My narrative began with a discussion on Indian Buddhism. I traced the emergence of Buddhism in the context of the world of the sixth century BC. Buddhism emerged in the wake of debates among rival traditions of spirituality. Such a tradition of debate among contending traditions meant that the monks and mendicants had to be aware of assumptions of competing ideologies. It was this awareness that is visible in many of the sermons of the Buddha. The end of the Buddhist quest was self-realization leading to liberation. This journey of discovery was not based on blindly following what the Buddha or some other visionary said, rather it was meant to emerge out of a complex process of reasoning and meditation. No wonder the one of the last instructions of the Buddha to his followers was for them to be ‘lamps unto themselves’ *app deepo bhava*. It is in this spirit that some of some of the Buddhist sects start their training by believing in the non-existence of the Buddha. This is because the Buddha did not matter, what mattered was the discovery of ‘knowledge’. So, the basic aim of Buddhism as a tradition was to show the path to self-realization. The tracing of this ‘path’ became the foundation of the Buddhist institutions of learning. The initial gatherings of the Buddhists were concerned with the teachings of the Buddha among small communities of monks. In its long journey of over a thousand years the institutionalization of Buddhist centres of learning created vast networks of contact and communication. Being a relatively open tradition that valued the ‘local’ and the ‘individual’, Buddhism absorbed a variety of ideas from different communities and rival traditions. Such a situation was articulated in the teaching of a variety of subjects in places like Nalanda. Outside the Indian subcontinent vast projects of translation of ‘original’ Buddhist texts were more of transcreations. The vibrancy of the translated texts was a proof of the communication the Buddhists established with people having radically different traditions.
My descriptions of Buddhism in Tibet, Korea and Thailand have dwelt upon issues of the coming of Buddhism in these areas. I adopted this strategy for two reasons. 1) The research bodies in India are remarkably insular in their worldview. So, an average researcher is unaware of the rich traditions of Buddhism outside India. 2) Traditional education and Buddhism were deeply enmeshed with each other in these countries. Thus, some of the detailed descriptions about Buddhism in these countries might look overdone, but they serve a special purpose of familiarizing the reader with a variety of cultural traditions.

Buddhism is unique in the sense that it is considered both a religion and a philosophy and above all a supreme vehicle for social amelioration and transformation through education. It can therefore be studied from any of these approaches or a combination of two but one analytical approach does not exclude the other. Buddhism provided educational opportunities to wider sections of society including marginalized sections that were denied access under the Brahmanical system. A major difference between the Brahmanical and Buddhist attitude towards knowledge and education (the means to attain the ultimate knowledge- prajna) was that Brahmanism had a “consciousness of possessing a knowledge which could and must belong to but a few, to chosen persons…”

Buddhism had a wider approach accommodating all sections of society- at least theoretically. Further, Buddhism also empowered the seeker of truth to be an agent of his/her own change. An analysis of the Buddhist adherents as discerned from scriptures points to the presence of a larger number of higher varna/class individuals. Majority of the eminent disciples/ monks called ‘Theras’ and eminent nuns called ‘Theris’ belonged to

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1 Hermann Oldenberg, *Buddha His Life, His Doctrine, His Order*, tr from German by William Hoey, Low Price Publications, Delhi, 2003 (reprint), p.61
higher varnas or economically well off classes like those of merchants (setthis). People belonging to lower varnas or class also entered the sangha as Buddha opened the gates of sangha for all irrespective of caste and class. But ironically among the laity, many must have belonged to lower varna or class but they were not the recipients of Buddhist monastic education..

Indian monasticism begins with Brahmanism but gained wider social acceptance with the emergence of heterodox sects like Buddhism and Jainism who challenged the established Brahmanical fourfold varnasrama system. In Brahmanism, the third and fourth stage of vanaprastha and sanyas was beyond the family life but Buddhism accepted young, middle and old men as well as women into its sangha. Young men and women joining the sangha did disturb the Brahmanical social order. The young directly going into monasticism without fulfilling the obligations of a householder were against the basic tenets of Brahmanism.

