



THE STUDY OF U-THONG CITY: HISTORY OF BUDDHIST PROPAGATION

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Abstract

The history of the Buddhist missions in the U-thong city, its influence and the Buddhist footprints during the Dvaravati era (U-thong) from the testimonial works of art. Due data were collected from the Tipiṭaka, the Aṭṭhakathā, the archeological evidences, literatures and related researches. The researcher found that Buddhism was expanded to the U-thong land and through archives, the archeological scholars believed that the U-thong history has ever welcomed the Indian traders (Iron Age) since the 3rd Buddhist Century. However, with evidences, the archeological, sculptural, architectural and inscriptional scholars found that the Buddhist missions arrived around the 8-10th Buddhist Centuries for they found clay sculptures of three monks with monkhood frock and holding bowls for alms gathering. They were the oldest testimonies ever found compared to other sites. Later Buddhism took firmly deep rooted in the mind of its followers. This led to the creation of arts, cultures, customs, and refined religious rites in the site of the ancient U-thong city which were very during the 11-16th Buddhist Centuries, witnessed in “Dvaravati Arts”. It was seen that the U-thong city was older than any other cities in the ancient Dvaravati Age since this was the major trade center and the center of Buddhism in the first Dvaravati State era showing the footprints of the influences of the Brahman and Buddhism such as the stupas, the Dhammacakra stones, the pagodas, the printed Buddha images, the Buddha images and other inscriptions related to the Buddhist principles. It well heralded the Buddhist prosperity.

Keywords: Historical study, the U-thong city, Buddhist missions



Introduction

Buddhism is one of the important religions of the world and prolong the national religion of Thailand and foremost influences the Thai cultures. At present, Thailand is counted the center of the World Buddhism because Thailand locates the World Fellowship of Buddhists attested with doctrines identical to the oceans of various sciences. Buddhism is not then just only philosophy or any theories but its contents ever cover ways of life, existence and all viewpoints of thinking. Around 95% of the Thais are Buddhists through each era. Buddhism as such most influences the Thai belief, their conducts and their ways of living (Phaitoon Maliwan and Sawai Malathong, 1999:1). It unavoidably requires to investigate Buddhist influences, its footprints, its roots in the Thai ways of life, its history amid the trendy tide of globalization including the authenticity of the national cultures. This is corresponded with the concept of Vinai Phongscripien contending, “Understanding the cultural soul or the national way of life is only to acclaim it from historical learning because it allows us to know what our societal singularity have been founded?” (Vinai Phongscripien, 2000:2). Besides exploring the meaning latent in the past episodes as such, learning history is then to explore how historians record them in each era. This is to realize and recognize the systems of politics, economy, social and historical knowledge creation especially the Buddhist history which has mastered the communal ways of life in the archaic U-thong city during the 9-15th Buddhist Centuries. It is witnessed from the legends or the religious inscriptions depicting that around the 3rd Buddhist Century, King Asoka the Great has consigned the 8th Batch of the Buddhist missionaries led by Phra Sona Thera and Phra Uttara Thera to buddhisize¹ or proselytize Buddhism in the Land of Suvarnabhumi (Vi.A. (Pali) 1/58, Mahavaṅṣ (Pali) 1/6/82)². The Thais believed Suvarnabhumi was located in the province of Nakhon Pathom and the U-thong district whereas the Burmese believed, it was Muang Satherm (Phra Dhammapitaka, (P.A. Payutto), n2004, p. 494) where Buddhism has been buddhisized, settled, solidified and disseminated.

The continuation of Buddhism seemed to gradually fade away. Still, during the Lord Buddha era, the Indians always traded with Suvarnabhumi and long-time settled and expanded their cultures to the local people in the areas of Southeast Asia. On account of Buddhism never rejected any contemporary sects; numbers of the Buddhist thus influx to the Indochina peninsulas (Sathien Phothinantha, 1972, p.2). With the current modern exploration, it discloses that the Dvaravati people have been mixed with many ethnic races and religious relation especially the Buddhism along the Chao Phraya basin while creating common customs and traditions having Buddhism as key to unlock into the historical lucidity. By acculturation, it rose the distinction of the Dvaravati arts

and cultures through Buddhism and due to Buddhism was rooted by the Indian cultures, it has been chosen and adjusted to be the core of the land and to become the center bridging diverse cultures, social and believes.

