CHAPTER - TWO

INDIA AND THAILAND

GEOGRAPHY, HISTORY, CULTURE & RELIGION

---

GEOGRAPHY

INDIA

The largest mountain range, the chain of the Himalayas with its extensions to east and west, divides India from the rest of Asia and the world. On her north and west is Persia. On the northeast is Nepal and Tibet. On the east is situated Burma. On the south, she contacts to Ceylon. The total area of India is 8,75,2,000 square kilometres. She is partly surrounded by the sea, the Arabian Sea on the southwest and the Bay of Bengal on the southeast.
In the Northern area, there are innumerable streams which flow southwards to meet in the great river systems of the Indus and the Ganga. The basin of the Indus, now mainly in Pakistan, had the earliest civilization and gave its name to India.¹

The central area is the fertile plain of the Panjab (Five rivers), watered by the five great tributaries of the Indus, the Jhelam, Chenab, Ravi, Beas, and Satlaj, had a high culture which spread as far as Gujarat.

The north eastern part of the Ganga plain and its great tributary river Yamuna. This land has been the land of the Aryans (once known as Aryavarta) where her classical culture was formed. At its mouth in Bengal, the Ganga joins the Brahmputra which flows from Tibet by way of the Valley of Assam.

---
¹ The Indian knew this river as Sindhu, and the Persians, who found difficulty in pronouncing an initial S, called it Hindu. From Persia, the word passed to Greece, where the whole of India became known by the name of this river. The ancient Indians knew their sub-continent as Jambudvipa (the continent of Jambu tree) or Bharatvarsa (the land of the sons of Bharata, a legendary emperor). With the Muslim invasion, the Persian name returned in the form of Hindustan and those of its inhabitants who followed the old religion became known as Hindus.
In the South, the Vindhya mountains form a divide between the North and the South. The great plateau of the south, often known as Deccan, is a dry and hilly land, bordered on either side by long ranges of hills, the Western and Eastern Ghats. These hills are the sources of many rivers e.g. the Mahanadi, the Godavari, the Krishna, the Narmadas, the Tapi and the Kaveri.

The south-eastern part of the Deccan plateau (Peninsula) forms a large plain, it is the region of the Tamil who was once independent and possessed its own culture and language. In course of time, the northern culture had its influence felt in the Tamil country.

THAILAND

Thailand is situated on the mainland of South-East Asia, in the middle of the Indo-China Peninsula. On her north and west is Burma. On the east she has Laos as her neighbour. On the south, she contacts to the Malay Peninsula. The total area of Thailand is 514,000 square kilometres. She is partly surrounded by the sea, the Gulf of Thailand and the China Sea on the South, and the Bay of Bengal to the west.
The Central area is a large alluvial plain known as the Menam Basin, the land of rivers. The principal river is the Menam Chao Phya or generally known to the westerners as the Menam River. This land has been the land of the early Indianized kingdom, the Dvaravati Kingdom (The Mon kingdom). At present, Bangkok, the capital of Thailand stands on the left bank of the Menam River.

The Northern part of Thailand is a hilly terrain, separated by four rivers into four relatively large valleys. And these four rivers flow to the south and join the Menam River. Within this area situated Chiang-Saen the early capital of the Thai race.

The Northeastern part has the great river Mekong as its eastern boundary. It is considered to be a dry area at present. Its chief cities are Korat (Nakorn Rajsima), Ubol Rajdhani and Lopburi. This land has been dominated by another Indianized kingdom, the Khmer Kingdom.

1. Menam literally means 'River' in Thai language.
The Southern area has ranges of mountains as its backbone, on either side of which are coastal plains. This land has also been dominated by the Sailendra Dynasty of Java (another Indianized kingdom).

THE PEOPLE

India

India is the abode of a vast collection of peoples who differ from one another in physical characteristics, in languages and in culture. Among them the three primary ethnographical divisions of mankind, the caucasian or the white type, with its subdivisions of blonde and dark, the Mongolian or yellow type, and the Ethiopian or black type are all presented: The first two by various races in the subcontinent itself, and the last by the inhabitants of the Andaman Isles. Four of the great families of human speech - the Asiatic, the Tibeto-Chinese, the Dravadian and the Indo-European are represented among the living languages of India. While the fifth family, the Semetic, has through the medium of Arabic and Persian, greatly modified some of the Indian vernaculars.
At present, the people of India are estimated to be 537 millions.

**Thailand**

Physically, the Thai are primarily of Mongoloid type. Actually, the Thais belong to the same ethnic group of the Laos of the Lao kingdom to the North-East Thailand and the Shans of upper Burma.

When the Thais settled down in this land (the middle of the Indo-China peninsula) they intermixed freely with their forerunners, i.e. the Mon-Khmer linguistic group, the Indonesian linguistic groups. And in course of time, they became culturalized and identified themselves as one with the local people. Nowadays the people of Thailand are estimated to be 42 millions or more.

**A BRIEF SKETCH OF HISTORY**

**India**

A brief outline of the history of India will provide a ground to understand the religio-philosophic and artistic tendencies of both the countries. The principal periods in Indian history are:

1. From about 500 B.C. to 200 B.C., Magadha (the Modern Bihar) was the principal state and
the dominions of its great king Ashoka.