In the initial phase of Buddhism when monks and nuns lived in avara/ arama/ vihara, they did have contact with the laity mainly due to collection of alms. The diffusion of Buddhist religious knowledge meant for laity must have been passed on to them through these regular contacts during alms collection. But with the transformation of Buddhism from Hinayana (Theravada) to Mahayana and royal patronage from Asoka to Kaniska to Pala rulers, there was definite shift towards permanent residency leading to institutionalization of viharas with large donations and land grants being given to them. It was this structural change that gave a strong footing and continuity to the Buddhist knowledge base in the form of a permanent institution with specialists. This transformation from renunciation into settled monasticism of vihara was a gradual process and Buddha in his lifetime allowed it. With greater institutionalization and students coming from
different parts of India and Asia, the education of the laity must have been largely overlooked in the Theravada tradition. But in the Mahayana tradition, and its concept of Bodhisattva and salvation for all, the laity’s access to education greatly improved for they must have heard certain discourses meant for them along with the monks/ nuns or separately.

The history of Buddhist education is traced through its monastic system which was initially religious studies or study of the Dharma. The monasteries (viharas) which evolved for shelter during the rainy season gradually got institutionalized and later some of them evolved into mahaviharas which were the prominent centers of learning. The viharas gradually transformed from dwelling place to educational centers and formalized into ancient universities. They were well equipped in terms of infrastructure, faculty, teaching methods, curriculum, examination, etc. to meet the needs and requirements of their contemporary time. The most famous among them were Nalanda, Vikramasila, Odontapuri, Jaggadala, etc. They received royal patronage as well as donations from the laity. It is clear that monastic settlements formed the core of Buddhist religious activities from the earliest of times. The Buddhist monasteries of India ran the gamut, ranging from modest communal areas to large, impressive establishments. They also served as important institutions of higher learning that generated intellectual thinking. One of the points that emerge from this development is the establishment of linkages with the community for the running of the institutions.

The Gupta and post Gupta period was marked by the arrival of many foreign students at Nalanda, Vikramasila, etc. The presence of foreign students was a special feature of the Buddhist institutionalized monastic education in India. The students were mostly from Asian countries like China, Tibet, Korea, Sri Lanka, etc. where Buddhism was and still is a major religion. The
presence of Indian scholars in foreign land was also a distinguishing feature as far as Buddhism was concerned. Scholars from India visited countries like Sri Lanka, China, Tibet, Java and Korea. These Indian scholars went for manifold works like establishing monasteries, translating the Buddhist scriptures into local languages, teaching and explaining the tenets of Buddhism, apart from preaching and propagating it. They were also welcomed warmly by the rulers as scholars from the land of the Buddha were believed to be endowed with charisma and provided a moral justification for the rulers and enhanced the prestige of the monarchies.

