

# Indian Savants, Historical Silk Road and Exodus of Buddhism to China

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## Background

The ideas, thoughts and behaviour of the civilized parts of the world always made inroads into other less civilized areas in the globe. The society that refused to accept new ideas and institutions of the civilized cultures and stuck in their own without embracing changes in the cultural backwardness usually collapsed.<sup>1</sup> Cultural exchange is so important in the course of development of civilizations that no society can create new knowledge and ideas without exchange with others with long lasting consequences. The tacit acceptance of superior cultures could not help sustain human society. Therefore, adaptation of tenets from other cultures through exchanges could help sustain native cultures more effectively. Such societies effectively contribute in the development of civilizations. The transmission of Indian religious culture particularly Buddhism has been a part of this behavior. Buddhism started cultural exchange with China in the 1st century CE with the travel of missionary monks towards the Northern countries. The date of first contact of China to Buddhism has been assumed as 2 BCE. The first monks were the Tokharians. Since then a large number of monks from Central Asian region (Parthia, Sogdian, Kuchean) and South Asia [India] visited China for missionary purposes. Similarly, hundreds of Chinese monks made pilgrimages in India in the ancient and the medieval times. It has been the main aspect of cultural exchange between India and China. After Buddhism reached ancient Korea, Korean monks started to take interest on the new ideas that came from India. Later, Buddhism deeply penetrated into the Korean society. Many Korean monks visited China and India for religious or study purposes. Korean monks such as A-nan ye-po-mo (Anandavarman),<sup>2</sup> Pen-jo-p'o-mo or Hui-lun-shih (Prajnavarman)<sup>3</sup> and Hye-cho (Skt: Prajnavikram)<sup>4</sup> visited

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1 Heo Hung Sik, *Koryoro Olmkin Indo ui Tungpul: Chi Gong Sonhyon*, Seoul: Il Chisa, 1997, pp. 377-379.

2 Latika Lahiri, *Chinese Monks in India*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1995, p. 17.

3 Sukumar Dutt, *Buddhist Monks and Monasteries of India: Their History and Their Contribution to Indian Culture*, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1962, pp. 312-314.

4 Hye-cho made extensive travel of India and China. He along with other Korean monks such as Korean monks Hyon-cho, Bulkasari, Yilim and Kyunghyong greatly contributed to the esoteric Buddhism (Mil

India. They also had links with China and thereafter, to the western world and India. It finally rendered invaluable contribution in the development of Buddhism in Korea since the three Kingdoms period.

In order to understand historical development of Buddhism in China and other adjoining areas including Korea, we need to inquire into history of great monks such as Chi Gong (Zhi Kong > Dhyana-bhadra) as well as others from Indian in China and Chinese and Korean monks in India. The latter visited India for learning Sanskrit language and pursue higher studies. They later contributed in the development of Chinese and Korean Buddhism. In addition, more research needs to highlight on interaction of Buddhism with minority frontier religions in regions such as Yunnan.

### **Indian Savants and Exodus of Buddhism to China**

The history of expansion of Buddhism in Central Asia is important in the study of history of Buddhism in such as China, Korea and Japan. The history of Buddhism in Central Asia from Iranian plateau to oasis cities around the Gobi Desert goes back to BC centuries. Silk Road civilization during the first millennium opened its doors to cultural and religious inflow from both east and the west. It proved to be a fertile land for gaining followers for Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Zoroastrianism and Manichaeism. But among those religions and faiths, Buddhism became more popular among the people of Central Asia and played the role to bring together divergent ethnicity in the region. Therefore, Buddhism became a very important ideology in the entire region for several centuries.