2. In the succeeding period, many invaders entered from the north-west. Some were Greeks from central Asia and some were Iranians, but the most important ones were the Kushans who ruled over an empire embracing both north-western India as well as regions in Afghanistan and Central Asia. This empire came to an end in about the third century A.D.

3. The native Hindu dynasty of the Guptas began to rule in 320 A.D. Its dominions included nearly all northern India but it was destroyed by the invasions of the Huns in the fifth and sixth centuries.

4. The Hindu Emperor Harsha (606-647 A.D.) practically reconstructed the Gupta Empire but his dominions split up after his death. At the same time, another empire which extended from Gujarat to Madras was founded by Pulakesin, a prince from the south.

5. From 650 A.D. to 1000 A.D. India was divided among numerous independent kingdoms. There was no central power, but three bigger powers continued their struggle for empire. These were the Gurjara-Pratiharas, Rastrakutas and the Palas.
6. About 1000 A.D. India saw multiplicity of its states, stabilisation of its local cultures and it faced a series of invasions from Turks now following Islam. In this struggle, the Hindus held out in Rajputana, Orissa, and in South India.

7. In 1526 came the invasion of Babur, who founded an Empire which at its Zenith (1556-1707) included all India except the extreme south. In its decadence the Marathas, Rajputs and Sikhs became powerful and Europeans began to intervene.

Thailand

The Thais were late arrivals on the historical scenes. The earliest mention of them in Southeast Asian epigraphy consists of a reference to Siam slaves in a mid 11th century Cham inscription.\(^1\) Thai-Chronicles, the Sinhanavati\(^2\) points to the town of Chiangsaen (northern Thailand) as the early region of the Thais.


and mentioned that the Thais had to pay tribute to the Khmers.\(^1\) Besides this early kingdom named Lanna, there were many other independent kingdoms established by the Thai before the formation of the present Thai Kingdom with Ayudhya as its former capital and Bangkok as the present capital.

Lanna existed in the northern Thailand, in the late eleventh with Chiangsaen as its capital.\(^2\) In 1292 A.D., the Thai rulers of Lanna conquered the Old Mon city, Haripunjaya (Lamphun)\(^3\), a stronghold of the Hinayana Buddhism and possessed themselves of its skilled artisans. Later, they moved their capital to Chiangmai. It was in the 14th century that the religious and artistic influence of Sukhothai, another independent kingdom, made itself felt. In the mid 16th Century A.D. the Burmese conquered Lanna and held the greater part of it for three hundred years. And in the 19th century, Lanna became a part of present Thai kingdom.

---

1. Ibid. pp.79-80; Notton, Annales I, p.183 f.
2. See two early Chronicles of North Siam, The Camadevi-vamsa of Bodhiramisi (early 15th Century) and also the Jinakalamali of Ratanapanna (in Thai).
3. Haripunjaya is a colony of the Dvaravati Kingdom, it was founded by Camadevi, about the 8th Century, in the hills some 12 miles south of the later Thai city of Chiang Mai see Janajalamali (in Thai version) 1958, p.86.
Another independent kingdom was also situated in the northern part of Thailand. It is called Sukhothai which came to the scene in the first half of the 13th century A.D. It was when King Si Intratit (Thai prince) declared Sukhothai to be a state, independent of the Khmer. And later on, his son, King Ram Kamhang expanded the kingdom until it included most of Thailand except the northern provinces. And this great king was the first king who invented Thai alphabets by adapting them from the Khmer alphabets. By this time downward, we have written sources which throw a flood of light on the history of Thai people. Another achievements of King Ram Kamhang were the adoption of Buddhism of the Ceylonese sect which has remained to this day; and the introduction of the manufacture of the Chinese glazed pottery to Thailand.

About 1350 A.D., there existed a new Thai power in the south of Sukhothai kingdom, it was Ayudhya kingdom.

Some 90 years later, Sukhothai was politically incorporated with Ayudhya. Then Ayudhya remained as the capital of Thailand for 417 years. It lost its independence to the Burmese twice. The second time was in 1767 A.D., but within the same year, Phya Tak Sin, the great hero succeeded in driving the enemies (Burmese) out of the country. Thus he moved his capital from Ayudhya which was then in ruins and depopulated, to Thonburi, a city on the right bank of Manam River. King Tak Sin was succeeded by King Rama I of the present dynasty (Chakri Dynasty) in 1782 A.D. And it was from the time of the fourth king of this dynasty (C. 1851 A.D.) that Thailand entered a new phase of progressive revolution following the Western trend.

CULTURE

India

Indian culture has sprung from Indian philosophy.

The Sacred Texts of Indian philosophy are: The Vedas, the Testament of people's collective reaction to the wonder and awe of Existence; the Upanishads which shift the emphasis from the wonder of the outside universe to the significance of the self within; the Bhagavad Gita with its emphasis on the joyful fulfilment of
one's specific Dharma and Buddha's Dharmapada which expounds the technique of the middle way.

Indian society was divided into four flexible divisions:

1. Brhamins : Priests
2. Kshatriyas : Rulers

The lower caste, called "the untouchable" suffered under this system. The national movement under Mahatma Gandhi included the eradication of the untouchability and removal of caste distinctions. Now under the national democratic constitution, untouchability has been abolished and caste system has gradually lost its rigidity. The people are equal before the law.

