

## 25. Concluding remarks

In the present study an attempt has been made to investigate the need for theoretically grounded and historically broad-based concepts and terms that take account of the specific character of the complex we know as Buddhism with a view to understanding and describing it in relation both to the cultural matrix in which it arose and developed and to the ambient religions of South Asia (and, incidentally, of Central, Inner and East Asia also). Whilst the concepts and terms investigated here should be appropriate to and closely fit Buddhism and the Indian (and Tibetan) situation, it is nonetheless hoped that they are not so culture-bound and parochial as not to be more universally intelligible. In the past, a number of terms, concepts, paradigms, and models – usually more ‘etic’ than ‘emic’ – have been employed by scholars when studying Buddhism in its historical milieu. But being so often rooted in western categories, many have proved to be overly culture-bound and parochial. The limitations, and some also of the Procrustean presuppositions and implications, of several of them have been noted above.

Three concepts in particular – those of docetic emanation (an ‘emic’ concept), of a substratum (which is ‘emic’ to the extent that it is largely co-extensive with the Buddhist concept of the *laukika*), and of the contrastive pair *laukika* : *lokottara* (which is of course ‘emic’) – have been considered above in regard to their capacity for providing, singly or jointly, useful approaches to the issues and questions raised. It is of course necessary to ensure that the concepts of emanation and substratum, and of the subordination of the *laukika* to the *lokottara* level, are not misunderstood as just artful, or more or less polite, ways of giving expression to either religious antagonism (as seems to have been assumed by Benoytosh Bhattacharyya and those scholars who followed him regarding the subordination of the *laukika* level) or superiority of the inclusivist variety (under Paul Hacker’s particular definition of inclusivism). This is not, however, to assert that an icon depicting an entity dancing upon another was *never* in any circumstance intended to express, or at least suggest, the victory of one deity, or tradition, over another. (Compare also above, note 2, as well as notes 68, 70, 138 on the *śarabha* icon, note 87 on the *brahmahatyā* theme, and the Tibetan source cited on pp. 75–76.)

Now, it has to be freely recognized from the outset that there probably exists no single universal category or tool, no single ‘etic’ or ‘emic’ model or paradigm, suitable for organizing and interpreting the totality of the evidence available from our sources relating to the issues and questions discussed here. (It indeed appears that Indian modes of categorization have sometimes been set up without theorization, and case by case rather than systematically.) Also, in its structures, classical Indian thought has often tended to be polythetic rather than monothetic, so that thinking was in terms of so-called ‘family resemblances’ rather than reified essences.<sup>197</sup> This observation largely holds also for the procedures of Buddhist thought in India (and Tibet ) studied in the present work. Hence, whilst the *laukika : lokottara* contrastive opposition considered here indeed possesses far-reaching relevance for the understanding of Buddhist thought, it is not being asserted that this model can be expected, of and by itself, to provide a single universal key for opening up all our materials and resolving the totality of issues they pose. Nevertheless, this contrastive opposition has very frequently served as an ordering principle for organizing and elucidating a complex world of religious and cultural representations.

In order fully to address the task before us, it is no doubt necessary to go beyond the division between indigenous, and in-built, ‘emic’ and imported, and superimposed, ‘etic’ concepts and categories. It is necessary to develop what one might call a methodology and anthropology – religious and more – drawing on the traditional twin disciplines of philology and history as well as on ethnography, linguistics and philosophy.<sup>198</sup> Only thus, it seems, is it possible to approach and describe the complex phenomena which we study under the names of Buddhism and Brahmanism/Hinduism.

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<sup>197</sup> For observations on this point, see D. Seyfort Ruegg, *Buddha-nature, Mind and the problem of gradualism in a comparative perspective* (London, 1989), p. 2; and ‘Aspects of the study of the (early) Indian Mahāyāna’, *JIAS* 27 (2004), p. 59.

<sup>198</sup> For some observations on the ‘emic’ and the ‘etic’ in the present connexion, see also D. Seyfort Ruegg, *Ordre spirituel et ordre temporel*, pp. 11–12, 140 f. Clearly, the emic and etic methods can be complementary, and employed alternately, and they should not be regarded as necessarily exclusive of each other.

The structured contrastive opposition *laukika* : *lokottara* differs from the familiar opposition sacred : profane because the Buddhist concept does not readily reduce to the latter tidy, and perhaps somewhat rigid, dichotomy. The category ‘sacred’ or ‘sacral’ is wider than *lokottara*, and it impinges on the *laukika* inasmuch as the latter includes a large number of divinities, *numina*, etc., recognized in practice by Buddhism – possibly in some cases even by the Buddha himself – in conformity with the usage of the world (*lokānuvartana*). Indeed, on the conventional level of discursive practice, the Buddha is reported to have once declared that it is not he who disputes with the world but the world that disputes with him: he acknowledges what is acknowledged in the world but not what is not acknowledged in the world (*loko mayā sārđhaṃ vivadati nāhaṃ lokena sārđhaṃ vivadāmi/ yal loke ’sti sammataṃ tan mamāpy asti sammataṃ/ yal loke nāsti sammataṃ mamāpi tan nāsti sammataṃ/*, quoted in Candrakīrti’s *Prasannapadā* xviii.8; cf. Saṃyuttanikāya III.138). As for the ‘profane’, it is not even clear to what Sanskrit (or Tibetan) category, concept and term it might precisely correspond.<sup>199</sup> Moreover, the opposition *laukika* : *lokottara* is not a frozen and essentialized one; and Buddhist thought in fact holds that it is possible to pass from the former to the latter, even to reach the latter through treating the former as an expedient, i.e. salvific, device.