The curriculum initially might have been confined to the Buddhist Pali texts- the Tripitakas. The emergence of Mahayana and its texts in Sanskrit and the writing of commentaries on major Buddhist texts- Pali as well as Sanskrit marked an expansion in the curriculum of the monastic education. With the rise of Madhyamika most of the debates in India were conducted in Sanskrit and the Buddhists were also compelled to shift to Sanskrit and thus a new burst of creative works under the aegis of the Mahayana flowered. By 8th -9th centuries, the Tantric influences led to writing of various Tantric texts which formed a part of curriculum in Nalanda and Vikramasila. The curriculum was quite comprehensive and also included subjects like grammar, arts and crafts, medicine, logic, spirituality and philosophy. The Mahayana literature included the compositions of Nagarjuna, Vasubandhu, Asanga, Dharmakriti etc. The study and development of logic was a special feature of Buddhist monastic education. Kamalsila’s Bhavanakrama and Bu Ston’s The Jewelry of Scripture mention twelve classes of sacred texts. The latter also explains each of them. They are: sutras, geya, vyakarana, gatha, undana/udana, nidana,
The sutras refer to sayings in which the subject matter was put forth in the form of aphorism as the Buddha taught through aphorism and cited ten advantages of teaching in such a way. Geya meant ‘that which can be sung’- ‘chhandas’. Vyakarana – one of the nine ‘angas’ of Sutta pitaka contains prophecies or revelations made by the Buddha about the future degradation of the monks. Gatha – lyrical ballads, contain stories of Buddhist monks and nuns. Undana/udana – they are the solemn utterances of the Buddha collected into eight parts of Udana-varga. It also contains parables. Nidana refers to stories of instructive character like the precepts given to Dhanika, asking him not to steal. Avadana meant biography of eminent Buddhist monks. Bu Ston explains it as ‘related in the form of parables to elucidate the meaning of the Sutras.’ Iti-vrittaka is divided into 112 parts written in mixed prose and verse. It contains the teachings of the Buddha in earlier times. Bu Ston refers to it as ‘legends of former times, the stories about the Buddha’. Jataka as we all know contain stories of Buddha’s previous birth as Bodhisattva. Vaipulya refers to nine important Mahayana sutras. The texts are Astasahsarika prajna paramita, Saddharma pundrika, Lalita-vistara, Lankavatara,Suvarna-prabhasa, Gandha-vyuh, Tathagata-guhyaka, Samadhiraja and Dasabhumisvara. These texts are also referred as ‘Vaipulya-sutras’ due to their comprehensiveness. Adbhuta-dharma contains the details of the miracles of the Buddha and Bodhisattvas while Upadesa-varga contains the discourses of Buddha. Bu Ston adds that ‘the meaning of the Sutras etc. is rendered clear by
it.\textsuperscript{4} Regarding these texts, Bu Ston writes that these twelve classes of sacred texts are mentioned in the commentary on the \textit{Astasaharika-prajnaparamita} named \textit{Sarottama}.\textsuperscript{5} They are also mentioned by Kamalsila in the context of “realization of ‘samatha’ and proficiency in ‘vipasyana’ where “carefully listening to those (texts), owning them up properly, practicing (their) recitation, analyzing them well through the mind, piercing with insight (lit. Vision), sitting in solitude at a lonely place,...”\textsuperscript{6} These may have been the subjects of study in Indian ancient universities like Nalanda and Vikramasila and may have diffused to Tibet through Indian teachers like Kamalsila who went to Tibet on invitation to establish and teach Buddhism. The focus is on the study of sacred texts and its deep analysis paving the path of meditation for deeper insight. \textit{Anguttara Nikaya} also specifies learning in \textit{Sutta, Geyya, Veyyakarana, Gatha, Udana, Itivuttaka, Jataka, Abbhutadhamma} and \textit{Vedallal}.\textsuperscript{7} Here the reference is to ninefold Buddhist scriptures and not twelve scriptures as discussed above. It is considered to be an interpolation and is a late insertion and was considered a must to understand \textit{Dhamma}.

Transcription, coping of manuscripts and translation of Buddhist texts in the established centre of education were an important academic activity in and outside India. Calligraphy was also an important activity that engaged many monks. Curriculum/ study of scriptures varied but religious discourse dominated the educational system. The original sayings of the Buddha codified as \textit{Pali Tripitaka} is common to all regions under study. The Buddhist

\textsuperscript{4} Kamalsila Bhavanakrama, Part ii, \textit{op.cit.}, fn. 54-64, pp.118-119; Bu Ston, \textit{op.cit}, pp.31-33.

\textsuperscript{5} Bu Ston, \textit{op.cit}, p.31

\textsuperscript{6} Kamalsila Bhavanakrama, Part ii, \textit{op.cit.}, p.60.

