THE EMERGENCE OF BUDDHISM AS A GLOBAL RELIGION: SPECIAL REFERENCE TO EAST AND SOUTH EAST ASIA

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Abstract

Buddhism is one of the world's oldest continuously practiced religious systems. The life and teachings of Siddhartha Gautama serve as the inspiration for this work, Buddhism's most important contribution to the development of human civilization is the teaching that there should be peace in the world. This paper will examine the emergence of Buddhism as a global religion with special reference to East and South East Asia. Post-colonial history's literary tradition serves as the paper's theoretical foundation. Studying the subject matter uses an approach that is both descriptive and analytical. After reviewing both primary and secondary sources, we arrived at the conclusions presented in this paper. An exhaustive study finds that East and Southeast Asia was once home to a flourishing Buddhist culture. Even before the beginning of recorded history, a sizable population in this region regularly practiced Buddhism. The existence of a variety of monuments is one kind of visible evidence. At the same time, the incorporation of Buddhism into the socio-cultural activities of the region is an example of an intangible form of witness. The paper contends that interreligious conflicts in the region, particularly the present condition of conflict between people of various faiths, may be handled by adhering to the Buddhist philosophy in its most literalform.
Keywords; Buddhism, Global Religion, East Asia, Southeast Asia,

Introduction

Siddhartha Gautama, who lived more than 2,500 years ago, is credited with the development of Buddhism, one of the most influential ideologies in the history of the world.Thanks to time, Buddhism is widely practiced throughout Asia, Europe, and the United States. After Buddha attained enlightenment, he spent the next approximately 45 years traveling and preaching his"dhamma." To disseminate his knowledge to as many people as possible, he went around to a number of different cities and countries. A considerable portion of the general population claimed to have undergone a profound viewpoint transformation due to his attempts to establish a new religion. Nevertheless, there is a philosophy of thought that contends his philosophical outlook creates political and theological concerns (Neelis, 2011). Pali is the language in which the majority of the Buddha's teachings are preserved; nevertheless, these teachings are not electively integrated, nor are they presented in a chronological philosophy. According to the sources found in Pali, the history of the Buddha and the people who followed him is both fascinating and significant (Dhammika, 1989). According to Buddhism, there are many ways to cleanse one's life. Not too much longer after the Buddhist religion and its philosophy were first

presented to the public, millions of people converted to it. According to archaeological records, Buddhism arrived in the East and Southeast Asian region about 3,500 BC due to trading links between India and East & Southeast Asia nations. Indian religious traditions made their way to this region thanks to the proliferation of trading operations; they encountered no resistance or constraints along the way (ha 2016: 213-4). According to historical evidence, the civilizations of East & Southeast Asia date back to the same time period as those in "Egypt, Greece, India, and China" (Agrawal, 2015). Buddhism has long been praised as a spiritual practice that fosters nonviolence and peace. The message of Buddhism, which advocates "global peace," is currently practiced in many parts of the world and is seen as a global religion. Even thus, prosperity and peace are intertwined together. Even though conflict and violence are still deeply embedded in human civilization peace has been restored as a consequence of the widespread acceptance that human civilization would inevitably come to an end in the absence of peace. A potential philosophy in this practice has long been the Buddhist teaching as a global religion that peace and nonviolence may be practiced as an inner sense develops, leading ultimately to harmony amongst many socio-cultural groups (Olson, 2005: pp. 16-17). People today believe that peace is a feeling of satisfaction brought about by factors in their environment, such as a sense of being safe, successful, or wealthy. As a result, Buddhist leachings as a global religion constantly strive to inspire peace among people while simultaneously emphasizing developing one's relationship with one's self. According to several source religions and philosophies, such as Buddhism, making other people happy may increase one's pleasure of happiness. The Buddhist philosophy encourages self-sacrifice, collaboration, inner satisfaction, and mutual trust among followers, eliminating the possibility of violent conflict and armed war. The establishment of peace also has significant implications for the world of animals (Panjvani, 2013: pp. 36-37). Peace has been the sole source of illumination in the modern world context, which has been tarnished by "colonialism, two world wars, the cold war, religious misunderstanding and sometimes cruelty, the erosion of ethics and morals." and hence can be considered as a major stone behind the emergence of Buddhism as a global religion. People who practiced many faiths and had access to various texts came into touch with one another mostly via the medium of commerce before the advent of mass travel. Even though Buddhism is not typically a religion that promotes convertibility actively, its influence may be seen across East and Southeast Asia. The number of Buddhist traders in Central Asia and other countries that practiced Middle Ages religion increased. When Buddhist monks went on pilgrimage, they often embarked aboard commercial ships. Because of this, they brought their religious traditions with them. There was mounting evidence that the spread of Buddhism in East and Southeast Asia significantly impacted the region's overall level of peace and tranquility. The local interest among local merchants in the religious practices of Buddhists was the primary factor responsible for Buddhism's rapid expansion in the region. As a result, Buddhism emerged naturally in certain parts of the world. Rulers often accepted Buddhism to assist in bringing morals to their people; nevertheless, no one was compelled to convert. People were allowed to choose whichever aspects of Buddha's message were useful since his teachings were made accessible to the public (Ibid: p. 26).