Approaches that are based on SUBSTRATUM and SYMBIOSIS paradigms on the one side, and on the other side on COMPROMISE or on BORROWING paradigms – including SYNCRETISM and ENCULTURATION – are not necessarily and automatically incompatible throughout the entire range of our source materials. In the course of history they have not been entirely exclusive of each other.

Historically attested instances of borrowing from Brahmanism/Hinduism would, presumably, have arisen precisely when Buddhism was developing on the basis of a common ground or inherited substratum which it largely shared with its religious ambience. Even advocates of the strongest version of the intracultural borrowing hypothesis would

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<sup>199</sup> The English-Sanskrit dictionaries by Monier Williams and Apte are of no real assistance in this regard (although for ‘profane’ = ‘secular’ they give *laukika*), nor are Dawasamdup’s and Dhongthog’s English-Tibetan dictionaries. Goldstein’s English-Tibetan dictionary gives *’jig rten* for ‘profane’, and *chos* for ‘sacred’.

probably concede that, to begin with, Buddhism was an Indian movement having much in common with other Indian movements. And historians of (intercultural) borrowing and enculturation between India and Tibet would no doubt acknowledge that Tibetan Buddhism has constituted a specific religious system (or, rather, set of systems), yet one which through (intracultural) perfusion or osmosis embraced elements held in common with pre-Buddhist, or para-Buddhist, forms of Tibetan religion (cf. pp. 168–172 below). In the first case, that of Indian Buddhism, what was taken over was presumably not totally foreign and alien (otherwise why would it have been ‘borrowed’ in the first place?). And in the second case, that of Tibetan Buddhism, any borrowed pre-Buddhist or para-Buddhist component would, by definition, be historically (if perhaps not typologically) allogenic to the Buddhism being newly propagated in Tibet.<sup>200</sup>

A further problem needs to be mentioned in this connexion. This is the fact that, for the reason that Buddhism ostensibly disappeared from India about a millennium ago, it has tended – unlike the other Śramaṇa tradition of Jainism – to be regarded as something dispensable, and hence non-essential and extraneous, within the body of Indian civilization (see below, p. 151 ff.). On this assumption certain academic programmes have even been constructed which in effect excluded Buddhist studies from mainline Indology. As far as Buddhism in India is concerned, such compartmentalization may well have favoured the generalized form of borrowing paradigm that has been in question here. Similarly, some Sinologists (more Confucian perhaps than the Chinese themselves), Japanologists and Tibetologists have regarded Buddhism as a foreign body – as a ‘xeno-transplant’ – throughout all periods of East Asian and Inner Asian cultures. In this way a problem in the history of religions that concerns the relationship of Buddhism either with the religion and culture of the land of its origin or with the lands of its adoption is to be found impinging on – and potentially being in its turn influenced by – academic

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<sup>200</sup> See Appendix I below. On the possibility of distinguishing conceptually, and even historically, between a Buddhism in Tibet and a Tibetan Buddhism, see D. Seyfort Rugg, ‘The Indian and the Indic in Tibetan cultural history, and Tsoñ kha pa’s achievement as a scholar and thinker: An essay on the concepts of Buddhism in Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism’, *JIP* 32 (2004), pp. 321–43. On the ‘exogenous’ and ‘allogenic’ see n. 239 below.

structures that have become prevalent either deliberately or accidentally. This form of compartmentalization has contributed to the formation of a somewhat distorted picture of Asian civilizations.

As observed above, no single theory or hypothesis can be expected to provide a universal key, or an 'ideologeme', for resolving all the issues and questions that may arise in connexion with the problems under discussion here. In some cases philological and historical evidence may point to the dependence of a Buddhist document or icon on a Hindu one; whilst in other cases the reverse may be true. This holds not only for religion and Tantrism but for other areas of thought, the case of Indian logic and epistemology (*pramāṇa*) being a well-documented example. It seems that the idea of a partly shared (back)ground or common Indian substratum is highly useful, indeed necessary, when seeking to account for instances of historical dependence, as well as of characterized INTERTEXTUALITY, in order to understand the cultural circumstances in which borrowing of any kind could have taken place. Alexis Sanderson's notion of unidirectional 'text-flow' will be a specific case of intertextuality between Buddhist and Hindu sources where the direction of influence can be clearly and securely determined; whereas instances of intertextuality where this determination cannot be made might be grounded in a partly shared SUBSTRATUM.

In addition, the concept of a common ground or substratum is pertinent in cases where the available evidence is insufficient to demonstrate direct borrowing, and where we meet instead with somewhat more diffuse cultural, religious and philosophical features, structures and procedures broadly shared by both Buddhism and Hinduism. The precise nature and modalities of the relationship between Buddhist and Hindu culture – i.e. whether they are based on a common source, (back)ground or substratum or whether they are due rather to a particular historical borrowing at a given time – needs, therefore, to be investigated case by case.