Thailand

So far as the Thais regard Buddhism as state religion, therefore the Thai culture is Buddhist culture. Buddhist monks play a very great role in everyday life of the people. It is layman's duty to offer food to monks. In the up-country, one will see that almost
every house starts the day with the offering food to the monks. People used to go to monastery on the Buddhist holy days, to listen to the sermon.

It should be noticed here that Thai people, from their cradle to the funeral pyre, have to contact profoundly with the monks, as babies, their parents would bring them to their most respected monk for the names; as boys, when they reach 20 years of age, it is customary that they must enter monkhood for some periods (at least three months), to study Buddhist doctrines and to practise meditation. In wedding ceremonies, monks would be invited to receive alms and to bless the wedding couple, when death, monks came to pray for their souls.

In the up-countries, monks sometimes played a very great role in politics. The natives would believe their monks rather than the officers. In ancient time, the monks had been chief leader in war.

However, it is to be mentioned here that the Brahmins also played a great role in Thai culture. In the royal ceremonies, e.g. the Coronation ceremony, etc., apart from the Buddhist monks, the Brahmins also took part in religious rites.
Regarding society, Thai society is not divided into four flexible divisions as Indian society. Under the Buddhist faith everyone is equal. The recognition of equality among mankind had come into existence in Thai society right from the time of the introduction of Buddhism in the early Thai Kingdom (Sukhothai kingdom).

However, in Ayudhya period, the concept of Devaraja (God King) from Cambodia influenced Thai society. The Kings, their families, and their colleagues were regarded as superior to the common people. The poor people suffered as slaves. But these slaves differ from Indian Shudras, as they can get liberation whenever they have enough money. This slave system was banished by king Rama V of the present dynasty.

At present, Thai people enjoy the freedom in Democratic way under the democratic constitution along with the Buddhist faith as a national religion having the king as its head who possesses the Buddhist faith.  

Sanskrit, Prakrits and Dravidian languages were used in India.

Classical Sanskrit was never spoken by the masses, but it was read and spoken by the upper-classes. It was used as the official tongue of church and state. The earliest surviving form of Sanskrit was that of the Rig Veda. Now Sanskrit served as a lingua franca for the whole of India. The learned brahmans from the opposite ends of the land, meeting at a place of pilgrimage, will converse in Sanskrit.

The spoken language for the masses were Prakrits. Prakrits were much simpler than Sanskrit both in sound and grammar. Most scriptures of pre-Gupta times, e.g., series of Asokan edicts are in Prakrits. The most important Prakrits are Pali and Magadhi.

Pali became the language of the Sthiravadin Buddhists and is still the religious language of the Buddhists of Ceylon, Burma and South-East Asia.
Magadhi was the official language of the Mauryan court and the edicts of Asoka were composed in it.

In South India, Dravidian languages flourished for centuries. Four of these tongues, Tamil, Canarese, Telegu, and Malayalam have distinctive scripts and written literatures. Of these, Tamil is spoken in the south from Cape Comorin to Madras; Canarese in Mysore and parts of Andhra Pradesh; Telugu from Madras northwards to the borders of Orissa and Malayalm in Kerala. In the Middle Ages, these Dravidian languages were strongly influenced by Sanskrit.

Writing. The people of the Harappa Culture had a script which can not be deciphered.

The Asokan inscriptions which are the earliest important written documents of India are engraved in two scripts - Brahmi and Kharosthi.

Brahmi script is used everywhere in India except the North West. Variations of the Brahmi script are

1. Brahmi Script is suggested by A. Cunningham to have derived from Harppan scripts. Other Europeans and some Indians believe to have derived from a Semitic script. But the resemblances are not strong enough to be convincing (see J. Marshall, Mohenjo-Daro and the Indus-Civilization, Vol. II, p. 423 ff. and see also Dani, Indian Palaeography, pp. 8-9).
evident even at the time of Asoka. In the beginning of the Christian era, the engravers in the north began to add little serifs to the letters. Until the later mediaval period, the serifs at the tops of letters were joined together in an almost continuous line, to form the Nagari, also called Devanagari, (script of the City of God) in which, Sanskrit, Prakrit, Hindi and Marathi are written at the present day.

In the Southern Deccan and Ceylon the Brahmi script became more and more circular in form, until in the middle ages, they approximated to that of the present day. The Tamils evolved an angular script known as Grantha which is still sometimes used in the Tamil country for writing Sanskrit and from which the modern Tamil alphabet is derived.

It was from India, that the people of South-East Asia learnt the art of writing. The earliest surviving South-East Asian inscriptions, found in Borneo, Java, and Malaya dating from 4th to 5th centuries are in correct Sanskrit and in a script resembling that of the early Pallavas. Every South East Asian script can be traced back to Brahmi. Scripts of Indian type have been used as far east-wards as the Philippines Islands.
Kharosthi derived from Aramaic alphabet which was widely used in Achaemenid Persia and known in North West India. Kharosthi was adapted to the sounds of Indian languages by the invention of new letters and the use of vowel marks. Kharosthi was little used in India proper after the 3rd century A.D., but it survived some centuries longer in Central Asia.

Thailand

Thai language, in its original form is of a monosyllabic type. Each word is independent and complete by itself and admits no modifications as do the inflectional languages with their differences of case, gender, number etc. It belongs to the Chinese Tibetan group.

