to the kindly patron of the Saṃgha, not only in the *Sāsanavaṃsa* but also in the *Nāgarājuppattikathā* which was written at the request of his teacher and the then Saṃgharāja Ñeyyadhamma to commemorate the foundation of the new capital at Ratanapura (*i.e.*, Mandalay).

Ñeyyadhamma himself composed at the king's request a work entitled *Surājamaggadīpanī*. He was an erudite

teacher taking delight in expounding the commentary on the *Majjhimanikāya* (of which a Burmese translation was prepared at his instance by a pupil of his) along with his own interpretation of the text. Thera Medhāvivaṃsa wrote a commentary in Burmese of the Pāli *Jātakas*. But the largest number of works was produced by Paññasāmi himself when he had become the supreme head of the Order. He wrote the *Sīlakathā* and the *Upāyakathā* at the request of the queen (*aggamahesī*), while the king's tutor induced him to bring out the *Akkharavisodhanī* and the *Āpattivinicchaya*. His own teacher Ñeyyadhamma successfully urged him to write the *Vohāratthabheda* and *Vivādavinicchaya* besides the *Nāgarājuppattikathā*. Two *amātyas* and one *mahā-amātya* were instrumental in having two works, the *Rājasevakadīpanī* and the *Nirayakathādīpaka* written by him. He also wrote the *Uposathavinicchaya* at the request of an *upāsaka* as well as a Pāli commentary on the *Saddanīti* for the benefit of those who came to attend his lessons (*bahūhi sotujanehi*). All the works of Paññasāmi seem to have been written in Pāli, not in Burmese as had hitherto been the practice with the majority of monk-scholars. Probably he wanted to revive the tradition of Pāli scholarship as well as the older religious tradition; and it is not unlikely that his patron Mindon-Min had some hand in it.

Indeed, Mindon-Min's religious activities lay in that direction. Only a year after he had transferred his capital to Mandalay, the last centre of Burmese monarchy, laxity in monastic discipline was in evidence in the Saṃgha. He saw with grave concern that the Saṃgha was gradually drifting from its age-old and vigilantly preserved orthodoxy towards a way of life that was contrary to the disciplinary code of the monks. Some of the monks were in the habit of using gold and silver and other metals, some took betel (tāmbulaṃ) in the afternoon (an

unprescribed hour), some indulged in smoking and other intoxicants, some again entered the villages with shoes on and holding umbrellas, and acted in violation of other Vinaya rules (*avinayānulomcāre caranti*). The king thought that such contrary practices could only be put an end to by imposing a vow (*patiññā*) on the monks to be taken before the (image of the) Buddha (*buddhassa sammukhe buddhaṃ sakkhiṃ katvā*). But before he could translate his ideas into action he consulted the Saṃgharāja Ñeyyadhammābhivaṃsa. The latter advised him to summon an assembly of mahātheras to ascertain the views of the Saṃgha. So an assembly was convened in the vihāra of the Saṃgharāja[9] where the mahātheras were told of the idea of the king and were requested to give their opinion. One group of mahātheras headed by the Saṃgharāja was of opinion that since the king was earnestly desirous of the reformation of the Saṃgha and was thus actuated by the best of motives, he would be justified in imposing the vow. But the opposition headed by Paṇḍitābhidhaja Munindaghosa held that there was no use imposing such a vow on the monks, for there was every likelihood of the vow being broken, and a vow taken before the image of the Buddha, if broken, would burden the transgressor with a heavy sin. The reply to the opposition was made by Paññasāmi, a pupil of the Saṃgharāja, at the bidding of the latter. A very learned speech was then delivered by the young thera who brought to bear on his discourse relevant passages from the *Vinaya*, the *Pātimokkha*, the *Parivāra* and the *Suttavibhaṅga*, along with Buddhaghosha's interpretations thereof. He pointed out that newly ordained bhikkhus had to take vows at the instance of the *upajjhāyas* at the time of the *upasampadā* ordination; the

[9] It is noteworthy that Mindon-Min did not convene the assembly in his own palace as had hitherto been the practice with the kings when summoning theras to a religious discussion or debate, nor was he present when the debate took place.

sāmaṇeras had to take a vow to observe the precepts of the religion at the time of their taking the *pabbajjā*; they had also to take another vow when they began their religious studies under their *upajjhāyas*. Thus the taking of a vow was not an unusual thing in the religious life that Buddhism prescribed. And, what the king wanted to do was not anything different from prescribed vows or anything not approved of or authorised by the sacred texts. Paññasāmi's speech had the desired effect; the mahātheras were all convinced, and they resolved that the king would be justified in imposing a vow. So the king decreed that all monks should take a vow before the Buddha to conform strictly to the rules of the *Vinaya*. The order was obeyed and those who have been acting contrary to the rules were made to conform to the stricter code. Monastic orthodoxy once more emerged triumphant.

It will be observed, and this is of some significance, that the point in the debate was not so much whether the king had any right to impose the vow as whether the vow itself was necessary and was approved of by the sacred texts. The king's right to impose the vow was not even questioned; in fact, it looked as if it were an accepted fact sanctioned by long use and tradition.

Meanwhile, the " Amarapura Saṃgha " in Ceylon was being agitated by a controversy centring round an ancient *sīmā*. The *sīmā* in question was situated on the bank of a certain river over which a bridge was built for easy passage of the bhikkhus to the other side of the river. This involved what is called *saṃkāradosa*, *i.e.*, confusion of boundaries of the *sīmā*, which invalidated a particular *sīmā* for the *upasampadā* ordination. This, as well as other religious ceremonies (*upasampadādi vinayakammāni*) were being performed in that *sīmā* for several years past by a thera named Ñāṇālaṃkāra, but now a section of the Saṃgha headed by Dhīrānanda refused to perform religious ceremonies in that *sīmā*. Thus two parties

came into being, one following the lead of Ñāṇālaṃkāra and another of Dhīrānanda. They jointly sent a deputation consisting of two bhikkhus, Dhammakkhandha and Vanaratana, to Mandalay to seek advice and decision on this point from the Saṃgharāja. They were very hospitably received and were housed in a vihāra newly built for them. The Saṃgharāja after hearing both sides of the dispute and consulting many (sacred) texts, gave his decision. He told them that such a place as the *sīmā* in question was really invalid owing to *saṃkāradosa*. It was again a decision in fovour of orthodoxy; indeed the Vinaya rules were upheld once more and strictest discipline was insisted upon. However, the two bhikkhus received instructions in the sacred texts for a second time from the Saṃgharāja, and when they left for Ceylon the king presented them with valuable gifts.

A second deputation from Ceylon reached Mandalay almost immediately after, this time consisting of two bhikkhus, Vimalajoti and Dhammānanda, and four upāsakas along with Ariyālaṃkāra, a sāmaṇera. They were also very cordially received and housed in a vihāra in the monastery of the Sāṃgharāja who re-iterated his decision to the new deputation. The two bhikkhus received instructions from him and the sāmaṇera his *upasampadā* ordination, after which they presumably sailed back home. It was perhaps on their arrival that a third and larger deputation consisting of two bhikkhus, three sāmaṇeras and four upāsakas, came to the king with valuable presents of a gold and silver casket, a sacred relic, an ivory image, and leaves, bark and branch of the *bodhi* tree. They were also cordially received and confortably housed; the two bhikkhus underwent instructions in the sacred texts, the sāmaṇeras received the *upasampadā* ordination, and the upāsakas took the *pabbajjā* after due ceremony.

These religious missions from Ceylon were as it were just what was needed to round off the history of the Buddhist

Saṃgha of Burma. We have seen how the founding of the "Amarapura School" in Ceylon was the first return gift of Burma to Ceylon. These missions now afforded a chance to Burma to make the second return gift to that island. As one reads the story of these missions and deputations and the reasons and circumstances that inspired them, one's memory naturally travels back to those days four hundred years ago, when king Dharmaceti sent out his mission to Ceylon to bring back to his country a valid *upasampadā* ordination.

Mindon-Min's work for the religion did not, however, end here. He emulated the examples of Asoka of olden days, and sincerely tried to revive the ancient tradition of the religion. At the instance of the king a great assembly of all learned monks in the realm was summoned at the capital with a view to making a new redaction of the three Piṭakas. For more than three years (1868-71) the assembly continued to meet under the presidentship of the king himself when the monks read out or recited the sacred texts, one by one, to restore the best and the most correct reading. The work finished, the complete text of the Tipiṭaka was engraved, by order of the king, on 729 marble slabs[10] which the visitor to Mandalay can see even today posted vertically at regular intervals over a wide green grassy lawn within the enclosure of the Kutho-daw pagoda. The Saṃgha in deep gratitude conferred on him the title of 'Convenor of the Fifth Council,' a title which Mindon-Min treasured the most. As a memorial of this Council Mindon-Min presented a new spire, coated with gold and studded with jewels, to the Shwedagon pagoda.

In 1885 the English occupied Mandalay, the city of Mindon-Min, and signalised the dawn of the modern age in Burma.

10 *Upper Burma Gazetteer*, I, p. 66.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY AND RETROSPECT

1

SUMMARY

It is nothing curious that all traditions of the people of Burma and all their chronicles hark back to India. They claim to have received the first message of culture and civilisation through a Śākyan migration from the Madhyadeśa or Middle Country of India; the kings of Burma are also said to have been ' originally descended from the noble Sun dynasty (Sūrya-vaṃśa) of the Śākyan.' They even claim Gautama the Buddha, who actually did never stir out of the Middle Country, to have more than once visited Lekaing, a village of merchants in Aparānta.[1] Today we dismiss these claims as mere expressions of a human weakness natural in early colonists and converts and hence in later chroniclers of Burma; their national vanity actuated them to affiliate their history and culture and their religion to a hoary past and a sacred tradition. But one thing is clearly brought out by these accounts. These native historians, even as late as the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when most of the chronicles were written and when direct relations, religious and cultural, with India had long been cut off, nevertheless recognised India as the source of their history, their religion and their culture and interpreted them accordingly. And so must we. For the history of Buddhism in Burma up till at least the end of the twelfth century, and even occasionally afterwards, is almost invariably connected

[1] This Aparānta, according to Burmese Geography, was in Burma. See, *ante*.

with India, and later with Ceylon, and can only be understood in the light of these connections.

Buddha originated Buddhism, but it was to the practical idealism and proselytising zeal of Asoka that the religion spread not only in all the countries of India but also outside, in Egypt, Asia Minor, Greece, and Ceylon. The tradition that he included Suvannabhūmi as well within the orbit of his missionary campaigns falls quite in a line with what we know of his actual proselytising activities, and we have seen that there is nothing "antecedently improbable" in it. But, even then, the difficulty of the historian remains, and he cannot yet treat it as a fact of history though circumstantially the tradition seems to stand within the bounds of probability. Other traditions of early relations with India are often alluded to in the local chronicles, but none concerns itself with Buddhism, nor, it seems, with sober and authentic history. Four centuries later or thereabout we hear of the Sinhalese fraternity of monks converting the Kirāta country to the faith of the Buddha. This country in all likelihood was identical, as we have tried to show, with a part of what is now known as Burma. Almost simultaneously we seem to strike on a piece of definite evidence of the existence of Buddhism in the country. Our source of information this time is Chinese which, though of a casual nature, is nevertheless of considerable value inasmuch as it affords the earliest authentic reference to Buddhism in Burma, subject to the acceptance of the identification of Lin-yang with some place in Burma. Circumstantially, the existence of Buddhism in Burma in the third century A.D., apart from the Asokan tradition of an earlier introduction of the religion, is not anything improbable. The religion existed in Fü-nan side by side with Brahmanism [2] and perhaps also in Tun-hsün which, about two centuries later, was a

[2] Pelliot, *B.E.F.E.O.*, "Le Fou-nan," p. 994.

dependency of Fü-nan.[3] In Java also Buddhism appears to have spread remarkably between 414 and 431 A.D.:[4]

With the fifth and subsequent centuries, however, we are on surer grounds; there is no more speculation, no more working on suspicious traditions or uncertain identifications. Epigraphic records and objects of archaeological interest are henceforth numerous and they furnish more or less definite evidence of a flourishing state of Buddhism in the metropolis of the realm of the Pyus, indicating at the same time a very intimate intercourse of coastal Burma with Eastern India and the Andhra-Pallava countries of South India which are known to have been the home of such Buddhist celebrities as Buddhaghosa, Buddhagupta and others. Some form of Sanskrit Buddhism, evidently Sarvāstivāda, was not also unknown. Buddhist records in Sanskrit are also known and they point to a very close relation with the countries of Eastern India. Epigraphic records are supplemented by quite a good number of Buddhist monuments, sculptures and terracotta tablets which have been unearthed in course of the last 40 years or so and which are datable on stylistic and paleographic grounds from about the sixth to about the tenth and eleventh centuries. The discoveries of a number of Pāli epigraphs in what is called the Kadamba-Telegu script and datable in the fifth and sixth centuries and of a number of Buddhist sculptures worked out in the artistic tradition of the Andhra-Pallava country

[3] At Tun-hsün, identified tentatively with Tennasserim, Brahmanism was however the most popular religion at this period (5th cent.), "The kingdom of Tun-hsun depends on Fü-nan; the king is called K'un-lun. In this country there are 500 families of Hu of India (probably referring to the merchants), two Fo-t'u, and more than a thousand brāhmaṇas of India, The (people of) Tun-hsün practise their doctrine, and do nothing but read the holy book of the heavenly spirits" (*i.e.*, Brahmanical texts).

"Fo-t'u means sometimes the Buddha, sometimes Stūpa; the expression might signify a Buddhist, but the construction is abnormal and the number scarcely admissible."—Pelliot, *B.E.F.E.O.*, 1903, p. 272.

[4] See *B.E.F.E.O.*, 1904, p. 275.

and datable in the same period, point to a sudden resurgence of the religion in the old kingdom of Prome in about the fifth and sixth centuries. Could it have been due to the impetus given to it by the celebrated Buddhist scholar and divine Buddhaghosa who is claimed to have visited Burma and helped the propagation of the religion in that country ? Independently the Buddhaghosa tradition cannot of course be said to stand on firm historical ground, but when viewed from the angle of coincidence I have ventured to present, it may not be judged to be without a foundation.

The seventh and eighth centuries bring forth still more evidences of a flourishing existence of the religion in Lower Burma. Thus, I-tsing testifies to the prevalence of Buddhism, probably of the Mūlasarvāstivāda school, in Śrīkṣetra (Old Prome) and Lang-chia-shu or Laṅkāsu which has been tentatively identified with a place in Burma. Fifty years later, Buddhism is stated in the T'ang chronicles to have been the religion of not only the State but of a considerable section of the people as well. Archaeological objects of all description furnish materials for an understanding of the state of the religion during the subsequent centuries. In about 1000-1050 A.D. Buddhism in the realm of Pegu seems to have come into conflict with Brahmanical Hinduism which by this time had come to gain some hold on certain sections of the people of Lower Burma. There can be no doubt that from at least the third or fourth century Buddhism had to measure strength with Brahmanism in Prome and Pegu as elsewhere, but the latter not only maintained its ground, but continued to flourish as it really did in Thaton before the fateful invasion of Anawartha in 1057-58 A.D. The story of this invasion, as related in the local chronicles, really indicates a very flourishing state of the religion in the city of Manuha, and we have reasons to assume that similar conditions prevailed in other important localities of Lower Burma.

