

# THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL STUDIES

## The Introduction and Improvement of the Sihala Sangha

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### **Abstract:**

*This Article based on Sihala Sangha how introduces to South-East Countries in ancient period. The Theravada shape of Buddhism exists in Ceylon, Burma, Siam (Thailand), Cambodia and in Laos. Theravada Buddhism is the tie that binds Ceylon with these kinds of countries of South – East Asia. In approximately the eleventh century A.D. the Buddhist nations in South- East Asia came into near contact with Ceylon, the fountain- head of Theravada Buddhism. From the period onwards Ceylon performed an important function in the established order and development of the Theravada form of Buddhism in one-of-a-kind regions of South – East Asia and the Sinhala Sangha (Ceylon Sangha) constituted a sturdy and vitalizing pressure in the non-secular history of South-East Asia. It's far evident from our sources that everyone the South- East Asian nations Ceylon's relations with Burma have been the nearest.*

*This research based on data collection with Primary & secondary Literature Sources. An additive used some special archeological remains and sources for this study.*

**Keywords:** Sihala Sangha, Theravada Buddhism, Sri Lanka, Burma , Siam, Laos

### **1. Introduction**

The Theravada shape of Buddhism exists in Ceylon, Burma, Siam (Thailand), Cambodia and in Laos. Theravada Buddhism is the tie that binds Ceylon with these kinds of countries of South – East Asia. In approximately the eleventh century A.D. the Buddhist nations in South- East Asia came into near contact with Ceylon, the fountain- head of Theravada Buddhism. From the period onwards Ceylon performed an important function in the established order and development of the Theravada form of Buddhism in one-of-a-kind regions of South – East Asia and the Sinhala Sangha (Ceylon Sangha) constituted a sturdy and vitalizing pressure in the non-secular history of South-East Asia. It's far evident from our sources that everyone the South- East Asian nations Ceylon's relations with Burma have been the nearest.

### **2. Discussion**

The Sinhala Sangha or the Buddhist Order of Ceylon turned into brought into Pagan in upper Burma in the reign of Narapatisithu, (1173-1210 A.D.), Uttarajiva Mahathera, the Preceptor of the King of Narapatisithu, followed via Chapata, the novice and plenty of other disciples of Burmese Sangha, got here to the Ceylon in 1170 A.D. on the way to worship at holy Shrines. (Taw Sen Ko, A preliminary take a look at of the Kalyani Inscription of Dhammaceti, 1476 A.D., Indian Antiquary, 1893, 151) after they arrived in Ceylon, they were received by way of the priests of Ceylon and they pointed out the cutting-edge religious life of the humans and every other's lineage. They knew that the monks in Ceylon from India to Introduce Buddhism in the reign of Devanampiya Tissa of Ceylon in the 1/3 century B.C. (TinPe Maung; Luce,C.H., 1923:143) The Kalyani Inscriptions, the Hmannan Yazawin Dawagyi and the other Chronicles nation that the Burmese monk belonged to an Acariyaparampara, i.e. the direct legitimate line of three- succession, of lesser diploma. (Bode,M.,1909:19; Ray,N.1946:113) according to the Sinhala Sangha, the Burmese Sangha had no longer strictly maintained the direct line of descent from instructor to instructor. However, the Maha Vihara of the Sinhala Sangha which performed an important function within the history of Buddhism in Ceylon, had strictly stored the legitimate line of the three- succession from the time of the Buddha and it can alone supply the valid Upasampada ordination. (Malalasekara, G.P.1928:196-197). That is why the Sinhala Sangha did not recognize the Ordination ceremony through the Burmese Sangha as an ecclesiastical act of pure validity. After worshipping at the shrines Uttarajiva Mahatera returned to Pagan. However Chapata received ordination in Ceylon and was admitted to the Sihala Sangha. He spent approximately ten years in Ceylon. He acquired a full knowledge of the Tipitaka and their commentaries and earned the designation of Mahathera. He had a company faith in Sinhalese orthodoxy and by way of establishing the Sihala Sangha in Burma he wanted to bring the Burmese Sangha in near contact with the Sihaa Sangha. He regarded the existing Burmese ordination as not legitimate and did not like to perform the ecclesiastical acts with the monks of the Burmese Sangha and without a bankruptcy of five monks, it might be impossible for him to perform any ecclesiastical act one after the other. That is why he reached pagan with four other monks who have been ordained at the hands of the monks of the Mahavihara in Ceylon in 1181 A.D. (Bode, M.1987:40) Sivali Mahathera, a native of Thamalitthi or Tamluk in Bengal, Tamalinda Mahathera the son of the