This clouded the investigative truth. If with real and serious examination, it was found that “Si praeteritum, praesens bquomodo sit? (Had there been no past, how can there be a present?). Where is at present the Buddhist Center located? With scholar archives explored and disseminated, most agreed, it is located in Dvaravati (U-thong) or the lower central region of Thailand because critical evidences have been found more than other sites including in many other appropriate sites to exposed and receive the external civilization. The archeological testimonies demanded scholars to hypothesize the center of Davaravati was located in 3 sites – Muang (city) U thong, Muang (city) Nakhon Pathom and Muang (city) Lopburi (Sakdhichai Saaisingh, 2004:61). In particular, it was found that the archic Muang (city) U-thong was the historical origin, the Suvarnabhumi civilization covering the territories of U-thong subdistrict, U-thong district: Suphanburi province engulfing 38.16 square kilometers. Archeological evidences assumed that there was a capital of the Dvaravati Kingdom centering the Land of Suvarnabhumi the historical origin of arts, cultures, and customs of various ethnic races before being annexed to be the Thai nationality at present. Still, the land of Suvarnabhumi was more translucent called “Muang (city) U-thong is the Archaic City” (Prof. Mom Chao (Monarch Grandson) Subhaddaradis Dissakul. Most scholars agreed that the capital of Suvarnabhumi should have been located at Muang (city) U-thong because a silver coin inscribed “Lava Pura” has been found in U-thong. Boeles, J.J. (1967) posited that while U-thong was the western center or as the capital of Dvaravati State explored from its geographical location incorporated with the testimony of archaeological sites, inscriptions and the Chinese archives found in these sites. Besides being the capital, the archaic U-thong should play the leading role of sea port during the Dvaravati age because it was located near the sea and exit-entry waterway directly adjoining the sea. Many terracotta seals belonging to Indian merchants in the latter Gupta period (the 12-14th Buddhist Centuries) were found in the archaic U-thong sites and its nearby areas. The ship terracotta seals revealed the trading roles in this city (Jira Jongkol, 1967; Indrawooth, Phasook, 1983) and the 2- sided seals of Kochalakshami (elephant seal). U-thong played another role of being the center of Buddhism as being found in many Buddhists artistic evidences in many major archaeological sites such as more than 30 Dhammacakkara Stones. Some were depicted with the crouching deer and Buddha images were also found with number of votive tablets.



Inscriptional Evidences (History, Artist, Archeology)

These would lead to assumptions that Muang U-thong should have played the roles as a capital of the Dvaravati State in the first era around the 9-13th Buddhist Centuries (Phasuk Indrawudh, 1999 pp.101-106; pp.177-178). Muang U-thong has been found by archeologists on trading with India since the fall of the Iron Age (the 3-5th Buddhist Centuries/Chin Yoodee, 1966 pp. 43-50) and played very evident roles during the era of Indo-Roman of India (the 6-9th Buddhist Centuries). At the very U-thong itself where the Buddhist traders from the Krishna river basin had travelled for trading and settled themselves during the Indo-Roman age while ushering Buddhism from the Buddhist Center in the Southern India patronized by The Kings of the Sāttavāhna Dynasty (the 4-8th Buddhist Centuries) and extended to the Iksavāku Dynasty (the 8-10th Buddhist Centuries) having its religious artistry in Muang Amarāvādī and Muang Nāgārajunkoṇḍa to be buddhisized the archaic communities in Muang U-thong as being found with the terracotta sculptures of the 3 apostles of His Lord Buddha carrying their alms bowls, clothed and clad in monkhood robes according to the popular style of Amarāvādī art and the stucco sculpture of a Naga Buddha image loosely seated on his feet according to the style of Amarāvādī art (Boisselier, J. and Murthy, K. K. 1977: 1-10.). As such, Muang U-thong was counted an archaic port continuously prosperous to become the main water port of the kingdom and the oldest center of Buddhism in the Dvaravati State. Many scholars recalled the existence of this archaic city such as Thaksin Indrayotha (1991, p. 14) contended that along the Chao Phraya river basin and the Golden Axe Handle settled many communities since the Buddha era or before that for over 2,000 years. For example, they were Muang Nakhon Chai Sri, Muang Phong Tuek, Muang U-thong, Muang Khoo Bua, Muang Sri Mahosod, Muang Chaiya, and Muang Din Daeng and so on. There were also many contradictory data about the ethnic races of the Dvaravati (U-thong) people. Some scholars assumed that they were the Mon with the reasons (Siriwat Khamwansa, 1999, pp.1-8;p.20) that (1) The Mon language inscriptions were found in Lopburi aged around 13-14th Buddhist Centuries inscribed in the octagonal pole with molding like in Nakhon Pathom. (2) Phra Nang Cāmdevī moved from Lopburi to rule Haribhūñjaya in the 13th Buddhist Century. She was a Mon princess and (3) George Cœdès (1886-1969) read the inscriptions at Wat Bo Rang: Nakhon Pathom and disseminated them in Paris in 1952 supported that Dvaravati (U-thong) was the Mon Kingdom. Therefore, the center of the Dvaravati Kingdom met contradictory viewpoints but most scholars viewed the center of the Dvaravati Kingdom should have been located in the lower central region of Thailand since many critical evidences were found along within strategic location for being able to contact and receive civilization from the outside world.