At all events, neither Buddhism nor Hinduism is a totally monolithic entity, and account will have to be taken of the existence of variables – and possibly (given the imperfect nature of our documentation) of indeterminables. Variation in both time and space between the regions of India as well as distinct social, family and school traditions may be expected to have been in operation, and the possible impact of these forces has to be kept in mind in order to avoid unwarranted generalization.

Viewed diachronically with respect to their development over time, such variations assume diatopic and diastratic dimensions.

In sum, a substratum model may in fact not fit all cases. But at the same time it is exceedingly difficult to understand how it can be simply dismissed as ‘redundant’ (as A. Sanderson once did). A borrowing hypothesis that completely rules out the substratum model cannot account for the entirety of the very rich evidence available. In particular, its postulation requires a satisfactory explanation as to why one group (the Buddhists) felt either the need or the desire to borrow – to ‘plagiarize’ even ‘piously’ (as Sanderson put it in 1995) – from another group (e.g. the Śaivas or Vaiṣṇavas) *if* at the same time it is assumed that there existed no common religious and cultural ground between them, and that, for them, what they borrowed was, *ex hypothesi*, exogenous and alien. To invoke rivalry or emulation would seem to explain very little indeed. For in what circumstances, and for what reason, would Buddhists have felt Brahmanism/Hinduism to be so prestigious were it in fact the case that Buddhism did not share common ground with it? Emulation surely presupposes some existing common ground. Competition too would seem to imply the existence of some shared background.<sup>201</sup>

In other words, whilst a substratum model may of course be marked by a certain under-extension, or *avyāpti*, in so far as it does not pretend to offer a universal key and solution to all issues and questions arising in respect to the relationship between Hinduism and Buddhism, the claim of any borrowing model that rejects the substratum model as redundant is gravely vitiated by generalizing over-extension and over-application – in Indian parlance by *ativyāpti* and *atiprasaṅga*.

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On the one side, looking at the relationship between Buddhism and Brahmanism/Hinduism HISTORICALLY, i.e. along a DIACHRONIC axis, three conclusions can be drawn.

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<sup>201</sup> cf. D. Seyfort Ruegg, ‘A note on the relationship between Buddhist and ‘Hindu’ divinities in Buddhist literature and iconology: the *laukika/lokottara* contrast and the notion of an Indian ‘religious substratum’ (as in n. 53).

First, because in its Indian homeland Buddhism arose in an Indian matrix, it is there that the SUBSTRATUM MODEL for their relationship finds an appropriate application. Yet, given more or less frequent and regular contacts over time between Buddhists, Hindus, Jains, etc., this model allows also for influences on Buddhism from its ambient religious and social milieu, and for borrowing from this milieu in the course of the historical development of Buddhism. In other words, within the overall frame of the SUBSTRATUM MODEL there is room for ACCOMMODATION and BORROWING.

Secondly, it seems difficult to account for conscious borrowing by Buddhism from Brahmanism/Hinduism, etc., when it is not admitted that such borrowing took place against the background of a common substratum. Why indeed would Buddhists have wished to borrow, or to 'plagiarize', from non-Buddhists if they did not share, at least to a significant degree, a common background with them? But, as already stated, the very idea of a monolithic, and monothetic, Brahmanism/Hinduism neatly demarcated and set off from a monolithic, and monothetic, Buddhism appears more than questionable. Discussion no doubt needs to proceed with reference to smaller or larger groups of Buddhists and Hindus, and eventually to individual masters (along with their disciples). According to the particular circumstances of each case, the conditions in which accommodation and borrowing took place may have been eirenic, or they may have been confrontational.

Thirdly, there thus exists the probability of instances of historical CONFRONTATION, and even of secular ANTAGONISMS, expressible by the formula 'Buddhism vs. Hinduism' (or 'Hinduism vs. Buddhism'). But for the reasons given above – and however great its value and explanatory power might be in other contexts – INCLUSIVISM as defined by Paul Hacker cannot fully account for the the incorporation of the the *laukika* level into Buddhism and its subordination to the *lokottara* level.

On the other side, looked at SYSTEMICALLY, and along a SYNCHRONIC axis, the relationship between Buddhism and Brahmanism/Hinduism (and Jainism) takes on a somewhat different aspect, the perspective here being no longer spread out over time but structural. At this level of analysis in particular the contrastive opposition WORLDLY/MUNDANE (*laukika*) : SUPRAMUNDANE/TRANSMUNDANE (*lokottara*) takes on its full significance. And it is at this level that the historical, and eventually secular, opposition 'Buddhism vs. Hinduism' proves to be problematic.

In some cases an analysis based on its postulation appears indeed to be quite inappropriate, for example in the case of icons representing a SUPERORDINATE, and transmundane, divinity treading on a SUBORDINATE, and mundane, one (although, as noted above at pp. 49–50, the mere fact that a protector divinity is described and iconographically depicted as treading on an inferior figure does not automatically show that the divinity must belong to the *lokottara* level).