The scene of history now shifts from the peninsular country to the upper regions of the Irrawady, and centres round Pagan, the seat of the Anawrahta dynasty. It is onwards from this time also that local chronicles and contemporary Môn, Burmese and Pāli epigraphs enable us to get a continuous narrative of the vicissitudes of the religion through the subsequent centuries. Ridden with primitive heathenism and a very base sort of what has been identified as Mahāyānist Tantrikism, imported from Tibet, Bengal and Assam, Pagan found in the Theravāda, the new religion introduced from the land of the Talaings, a purer and and simpler faith, a religion with a more direct appeal and a fresh message of deliverance. With Shin Arahan at the head of the Saṃgha and the support of the throne and the state at its back, the new faith soon secured a solid ground and spread far on all sides. Even during the reign of Anawrahta the fame of Pagan as a centre of the Theravāda faith was so well established that she exchanged religious gifts with Ceylon, and, what is more, established direct religious relations with that island where Pāli Buddhism had built up its new home after a long period of cruel Cola persecution and its eventual banishment from South India. Relations with Eastern India were maintained mainly through periodical embassies deputed to worship at the Bodhgaya shrine, and through Buddhist monks and Brāhmaṇa priests from India, but it was with Ceylon that she came eventually to be linked up in all matters connected with Theravāda Buddhism. This, we have already explained, was but inevitable. Since India had already ceased to be the home of Theravāda Buddhism and Ceylon had now become the land where the religion found a congenial abode, the Buddhist monks of Burma came to look up to the brotherhood of that island as the source of all inspiration, of wisdom and purity and of the religion itself in its pristine form and character. In fact, the Mahāvihāra of

Ceylon came to be considered as their Mecca; and this attitude of the Burmese brotherhood was in reality responsible for the introduction of the Sīhala Saṃgha and the division of the Buddhist Church of Burma into two opposing factions, the Maramma Saṃgha or the older organisation that presumably came to being as a result of contact with South India, and the Sīhala Saṃgha or the new organisation that owed its life and inspiration to the Mahāvihāra of Ceylon. The Sīhala Saṃgha in course of time was further divided into various factions, one differing from the other not on any important metaphysical doctrine, but on subtle questions of the Vinaya. In their opposition to the Maramma Saṃgha, however, the different factions of the Sīhala Saṃgha chose to offer a united front.

The Sīhala Saṃgha gradually established itself in the Môn or Talaing country as well where too there grew up a number of contending factions. Such splitting up into various factions naturally led to the disintegration of the factions themselves as well as to the degeneration of the religious Order, an unfortunate state of things which is faithfully reflected in the preamble of the Kalyāṇī inscriptions. A move towards unity and strength, towards infusion of new life into the religion was the need of the day; and it came as if in response to a great social demand when Dhammaceti was crowned king of Pegu (1472). Again the Sinhalese brotherhood of the Mahāvihāra came to the aid of the religion in Burma, and the reformation of Dhammaceti practically led to the final triumph of the Sīhala Saṃgha as well as to the better consolidation of the Saṃgha in Burma. It is important here to note that from the very introduction of the Sinhalese fraternity the royal authority had always lent its support to the new order in preference to the old, which was not a little responsible for the position of supremacy the Sinhalese Saṃgha came eventually to acquire in Burma. The triumph of the Sīhala Saṃgha was indeed the triumph of the Mahā-

vihāra tradition that stood for orthodoxy; and this orthodoxy by which is meant strict comformity to the rules of the Vinaya according to orthodox interpretation was ever the character and ideal of the religion in Burma.

We may here pause to consider the extent reached by the various forms of Sanskrit Buddhism in Burma. It has already been pointed out that Theravāda was not the only form of Buddhism in the country. Sarvāstivāda, on the evidence of Sanskrit Buddhist epigraphs as well as on that of I-tsing, was a prevalent form of the religion in about the seventh and eighth centuries A.D.; and, if the local chronicles are to be believed, some sort of Mahayanism and Mahayanist Tantrikism had also penetrated into Upper Burma, probably by the land-route by way of Tibet, Assam and Manipur. In fact, when Anawrahta introduced Theravāda to Pagan there had already been in existence some sort of Buddhist Tantrik worship which orthodox Buddhism considered as heresy. Besides, there were the Samaṇākuṭṭakas, probably the same as the Aris, who had a powerful following at least in and around Pagan. Their existence is proved by the paintings on the walls of some of the temples of Pagan as well as by the discoveries of sculptures, bronzes and terracotta plaques representing Tantrik Buddhist divinities. The prevalence of Mahāyāna and Mantrayāna is also testified to by more than one Tibetan text. Regular and determined attempts were made by successive kings to exterminate the Aris, but they were successful not until the reformation of Dhammaceti. Somehow or other Tantrik Buddhist texts and Mahayanist texts on logic were made subjects of study by monks of Theravāda affiliation; a few such texts were preserved in a monastic library of Upper Burma as late as 1442 A.D.

The reformation of Dhammaceti bade well for the religion for some time at least; but the majority of the kings of Burma

were swarthy tyrants and relentless vandals caring but little for the religion. Some of them even delighted in killing monks and robbing monasteries of their treasures. Of course there were many also, not necessarily religious in any way or having any high spiritual ideals and aspirations, who strove to play the part of guardian-patrons of the religion by bestowing bounties on the monasteries and establishing new religious foundations. Not unoften the motive behind each benefaction was to secure the support of the religious brotherhood who were the only organised band capable of influencing social and political opinion. Thus the history of the religion during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is the history of alternate inroads on and benevolent patronage of the Church just as it pleased the individual on the throne or in power. Not unoften personal or political considerations played their part and determined the attitude of the ruling authorities. However, as years rolled on towards the end of the seventeenth century, the Saṃgha again began to show signs of disintegration. The only way to stop the rut was to activise the Saṃgha by tightening up the disciplinary controls and by a general levelling up monastic standards. Factions due to difference of opinion as to questions of monastic discipline were already disturbing the Saṃgha and unrest was slowly brewing up. Soon the contending parties came to engage themselves in a long and bitter struggle in course of which the Saṃgha purged itself again of the impurities that had gathered during the last two centuries.

The struggle centred round what came to be known as the Pūrupaṇa-Ekaṃasika Controversy. With the dawn of the eighteenth century when the controversy came to the surface the history of the religion in Burma enters a new phase. Readers of the foregoing pages must have noted that the few events of importance that turned the course of this history or infused new life and enthusiasm into the

religion itself were all concerned with the preservation or resuscitation of the pristine purity of the faith, and were therefore connected with the Vinaya rules of monastic discipline. That story was to repeat itself ; indeed, the whole canvas of the history of the religion in the next century is covered by questions centering round monastic discipline and consolidation. The Pārupaṇa-Ekaṃsika controversy passed through many vicissitudes, sometime the heterodox school won, sometime the orthodox, but, as was to be expected, the final triumph lay eventually with the orthodox school, that is, with those who strove to keep strictly to the word and spirit of the original teachings of the Master so far as monastic discipline and consolidation were concerned.

The dawn of the nineteenth century saw the introduction of the "Amarapura School" or "Burama Saṃgha" (Burmese Order) in Ceylon, a significant event in the history of Buddhism in Burma, which it is possible to interpret as the first return gift of Burma to Ceylon. About sixty years later two deputations from Ceylon came to Burma with a view to receiving valid *upasampadā* ordination from the Burmese fraternity, and Burma was thus able to return the gift Ceylon had made in the fifteenth century. Before the curtain drops on the stage of the mediaeval period of Burmese history with the end of the reign of Mindon-Min and the British annexation of Upper Burma the history of the religion records another triumph for the orthodox school. Mindon-Min observed with regret that laxity in monastic discipline was in evidence in the Saṃgha which was gradually drifting from its age-old orthodoxy towards a way of life that was contrary to the disciplinary code of the monks. He therefore thought it necessary to impose a vow enjoining strict conformity to Vinaya discipline and saw to it that the vow was kept in word and spirit.

In 1885 the British occupied Mandalay and thus came into possession of the whole of Burma. It signalised the

termination of the old order of things and beginning of the new, in fact, of the modern age in Burma. Naturally it meant a great deal to the religion and to its history which had so long followed a course that found itself incompatible with the new age and new order of things.

The history of Buddhism in Burma is also the history of monastic scholarship; one is complemetary to the other. True, for the early period of our history we have practically no evidence of the scholarly activities of the monks; but the interest in Abhidhamma treatises is evident. However, with the introduction of the faith into Pagan and better and sounder organisation of the Saṃgha we get a glimpse of the scholarly pursuits of the monks inside the seclusion of the monasteries. For centuries these monasteries had been busy centres of scholarly activities; there in the darkness and solitude of the library-hall of the monastery generations of monks strove hard, day in and day out, to master the sacred texts of their religion and other works most suited to their lines of study. No subject was too unworthy for their pursuit and attention; and though naturally Buddhism in all its various aspects and branches demanded the most serious and careful attention, subjects like grammar, logic, medicine, astrology, astronomy, philosophy, polity, law, prosody, metres and even military science claimed their time and labour, grammar of course being one of the most important and favourite. But studies alone did not satisfy the scholarly craving of the monks; they were authors as well and produced works, mostly commentarial, on Buddhist ethics and metaphysics, myths and legends, morals and law, on grammar and prosody, on logic and astrology, on medicine and astronomy and other arts and sciences. The *Sāsanavaṃsa*, the *Gandhavaṃsa*, the *Pitakatthamain* and other chronicles give long lists of such monk-scholars and philosophers, and a longer list of their works, but even these lists must represent only a

fraction of the good and continuous work that was carried on in the network of monasteries all over the country. A careful analysis of the works mentioned in the lists will show that a large majority of texts concerned themselves with the Vinaya which was the subject nearest to the heart of the monks of Burma; Abhidhamma and Sutta treatises followed close next.

Political intrigues and unrest, court squabbles and periodical acts of vandalism were often, it is true, responsible for disturbing the quiet life of the monasteries. And as the monasteries, not unoften, depended to a great extent on royal bounties, scholarly pursuits suffered whenever there was any severe political confusion in the country or an unsympathetic authority sat on the throne. It is on such occasions that one can see a lull in the scholarly pursuits of the monks, but seldom do we find them giving up their studies altogether or forsaking the life and ideal to which they had devoted themselves. Often the religion shone dim and pale, but never did the flame go out; the monks carried the torch ever with unfailing zeal and earnestness till it again burnt bright after unfortunate interludes.

II

CHARACTER AND IDEAL OF THE RELIGION

If one is allowed to conclude anything from the fragmentary Pāli inscriptions found at the old city of the Pyus, it may be said that the earliest phase of the Theravāda faith in Burma was mostly concerned with the metaphysical aspect of the religion. But the material at our disposal is too scanty to enable us to form any idea as to the character of the religion at that early period. In fact, that character was not determined until some time after the introduction of the faith into Upper Burma. It invariably takes some time for a new faith to determine its own character and find out

its ideal under given local conditions and not unoften they are determined by the force of socio-economic circumstances that mould its course of history. Indeed, the linking up of the career of Buddhism of Burma with the Mahāvihāra tradition of Ceylon was primarily responsible for the character the religion in Burma came to assume and the ideal it came to cherish. The Mahāvihāra stood for orthodoxy, for essential purity of life and conduct as well as for monastic consolidation; the slightest deviation from the Vinaya code of discipline was sternly and rigidly criticised and punished. To this tradition the Burmese Saṃgha gradually came to be affiliated until finally it identified itself with the character and ideal of the Sinhalese Church as represented by the Mahāvihāra.

Burmese Buddhism thus came to be less concerned with deep metaphysical problems of the religion, and though the Abhidhamma continued to engage the attention of the monks —the seventeenth century was pre-eminently the century of Abhidhamma studies—Vinaya was undoubtedly their first love. All along the course of history the religion stresses more and more on a disciplined and consolidated monastic life; it is on Vinaya rules that Burmese Buddhism takes its stand. It is interesting to find that all the major movements for reform, all priestly or kingly acts of importance in connection with religion, and all minor disturbances within the Saṃgha were in one way or other concerned with rules of monastic discipline. It is curious that no deep spiritual or metaphysical doctrine ever moved the religious order to its depths. In Burma the purity of the religion has again and again been threatened by inroads from other religions, for example, Mahayanism and Mahayanist Tantrikism and Brahmanism, by deep-seated primitive faiths and practices, by individual members within the Saṃgha itself as well as by contending ideas and ideals. But eventually it always emerged triumphant from amidst all trials and struggles,

and upheld the ideal of monastic discipline as laid down by the Master. There had been occasional lapses, but movements for reform were immediately set on foot to bring the Order back to its original ideal of purity and improve its moral fibre. Not for once had the orthodox cause had a defeat, and it is an important consideration that it had always the royal authority on its side. Burmese Buddhism therefore underwent very little transformation with the march of time; it was. thus practically the same in the time of Mindon-Min as it had been when we first catch a clear glimpse of it after the introduction and consolidation of the Sīhala Saṃgha, or, in other words, of the orthodox Theravāda School. If, therefore, anybody wants to know and see Buddhism as conceived and preached by the Buddha himself so far as Saṃgha life goes one can see a nearest approach to it in the monasteries of Burma.

But Burma has hardly any creative contribution to Buddhist logic and metaphysics to her credit. Buddhism as an intellectual and emotional discipline certainly engaged their attention; but there is hardly any evidence throughout the centuries of their having ever made any conscious attempt to expand or interpret creatively the Buddhist way and philosophy of life. There have been recent attempts towards such contribution, but on the whole Buddhism in Burma remained and still does remain a colonial religion.

III

WHAT BUDDHISM HAS DONE FOR BURMA

Of all the Indianised lands of South-eastern Asia, Burma is indeed the only country where monastic Buddhism of the Theravāda nikāya survives to this day in its pristine purity and glory. In Campa and Kamboj as well as in Java and Sumatra, Theravāda Buddhism could hardly make any headway against Brahmanical Hinduism and Mahayanism and

its allied cults; in Siam priestly corruption had undermined its purity;. but in Burma the religion survived every, attack directed against it, and successfully swallowed all the religions that came to contend its claim to superiority. Even the heathen with powerful gods of primitive belief, the *Nat* spirits, for example, came slowly and gradually to merge themselves into the more pure, simple and direct faith that brought light into the land, and hope and solace into the minds of thousands. To ask what Burma owes to Buddhism is to be told at once that it was Buddhism that brought Burma into the arena of culture and civilisation and in one line with the other countries of the Indian Orient. Indeed, Buddhism was the one civilising factor in Burmese life society.