Theoretical Frameworks

The purpose of this paper is to use history as a prism to study the Buddhist religion and philosophy and how it has been received in the East & Southeast Asian region. Historically, Marxism and Liberal have been the two schools of thought that have dominated sway over historiography. Marxism is a sociological theory that uses the "base" and super-structure" paradigms to examine social development. This worldview sees capitalism as the "base" and considers religion as a tool used by the "haves" to oppress the "have-nots." The Cambridge pattern, also known as the Whitesman Burden Theory, has historically dominated the liberal tradition. This pattern portrays the East as primitive and barbaric, legitimizing colonial rule over Asian and African regions. These preconceived assumptions are challenged by the post-colonial historical literature, which endeavors to demonstrate that the nations of the Third World had a beautiful history marked by significant progress in technology and spirituality. This paper examines Buddhism as a global religion developed in Europe in the twentieth century. It makes the case that since Buddhism has been promoting this for the last 2,550 years, it should be seen as the forerunner of global religious study.

Methodology

The historical method, combining descriptive and analytical methodologies, was this paper's primary source of support. The sources include a variety of publications about Gautama Buddha and Buddhism in East and Southeast Asia, as well as journal articles, magazines, and newspaper articles. The materials are analyzed to bring various facets of the primary theme of the paper into focus. Researchers have used the analytical method to evaluate happenings and occurrences in the past, and then they have interpreted those findings in the present context. In this research, researchers have perused the literature to find relevant studies on the emergence of Buddhism as a global religion and how it is practiced in modern East and Southeast Asia.

Literature Review

On the topic of the emergence of Buddhism as a global religion, there are multiple academic publications accessible. According to Agrawal (2015), Buddhism is one of the primary faiths practiced by people all over the world. It is possible to trace its roots back to the sixth century BC in India when the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama served as its inspiration. After that. It expanded over most of Asia, including China, Korea, and Japan. More than 300 million Buddhists now practice their faith around the globe. To get to the enlightened state of Nirvana. Buddhists are instructed to walk in the footsteps of the Buddha. Buddhism is a religion that does not believe in a specific deity but rather in the concept of impermanence. One may increase their level of knowledge by practice, existing knowledge, and the ability to mediate. According to Ashitsu's interpretation (1984), the term "Buddha" means "awakened," and it gets its name from the Sanskrit root Buddha, which means "wake up." A man is said to become a Buddha when he suddenly comes to, as if from a profound slumber, the realization that the suffering has ended, as if from a dream. The historical Buddha was an exceptional figure, even though he was a human like any other. He discovered a technique for walking that anybody could use, provided they had the motivation. Beginning with the birth of Buddhism in ancient India and continuing through its development and spread in that country, he crafted a story that

highlights the religion's impact on the fields of education and literature (Bapat. 1956).

The crisis and confusion humanity is now facing might be resolved by a vision of Buddhism that has extraordinary clarity and depth (Bodhi, 2000). The profound insight into the underlying nature of life that may be obtained via observation is known as the "Vision of the Dhamma." His interpretation of the Dhamma gives a modern vision for that confused and intuitive knowledge of the fundamental nature of reality. When he discusses subjects like Karma, Nirvana, Bhakti in Buddhism, and the means to end suffering, he mixes his awareness of problems significant to the modern Western mind with his profound understanding of the Buddha's written teachings. In his work, Buddhist scholar Jayatillake (1962) argues that the idea of peace as fulfillment distinguishes Buddhism from other faiths. The Buddha developed his religion to promote global peace, also known as peace or the Shanti. Nonviolence and a commitment to a peaceful peace are the two pillars on which the Buddhist religion is founded (Theresa Der-lan Yen, 2006). In light of peace studies, he examines the Buddhist concept of peace and discusses the Buddhist viewpoint on the factors contributing to violence and how it may be avoided to achieve peace. Lim (1973) has also addressed how Buddhism expanded across Southeast Asia and the influence that Buddhism had on the culture of that region. She did in-depth research on the cultural traits of the Southeast Asian region between the 12th and 14th centuries, beginning with the early phases of Buddhist growth and paying enough attention to the Indonesian islands of Sumatra and Java. Even though the Puranas consider Buddha a heretical teacher of Vedic culture, his contributions to the development of the idea of peace may be seen in Buddhist philosophy (Joshi. 1970). Buddhism significantly impacted Indian art, culture, religious philosophy, and philosophical religion. The goal of Buddhism is not only the independence of the individual but also the societal independence of both men and women. In ancient India, it was also a factor in maintaining social peace and integrating different ethnic groups. Thailand, and Laos, adhere to the Buddhist traditions of the Theravada school. In the first century BC, Hinduism and Buddhism were already being practiced in the East, especially in Southeast Asia (Jha, 2016: pp. 213-16). In the 7' century, a Chinese traveler built a center of Buddhist teaching in Indonesia. In the 9' century, construction began in Central Java on Borobudur, which would later become Indonesia's greatest Buddhist temple. However, due to the fall of Srivijaya's empire in the 13th century, the number of people who followed the Buddhist religion in that region decreased. The splendor of Borobudur began to deteriorate over time, and eventually, it was left to fall into disrepair. Borobudur was buried for centuries by a layer of volcanic ash and new growth from the surrounding forest since it was located in a region with active volcanoes. British explorers discovered it later in the 19th century and reconstructed the monument, which still represents Buddhism's storied history in the region (Braun, 2009: p.37). One more enormous Buddhist temple complex may be found in Cambodia at Angkor Wat. Around the time of the 12'h century, people of Khmer origin built the temple. The temple is a testament to the widespread practice of Buddhism in that region during those times. The fact that the temple was originally devoted to the Hindu god Vishnu is noteworthy to keep in mind. Because many Khmer rulers practiced a kind of Buddhism known as Mahayana, the temple of Angkor Wat evolved into a destination for Buddhist pilgrims. In the 13' century, missionary monks from Sri Lanka spread what is now known as "Theravada