In the last analysis, then, the choice for the historian of religion will not lie between two clear-cut and mutually exclusive alternatives, i.e. between a substratum model and a borrowing model.<sup>202</sup> Rather, it will often be necessary to have recourse to more than one model, each being appropriate to distinct aspects or levels of analysis, and without one relevant model necessarily excluding another relevant one. If neither a sub-

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<sup>202</sup> As the matter has been starkly formulated by an advocate of the latter model in accordance with his understanding of Sanderson's views on the subject; see R. Mayer's statement on p. 272 of his article 'The figure of Maheśvara/ Rudra in the rÑiñ-ma-pa Tantric tradition', *JIAS* 21 (1998) (pp. 271–310): 'For specialists in Tantric Buddhism, the most significant result of Sanderson's work has been to seriously call into question the previously dominant view accepted by a majority of Buddhological scholars, who had suggested that any such observable parallels between the specifically *kāpālika* or "cemetery" strands within the Buddhist Vajrayāna and a number of very similar Śaiva systems, were primarily the result of both traditions arising from a common Indic cultural substrate. While Martin Kalff since the 1970's and David Snellgrove since the mid-1980's had already begun to question the validity of this unsatisfactorily vague position on the grounds of common sense and more generalised observation, it was only with the presentation of Sanderson's minutely detailed and substantially documented philological analysis that we have finally been able to conclude with a reasonable degree of certainty that such similarities are much better explained as a result of direct Buddhist borrowings from the Śaiva sources.' This statement of the matter appears unsatisfactory in several respects. First, it is far from clear that a 'substrate' explanation has been accepted by 'a majority' of 'Buddhological scholars'; numerically the majority would seem to have taken a borrowing model as a given. Secondly, and more importantly, the very abundant evidence – which has not in fact, so far, been set out in a 'minutely detailed and substantially documented philological analysis' – is far from being unilateral and unequivocal, and from lending itself universally, in 'generalised observation', to a single form of analysis. Thirdly, it is by no means evident whose (and what) 'common sense' is being invoked here as normative (that of the various authors of the Vajrayānist sources or that of the individual modern analyst?): in these matters claims invoking so-called common sense are all too often subjective and doubtful.



stratum model – which is an ‘etic’ and historical one except to the extent that it corresponds to the *laukika* level in Buddhist thought, which is an ‘emic’ as well as a synchronic category – nor even an ‘emic’, and synchronic, form of the substratum model corresponding to the contrastive opposition *laukika* : *lokottara* can, alone and by itself, fully account for the entirety of the very complex religious and doctrinal evidence available to us, neither can a generalized borrowing model do so alone. Explanation and hermeneutical understanding both need to be refined and made context-sensitive. And analysis and interpretation need also to operate on more than a single level and, sometimes, with more than a single model or paradigm.

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It has also to be kept clearly in mind that, in the Buddhism of the Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna, the dichotomy *laukika* : *lokottara* is resolvable, and as it were deconstructible, in the Emptiness of self-existence (*svabhāva-sūnyatā* or *niḥsvabhāvatā*) and essencelessness (*nairātmya*) that characterizes all things (*dharma*) and entities (*bhāva*). Thus, neither of the two terms of this pair, nor of course even the pair itself, is to be essentialized and reified. This is indeed a fundamental point in Prajñāpāramitā and Madhyamaka thought that subtends Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna. Hence, while beings of the *laukika* level are all regarded as subject to the conditioned (*samskṛta*) processes of the round of existences (*samsāra*), and while gods make up one of the recognized five or six states of existence (*gati*), the divinities belonging to the *lokottara* level are not to be hypostatized as ultimately real entities. Rather, the tutelaries of the *lokottara* level are so to say symbols of yogic and intellectual attainment (see Appendix II below). The gods of the *laukika* level largely correspond to the Pali category of *sammutidevas* and *upapattidevas*, whilst divinities of the *lokottara* level parallel the Pali category of *visuddhidevas*.

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Topics discussed above touch on an old, and very vexed, issue in Indian studies, namely the question why Buddhism did not survive as a distinct entity in India and why it practically disappeared in the land of its birth as a distinct religious movement.

The fact that Buddhism arose in an Indian matrix and developed in an Indian ambience, and that it has many features in common with Brahmanism/Hinduism and also Jainism, can scarcely justify the view that it was somehow fated to recede back into its milieu at some point in its history and then practically disappear from view. As pointed out above, the substratum model discussed in the present work does not imply that Buddhism was nothing but a version of what is now called 'Hindutva'.<sup>203</sup> Both Buddhists and Brahmanists/Hindus have in fact been aware of their distinctiveness and their mutual differences, and they did not fail to discuss and dispute with each other on matters of religion and philosophy. An interesting piece of evidence is furnished by the *Prabodhacandrodaya*, an allegorical drama by Kṛṣṇamiśra, a contemporary of the Candella king Kirtivarman of Jeṅkabhukti (Bundelkhand) who advocated at the end of the eleventh century a form of Vishnuite Vedānta, where Buddhism has been depicted in a conventional, and polemical, light. (The Pālas, who had reigned a little earlier, were the last major Buddhist dynasty of India.)

Yet it is a historical fact that – unlike Jainism, another Śramaṇa movement – Buddhism did not live on in the Indian heartlands as a distinct and discrete entity. This may have to do at least in part with the fact that, unlike Jainism, Buddhism did not cultivate the kind of socio-religious organization necessary to ensure its survival as a distinct institution.<sup>204</sup>

It could of course be maintained that Buddhism has survived in India in a diffuse and non-institutional form in the sense that, by cross-fertilization or osmosis, it has contributed much to the historical development of Brahmanism/Hinduism (and Jainism). The Buddha was for example adopted as an *avatāra* of Viṣṇu (the motive for this acceptance being, however, double; see above, pp. 14, 122). Since the nineteenth century, moreover, many educated Indians have felt a keen interest in, sometimes

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<sup>203</sup> See pp. 1–2, 113 above.