Besides, Buddhism gave to the people of Burma a religion that replaced the gross and primitive heathenism of earlier centuries. In the place of rude and barbaric cults fostering animistic and totemistic worship they had received one of the simplest and purest faiths mankind has ever known. To speculate what Burma would have been without Buddhism is to imagine Burma given up to those barbarous images of heathen gods, the *Nat* spirits, that stand as it were with folded hands round the more important sacred shrines of Buddhism (e.g., the Shwezigon in Pagan). Anawrahta, asked why he had allowed them in a Buddhist shrine, said, "Men will not come for the sake of the new faith. Let them come for their old gods and gradually they will be won over." And eventually, they were indeed won over.

Buddhism, moreover, exercised a most sobering influence on the rude semi-civilised Burmans and the ruder northern invaders, particularly the Shans that later on came to occupy a large portion of Burma as their realm. It was through Buddhism that they came in touch with civilisation; it moulded them into a new people, as it were, it gave them

self-expression and brought out the very best that was in them. The spirit of the religion moved the peoples of Burma to such depths that a whole realm pressed itself to its service; it enthused them to activities in all spheres that make life beautiful and worth living—in art, in literature and in general culture. To contemplate rude and primitive tribes like the Burmans and the Shans given up to the building of beautiful and magnificent temples and decorating them with sculptures and paintings, or to think how thousands enjoined upon themselves the strict vows of a monkish life in the seclusion of monasteries busying themselves there in enriching the store of knowledge of the world or in seeking deliverance for themselves and their fellow creatures, is to admire the wonderful magic that Buddhism wrought on the people of Burma. To-day all that is beautiful and attractive in Burmese life and society and manners and customs come in fact from Buddhism. The religion gave them deeper thoughts to contemplate upon, higher principles to live for and nobler ideals to aspire after. It gave them a new outlook on life, and influenced the notions and beliefs of the average Burman to a considerable extent.

Buddhism has also been a great unifying factor in Burma. Racial jealousies and rivalries did indeed exist even within the Saṃgha, but it was Buddhism that eventually brought the Talaings and the Pyus, the Burmans and the Shans, the Thais and the Karens and numerous other smaller ethnic groups under one banner in the name of one common religion, and unified them as one whole, though racially they had hardly anything in common and were even hostile to one another. Buddha was their common teacher, Dharma was their one common goal and Saṃgha was their one common meeting ground.

Buddhism gave to Burma a society based on the theory of equality of social standards. Discarding wealth as well

as caste as Buddhism did, society in Burma hardly knew any grading based either on material possession or on birth. Very few countries in fact enjoy such a democratic social life as Burma does even to-day; and whoever has cared to enter into its spirit and understand the meaning thereof knows very well that it is one of those remarkable gifts Buddhism has given to Burma. Another gift of Buddhism to Burmese life is the very high percentage of literacy among the Burmese people. This is even to-day, as it was in olden times, the work of the Buddhist monks whose one duty is to initiate every boy and girl of the neighbourhood into the art of reading and writing so as to enable him or her to read and understand the most essential texts of the religion. Every village or a cluster of neighbouring villages in Burma has even to this day a monastery school (*phongyi kyaung*), and until recent times every boy and girl, within a certain specified age, of the neighbourhood had to spend a specified time as a novice in the monastery school after which he or she was at liberty to go back to a layman's life or take to the life of a monk or nun as he or she chose. It is in these monasteries that Burmese boys and girls received their early training, and as the system was almost obligatory, Buddhism had been instrumental in carrying education and a particular attitude towards life and society to almost every home in Burma.

Buddhism had also an indirect influence on the growth of Burmese language and literature. Burmese originally was a primitive language, poor in ideas and vocabulary and in phrases and idioms and unable to express the most abstruse and abstract thoughts of Buddhism. Pāli, the language of Theravāda Buddhism, was therefore its only guide, and through that sacred literature, and that of the Mons or Talaings, also deeply indebted to Pāli, Burma found its surest way to intellectual development. Their lisping native tongue exercised itself through the language and literature of a

religion which they had accepted for themselves, and gradually they learnt to express themselves in the language of their own. In that adapting process Burmese language and literature became endowed with the richness of Pāli, and a primitive non-Indian mind raised itself to a level so as to be able to claim kinship with the highly developed Indian thought and culture.

IV

THE SAMGHA AND THE SOCIETY

It would be a sad mistake to suppose that the Buddhist monks of Burma lived an isolated and self-complacent existence. Indeed, nothing could be further from truth. To read the large number of inscriptions of the Pagan dynasty and all other kings that followed them is to know what intimate ties of mutual help and understading, of love and respect bound the Saṃgha and the people together. In fact the Saṃgha constituted an essential element—by far the most effective and powerful element—of the entire social fabric of the peoples of Burma. If those who had the means reared up and maintained temples, stūpas and monasteries and whoever could afford supplied the means wherewith the monks not only met the daily requirements of their earthly existence but also fulfilled the duties demanded of them by their religion, or if hundreds of men and women offered themselves as slaves to religious establishments they did so because the members of the Saṃgha reciprocated such gifts and services with commendable responsibility and with a good will and noble heart that no body failed to appreciate. No doubt the high ethical and spiritual values of Buddhism and the generally high moral tone of the Saṃgha were the main inspiration that drew people to the services of the monks and their organisation ; but one cannot

but recognise that the people were deeply conscious of the services rendered to them by the monks.

The most important of services directly rendered was in the sphere of education, both secular and religious. Since every Burmese male over seven years of age had to spend a certain specified period of their young lives in the monasteries where they not only learnt to read and write but also imbibed the teachings of Buddhism and the Buddhist way of life, the monasteries were rightly considered to be the centres whence radiated education and enlightenment. Indeed, until he completed his novitiate a Burmese boy was not considered as having reached maturity in membership of the society. This explains the hold the Saṃgha used to exercise on the people of Burma.

In every generation there has been a considerable number of monks who were men of outstanding piety and learning ; their lives have been commendable examples of devotion and prayer, of integrity and discipline, of love and piety, of tolerance and forgiveness, of patience and unselfishness, of charity and service. Their day to day life, lived for the good and solicitude of others around them, helped the people to imbibe some of the noblest of human values that Buddhism sought to hold aloft. The kindness and hospitality that any sojourner in Burma receives from the common folk, the tolerance and the tenderness, the piety and devotion that one still notices in an average Burmese village-man or woman are direct contributions of the monks to Burmese life. When you see a wooden house by the road side, containing earthen pots full of cold drinking water daily replenished by one who feels for the thirsty traveller, or a *zayat* or rest-house where you can rest for the night without paying a single cowrie, or you find a host of parentless children adopted by kindly neighbours, or daily feeding of birds and beasts by the ordinary folk, or a whole village well-provided by some folk who thinks kindly

of his fellow-men, or when you see any one going out to call a monk from the nearest monastery to attend on the sick in his house, you will at once know what part the monks and the monasteries play in the life of the people. Not without reason the Buddhist monk in Burma is called "Phongyi" or "Great Glory" which explains the great respect and admiration in which he is held by the people.

Any one who has spent a whole year in Burma must have seen and enjoyed the gay and colourful seasonal festivals—notably the *Thin-gyan* or water-festival in early April, the *Wa* or rainy season festival in early July and the *Thadin-gyut* festival in late September or early October—in which men and women, rich and poor all alike take part. Or, he may have witnessed the festival connected with the cremation of a well-known Buddhist monk. Practically all such festivals that are today important elements of Burmese social life had originally nothing to do with Buddhism, but came down from primitive tribal worship and rituals, not even excluding the cremation festival which is just a form of primitive ancestor worship. Some of them were even connected with *Nāt* worship. Today, however, they have all clustered round Buddhism, and the centre of all festivals is the pagoda-shrine where the first offerings are made, and not a little of the gaiety and entertainment of all such festivals is provided by the performances of one of the ten great birth-stories of the Buddha. The integration of some of the gay and colourful aspects of primitive life into the functional side of Buddhism that holds that 'all is suffering, all is transitory' must be considered to be the work of Burmese monks and the Burmese people holding together and fostering a common understanding.

Equally significant is the belief in and worship of spirits and faith in omens and magic that go hand in hand with Buddhism in Burma, not only amongst the people but inside the monasteries as well where the more learned

and wise theras no doubt look down on them. Most of the indigenous peoples of Burma came down from the hills of Tibetan and Chinese borders and carried along with them their animistic faiths and practices that manifested itself in the worship of *Nāts* or spirits of various forms, classes and descriptions. Tribal memories and traditions die hard; even when the peoples of Burma accepted Buddhism they did not wholly give up or forget their old gods and faiths that are generally though not always regarded as malevolent. In fact, there is in every village a *Nāt-sin* or shrine for the local spirits and they are regularly propitiated. Burmese Buddhism has no quarrel with them and it appears that they are gladly tolerated. This attitude of Buddhist monks has gone far towards drawing the people nearer to them and to Buddhism and building up a common ground from which the rational and the emotional, the intellectual and the primitive can equally draw their sustenance and inspiration. The Buddhist monks thus played the most important social role of civilising a primitive mind through a process of rational synthetisation and yet without letting it feel that it was being cut off from its tribal and primitive moorings.

V

THE SAMGHA AND THE KING: SAMGHA'S POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

The picture of a monk in Burma is not that of a recluse cut off from society, rapt in calm contemplation, and completely given up to meditation; he is not the embodiment of spirituality detached from all and above all joys and sorrows. His is a simple and modest life, but he is no ideal of renunciation as it is generally understood. He is thus as good a member of the society as anybody else, taking interest in matters spiritual as well as temporal. He is a member of a brotherhood that is closely in touch with society and shares

in its strength and weakness, in its joys and sorrows. Its more wise and experienced members not unoften become advisers to kings and ministers of state and participate in political discussions and struggles just as any lay man does, while its ordinary members take part, whenever there is need of them, in court-intrigues and party squabbles just as easily as they shut themselves up within the sequestered life of the monasteries. On several occasions in our history do the monks take active part in the political intrigues and turmoils of the times, sometime in support of the reigning monarch, sometime against. Of instances of church-elders becoming or playing the part of trusted advisers of kings we have good many; they were often so powerful as to determine the major policies of the state; on more than one occasion they indeed acted as peace-makers and negotiators in grave affairs of state. In matters of disputes concerning the church the king is usually and perhaps naturally under the influence of his preceptor who is also the supreme head of the Saṃgha; it is according to the latter's conviction and affiliation that the king forms his own opinion and lends his support accordingly.

More than the political occupations of the monks or their authority in matters of state was the authority of the king in the affairs of the church. This authority seems to have been generally recognised and accepted by the Saṃgha from the very beginning. Not only that he appoints the Saṃgharāja, but it is he who takes the initiative and provides the funds and other necessities in all movements for reform, beginning from Anawrahta's time and terminating with Mindon-Min's. He plays the part of the guardian-patron of the church, and we have more than one instance when he even prescribes particular subjects and courses of religious study, or commands monk-teachers to go hither and thither in connection with the work of the church. No member of the Saṃgha ever questioned the king's authority over such

matters, nor considered that he was interfering in a matter that was outside his ordinary jurisdiction. The Saṃgha as a whole even fully recognised the king's authority to decide religious controversies by royal decrees; in fact, the Pārupaṇa-Ekaṃsika dispute was actually decided in this way. Also, they recognised the king's authority to impose vows on the monks; the point at issue was not so much whether the king, Mindon-Min in this case, had any right to impose the vow as whether the vow itself was necessary and was approved of by the sacred texts. For themselves, the kings sincerely held that ecclesiastical affairs were quite within the jurisdiction of their authority. There is nothing to doubt that some of them were deeply influenced by the pure and sublime ideal of the religion and had a real love for it; they considered themselves as members of the Saṃgha and did all they could to further its cause.

The Saṃgha generally was loyal to the king and reciprocated faithfully and well the good work done by him. His authority seems to have not only been recognised but gladly acquiesced in by the monks in general. In more than one instance they also stood by him in his distress. "The Order, though enriched by the gifts of pious lay men, yet depends, in the last resort, upon the king. Under such despotic rule no man's property or labour is his own; the means of supporting the Saṃgha may be withdrawn from any subject who is under royal displeasure. The peaceful easy life dear to the Burmese bhikkhu, the necessary calm for study or the writing of books, the land or water to be set apart for ecclesiastic ceremonies (a fitting place for which is of the highest importance), all these are only secured by the king's favour and protection. If this be borne in mind, the general loyalty of the Saṃgha to the head of the state is easy to understand."[5]

[5] Bode, *Sāsanavaṃsa*, Intro., pp. 53-54, where she gives a brilliant analysis of the relation between the Saṃgha and the state.

But this loyalty must not be understood to be the same as abject surrender. It is true the Saṃgha had largely to depend on the king's favour, but they did not surrender their souls for the royal mess of pottage. In fact, we have numerous instances of monks, high and noble souls, caring little for the king's favour or disfavour, bravely challenging the royal will and courting imprisonment, banishment and even death. Once a royal preceptor and primate of the realm refused to abide in the kingdom of an unscrupulous king and went to self-banishment in disgust; again, a venerable monk recorded his strong disapproval of the building of a monastery by forced labour; at another time members of the Order refused to accept gifts made by the king, gifts secured by coercion from the people in times of widespread misery and poverty. On another occasion, another monk steadfastly stuck to his own views in contravention of the royal decree, and bravely faced the angry king who threatened him with imprisonment and death. Still, at another time the Saṃgha stoutly and successfully resisted the claim of another king to be recognised as the final Buddha, and not long after also the claims of two kings to the right of royal forfeiture of properties once made over as gifts to the Saṃgha. It is easy to multiply similar instances besides those already cited in the foregoing chapters.

VI

THE SAMGHA AND ITS CONSTITUTION: THE SAMGHARĀJA

THE RESOURCES OF THE SAMGHA

Buddhism brought with it its own church organisation as well, and the constitution and organisation of the Saṃgha in Burma were much the same as in India. Within the monasteries life as in Buddhism followed its usual course with the chief monk at the head of the monastic household.

Each monastery was thus under a chief thera, and each single monastery was an autonomous institution managing its own internal affairs. They had to find their own resources and tend to the religious needs of the locality in which they were situated. Monasteries situated within a particular geographical or racial area and affiliated to a common Saṃgha often combined to form one unit without however losing their autonomy, but that was no essential element in the church organisation. All the monasteries of the kingdom participated in a common federation of which each autonomous monastery was a member, it being represented in the federation by its chief thera. This federation of monasteries subscribing to the creed and discipline of a particular school, the Sinhalese or Burmese, is what constituted the Saṃgha. At the head of the Saṃgha was the Saṃgharāja, the king as it were of the church organisation, with almost the same supreme authority as that of the temporal king, in matters relating to the church. True, we do not hear of a Saṃgharāja mentioned as such before the fifteenth century, but all the same, we have always a supreme head of the Saṃgha from the beginning of our recorded history, *i.e.*, from 1057 A.D. Shin Arahan was indeed the first Saṃgharāja followed by Panthagu and Uttarajiva. More often than not the Saṃgharāja was no other than the king's own tutor and preceptor; from the very beginning successive preceptors of the king were accepted as primates of the realm. Throughout the course of our history nobody seems to have ever questioned this practice and procedure. It will be seen that the exalted position of the Saṃgharāja was not elective which it ought to have been; on the contrary he was appointed by the king. With the death, abdication or deposition of the king, therefore, there was almost invariably a replacement of the Saṃgharāja by one who happened to be the ācariya of the new monarch. This

gives us perhaps the key to the understanding of the king's authority in ecclesiastical affairs.