As for Thai alphabet, it was firstly invented in 1283 A.D. by King Ram Kamhang the Great, king of Sukhodaya Kingdom, who adapted them from Khmer alphabet. Prior to this date, the Thai used Khmer alphabet which derived from the Grantha alphabet of the Tamils, people of Southern India. In other words, Thai alphabet is indirectly of Indian origin. It is modelled on the Indian one through the medium of the Old Khmer.
The Thais not only adapted Indian alphabet, they also adopted Indian languages mostly Pali and Sanskrit. For Pali and Sanskrit are religious languages. At first, these Sanskrit and Pali words, were introduced into Thai language through the medium of the Mon-Khmer languages. But later on, they came directly from India and Ceylon.

However, the Sanskrit and Pali words as used in Thai Language do not strictly adhere to the rules of inflections. They were clipped and reduced to meet the people's favour. And the sounds are also changed to suit the phonetic system peculiar to Thai language, for instances, vidya (Sanskrit) is pronounced vidaya (thai) etc.

RELIGION

A BRIEF HISTORY OF INDIAN RELIGION

The Early Phase

The Vedas are the earliest documents of human mind and the earliest known records of social organization of Indian people. They cover a large epoch extending over one thousand years. The Vedic literature can be classified into four different groups - Samhita, Brahmanas, Aranyakas and Upanishads.
The Vedic Aryan enjoyed life and wished for a long span of life on earth. Next to Vedic stage is the Brahmanical stage, during this period, the ritual acts were increasing, the rituals and sacrifices were regarded as more important than gods. It is believed that only sacrifice was enough to fulfill man's desire. Thus sacrifices became very common and often very expensive. At the end of this stage, there was a new movement within the Brahmanical fold with a strong antiritual tendency.

This anti-ritual movement found its place in the Upanishads. According to the Upanishads, life on earth is suffering, it is full of sorrow and discontents so the attachment to this world should be renounced. And the liberation or salvation could be obtained only by the truly religious life, based on an insight to the heart of the universe, not by performance of sacrifices.

This change in the religion of the Vedas and the merging out of the new elements, which were considerably contradicted to the old Vedic thought in the Upanishads, indicated the expanding movements of thought and action.
The Middle Phase or the Systematic Period
(C. 600 B.C. - 700 A.D.)

As the result of the varied notions of the religion of the Vedas, many systems emerged and produce systematic practices, to break down the conflicting theories. It was a period of immense philosophic activity and multi-sided development. The people were labouring with the contradictions felt in the things without and the mind within. Therefore the thinkers tried to heal the sickly minded people by either seeking repose and calm, deliverance and nirvana through knowledge, morality or else intoxication, ecstacy, bewilderment and madness. The emphasis was on the right of free inquiry and promoting the cause of truth which led to the weakening of the power of traditional authority. It was the age full of strange anomalies and contrasts. We would find the ideas of the materialism of the Carvakas as well as of the ethical Buddhism. Sorcery and science, scepticism and faith, license and asceticism were found commingled. However, all these new-born systems can be divided into

two broad classes, namely orthodox (astika) and heterodox (Nastika). The orthodox ones are the ones that believe in the authoritativeness of the Vedas and they can be called as the Vedic group. But the heterodox ones are those that do not accept the authority of the Vedas or known as the Non-Vedic group. The Carvakas, the Buddhists and the Jains, which belonged to the nastika group, appeared first. But Buddhism and Jainism, with their emphasis on the ethical, failed to supply the spiritual wants and emotions of people, and neither the abstractions of the Upanishads nor the brilliant pantheon of the Vedas, could satisfy the masses. Immediately as a sort of reaction, attempts were made to emphasize the theistic side of the Upanishadic teaching. Then came the time for the readjustment of Brahma religion, the Mahabharata and the Bhagavadgita were composed. Instead of the vague absolute Brahman of the Upanishads, the Gita introduced a living personal God. In Gita, Krishna is represented as an incarnation of Visnu as well as the Eternal Brahman of the Upanishads. The Pancaratra system, the other later Upanishads. The Pancaratra system, the other later Upanishads, the Mahayana form of Buddhism, where Buddha becomes an eternal God, the Saivism, Vaishnavism, and S'aktism, all belong to this religious reaction. And during this
period, the germs of systematic philosophy emerged out, Sankhya and Yoga systems in their early forms, Nyaya and Vais' esika developed on their independent lines, the Mimansa and the Vedanta were directly derived from the exegesis of the Vedic texts.

Now, we can obviously see that this period is really a period of contradicting systems and each of them representing one phase of the spirit of the age. Chronologically and logically, all these systems represent three different stratas of thought as follows:

1. The system of revolt, such as the Carvakas, Jainism and Buddhism.

2. The theistic reconstruction of the Bhagavadgita, Vaisnavism, Saivism and S'aktism.

3. The speculative development of the six systems.

The Last Phase (Tantrism)

The word "Tantra" in Sanskrit lexicon, usually denotes S'astra or treatise in general. But in its most popular sense, it is used to denote a class of literature dealing with mystical and magical worship of various deities. And this class of literature was committed to
writing during the period from the second half of the seventh century A.D. to the advent of the Muslim invasion. This phase is called the "Trantric Period".

At first, it was customary to hold that Tantrism was the direct off-shoot of Hinduism and it was practised among the Hindus only, and that later Buddhism was an outcome of S'āivism.