<sup>204</sup> See P. Jaini, 'The disappearance of Buddhism and the survival of Jainism' (as in n. 28 above). And on the Jaina *śramaṇopāsaka* helping to guarantee the separate survival of Jainism, see P. Jaini, 'Śramaṇas: their conflict with Brahmanical society' (as in n. 3 above), p. 65. Cf. K. R. Norman, 'The role of the layman according to the Jain canon', in M. Carrithers and C. Humphrey (ed.), *The Assembly of Listeners, Jains in society* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 31–39.

even an affinity to, Buddhism (without in most cases ceasing to consider themselves true Hindus). The Mahābodhi Society arose at that time. And Hindus are quite prepared to give alms and hospitality to a Buddhist monk or nun, whom they recognize as a religious and renunciant. Also, since the middle of the twentieth century, there have existed the so-called Neo-Buddhists inspired by B. R. Ambedkar. Furthermore, on the periphery of the Indian subcontinent – in Ladak, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, Bangladesh,<sup>205</sup> Burma, and Sri Lanka – Buddhism has continued to live on in various forms. But the fact remains that, for many centuries, Buddhism has for all practical purposes been barely present in the Indian heartlands – in the Āryāvarta or Madhyadeśa of old – and in India south of the Vindhya mountains at least until the twentieth century.<sup>206</sup>

By scholars this fact has been explained in various ways. Some explanations have simply displaced the problem without resolving it. And sometimes what was hypothetical, and still in need of demonstration, was taken as the premiss of a further argument, so that questions were simply begged.

Several considerations cited in the past in order to account for the disappearance of Buddhism in India can be seen not to be specific to Buddhism alone and to apply *mutatis mutandis* also to other surviving Indian religions.

Thus the view that seeks to explain the disappearance of Buddhism on the ground that Hinduism was ‘always predominant’ in India fails to tell us why it was that Buddhism’s numerical inferiority – which presumably was its demographic situation in much of India during most if not all of its history there – caused it to decline at one point rather than at another in this history. Above all, it fails to explain how it came about that, unlike Jainism, Buddhism was unable to survive in a position of numeri-

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<sup>205</sup> On historical and cultural problems posed by this presence in the east of the Indian subcontinent, see H. Bechert, ‘Zur Geschichte des Theravāda-Buddhismus in Ostbengalen’, in: H. Härtel (ed.), *Beiträge zur Indienforschung* (Festschrift E. Waldschmidt, Berlin, 1977), pp. 45–66, who distinguishes between true survival from earlier times, more or less recent migration and conversion, and Hindu-Buddhist syncretism.

<sup>206</sup> For South India, see recently J. Guy, ‘Southern Buddhism – Traces and transmissions’, in: C. Jarrige and V. Lefevre (eds.), *Proceedings of the 16th European Association of South Asian archaeology* (Paris, 2005), pp. 495–504.

cal inferiority. But does ‘predominance’ here include other factors such as royal preference, or at least support? Questions then arise as to what caused Buddhism sometimes to be preferred by a king (or perhaps a queen) over other religions, and when it was being supported by royal patronage alongside other religions. Following this line of thinking, it seems that the reverse of royal preference or favour – i.e. prolonged persecution and radical extirpation – might account for its disappearance. Shrouded as they are in the mists of time, however, the historical developments in question often remain uncertain if not undeterminable for us. (In the case of the emperor Aśoka, we do have extensive independent and contemporary documentation – namely this king’s inscriptions – that contribute to clarifying his relation to Buddhism. For Harṣavardhana of Kanauj in the first part of the seventh century, available evidence connects this king with both Buddhism and Śaivism (*‘paramamāheśvara’*), and his drama *Nāgānanda* includes both Buddhist and Śākta features; in the Sonpat seal of Harṣa, his elder brother Rājyavardhana is called a *paramasaugata*. Examples of such complex religious affiliation could of course be multiplied easily.<sup>207</sup>)

The transition from earlier Brahmanism – with currents within which Buddhism has indeed had numerous points of contact and relationship – to what is known as Hinduism with its strong theistic orientation, and its caste- and ‘class’-oriented *varṇāśramadharma*, must have been a very significant factor in the disappearance of Buddhism. Yet Buddhism too has had its devotional or *bhakti* currents; and as is clear from material discussed in the present work the presence of the divine, and of gods, is well attested in it. And although Buddhism did not accept the external-

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<sup>207</sup> To Harṣa is also ascribed the *Aṣṭamahāśrīcaityastotra*. The prologues of two other plays attributed to him, the *Ramāvalī* and the *Priyadarśikā*, bear the imprint of Śaivism.