The first step in the transmission of Buddhism in Central Asia was the missionary activity encouraged by Emperor Ashoka in the third century BCE. The spread of Buddhism started all the way from northwestern India (Ch: Tien-chu) to the region what we call now a day as Pakistan, ancient Afghanistan, Central Asia, Xinjiang, China, Korea and Japan. By the first century CE, Buddhism was well established in Bactria and Gandhara, which was patronized by the Kusanas.<sup>5</sup> As the Empire's sphere of influence moved eastward along

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kyo). His Indian teacher in China was Shubbakarasirpa. According to a Nepalese scholar, he also visited Nepal during his India trip. Harihar Raj Joshi, 'Ven. Hye-cho: A First Korean to Visit Nepal', *Buddhist Himalaya* Vol. V No. 1-2, 1993, pp. 38-40. For further details on Hye-cho's Travel see: Yan Han Sung, 'Soviet and Chinese Turkistan in the Eighth Century', *Korea Journal*, Vol. 9 no. 9, January 1970; Yan Han Sung, 'New Facts About Hye-cho's Travel', *Korea Journal*, Vol. 9 no. 12, December 1969, pp. 10-13; Yan Han Sung, 'Eighth Century Asia and Hye-cho's Travel', *Korea Journal*, Vol. 9 no. 9, September 1969, pp. 35-39; and Jan Yun Hua, 'Hye-cho's Memoires: Korean Record on Varanasi and Sarnath', *Korea Journal*, Vol. 9 no. 9, September 1970, pp. 28-31.

5 The Kucheans dominated the areas of Hindu Kush into Kabul, Gandhara, northern Pakistan and

the Silk Road, so did Buddhism. Prof. A. Litvinski opines that Buddhism had reached Merv (Turkmenia) and Parthia as early as Achaemenid times. The Mahavamsa (the Great Chronicle of Ceylon) describes that Parthian and Alexandrian delegates were in attendance at a Buddhist council held by King Dutthagamani (108-77 B.C.).<sup>6</sup> With the extension of Kusana influence, Buddhism further penetrated the realm of the Parthians and Sassanians.<sup>7</sup> Parthian's Buddhist faith was also confirmed by the Chinese records on the missions of the Parthian Buddhist preachers, An-Shih-Kao and An Hsuan during the 2nd century.

By 7th century, all the small Kingdoms in the Tarim region were won over to Buddhism, which brought with it so much of Indian culture.. As Buddhism advanced towards the Tarim basin, Kashgar with Yarkand and Khotan in the west, Tumsuk, Aksu and Kizil in the north, Loulan, Karasahr and Dunhuang in the east, and Miran and Cherchen in the south became important centers of Buddhist art and thoughts. The Buddhist texts were translated from Sanskrit into various local Indo-European dialects such as Tocharian or Kuchean. By 658 CE, Kucha (an oasis city on the northern Silk Road) became the main center of Hinayana Buddhism. It is impossible to make any general rules about the precise schools of Buddhism that flourished in the Tarim basin, but Chinese pilgrims Fa-hsien and Xuan Zang appeared to indicate that most of the kingdoms such as Kashgar, Kizil, Karashahr and Kucha on the northern route followed the Hinayana Vehicle whereas Mahayana flourished along the southern route including the kingdoms of Khotan and Yarkand.<sup>8</sup>

Bactria was introduced to Buddhism by the 1st century CE. A Buddhist settlement has been discovered at Airtam some eighteen kilometers northwest of Termez. For the next few centuries, Kusana/Bactrian Buddhist centers were expanded to Hadda, Bamiyan and Kondukistan. Buddhist travelers also took this route all the way to China. At this time, the oasis town of Kucha on the mid-point of this route became an important centre of Buddhism. Initially, Shravakayana, was transmitted to Central Asia. Then after, Mahayana was introduced in the first century CE. It took different route from Gilgit which is now known as Kashmir. Thus, Buddhism reached in the city-state of Khotan. From there,

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northwestern India. They controlled the trade between India, China, Parthia and the Roman Empire. For details on India's cultural influence in Central Asia and China etc. see: Priyatosh Banerjee, 'The Spread of Indian Art and Culture to Central Asia and China',

6 Wilhelm Geiger (Eng. tr.), *The Mahavamsa or the Great Chronicle of Ceylon*, New Delhi: Asian Educational services, 1986, XXIX. 29; Also see B. N. Puri, *Buddhism in Central Asia*, Delhi: Motilal Benarsidass, 2000, pp. 92-97.