Buddhism" across the region. After traveling via Laos and Thailand, it arrived in Cambodia, where the Khmer kingdom became a supporter of the art form. In modern times, the temple of Angkor Wat has become an important hub for «Theravada Buddhism." It is interesting to note that some people believe Buddha himself traveled to Myanmar. In Southern Myanmar, some Buddhist archaeological evidence date to the fourth century. This evidence comes from caves. However, by the middle of the 11' century, the vast majority of people in Myanmar had converted to Buddhism, and the country officially embraced it as its official religion (McGovern, 1919: pp. 17-18). Both geographically and spiritually, East and Southeast Asia may be divided into many distinct areas. On a broad scale, it incorporates the Buddhist religion. According to some estimates, Sunni Muslims make up more than 40 percent of the total population in this region. Christianity is the dominant religion in East and Southeast Asian nations, followed by Buddhism (mostly Theravada Buddhism), with the bulk of its adherents concentrated in the Philippines. Nearly all the nations that makeup East and Southeast Asia practice religious tolerance and pluralism. As a result, ethnicity is a factor in religious conflict in this region (Kosuta, 2017: p. 24). The East and Southeast Asian region is history to some of Buddhism's earliest and most significant historical sites. Nowadays, Buddhism is observed by a minority of people in East and Southeast Asia, except in Singapore, where it is the most frequently followed religion.

Conflicts between religions in East and Southeast Asia

In the present order of the global political landscape, the escalating conflict between diverse socio-religious groups and fundamentalism has emerged as a critical problem for peace and security. Unfortunately, East and Southeast Asia are not an exception to this trend. The application of standards of common law alone will not be adequate for any nation during this time of escalating conflict. During such a difficult moment, having a solid grasp of the Buddhist nationalist rhetoric may significantly reduce the number of complaints received. In this sense. Buddhism is significant for enhancing peaceful cohabitation in the region. As a result, Emperor Ashoka in the third century BCE was influenced by Buddha's focus on the moral obligation of a ruler "to use public power to improve the welfare of the public" (Bhikkhu, 2012: pp. 36-39). In the same vein, Emperor Ashoka decided to spend his life in line with Dhamma and serve the whole human population. He was a brilliant example of this principle. Therefore, Buddha should be considered a forerunner in the history of social change throughout ancient times. He stood in complete defiance of the caste system that was prevalent in India at the time. He sought to better socioeconomic circumstances for people, fought for the equality of all people, and recognized the significance of more fair income distribution between the affluent and the less fortunate. In addition, considering him a precursor intellectual of gender equality is appropriate given that women were given equal opportunity inside Buddhist institutions throughout his lifetime. There is a philosophy between the teachings of Buddha and the ideas of humanist administration and welfare states. He advocated for the infusion of humanism into government and administration for the welfare of the people. In addition, the idea that a society shouldn't be administered in a self-centered way but rather with regard and compassion for the people who live in it is a fundamental tenet of this tradition (Berzin, 1996: pp. 15-16). Until the 19' century, when colonial forces subjugated these nations in South and Southeast Asia. Theravada