It is true that the Saṃgharāja was the supreme head of the church, but his authority was not absolute. On occasions when there were differences of opinion or on matters that vitally concerned the church he invited other prominent elders of the organisation to a conference and took their opinions into consideration. The initiative almost always came from the king and the Saṃgharāja, again at the king's initiative, consulted the chief theras as well. From this practice there gradually grew up a consultative council of Mahātheras consisting of four members, each designated as Saṃgharāja and collectively placed at the head of the Saṃgha, under the presidentship of the supreme head of the Order known as the Mahāsaṃgharāja. When Bodawpaya made an attempt to further strengthen the church organization he added four more members to the already existing council of four, thus making a total of eight members, each with the title of Saṃgharāja. The supreme head of the Order was also there at the head of the committee of eight; and like him all the eight Saṃgharājas also were appointed by the king. The members of this consultative church council were all paid by the king who was the head of the church. The duties of this council were many and various. They had to maintain a regular register of all monks of the realm with particulars of age, locality and ordination, to administer monastic discipline and punish offending monks, to manage church-lands and other properties of the Saṃgha, to prevent schism and arbitrate or give decisions on questions of monastic discipline and doctrinal differences. The council was thus the main instrument through which the king not only guided and controlled the entire network of monastic organisation throughout the realm but also kept himself and his administrative machinery in touch with the people over whom the Saṃgha

had considerable sway. British administration, essentially secular in aim and ideal, allowed this council to lapse and slowly but eventually made itself independent of any relation with the Saṃgha and its constituents, and hence to a very large extent isolated from the people. To this undoubtedly is due much of the misunderstanding and consequent trouble and unrest that exist to-day between the Government on the one hand and the large army of monks on the other.

"In 1887, the primate and thirteen bishops met the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Frederick Roberts, offering to preach submission to the English in every village throughout the land, if their jurisdiction was confirmed. The staff trained by the English in Lower Burma for two generations included Burmese Buddhist extra Commissioners who could have represented the Chief Commissioner on the Primate's Board. But English administrators, being citizens of the modern secularist state, did not even consider the Primate's proposal; they merely expressed polite benevolence, and the ecclesiastical commission lapsed. To-day schism is ripe, any charlatan can dress as a cleric and swindle the faithful, and criminals often wear the robe and live in a monastery to elude the police. As Sir Edward Sladen, one of the few Englishmen who had seen native institutions as they really were, said, "the English *non-possumus* was not neutrality, but interference in religion." (Harvey, in the Cambridge History of India, Vol. V.)

The resources of the Saṃgha were mainly limited to private benefactions and royal bounties. There was fortunately no dearth of pious lay men, and on auspicious and ceremonial occasions they used to make endowments of rice-fields, fruit-trees, cattle, and even books and all other necessaries of monastic life to temples and monasteries. Gifts of servants and slaves were also made and we have numerous references to them in chronicles and inscriptions. The more bounteous gifts of land, of water for valid *sīmās*, of temples and vihāras, or of libraries, were generally received from the king and the nobles who usually were generous givers. On the whole occasional depressions apart, the monasteries of Burma fared well, and financially they had hardly any long periods of stress and struggle ; we have indeed no instance of monasteries suffering from want of

material needs which however were modest and very limited. It is certainly an unmistakable evidence of the love and fostering care which the Burmese people, the court and the nobility bestowed on the Saṃgha and its numerous establishments. Only on one occasion did a king, Bodawpaya, become jealous enough of the resources of the Saṃgha and his successor Bagyidaw made inquiries if he could, according to law, forfeit the lands once bostowed on the Saṃgha. His ministers pointed out, however, that he could not do so, for the Order could, according to the *Vinaya* and the *Aṭṭhakathā*, continue to claim all rights bestowed by individuals in the past.

VII

THE NEW CONDITIONS

It has already been pointed out that the British annexation of Burma signalised the termination of the old order of things and the beginning of the new, in fact, of the modern age in the country. Buddhism still weilds a most powerful influence, just as it did in the past, on the life of the people, and is still a great social force. British administration allowed the ecclesiastical council to lapse and thus lost the main prop on which rested the social fabric of the Burmese people, but could not ignore the religion that was the most vital factor of Burmese life, and had to frame its laws in accordance with the religious laws and customs of the land. Within the monastery the chief thera is still the supreme authority, and the monks pursue the daily routine in much the same usual way; their literary occupations are also as potent, and their social and spiritual authority with the people as effective.

But the Saṃgha is no more in a position to exert the same direct influence on the social and political affairs of the country. Modern conditions of life, Western science, education

and philosophy and state policy which are now strong forces to be reckoned with in Burmese life and society as elsewhere in the East are slowly but steadily creating new values and ideals of life and bringing a new society into being. The resources of the Saṃgha have also consequently suffered to a considerable extent. Moreover, it is being seriously doubted if a small country like Burma can really support such a large monkish population under modern conditions of life and society without their doing some work that is socially and economically creative. Various other forces have also combined to oblige them to withdraw themselves within the four walls of the monasteries where they confine their activities strictly to religious and literary pursuits, except for occasional inroads into the realm of active politics. Their participation in contemporary social and political activities and their influence on the ruling authority have generally been thrown into the background. Indeed, present-day state policy and administration have failed to understand the social implications of the Buddhist monastic organisation and to recognise it as a great social factor in Burmese life and politics. As. things stand, any future administration to be socially responsible to the land and its people must be able to harness the immense potentialities that reside in the Buddhist Saṃgha and exploit creatively its large social sweep. Invested with responsibility and confidence, the Saṃgha also will feel the call to rid itself of the abuses it suffers from at the present moment.

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BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INDEX

Abhidhamma-paṇṇarasaṭṭhāna, 173
Abhidhamma-ṭīkā, 176, 200
Abhidhammattha-saṃgaha, 179, 212, 228
Abhidhammattha-saṃgaha-pakaraṇa, 221
Abhidhammatthasaṃgaha, 41, 127
Abhidhammatthasaṃgaha-ṭīkā, 128
Abhidhammāvatāra, 61
Abhidhamma-vibhāvanī, 179
Abhidhānappadīpikā, 173, 222, 244
Akkharavisodhanī, 245
Alaungpaya Ayedawbon, 225
Ancient Geography of India, 23
Ancient Inscriptions of Ceylon, 99
Annual Report of the Archæological Survey of Burma, 36ff, 59, 106ff, 138ff, 147, 162ff, 167ff, 183, 203
Annual Report of the Archæological Survey of India, 43, 61ff, 62, 64ff, 87, 103, 110ff, 134ff, 140ff, 143, 145ff, 148ff
Annual Report of South Indian Epigraphy, 44
Anuṭīkā, 179
Apheggusāra, 176
Archæological Survey of South India, 44
Ariyavaṃsālaṃkāra, 234
Arthaśāstra, 4, 6
Asoka (Smith), 9
Aṭṭhakathā, 92
Aṭṭhasālinī, 172, 179, 207, 210, 222

Bālāvatāra, 128
Bhilsa Topes, The, 8
Brahmanical Gods in Burma (Ray), 56, 146, 73, 148, 150
Bṛhaja, 128
Bṛhajjātaka, 128
Bṛhatkathā, 6
Bṛhatkathāślokasaṃgraha, 5
Bṛhatsaṃhitā, 5, 17
British Burma Gazetteer, 77
Buch des Ragawan, des Konigsgeschichte, 75
Buddhagaya (Mitra), 107
Buddhālaṃkāra, 179
Buddhist India, 8
Buddhist Records of the Western World, 48ff
Bulletin de l'Ecole Française d'Extrême Orient, 19, 22, 24, 47ff, 50ff, 56, 87, 192, 252
Burma with special reference to the relations with China, 56
Burmese Code of Manu, 25

Calcutta Review, 28
Cambridge History of India, 275
Catalogue (Nevill), 210
Catalogue of Indian Manuscripts, 126
Catalogue of Mandalay Manuscripts, 127, 129, 171ff, 199, 210
Catu-sāmaṇera-vatthu, 234
Cetivakathā, 94
Cetivaṃsa, 94
Chaddanta-nāgarājuppattikathā, 234
Chanda-sārattha-vikāsinī, 171
Chau-ju-kua, 50ff
Cha-paccaya-dīpanī, 171
Chin-t'ang-shu, 55
Christianity in Ceylon, 238
Chronicle, Glass Palace, 78ff, 81, 94, 111ff, 117, 123
,, Great, 26, 94, 99
,, Hugappyittaung, 94
,, Middle, 26
,, New, 79, 94
,, New Pagan, 94
,, Pagan, 94
,, Paklat Talaing, 80ff
,, Pegu, 94
,, Rakhaing, 94
,, Tagaung, 94
,, Talaing, 94
,, Tavoy, 94
,, Tharekittara, 94
,, Thaton, 26
,, Yazawingyaw, 180
Chronicles, T'ang, 253
Cūla-gaṇṭhi-pada, 235
Cullavaṃsa, 46, 91, 99, 155, 158

Daṇḍippakaraṇa, 173
Description of the Burmese Empire, A 241
Deux Itineraires, 48, 56
Dhammapada, 41, 68
Dhammasaṅgaṇī, 29, 36, 41, 43, 210, 212
Dhammathat, 131
Dhammathat-kyaw, 201
Dhammathat, Wareru, 201
Dhātukathā, 212
Dhātukathā-yojanā, 222
Dīpavaṃsa, 7, 13, 15, 26
Divyāvadāna, 4ff

Eastern monachism, 230, 238
Ekakkhara-kosa, 198
Epigraphia Birminica, 3, 11ff, 91, 103ff, 113ff, 117ff, 120ff, 133, 152ff, 156, 185, 187, 190
Epigraphia Indica, 4, 33, 42, 61
Essay (Forchammer), 171ff, 175, 201
Etimāsamidīpanī, 104
Etudes Asiatiques, 4

Fü-nan chi, 21

Gaṇapāṭha, 5
Gandhābharaṇa, 179
Gandhatthi, 171
Gandhavaṃsa, 91, 104, 123, 125ff, 171, 173, 176, 179, 259
Gandhisāra, 127
Gaṇṭhi-padattha-vaṇṇanam, 244
Gaṇṭhisāra, 127
Guḷhattha-dīpanī, 212

Harivaṃśa, 15
Hinduism and Buddhism, 14, 28
History of Burma (Harvey) 48, 94ff, 100, 124, 175, 180, 183, 225
History of Burma (Phayre), 209
History of Indian and Eastern Architecture, 107
Hmannan, 81ff, 96, 99ff, 109, 112ff, 170, 200ff
Hmannan Yazawin. 25, 94ff
Hsin-t'ang-shu, 55ff
Hsutaungganpye, 180

Indian Antiquary, 3, 9, 25ff, 80, 91, 226
Indian Culture, 28
Inscription, Gopalpur Bricks, 42
,, Kasia, 42
,, Kurram casket, 42
,, Maināmatī Copper-plate, 202
,, Po-U-Daung, 3, 226, 230
Inscriptions of Pagan, Pinya and Ava, 124, 126, 171, 174, 192
I-tsing's Records of the Buddhist Religion, 45, 47
I wu chih, 20

Jardine Prize Essay, 127, 131, 229
Jātaka, 4, 6, 179
,, Aggika, 135
,, Aggikabhāradvāja, 135
,, Bhūridatta, 146, 180
,, Dīghitikosala, 134
,, Hatthipāla, 180
,, Kosalarāja, 134
,, Mahāgovinda, 134
,, Mahājanaka, 4, 133, 146, 241
,, Mahāummagga, 133, 136, 146
,, Mahosadha, 133
,, Mūgapakkha, 66
,, Nemi, 146
,, Poṭṭhapāda, 135
,, Rādha, 135
,, Sāma, 133, 146
,, Saṃvara, 180
,, Sumedhapaṇḍita, 134
,, Suppāraka, 4
,, Temiya, 146
,, Velama, 134
,, Vessantara, 133, 146, 206
,, Vidhura, 146
,, Vidhurapaṇḍita, 146
Jātakamālā, 4
Jātakatthakathā, 41, 234
Jātaka-visodhana, 179

Journal Asiatique, 5, 14, 19, 33, 51, 56, 61
Journal of the Burma Research Society, 19ff, 48, 50, 52, 54, 131, 160ff, 165, 167ff, 175
Journal of an Embassy from the Governor General of India to the court of Ava, 241
Journal of Indian Archæology, 51
Journal of the Pali Text Society, 91
Journal of a Residence in the Burmese Empire, 241
Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, 42, 54

Kaccāyana, 212
——— bheda, 176
——— gandha, 209
——— sāra, 176
——— sāra-ṭīkā, 171
——— suttaniddesa, 127
——— vaṇṇanā, 199
——— yoga, 128
Kalāpa Vyākaraṇa, 171
Kalyāṇī Inscriptions, 3, 11ff, 26ff, 76, 80, 82, 91, 99, 113ff, 117, 119ff, 130ff, 154ff, 157ff, 184, 187, 190, 255
Kaṅkhāvitaraṇī, 191, 210
Kārikā, 104, 126
Kavisāra, 176, 210
Keddah Annals, 51
Keganpye, 180
Khuddakasikkhā, 116, 190
Koladdhaja, 173
Konbaungṣet Yazawin, 225
Kosaungchok, 201
Kurmavibhāga, 17

Lalitavistara, 65
Law Code, 131
Liang Shu, 19, 51
Life of the Buddha, 8
Life and work of Buddhaghosa, 25, 30
Likhananaya, 221
Liṅgatthavivaraṇa, 128
Liṅgatthavivaraṇappakāsaka, 128
Liṅgatthavivaraṇa-ṭīkā, 128
Liṅgatthavivaraṇavinicchaya, 128
List (Forchammer), 171, 173, 176, 199
List of Inscriptions found in Burma, 128ff, 162ff, 167ff
Lives of the Pilgrims, 49
Lokadīpasāra, 175
Lokuppatti, 128

Madhura-sārattha-dīpanī, 176
Madhu-sārattha-dīpanī, 200
Mahābhārata, 15
Mahākarmavibhaṅga, 4, 14
Mahā-niddesa, 243
Mahā-nissara, 179
Mahā-paṭṭhāna, 229
Mahānipāta, 133
Mahārājavaṃsa, 92
Mahāṭīkā, 129
Mahāvagga, 41

Mahāvaggaṭṭha-kathā, 230
Mahāvaṃsa, 7ff, 10, 13, 15, 30, 46, 91, 99, 112
Mahāvastu, 65
Maṅgala-dīpanī, 202
Maṇidīpa, 179
Maṇikuṇḍala-vatthu, 204
Manisāra-mañjusā, 179
Manorathapūraṇī, 32, 73
Manual of Buddhism, 24
Manual of Indian Buddhism, 9
Matikaṭṭhadīpanī, 127
Maunggan Plates, 37, 42ff
Meiktila Kanbidemawgun, 180
Meiktila Settlement Report, 241
Milindapañha, 4ff, 15, 17
Mukhamattadīpanī, 128
Mukhammattasāra, 129
Myazedi Inscription, 106, 124