\textsuperscript{7} A N, ii, 6, 102,186
Mahayana texts are predominant in Korea although the emphasis was on the study of both Hinayana and Mahayana texts for a better understanding while Mahayana and Tantric texts are important in Tibet. With the passage of time, the curriculum expanded to include secular subjects too. The methods of teaching included prasana (question), anuprasana (asking question after instruction by the preceptor), vyakhaya (explanation given by teacher regarding meaning of mantras), drshtanata (analogy) and use of parables and allegories.

Meditation was a vital component of the Buddhist monastic education in all the three streams of Buddhism and continues even today. The coming of ultimate knowledge- wisdom, that is, prajna through meditation is accepted in all regions under study with the exception of Pure Land sect of Korea (although it is present in China and Japan too). This sect lays emphasis on the study of scriptures and chanting of mantras. The presence of meditation chambers and cells in various monasteries of India and references in various texts explaining it clearly point towards the importance of meditation. The presence of several Vipassana meditation centres all over India and abroad is a testimony to the growing importance of meditation to find solutions to the problems of present day materialistic world.

Buddhism spread to various parts of Asia in ancient and medieval period. Buddhism was conditioned by the historical experiences and cultural settings of the host countries like in Far East (China, Korea, Japan), Central Asia and South East Asia. Thus, we find several culturally oriented Buddhism in different geographical locales like Chinese Buddhism, Korean Buddhism, Japanese Buddhism, Thai Buddhism, Burmese Buddhism, Tibetan Buddhism, etc. Regarding Buddhism’s early dissemination, Richard Gombrich wrote: “The major factor has no doubt been the power and beauty of its thought; it
offered both a coherent Universalist ethic and a way to salvation from suffering.”

A remarkable feature of the transmission of Buddhism to other countries was that it presented itself more as a ‘supplement’ than as a ‘contestant’ to existing religions and cultures. Thus, we find that “…Buddhism embraced Nat worship in Burma, and the Bon cult in Tibet; it cooperated with Confucianism and Taoism in China; and it amalgamated with Shinto in Japan…In so doing, Buddhism enriched the local cultures and contributed rich symbols, rituals, and lofty philosophical systems to the religious life of the people, but it approximated rather than challenged, the existing world-views and cultural assumptions in various parts of Asia.” This was true in regions beyond Asia too. Apart from philosophical justifications, the diverse nature of Buddhism in each of these countries is also due to the fact that Buddhism did not erase the pre-existing cultural traditions but appropriated and repackaged them presenting the local deities as part of the Buddhist pantheon and also explaining the pre-existing myths that had a great hold on the popular mind as part of the Buddhist worldview. Carl Becker opined, “Each time Buddhism has gone from one culture to another, it has undergone major modifications and evolutions to adapt itself to the new host culture rather than to transform the culture to its own end.” One may add that it also gave the prestigious ‘Great tradition’ to the extant ‘Little tradition’.

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The prestige attached to Indic religions and thought is seen by the adoption of both Buddhism and the Ramayana in local traditions as they also served many practical purposes like enhancing the prestige of the polity and giving it a sacred legitimation.

Royal patronage in the establishment and propagation of Buddhism is seen in all regions under study as monarchy was the dominant political set up in all these regions. Although there are instances of suppression by certain rulers in case of Tibet and Korea but ultimately Buddhism triumphs due to its simple ethical appeal of love, compassion and brotherhood. As royalty played an important role in the establishment of Buddhism, the political association and its role in Buddhist monasticism is also a marked feature in some of the regions. The sacred and temporal is closely linked in the case of Tibet where the spiritual head His Holiness the Dalai Lama is also the political head of the Tibetans. The political system of Tibet is referred to as *ahosi nyindre* in Tibetan meaning religion and politics joined together. As discussed in chapter three, out of the four sects in Tibet, three sects had political roles too. The traditional education system of Thailand is inspired by three basic philosophies including veneration of the king which continues till date. This political connection is absent in the case of present day Korea. The Early Goryeo period in Korea is marked by some degree of control of the state in regulating Buddhist examination system and monastic education. Monasteries were created and sustained for the protection of the political state. Nāgarjuna, the great Indian philosopher advised kings to govern with compassion that included education for the people, fixed charges for doctors, proper health care, and low taxes, all based on Buddha’s non-substantial enlightenment.