Buddhism functioned as the driving philosophy for the pre-modern states that existed in diverse regions of South and Southeast Asia. The monarchical states of Thailand. Myanmar, and Sri Lanka obtained a substantial chunk of their legitimacy before the coming of European invaders because their governments were established on the Dhamma, the teachings of the Buddha, and the endorsement of Buddhist monks. As a consequence of this, Monarchs were passionate about giving the nuns both monetary and political help. In addition, the nuns took on the responsibility of protecting and expanding Buddhism. Buddhism significantly aided the work of establishing the state's legitimacy. In addition, it substantially influenced a range of pre-colonial aspects of Burman and Sinhalese society, such as their culture, language, judicial system, educational system, and several other aspects. As a direct result of this, Buddhism became an important facet of the modern nationalist identity (Stein, 2014: pp. 2-3). Education in the West has had and continues to significantly impact modern concepts of nationalism in East and Southeast Asian nations. Buddhism's customs, culture, and traditions are still practiced in many states today, and it has traditionally played a significant role in legitimizing state rights. Despite the persistent attempts of colonial powers, many indigenous institutions were not altered at all. Because of the colonial encroachment into the region, the religious validity of the state has been called into question. The ruling elites realized that they were in a position to keep their power within an increasingly complicated structure of nation-states. On the other hand, modernization should not be seen as incompatible with Buddhism. "The Southeast Asian nation can be given a new identity through the teachings of Buddhism, and a great state can be created," according to the Buddhist doctrine (Iselin, 2015: p. 2). The growth of modern Buddhist states in East and Southeast Asia has resulted in the traditional relationship between the state and Buddhism in these regions being expanded to include a third important component as a direct result of the expansion of this link. Therefore, the ideas of the state, religion, and nation are all connected and have close ties. Any perspective, whether on threats or opportunities, must be taken. Monks have continued to do their responsibility to defend Buddhism against new threats, notwithstanding the end of colonialism. They see the modern governmental apparatus with suspicion. This is particularly true in China & Japan from East Asia and in Sri Lanka & Myanmar from Southeast Asia, where a group of monks sought to restore each nation's traditional monarchy, Throughout this period, the great majority of monks assumed a proactive and independent role in the protection of the country as well as the religion. Politically engaged monks have sometimes expressed religion to the rights of religious minorities belonging to organizations that are not Buddhists, This campaigning resulted in state regulations that have been condemned for being exclusive and discriminating against religious minorities, Becouse of this one-of-n-kind event, Buddhism in the Southeast Asian area developed its distinetive personality (Schober, 199S: pp. 12-15). As a result, Buddhism has been essential in bolstering not just the identity of the state but also "the political, economic, military, and cultural dominance of Burman and Sinhala ethnic majorities in both colonial Myanmar and Sri Lanka. It is a scenario quite similar to that of Thailand", with the exception that the involvement of monks in this nation was not as significant as it was in Thailand, Despite this, Buddhism was crucial in consolidating state power across Thailand, particularly in regions of northern Thailand that were inhabited by "non-Buddhist communities such as hill tribes" (Ibid). Because of this, the mutual tension that exists in this region must not be ignored. Without

doubt, the "rule of law" is a criterion that must be met to ensure both the state's and its residents safety and security, Concern has been raised in the East and Southeast Asian region and worldwide in light of the religious conflicts that have broken out in some parts of Myanmar. The authorities need to depend on mutual discussions to bring about any constructive settlement, and politically engaged priests may greatly assist in finding a solution to the situation. Buddhist and Muslim religious leaders have participated in various official and unofficial dialogues to overcome the issues of conflict and bloodshed. Many of these discussions were sponsored by international organizations, local governments, nongovernmental organizations, and other entities. Conflict prevention and resolution training for religious leaders, including monks, has taken place. This training has resulted in many debates and collaborative initiatives in religious organizations. In this manner, Buddhism, in particular, has significantly influenced the organization of such instances (Stein, 2014: pp. 3-4).

East & Southeast Asian Countries' Popular Traditions
After Buddhism and Islam, the two major faiths in the region, Christianity is the third most practiced religion in East and Southeast Asia. Every event in a country is first seen by those who live closest to it, then by those who reside farther away. Communities worldwide share a wide variety of aspects of their cultural history. Buddhism is not simply a religious phenomenon but also a historical, cultural, and social one. It has been a part of East and Southeast Asia for more than a century, and during that period, it has significantly influenced many aspects of life here. It generates new varieties of cultural and religious concepts, which in turn affects the area of study of geographical variables and the attitudes of individuals in any society (Brown, 2001: pp. 7-8). There is a close connection between the great religions of the world and certain ethnic groupings, geographical borders, cultural identities, governmental systems, and ways of life. For instance. without Buddhism, Thailand's contemporary culture would be missing, Nepal and India's Hindu traditions are firmly embedded, and Christianity substantially influences the culture of the United Kingdom. On the other hand, religious observances cannot be contained inside the confines of political borders. Buddhism is the clearest illustration of this since, in the modern era, it has spread across the western world at an extremely quick rate (Park, 2004: p. 11). Buddhism may be seen both as a philosophy and as a religious practice. Investigating, analyzing, and conceiving new concepts are all part of the scope of the academic field known as philosophy, which is a discipline. It examines traditional knowledge about ideals and actuality. The application of discipline in Buddhism is founded on the major tenets of the Buddha's teachings, including "moral duty, knowledge, reason, issues, difficulties, ethics, conceptual analysis, and a theoretical component." Reasoning and deliberation have always played a significant role in Buddhist thought. In the process, it fosters a sense of equality and fraternity across society. All religious traditions based on the Buddha's teachings are collectively referred to as "Buddhism" (Berzin, 1996: pp. 6-19). There are two primary traditions of thought within Buddhism: Theravada and Mahayana. The word «Theravada" literally translates to "teaching of the elders." The roots of the Theravada religious tradition and Sri Lanka's history are closely related. The Theravada school of Buddhism is frequently referred to as Southern Buddhism. Its devotees are over 150 million