But recent researches in later Buddhism, and the discoveries of the Indus civilization have revealed the fact that the Tantric practices had been prevalent in India for a long time, the earliest evidences of which are found in the remains of the Indus culture e.g. innumerable terra-cotta figures of an almost nude female and the models of linga and yoni (male and female organ). ¹ And there are sufficient evidences to prove that this kind of practice had been performed continually among some groups of people. And the Vajrayana school of Mahayana Buddhism was the first school to have carefully noted this tantric practice into its religion.

¹ Marshall John, Mohenjo-daro and the Indus Civilization, London, 1931, PIs. XIII, 1,7; XIV, 2,4; see also, Vats, M.S., Excavations of Harappa, Delhi, 1950, pp. 51, 53, 55 ff., 140
However, it is not easy to determine when and under what circumstances, this tantric practice was incorporated into religion. It will be evident only when magical practices become extremely popular with one section, the other sections cannot resist in incorporating them into their own system.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF RELIGION IN THAILAND

Though Hinayana Buddhism is regarded as state religion in Thailand. But many religious remains of art and architecture clearly indicate the trade of Mahayana concept as well as Hindu concept. This problem was already solved by a thorough study of the civilization which flourished in this Indo-Chinese peninsular as a whole. However, it is noticed that Buddhism played a very great role in the movement. One can see that the Theravada Buddhism ultimately became the dominant faith of Burma, Thailand and Cambodia. Brahmanism, though, failed in converting the people, the Brahmans still played an important ceremonial part, especially at Court. And they still do so in Burma, Thailand and Cambodia. As for Mahayana and Tantrayana Buddhism, these
sects also prevailed in this land mixed with Theravada (Hinayana) Buddhism until it is unable to separate it.

Being devout Buddhists, the Thai people still belief in ghost, spirit house occupies an important role in the Thai life. This spirit house is known as Sarn Phra Bhumi (The house of the Lord of the Land). It is to be erected in everyhouse. This Lord of Land will act as a guardian angel. Food and drinks are usually offered to the spirit. This belief derived from the spirit worship of the Chinese.

In this work, the history of Buddhism in Thailand will be discussed.

Buddhism in Thailand

To trace the history of Buddhism in Siam it is necessary to go to a brief survey of Buddhism in south-east Asia. For the Thai were the late arrivals in the present Thai territory. They are heard of as settling down in the northern part around the twelfth century A.D.¹

---

¹ To be discussed in Chapter III.
It is believed that Buddhism came to south-east Asia by the missionary movement of Asoka some two hundred years after the death of the Buddha. He sent the monks Sona and Uttara to Suvarnabhumi which is identified as the south-east Asian peninsula.

At present two regions are identified as the first centre of Buddhism in South-East Asia: Thaton (Sudhammanagara) in Lower Burma and Nakorn Pathom in central Thailand. However, these two places were both the ancient city of the Mon. Thaton was captured and replaced by the Burmese\(^1\) whereas Nakorn Pathom by the Thai.

However, Nakorn Pathom is believed to be the early centre of Buddhism as the antiquities of the Mauryan pattern, such as the deer and-wheel motifs, etc. are discovered.\(^2\)

When Buddhism split into two sects: Theravada or Hinayana and Mahayana, Theravadin Buddhism spread in the east and south India, then to Ceylon and Burma and the greater part of southeast Asia. As for Mahayanism,

it influenced the northern region and spread over the Himalaya to Tibet, China, thence to Korea and Japan. Moreover, it spread to the south-east archipelago (Java and Sumatra) and across the China Sea to the Mainland of Asia (the region of the ancient Khmer Empire.

The Spread and Progress of Buddhism in Thai Territory.

Pre-Thai Period. According to the history of Thailand, the region where live the Thai people were formerly occupied numerous races other than the Thai. Basing on the antiquities and the monumental remains, these races were devotees of Buddhism of both sects: Hinayana and Mahayana. There were traces of Hinayana Buddhism in the Mon Kingdom (in central part of Thailand); Mahayanism in the ancient Khmer Empire (in the north eastern part) and in the south under the Sailendra dynasty of Java.

Thai Period. Before the formation of the Thai Kingdom with Ayudhya as its former capital and Bangkok as the present capital, there were many independent kingdoms established by the Thai. The early ones are Lanna in the north west, Sukhothai in the north. Later Lanchang was formed in the further east, where the modern kingdom of the Lao stands. Then came Ayudhya in the Central Thailand. From Ayudhya, Thai capital was moved to Bangkok.
It should be noted here that these kingdoms were devotees of Buddhism of Hinayana sect. But each kingdom obtained Buddhist doctrine from different sources, mostly from their neighbours. It is necessary to trace the source and the progress of Buddhism in each kingdom individually.

Lanna. In early period, Theravadin Buddhism in Lanna must have been of the type introduced by King Anoratha of Pagan. For literary evidences as well as archaeological evidences indicate the relationship between Burma in the reign of King Aniruddha (1044-1077) and the region in the north west and the north of Thailand where situated the kingdoms of Lanna and Sukhothai respectively.

Thai literary mentioned the relationship with Burma in the reign of King Aniruddha of (1044-1077 A.D.) only. It mentions the relation of King Aniruddha in 1051 A.D. with Queen Chamadevi of Haripunjaya Kingdom (Lamphun),

3. See the early Chronicles of North Siam, The Jinakalamali of Ratanapanna which has been edited for the Pali Text Society by A.P. Buddhadatta Mahathera (Luzac, 1962). In 1958 a Siamese translation, using new materials, Jinakalamali pājarana, was made by Prof. Sang Monvidur and published by the Fine Arts Department of the Thai Government, see the 4th ed. in 2517, B.E., pp.137-139.
a Mon colony founded by Chamadevi, about the 8th century, in the hills some 17 miles south of the later Thai city of Chieng Mai.