Women entered monasticism during Buddha’s lifetime and even continue today in countries like Korea, Taiwan and China. Buddhism was ‘accommodative’ and ‘inclusive’ when it admitted women within the *sangha*
but with a subordinate position to nuns over monks. But considering the then ‘period’ under consideration and the gender bias still prevalent in many of the societies, it was a great move which certainly gave space to women in a patriarchal society. Buddhism in general did not question the very nature of patriarchy which gave a subordinate social status to women.

The ordination of women in India died out with the decline of Buddhism around 12th century AD. Full ordination was denied to women in Thailand (Theravada tradition) although lay women called mae chii/mae ji live as nuns. In Tibet (Vajrayana tradition), women were allowed only lower ordination and is still going on and the process of full ordination is under consideration. Full ordination of women has been a part of the Mahayana tradition and still exists in Korea. Pomun-sa is the largest nunnery still existing in Korea which was established in 1115 AD. The monastic life in Korea of both monks and nuns are almost similar and educational curriculum is also common to both.

The Buddhist system of education was closely linked to monasticism. One cannot imagine Buddhist education without monasticism and its institutionalized setup. The Vinaya rules and Dhammachakraparivartan Sutra formed the core of the Buddhist education everywhere as it defined the monastic code and discipline. Without codified rules, it would have been difficult to run an institution having a large number of students. The number of monastic rules for monks and nuns varied in different Buddhist traditions. The Theravada tradition had 227 rules for the monks and 311 for the nuns. Women had more rules to follow than men.

Buddhism laid stress on wisdom (prajna), conduct (sila), ethics (carya) and meditative practices (dhyana or bhavana). Wisdom (prajna) remains central to Buddhism even in contemporary period, especially as Buddhist insight meditation (vipassana) is practiced more widely than ever before.
“Buddhist views are compared with one another and with western ideologies, and old debates continue about how to describe the object of wisdom, balance intellectual and experiential approaches to wisdom, and apply wisdom to living life in the world with real intelligence and freedom.”¹² One can solve the challenges of the modern world and meet the needs of the human society by applying the traditional Buddhist methods of *Nissaya* and *Katha* combining it with the contemporary scientific methods of theory, value and data.

Regarding Buddhist monasticism and education system in Tibet, Korea and Thailand, one common strand is that Buddhism still survives there although the forms are different. Buddhism plays a prominent role in Tibet defining moral and spiritual values. It pervades the daily life of Tibetans. It has incorporated many local deities and spirits. The Indian connection is very much visible as many scholars like Padmasambhava, Santarakshita and Atisa, went to Tibet and hundreds of Tibetans came to India to study. The first traditional monastery (*Gompa*) was made at Samye modeled on Odantapuri with the help of the Indian *acaryas* in 7th century AD. The monastic education was well structured; the colleges specialize in Philosophy or Tantra. *Vinaya* rules are followed. The curriculum was well defined. The five main subjects are Logic, *Prajnaparamita, Madhyamika* (*Nagarjuna’s work*), *Vinaya* and *Abhidhamma*. The highest degree awarded is *Geshe*.

