



INDIA'S CULTURAL RELATIONSHIP WITH ASIAN NATIONS

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ABSTRACT

The social customs and technological advancements that have their roots in or are connected to the ethno linguistically heterogeneous country of India are known as Indian culture. The phrase also refers to nations and cultures outside of India whose histories have ties to India via immigration, colonialism, or other forms of influence, notably in South Asia and South-East Asia. An important chapter in the history of India is the spread of Indian culture and civilization to other regions of Asia. Indian trade relations with other nations date back many centuries. The spread of Indian languages, religions, arts, and architectural styles, as well as Indian philosophy, beliefs, and practices, was an inevitable outcome of this. In certain regions of Southeast Asia, Hindu kingdoms were even founded mainly through Indian political intrigue. The Indus Valley Civilization and other early cultural regions were influential in shaping Indian culture, which is sometimes described as a synthesis of various civilizations.

Keywords: *Culture, China, Myanmar Sumatra and Champa*

1. INTRODUCTION

The number of people who travel often has increased significantly recently. They travel by land, air, sea, train, and every other means possible. But did you know that people traveled large distances in India even when there were no railroads or planes? Commercial exchanges between India and the outside world began about the middle of the third millennium B.C. Despite having the sea on three sides and the Himalayas to the north, Indians continued to engage with the outside world. They indeed traveled far and wide, leaving their cultural traces wherever they went. In exchange, they also brought back from these far-off places ideas, perceptions, customs, and traditions. The expansion of Indian culture and civilisation across the globe, particularly in Central Asia, South-East Asia, Cambodia, Champa, etc., has been the most amazing result of this interaction. The most amazing thing about its proliferation is that it happened via voluntary adoption of Indian cultural and spiritual ideals rather than through conquest or danger to an individual's or society's existence. This paper will shed light on how Indian culture spread to other nations and what effect it had on them. It will also highlight the lovely notion that fostering goodwill and friendship with people from various countries, communities, faiths, and cultures enriches and deepens our own lives

Cultural exchange between India and Sri Lanka

Over its history, Sri Lanka has seen a handful of different cultural transformations.

The oldest indications of a sophisticated civilization date back more than 30,000 years, to the time of the Balangoda man (*Homo sapiens balangodensis*). Periodic cultural exchange programs between the two nations are based on the Cultural Cooperation Agreement that the governments of India and Sri Lanka signed in New Delhi on November 29, 1977. even if they have diverse political affiliations. India has a significant cultural impact on Sri Lanka. Buddhist missionaries have disseminated both cultural customs and religious beliefs. In the third century B.C., Buddhism was brought to Sri Lanka from India, where Siddhartha Gautama had founded it three centuries earlier. The new comprehensive religio-philosophical system was fostered in the third century B.C. by the strong Indian king Asoka. At that time, Buddhism was transformed from a tiny sect to an official religion, enjoying all the benefits of royal sponsorship. Asoka's conversion to Buddhism is one of the pivotal moments in religious history. Asoka's kingdom, which included much of India, sponsored one of the most intense missionary endeavors in history. Buddha Ghosha traveled to Sri Lanka in the fifth century and helped establish Hanayana Buddhism there. Through collaborative efforts, India and Sri Lanka marked the 2600th anniversary of Lord Buddha's (*Sambuddhatva Jayanthi*) achieving enlightenment. These events featured the August–September 2012 exhibition of sacred Kapilavastu relics in Sri Lanka. Almost three million Sri Lankans (roughly 15% of the country's total population) paid respect to the Sacred Relics during the exhibition. The Indian Gallery of the International Buddhist Museum, Sri Dalada Maligawa, was opened in December 2013. The gallery emphasizes the common history and strong ties to Buddhism between Sri Lanka and India. In 2014, the 150th anniversary of Anagarika Dharmapala was commemorated jointly by the two governments.