7 'Buddhism and Its Spread Along the Silk Road', <http://www.globaled.org/curriculum/china/bessay1.htm>; <http://www.silk-road.com/artl/buddhism.shtml>

8 *Ibid*,

Mahayana Buddhism reached China. Vajrayana Buddhism was also transmitted to Khotan from Northwest India. People in the Central Asian region adopted Mahayana Buddhism. In the first century CE, the Kucheans and Sogdians were influenced by Buddhism. Kucha particularly contributed in the spread of Buddhism towards China. Tibetans also came in contact to Buddhism of Central Asia. This historical context has been regarded as an important factor in the conversion of entire Tibet into a Buddhist country. Towards the end of the first millennium CE, the Uigur Turks were also converted to Buddhism. In the tenth century, the empire of the Tanguts, the people of northeast of the Taklamakan desert, expanded to the eastern end of the Silk Road. They became last Buddhists to survive on the Silk Road. The end of the first millennium CE marked the decline of China's power in the Central Asian region and the growth of Mongolian and Turkic influence. It led to promote Islam in the region that resulted in the decline of Buddhism. Eventually, Buddhists were disappeared from Central Asia. With the victory of Genghis Khan over the Tanguts in 1227, Buddhism completely disappeared from the Silk Road.

After the power of Seleuchos Empire of Syria (312-63 BCE) declined in the mid-third century BCE, independent countries emerged by seceding from the Syrian Empire. Among these, three countries later encountered Buddhism. They were the Greek Kingdom of Bactria (255-139 BCE) based around the upper Āmu River and extending into northwestern India, the Iranian kingdom of Parthia based around the southeastern part of the Caspian Sea and the Indo-Scythaeon Kingdom of Saka.<sup>9</sup> When they lost their homeland in Bactria during the latter half of the second century BCE, they moved the base of their kingdom to the Punjab region. Among the Greek kings who migrated to India, Menandros (Milinda) is particularly noteworthy. According to a Buddhist text entitled *Milindapanha* (The Questions of King Milinda), the king converted from Greek religion to Buddhism as a result of his dialogues with the Ven. Nagasena. The power of Greek kings declined during the first century BCE. Then Sakas and Parthians, the Central Asian nomadic tribes, began invading northwestern India. Then, in the latter half of the first century CE, the Kusana tribe moved south to invade northwest India. The Kusanas were Iranian nomadic people. As their power increased, they began expanding territory and invaded northwest India. Eventually, they were expanded deep into the Indian continent and occupied central part of the Ganges River basin. Second step of Buddhism to become a universal religion occurred during the reign of Kusana King Kaniska as the religion started spreading in Central Asia. The Kusana Empire also included many different ethnic groups within the territory. King Kaniska rose to power in the first or

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9 Kogi Kudara, 'A Rough Sketch of Central Asian Buddhism', *Pacific World: Journal of the Institute of Buddhist Studies*, Third Series, Number 4, Fall 2002, p. 94.

second century of the Common Era. It seems that he promoted Buddhism not out of belief but because he had to adopt its egalitarian ideals in order to manage different ethnic people under in the empire.<sup>10</sup> Buddhism was well flourished in the central Asian countries before it was disappeared due to Muslim invasion. Buddhist manuscripts, statues and jars containing fragments of scriptures have been recovered elsewhere in the region to attest the popularity of Buddhism.<sup>11</sup> Buddhist period in Central Asia remained from 2nd to 14th centuries. The countries and places related to Buddhism in the region were mainly – West Turkistan (Parthia, Kusana Empire and Sogdiana),<sup>12</sup> East Turkistan (Shulein, Khasgar, Khotan, Kucha, Turfan, Hami, Dunhuang), Termez at the southern border of Uzbekistan, Qurgantuba in southern Tajikistan and so on. Even in Buryatia in Southern Siberia Buddhism entered in the 17th century.<sup>13</sup>

The role of Indian monk-scholars cannot be overlooked without a glance who migrated to China. Their names have been interwoven with the history of Chinese Buddhism. It covers roughly a period of five centuries from the third to the eighth century CE, however, it further overflows into later times as well.

Indian Buddhist monks carried Buddha's teaching to eradicate sufferings of humankind in China and other nearby areas. The relationship between India and China in terms of transmitting Buddhist tenets was first initiated by the Chinese. Indian monks who went to China in ancient times with the motivation of missionary zeal were the torchbearers of

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<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 95.