However, even most scholars agreed with such idea but with the archeological evidences which some scholars assumed that there were 3 centers of the Dvaravati Kingdom – Muang U-thong, Muang Nakhon Pathom (Nakhon Chai Sri) and Muang Lopburi (Sakdhichai Saisingh, 2004:61- 74).). The backgrounds related to the Center of Buddhism in the Dvaravati Kingdom was Muang U-thong attracted the very investigation how was the situations of Buddhism on its first entry, its dissemination, its origin, its influences, its footprints and its development becoming? And what was about in the later era? They were still the challenges and always a waiting for additional investigation. As of the history of Muang U-thong in buddhizing, none investigation was directly conducted or few studies have been conducted but many historical studies were conducted such as archaeology and excavation. The exploration of evidences to affirm the existence of the archaic communities, to investigate the U-thong identity, and the U-thong tourism and so on where the researches of Buddhism for that period were interrupted. At present, historian and archeologists have conducted surveys, and excavations and found new data such as recently, many archeological research teams have excavated the sites of Plabplachai in 2017 which revealed the better background and the situations of Buddhism. However, the findings presented were scattered and discontinued because different people differently studied and made the history inconsistent as it should be.

The 2 Groups of Buddhism and the Arrival

The arrival of Buddhism was mostly informed that since the 3rd Buddhist Century. Some documents insisted its arrival during the 7-8th Buddhist Centuries and some asserted its arrival during the 8-9th Buddhist Centuries and some confirmed its arrival the 9-13th Buddhist Centuries. They were conclusively divided into 2 groups. The First Group believed that Buddhism arrived the Land of Suvarnabhumi since the 3rd Buddhist Century and prospered since them until the Dvaravati era until the 11-16th Buddhist Centuries. Many scholars believed in this group and agreed that (1) Buddhism has deep rooted in Ban Khoo Bu. Muang District: Ratchaburi province in the era of King Asoka the Great unto King Kaniska during BE 273- 703. Prof. Prom Suthas Na Ayudhya (1968) believed that there had to be people who worshiped Buddhism in the land of Suvarnabhumi before King Asoka the Great has missioned Phra Sona Thera and Phra Uttara Thera to buddhisize in Suvarnabhumi. At that time, people of Suvarnabhumi were the Mon and the Funan who together worshipped Buddhism. The capital of Suvarnabhumi was in the old Muang Kanchanaburi at the same side of Ban Khoo Bua and disembarked at Muang Ta Kho La and took north route to the central region of Suvarnabhumi the Buddhist missionaries might visit an international sea port to ease for alms gathering, buddisization, and travel. (2) In the Legend of the Buddha Cetiya, Somdej Phra Chao Borromawongther



Khrom Phraya Damrong Rajanuphab (2505, p.124-127) maintained that Buddhism would have arrived Siam (Thailand) before BE500. His Royal Highness assumed that its arrival into Siam because Buddhism arrived in many eras and with many sects causing the birth of many archeological sites of 7 eras. The first era was Dvaravati depicted since BE500.