Classes in Indian music, dance, Hindi, and yoga are just some of the subjects that are taught at the Indian Cultural Center in Colombo, which is working hard to raise awareness of Indian culture. On June 21, 2015, the First International Day of Yoga was held at the renowned Galle Face Green. Almost two thousand people who are interested in yoga attended the event. In order to commemorate the International Day of Yoga in 2016, a gathering quite similar to the one described above was held in Mahavihara Devi Park. Celebrations for the third and fourth International Days of Yoga were held at Colombo's historic Independence Square. Attendees included Sri Lanka's President, His Excellency Maithripala Sirisena, as well as thousands of other yoga practitioners

In honor of the Vesak exhibition that was held in Sri Lanka from April 29th to May 2nd, 2018, holy relics were delivered all the way from Sarnath. The 2nd of October marked the beginning of celebrations commemorating Mahatma Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary in Sri Lanka. The President of Sri Lanka was in charge of the unveiling of a unique video project called "Vaishnav Jana To," which included prominent Sri Lankan musicians such as Bathia, Santhush, and Umaria singing bhajans. In honor of Gandhiji, the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka has made a set of special postage stamps. The well-researched book about Mahatma Gandhi, authored by experienced journalist Sampath Bandara, was presented to the public for the first time by the Speaker of the Sri Lankan Parliament, Karu Jayasuriya. A unique performance of "Symphony One" by the National Leipaja Latvian Philharmonic Orchestra and violin maestro Dr. L. Subramaniam In order to highlight portraits of Gandhi, the iconic Colombo Municipal Town Hall was illuminated with specialized LED lighting. In celebration of the 550th anniversary of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's birth, there was a discussion, a showing of a documentary, and a Kirtan and Ardas performance that was quite heartfelt. The India-Sri Lanka Foundation was established in December 1998 as an intergovernmental initiative. Its goals include the enhancement of scientific, technical, educational, and cultural cooperation through exchanges between civil society organizations and the promotion of increased contact between the younger generations of both countries.

Buddhists have a tradition of writing down historical events, which has helped a lot in proving that historical figures are real. One of these people, King Devanampiya Tissa, is considered to be one of the most significant (250-c. 207 B.C.). Mahinda, Asoka's son and ambassador to Sri Lanka, is said to have been the one who first taught the king about Buddhism, according to the Mahavamsa. Devanampiya Tissa became well-known as a Buddhist benefactor, and he was the one who started Mahavihara, the monastery that would later become the spiritual center of Theravada Buddhism in Sri Lanka.

India Cambodia Cultural Relations

Relations between India and Cambodia date back to the first century AD, when Hindu and Buddhist religious and cultural influences spread from India to different countries in South-East Asia. From the Hindu-style temples of Angkor Wat to written Khmer, which is a descendant of the Pallava alphabet from present-day southern India, The temples of Sambor Prei Kuk erected by Ishanvarmana I and other rulers of the Chenla Empire during the 6th and 7th centuries AD at Ishanapura, the Kingdom's then capital, are the earliest known evidence of Indian culture and religion in Cambodia. To deepen our long-standing cultural ties, India and the Kingdom of Cambodia signed the Cultural Exchange Program (CEP) in 2000, which has been periodically renewed. During Prime Minister Hun Sen's state visit to India in January 2018, the CEP was extended for another four years, until 2022.

As part of the Mekong Ganga Cooperation program, India declared and set up the MGC Asian Traditional Textiles Museum in Siem Reap. This museum is a rare collection of traditional textiles from India and Southeast Asian countries like Cambodia. It also offers a textile training center and workshop, a fashion design and development center that uses traditional ethnic patterns, and a variety of children's activities. It also contributes to the preservation of the region's long-standing textile culture. The museum is another draw for visitors visiting Siem Reap. In order to promote one of the Indian traditional dance forms, the government of India has sent a full-time Bharatnatyam instructor to the Embassy who has been teaching dance lessons at the Royal University of Fine Arts. Yoga, Sanskrit, and Veda are being promoted in Cambodia via the formation of regular 8-credit courses in universities, the staging of seminars, demonstrations, etc. in different institutions and organizations, and the deployment of a full-time teacher of Indian culture by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), Government of India. In three cities in Cambodia in June 2017, the third World Yoga Day was observed. There were around 2700 attendees. The Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports of Cambodia provided assistance to the Embassy in organizing the event. In January-February 2017, the Embassy, with assistance from the Ministry of Culture, held the Festival of India in Cambodia. The festival included performances of Kathak dance, folk dances from Manganiar and Kalbelia, the Ramayana, a Buddhist festival, and a food festival. At the Angkor Archeological Park, Ramayana stories were shown for the first time in front of the revered Bayon Temple.