Buddhism travelled from China to Korea. The Indian monk Malananda/Kumarnandin took Buddhism to Paekche/Backje, one of the three kingdoms in ancient Korea. Korean Buddhism is referred to as “Hoetong Buddhism” meaning “all encompassing Buddhism”. They closely follow the Mahayana text *Avamtasaka Sutra* (*Flower Ornament Sutra*)¹³ emphasizing ‘One is all,

¹² Roger R. Jackson, ‘Prajna (Wisdom)’, *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, vol.2, p.666

¹³ This also forms the basis of Chinese Hua-yen and Japanese Kegon sects of Buddhism. This text was probably translated from Sanskrit into Chinese around 420 AD by Buddhabhadra.
one is all; one is in all, all is in one. Won-hyo and Chin-hul (12th century AD) played an important role in harmonizing diverse thoughts of Buddhism in Korea accepting indigenous cultures. The main sect is Chogye/ Seon Buddhism whose main focus is on meditation. Among other sects Pure Land Buddhism is important. Chanting of mantras, study of scriptures and prayers besides meditation are also important aspects of Korean Buddhism. The coming of Korean monks in India is attested from the writings of Yijing, Samguk Yusa, the Korean text of 12th century AD and the writings of Hye Cho (704-780 AD), the Korean monk who visited India and Central Asia. From these examples, we see the profusion of literature which points to the creation of literary elite in many of these countries where they emerged as the custodians of the Buddhist learning and traditions.

In Thailand, the Indian connection dates back to ancient times. King Asoka is believed to have send missionaries for propagation of Buddhism. In medieval and later period, they seem to have been more influenced by Sri Lanka, Myanmar and other South East Asian countries. The Indian role in the spread of Buddhism seems to be paramount in the case of Tibet followed by Korea and then Thailand. The traditional education system is marked by three features: dedication to Theravada Buddhism, veneration of the King and loyalty towards family. Temporary monkhood is a marked feature of Thai Buddhism which is not present in Tibet or Korea. One could leave the monastic order after a short or medium duration to join the family life. It varies from one vassa (rainy season) to one to three years. The political association of the monarchy with Buddhism is another marked feature. The legitimacy of the state is closely linked to its role in the protection and

Dasabhumika and Gandavyuha, two important chapters are available in Sanskrit. Refer, Charles S Prebish, op.cit. pp.61-62
support for Buddhist institutions. The whole focus of monastic education has been on Pali texts and its translation into Thai.

**Relevance in Modern Times**

Considering the intricacies of our modern times, the problematic scenario witnessed in various sphere of life, the issues of environment and sustainable development, a true and proper perspective on education can act as a panacea. A proper education in the true sense which is much more than mere literacy can lead to a better society and world. With the increasing focus on value education, peace education, environmental studies and so on, the focus of education is to produce person with values, morals and sensitiveness towards the needs of society and environment. The emphasis on non-violence, equality, morality, character building and the development of mental faculty through meditation were the hall marks of the Buddhist education meant for the monks and nuns within the monastic structure and also meant for the laity. Right Concentration within the Noble Eightfold Path was a mental exercise for a person’s inner development. It was a stage of mental purity where passions were extinguished. Concentration and meditation took place in mind and mental purity facilitated the deliverance from suffering and prompted true happiness which should be the aim of any individual, society and nation. In recent times, the concept of Gross National Happiness as an indicator of human development was given by Bhutan, a small Himalayan state with a strong Buddhist affiliation. Meditation removes tension and develops self-respect, self-control and self-confidence and gives strength to face all worldly problems with a sense of conviction and solution.

“Buddhism has emerged more than ever in the twentieth century as a ‘world religion’, virtually stagnant perhaps in the mid-nineteenth century, but since then once more discovering life in itself and meeting the challenges
Buddhism has much more to offer as far as peace and universal brotherhood is concerned. The need is to produce really educated people and not merely literate ones. In this, the ancient system of education including the Buddhist system can provide us a guideline. Education is a powerful tool of social change. Education and society have close linkages and both affect each other. Education for social change and transformation would need Buddhist way and thought as one of its components. There is a need to combine the traditional system of education with the modern methods including the use of latest educational techniques, teaching aids, methodology and technologies. The modern ways of pedagogy with science and technology along with Buddhist spirituality and meditational practices following the middle path would go a long way in providing solace to humankind.