Nāgārjunikoṇḍa Inscription, 17, 45
Nāgarājuppaṭṭi-kathā, 244ff
Nālandā Inscription, 42
Nāmacāradīpanī, 127
Nan chou i wu chih, 20ff
Nan hai chi kuei nai fa ch'nan, 47
Nettipakaraṇa, 180, 212, 234
Nidānakathā, 32, 102ff
Niddesa, 4ff
,, Mahā, 4
Nikāya, Aṅguttara, 29, 32, 34ff, 40ff, 73, 243
,, Dīgha, 34ff, 41, 234, 243
,, Khuddaka, 41
,, Majjhima, 34, 40ff, 245
,, Saṃyutta, 40, 243
Nirayakathā-dīpaka, 245
Nirutti, 172
Nirutti-saṃgaha, 210
Nirutti-sāra-mañjusā, 172, 210
Notes on the Ancient Geography of Burma, 29
Notes on Buddhist Law, 131, 195
Notes on Early History etc. (Forchammer) 174
Nyāsa, 128, 209ff, 229
Nyāsappadīpaṭikā, 128

Pabbatabbhantara-paṭisamayutta, 179
Padavibhāga, 229
Pali Literature of Burma, 92, 104, 125ff, 178, 192, 195
Pali MSS. at the India Office, 127, 175, 199
Pañcatantra, 15
Pārājikā-kaṇḍa, 35
Paramaṭṭhavindu, 123
Pārāyaṇavatthu, 180
Paritta, 212
Pātimokkha, 190, 210, 246
Paṭisambhidāmagga, 41, 243
Paṭṭhāna, 43, 212
Paṭṭhānagaṇanaya, 127
Paṭṭhānapakaraṇa, 213
Paṭṭhānasārattha-dīpanī, 176, 200
Pawtugi Yazawin, 94
Pei Shih, 50
Periplus of the Erythrean Sea (Schoff), 2ff, 5
Personal Narrative of two years' Imprisonment in Burma, 241
Petālaṃkāra, 234
Piṭakattaya-lakkhaṇa-gandha, 235
Piṭakatthamain, 91, 94, 123, 126ff, 171ff, 176, 200, 222, 230, 259
Puññābhisandavagga, 35
Purāṇa, 5, 15, 17, 49, 146
Purāṇa, Mārkaṇḍeya, 15ff

Rājābhisekagandha, 233
Rājādhirāja-nāmatthappakāsinī, 222
Rājādhirāja-vilāsinī, 234
Rājasevaka-dīpanī, 245
Rājavaṃsa, 92, 177
Rājasaṅkhepa, 212
Rājayazawin, 209
Rājinda-rājābhidheyya-dīpanī, 206
Rājovādavatthu Tigumbathomaṇa, 234
Rāmāyaṇa, 17, 146
Razadarit Ayedawpon, 94
Religieux Eminents, 47, 49, 52ff
Report (Duroiselle), 43
Report (Forchammer), 79, 129, 171, 173, 195
Rock Edicts of Asoka, 10, 12

Sacred Books of the East, 4
Saddanīti, 126, 245
Sadda-sārattha-jālinī, 173
Saddatthabheda-cintā, 244
Saddavindu, 123
Saddavutti, 172, 189
Saddapakāsaka, 172
Saddhamma-nāsinī, 171
Saddappajotikā, 243
Saddavilāsinī, 243
Sādhujjana-vilāsinī, 234
Samantapāsādikā, 172
Sambandhacintā, 129
Sambandhacintā-ṭīkā, 129
Saṃkhepavaṇṇanā, 127, 210
Sammohavinodanī, 28, 172, 210
Saṃvaṇṇana-naya-dīpanī, 210
Saṅkhyāpakāsaka, 202
Sanskrit Buddhism in Burma (Ray), 48, 55, 69, 86, 149, 151
Sāratthadīpanī, 190
Sarvajñanayadīpanī, 210
Sāsanasuddhi-dīpikā, 230
Sāsanavaṃsa, 14, 26, 76, 79ff, 91ff, 101, 105, 113ff, 120ff, 123, 125ff, 155, 168, 170ff, 181, 195ff, 199ff, 202, 204ff, 208, 210ff, 213ff, 218ff, 221ff, 225ff, 229ff, 235, 238, 242ff, 259, 271
Sāsanavaṃsadīpa, 126
Sāsanavaṃsadīpanī, 176, 199
Satta-rājadhamma-vatthu, 204
Shui Ching Chu, 21
Shwegugyi Inscription, 109, 124, 152
Sīlakathā, 245
Sīmālaṅkāra, 127
Sīmālaṅkāra-pakaraṇa, 191

Sīmālaṅkāra-saṃgaha, 191
Slapat Rajawan, 74
Sui shu, 50f
Sumedhakathā, 179
Surājamagga-dīpanī, 244
Surāvinicchaya, 199, 222
Sūtra, Pratityasamutpāda, 42
Sūtras, Mahāyāna, 54
Sutta, Ambaṭṭha, 35
,, Mahāparinibbāna, 35, 41
,, Paṭiccasamutpāda, 40
,, Piṭaka, 35
Sutta, Sāmaññaphala, 35
Suttasaṃgaha, 230
Suttasaṅgīti, 35
Suttaniddesa, 127
Suttavibhaṅga, 35, 246

Tadā-u-ti-mawgun, 180
T'ai-p'ing yu lan, 20ff
Taungdwinlapya, 180
Textes (Coedes), 3
Thamaing, 96
,, Hop-U, 97
,, Ke-Hkayaina, 97
,, Shwemadaw, 75, 97
,, Shwenattaung, 97
,, Shwesandaw, 97
,, Shwezigon Liṅka, 67
,, Thaton Shwezayan Hpayazi, 97
,, Zat-ngaya, 97
T'oung Pao, 50

Udāna, 34, 41
Upāyakathā, 245
Uposathavinicchaya, 189, 245
Upper Burma Gazetteer, 249

Vācakopadesa, 199
Vācavācaka, 129
Vaccavācaka, 129
Vaṃsadīpanī, 94
Vaṇṇabodhana, 221
Vārttika, 5
Vibhaṅga, 23ff, 34, 37, 40, 210, 234
Vibhatyattha, 123, 129, 171
Vimānavatthu, 5
Vimativinodanī, 190
Vinaya, 246
Vinayaganṭhipada, 235
Vinayaguḷhaṭṭhadīpanī, 127
Vinayālaṃkāra, 206
Vinayapakaraṇa, 191
Vinaya Piṭakam, 40ff, 117, 127
Vinayasaṃgaha, 230
Vinayasamuṭṭhānadīpanī, 127
Vinayaṭṭhakathā, 190, 210
Vinayavinicchaya, 233
Visuddhimagga, 25, 28, 41
Visuddhimaggaganṭhi, 127
Visuddhimagga-ganṭhapadattha, 212
Vivādavinicchaya, 245
Vohārattabheda, 245
Vuttodaya, 173
Vuttopañcikā, 171

Yamaka, 212, 233
Yasavaḍḍhanavatthu, 207
Yazawingyaw, 94
Ye-ngwe Inscription, 105
Ywan-Chwang, 54

GENERAL INDEX

Abeyadana, 136, 149f
Abhaya, 129
Acaw, 164
Acyutavikrama, 61
Acyutavikrānta, 61
Adhikarāja, 77
Aggadhammālaṃkāra, 205, 211ff
Aggapaṇḍita, 128
Aggavaṃsa, 126
Alaungpaya, 223, 225ff, 228, 231ff
Alaungsithu, 106ff, 109, 124
Ālavaka 140ff
Alberuni, 5
Alexander, 8
Alikasudara, 8
Amarapura, 233, 239, 242ff
Amara(pura)saṃgha, 238, 239, 247
Amara School, 237, 239, 249, 258
Amarāvatī, 44, 68, 86
Amba-gahapati, 238
Aṃtekina, 8
Ānanda, 64, 121ff, 170, 173, 176, 200
Ānanda, Elder, 107, 131
Ānanda, mahāthera, 113, 116ff
Ānanda temple, 101ff, 126, 133ff, 137ff, 140, 156
Anaukpetlun, 203
Anawrahta, 76ff, 80, 82ff, 85, 87ff, 90, 93, 96ff, 118ff, 125, 130, 134ff, 142ff, 148ff, 151, 155, 157ff, 172, 204, 253ff, 256, 263, 270
Anawrahtaminsaw, 78
Andhra, 14, 44, 59ff, 71
Andhra-Kadamba Script, 69, 86
Andhra-Pallava Script, 71
Anekasetibhinda, 198, 202
Angkor Borei, 22
Aniruddhadeva, 143
Annam, 47, 49, 51
Antibolei, 15
Antigonos, 8
Antiochus, 8
Anuruddha, 90, 127, 202
Anuruddhadeva, 101
Aparānta, 9, 250
Aparāntaka, 7, 15
Aparāntaraṭṭha, 93
Arabs, 5
Arabia, 1
Arahan, Mahāthera, 156
Arahantagaṇa, 177, 202, 210
Arahanta Saṃgha, 121
Arahantathera, 101
Arakan, 16, 18, 26, 107, 203
Arakan hill, 1
Arakan Pagoda, 239
Arakan yoma, 3
Ari, 78, 80, 107, 140, 159
Arimaddana, 81, 93, 99, 127, 155, 1. , 171
Arimaddanapura, 81, 90, 93, 105, 106
Arimittiya. 106
Arimittiya (Bodhisattva), 241
Aris, 172, 256
Ariyālaṃkāra, 205ff, 211, 248
Ariyārahantapakkha bhikkhusaṃgha, 120
Ariyārahanta Saṃgha, 130
Ariyavaṃsa, 178ff
Āryaṃahāsaṃghika nikāya, 53
Āryamūlasarvāstivāda nikāya, 53
Āryasammiti nikāya, 47, 53
Āryasthavira nikāya, 53
Asaṅga, 54
Ashin Anomadassi, 26
,, Arahan, 78
,, Mahāsobhita. 26
,, Mahāsomadatta, 26
,, Sobhaga, 26
,, Somadatta, 26
,, Sumantissa 26
Asia, 262
Asia minor, 251
Asitañjana, 29
Asoka, 7ff, 18, 26, 45, 83, 86, 90, 93 105 200, 249, 251
Assam, 1f, 254, 256
Astrology, 159
Athinkaya, 170
Athwa, 225
Atula, 227ff, 235
Atula Yasadhamma, 226
Aupadhas, 15
Aupamadha, 15
Ava, 77, 169, 174, 177, 179ff, 182, 184, 196ff, 203, 206ff, 211ff, 219ff, 223ff, 228ff, 233, 242
Avalokita. 139
Avalokiteśvara, 69, 139, 150, 151
Avaraṃta, 14
Avīci, 164
Awbatha, 241
Ayuddhā, 202
Ayuthia, 48, 201ff

Badaravanavāsī, 206
Bagchi, P. C., 28, 42,
Bagyidaw, 95, 141f, 276
Bakr-id, 200
Barbaras, 16
Barua, B. M., 28
Bassein, 112ff, 243
Bawbawgyi, 35, 42, 56, 58, 69, 72
Bayinnaung, 198ff, 206
Bay of Bengal, 17

Beal, 48
Bebe, 58, 67, 72
Benares, 66, 229
Bengal, 72, 113, 137f, 149, 254
Bernard Free Library, 91
Besyngeitai, 3
Bhaddā, 175
Bhaddasāla, 8
Bhadrādevī, 74
Bhallika, 65
Bhaṅgiri, 25
Bhāratavarṣa, 5, 16
Bharukaccha, 47, 152
Bhuvanekabāhu, 186
Bidagataik, 80
Bihar, 72, 137ff, 149
Bilugyan, 91
Binnya Dala, 94, 223, 225
Binnya U, 175ff
Blagden, C.O., 11f, 60f, 91
Bodawpaya, 231ff, 237, 239, 241f, 274, 276
Bode, Mabel, 91ff, 104, 123, 126ff, 132, 174, 177ff, 192, 195, 215, 230, 234, 271
Bodhgaya, 70, 105, 107, 123, 138f, 141, 144, 152, 183, 254
Bodhi, 139ff
Bodhi, Elder, 107
Bodhisattva, 54, 68ff, 71, 102, 134, 138ff, 150, 162, 225
Bodhi tree, 183
Bo-dcy-p'aya, 226
Borneo, 18
Brahmā, 148f
Brahmadiw, 106
Brahmapāla 106
Brāhmī script, 44, 62ff
Buddhadatta, 61
Buddhaghosa, 24ff, 44ff, 84, 127, 172, 179, 210, 235, 246, 251f
Buddhagupta, 252
Buddhaṅkara, 219
Buddhaṅkura, 221
Buddhavaṃsa, 175, 187
Buddhavaṃsa-mahāthera, 121
Bühler, 61
Buramagāma, 238ff, 258
Burmans, 264
Burmese Order, 258
Burmese Saṃgha, 261
Burmese School, 92
Burney, 77
Cakkindābhidhaja, 234
Calaṅganagara, 230
Calcutta University, 73, 86ff
Cālukyas, 43
Cambodia, 19ff, 27, 52
Campā, 18, 47f, 52, 262
Ca-nah-khum, 174
Candanasāra, 187
Candovara, 229
Canton, 53
Capata, 45, 112ff, 126ff, 154, 157, 170, 179, 190, 206, 230, 239
Caturaṅgavijay, 159
Caw, Queen, 165
Caw Rahan, 159
Ceylon, 8, 11, 17, 25ff, 30, 44ff, 53ff, 81, 89ff, 99ff, 109ff, 116ff, 119, 121ff, 126ff, 133, 154ff, 157ff, 173, 175ff, 181, 184ff, 190, 220, 235, 237ff, 243, 247ff, 251, 254ff, 258, 261
Chakravarti, N. P., 42
Chandone, 22
Ch'ang chun, 50
Chaukpala, 111
Chavannes, 47ff, 52ff
Chen-la, 52
Chia-mo-lang-chia, 48f, 52
Chia Tin, 48
Chiengmai, 176
Chih-ngan, 53
Ch'ih-t'u, 50
Childers, 47
China, 1, 46, 54ff, 135
Chin-Ch'en, 20ff, 84
Chin-chi, 19
Chindwin, 3
Chin-lin, 18ff, 84
Chryse Chersonesus, 3
Chryse Chora, 3
Chu Chih, 21
Chu-li, 19f
Ch'u-tu-kun, 19
Chu ying, 19
Cilāda, 15
Cilāta, 14ff 17, 84, 86
Cīna, 4, 14f, 17, 211
Cīnaraṭṭha 93
Cirrhadae, 15
Citradūtān, 186
Citta, 73, 219
Coedes, 51
Col (ḷ)a, 61, 105
Colas, 99, 254
Coli, 152
Conjeeveram, 30
Cordier, 51
Coromondal, 28
Cowell, 4
Cox, 241
Cūḷakassapa, 187
Cūḷasīvali, 187
Cūḷasumaṅgala, 187
Cullavajirabuddhi, 174
Cullavimalabuddhi, 173
Cunningham, 8, 22ff
Dagon, 183
Dakkhinavanārāma, 209
Dala, 119ff
Damila, 14, 99
Dammayazaka, 111
Daśāvatāra, 148
Dāṭhānāgarājaguru, 210
Deccan, 14, 18, 25, 44
Deer Park, 66
Devacakkobhāsa, 23
Dhamek stūpa, 72
Dhammabuddha, 176, 200
Dhammacārī, 127