<sup>11</sup> Nalinaksha Dutt, *et al.*, (eds.), *Gilgit Manuscripts*, 4 Vols, Calcutta: J.C. Sarkhel, vol. 1, 1939; vol. 2, 1941, 1953, and 1954; vol. 3, part 1, 1947; vol. 4, 1959; Jens Brarrvig, (ed.), *Buddhist Manuscripts*, 2 Vols., Manuscripts in the Schoyen Collection, Oslo: Hermes, 2000?002); Nicholas Sims-Williams, 'A Bactrian Buddhist Manuscript', in Jens Brarrvig (ed.), *Buddhist Manuscripts*, vol. 1, pp. 275-277; Richard Salomon, *Ancient Buddhist Scrolls from Gāndhāra: The British Library Kharostī. Fragments*, (Seattle: The British Library and University of Washington Press, 1999; Richard Salomon, *A Gandhari Version of the Rhinoceros Sutra, Gandharan Buddhist Texts 1*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000; Fumio Enomoto, 'The Discovery of the Oldest Buddhist Manuscripts', *The Eastern Buddhist* 23-1, 2000, pp. 157- 166; Mark Allon, *Three Gandhari Ekottariyagama Type Sutras, Gandharan Buddhist Texts 2*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001, Kogi Kudara, *The Buddhist Culture of the Old Uigur Peoples, Pacific World, Third Series*, 4 (2002): p. 189,

<sup>12</sup> Sogdiana is also known as Samarkand, which is modern Kirghizistan and Kazakhstan.

<sup>13</sup> The Buryats, Kalmycks and the Tyvanians are the three Buddhist nationalities in Russia historically belonging to the common Mongolian spiritual realm and to the Tibetan and Mongolian cultural and religious traditions of the great Central Asian civilization. Tsymjit Vanchikova, 'Buddhism and Buddhist Studies in Russia and Buryatia', <http://www.pnclink.org/annual/annual1999/1999pdf/Vanchikova.pdf>

Indian civilization in the region. China has well preserved all such historical activities.<sup>14</sup> The travels in ancient times by monks to China and India were initiated through overland route via Central Asia or the sea voyage starting from the port of Kuang Chou or modern Guangzhou through the East China sea into the Indian ocean.<sup>15</sup> The overland route was older than the sea route. Sea route was more popular with the advancement of science and culture during the T'ang dynasty (CE 618-905). The ancient route passed through Dunhuang and then through the province of Kansu, Ch'ang-an and Loyang. In the seventh and eighth centuries, navigation became little easier and safer with China's progress in ship building and the mariners' compass. I-jing was the pioneer Chinese monk who first took up sea voyage from China to India. In the beginning, the Chinese Buddhists encountered problems in the translation of Buddhist scriptures with their highly technical terminologies. For the popularity of the new faith and salvage, the doctrine was to be made available to the general public. People needed to be given correct knowledge of philosophical aspects of Buddhism.<sup>16</sup> As a matter of fact, monk scholars in China paid due attention on translation and explanation of both the Sutras and the Shastras. In such activities, Chinese and Indian monk scholars in China were much ahead of time.<sup>17</sup> The city of Loyang became the center of textual translation. The highly organized team of translators translated Buddhist texts. Mostly Indian, Nepalese,<sup>18</sup> Central Asian and Chinese monks enormously contributed to translate Buddhist texts. The prominent monks who rendered greater contribution were a Parthian monk An Shih-Kao,<sup>19</sup> Indo-Scythian monks Dharmaraksha <sup>20</sup> and Lokakshema, Indo-Kucchean monk Kumarajiva <sup>21</sup> and Nepalese monk Buddhahadra.<sup>22</sup> The contributing

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14 Lahiri, *op. cit.*, p. XVIII.

15 *Ibid.*, p. XIX.