Archaeological evidences also support this contact. As many votive tablets which were discovered at Sukhothai and Srisajanalai were similar to the ones produced by King Aniruddha of Burma (they depict figure of Buddha seated under the shrine at Bodha Gaya (fig. 82)). This tablets were inscribed with South Indian scripts. Moreover the other tablets found at Nakorn Pathom and Pong Tuk (Kanchanaburi) also resemble the ones at Chedi Tagaung and Chedi Odok in Pagan

Aniruddha's Buddhism. King Aniruddha was the greatest of the Kings of Burmans the control of the major part of their country. He wished to convert his people to a living faith in Buddhism. Therefore, the only original inscriptions of Aniruddha are pious Buddhist sentences or prayers, signed by himself, on

2. The Influence of Buddhism of the Andhradesa of South India appeared among the Pyu between the 1st to 8th century A.D. (Report on the excavation at Be.kthano, by Aung Thaw, Director, Archaeological Survey, Burma, Rangood, 1968, p.61.)
His purpose in scattering his plaques all over Burma was a missionary one. North India was clearly the original source of these tablets, Pala Bengal, Nalanda and Bodhgaya are the distributing centres.

At first Aniruddha contacted mainly with the west and northwest, Arakan and East Bengal which were Mahayani and Tantric. In order to obtain the basic Buddhist texts, he then turned to the south, where he invaded Sri Ksetra of the Pyu and opened a hole at the base of the Bawbaw-gyi pagoda and removed the Relic to Pagan, leaving his own signed votive tablets of the 50 Buddhas. Having heard that Thaton (Sudhammangara) had the original texts, he captured Thaton, another

1. The Excavation at Sri Ksetra had established the presence of the Pyu culture dating from circa 5th to 8th centuries A.D. (Aung Thow, Historical sites in Burma, Rangoon, 1972, pp.1-15)

2. See General de Beylie, the first excavator at Sri Ksetra (A.S.I. 1908, pp.41-42) and Maung Po Cho, (A.S.B. 1912)p.13.

3. Two early Chronicles of North Siam, Janakalamalini and Camadevivamisa, relate that the population of Thaton were the ones who fled from Haripunhaya during the reign of Kamala (Kambalaraja) when cholera desolated the country for six years, see BEFEO t. XXV, p.80 (Janakalamalini); pp. 160-1 (Camadevivamisa) This fact is confirmed by the finding of 7 Mon inscriptions at Lamphun (Three of the Lamphun Mon Inscriptions were first edited by Coedes (BEFEO t.XXV, pp.189-195) then all by R. Halliday, "Les Inscriptions. Mon du Siam" (BEFEO t.XXX, 1030 (Nos.1-2).
Mon colony where he could get the Jataka commentaries\(^1\) and the books of the Pitaka\(^2\) and also all the architects and artists to Pagan.

Besides Theravadin Buddhism of the type introduced by King Anoratha or Aniruddha of Pagan, Lānṇā also received the Mon type of Theravadin Buddhism. For the Thai rulers of Lānṇā, in 1292 A.D. conquered the old Mon city, Haripunjaya\(^3\) (Lamphun), a colony of the Dvaravati kingdom, a strong hold of the Hinayana Buddhism.

It was in the reign of King Kūna (1355–1385) that Sinhalese Theravadin Buddhism was introduced to Lānṇā by the Sinhalese monk Sumana who was then residing in Sukhothai. For king Kūna sent an embassy to King Lithai of Sukhothai, requesting for the establishment of the Sinhalese school of monasticism in Lānṇā.

---

1. These were not of Singhalese origin, they contained 550 stories, not 547, and the numbering differed from 497 onwards.

2. But some scholars incline to believe that Aniruddha could only get the Jataka Commentaries from Thaton as the Tipitaka knowledge is not visible at Pagan during his reign, see Luce, Old Burma-Early Pagan, p.26, note 98, where he pointed out that the earliest Pagan temple to show knowledge of the Tipitaka beyond the Jataka, the Pahtothamya (c. 1084 A.D.)

3. Haripunjaya was founded by Camadevi, about the 8th century, in the hills some 17 miles south of the later Thai city of Chieng Mai. See Jinakalmali (in Thai version) 2501 B.E., p.86.
Buddhist Literature in Lanna. Many Buddhist literature were composed, between the middle of the 14th to the 16th century, by the Lanna scholars. These scholars wrote their religious works in Pali, by modifying from the standardized classical Pali of the Tipitaka, to suit local circumstances. Their important works are:

The Jinakalamali, written by the monk Ratanapanna of Wat Padang in Chiengmai which was dated 1516. It is the history of Buddhism from the time prior to the Buddha's birth, coming down to the life story of Buddha and his teaching; the three Buddhist Council; the introduction of Buddhism in Ceylon, its progress there and its spread to Pagan and then to Lanna country. This literary work is considered by scholars to be reliable.¹

The Camadevivahisa or the History of Queen Camadevi. Like the Jinakalamali, it narrated the history of Buddhism in India, Ceylon and Lanna.