Scholars from the socio-anthropological arena opine that modern Buddhism in Asia is not just a meditative vehicle for spiritual liberation, but also a vehicle that includes movements for social and political change. The “socially engaged Buddhism,” or simply “engaged Buddhism,” represents several Asian movements with millions of adherents dedicated to addressing the economic, social, political and environmental as well as the spiritual needs of modern humankind. In Southeast Asia, thousands of Buddhist monks work with hundreds of thousands of laity to rejuvenate village life. In South Asia, millions of Indian untouchables have converted to form a Buddhist movement for social change and challenge the caste system. In East Asia, Buddhist lay movements have millions of members caring for their daily needs. And throughout Asia, Buddhist nuns are founding orders that work for institutional changes in the Buddhist monastic communities and organize social,

educational, and health services for the poor. And, their response to this situation is not only to help people practice spirituality for the sake of personal liberation, but also to change the economic system for the sake of social liberation.\(^{15}\) Buddhadasa Bhikkhu, a famous Thai monk is famous for his talent and initiative in the study of Buddhism. He tried to study the highest Buddhist doctrine including its aim and goal by way of reasoning, analysis and investigation. His ideas lay stress on practice, consideration and thorough investigation.\(^{16}\)

In the present times, both in Asia and the West, lay meditation movements are growing in popularity, especially the Buddhist systems like *Vipassanā*.\(^{17}\) Meditation has a great impact on one’s mind and leads to better mental health and a better society. Vajracharya the Ven. Chogyam Trungpa while emphasizing the importance of meditation wrote, “Only through personal meditative practice is the student of Dharma enabled to slow down the speed of neurotic mind and to begin seeing the world with clarity and precision. Without this, he will only increase his confusion and perpetuate his aggressive grasping for self-confirmation. Without meditation, there is no approach to genuine sanity, no path to enlightenment, indeed no Dharma.”\(^{18}\) The spread of meditation among the common people is considered as the

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15 Refer Christopher S. Queen and Sallie B. King (eds.), *Engaged Buddhism: Buddhist Liberation Movements in Asia*, which is reviewed by Donald W. Mitchell, Albany: SUNY Press, 1996.

16 http://www.mahamakuta.inet.co.th/english/Questions/Thailand.html


“greatest single change to have come over Buddhism in Sri Lanka (and indeed in the other Theravada countries) since the Second World War.”\textsuperscript{19}

A teacher (\textit{kalyana mita} ‘spiritual friend’ in the Theravada tradition), Jack Kornfield has precisely and beautifully summarized the entire teaching of Buddhism as follows\textsuperscript{20}:

\begin{quote}
“Nothing is worth holding on to.
If you let go off everything,
Objects
Concepts
Teachers
Buddha
Self
Senses
Memories
Life
Death
Freedom
Let go and all suffering will cease.
The world will appear in its pristine self-existing nature, and you will experience the freedom of the Buddha.”
\end{quote}

What I have described is a long history that washes down to the present. So, chronological spans and spatial boundaries have been broken over and over again. For Tibet, Korea and Thailand Buddhism is not simply a forgotten past, it is a living present. As such it connects with a large number of issues about their entry into the modern world. The Tibetan Buddhist community in India despite the pressures of livelihood in an alien environment has managed to sustain itself outside Tibet too. Studies of the Tibetan population in India

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\textsuperscript{20} Jack Kornfield, \textit{Living Dharma: Teachings of Twelve Buddhist Masters}, Shambala, Boston & London, 1996,p.31
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show fewer psychological and social breakdowns compared to the native population in the same area. Can it be related to the Tibetan education system? Does the relatively liberal Buddhist attitude towards women feed into issues of women’s status in countries like Korea or Thailand? These are issues that need to be explored in future. Similarly, it is a well known fact that Korea boasts of one of the finest educational systems in the world. One could ask whether the Buddhist tradition feeds into the creation of this system in Korea. Meditation is deeply ingrained in the Buddhist practice. We need to reflect upon the possibility of combining modern systems of education with Buddhist meditational practices. But that is a task for research in future.