king of Cambodia, Ananda Mahathera of Kanchipura or Conjeveram in South India and Rahula Mahathera of Ceylon got here with Chapata Mahathera. 'This little group formed the nucleus of a Sinhala Sangha in Burma, the rightful heirs of the legitimate tradition'. Within the period in-between, Uttrajiva Mahathera had died and these five monks who have received their ordination at the hands of the monks of the Mahavihara refused to perform any ecclesiastical act with the Burmese monks of the Maramma Sangha or the Arahatha Sangha of Pagan and declined to understand the Burmese Sangha and that they performed the ecclesiastical acts separately. This was the established order of the Sinhala Sangha at Pagan.

The five Mahatheras, underneath the patronage of King Narapatisithu, performed the Upasampada ordination at the Burmese monks who wanted to receive it in their hand and to sign up for the Sihala Sangha. Many monks belonged to the Burmese Sangha gradually joined the Sihala Sangha. According to the Kalyani Inscription the Sinhala Sangha becomes established in Pagan 1181 A.D. later on Sihala Sangha was divided into several branches. The dissensions among the theories of the Sihala Sangha were on occasion on questions of monastic discipline and at different times they were because of personal reasons. Rahula Mahathera, one of the five Mahatheras, fell in love with a dancing woman and decided to return to the life of a layman and according to the advice of his friends he went to Malayadipa and became a layman. After the loss of life of Chaptta, the three Mahatheras – Sivali, Ananda and Tamalinda continued to maintain the religion in splendor at Pagan. But soon dissensions arose on question of monastic discipline many of the three Mahatheras of the Sihala Sangha. The king of Pagan Narapatisithu had excellent reference for the three Mahatheras and presented them with three elephants. Sivali and Tamalinda Mahatheras releasing the elephant in a forest gave it to a wooded area for their happiness, however Ananda Mahathera instead of liberating the elephant in a forest gave it to a relative in Kancipuram in South India. The two Mahatheras bitterly criticized this act of the Ananda Mahathera as it was against the rules of monastic field. However the later informed them that "Kindness to kinsfolk" changed into preaching via the Buddha so he changed into no longer doing any incorrect. But Sivali and Thamalinda Mahatheras refused to partner with Ananda within the overall performance of ecclesiastical acts and achieved such acts one after the other. In course of time a dispute arose among Sivali Mahathera and Thamalinda Mahathera at the question of monastic discipline. Thamalinda Mahathera had recommended his learned and intelligent disciples to the laity for items. This changed into against the policies of monastic discipline. Sivali Mahathera protested against this act of Thamalinda Mahathera and performed his ecclesiastical act separately. Sivali and Thamalinda Mahatheras founded branches of the Sihala Sangha at Pagan. Thus, at Pagan in upper Burma all through this period the Sinhala Sangha turned into divided into 3 branches – the disciples of Sivali Mahathera, the Disciples of Thamalinda Mahathera and the disciples of Ananada Mahathera.

The reign of Narapatisithu witnesses the introduction of the Sihala Sangha at Dala in lower Burma. This changed into doing under the leadership of Sariputta, a native of Padippajeya, close to Rangoon within the Province of Dala. He had received his ordination at Pagan from Ananada Mahathera of the Sihala Sangha. The king after having conferred on him the title of Dhammavilasa Thera, requested him to go to his native place (Lower Burma) to purify the religion. Dhammavilasa Thera went there and founded the Sihalapakkhahhikku Sangha, the Sihala Sangha.