Dhammaceti, 3, 11, 28, 76 892ff, 155ff, 181ff, 189ff, 196, 249, 255ff
Dhammadassi, 129
Dhammakīṭṭi, 30, 186
Dhammakkhandha, 248
Dhammānanda, 176, 210, 248
Dhammānanda-rājaguru, 209
Dhammapāla, 179
Dhammarāja, 123
Dhammarājika, 187
Dhammarājika temple. 134
Dhammarakkhita, 7, 187
Dhammasenāpati, 104, 126
Dhammavilāsa, 120, 131, 154, 157, 174
Dhammavilāsa-mahāthera, 121
Dhammavilāsa-thera, 119ff
Dhātusena, 99
Dhīrānanda, 247f
Dikshit, K. N. 62
Dīpaṅkara, 147
Disāpāmokkha, 130, 168
Disāprāmuk, 168
Divine Land, 54
Dosarene, 15
Dramilas, 112
Duroiselle, 36, 43, 61, 102f, 105, 133, 135, 137
Duṭṭhagāmanī, 9f
Dvā (ra) patī. 47
Dvāravatī, 48ff, 51ff

Eastern India, 252, 254
East Indian Characters, 144
East Zegu temple, 58ff
Egypt, 1, 251
Ekaṃsika, 218ff, 226, 231ff, 235, 237, 257ff, 271
Eliot, 14, 28

(Fan)-hsun, 19
(Fan)-wan, 19
Fausböll, 4, 41, 126ff, 134, 136, 171ff
Ferrand, 5, 51, 56
Finot, L, 14, 26f, 33, 36, 61
Forchammer, 27, 79, 127ff, 131, 171ff, 192, 195, 199, 201, 229
Fo-t'u, 24, 252
Foulkes, 26
Frontier of Gold, 20
Fü-nan, 19ff, 24, 52ff, 251ff
Fergusson, 107
Furnivall, 131

Gandhakūṭi, 141
Gandhāra, 7f, 14f, 93
Gaṅeśa, 148f
Gaṅgasū, 164
Ganges, 15
Gautama, 68, 124
Gavampati, 14
Gawdawpalin temple, 111, 123
Geiger, 7ff, 10
Gibson, 241
Gloria, 163
Godāvarī, 30ff, 44
Gotama, 64, 139
Conger, 241
Great Black Mountain, 47
Greece, 1, 251
Greek, 8
Guṇābhilaṃkāra, 219
Guṇagandha, 212
Guṇa-munindābhisāsanadhammarājādhi-rājaguru, 230
Guṇasāgara, 187
Guṇasāra, 129, 212
Gunong Jerai, 51
Gupta-Brāhmī, 60, 62, 69
Guptas, Later, 59

Hackmann, 26ff
Hamilton, 220
Haṃsāvatī, 14, 29, 32, 73, 76, 93, 176, 181, 189, 198, 200, 207
Hanthawaddy, 225
Hardy, 24, 230, 238
Haribhuñja, 202
Haripuñjaya, 202
Harivikrama, 60ff, 63
Harvey, 94ff, 100, 124, 175, 183, 225, 275
Hayagrīva, 150
Henbuiy, 106
Henzada, 203
Himalayan country, 7ff, 13
Himalayas, 16
Hīnayāna, 53ff, 69, 73, 136ff, 151
Hinayanism, 14, 28, 135
Hirth, 50
Hmawza, 23, 29ff, 33, 37, 42, 44, 48, 55, 57ff, 60, 68ff, 71ff
Ho-ling, 49, 52
Hshinpyushin, 220
Hsinbyushin, 229ff
Hsüan-Chuang, 23, 45, 48ff, 55ff
Htilominle, 122f
Hu, 24, 252
Huan Chou, 47, 54

I-ching. 44, 46ff, 84, 86
I-hsüan, 53
Ikṣvāku, 14, 18, 44
I-lang, 53
Ilaṅgāsogam, 50ff
Indasāra, 243
India, 1ff, 16, 18, 24, 59, 250ff, 254
India Extra-Gangem, 3
Indo-China, 1, 4, 12, 18, 46, 49, 52, 56, 95, 133
Indonesia, 1
Insulindia, 4
Irrawaddy, 3, 27, 49. 77, 82, 115, 206, 208
I-tsing, 253
Iṭṭhiya, 8

Jaggayyepeta, 44
Jāguḍas, 15
Jambudhaja, 205, 210
Jambudipa-Anantadhaja, 229
Jambudīpadhaja, 210
Jambudvīpa, 8ff, 25
Jambupati. 139

Janindābhipavara, 234
Jardine, 195
Java, 18, 49, 51ff, 252, 262
Javanapañña, 187
Jayachandravarman, 62ff
Jesalya, 145
Jetavana, 141
Jetavanavihāra, 198
Jeyyapura, 198, 206
Jina, 144
Jinārāma, 212
Jotipuñña, 210

Kaccāyana, 25, 128, 171ff, 176, 199
Kadamba, 61, 71
Kadambas, 43
Kadamba Script, 29, 33, 43ff, 61, 64
Kadamba-Telegu Script, 60, 71, 252
Kahnyaw, 91,
Kahson, 124,
Kakusandha, 64
Kālacakrayāna, 149
Kāḷadevala, 141
Kalagya, 109
Kalekyetaungnye, 177
Kaliyuga, 180, 233
Kalyāṇa, 219
Kalyāṇī, 90
Kalyāṇī river, 185, 187
Kalyāṇīsīmā, 89ff, 92, 146, 187, 196, 201
Kāmaḷāṅka, 48, 50, 55
Kāmarūpa, 48
Kamboj(a), 18, 113, 120ff, 154, 193, 202, 262
Kānādā-Telegu Script, 61
Kāñcīpura, 86, 113
Kāñcīpuram, 30ff, 44, 81, 116
K'ang Tai, 19, 20ff
Kaṇṭakakhipa, 173
Kan-wet-khaung- kôn, 72
Kapuṇṇa, 202
Karens, 264
Kasab, 64
Kāśmīra, 7f, 13ff, 93
Kassapa, 10, 41, 64, 187
Kātyāyana, 5
Kaungdwit, 26
Kauṭilya, 4, 6
Kāverī, 30ff
Kāverīpaṭṭanam, 31, 44, 81
Kavindābhisaddhammapavara-mahādhammarājaguru, 234
Kedah, 51
Kedah Peak, 51
Kern, 9ff, 13
Ketumatī, 198
Kharoṣṭhi Script, 42
Khemacara, 174
Khemavara, 202
Khujjānanda, 187
Kirāta, 251
Kirātas, 15ff, 84
Kirāta country, 84, 86
Kittisīhasura, 173
Kittisirirājasiṃha, 237
Klacwa, 162ff, 167
Klok sa, 153ff
Koki land, 14, 151
Koṇāgamana, 64
Konow, S, 42
Kon Sambeṅ daleṅ, 154
Kosam, 229
Kotheiunayon, 111
Kra, Isthmus of, 49ff
Krom, 121
Krom market, 120
Kṛṣṇā, 31, 44
Kublai Khan, 169
Kubyaukgale, 140
Kubyaukkyi, 135ff, 149ff
Kukhānagara, 210, 221
Kumārakassapa, 187
K'un-lun, 252
Kuntala, 43f
Kutho-daw, 249
Kwan-chou, 47
Kyaikpon, 183
Kyanzittha, 100ff, 104ff, 124, 126, 134, 149, 152, 156
Kyanzittha Onhmin, 125
Kyaswa, 123ff, 129, 163
Kyaukku Onhmin, 125
Kyaukse, 134, 153, 197
Kyawsua, 171
Kyawswa-nge, 173
Kyundawza, 42

Labun; 225
Lang-chia, 49,
Lang-chia-shu, 47ff, 84, 253
Lang-saka, 51
Lang-ya, 50
Lang-ya-hsin, 50ff
Lang-ya-hsü, 50ff
Lang-ya-hsun, 50
Laṅkā, 8, 99, 155
Laṅkāsu, 47ff, 55, 84ff, 253
Laos, 18
Lappan, 109
Laufer, 19
Law, B. C. 25, 30
Lekaing, 250
Lemeythna, 58, 67
Lēnkasuka, 50ff
Letyaminnan 107
Lèvi. S , 4ff, 15
Liem-(d)iang, 21
Ligor, Isthmus of, 51
Li-Hsu, 55
Lin-yang, 251
Ling ya-ssu, 50
Ling-yu-ssu-chia, 51
Ling-ya-ssy-chia, 51
Lin i, 47ff, 52
Lin-yang, 21ff, 84
Linzin, 26
Lobpuri, 32
Locac, 51
Lokanātha, 150
Lokapāla *devas*, 65, 140
Loṅ, 154

Luce, 19f, 22f, 50, 52, 56, 94, 109, 161
Lu Pe Win, 37

Māḍhariputa, 14
Madhyadeśa, 54, 250
Mādhyamikas, 54
Maga, 8
Magadha, 24, 27ff, 54
Magas, 8
Magwe, 179
Mahābodhi, 123, 183
Mahādammayazadipati, 213, 221, 223
Mahādeva, 7
Mahadew, 154
Mahādhammarāja, 203ff
Mahādhammarājādhipati, 130
Mahādhammarakkhita, 7
Mahādhi Dhammarājaguru, 167
Muhādhi Rājaguru, 167
Mahāgiri, 200
Mahājanaka, 4
Mahākosali, 4
Mahānāga, 121, 175
Mahānāma, 200
Mahānāman, 25ff
Mahāñāṇābhidhaja, 234
Mahāparakkama, 198f
Mahāpavaradhammarājā, 212
Mahārakkhita, 7
Mahāratanakara, 206
Mahāraṭṭha, 7, 9, 93
Mahāraṭṭhathera, 180
Mahāsādhujjana, 198
Mahāsaṃghanātha, 204
Mahāsaṃgharāja, 234
Mahāsāmī, 121, 178
Mahāsaṃghika nikāya, 54
Mahāsīhasuradhammarāja, 212
Mahāsīhasura-dhammarājādhirāja, 220
Mahāsīlavaṃsa, 179
Mahāsirijeyyasura, 199
Mahāsīvalī, 187
Mahāvihāra, 90, 92, 114, 119, 121, 126, 175, 181, 184ff, 190ff, 239, 255, 261
Mahā-Vimalabuddhi, 128
Mahāyāna, 53ff, 86, 136, 141, 149ff, 256
Mahayanism, 14, 135, 148ff, 256, 261ff
Mahayanist Tantrikism, 254, 256, 261
Mahāyasa, 176
Mahāzedi, 112, 201
Mahiṃsakamaṇḍala, 93
Mahinda, 8, 12, 114
Mahisamaṇḍala, 7, 9
Mah(i)sya devī, 144
Mahlaing, 165
Mahtaw, 58
Maitreya, 69, 106, 139, 150ff, 162
Majapahit, 50
Majjhantika, 7, 10
Majjhima, 7, 10
Majumdar, R. C. 3, 5f
Maka, 8
Malay Archipelago, 46
Malay Peninsula, 3, 6, 19ff, 22, 50ff, 116
Malaya, 51
Malayadīpa 116
Malayasia, 1, 4,
Malayu, 64
Ma-na-kri-cek, 174
Mandalay, 94, 134, 225, 239, 244ff, 248ff, 258
Maṅgala, 171
Maṇijota-Saddhammālaṅkāra, 243
Manipur, 1ff, 48, 256
Manipurī, 223f
Maṇiratana, 210
Maṇisāra, 187
Mañjuśrī, 150
Manohar, 90
Manohara, 104
Manohari, 79, 90
Mantrayāna, 149, 256
Manu, 131, 229
Manuha, 78ff, 90, 148, 253
Māra, 68, 103, 108, 139
Marammadesa, 76, 101
Marammamaṇḍala, 93, 118, 157
Marammaraṭṭha, 196, 207f, 210, 213, 225
Marammasaṃgha, 92, 110, 117, 121, 189ff, 238, 255
Marco Polo, 51
Marshall, John, 59
Martaban, 20f, 23, 25, 93, 118ff, 121, 174ff 180f, 184, 199, 225
Martaban, Gulf of, 174
Mattama, 118
Maulāna, 64
Maungdaung Sayadaw, 229
Maunggan, 33
Maung Kala, 94
Maung Tin, Pe, 94, 109, 160ff, 167
Māyādevī, 140
Māyāvattaka, 230
Mecca, 254
Medhaṃkara, 175, 181
Medhāvivaṃsa, 243, 245
Mekkaya, 169, 197
Mekong, 22
Melchior La Beaume, 233
Menam, 49, 52
Middle Country, 250
Mimalungkyaung, 111
Minayeff, 91
Mindon-min, 92, 125, 244ff, 249, 258, 262, 270ff
Mingalazedi, 104, 124, 134
Mingun, 239
Minhkaung, 177
Minhkaung, II, 179
Minkyinyo, 199
Minkyiyannaung, 197
Minshinsaw, 109ff
Mi Saw U, 170
Mitra, Rajendralal, 107
Mittaya, 162
Moggaliputta 7, 9
Moggaliputta Tissa, 9, 12, 93, 106
Moggallana, 64, 173, 185ff, 235
Mohnyintha, 177
Mohnyinthado, 182
Momeik, 200ff

Môn, 12, 26, 56, 81, 90ff, 113ff, 118, 120, 141, 144, 146, 151, 153, 156, 185ff, 189, 254ff, 265
Môn country, 12, 152
Môn-khmer, 16
Mongol, 168, 169, 170
Mṛgadāva, 59, 66
Mriññaṇa, 177
Mucalinda, 138ff,
Mūlasarvāstivāda, 253
Mūlasarvāstivāda nikāya, 54, 85
Mūlavasagāma, 212
Müller, 99
Munindābhi-sirisaddhammadhaja-mahādhammarājādhirājaguru, 242
Munindaghosa, 227ff, 246
Muttima, 93, 118, 121, 181
Myanzaine, 134
Myazedi, 105
Myingyan, 77
Myinkabu, 79
Myinkyiswasawke, 174
Myinpagan, 139ff, 142, 148
Myinsaing, 169ff
Myinsing, 197