and spread throughout Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos, and Thailand. Since the time of
the Buddha, Theravadins have passed down practices like meditation and living in solitude in
the forests from older monks. The goal of Theravada Buddhism is to attain Arhat status, which
means "free from suffering." in Sanskrit. Most of its practitioners are found in East Asian
countries, including China, Japan, Korea, and Tibet.Today, adherents of the Theravada
tradition of Buddhism are the most numerous in East and Southeast Asian nations.
Consequently, Buddhism's real practices are still alive and well throughout the nations of these
areas today. The "Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path" are the primary foundation
upon which the teachings of Buddhism are built. This sets it apart from other great historical
religions. As a result, Buddhism in East and South-East Asia ensures that everyone has access
to equal rights and resources. If they have this, people will have the ability to confront life's
challenges and the rationale to justify all of the actions that are taking place in the globe (Stein,
2014: pp. 4-9). In ancient times, Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, and Konghucu
were the other five major religions worldwide. The Buddhist monastic community in Thailand
is governed by a supreme patriarchal and a council of elders. Both share the duty of ensuring
this tradition is maintained in its pristine form. It is living in two distinct monastic communities:
those living in the woods and those residing in the settlements. In addition, there is a university
specifically for Buddhist monks. Its primary purpose is to provide a venue for Buddhist
teachings. Unfortunately, during military administration in Myanmar, the monasteries where
unhappy people resided, particularly in the country's northern region, were brutally destroyed.
The government is now giving the monks significant financial assistance to gain their
confidence and support. Because of its long history of promoting both meditation practices and
education, the Buddhist psychology, philosophy, and ethics system known as the
"Abhidhamma" is particularly well-known in the country (McGovern, 1919). There are several
meditation schools across the globe where monks and professors instruct people in fundamental
meditation practices. But Buddhist monks in Myanmar have often voiced their annoyance and
displeasure with the military government that rules that country. For instance, during the
"saffron revolution" in Myanmar in 2007, the bright robes of the country's spiritual leaders
were torn apart by the country's powerful army. On the other hand, compared to around ten
years ago, the pictures of Myanmar now couldn't be more different. Currently, Buddhist monks
in Myanmar are holding protests to defend their religion, which have recently been under attack
by the country's Muslim minority groups (Taylor, 1987: pp. 6-9). Similarly, there is a rise in
the level of mutual hostility in a number of East and Southeastern nations. In southern Thailand,
the government has conflicted with the so-called "Malay Muslim Rebels" for almost a century;
the monks have found themselves in the middle of the conflict. Because of this, the military
has reportedly infiltrated several temples, spreading stories among so-called "military monks"
(Stein, 2014: p. 1). These developments go against Buddhism's essential principles, which
promote a peaceful way of life and see taking any life as a serious violation. In the most
populous nations where Theravada Buddhism and Islam coexist, these developments add to a
sensation of expansion since they predict a widening gap between the Buddhist and Muslim
populations. This occurrence requires familiarity with Buddhist nationalist ideologies, which
contend that the state is a part of a majority nation. To address the developing interconnected
tensions in South and Southeast Asia constructively, it is first necessary to understand the

motivating force behind these discourses (Hipsher, 2011: pp. 6-15).

Buddhism's Current Situation in East and Southeast Asia

A great deal of complexity has marked the evolution of Buddhism throughout history. Buddhism is not intended to be only a philosophical school of thought; rather, it is both a theory and a ritual practice that encompasses a wide variety of human endeavors, such as the creation of works of art and literature. The effect of Buddhist concepts on social structures results in significant connections between individuals. In modern times, Buddhism has spread over the whole of Asia. It is now possible to find it in "Afghanistan in the west, Java in the southeast, Japan and Korea in the northeast, and China and Mongolia in the far north." Southeast Asia comprises ten separate nations: "Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, Singapore, and Vietnam. Brunei is the tenth and last country in the region". Buddhism and Islam are the two religions practiced by most people in this part of the region. The fact that people in East and Southeast Asia took part in the advent of Buddhism freely and without fear or greed is perhaps the most noteworthy aspect of the religion's spread in that region. Buddhism was introduced to this region in a non-violent manner by way of peaceful missionaries or by way of merchants and sailors. Soon after that, Buddhist literature began to make its way slowly across Asian nations. Buddhist thinkers and monks, many of whom were ardent explorers, made significant contributions to the political and cultural advancement of Southeast Asian states. Hinduism was losing ground to Buddhism in terms of influence, which was growing much faster. The core principle of Buddhism served as the main inspiration for this. Many other religious beliefs and practices were already established in Asia before Buddhism arrived. Buddhism and Hinduism incorporated this wide range of unique ideas into their own religions, reinforcing their control over their adherents. Concurrently, the Mahayana and Theravada schools of Buddhism were gaining followers and gaining popularity as schools of Buddhism. Even in India, where religion declined in the tenth and eleventh centuries, these conditions ensured Buddhism's survival throughout East and Southeast Asia. Southeast Asia saw

the rise of Buddhism, which attracted followers and gained social acceptance in countries like Ceylon, Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, and China & Japan from East Asia. Countries that still put Buddhism at the core of their social philosophy and where the Buddhist community places a high value on social bonds, especially in rural areas, are referred to as Buddhist countries (Banerjee, 1990: pp. 32-33).