The Pathamasambodhi, this work deals with the life of Buddha in detail. The Thai people use this literary in studying the life story of Buddha.

¹ Coedes G., Documents sur l'Histoire politique et religieuse du Laos occidental, BEFEO, Vol. XXV, pp.4-11, pp.36-72 and pp.73-113; see also Pali text and Thai translation, Sobhon Press, Bangkok, 1909 and see new translation with critical notes by Manavitur in Thai, revealed in English in JSS, L.I. pp.54-61.
There are other works e.g. the Mangalatthadipani, commentary of the Mangala Sutta; the Sihinga Buddharaupanidana (Sihinganidana), a history of the famous image from Ceylon etc.

Sukhothai

As the first king of Sukhothai, King Si Intratit declared Sukhothai to be a state independent of the Khmer. Naturally, Khmer culture and Khmer style of Mahayana Buddhism must have influenced the Thai belief. And it is noted above that Pagan's type of Theravadin Buddhism also reached this region.

However, the Sukhothai kings favoured the Sinhalese Theravadin Buddhism. King Ramakamheng the third king of Sukhothai heard of the establishment of the Mahavihara sect of Ceylon at Nakorn Sri Thammarat (southern Thailand) He learned that this sect is very strict in regarding Buddhist Vinaya (discipline), it claims to have derived from the Vibhajyavada sect in India. He then, by the


end of the 13th century, requested the monks of this sect to establish the validation of the ordination at Sukhothai. This Mahavihara sect of Ceylon gave birth to the Arannavasi sect (Forest Monks) in Thailand. Thus we have the following information from Ramkamheng's inscription.¹

"To the west of this city of Sukhothai there is a monastery of the Forest Monks. King Ramakamheng founded and offered it to the Venerable Preceptor, learned in all the three Baskets, in erudition excelling all other monks in the whole land. He hailed from Nakorn Sri Dharmaraj".

A further influx of Sinhalese Theravadin Buddhism took place again in 1361 in the reign of King Litai, grandson of Ramakamheng. He invited the learned monk from the Mon country named "Sumana" who possessed a high code of morality, learned in all the three Baskets (of the Canon of Buddhism), residing in Ceylon.²

Theravadin Buddhism from Ceylon then firmly implant upon Sukhothai. There are vestiges of it in the realm of architectural and plastic arts which will be discussed later. This sect led to be implanting of the double sima

2. Ibid. pp.91.
or boundary stones (marking the extent of an uposatha or assembly hall where the monks perform their rites).

It is explained that in the establishment of the Ceylonese style of Buddhism the Sinhalese monks in Sukhothai fixed another sima by the side of the old sima to indicate that the assembly hall had been demarcated in accordance with their orthodox procedure. And in plastic art, a new type of Buddha image was produced too.

The golden age of Buddhism in Sukhothai started from the reign of King Ramakamheng and reached its zenith in the reign of his grandson, Litai, we learned from Ramakamheng's inscription that he invited venerable monks to deliver sermons on holy days to public congregations.

As for king Litai, he is considered to be a Buddhist scholar. He composed a Buddhist treatise called Tebhumikatha. It is the Treatise on Buddhist cosmology. He drew some information from numerous treatises and combined them into a whole giving the name of Tebhumikatha or a treatise on the three worlds. The names of the treatises
drawn to Tebhumikatha are: the four commentaries; some from the Commentary and Tika of the Abhidharmavatara; some from the Abhidharmasangaha; some from the Sumangalavilasini; some from the Papancasudani; some from the Sinorathapakasini; the commentary and the Tika of the Vinaya; the Dharmapada; the Mahakotha; the Madhuratthapuranivilasini; the Dharma-Jataka; the Milindapanha; the Mahanidana; the Mahakalpa etc.

Lanchang. In another independent state in the further east (where the modern kingdom of the Lao stands) known as Lanchang. It is believed that there was an influence of Theravadin Buddhism from Combondia which lasted to modern days. There is a collection of apocryphal Jataka tales in three versions, Lanchang, Chienmai and Cambodian. The Pali name of the collection was Pannasa-Jataka, meaning the Fifty Tales. The stories were folktales, many of which became the favorite subjects for Drama e.g. the Golden Conch, Samudaghos, Sudhon etc.

Ayudhya Period

Ayudhya had been one of the former capitals of Thailand. It succeeded Sukhothai by the end of the 14th

1. Tebhumikatha, or Phra Ruang's Tribhumi" published in the original Siamese in 2457 (1914), 244 pages; see preface; see also a review in English by Phya Anuman in JSS XLIII,1 (1955) pp.73-75.
A.D. and survived for 500 years. It is situated in the central part of Thailand. Ayudhya kings and their people were also devotees of Theravada Buddhism (Ceylonese style). But the Ayudhya kingdom had close relationship with the Cambodian kingdom. Therefore, Cambodian culture as well as religious belief strongly affected Ayudhya culture.

For instance, the concept of Deva-raja penetrated into the king court. The king's name usually started with "Rama", one aspect of Vishnu as the great fighter. The crowned prince was entitled as "Noh Buddhangkura"\(^1\), (the offspring of Buddha) etc.

Moreover, Hindu ceremonies played a very great role in the court. In every Royal ceremony, the Brahmin took part officially, e.g. the Coronation Ceremony etc. Many Hindu ceremonies were accepted by Thai as the sacred ones to be performed annually, for example "the Ploughing Festival"\(^2\).

