

EDITOR'S NOTE

Sri Lanka International Buddhist Academy (SIBA) is honored and proud to have been able to publish Volume VII - Issue I of its annual peer reviewed academic journal, *The Sri Lanka International Journal of Buddhist Studies (SIJBS)* in June 2021. It consists of a variety of timely academic articles from national and international veteran and budding scholars in the fields of Buddhist and Religious Studies.

Since the SIJBS has attracted the attention of distinguished academics due to the high quality of many of its publications of the past several years, many authors have increasingly shown interest and enthusiasm to contribute to it with their precious pieces of academic writing that are, indeed worth reading. Hence, an important decision was made to publish two issues of SIJBS per year by the editorial board to facilitate more scholars to present their academic writings in our peer reviewed journal.

It is honored to have the involvement of Ven. Prof. Bhikkhu Anālayo who has contributed to the SIJBS with a precious article entitled '**An Inspired Utterance on Annihilation**' based on a translation of the Chinese *Āgama* parallel to the *Udānasutta* of the *Samyuttanikāya*. This thought-provoking article evaluates the significance of the early Buddhist adoption of a maxim ostensibly employed by ancient Indian practitioners aiming at annihilation.

Dr. Iromi Ariyaratne, the editor in Chief of the SIJBS has contributed to this issue with an article entitled, '**Buddhist Attitude towards Plant Life with Special Reference to Bhūtagāma Sikkhāpada of the Pācittiya-pali**' where she discusses the Buddhist attitude towards plant life by analyzing the early Buddhist classification of the different types of plants, and the significance of the *bhūtagāma* disciplinary rule for the preservation of vegetation to substantiate the view that Buddhism promotes an ethical perspective on plant life, and the Buddha has emphasized the significance of the preservation of plant life.

Mr. Vishanka Gunawardana in his contribution to the SIJBS '**A Psychological Study on Bodhipūjā Ritual in the Sri Lankan Buddhist Tradition**' illustrates his argument on *Bodhipūjā* Ritual in the Sri Lankan Buddhist Tradition as a Psychological Study. Further, in this study he aims to engage in a psychological analysis of *Bodhipūjā* ritual to find its contribution to the mental well-being of humans who perform it, and in this connection, he presents the view that the *Bodhipūjā* ritual may be said to have a strong psychological background prompting people to use them unintentionally for protection of their life from threats that may come from various sources.

Assistant Professor Dr. Vinay Kumar has pointed out in his contribution '**Greco-Roman Elements in the Narratives of Buddhist Art of Gandhāra**' to the SIJBS that it is only in a handful of reliefs the distribution of space clearly recalls Classical Greek and Hellenistic compositions and in those which can be allied to Roman examples, the schematized treatment in Gandhāra diffuses the charged movement of the compositions. He argues that the stylistic correspondence in Greco-Roman art and Gandhāra art may not have been caused by external

similarities, but such a relationship must have been brought about by a deeper involvement of one cultural sphere with the other.

Ven. Derangala Kusalagnaṇa has provided a critical article on '**An Introduction to the Abhinavasāsanavaṃsa**' one of the latest and most recent Pali chronicles written in Sri Lanka discussing the contribution of the text to the existing knowledge of Pali literature by examining an early 20th century Pali poem. He further says that Venerable Vidurupola Piyatissa discovered his passion for writing in three languages: Pali, Sanskrit, and Sinhala and he not only set an example for Pali enthusiasts both young and old, but also overcame the challenges of writing poems in a language that many regarded as dead.

Ms. Pratishtha Mukherjee in her article entitled '**Portrayal of Yakkha in Jātaka**' pays her careful and critical attention in the analysis of the concept *Yakkha* in the *Jātaka* tales. She finds a close connection between signs, symbols, and mythological creatures in Buddhist art and events in the life of the Buddha. Further she illustrates that *Yakkhas* also were worshipped by the aboriginals as a part of their belief system where their presence as primordial deities are depicted on the *stūpa* railings. The author illustrates that the *Jātaka* tales made an attempt to show that *Yakkhas* become followers of moral teachings through the transformation of their original *Yakkha* character after listening to the teachings based on Buddhist ethical values.

Ven. Saliya Ashokapura Nanda in his article '**An Analysis of views ascribed to the masters titled 'Keci' appearing in the Commentary to the Dīghanikāya**' discusses the '*keci*'-views included in the *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*, the commentary to the *Dīghanikāya*. Further, he highlights that '*Keci*' or '*keci-vāda*' means the viewpoints that were attributed not only to the Abhayagiri School but also to the Mahāvihāra and some other individuals and therefore cannot be ascribed merely to one or two groups. Moreover, he finds that three kinds of formulas or modes of interpretation were employed in the *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī* when referring to '*keci*' and assumes that all the *Kecivāda* could be standardized on the basis of these formulas.

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 also my special gratitude is paid to Professor P.D. Premasiri whose exceptional and dynamic contribution has been extended to review articles as well as in language editing.

And again, my sincere thanks should be extended to all reviewers of SIJBS for their commendable service rendered to make this 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), Mr. Mahesh Nawarathna (Coordinator/ Department of IT, SIBA), Mr. Gayan Herath, Mr. Anupama Dilshan and Mr. Rasindu Perera 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 VII – Issue I, namely, 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 to mention that in my capacity as Editor-in-Chief, together with the editorial board, I have been successfully able to publish the SIJBS as two issues per volume from the year 2021 onwards to offer more opportunities for the writers of the academic field of Buddhist Studies to publish their academic work. We hope to continue publishing SIJBS to the best of our capacity to bring forward the essence of Buddhism for the future.

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