It could be witnessed that more Dvaravati Buddha cetiya (pagodas/shrines) had been found in Nakhon Pathom than in other areas and they were the oldest cetiya in Thailand. It was assumed that these cetiya were influenced by the Magadharāj Dominion. The materials to construct the Buddha chetiya in this era were the Dhātu cetiya (a relic shrine: stupa enshrining His Lord Buddha's relics), the Baribhoga-cetiya (a shrine/stupa by use: things and places used by His Lord Buddha especially the Bodhi tree), the Dhamma-cetiya (a doctrinal shrine: the monument of the Teaching where inscribed palm-leaves/tablets/scriptures are housed), and the Uddesikacetiya (a shrine by dedication: a Buddha image). However, the Dhātu cetiya construction was reserved as the most important cetiya than the other three cetiya. It was possible that King Asoka the Great had also distributed His Lord Buddha's relics to be enshrined in the countries where the missionaries had been consigned (KhA.222; J.IV.228). (3) In the merit pilgrimage – the dhamma pilgrimage, Phra Brahmaganabhorn (P.A. Payutto), 2004, p.494) maintained that Buddhism has arrived Thailand far back over 2000 years since the Suvarnabhumi era. His Most Venerable assumed that the territory to route India and Thailand in the past was in the book entitled “The Merit Pilgrimage – the Dhamma Pilgrimage” and concluded that the peninsular lands of Thailand were possibly the first site of Southeast Asia to meet continuous contact with India. They were the southern Indian merchants where Buddhism bloomed, expanded and became the center of the Indian cultural dissemination. (4) Where did Sukhothai come from? Prof. Sujitt Wongthes, (2006, p.12) believed that the buddhisization from India in the reign of King Asoka the Great missioning Phra Sona Thera and Phra Uttara Thera first to Suvarnabhumi around the Tha Chin river–Mae Glong areas (the sites of U thong, U-thong district, Suphanburi province at present). The Buddhist Theravāda has continuously bloomed until today. (5) In the geo-history of His Lord Buddha Sathien Phothinantha, (1972, p.2) concluded that Buddhism has arrived Thailand since the 3rd Buddhist Century. At first, The Buddhist Theravāda was flourished for many centuries and mantled over the Indochina peninsular. Later in the 6th Buddhist Century, the Buddhist Mahayana arrived former Thailand by land route from Bengal to northern Burma whereas by sea route, they landed at Malayu Peninsular, Sumatra and encircled the bay to Cambodia. During that time, the Funan worshipped both the Theravāda and the Mahayana which were so flourished so much so two Buddhist missionaries, Phra Sangha Pāla and Phra Mandarasena travelled to translate the Buddhist

scriptures in China in the 10th Buddhist Century. (6) Saṅgītivon, a chronicle on the Dhamma Vinaya Saṅgāyanā (Capitulary) asserted (Somdej Phra Vannaratana, 2514 pp.46-75) that Buddhism arrived Suvarnabhumi after the 3rd Dhamma Vinaya Saṅgāyanā (Capitulary), King Asoka the Great missioning Phra Sona Thera and Phra Uttara Thera associated with another 5 monks to buddhize in Suvarnabhumi. (7) Suvarnabhumi as the first current of the Thai history (Prof. Sujitt Wongthes, 2005, pp. 74-77) maintained that around the 3rd Buddhist Century, Phra Sona Thera and Phra Uttara Thera sailed with the trade ship to buddhize Buddhism for the first time in the Land of Suvarnabhumi around the waterway of the Mae Glong-Tha Chin Rivers.

