

Editor's Note

Sri Lanka International Buddhist Academy (SIBA) is honored and proud to have been able to publish Volume VIII of its annual peer reviewed academic journal, *The Sri Lanka International Journal of Buddhist Studies (SIJBS)* in December 2022. It consists of a variety of timely academic articles from both well-known and budding scholars in the fields of Buddhist Studies.

Since the SIJBS has attracted the attention of distinguished academics due to the high quality of its publications of the past several years, many authors have increasingly shown interest and enthusiasm in contributing to it with their highly informative pieces of academic writing.

Among the distinguished scholars who have contributed to the current issue of SIJBS, we are fortunate to have an article by **Omälpe Somananda** regarding the promising field of Buddhist Social work. With his extensive experience in the field of social work and deep understanding of Buddhism he points out the difficulties faced by a purely western approach to social work in Sri Lanka. He advocates for a social work approach based on Buddhist values that will make for a much better fit in Sri Lankan society. His article may be of interest to social workers not only in Sri Lanka, but also in other countries with large or majority Buddhist populations.

Buddisha Jayashan Weerasooriya has contributed an intriguing article on temple architecture of the ancient Anuradhapura Period. Through a detailed study of certain architectural features, he reveals how the features of the meditation monastery tradition were applied to the needs of the monks who lived in those monasteries and conversely, how the particular necessities of the religious life determined architectural forms.

Bhikkhu Dhammarama brings his knowledge of the teachings of the Buddha to bear to shine a light on the age-old question of how human conduct can be evaluated according to ethical standards. He demonstrates the way in which the Buddha and his disciples clearly outlined criteria for action that can be universally applied to human conduct.

Students of Sri Lankan Buddhist history will find the article by **Derangala Kusalagnana** to be quite interesting and valuable. He tells us of a time when the higher ordination was being denied to novices who were not members of the higher caste. To remedy this situation, Venerable Ambagahapitiye Nāṇawimala Sāmaṇera and the other novices undertook a dangerous journey by sea to Myanmar where they were able to obtain the full ordination, bring it back to Sri Lanka, and establish it for the benefit of novices of all castes. It is an amazing and colorful story of courage and determination.

Two distinguished scholars, **Kadihingala Hemasiri** and **Sangjingyu** have collaborated on a pair of articles regarding different aspects of the little-known Mahāyāna influence on Sri Lankan Buddhism. Although Sri Lanka is known as a Theravādin country, the authors point out that a full understanding of contemporary Buddhism in Sri Lanka must take into account the historical impact of the Mahāyāna. The introduction of Mahāyāna ideas into Sri Lanka began with the flourishing of Mahāyāna practices in the early centuries CE and although it eventually disappeared as a distinct school, the

authors show how aspects of the Mahāyāna have continuing influence even in contemporary Sri Lankan Buddhism.

Apart from the article contributors, many people have contributed to this journal and without their combined efforts, it would not have been possible for me to release this journal as planned. First, my sincere gratitude should be paid to the advisory board of the SIJBS, namely Dr. Pradeep Nilanga Dela, Chairman, SIBA, Dr. Upali M. Sedere, and Professor P.D. Premasiri.

The Rector/ CEO of Sri Lanka International Buddhist Academy, SIBA Campus, Dr. Upali M. Sedere has been extending his continuous support and wise counsel in innumerable ways to this exercise, and without his kind advice and assistance, the SIJBS and indeed the academic contribution to the field of Buddhist Studies which SIBA has been making, would not be possible.

And again, my sincere thanks should be extended to all reviewers of SIJBS for their commendable service rendered to make this current volume a success. Further, I extend my sincere gratitude to all the above-mentioned contributors who contributed to the SIJBS enabling us to publish their valuable academic writings.

SIBA's IT team contributed their indispensable technical assistance. I am grateful for their contributions in maintaining the e-journal site. Therefore, my thanks go to Mr. Dhanushka Rathnayake (Head/ Department of IT, SIBA) and Mr. Anupama Dilshan for their generous support.

The SIJBS comes to you due to the work of the dedicated administration and staff at SIBA. Specially, I am grateful for the supportive hands of Ms. Mirani Werellagama, Head/ Finance and Accounts, SIBA as well as, the staff members of the finance department.

Further, I offer my heartfelt gratitude to the editorial board of Volume VIII, namely, Dr. Mark Johnson, Ven. Viharagala Pagnnaloka, Ven. Beralapanathara Dhammarama and Ms. Kaushalya Karunasagara who were always ready to extend their supportive hands to me in this editorial work.

On a final note, I am pleased that despite the challenges of covid and related difficulties faced by the country of Sri Lanka over the past two years, we have been able to continue our contribution to the field of Buddhist Studies through publishing the SIJBS once or twice a year. Our hope is to sustain a rate of publication of twice a year in the future. We intend to continue publishing SIJBS in order to make a contribution to bringing the essence of Buddhism into the world of the 21st century.

Iromi Ariyaratne (PhD)

Editor-in-Chief, SIJBS

E-mail: sijbs.siba@gmail.com