---

1. This title was only used in the reign of King Ramadhibodi II, (in 2069 B.E.)

2. The detail of annual ceremonies are to be seen in "The Twelve Months Ceremonies" (in Thai language) edited by King Rama V, Fine Arts Department, 2503 B.E.
As for common people, magic and sorcery penetrated deeply into people's mind. Amulets were used freely among them. The well educated people at that time were limited among the ones who can perform magic. Mantra (string of mystic words) for protecting themselves and for harming the others were learned by heart. Everybody wears amulets, many kinds of amulets were used e.g. Takrut, and Yantra. Takrut is a small thin-copper-plate, square in shape, inscribed with gatha. Yantra is like Takrut, the difference is that the former is a piece of cloth inscribed with special mantra or gatha to serve special purpose. 

Therefore Hinayana Buddhism of Ceylonese style could not resist the influence of the Angkorian culture and religion (Hinduism mixed with Mahayanism). The monks of the Hinayana sect used string of beads (108 in number) in their prayer. Actually these string of beads were used by the Hindu and by many sects of Mahayana Buddhism e.g. Sukhavati sect and Vajrayana sect.

1. Religious belief in Ayudha period is perfectly recorded in one of the most famous literature "Khun Chang, Khun Pan" - composed by Sundara Pu. This literature now used as a text book for studying of Thai History and culture in High School.

2. It is recorded by De La Lubere, the French Diplomat in the reign of King Narayana The Great, Trans. by H.R.H. NaraDhip Prapanpong, Part II, p.195 (in Thai language).
There was a tradition of embedding within the core of stupas (the crypt), the Buddhist texts, the votive tablets or plates depicting the figures of Buddha or inscribed with the sacred Pratityasamutpadasutra, the Buddhist creed:

"Ye dharma hetu prabhava hetuni tesham Tathagato
by-avadat teshani Cha yo nirodha evam vadi
Maha- sramanah"

with or without images and symbols.

This practice of entombing the manuscripts or Buddha image or Buddhist tablets seem to exist in India from a fairly early period, but it became prevalent in North India in the sixth century A.D. as recorded by a Chinese pilgrim.¹ And it was popular in Central Asia and Eastern Turkistan and East Pakistan under the patronage of the Buddhist Palas.

King Songdham (1620-1628) built the shrine of the newly discovered footprint of the Buddha near Saraburi province² which became popularised down to modern days.


2. see Collected History of Thailand Vol.8, part 8, p.58 it states that "Thai monks who went to Ceylon, learnt from the Ceylonese monks that the Buddha pressed his footprint on Mt. Suwanbarpot which is situated in Thailand. The king then ordered a search for footprint and found it in Saraburi".
By the end of the 18th century, in 1750 A.D. King Kirtisiri sent for Thai monks to reintroduce valid ordination in Ceylon. King Boromkot of Ayudhya sent Thai monks headed by Venerable Upali to Ceylon to install Buddhism there. Monks of Ceylon who were ordained by these delegations and their Sinhalese pupils are still known as the Siamvans (the Siamese school of Sangha). Its history was written by the Sinhalese Thera Buddhara-kkhita of the monastery of Pubbaram in Kandy.

Bangkok Period.

When Ayudhya was overthrown by the Burmese, Buddhism in Thailand fell down. The Burmese destroyed and put into fire many temples, images including Buddhist scriptures.

In the reign of King Rama I in the beginning of the 19th century, Buddhist scriptures were collected from various parts of Thailand. The king then ordered a Buddhist council to be held to revise the scriptures.

1. see Prince Damrong, The Establishment of the Siamese Sangha in Ceylon, in Thai, p.79; see also P.E. Pieris, a translation from the Sinhalese of an article entitled King Kirtisiri's Embassy to Siam in 1750 A.D., in JRAS, Ceylon branch, Vol.XVIII, 1903, p.3; see also "Collected Ayudhya's Record, Part I, pp.58-63
King Rama XI sent monks to Ceylon to study Buddhism. It was in the reign of King Rama III that many Buddhist scriptures were translated from Magadha language into Thai language.

It was King Rama IV who entered monkhood for many year before his coronation. He is responsible for the monastic reform in Thailand. He appreciate the monastic life practised by a Mon monk from Thonburi by the name of Buddhavanso. He found out the Mon Monks were still preserving the true spirit of a monastic life. He then sought new-ordination from the Mon monk and his associates. And at Wat Smorai (now known as Wat Rajadhivas) where he took his studies when ordained, he established the nucleus of a new school of thought, which became known in letter days as the Dhammayutika. The distinctive features of this school were a strict interpretation of the Vinaya. It involved a new style of wearing the robes, a conduct of ordination strictly following those prescribed in the Tipitaka, e.g. not collecting food or money etc. This school was established in 1833 A.D.

The masterpiece of King Rama V is that he asked the monks to revise the Tipitaka and ordered them to be typed for 1000 copies, each copy contain 18 volumes. They were distributed to neighbouring countries.\textsuperscript{1}

Apart from Buddhism, Brahmanic ceremonies still played a great role in the kings' court and the annual ceremonies. But magic and sorcery became less popular.

\textsuperscript{1} Prince Damrong Rajanubhab, \textit{The History of Buddhist art in Thailand}. Klang Vichya Publishing House, Bangkok, 2469 B.E. p.150 (in Thai).