Relationship between Buddhism and Peace which Helps Buddhism to become Global Religion Even though practically all of the world's religions adhere to the principles of peace, Buddhism considers it the primary and most important aspect of existence. Buddhism places a primary emphasis on achieving and maintaining peace. The Buddha's teachings and the lifestyle he lived are directly responsible for Buddhism's emphasis on peace. The teachings of Buddha and the way he lived his lifestyle provide the foundation for his ideas of peace. Not only are Buddha's teachings and lifestyle incredibly straightforward, but they are also highly applicable. Peace is seen as a path to enlightenment and salvation in the teachings of Buddha. To reach salvation, a person must behave in accordance with a set of predetermined standards of right and wrong. The disciples of Buddha lived a life that was exceedingly moral, honest, and

peaceful during the time of Buddha. This life was built on liberty, fairness, and mutual love. Buddha also stressed to his followers the need for a strong sense of community and aiding one another for people to flourish as human beings. Buddha's teachings also major themes of an equal society for all people and a commitment to social justice. No world can make significant advancements without achieving peace in the current international climate. It is possible to conceive of peace as "consisting of political and economic stability, social equality and justice, the sharing of love among human beings" and achieving these goals. All of the world's nations should live by the adage, "Love your neighbor as yourself," since doing so would help keep the peace among all nations. Buddha never meant for his teachings to be interpreted as the creation of a brand-new religion. Buddha did not create a completely original religion. It changed in response to religion. He offered a fresh viewpoint on the timeless principles that defined Indo-Aryan civilization. Buddhists are strongly committed to high moral standards and stringent   ethical   ideals.   The people who lived in the Indo-Aryan civilization were not at all familiar with a number of the core qualities that Buddhism emphasized. The pre-Upanishadic Vedic religion or the Indo-Aryan civilization had no concept whatsoever of the "moral and spiritual ideals, much alone the ideals of Ahimsa, Moksha, Karma, or rebirths" (Joshi, 1970: pp. 1-35). The Buddhist principle of Karma is regarded as one of the religion's most fundamental precepts One of the four pillars that support the Indian school of thought is the principle of Karma. A life lived with a sense of personal responsibility is what is meant when referring to Karma. It emphasizes a sense of kindness and regard for other people. They better understand the role that peace plays in their Karma and their connectivity to the rest of the world as a result of this. The vast majority of Buddhists advocate for peace in all spheres of society, whether in homes, communities, or the natural world (Der-lan Yeh, 2006: pp. 91- 112). Cultivating a charitable disposition and acts of kindness in people is necessary for ensuring peace among the many people, families, and nations of the world. Der-lan Yeh states that rather than via discussions among the most powerful nations on a certain issue. He does this by adapting the peace ideals to the modern world context. Until it is effectively attained, peace efforts should be undertaken consistently (Der-Ian Yeh, 2006: pp. 91-112). As was just indicated, the concept of peace has been an integral part of Indian thought and religious religion from ancient times, far before the appearance of Buddhism. The idea of peace was elevated and perfected through the practice of Buddhism. The Buddha was convinced that promoting world peace should be a top concern. Even more appealing is the prospect of adopting his strategies for spreading peace. Teachings are zealous about spreading Buddha's message of peace over the world because he implanted a sense of missionary enthusiasm in them. Buddha concluded that peace is the only thing that can sustain the world over the long term. The sole outcome of violence is the destruction of the world. When he was younger, one of his primary objectives was to travel around India and the rest of the world to instill a sense of peace in people. Even after Buddha's time, this approach to spreading the message of peace continued to gain popularity. This was, without a doubt, a highly effective strategy for bringing people's attention to the peace and certainty that may be found in everyday life. People are encouraged to practice self-control and discipline as part of the Buddhist religion. Buddhist monks showed the necessity of maintaining self-discipline and control in daily life via the life they lived their lives and conveyed the message to others.

Missionary monks were the ones who carried Buddha's message of peace to the rest of the world (Dharmakosajarm, 2000, pp. 1-10). Following Buddha's passing, many Buddhist academics began to develop their unique perspectives on how canonical Buddhist writings should be understood and interpreted. However, there is proof in certain historical records that scriptures of the Theravada and Mahayana schools of Buddhism were studying the Buddhist canon together at the same monastery. Despite having radically different interpretations of Buddhism, Mahayana and Theravada adherents came together in the global Buddhist world. Even though Buddhist scholars have varying views on interpreting Buddhist scriptures, they all agree that peace is the interpretation's central value. As a result, Buddhism has given the world a very valuable gift, especially in Southeast Asia: the idea of peace (Core, 1973: pp. 13-14). Buddhism worked hard to alter people's minds and spirits in addition to teaching its principles and emphasizing human life is at peace. It also made several attempts to bring about this shift. Additionally, it transformed to change society's social and political structures. At the start, it is essential to make it abundantly apparent that Buddhism focused on a life that was devoid of any desire for worldly possessions or success. To reach nirvana, Buddhism emphasizes living a short and uncomplicated life. Within a relatively short period of time following Buddhism's founding, the society in which it was practiced saw significant social, political, and economic changes (Olson, 2005: pp. 68- 70). The social transformation would affect all aspects of society- from a sleepy small village to a powerful empire. The structures of the village administrations were altered as part of the political reform to more closely mirror those of the kingdom administrations. In terms of economies. Buddhism changed the changes that agriculture was produced. This plan placed a lot of emphasis on agriculture, which was the economy's foundation. Iron use was widespread throughout this time period, which was a factor that greatly assisted agricultural activity. During this time, trade was another focused period. A business society that allowed people to refine their skills had already emerged during the period of the Buddha (Core, 1973: pp. 22-23). In addition to these shifts in the social, political, and economic sectors, major shifts have also taken place in the realms of language and literature. These shifts have had a significant impact. One possible explanation for these shifts is that they result from the effect of globalization. It is a generally accepted truth that Buddhism reached a new zenith under the reign of Asoka, which was a significant milestone. At that time, King Asoka had already sent his daughter Sanghamitra and his son Mahendra to a number of nations in South and East Asia, as well as Sinhala, which is now known as Sri Lanka, to spread Buddhist teachings. During the reign of Asoka, the Pali language was the most common mode of communication among the people.   During   this   time period, the Pali language was employed to spread Buddhist teachings across the region. During this period, Pali's language was used to compose much Buddhist literature (Schober, 1995: pp. 15-16). Throughout its long history and progression, Buddhism has been responsible for changes in several aspects of society, including "the social, political, economic, linguistic, and literary spheres." Hinayana and Mahayana schools of Buddhism made separate attempts, each in their unique society, to bring about social transformation. According to Jayasuriya's observations, the teachings of the Buddha had an impact on all aspects of society, including the social, political, and economic spheres. As a result, Buddhism has exerted a significant