An inscription on a bronze image of the Buddha from Central India dedicated by an anonymous ‘queen’ of a certain ‘king’ Hari of the Gupta dynasty includes the curious formula *sarvasattvānāṃ ... anuttarapadaññānāvāptaye* (the more usual formula being: *...anuttara(buddha)ññāna...*); see O. von Hinüber, *Die Palola Śāhis* (Antiquities of Northern Pakistan 5, Mainz, 2004), pp. 126–7. The inscriptional (and also numismatic) materials of course yield much suggestive information concerning Buddhist-Hindu symbioses. In the history of Buddhism, queens sometimes appear to have been more closely linked with Buddhism than were their husbands.

ities of Hindu *varṇāśramadharmā*, it did recognize a class of Āryas and successive stages in religious life. In Buddhism, the Āryan person was determined and defined not by birth and family but by inner qualities and by that person's spiritual 'family' and stage of development. In this respect, as well as in regard to monachism and monasticism, Brahmanism/Hinduism – where renunciation (*saṃnyāsa*, as distinct from restraint), even though prized, has nevertheless been a somewhat problematic category – can be described as being in a certain sense both more societally oriented, and somewhat more lay or 'secular' (as opposed to monachal or monastic), than Buddhism tended to be in India.<sup>208</sup> But, of course, in such matters generalization can be dangerous, and the concept of the secular is slippery in a civilization that does not in fact oppose the secular and the religious, the temporal and the spiritual, in the way this has usually been done in the modern West. In Hinduism, the *varṇāśramadharmā* is of course considered an eminently religious value.

A further weighty factor in the present context may well have been the fact that, in India, Buddhism was so closely associated with the monk's (and eventually the nun's) code of discipline (*vinaya*), and that it came to be bound up to a high degree with its monastic institutions. Institutional monasticism with populous and costly monasteries (as distinct from temples) evidently weighed less, generally speaking, in Hinduism, and in Jainism, than in Buddhism. (In this connexion it is interesting to note that, in Tibet, the survival of Buddhism in times of troubles – and notably at the time of its persecution there in the ninth century – has been linked with the action of lay [*khyim pa = grhin*]

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<sup>208</sup> The high proportion of 'secular' literature – poetry (albeit regularly with Hindu religious themes), poetics and of course grammar – in the traditional Sanskrit education of the *paṇḍit* in India has been pointed out in E. Gerow, 'Primary education in Sanskrit: Methods and goals', *JAOS* 122 (2002), p. 661 f.; see also A. Michaels (ed.), *The paṇḍit* (New Delhi, 2001). This situation may be compared and contrasted with the traditional Tibetan curriculum – beginning with the class of logic-epistemology and ending with the class of Abhidharma or Vinaya – largely dispensed in monastic seminaries. Even in Tibet 'secular' literature including *belles lettres* was not always entirely neglected; see Part II of our *Ordre spirituel et ordre temporel dans la pensée bouddhique de l'Inde et du Tibet*.

On *saṃnyāsa* with Śaṃkara, see R. Marcaurelle, *Freedom through inner renunciation* (Albany, 2000) with the review by J. Taber, *JAOS* 123 (2003), pp. 692–5.

religious – i.e. the Tibetan category of the white-clad [*skya bo, dkar po*] religious and married Mantrin [*snags pa*] – in particular among the rñiñ ma pas for whom vast monastic implantations, as distinct from temples, were for long of limited importance, but also among other Tibetan orders and schools [*chos lugs*]. During difficult times in Tibet, Buddhism could survive, and remain alive, with proportionally few monastics [*grva pa*, etc.], and even fewer fully ordained monks [*dge sloñ = bhikṣu; btsun pa = bhadanta*], relatively to the population compared with other periods in that country's history.)

Very significant must also be the fact that Hinduism has situated itself as 'Vedic' – and hence as of non-human (*apauruṣeya*) and timeless origin – and as the *sanātanadharmā*, whereas Buddhism has been a movement that regarded itself as originating from a human Sage and Awakened One (*[sam]buddha*; that is, it is classed as *pauruṣeya*). Yet even this important difference can be overstated. Although also a Śramaṇa movement, Jainism has survived in India. And, beside the 'Vedic', non-Vedic (Āgamic and Tantric) strands have flourished in abundance within Hinduism. These non-Vedic traditions claimed to have their source not in a human teacher but in god (*īśvara*, i.e. Śiva, Viṣṇu, etc.).

Another factor traditionally regarded as having favoured the disappearance of Buddhism in India was the 'universal conquest' (*digvijaya*) of India by Śaṅkarācārya and his Śāṅkara-Vedānta.<sup>209</sup> Yet, interestingly, it is in his tradition that monasticism came to play a considerable rôle. And in its essence Śaṅkara's Vedānta is highly 'intellectual', and anything but 'popular'. It also includes certain features reminiscent of Buddhism; indeed, by opponents, Śaṅkara was considered a 'secret Buddhist' (*pracchannabauddha*; see above, p. 139). Except through its being largely represented in society by Smārtas with their *pañcāyatanapūjā* (directed to Śiva, Viṣṇu, Durgā, Sūrya, and Gaṇeśa), the Advaita-Vedānta is in itself scarcely more theistic than Buddhism.<sup>210</sup> As for Mīmāṃsā,

<sup>209</sup> *Śaṅkaravijaya* is the title of a hagiography of Śaṅkarācārya ascribed to his disciple Ānandagiri, *Śaṅkaradigvijaya* being the title of a later hagiography attributed to Mādhava-Vidyāraṇya.

<sup>210</sup> Some aspects of this question have been reviewed by P. Stephan, 'Göttliche Gnade in Śaṅkaras Soteriologie?', *ZDMG* 154 (2004), pp. 397–416 (discussing B. Malkovsky, *The role of divine grace in the soteriology of Śaṅkarācārya* [Leiden 2001]). See also

also non-theistic, its great representative Kumāriḷa (seventh century) was a strong critic of Buddhism.