16 *Ibid.*,

17 E. Zurcher, *The Buddhist Conquest of China*, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1972, pp. 202-204.

18 Buddhahadra who translated various Buddhist Sutras and Vinaya texts, in the 5<sup>th</sup> century China was contemporary of Kumarajiva. Buddhist historians have often mistaken identifying him as an Indian monk. But truly, he belonged to the Shakya clan of Kapilvastu, who later went to Maulayantholo Vihara in Kashmir for further training. Upon request of some visiting Chinese monks, his *Guru* advised him to go to China. He agreed it and in the long run he rendered invaluable services in the development of Buddhism in China. His effort in translating Buddhist texts into Chinese is praiseworthy. Sukumar Dutt, a renowned Buddhist historian of India also mentions Buddhahadra as a native of Kapilvastu. Sukumar Dutt, *Buddhist Monks and ...*, *op. cit.*, p. 307.

19 Bunyiu Nanjio, *A Catalogue of the Chinese Buddhist Translation of the Buddhist Tripitaka – The Sacred Canon of the Buddhists in China and Japan*, Delhi: Classic India Publications, 1989, XII no. 4.

20 *Ibid.*, appendix ii, no 23.

21 Nanjio, *op. cit.*, Lewis Lancaster and Park Sung Bae, *The Korean Buddhist Canon: A Descriptive Catalogue*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989

22 Vijay K. Manandhar, *Nepal China Relations*, New Delhi: Adroit Publishers, 1999, pp. 1-10; Vijay K.

monks well collaborated with the Chinese counterparts. Within two hundred fifty years after Buddhism was first introduced in China in 67 CE, some 1153 Buddhist texts were translated into Chinese.<sup>23</sup> Chinese monks mainly Tao-an, Chih Ch'ien and Hui Yuan have rendered contribution of immense significance which is very important in the history of Buddhism in China. They also encouraged fellow Chinese monks to undertake pilgrimages to India for religious and academic reasons. Most of the Chinese pilgrims to India spent several years learning Sanskrit, studying Buddhist doctrines and procuring authentic Buddhist texts.

As Buddhist missionary activities took momentum in China, Chinese Buddhists were confused by the introduction of varied forms of Buddhism based on different schools. This confusion was also grown due to translation of the texts of Nagarjuna, Asanga and Hinayana School. It finally motivated Chinese monk scholars to set out for historical pilgrimages to India with the aim of studying and collecting authentic texts. Thus, Fa-hsien, Sung-yun, Hui-sheng, Yuan Chwang, I-jing and Shan-hsing made historical visits to India. Their motive was to search genuine texts, true doctrine and pay homage to the holy sites.<sup>24</sup> Modern researchers believe that some one hundred eighty monks from China visited India and paid homage to the Buddhist shrines.<sup>25</sup>

Buddhism was introduced in China through the Silk Road. An Shih-kao, a Parthian missionary monk arrived in China and translated Buddhist scriptures as early as 148 CE. Another Indian Buddhist missionary named Chu-sho-fu arrived in China in 170 CE. It is also said that the second Parthian missionary, An Hsuan, arrived in China in the year 181 CE. The travel of Buddhist monks tended to continue for centuries. The last Pandit to go to China was Ven. Dhyana-bhadra. He also visited various places in India, Nepal and Sikkim on the way to Tibet and China. However, no Nepali sources speak about his sojourn in

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Manandhar, 'Buddhabhadra: A Nepalese Buddhist Scholar in Ancient China', *The Great Compassion*, Winter 2004, Kathmandu, pp. 10-13.

23 Lahiri, *op. cit.*, p. XX.

24 The Chinese pilgrims also wrote travel accounts, which are valuable historical sources to contemporary history of India, Nepal, Central Asia and so on. The most popular and important travel accounts are Fa-hsien's *Fo-kuo-chi* (Record of the Buddhist Country), Hsuan-chang's *Ta-T'ang-his-yu-chi* (The Buddhist Record of the Western World of The Great T'ang Dynasty), I-ching's *Nan-hai-chi-kuei-wei-fa-chuan* (A Record of the Religion as Practiced in India and Malay Archipelago) and *Ta T'ang-his-yu-chiu-kao-seng-chuan* (Biographies of Eminent Monks Who Went to the Western world in Search of the Law During the Great T'ang Dynasty).