At present, it is U-thong district, Suphanburi province and in Ban don Tapetch, Panom Thuan district, Kanchanaburi province. The Second Group believed that Buddhism arrived [Suvarnabhumi] after the 6th Buddhist Century. (1). The Archeology written by Somdej Phra Chao Borromawongther Khrom Phraya Damrong Rajanuphab and by Prof. Luong Paripāl Paribhaṅḍ (1960 p.34) and the latter saw that the Indian cultures had played roles in Thailand and neighboring countries since ancient times. Evidences began to appear since the 6th Buddhist Century and it was witnessed that Buddhism has arrived as the first wave since Amarāvati era (the 7-9th Buddhist Centuries). This was referred to the evidences of the clay sculptures of three monks and the stucco sculpture, the stone Nāga Buddha image of the Amarā style holding an alms bowl in U-thong. (2). The Land of Siam the background of Thailand since primeval period until the Ayudhya era the Siamese Kingdom, Assoc. Prof. Boisselier (2009) postulated the Buddhist and Hindu influences would expand into Thailand and were widely popular not less than found in the 7-8th Buddhist Century. (3) Suvarnabhumi by archeological evidences. Phasuk Indrawudh, (2005 pp.105-111) contended that U-thong has contacted with the Indian merchants since the 3-5th Buddhist Centuries. Buddhism from the southern religious center in India arrived Thailand in the Dvaravati era in around the 8-9th Buddhist centuries. References were the clay sculptures of three monks holding alms bowls. (4) Muang U-thong, in fact was one of the most important archaic cities in Thailand. Prof. Jean Boisselier a French archeologist (Boisselier, 1982, p.52) maintained that Muang Suphanburi was a bisected large city overlapping with Muang Suphanburi. This was another case licensing the previous conviction that Muang U-thong was Muang Suphanburi where His Majesty Phra Rāmādhībordī I (Phra Chao U-thong) left it behind because of plague and constructed Phra Nakhon Sri Ayudhya as a capital. On the contrary, it was in fact found that Muang U-thong at U-thong district, Suphanburi province was an ancient city and one of the most important city of Thailand. As such, a French archeologist conducted an archeological survey and at that time excavated the city weighing that U-thong was the very important city of the Funan dominion aged around the



7-8th Buddhist Centuries and ever being a capital before the important city like Muang Nakhon Pathom. This French archeologist admitted that Muang Uthong was evacuated before the reign of His Majesty Phra Rāmādhībordī I (Phra Chao U-thong) for not less than 200-300 years. 5) The ethnic group settled in the central region better clarified for the Department of Fine Art (1988: (1) pp. 121-29; (2) pp. 90-250) supported by archeological evidences. Though the testimony might be too old and far back to the 8-9th Buddhist Centuries; they could trail the ethnic groups of the central region on having sufficient development and advancement enabling them to embrace Buddhism. It was also found that Buddhism much glowed in the Dvaravati era during the 11-16th Buddhist Centuries including being the center of buddhisization. From the above documentary evidences, its analyses revealed that the arrival of Buddhism from India since the reign of King Asoka the Great began in the 3rd Buddhist Century and extensively glowed until the Dvaravati era but just not having any evidence to back it up because archeology interpreted and analyzed the archeological evidences found at the arrival sites that they were not before the 8-9th Buddhist Centuries. Similarly, the foreign literatures did not provide much clarity. Though the ancient Indian, Brahman, Buddhist and Jainism literatures did not mention about any expansions of Buddhism from India to the Land of Suvarnabhumi. Though the stone inscriptions of King Asoka the Great (BE269-311) have described consigning Buddhist missionaries for buddhisization outside India but not to Suvarnabhumi. Though the Indian literature did not however detail the Buddhist arrival to Suvarnabhumi or Dvaravati, on the contrary, critical ancient Lankan literatures by Dīpavongs (Phasuk Indrawudh, 2005 pp.199-203) wrote during the 9-10th Buddhist Centuries and Mahāvongs also wrote in the 11-12th Buddhist Centuries about King Asoka the Great consigned the Buddhist missionaries from India to the Land of Suvarnabhumi without depicting any sites.

In addition, the researcher still found that the Lankan scriptures mentioned about the Land of Suvarnabhumi on travelling to seek fortune and trade, i.e. Mahājanakajātaka, Saṅkhabrāhmjātaka and Susandhīdhajātaka and so on. As of buddhisization to Suvarnabhumi, there were also the Lankan scriptures as key, in particular, the Mahānides scripture and the Samantapāsādikā scripture and so on as mentioned above. In brief, the foreign documentary evidences about the Buddhisization from India to the Land of Suvarnabhumi were mostly from [Sri] Lanka. It was possible that Thailand had intimate relationship on cultures with [Sri] Lanka since after the age of His Lord Buddha in particular, the Buddhist cultures during the aftermath age until today. The researcher believed that documentary evidences about the Land of Suvarnabhumi (U-thong) contributed interested details and led to recognition that U-thong was an archaic port glowing into the important port of the Dvaravati State and the oldest center