It is certain that Buddhists were engaged in organized debates with Brahmanical/Hindu opponents, by whom they were no doubt sometimes defeated and may eventually have been compelled publicly to renounce their religio-philosophical position. Moreover, that Buddhists were on occasion the targets of religio-political or sectarian attacks and persecution by Hindu rulers and Brahmans also seems clear.<sup>211</sup> Perhaps the threat of persecution came less from Vedāntin or Mīmāṃsaka thinkers than from sectarian followers of the Indian theistic religions (Śaivas, Vaiṣṇavas, etc.) claiming *āstika*, and eventually ‘Vedic’ (*vaidika*), affiliations. In so far as they were philosophers, by the time of the decline of Buddhism in India its opponents appear to have been linked closely with the Nyāya school (Udayana of Mithalā, a Śaiva, was a leading example in the eleventh century).

An impression of hostility to the point of persecution may sometimes be conveyed by the highly polemical style of debate traditionally practised in India (and Tibet), which could go so far as to include mockery, obloquy and invective. It should be remembered, however, that extreme forms of language could on occasion be adopted even by debaters belonging to different traditions within the same school – and also by fellow students in school debates (for example in a Tibetan seminary or *grva tshan*) – and that this conventionalized, and even highly ritualized, style became a sort of formalized hortatory or admonitory procedure having paraenetic as well as intimidatory uses.

A further cause of the decline of Buddhism in India is credibly stated to have been Muslim (Turuṣka, etc.) invasions and depredations, in particular the destruction of its great monastic centres.<sup>212</sup> This, however,

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P. Hacker, *Kleine Schriften*, ed. L. Schmithausen, Index s. u. ‘Gott’; and M. Comans, *The method of early Advaita Vedānta* (Delhi, 2000), pp. 184 ff., 215 ff.

<sup>211</sup> Evidence for the persecution of Buddhism in India has recently been studied by G. Verardi; see n. 2 above). The question of both persecution and tolerance was reviewed by R. C. Mitra, *The decline of Buddhism in India* (Santiniketan, 1954), p. 125 ff.

<sup>212</sup> For a later Buddhist view of the situation then prevailing see, e.g., Tāranātha, *rGya gar chos 'byuñ* (ed. Schiefner), pp. 193–4. A contemporary account is provided in the

leaves intact the question as to the extent to which the survival of Buddhism in India was in fact dependent on the continued existence of these monastic centres, and also on the extent to which there existed Buddhist householder-religious (of whom a Vimalakīrti was doubtless an idealized instance) and non-monastic *gomins* (such as Candragomin). In principle, in times of trouble, these would have been in a position to ensure the continued existence of the Buddhist traditions in the lay setting of a family and lineage.<sup>213</sup>

What is noteworthy is the fact that Buddhism has remained alive around the periphery of India – in Sri Lanka, in sub-Himalayan, Himalayan and trans-Himalayan regions, and in Southeast Asia – and also in distant Japan. Even in China it survived in a much more visible and palpable form than it did in the Indian heartland. It was in ‘exterior India’ that Buddhism has lived on, whereas in most of India proper it more or less disappeared as a distinct and discrete entity.

None of the aforementioned factors can, it seems, fully account for the vicissitudes that have marked the history of Buddhism in India. They can at best elucidate some individual cases, but without comprehensively explaining the fate there of Buddhism as a whole. The Indian plant that was Buddhism apparently somehow came to be felt to be exotic and exceptional (even alien) in the Indian heartlands in spite of the fact that it had sprung from Indian soil and had long shared a multitude of features with Brahmanism/Hinduism. Something in the nature of a paradigm gap seems to have developed. And meaningful dialogue appears to have become difficult between Buddhists and most ‘orthodox’ Brahmanists, who often found themselves simply talking past each other. Notwithstanding the fact that there has existed a wide range of shared ritual behaviour, mental categories, even linguistic expression – and, indeed, also a commonality of ends (i.e. liberation or *mokṣa*) –, a certain discontinuity, even

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biography of the Tibetan pilgrim-student Chag Lo tsā ba Chos rje dpal (1197–1264), as well as in the biographies of Śākyaśrībhadrā (1140–1225) and his associates.

<sup>213</sup> See the remarks made above. On the matter of the *gomin*, and on the non-monastic Mahāyānist, see the observations in D. Seyfort Ruegg, ‘Aspects of the study of the (earlier) Indian Mahāyāna’, *JIAS* 27 (2004), p. 25. As observed above, Buddhism in Tibet is said to have been in a position to survive catastrophe and persecution by reason of its having been transmitted by householder religious and lay *snags pas* who were able to preserve it in a family and lineage structure.



a rupture, evidently came to be felt to exist as regards attitudes and approaches, and the religious and philosophical organization and mapping of life. Then, in the time of upheaval through which large parts of India were passing at the turn of the millennium, the close links between these two traditions were largely lost sight of (except, in part, in so-called ‘Tantrism’ and hence in areas deeply marked by ‘Tantric’ culture).