For most of Cambodia's long history, religion has been a major source of cultural ideas. Cambodia has created a unique culture and religion by mixing animist ideas from its own people with Buddhism and Hinduism from India. According to Cambodian mythology, the foundation myth of the Khmer people revolves around an Indian ruler named Kaundinya, known as Preah Thaong. The Hindu and Buddhist rituals, worship, and mythology of India have had a significant impact on Cambodian society, which is now mostly Buddhist. This is seen in the various ceremonies that are reminiscent of Indian culture and customs. The Khmer language, which includes more than 3000 terms derived from the ancient Sanskrit language of India, is another living representation of Indian culture. Theravada Buddhism, which is followed by over 95% of the population and is infused with Indian culture, is the nation's official religion and India's major geopolitical foe.

India China Cultural Contact

China and India have had a long history of trade and cultural exchange. The Silk Road is credited with promoting the spread of Buddhism from India to East Asia in addition to acting as a significant economic route between China and India. The East India Company, which traded opium cultivated in India and China, engaged in a burgeoning opium trade throughout the 19th century. Deep cultural values that were shared by India and China, particularly via Buddhism, helped to define both nations. Rabindranath Tagore, a well-known Nobel laureate from India, played a key role in the contemporary cultural interchange between China and India. A quote by the Chinese scholar Hu Shih, which represents the long history of cultural relations between the two civilizations, claims that India controlled China for 20 centuries in terms of culture without ever sending a military over the border.

Mr. A. K. Chanda, who was at the time the deputy minister of external affairs, led the first Indian cultural mission to China. Structured cultural exchange programs have been bringing the people of the two nations together since 1988. The general framework for cultural cooperation between India and China is laid out in the Agreement on Cultural Cooperation, which was signed in May 1988 and calls for the implementation of an executive Cultural Exchange Plan (CEP). . As a reminder of the long history between India and China, India built a Buddhist temple in the White Horse Temple complex in Luoyang, Henan Province. People think that this temple was built to honor the Indian monks Kashyapa Matanga and Dharmaratna. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, Indian Bollywood films were well-liked in China, and this popularity has recently returned. In China, the popularity of yoga is rising. The UN resolution declaring June 21 as the International Day of Yoga has China as one of its co-sponsors. Premier Li Keqiang and Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended a Yoga-Taichi performance at the Temple of Heaven, a world heritage site, during the Prime Minister's visit to China in May 2015. On May 15–26, 2017, Beijing and Nanjing hosted the Colors of India Festival, which included a distinctive fusion of Indian performing arts, Bollywood films, and Indian photography.

India Tibet Cultural Relations

It is believed that Tibetans and Indians first became acquainted with one another around the seventh and eighth centuries AD, when Buddhism traveled from India to Tibet. With the defeat of the Tibetan rebellion in 1959, the Dalai Lama made his way to India to seek refuge. Gampo, a well-known Buddhist ruler, is credited for founding the city of Lasa and introducing Buddhism to the region. The Tibetan alphabet was developed with the assistance of intellectuals from India. Lamaism had its start in Tibet thanks in large part to the contributions of Indian academics

Cultural Ties between India and Myanmar

India and Myanmar have close ties because they have a lot in common in terms of their history, ethnicity, culture, and religion. Even before Ashoka's reign, cultural exchanges were taking place between India and Burma. Who dispatched Buddhist missionaries to propagate the message? Before the thirteenth century, Pali and Sanskrit were the official languages of Burma. The people of Myanmar often go to India to worship at the sacred sites associated with the Buddha. The bonds between India and Myanmar have persisted over the years. There have been frequent performances by Indian cultural troupes in Myanmar since 1997. There have been many excursions and performances between both nations' cultural troupes. A delegation of 13 students from Myanmar traveled to India for the SAARC Cultural Festival in November 2009. The famous Burmese band Emperor traveled to India in December 2009 to perform at the "South Asian Bands Festival," hosted by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR). Moreover, they performed a show in Shillong, Meghalaya. The Embassy of India hosted its annual "Indian

Film Festival" in January 2010 in Yangon. The Yangon community now looks forward to this event every year. A well-known landscape painter from Myanmar visited Pondicherry, India, in March 2010 for the "South Asian Artists Camp," hosted by the Inter-Cultural Center for Religious and Ethnic Harmony and Relief (SEHER). The paintings produced at the camp were shown at the Embassy Auditorium in November of 2010 and were met with a resounding amount of enthusiasm from the neighborhood. In March 2010, the ICCR and NSD brought together theater troupes from all around South Asia for the "South Asian Theatre Festival" in India. In the final week of May 2010, the band "Abiogenesis" played shows in Yangon and Mandalay. In January 2011, the Qawalli band Sabi Brothers played in Yangon and other places in Myanmar. In honor of Rabindranath Tagore's 150th birthday, several events were held all year. They included a dance play, seminar, artists' camp, film festival, and more. The people of Myanmar and the media gave the events enthusiastic responses. Since December 2010, with funding from the ICCR, the Embassy has hosted yoga and Bharatnatyam classes.