effort in ameliorating the economic, social, and geographical conditions of the people living in East and Southeast Asia (Jayasuriya, 2008: pp. 41-44). Buddhism as a Global Religion in the Contemporary World: Special Reference to East and South East Asia Trends since the 19'h century However, during the 19th and 20th centuries, Buddhism reacted to new issues and opportunities that cut through traditional patterns to adapt to a changing world. Regional religious and cultural patterns characterized Buddhism's premodern world. Even those Buddhist nations that avoided a direct Western invasion were nonetheless subject to the powerful pressures of Western theological, political, economic, and cultural influences. Several nations that practiced Buddhism were subject to Western influence. In East and South East Asia. Buddhists and non-Buddhists were exposed to new ways of thinking, including modern rationalistic and scientific thinking methods, modern ideas of liberal democracy and socialism, and modern forms of capitalist economic structure. These novel concepts, precepts, and behavioral patterns played significant roles in communities' mentality and way of life. Additionally, Buddhism saw a resurgence in regions where it had previously exerted significant influence (India being the most notable example), and it spread fast to the West where new developments took place, impacting Buddhism in East and South East Asia as a result. Buddhists responded to this complex situation in several ways. They often linked Buddhism to the cultural and religious identity they wanted to maintain in the face of Western supremacy. This was carried out in response to the perceived danger that the West presented. Buddhists faced a challenge from the arrival of Western Christian missionaries, and they replied by using various tactics. These tactics often included copying modern Christian practices, such as starting

Sunday schools, handing out pamphlets, and setting up worship spaces to imitate churches and gathering places. They also supported missionary activities in East and South East Asia in addition to the West to further the cause of Buddhism.

Four other responses should be mentioned:

A. In certain cases, Buddhists have started reforms to make Buddhism a more attractive and powerful force in the modern world. Buddhist leaders put out a highly reasoned interpretation of Buddhism in the second part of the 19th century. The mystical and ritualized elements of the tradition were reduced, and a focus was instead put on the apparent interpretation between Buddhism and modern science and the value of ethics and morals. Those in favor of its claim that this interpretation represents a return to the authentic kind of Buddhism that the Buddha taught.

B. Another activity that has been done is developing what is today referred to as Engaged Buddhism. Some of the Buddhists who support this cause are those from East and South East Asia, like the monk and author Thich Nhat Hanh, born in Vietnam, and Western converts to Buddhism. They have developed people of Buddhist teachings and practices that emphasize the implementation of progressive social, political, and economic activity, Buddhism's world of world peace and justice has often been highlighted, along with its principles and practices. The 1978-founded Buddhist Peace Fellowship is one of the most important organizations connected to this movement. Socially engaged Buddhists have tried establishing Buddhist

teachings as the cornerstone of modern democratic society both within and outside Engaged Buddhism. Both within and outside of Engaged Buddhism, this has happened. Others have also expressed their support for developing a sustainable economic system based on Buddhist teachings that are both socially and ecologically responsible. Buddhists who are socially aware have also established a sort of Buddhism-based feminism and have ties to organizations working to restore or strengthen the status of Buddhist nuns (in the Theravada and Mahayana traditions, respectively).

C. A third important trend of Buddhist reform that has taken place in recent decades is the development of movements that give the laity a far larger role than it previously had Vipassana (Pali: "insight'") meditation techniques focus on lay-oriented meditation movements in the Theravada community. These movements have been successful and, in some cases, have attracted adherents from beyond the Theravada group. Before the modern period, an anticlerical, lay-oriented trend developed in East Asia, which resulted in the creation and rapid spread of new, completely laicized Buddhist movements, particularly in Japan. In Japan, this tendency has been especially pronounced.

D. The fourth tendency that may be seen challenges the traditional understanding of the term "reform" The emergence of new sorts of popular movements often associated with charismatic leaders or particular practices that promise speedy success in religious terms and worldly affairs is indicative of this tendency. This kind of organization has been more popular across the Buddhist world during the 20th century. These groups might be large or fairly small, extremely closely organized, or loosely knit. One such instance is the Dhammakaya group, a large, hierarchical, commercialized, and well-organized religious organization with its headquarters in Thailand. The Dhammakaya organization, often referred to as "fundamentalist," advocates meditational techniques that promise rapid nirvana and regular contributing patterns that promise instant career and financial success.