The old ‘religious-cultural code’ of Buddhism would appear for instance to have come to be regarded as somewhat alien in a time when theism had prevailed in India. But it does not seem that the decisive factor in its virtual disappearance there could have been so-called Buddhist atheism alone; for, as seen in our sources, whatever the subordinate place it may have assigned to gods and celestials, Buddhism not only very clearly included them on one level but it embraced a distinctive sense of the divine. In particular – and contrary to an often-expressed opinion – it does not appear to be the case that it was Buddhist recognition of the mundane level of the *laukika* – inclusive of the religious and also temporal substratum which it largely shared with Brahmanism/Hinduism – that was inexorably to result in Buddhism’s receding, and in effect being absorbed, into the matrix from which it had sprung, and in which it had flourished over many centuries. Even though the *laukika* was acknowledged by Buddhists, this was balanced by the recognition of a distinctively Buddhist *lokottara* level: the two levels are indeed linked terms in a structured opposition. How decisive the argument could be that this *lokottara* level had become less and less perceptible and significant, at least to ordinary followers of the Buddhist religion, is a matter of conjecture. Inclusivism under Hacker’s definition does not in any case seem to have been responsible. In Japan too, dividing lines between Buddhism and other traditional religion have on occasion been blurred, doubtless leading sometimes to a marginalization of Buddhism, but not to its disappearance. In Tibet, such marginalization did not take place, even though there too lines of demarcation have on occasion been obscured.

The exploration of these and related issues will constitute a major task for further study and research in the history of Buddhism.<sup>214</sup>

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<sup>214</sup> This is not the place to pursue any parallelism or isomorphism between the absorptive integration (docetic or otherwise) of the *laukika* level into the *lokottara* with Indian politics and state-formation that have been variously described as

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To sum up, in the source materials surveyed in the present study, the relationship between the two levels of the worldly/mundane and the transmundane/supramundane has been conceived of mainly in terms of three paradigms: 1) the idea of a *laukika* divinity as phantom projection or docetic emanation (*nirmāṇa* = *sprul pa*) of a being (or symbol) belonging to the *lokottara* level, 2) the idea of a *laukika* divinity's respectful submission to this being (or symbol) of the *lokottara*, and 3) the idea of the forcible subjugation of a *laukika* divinity to the *lokottara* deity, either directly by the latter or through the agency of Vajrapāṇi. The last two paradigms are frequently associated with the idea that the *laukika* divinity offers a vow (*saṃvara* = *sdom pa*) or promise (*pratijñā* = *dam bca'*) to protect the Teaching and enters into a convention (*samaya* = *dam tshig*) with the transmundane level. Essential here is the theme of training (*vi-nī-* = *'dul ba*) on the Path of liberation. And the idea of a solemn predictive declaration (*vyākaraṇa* = *luñ bstan*) for Awakening and future buddhahood may also be present, especially in the context of paradigm 2.

Iconographically, these modes could be variously depicted. The integration of a worldly divinity in the *kula* 'clan' of a *lokottara* deity can be represented by the image of the latter placed vertically above the head, or

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integrative (H. Kulke), segmentary (B. Stein), galactic (S. Tambiah), or feudal. The fact that *maṇḍala*-structure has been prominent in both areas may have provided a link. Characteristic of Indian polity and state-formation was the absorption or integration of neighbouring, peripheral chiefs or 'little kings' – *sāmanta(rāja)s* exercising effective political control locally – into a larger, central realm of a 'great king' possessing *inter alia* extended ritual sovereignty or suzerainty. There exists then a certain comparability between *sāmanta* rulers and regional or local divinities (along with their temples and sacred places) who are integrated into the myth, ritual and ideology of a central and superordinate deity (and his sacred centre). A great transmundane protector (*dharmapāla*) may even be represented as placed in the centre of his *maṇḍala*, surrounded by his entourage or court consisting of ministers, generals, warriors, messengers, etc. But although there may indeed exist parallels or echoes, any reductionism that would seek to derive the religious from the political or societal, or to explain the former by the latter, cannot be postulated *a priori*. The political and historical issues have been surveyed in, e.g., H. Kulke (ed.), *The state in India 1000–1700* (Delhi, 1995); see also the same scholar's *Kings and cults: State formation and legitimation in India and Southeast Asia* (New Delhi, 1993).

in the headdress, of the the former, a depiction that corresponds in particular to paradigm 2. Such incorporation can also be depicted horizontally by placing the *laukika* in a subordinate field of the *maṇḍala* of the main, central, deity. The forcible subjugation of a *laukika* divinity can be depicted by the figure representing the *lokottara* shown dancing, or treading, upon the the *laukika* divinity, a depiction corresponding to paradigm 3. Paradigm 2 may be more or less closely associated with the docetism characteristic of paradigm 1. This is exemplified also in the Japanese *honji suijaku* concept.

It is important to observe that, in a soteriological perspective, the *laukika* level may be transformed, or trans-valued, on to the *lokottara* level. Conversely, the noumenal (*ye šes pa*) of the *lokottara* level may be ‘invited’, by ritual and yogic means, to ‘descend’ on to the phenomenal, and conventional (*dam tshig pa*), level of the practiser (see Appendix II below). In terms of religion, soteriology and even gnoseology, then, the *laukika* and *lokottara* levels are not thought of as fixed and frozen reified entities between which there is no possibility of transfigurative communication. And their relation involves very much more than infiltration, borrowing, syncretism, or inclusivism (under Paul Hacker’s definition). Pertinent, rather, are the ideas of symbiosis and a common ground, or substratum, one on the basis of which intertextuality and intericonographicity (and indeed borrowing) may have operated in certain cases.