of Buddhism in Dvaravati State and its capital at the first age. Muang U-thong was part of the Dvaravati State given it instituted from the local people, embracing Indian cultures adapted to meet the local cultures. Its identical features were the adoption of the Buddhist Gupta and post Gupta arts and cultures hybridized with the beliefs along the central region coasts of Thailand. The center of Dvaravati State was Muang U-thong because it was located on the waterway to the sea. The Dvaravati arts and cultures were spread to various cities being the small communities along the basins of the Chao Phraya River, the northeastern region, the northern region and the southern region. The tradition of imprinting the Buddha images, the Buddha images, the construction and worshipping the Phra Paramadhātu Cetiya were all influenced in the Buddhist inheritance as evidences found in the Thai archeology beginning from the arrival of the Indian civilization to Thailand during before the Dvaravati era with its archeological evidences in the post-Dvaravati era. They depicted such traditions especially the construction of the Phra Paramadhātu Cetiya in the center of various cities which bridged to witness the traditional continuation of each era arriving Thailand until today.

Buddhisization: U-thong and Its Premises

Hierarchical order was as follows: (1) Over 4,000 years during the Neolithic Age, people dissipated among the northern part of Suphanburi province. At present, it was around Dan Chang district, Nong Rajwat District and the neighboring areas located in the provincial jurisdiction of Kanchanaburi province. (2). Around 2,500 years during Lithic Age, people from the upper areas of Suphanburi province at present have moved to the lower area around the areas of Don Cetiya, Sri Prajan: Muang Suphanburi and U-thong in the Tuan-Jarakhe Samphan basins, with the Tha Wa- Tha Jin basin or Suphanburi River basin; these communities would develop the land into the Dvaravati culture. (3). For the past 2,000 years, communities in the Tuan-Jarakhe Samphan basins, with the Tha Wa- Tha Jin basin or Suphanburi River basin having U-thong as their central city, there was intensive contact with other world regions. Many antiquities were imported from the external cultures. (4). For the past 1,500 years, U-thong embraced BuddhistBrahman cultures form India. It began with constructing worshipped images and religious sites in Buddhism and Brahman. 5) For the past 1,300 years, ditches around the U-thong city were seen at present. 6). For the past 1,000 years, Muang U-thong was faded in its importance but not abandoned on its eastern bank which was replaced by the glows of Tha Wa-Tha chin waterways and Tuan waterway. And 7) for the past 800 years, Muang Suphanburi became the important city of this cultural groups replacing Muang U-Thong. An archeological assumption believing that the U-thong as a State of the Dvaravati culture seemed to be a sea port but by revision



and by the evidences from the studies of Geology and Geological Palynology in the aftermath revealed the different direction. Though a State of the Dvaravati culture was attributed as a port but not a coastal sea-port since it was located deep into the land. A State of the Dvaravati culture bridged to the sea by rivers as in the case of Uthong was the rivers of Tha Chin and Mae Glong at the eastern side and western side respectively. Such identity was similar to the Ayudhya City in the later years which linked the sea through the Chao Phraya River. The attractive data related to the coast during the Dvaravati culture were the findings of the two ship remnants sank with their goods at that period in the archeological territory of Samut Sakhon province at Ban Khom, Khok Kham subdistrict, Muang district (Payoong Wongnoi, n.d./date unquoted) and in the Vat Visuddhivarāvās or Vat Klang Glong, Phan Taai Norrasingh subdistrict, Muang district [Samut Sakhon province]. The area of sank ships found connected with the Thai gulf was the gathering of silt flown down with continuous accumulation until becoming lands from sea mud for over 1,000 years along given winding waterways connected in a network since ancient times. Until the Ayutthaya period, there were evidences of digging up the Khok Kham canal as a shortcut route connecting the Chao Phraya River with the Tha Chin. The evidence of sank ships found at the Vat Visuddhivarāvās or Vat Klang Glong besides being the oldest finding in Thailand today, they also confirmed the uses of this waterways for over thousand years until the early Rattanakosin era (Prapas Choovichien, 2013, p.40). The reasons acquired from exploring the archeological documentary evidences came from four targets, i.e. (1) it is to recognized the present Thailand on its pre-historically consistent development at least from the Suvarnabhumi era developed through the Funan Kingdom into the Dvaravati period with its testimonial history in documentation, archeological evidences and its flourishing of Buddhism, its politics and governments which were influenced by the Indian civilization. (2) It is to recognize the birth and the arrival of Buddhism in this area through the documentary assertion and the glowing widespread of Buddhism since the time of King Asoka the Great in the 3rd Buddhist Century. There are also many waves of the Buddhist arrivals minimally found before the Davaravati era during the 9-10th Buddhist Centuries whereas the most Buddhist flourishing is during the 11-16th Buddhist Centuries in the Dvaravati (U-thong) era. (3) It is to realize Buddhism during the Davaravati era (U-thong) flourishes and is disseminated to various groups of people while best facilitating benefits and prosperity for them who have settled in Thailand. It is to lead the people to respective happiness by being deserved. It is to witness the inscriptions of the Dhamma principle in various levels in all parties. This is the confirmatory instrument people are happy and deeply understand Buddhism leading to the influences of cultures, traditions, and prosperity in various angles while being beautifully delivered them to the following Sukhothai period. (4). The recognize the trace of the