25 Liang Ch'i-chao, 'Chinese Students Going Abroad 1500 Years Ago and Afterwards (Essay)', Quoted in Lahiri, *op. cit.*, pp. XXV-XXVI.

Nepal. Dhyanaabhadra was in Tibet in the 14th century. However, Tibetan historical sources fail to notice his presence and activities in Tibet.<sup>26</sup>

A large number of Indian monks emigrated and settled in China. Moved solely by the desire to promote Buddhism in China, they lived and worked there continuously over long years. Very few are known to have returned to India. Great Buddhist monk scholars and philosophers of the Indian tradition were domesticated through Chinese biographical (Kao-sheng Chuan) <sup>27</sup> and historiographical traditions. They contributed significantly in the transmission of religious teachings.

Eminent Indian monks and patriarchs were recognized in China as principal architects of Mahayana Buddhism. Despite their fundamental contribution in the development of medieval Chinese Buddhism, modern scholarship has largely overlooked their role and ignored the ways in which their imagery was shaped in medieval culture in the region.

Buddhism was a common ground of spiritual and intellectual interest between India and China. The history of spiritual relations between China and India started in the third century CE. Many Indian monks emigrated and settled in China. A number of Chinese and Korean monks visited India on different occasions to earn spiritual merit and study authentic Buddhism in the country of its origin. At that time there were some smart and ingenious fellows among the Buddhist monks. Some of them knew the taste of Chinese people to choose some among the incongruous practices grouped under the rubric Buddhism. Comparing to Indian monks who were settled in China, only a few Chinese monks were settled in India. On the other hand, Indian monks were motivated solely by the desire of promoting Buddhism in China. They lived and worked there continuously over long years.

Under Tang and Sung (CE 960-1126) dynasties, a large number of expatriate Indian monks settled in China. In the forefront of emigrant monks, there were Kumarajiva (5th C), Paramartha (6th C) and Bodhibhadra (6th C).<sup>28</sup> The contributing Indian monks are recorded

<sup>26</sup> George N. Roerich, *The Blue Annals*, New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1971, p. 804.

<sup>27</sup> There are three biographies of monks in China known as Kao-seng Chuan – Hui Chiao's Kao seng Chuan (The Biographies of Eminent Monks) 531 CE, Tao-hsuan's Hsu Kao-seng Chuan (Further Biographies of Eminent Monks) 645 CE and Tsan-ning's Sung Kao-seng Chuan (Sung Biographies of Eminent Monks). These biographies serve as very good sources of history of Chinese Buddhism. For details on religious biographies in Asia see: Phyllis Granoff and Koichi Sinohara, *Monks and Magicians: Religious Biographies in Asia*, Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass, 1994,

<sup>28</sup> Behind them in the rank and file were many who enjoyed local or regional fame and are mentioned in Chinese dynastic records called *Shu*. Yet a whole host of others unknown to fame were absorbed in the



in various Tripitaka catalogues as the translators of Buddhist texts.<sup>29</sup> Indian monks were mostly engaged missionary activities as well as translation works. Indian monks settled in China formed a large section of all the textual translators. A great deal of Buddhist literature is extant in Chinese translation. The emphasis placed by the Indian missionaries in the supply of Buddhist texts was motivated by proverbial Chinese reverence for the written word, a tradition of Chinese civilization of almost immemorial antiquity.<sup>30</sup>

The Chinese monks, not satisfied with the incomplete instruction and training they received in China went as far as India at their own risk and stayed there for some years in Buddhist monasteries, learnt Sanskrit, procured Buddhist texts and then undertook the return journey, bringing to China both theoretical doctrine and the practical experiences of ascetic practices.<sup>31</sup>