India Thailand Cultural Relations

Bangkok opened an Indian Cultural Center in September 2009. It is now called the Swami Vivekananda Culture Center. During the Thai Prime Minister's trip to India in June 2016, the Cultural Exchange Program for 2016–19 was officially approved. Among prominent Thai universities, there are a number of India Studies Institutes in existence. Together with Indian cinema, cuisine, and other events, regular visits by Indian cultural troupes are planned. To commemorate the beginning of India-Thailand diplomatic ties seventy years ago, the Embassy staged the Festival of India in Thailand in March 2014, the second edition in February-May 2015, and from July 2017 to March 2018 in partnership with the Ministry of Culture and numerous local partners. This festival included lectures, literary events, cuisine festivals, art and painting displays, and traditional Indian dances. The fifth International Day of Yoga (IDY) was held on June 16, 2019, at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok. At least 6,000 people showed up for the event. Moreover, other IDY events were planned for Chiang Mai, Hat Yai, Rayong, and Khon Kaen. During the 150th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi's birth, a number of different activities, including seminars, lectures, cycling competitions, and art competitions, were organized. Due to the COVID-19 scenario in 2020 and 2021, the IDY was observed in a hybrid manner on the grounds of the Embassy. Thailand commemorated Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's 550th birthday. On July 20, 2019, all of the major Sikh organizations came together under the sponsorship of the Embassy to celebrate the 550th anniversary of Shri Guru Nanak Devji's birth by participating in a tree-planting ceremony in the Klang Dong forest, 200 kilometers east of Bangkok. 550 saplings were planted. Other activities, including tree planting, blood donation drives, talks, sangats, and kirtan, were also planned. On November 10, the Thai Sikh community, in collaboration with the Embassy, organized a big Nagar Kirtan, a procession of Sri Guru Granth Sahib through the streets of Bangkok, as part of the closing celebration. Over 3,000 people attended the Nagar Kirtan. The Thai mythology of Ramakien, which served as the inspiration for the traditional dances of Khon and Lakhon, was strongly impacted by the Hindu epic Ramayana. The Hindu holidays of Holi and Diwali inspire the Thai celebrations of Songkran and Loy Krathong.

India Java Cultural Relations

Through the Malay Archipelago, there was a very important link between India and the Far East. In the seventh century, it was a significant commercial and cultural hub. Saailender commissioned the largest piece of Indo-Java art, known as Borobudur. Between the two nations, there is a vibrant interchange of cultures. During the visit of the

Indonesian President to India in January 2011, the Cultural Exchange Plan (CEP) for the years 2011–2014 was formally adopted. In order to establish a rotating chair in Indian studies, the ICCR and University Gadjah Mada signed a memorandum of understanding in February 2012. Mahendradatta University in Bali has also created a chair for Indian studies. Through an active cultural interaction between the two nations, facilitated by the focal points at the Indian Cultural Centers in Jakarta and Bali, people-to-people ties were further developed. In order to increase India's profile in these areas and facilitate commercial relationships, a number of events have been organized in the Indonesian provinces. Indonesian universities have hosted Slice of India events to highlight Indian culture. In October and November 2012, a number of activities were held in Yogyakarta, Manado, and Bali as a part of the India-ASEAN Commemoration Festival. In October and November 2012, renowned Kathak performer Ms. Malti Shyam gave performances in a number of places, including Jakarta, Bali, and Manado. On November 26, 2012, a Manipuri dance group performed during the vehicle rally's flag-off ceremonies in Solo and Yogyakarta. On November 26, 2012, Rabindranath Tagore's bust was placed within the Borobudur temple in Yogyakarta.

Conclusion

It is not accurate to suggest that the Indians were the only people who contributed to the culture of their neighbors, since cultural exchange occurred in both directions. For instance, the Indians picked up the skill of cultivating silk from the Chinese, gained the ability to make gold coins from the Greeks and Romans, and picked up the skill of cultivating betel leaves from the Indonesians. In a similar manner, cultivation methods for cotton expanded from India to China and other parts of central Asia. Yet, Indians made a more significant contribution in the fields of art, religion, script, and language.

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