buddhist flourishing, the widespread of the Dvaravati (U-thong)-oriented Buddhist cultures and the Buddhists more deeply understand Buddhism than any eras in the Thai history. It can be witnessed with the footprints from the center of the Dvaravati cultures leaving their trails in every regions and particular the central region around the basin of the Chao Phraya River with the worship of Buddha images, the Buddha votive tablets and various inscriptions related to merit contributions, the inscriptions of the Dhamma principles and teachings in Buddhism and many remnants of the pagoda. All are the evidences well denoting the flourishing of Buddhism during the Dvaravati period so much so being the original models of arts and cultures for the Sukhothai and the later ages.

Buddhisization: Muang U-thong and Thailand

It is believed that there are 2 phases in buddhisizing in U-thong, Thailand. The first phase is when King Asoka the Great has missioned Most Venerable Phra Sona Thera, Most Venerable Phra Uttara Thera and their venerable retinue monks to buddhisize or proselytize Buddhism in the Land of Suvarnabhumi in the 3rd Buddhist Century and it has been flourished ever since (In this case, it is compared to Sri Lanka denoted that Most Venerable Phra Mahinda Thera and Most Venerable Phra Saṅghamittā Therī at the same time with missioning Most Venerable Phra Sona Thera, Most Venerable Phra Uttara Thera to Thailand before the Dvaravati period, too. The Sri Lanka has more complete religious legends than Thailand. Rationally, Sri Lanka has been once a mega-center of Buddhist studies after India). The second phase, Buddhism arrives the Land of Suvarnabhumi (U-thong) around the 8-10th Buddhist Centuries at the vicinities verified by the archeological testimonies of (1) the terracotta sculptures of the 3 apostles of His Lord Buddha carrying their alms bowls with the popular style of Amarāvādī art, (2) the two inscription posts of the incantation on Ye Dhamma found in Sraiburi aged around the 8-11th Buddhist Centuries and (3) the incantational inscriptions of Ye Dhamma in the Theravāda Buddhism on the settling of a ring found in Vietnam.

New Knowledges

It is the new knowledge of the lucidity on the arrival of Buddhism to be buddhisized in Muang (city) U-thong, its footprints and its influences facilitating the historical studies of Muang U-thong which involve Buddhism, cultures and traditions and the rest. Knowledge is acquired through archeological sites, antiques, and art objects related to buddhisization in Muang U-thong, the lined design of the terracotta sculptures of the 3 apostles of His Lord Buddha carrying their alms bowls. It was the oldest evidence witnessing there are