Conclusion, Challenges, and Way Ahead

This paper discusses the emergence of Buddhism as a global religion with special reference to East and South East Asia. The literary tradition of post-colonial history serves as the theoretical foundation throughout the paper. The researcher used descriptive and analytical approaches to study the subject matter. The essential tenets of Buddhism, as well as the spread of Buddhist practice across East and Southeast Asia, have been investigated and accessed through the study of history in this body of research that has been carried out. In addition, it has given a concise outline of East and Southeast Asia's social and political links that other Buddha's vision of social unification and his message of peace. Buddhism's teachings have illuminated all aspects of human existence, including social, political, economic, psychological, and religious lives. Modern Buddhist communities' current status and difficulties vary from one geographic area to the next. There are a number of countries, for instance, where Buddhist communities that were once quite well-established have been dealt terrible blows that have severely hampered their ability to exert influence and have drained them of a significant amount of their energy. The nations that are now or previously were governed by communist governments that made

it a conscious purpose to diminish the institutional strength and influence of Buddhist groups are those where this situation is most prevalent. This has occurred in Mongol-inhabited areas of Central Asia, on the Chinese mainland and in Tibet, as well as in North Korea, Vietnam. Cambodia, and Laos. While circumstances varied from country to country and from time to time. towards the end of the 20th century, less pressure was placed on Buddhist groups in many of these areas. The state of Cambodia has once again acknowledged Buddhism as the official religion of the nation. Buddhism has continued to be the dominant religious force and a major region in the political, economic, and social life of various regions of Asia, such as East and South East Asia. This situation is distinct from the one that was previously mentioned. This is the case in Thailand. where more than 90% of the population is Buddhist. Buddhism is the most popular religion among the Sinhalese and Burman majority in Sri Lanka and Myanmar. Buddhists have especially challenging challenges, even though they predominate in certain areas. From 1983 until 2009, Sri Lanka saw a civil war between the Sinhalese government and the Tamil Tigers. This paramilitary organization fought to create an independent Tamil state in the country's north. Buddhists in Sri Lanka had different views on handling the conflict. Buddhists in Myanmar were forced to face the stark political division that existed between the democratic opposition, which was led by Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung   San   Suu Kyi, and which based its resistance on a very different version of Buddhist teaching and practice, and the military junta, which ruled from 1962 until 2011 and sought to legitimize its dictatorship in traditional Buddhist terms. To justify its tyranny, the military junta, which governed from 1962 to 2011, used traditional Buddhist principles. Buddhist monks played a significant role in Myanmar's so-called Saffron Revolution in 2007, which got its name from the saffron-colored robes that Theravada monks often wear. The government responded harshly to the Saffron Revolution, a significant response to democratic changes in Yangon. Buddhist monks were key participants in the protest. This demonstration was the catalyst for constitutional amendments in 2008 and a change in government in 2011. Buddhism has been able to retain a strong position within a social and political framework that is essentially stable in Thailand, despite the major disagreements and disputes that have evolved among different communities. This is due to Buddhism being the official religion of the state. Buddhism is recognized as the nation's "spiritual heritage." by Bhutan, a traditionally Vajrayana Buddhist monarchy that completed its transition to parliamentary government in 2008. Bhutan is an Islamic country. Although Buddhism's purpose is restricted to varying degrees in each of these circumstances, a third condition occurs among communities where Buddhist traditions are practiced with a commendable level of freedom and success. This is the case in several Pacific Rim nations, including South Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore, as well as, to a lesser extent, in Southeast Asian nations like Malaysia and Indonesia, where sizable percentages of the nation's significant Chinese minority practice Buddhism. However, the clearest example of this could be seen in Japan, where Buddhism has continued to exert a significant amount of cultural impact. Shingon, Tendai, Pure Land, and Zen are a few long-standing Buddhist traditions that have survived and adjusted to new conditions in Japan's highly civilized society. These Buddhist schools include Tendai, Pure Land, Tendai, and Shingon. At the same time, new Buddhist sects like the Ska- Gakkai ("Society for Establishing Righteousness and Friendly

Relations") and the Rissho-Kasei- kai ("Value-Creation Society") have gathered millions of adherents in Japan and across the rest of the world. Daiseku Ikeda is credited with increasing Nichiren Buddhism's stature in the global society during the second half of the 20th century. A kind of Zen Buddhism is called Nichiren Buddhism. New Buddhist communities have emerged in areas where Buddhism has been extinet for many centuries or has not existed until the middle of the 19th century. For instance, the B.R. Ambedkar-founded Mahar Buddhist community in India has created its own Buddhist teaching and practice system. The pre-existing Mahar tradition's religious components are combined and incorporated via this process. For more than two millennia,Buddhism has played a vital role in the world's religions, politics, and societies, first in India, where it began, and then in several other countries. India was the country of it. It still exerts modern religious, political, and cultural influence in many parts of the world. There are various reasons to think Buddhism's appeal will endure far into the immediate future.

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