According to the Kalyani inscription and the Sasanavamsa Buddhavamsa Mahathera and Mahasami Mahathera greater is popularly known as Mahanaga from Martaban in lower Burma visited Ceylon and acquired re-ordination on the hand of the monks of the Sinhala Sangha and once they returned to Martaban they separated themselves from the monks of Martaban and performed their ecclesiastical acts separately. In this manner they established branches of the Sinhala Sangha at Martaban. It's miles possible that the two Mahatheras separated themselves from each other on problems regarding monastic discipline. Other than these two there had been three different branches of the Sinhala Sangha in Martaban. The disciples of Sivali Mahathera, the disciples of Tamalinda Mahathera and disciples of Ananda Mahathera. The Burmese sources make no mention of the date of the establishment of these three branches of the Sihala Sangha. It's far possible that under the patronage of Narapatisithu these three branches of the Sihala Sangha had been established at Martaban. (Ray,N.R. 121) even though there were different inside the Sinhala Sangha, it nevertheless maintained its popularity in upper and lower Burma, and it had made a strong impact on Burma's religion. Burma within the fifteenth century witnessed the religious revival and the unification of the Sangha under the guidance of the monks from Ceylon. At that point the Sinhala Sangha grew in importance in Burma and most of the Burmese monks received the Sinhala ordination beneath royal patronage. For this reason with the assist of Sihala Sangha, Burma established itself as a Centre of Theravada Buddhism.

### 2.1. Siam (Thailand)

Siam (Thailand) is the next essential country with which Ceylon had a truthful amount of religious intercourse. The Jinakalamali, a Pali work on the history of Northern Siam, refers to the establishment of the Sihala Sangha in Sukhodaya in Northern Siam in the course of the reign of Dhammaraja of Sukhodoya, identified as Lothai (1317-1347 A.D.) the son of the Rama Khamheng. (Coedes, G.1925:95) The textual content in question changed into written inside the early years of the sixteenth century through a monk who belonged to the Sihala Sangha. According to it, a famous Sinhalese Mahathera named Udumbara Mahasami 'superb Sage' arrived in the Ramanna country, i.e. lower Burma from Ceylon. We are also informed of the visit of a Siamese monk named Sumana from Sukhodaya to the Ramanna country to receive the Upasampada ordination at the hands of the Sinhalese Mahathera and to study the religious texts under his guidance. Dhammaraja the king of Sukhodaya on listening to of the reputed Sinhalese Mahathera Udumbara Mahasami sent him an envoy asking for him to send a monk who would be able to perform all ecclesiastical functions of the Sangha in Sukhodaya. It would seem that the knowledge of the Sinhala Sangha became extensive in the Buddhist countries of South- East Asia during this time and the Siamese from of the monastic discipline and in order to re-organize and version the Buddhist Sangha of Siam on that of Ceylon sought the help of the Sinhalese Mahathera. Udumbara Mahasami received the envoy of

the king of Sukhodaya and he dispatched the Elder Sumana to Dhammaraja of Sukhodaya. His arrival in Sukhodaya helped to introduce the Sihala Sangha in Siam.

The fame of Udumbara Mahasami also reached Nabbisipura (Xieng Mai) in Northern Siam. Kilana the king of Nabbisipura, sent an envoy to Udumbara Mahasami in the Ramanna country with a request that a monk capable of performing all religious acts be sent to Nabbisipura. The Mahasami complied with the King's request and he sent Sumana to Nabbisipura. Sumana, under the patronage of King Kilana, made a remarkable contribution to the establishment of the Sihala Sangha in Nabbisipura.

The Jinakalamali states that in about 1423 A.D. Twenty five monks from Nabbisipura together with eight monks from Cambodia came to Ceylon to obtain the Upasampada ordination and there they were joined via six monks from the Ramanna country. Tissaraja, who is also known as Sam Fang Ken, become the king of Nabbisipura inside the first half of the 15th century A.D. He honored demons and worshipped wooded groves, trees, rocks, forests, spirits etc., with cattle and buffaloes. It's miles possible that the Siamese monks from Nabbisipura came to Ceylon to get the assistance of the Buddhist Sangha in Ceylon to position an end to this state of religious affairs and to establish the Sinhala Sangha and higher ordination in Siam. The thirty nine monks were ordained in the presence of twenty Mahatheras of Ceylon in 1424 A.D. at Yapapattana in Kalyani in Ceylon. After their ordination they lower back one observed by means of Sinhalese Mahatheras Mahavikkamabahu and Mahauttamapanna. After their arrival at Ajoyhapura or Aythia in Southern Siam they have been obtained by means of the king and the two Mahatheras Saddhammakovida and Silavisuddhi received their ordination at the hands of these Mahatheras. Then they toured at some stage in Northern Siam touring Sri Sachanlai (Svargaloka), Haripunjaya (Lampoon), Khelanganagara (Lampang), Jamrayapura (Xieng Saen), Sukhodaya and that they attend local monk and established the Sihala Sangha in Northern Siam. Afterwards, many priests in Nabbisipura in the reign of Tissaraja (1401-1442 A.D.) received the Upasampada ordination and they established the Sihala Sangha there. After Tissaraja his son named Tilokaraja (1442-1487 A.D.) performed an important role in the development of the Sihala Sangha in Northern Siam.