The White Horse monastery in Loyang was the center of monk scholars, translators and writers from different parts of Asia. In 266 CE, Dharmaraksha, a Getian monk, arrived from Dunhuang and settled in the monastery. He died there around 317 CE at the age of eighty-seven. He completed 175 translations of which ninety are extant. Besides, the Getian monk, an Indian, a Parthian, two Chinese monks and two laymen distinguished themselves by the number and importance of their translations.<sup>32</sup> An eminent figure in the White Horse monastery during the last years of Loyang was one whose name has been equated to Buddhajangha. Chin official annals say that he was born in India and arrived at Loyang in 310 CE, declaring himself to be a centenarian. He seems to have been a Tantric and miracle performer. He died in Loyang.<sup>33</sup> Many Indian monastic and scholars contributed in the development of Buddhist literature in China. At the same time, they also contributed in Buddhist missionary activities. Kumarajiva, son of a Kashmiri Pandit, is one of the greatest names to render invaluable contribution in the development and expansion of Buddhism in China. Another monk Buddhahadra (Chiao-hsien) who came from Kapilvastu equated to Kumarajiva in Buddhist activities in Chang-an, Nanking and other areas in China.<sup>34</sup> He

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organized industry of translating Sanskrit texts, working singly or jointly with Chinese scholars. *Ibid*, p. 298.

29 Nanjio, *op. cit.*; Lancaster *et al.*, *op. cit.*

30 Sukumar Dutt, *Buddhist Monks and...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 298-299.

31 *Ibid*, p. 300.

32 Leo Weiger, *A History of Religious Belief and Philosophical Opinions in China*, Eng. tr by E.E. Werner, Peking: Hsien hsien Press, 1927, p. 407, Quoted in Sukumar Dutt, *Buddhist Monks and...*, *op. cit.*, p. 301.

33 Sukumar Dutt, *Buddhist Monks and...*, *op. cit.*, p. 301.

34 For details see: Manandhar, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-10; Manandhar, *loc cit.*, pp. 10-13.

translated several Buddhist texts into Chinese.<sup>35</sup> The development of Buddhism in China is linked to the 'Silk Road' history and historical connections with the central Asian region. The earlier monk travelers used the route of western border of China to arrive at places such as Dunhuang, Loyang, Chang-an, Khotan, or took another route via Nepal, Sikkim, Tibet then to China. Under Tang and Sung dynasties, the number of Indian monks to settle in China was larger. Until 6th century, entire China turned a Buddhist state paving the way for developing Chinese version of ancient Buddhism. Consequently, there developed a number of different schools of Buddhism in China. Ten traditional Chinese Buddhist schools are popular in history.<sup>36</sup> It was obvious that Chinese were deviated from traditional Indian Buddhism. The activities of Chinese monks for the development of Chinese Buddhism lasted from the time of Fa-hsien to that time of I-jing. Those activities were motivated by the need for knowledge of authentic Buddhism through close and sustained cultural intercourse with India. Indian monks in China earned higher prestige in the Far East. They preached the supreme spiritual efficacy of Dhyana and were devout follower of the philosophy of emptiness initiated in India by an eminent Buddhist philosopher Nagarjuna. Chinese Buddhism reached its climax not in the Tientai and Huayen schools but in the Dhyana tradition. The founder or the first Patriarch was an Indian Master named Bodhidharma.<sup>37</sup> The contribution of Buddhahadra to develop Dhyana tradition in China is extremely remarkable. He translated very important text of Dhyana entitled 'Dharmatrata Dhyana Sutra' into Chinese among several other Sanskrit Buddhist treatises. It has been regarded as the most authentic translation. The scholarship and learning grew up into an essential part of the Sangha life and related activities. It further went on expanding throughout the region.

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35 For details on their translation works see: Lancaster, *op. cit.*, ; Nanjio, *op. cit.*,

36 The Chinese Buddhist Schools > <http://www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/history/b3schchn.htm>; S. Dutt, *History of Philosophy, Eastern and Western*, Vol. 1, London: George Allen and Unwin, 1952, Ch.

XXIV. The ten schools were –

Abhidharma School, Satysiddhi School [Cheng-se], Three Sastra School [San-lun], The Lotus School [T'ien-t'ai > absorbed the Nirvana school], Avatamsaka School (Hua-yen)> absorbed Dasabhumika and Samparigraha-Sastra schools, Dhyana School [Ch'an], Vinaya School [Lu], Mantra School [Chen-yien], Dharmalakšana School [Ch'u-en], Pure Land School [Ching-t'u].

37 Sukumar Dutt, *Buddhist Monks .....*, *op. cit.*, pp. 307-308.