monks in the Land of Suvarnabhumi found at Muang U-thong, U-thong district, Suphanburi province. Another evidence is the stucco sculpture of a Nāga Buddha image loosely seated on his feet according to the style of Amarāvādī art at its ending aged around the 9-11th Buddhist Centuries found at Muang U-thong. Another evidence was inscribing the Lord Buddha's father in Pallava language at the sculptural basement nominated "Suddhodana". Still, an evidence of the "Dhammacakra and the Crouching Deer", it is said to be the representation of civilization because the Dhammacakra is the symbol of the proclamation of His Lord Buddha's Dhamma Teaching- the First Sermon aged around the 13th Buddhist Century. The Department of Fine Art has excavated and found at the Stupa No.11 in Muang U-thong, and so on. It is seen that most Thai scholars agree the capital of Dvaravati is possibly located in Muang U-thong and it is the center of Dvaravati State because at Muang U-thong silver coins inscribed "Lava Pura" have been found (Boeles, J.J., 1967). The primary data first found have been assumed that Muang U-thong is the western center and as the capital of the Dvaravati State through exploring its geographical location, archeological sites including documentary evidences such as the Chinese Archives, the inscriptions in U-thong and number of Buddhist art works. Evidences showed that Muang U-thong has traded with India since the end of Lithic Age (around the 3-5th Buddhist Centuries) (Chin Yoodee, 1966 pp.43-50). In Muang U-thong itself, the Buddhist traders from the Krishnā river basin have traded and settled themselves around the age of Indo-Roman and adopted Buddhism from the Southern Buddhist Center of India under the royal patronage of Sātavāhana Dynasty and passed on to the Iksavāku Dynasty (around the 8-10th. Buddhist Centuries). It is where the center of religious arts has been located in Muang Amarāvātī and Muang Nāgārajunkoṇaḍa to buddhisize Buddhism among the archaic communities in Muang U-thong. This is witnessed with the findings of the terracotta sculptures in line design of the 3 apostles carrying their alms bowls which is the oldest evidences proven that there were monks in the Land of Suvarnabhumi. They have been found in Muang U-thong, U-thong district, Suphanburi province. Another evidence is the Buddha image loosely seating cross-legged over the coil Nāga which is the Indian art at the end of Amarāvātī style aged around the 9-11th Buddhist century and found in Muang U-thong. Another evidence was inscribing the Lord Buddha's father in Pallava language at the sculptural basement nominated "Suddhodana" aged around the 13rd Buddhist Century where the Department of Fine Art has excavated and found at the Stupa No.11 in Muang U-thong, and so on. Turkish Journal of Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation; Muang U-thong is as such accounted for an ancient port with prosperity and becomes the oldest important port of the Kingdom and the oldest center of Buddhism in the Dvaravati State. Consequently, the loss of the history connected with the buddhisization in Muang U-thong has been analyzed and

acquired by scholars to rise a new knowledge which would be advantageous for further studies.

Conclusions

From the above investigation, it is found that the arrival of Buddhism in Thailand during the Dvaravati (U-thong) period has to be mostly the Theravāda Buddhism because of various inscriptions such as the evidences of Dhamma principles so far gather in Muang U-thong are aged around 12-13th Buddhist Centuries. The first official one is the inscriptions of the incantation of Ye Dhamma inscribed in the Pallava language and Pāli and found in many layers. For examples, there are inscriptions on the Buddha votive tablets where their fronts would have been the miracles in Muang Sāvattī whereas the back side is inscribed the incantations of Ye Dhamma which some are secure in the U-thong Museum. The full incantations are *ye dhamma hetuppabhavā yesaṅ hataṅ tathāgato āha tesaṅca yo nirodho ca evaṅ vādī mahāsamaṇo* found in the brick at Phra Pathom Cetiya. Its translation is “it is a brief of Phra Paṭiccasamupapāda, it is a brief of Phra Ariyasacca - 4 which all should learn, remember and could pray where there would be virtuously fruitful at present and in future. The second official one inscribes “*Khemākhemasaraṇadīpikagatā* and from Phra Suttantaspiṭaka Khuddkanikāya on the story of Purohitaaggidat” In summary, it is the Phra Buddha, Phra Dhamma and Phra Saṅgh, upon meeting the Saraṇa Phra Rattanatriya will meet Ariyasacca which is the real abode and can salvage from miseries. As of mountains, forests, big trees, holy monasteries, all are not real resorts. In addition, the heart of the main Buddhist doctrines including the incantations of Ye Dhamma, Ariyasacca - 4, Paṭiccasamupapāda, the belief of Phra Asīti Mahāsāvaka, the belief of the Phra Sī Ārayametriya all are doctrines and key principle of beliefs in the Theravāda Buddhism.



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