In the 16th Century A.D., the Sihala Sangha continued to flourish in Siam. The Jainakalamali refers back to the existence of three fraternities in Siam, they bring the Sihala Sangha, the Baharavasigana and the Pupphara Mavasigana. Many of the three fraternities, the Sihala Sangha has become very prominent in Siam. In all ecclesiastical acts the Sihala Sangha took the leading part and performed the acts first and afterwards the opposite fraternities participated in them. In 1518 A.D., the king of Nabbisipura conferred the title of Rajaguru 'Royal trainer' at the Mahasami of the Sihala Sangha. The conferring of the title of Rajaguru of the Sihala Sangha with the aid of the king indicates the importance of the Sihala Sangha in Siam inside the sixteenth century A.D.

## 2.2. Cambodia

Cambodia and Laos have been countries drawn into near association with Ceylon as a result of Sihala Buddhism and Sihala Sangha. The second one half of the twelfth century A.D. witnessed Cambodia's cultural connection with Ceylon. At this time Ceylon's reputation as fountain-head of Theravada Buddhism reached the Buddhist countries of South-East Asia. The knowledge of Sihala Buddhism and the Sihala Sangha become so widespread and the Sihala monks were so to the contemporary Buddhist International that right now a Cambodian prince, Shin Tamalinda (TinPe Maung; Luce, C.H., 1923:143) visited Ceylon to study Sihala Buddhism under the able guidance of the Sinhalese Mahatheras of the Sihala Sangha. From the Jinakalamali we learn that inside the first half of the fifteenth century A.D. Eight monks headed by way of Mahanasiddhi from Cambodia came to Ceylon to receive the Upasampada ordination at the hands of the Sinhalese Mahatheras. Having studied the sacred texts from the Mahatheras in Ceylon, they have been ordained within the presence of a chapter of twenty Sinhalese Mahatheras of the Sihala Sangha in 1424 A.D. at Yapapattana in Kalyani in Ceylon. The Jinakalamali, however, does not give any information regarding the sports of the Cambodian monks after their arrival in Cambodia from Ceylon. It is possible that these Cambodian monks went to Ceylon to take help and guidance from the Sinhalese monks for the establishment and development of Sihala Buddhism and Sihala Sangha in Cambodia. This form of Buddhism and Sihala Sangha continue in Cambodia as much as the present day. Cambodia played an important function within the development of Sihala Buddhism and the Sihala Sangha in Laos in 1353 A.D. when the kingdom of Lan Chang in Laos turned into founded with the aid of Fa-Ngum who became the son-in-law of Jayavarman Paramesvara, the king of Cambodia. (Codes, G.1948:373; Hall, D.G.E. 1964:121)

## 2.3. Laos

The establishment of the independent kingdom of Lan Chang opens a new epoch in the history of Buddhism in Laos. L.P. Briggs states that as a result of the efforts of the wife of Fa-Ngum, the daughter of Jayavarman Paramesvara, the Laotians had been converted to Sihala Buddhism. (Briggs, I.P.1951:254) The what Kee inscription (Paul, I.1942:419) dated 1602 A.D. relates that the religion of Buddha became not so at this time in the kingdom of Lan Chang. On the request of the king of Laos, religious mission consisting of Maha Pasaman, a Buddha Statue, Buddhist texts and monks from Cambodia reached Laos. The Wat Kee inscription refers to a few Mahatheras who came to Laos with Maha Pasaman of the Sihala Sangha from Cambodia. They had been Mahadeva Lanka Cao, the elder brother, P'ra Mahadeva Lanka, the younger brother and Maha Nandipanna Cao. It states that they all came from Ceylon to Cambodia.

### 3. Conclusion

These monks who probably played an important function within the development and popularization of Sihla Buddhism and the Sihala Sangha in Burma, Siam Cambodia and Laos also made a great contribution to the introduction of this form of Buddhism and the Sihala Sangha.

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