Nāga, 147, 152
Nā Gan Dā, 154
Nagita, 173
Nāgarakṛtāgama, 50f
Nāgārjuna, 54
Nāgārjunikoṇḍa, 14, 18, 24, 44, 86
Nagayôn, 104, 142
Nāgarī script, 59, 70ff
Nālagiri, 68, 102, 138ff
Nālandā. 70, 144
Na Lwoy, 154
Na Mrik, 154
Nanda, 187
Nandabayin, 202ff
Nandabhayā, 203
Nandajeya, 208
Nandamāla, 230f
Nandamañña, 150
Nandawye, 134, 170
Nanpaya, 79
Narapati, 79, 111, 119, 126, 178ff
Narapatisithu, 110f, 116, 119, 122, 126, 129, 134
Naratheinka, 110
Narathihapate, 124, 169ff
Narathu, 109ff
Narawara, 212ff, 219
Nārāyaṇa, 148ff, 152
Nat-hlaung-kyaung, 148
Natoṅmya, 164
Nats, 100, 107, 148, 150, 152
Nat-sin, 269
Natspirits, 211, 263, 269
Nat worship, 213, 268
Naungdawgyi, 228ff
Nava-medhaṃkara, 175
Nava-vimalabuddhi, 173
Neko, 223
Nepal, 149
Nevill, 210
Nga Dula, 75
Nga Zinga, 203
Nicobar, 49, 52
Nīpagāma, 227
Nisinnavihāra, 209
Nyang-U, 135, 154
Ñāṇābhivaṃsa, 234
Ñāṇāgambhīra, 104
Ñāṇālaṃkāra, 29, 228, 247ff
Ñāṇamahādhammarāja, 228
Ñāṇālaṃkārasaddhammadhaja, 234
Ñāṇasāgara, 128, 187
Ñāṇavara, 221ff
Ñāṇavilāsa, 202
Ñāṇa, 228, 232
Ñāṇābhisāsanadhaja, 234
Ñāṇamahādhammarājaguru, 232, 234
Ñeyyadhamma, 243ff
Ñeyyadhammābhivaṃsa, 244, 246
Ñoṅramkṛi, 164

Oldenberg, 40, 127, 175, 199
Old Prome, 253
Onbaung, 200ff
Ou yang Hsin, 55

Pabbatābbhantaranagara, 179
Padippajeyya, 119
Padumottara Buddha, 32
Pagan, 14, 55, 65, 69ff, 76ff, 88ff, 93, 95, 97ff, 101, 104ff, 107, 111, 113ff, 116ff, 119ff, 123ff, 132ff, 140ff, 145, 147ff, 163, 166, 168, 169ff, 177, 179, 182, 191ff, 196, 200, 205, 210ff, 221, 227, 254, 256, 259, 263, 266
Pagan-Min, 243ff
Pagan Museum, 149
Pagan saṃgha, 123
Pakhoi, 53
Pāla sculptures, 72
Palembang, 49ff
Pāli Buddhism, 254
Pāli Text Society, 35
Pallava, 44, 59ff, 64, 71
Paloura, 14
Pan, 225
Pāṇḍya country, 17
Pāṇini, 5
Paññājotābhidhaja, 243
Paññasāmi, 92, 132, 156, 168, 177ff, 195, 205, 218, 222f, 225ff, 233, 235, 238, 243ff
Paññāsīha, 242
Paññātissa, 243
P'an-p'an, 52
Panthagu, 45, 107, 109, 111, 167, 273
Panthagugyi, 111
Pāradas, 24
Parakkamabāhu, 112, 235
Paramata, 229ff
Paramattha order, 81
Pargiter, 15
Pārileyya, 102
Pārileyyaka, 140ff
Parker, 56
Pārupaṇa, 218ff, 226ff, 235ff, 257ff, 271

Pāsaṃsathera, 222
Patodawgyi, 239
Patothamya, 141
Payagyi, 58, 60
Payama, 59
Payathonzu, 141, 150
Pegu, 11, 14, 26ff, 29, 32, 73ff, 85, 87, 89ff, 93, 169, 174, 176ff, 181ff, 199, 201, 203ff, 207ff, 223ff, 253, 253, 255
Pelliot, Prof., 18ff, 47ff, 50ff, 56, 87, 192
Petleik, 104, 134
Phayre, 48, 209
Philip di Brito, 203
Phonm penh, 22
P'iao, 52, 55ff, 60, 85
Pi-king, 47
Piladai, 15
Pindale, 210, 212
Pinle, 169
Pinya, 77, 169, 171ff, 174, 197, 199
Popa hill, 200
Potthapāda, 135
Prome, 23, 28, 31, 43, 46, 48, 52, 56ff, 59ff, 62ff, 66, 70, 72, 84ff, 105, 137, 152. 159, 168, 199ff, 206, 223, 253
Ptolemy, 2ff, 8, 15ff, 20
Pubbārāmavihāra, 212
Pugāma, 113f
Pukām, 114
Pukhām, 14, 116
Pukhānagara, 210
Puññacetiya, 179
Payama, 56
Phyogingyi-kôn, 43
Pyu, 48, 52, 55, 71, 84ff, 155, 159
Pyus, 16, 43, 56, 59, 71, 73, 86ff, 252, 260, 264
Pyu script, 62

Racasū, 162
Rādha, 135
Rāhula, 113, 116, 187
Rāhulabhadda, 188
Rājacakkavatti, 139
Rājādhirāja, 176
Rājagaha, 41, 68
Rājaguru, 167
Rājamaṇicūla, 209
Rājayodha, 208
Rājendracola, 50ff
Rajjuggāhāmacca, 129
Rakkhita, 7
Rāmādhipati, 185, 188ff
Rāmadutān, 186
Rāmañña, 25, 177, 184, 196, 204, 223
Rāmaññadesa, 3, 25, 32, 76, 80, 93, 101, 131, 181
Rāmaññādhipati, 89, 185
Rāmaññaraṭṭha, 207ff, 213
Raṇavaṅkamalla, 202
Rangoon, 29, 91, 94, 119, 126, 145ff, 176, 200, 224ff, 230
Rapay, 106
Rasa, 176
Ratanapura, 169, 179ff, 206, 244
Ratanavimāna, 179
Raṭṭhasāra, 178, 180
Ray, N. R., 56, 69, 73, 148f
Razadarit, 176ff, 182, 224
Red Province, 54
Rhys Davids, 8
Roberts, 275
Rockhill, 8, 50
Rogers, 24
Rome, 1

Sabbaññu, 107
Saddhamma-cakkasāmī, 202
Saddhamma-cārī, 202
Saddhamma-guru, 171, 199
Saddhammajotipāla, 126
Saddhammakitti, 198
Saddhammālaṃkāra, 176, 202
Saddhamma-ñāṇa, 171
Saddhammanandi, 129
Saddhammapāla, 171ff
Saddhammapura, 79
Saddhammarāja, 177, 195
Saddhammasiri, 128ff
Saesadai, 15
Sāgara, 129
Saggaing, 110, 174, 197ff, 206, 210, 228, 241
Sagu, 173
Sahantva, 196
Sahassarodha-gāma, 227, 230
Sakka, 25
Sakkrac, 110, 164ff
Sakmunalon, 106
Śakti, 71, 150
Śākya, 141
Śākyamuni, 80, 99
Salween, 56
Samaṇakuttaka, 79ff, 93, 149, 172, 256
Samataṭa, 48
Sambala, 8
Sameikshe, 70
Saṃgharāja, 130, 132, 167, 177
Saṃgharakkhita, 129
Saṃghasena, 106
Sammitinikāya. 53
Sammitiya School, 54
Samuti order, 81
Sane, 217, 219
San-Fo-c'hi, 50
Sangermano, 241
Saṅgharakkhita, 173
Śaṅkrān, 152
Sanskrit Buddhism, 252, 256
Sāradassi, 222
Sāriputta, 119ff, 178, 187
Sāriputta Dhammavilāsa, 131
Sarnath, 59, 70, 72, 138, 144
Sarvāstivāda, 54, 86, 252, 256
Sarvāstivāda nikāya, 47, 54ff
Sativa-rāja, 174
Sāvatthi, 69, 138ff, 147
Sawlun, 196
Sawyun, 172
Sayambu, 141
Schlegel, 50

Schmidt, 75
Schoff, 3
Seinnyekmin, 107
Setibhinda, 175, 229
Sevā-suvaṇṇa-sobhana, 181
Shans, 95, 169ff, 172, 174, 199ff, 203, 223ff, 263ff
Shan Yun, 26
She-ho-po-ti, 47ff, 52
Shih-li-ch-a-ta-lo, 47ff, 52, 56
Shin Agyathamahdi, 180
Shin Arahan, 77ff, 80ff, 98, 100ff, 104, 106ff, 112ff, 117, 130ff, 154ff, 170, 172, 254, 273
Shin Ariyavaṃsa, 111
Shin Mahindra, 112
Shin Sarobu, 183
Shin Sawbu, 182ff
Shin Sona, 112
Shin Thilawantha, 94
Shin Thulawantha, 180
Shin Uttamagyaw, 180
Shu-Chuan, 47
Shwebo, 224
Shwedagon, 29, 138, 152ff, 176, 183, 200f, 230, 249
Shwegu, 107
Shwegugyi, 183
Shwemawdaw, 176, 201
Shwesandaw, 105, 134, 200
Shwethetlut, 174
Shweyyin, 225
Shwezayan, 145
Shwezigon, 79, 100ff, 104, 124, 134, 150, 153, 200, 263
Siam, 1, 18f, 22, 32, 48, 52, 193, 201ff, 228, 237, 263
Sˉhala, 17, 93
Sīhaladīpa, 101
Sīhalapakkha-bhikkhusaṃgha, 120
Sihala Saṃgha, 92, 110, 114ff, 117ff, 121, 128, 131, 178, 184, 189ff, 239, 255
Sīharāja-yuvarājacariya-thera, 186
Sīhasura, 172
Sīhavikrama, 60, 63
Sīlavaṃsa, 178ff
Sinbaung, 143
Singu, 230
Sinhalese saṃgha, 237
Sirihaṃsvā, 196
Sirikhettanagara, 209
Siri-mahāsīhasura-sudhammarājā, 218
Siri-maṅgala, 172, 202
Siri-nanda-dhammarājapavarādhipatirāja, 210
Siri-pavarāditya-lokādhipati-vijaya-mahādhamma, 242
Siri-pavarāditya-vijayanantā-yasa-mahā-dhamma-rājādhirāja, 243
Sıri-pavara-mahādhammarājā, 228
Siri-pavara-sudhamma-mahārājindādhi-pati, 229
Siri-saddhamma, 213
Siri-saddhammavilāsa, 171
Siri-saṃghabodhi, 99
Siri-sudhamma-rājādhipati, 179
Siri-sudhamma rāja-mahādhipati, 206
Siri-sumaṅgala, 172
Siri-tribhuvanāditya- paramadhammarāja, 124
Siri-tribhuvanāditya-pavaramaṇḍita, 241
Sittana, 123
Sittang, 225
Śiva, 149
Sivali, 116ff, 121
Sivli, 113, 116, 121
Siyamagāma, 238
Sklin singhuim, 143
Sladen. E. 275
Smim, Htaw Buddhaketi, 223
Smith, Vincent, 9f, 12f, 26
Sokkataya, 202
Sokkati, 26
Soṇa, 7ff, 26, 83, 90, 106, 112, 190
Soṇa-mahāthera, 119f
Soṇa-thera, 8, 12, 114ff
Sonuttara, 9ff, 194
South China Sea, 22
South India, 252, 254ff
Śrī Bhoja, 54
Śrīkṣetra, 47ff, 51ff, 55ff, 73, 84, 206, 253
Śrī Prabhudevī, 61, 63
Śrī Prabhuvarmā, 61
Śrī Prabhuvarman, 61, 63
Śrīvijaya, 46, 50, 54
Śrī-vīrapuriṣadata, 14
Ssu-ch'uan, 47
Sthavira nikāya, 45, 53ff
Sthavira School, 55
Subhūticandana, 128
Sudhamma, 117
Sudhammanagara, 80, 100
Sudhammapura, 80, 101
Sudhammasabhā, 227
Sudhammasālā, 207
Sudhammāvatī, 25, 73, 76, 80
Sudhuim, 90, 114
Suhattha, 221
Sujātā, 73, 212, 242
Sukhodaya, 202
Sulamani, 111
Sumana, 187
Sumaṅgala, 187
Sumatra, 6, 50, 54, 262
Sumedha, 106, 179
Sunanda, 219, 243
Sun dynasty, 250
Supabhādevī, 203
Surakīṭṭi, 206ff
Suriyavaṃsa, 243
Sūriyavikrama, 60f, 63
Sūryavaṃśa, 250
Suvaṇṇabhūmi, 1ff, 18ff, 26, 37, 46, 73, 81, 83, 90, 93, 156ff, 181
Suvaṇṇāparantā, 3
Suvaṇṇapura, 5
Suvaṇṇasobhana, 181, 188
Suvarṇabhūmi, 6
Suvarṇadvīpa, 5ff
Suvarṇakuḍyaka, 6
Suvarṇapura, 6
Syriam, 220

Tabinshwehti, 199
Tada U, 211
Tadagale, 147
Tagaung, 95
Takakusu, 45, 47ff, 54
Takola, 4
Talaing, 101, 103, 105, 111, 118, 119, 124, 136, 145, 148, 155ff, 169, 174ff, 180, 182, 199ff, 203ff, 207ff, 223ff, 237, 254ff, 264
Talaings, 16, 71, 80ff, 87, 95, 98, 119, 135, 156ff
Talaing country, 32, 76, 85, 130ff, 145ff, 157
Talaing Saṃgha, 205
Talapoins, 233
Talpoons, 233
Tāmalin, 154, 157
Tāmalinda, 154, 157
Tāmalinda, mahāthera, 113, 116ff, 121ff
Tāmalitti, 113
Tāmasas, 15
Taṃbapaṃna, 14, 17ff, 84
Taṃbapaṃni, 14, 17f
Taṃbapaṇṇi, 8, 12
Tamils, 112
Tampadīpa, 77
Tāmralipti, 4, 49, 52, 113
Tāmraparṇī, 17ff
Tāmulinda, 116
T'ang, 55ff, 60, 85
Tanjore, 50
Tan-mo-li-ti, 49
Tantrayāna, 137, 141, 148ff
Tantrikism, 254, 256, 261
Tao-lin, 49, 53
Tapussa, 65
Tārā, 150
Tarabya, 169
Tāranātha, 14, 151
Tartars, 169
Taruks, 168
Tarukpyemin, 134, 168
Tathāgata, 143
Taungbalu, 197, 211
Taung-dwi-gyi, 180
Taungdwin, 192ff, 228
Tavoy, 52
Taw Sein ko, 80, 91, 126
Tejodīpa, 212
T'e-mu, 22
Tennasserim, 19, 24, 48f, 51ff, 85, 87, 252
Tennent, 238
Thadin-gynt, 268
Thadominbya, 174
Thaygapaya, 146
Thais, 264
Thalun, 205
Thambula, 105, 124
Tharaba, 152
Tharekhittara, 25, 95, 100
Tharwaddy, 242
Tharwaddy-min, 242f
Thaton, 21, 23ff, 27ff, 32, 52, 73ff, 76ff, 83, 85, 87ff, 93, 97ff, 100, 112ff, 118, 130, 145ff, 155, 176, 181
Thatpyiññu, 107
Thayetmo, 174
Thazi, 70
Theravāda, 53, 55, 58, 66, 71, 83, 85ff, 99, 149ff, 254, 256, 260
Theravāda Buddhism, 29ff, 43ff, 76ff, 80ff, 86f, 89, 97, 103, 107, 142f, 145, 147ff, 154ff, 262, 265
Theravāda nikāya, 262
Theyet, 77
Thihathu, 170ff, 177, 182
Thin-gyan, 268
Thinlikyaung, 26
Thiripyissaya, 25
Thiyipyitsaya, 120, 138ff, 143, 157
Thohanbwa, 196ff
Thudammawadi, 80
Thupārāma, 178ff
Tibet, 40, 149, 254, 256
Tien-sün, 19
Tiladai, 15
Tilokaguru, 205, 208, 212
Tilokālaṃkāra. 207, 210ff
Tilogagaru, 212
Tinnevelly, 18
Tipiṭakālaṃkāra, 205ff, 210
Tipitakālaṃkāradhaja, 234
Tiriyapabbata, 206, 210f
Tisāsanadhaja, 198, 202
Tisāsanālaṃkāra, 205, 207
Tissa, 74ff
To-lo-po-ti, 48ff, 52
Ton-bhi-luḥ, 197
Tosali, 14
Toungoo, 198ff, 204ff, 213, 223
Trans-Gangetic India, 15
Trayastriṃśa heaven, 102, 138, 141
Trenckner, 15
Tu-fan, 47
Tu-k'un, 19ff
Tun-Hsün, 19, 20, 24, 87, 251f
Tunna, 219
Tun Nyein, 126, 174
Tupayan, 178
Turamaya, 8
Turaṅ, 159
Twinthintaikwum, 241

Uccanagara, 208
Ukkala, 29
Ukkaṃsamāla, 220ff
Ukkaṃsika, 205, 207ff
Uragapura, 31, 44, 61, 86
Uraiyur, 61
Utkala, 29
Uttama, 128
Uttara, 7ff, 26, 83, 90, 112, 119, 190
Uttarajīva, 45, 111ff, 126, 273
Uttara-mahāthera. 119f
Uttara-thera, 12, 114f
Uttiya, 8
Uzana, 123ff, 173

Vācissara, 128
Vajirabuddhi, 191
Vajrāsana, 107, 141
Vajrayāna, 136, 141, 148ff
Vaṃga, 14
Vanaratana, 186, 188, 248
Vanavāsa, 7, 9, 15, 93
Vanavāsī, 14
Varābhisaṃghanātha, 204
Varāhamihira, 128
Vasubandhu, 14
Vedasattha, 178, 207ff, 213
Vepullabuddhi, 173
Veravijaya, 206
Vibhakti, 123
Vienna, 75
Vien Tiane, 22
Vijayabāhu, 99, 155, 158
Vijayapura, 169
Vijitāvī, 199
Vilāpa, 15
Vilasa, 147
Vimalabuddhi, 128
Vimalajoti, 248
Viṣṇu, 148f
Vyākarana, 159
Vyādhapura, 22
Wanchen, 20f
Wareru, 169, 174ff
Watters, 54ff
We-lei, 53
Wetkyi-in, 135
Wheel of Law, The, 66
Yahandagu, 58, 67
Yamaka-pratihārya, 141, 147
Yamunā, 149
Yasa, 144
Yavana, 14
Ya-wān, 154
Yazakumāra, 105ff
Yazathinkaya, 170
Yodaya, 225
Yoga, 54
Yogācāra. 54
Yona, 7, 15
Yonaka-raṭṭha, 93, 202
Yule, 51, 77
Zabaj, 5
Zeyathura Mingyi, 110
Zeyyaput, 167

ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS

Page	Line	For	Read
13	31	Is it possible that *Suvaṇṇabhūmi* of the Sinhalese tradition refers not to Lower Burma but to *Suvaṇṇagiri* of Asokan inscriptions, somewhere in the Deccan or the Far South, where Asoka had one of his important viceregal seats ?	
28	18	*Sammohavinodinī*	*Sommohavinodanī*
29	25	*Dhammasaṅgani*	*Dhammasaṅgaṇi*
32	12	Jātaka	*Jātaka*
33-34		In the two inscriptional texts *for*	cha *read* ca
35	26	*Sutta Vibhaṅga*, of the	*Sutta vibhaṅga* of the
36	16, 20, 23	*Dhammasaṅgani*	*Dhammasaṅgaṇi*
41	2	,,	,,
41	6, 10, 11	*Abhidhammattha Saṅgaha*	*Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha*
43	34	*Dhammasaṅgani*	*Dhammasangaṇi*
44	10, 23	Aṅdhra-Kuṅtala	Andhra-Kuntala
44	24	Kāveripaṭṭanam	Kāverīpaṭṭanam
47	15	dūhta	dhūta
48	2	Dvārāvati	Dvāravatī
,,	7	Chia-mo lang-chia	Chia-mo-lang-chia
,,	10	To lo-po-ti	To-lo-po-ti
56 foot-note	110	The *Man-shu* adds that the Pyu custom is "to esteem modesty and decency. Their disposition is peaceful and good. They are men of few words... There are many fortune-tellers and astrologers."	
,, foot-note	111	For a better and fuller translation of the passage, see JBRS, 1937, XXVII, pp. 250-51, where (pp. 251-52) a passage taken from the *New T'ang History* is also relevant and informative in this connection.	
57	16	Luce thinks that the P'iao capital of the T'ang Chronicles is to be identified not with Prome but further North with Halingyi. In about the 8th century the "Little Brāhmaṇas" of Hu-kong valley and the "Ta-ch'in Brāhmaṇas" of Manipur were under the domination of Nanchao. It is highly probable that these "Little" and "Ta-ch'in" Brahmaṇas were none but the Śākadvīpī Brāhmaṇas who had by this time migrated to Assam, Manipur and as far east and north as upper Burma and South China. It is now an admitted fact that the Śākadvīpī Brāhmaṇas were responsible for giving a new shape and form to the art of astrology and fortune-telling in India, and thence to Assam, Manipur, Burma and further east and south to the Indianised colonies. This explains to a very great extent the numerous references to Brāhmaṇa court-astrologers in the inscriptions and literature of Burma. Indeed, they were very popular in Burmese courts, and the modern *Paunā* Brāhmaṇas of Upper Burma seem to be the cultural and traditional descendants of the Śākadvīpī Brāhmaṇas of old.	
64	10	Konāgamana	Koṇāgamana
65	12	Trapusa	Tapussa
70	20	Nāgari	Nāgarī
79	28	micchādiṭṭhinaṃ	micchādiṭṭhīnaṃ
91	7	Piṭakaṭṭha-main	Piṭakattha-main
,,	39	Piṭakkatthamain	Piṭakattha-main
93	13	Kāśmīra	Kasmīra
,,	20	Suvannabhūmi	Suvaṇṇabhūmi

Page	Line	For	Read
93	21	Samaṇakuṭṭaka	Samaṇakuttaka
98	21	Tripiṭaka	Tipiṭaka
99	34	Vijayavāhu	Vijayabāhu
101	33	ānīapitakatteyā	ānītapiṭakattayena
,,	34	Vimaṃsesi	vimaṃsesi
104	22	Manohāra	Manohara
107	29	Sabbaññā	Sabbaññu
113	22	*pañca-vaggagana*	*pañcavaggagana*
115	25	*paccagaṇa*	*pacchāgaṇa*
118	13	Muttimā	Muttima
119	18	Kalyāṇi	Kalyāṇī
121	18	Kalyāṇi	Kalyāṇī
,,	31	aggamahesi	aggamahesī
122	12	Mahātherā	Mahāthera
127	3	Dhammacāri	Dhammacārī
,,	4	*Ābhidhammattha*	*Abhidhmmattha*
,,	9	*Vinayagulatthadīpanī*	*Vinayagūḷhaṭṭhadīpanī*
,,	9	*Mātikatthadīpanī*	*Māṭikaṭṭhadīpanī*
128	23	Uttara	Uttama
,,	24	Vacissara	Vācissara
129	11	Rajjuggāhamacca	Rajjuggāhāmacca
,,	12	sāmanera	sāmaṇera
,,	13	*vācāvācaka*	*vācavācaka*
,,	17	*saṃbandhacinta*	*sambandhacintā*
139	1	*Trayatriṃsa*	*Trayastriṃśa*
139	1	bhūmisparaśamudrā	bhūmisparśamudrā
,,	12	Rājachakkavatti	Rājacakkavatti
141	23	Trayatriṃsa	Trayastriṃśa
,,	32	2935-36	1935-36
144	31	Trilokavataṃsaka	Trilokavataṃsakā
146	19	Bhuridatta	Bhūridatta
,,	24	Sāmā	Sāma
149	30	Samaṇakuṭṭakas	Samaṇakuttakas
156	13	Paññasāmī	Paññasāmi
158	10	Vijayavāhu	Vijayabāhu
159	11	sīma	sīmā
165	6	*kathina*	*kaṭhina*
166	19	*Paticcasamuppāda*	*Paṭiccasamuppāda*
,,	20	*Patisambhidā*	*Paṭisambhidā*
168	19	Disāpāmokkha	Disāpamokkkha
172	20	*Sammohavinodinī*	*Sammohavinodanī*
,,	24	Samaṇakuṭṭakas	Samaṇakuttakas
,,	30	Samaṇakuṭṭakas	Samaṇakuttakas
,,	32	Sīhasūra	Sīhasura
176	5	Saddhammalaṇkāra	Saddhammālaṅkāra
179	8	*Maṇidīpa*	*Maṇidīpa*
180	9	*Bhuridattajātaka*	*Bhūridattajātaka*
,,	36	Mahāraṭṭathera	Mahāraṭṭhathera
183	2	Dammaceti	Dhammaceti
186	34	Siharājayuvarajacariyathera	Sīharājayuvarājācariyathera
190	33	*Sāratthadipaṇī*	*Sāratthadipanī*
195	18	Saddharmarāja	Saddhammarāja
199	15	*Vacakopadesa*	*Vācakopadesa*
200	5	*Madhurasāratthadīpaṇī*	*Madhurasāratthadīpanī*
,,	6	*Abhidhammatikā*	*Abhidhammaṭīkā*
,,	7	*Paṭṭhānasāratthadipaṇī*	*Paṭṭhānasāratthadīpanī*
202	16	*Saṅkhyapakāsaka*	*Saṅkhyāpakāsaka*
,,	17	*Maṅgaladīpaṇī*	*Maṅgaladīpanī*
,,	17	*ṭikā*	*ṭīkā*
204	18	*chekataya*	chekatāya
206	3	Rājindarājabhidhayyadīpaṇī	*Rājindarājābhidheyyadīpanī*
,,	10	Badaravanavāsi	Badaravanavāsī
,,	18	,,	,,
,,	20	Sūrakitti	Sūrakitti

Page	Line	For	Read
206	22	Tipitakalaṃkāra	Tipiṭakālaṃkāra
207	4	*Yasavaddhanavatthu*	*Yasavaḍḍhanavatthu*
,,	5	Surakītti	Sūrakitti
,,	22	Rāmaññaraṭṭhavāsina	Rāmaññaraṭṭhavāsinā
,,	24	*Vedasātthas*	*Vedasatthas*
,,	29	,,	
208	2	*gihikammesu*	*gihīkammesu*
,,	20	*vedasātthas*	*Vedasatthas*
,,	31	Dakkhiṇavanārama	Dakkhiṇavanārāma
210	32	*Rūpabhedapakāsanī*	*Rūpabhedapakāsinī*
,,	33	*Dhammasaṅgani*	*Dhammasaṇgaṇi*
211	15	*Marammaraṭṭham*	*Marammaraṭṭhaṃ*
,,	15	*dūsesum*	*dusesuṃ*
,,	16	*Sāsanam*	*Sāsanaṃ*
,,	16	*dubbalam*	*dubbalaṃ*
212	14	*Abhidhammaṭṭha*	*Abhidhammattha*
,,	15	*Dhammasaṅganī*	*Dhammasaṅgaṇi*
,,	20	Jināramathera	Jinārāmathera
,,	30	Pubbārama	Pubbārāma
,,	31	*Gulaṭṭhadīpanī*	*Gulatthadipanī*
,,	32	*ganthipadattha*	*gaṇṭhipadattha*
213	3	talapattāni	tālapattāni
,,	3	sīsavethana	sīsaveṭṭhana
,,	15	*vedasātthas*	*Vedasatthas*
214	8	*atiparisuddham*	*atiparisuddhaṃ*
217	1	sīhasūra	sīhasura
218	9. 16	Paññasāmī	Paññasāmi
220	4	Saddhammacāri	Saddhammacārī
,,	33	Mahasīha	Mahāsīha
221	34	*Abhidhammaṭṭha*	*Abhidhammattha*
222	23	*samattham*	*samatthaṃ*
,,	23	*naṅgala Kotiyā*	*naṅgalakotiyā*
,,	23, 24	*samvaddhantam*	*saṃvaḍḍhantaṃ*
,,	25	*Pakkhānam*	*Pakkhānaṃ*
,,	27	Paññasāmī	Paññasāmi
,,	31	*samipe*	*samīpe*
,,	34	Sāradassi	Sāradassī
223	5	*vupasami*	*vūpasami*
,,	10	Paññasāmī	Paññasāmi
225	9	Binaya	Binnaya
,,	28	Paññasāmī	Paññasāmi
227	8	*Idani*	*Idāni*
,,	9	*Carantu*	*carantū*
228	28	Siripavana	Siripavara
,,	31	āṇālaṃkāra	Ñāṇālaṃkāra
229	33	*rāñño*	*raññno*
231	28	*nayaka*	*nāyaka*
,,	33	*mayam*	*mayaṃ*
232	38	gama	gāma
234	6	Ñanābhisāsana	Ñāṇābhisāsana
,,	18	*vilasinī*	*vilāsinī*
,,	22	Tigumbathomaṇa	Tigumbathomana
,,	23	Rājadhirājavilasinī	Rājādhirājavilāsinī
,,	30	Mahajñāṇābhidhaja	Mahāñāṇābhidhaja
235	19	*lakkaṇa*	*lakkhaṇa*
238	19	Kīrti	Kitti
241	37	*Jātākas*	*Jātakas*
243	1, 3, 25	Sūriya	Suriya
,,	15	Ñeyyadharma	Ñeyyadhamma
,,	19	*Saddhammapajjoṭikā*	*Saddhammapajjotika*
,,	30	Maṇiyota	Maṇijota
,,	30	Medhāvivaṃsa	Medhāvīvaṃsa
245	4	,,	,,
,,	35	tāmbulaṃ	tambulaṃ

Page	Line	For	Read
246	4	*avinayālomcāre*	*avinayalomācāre*
248	21	Sāṃgharāja	Saṃgharāja
249	8	Dharmaceti	Dhammaceti
253	30	Anawartha	Anawrahta
256	19	Samaṇākuṭṭakas	Samaṇakuttakas
259	33	Pitakatthamain	Piṭakattha-main
273	24	Uttarajiva	Uttarajīva
287	8	Monarchism	Monachism