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Quest for the Dharma: The Childhood, Education, and Indian Pilgrimage of Yijing (635–713 CE)

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Abstract: This research paper explores the life, rigorous education, and monumental transcontinental pilgrimage of Yijing (635–713 CE), one of the three great Chinese pilgrim-scholars of antiquity alongside Faxian and Xuanzang. Driven by a deep desire to obtain authentic Vinaya canons, correct widespread misinterpretations of monastic discipline in China, and honor the dying wishes of his preceptor Hui-hsi, Yijing undertook an arduous fifteen-to-sixteen-month journey from Guangzhou to eastern India between 671 and 673 CE. After passing through maritime Southeast Asia—including extended stays in Srivijaya (Bhoja/Palembang) and Kedah—he crossed the Bay of Bengal, navigated the Nicobar Islands, and arrived at the port of Tamralipti before settling in for a decade-long residency (675–685 CE) at Nalanda University. Unlike Xuanzang, who emphasized extensive regional sightseeing, Yijing focused intensely on linguistic mastery, scriptural acquisition, and textual study, amassing roughly 400 distinct Buddhist works. Following his return via Srivijaya, Yijing established a prolific state translation bureau in China under the imperial patronage of Empress Wu Zetian and Emperor Zhongzong. Over his lifetime, he translated over fifty Buddhist texts, authored key historical treatises such as the Nan-hai-chi-gui-nei-fa-zhuan and Da Tang Xiyu Qiufa Gaoseng Zhuan, and permanently bridged the cultural and religious exchange between South and East Asia.

Key Points: Yijing, Childhood, life, Travel, Indian Pilgrimage

Introduction

The historical tapestry of Sino-Cultural exchanges is illuminated by the extraordinary journeys of Chinese pilgrim-scholars who braved immense geographical and physical perils in pursuit of sacred knowledge. Alongside Faxian and Xuanzang, Yijing (635–713 CE)—born Zhang Wenming during the golden age of the Tang dynasty—stands as a monumental figure in this tradition. From an early spiritual awakening in Shandong and rigorous monastic discipline under esteemed preceptors like Shan-yü and Hui-hsi, Yijing's life was defined by an unwavering dedication to rectifying the corrupted interpretations of Buddhist teachings. Inspired by the legacy of his predecessors and fortified by profound mentorship, he embarked in 671 CE on an arduous transcontinental and maritime pilgrimage toward the heartland of Buddhism in India. His travels—spanning perilous sea voyages across the Southern Seas, extended study in Srivijaya (Bhoja), and a decade-long residency at Nalanda University—not only enriched Chinese Buddhism with hundreds of Sanskrit manuscripts and over fifty translated texts, but also left behind invaluable historical chronicles that continue to bridge ancient India and China.

The Life, Childhood, Education, and Departure of Yijing to China

Yijing (義淨, 三藏法師義淨, 635–713 CE)—alternatively spelled Yiqing, I-Tsing, or Yi-Ching—occupies a monumental place in the history of Sino-Indian cultural exchanges as one of the three great Chinese pilgrim-scholars of antiquity, alongside Faxian and Xuanzang. Born into a distinguished lineage bearing the family name Zhang, his secular birth name before entering the monastic order was Zhang Wenming[1]. His birth in 635 CE coincided with a period of remarkable political consolidation and cultural renaissance under the Tang dynasty, specifically during the golden reign of Emperor Tai-zong[2] (T'ai-zong, r. 626–649). Geographically, he hailed from

Fan-yang[3] (situated in modern-day Li-cheng County, Shandong province, near contemporary Beijing)—a region historically recognized as Jinan, the capital of modern Shandong province, lying south of the national capital.[4]

Demonstrating an exceptional spiritual inclination from an early age, Yijing made the momentous decision at the tender age of seven (in 641 CE) to leave behind the comforts of his family home to reside within the sacred precincts of a Buddhist monastery. Driven by an earnest thirst for knowledge, he placed himself under the tutelage of two esteemed monk-teachers, Shan-yü and Hui-hsi, who practiced and resided within a mountain temple on Mount T'ai in Shan-tung. Under their guidance, Yijing received a rigorous foundational grounding in traditional Chinese literature and classical texts. This early literary training was not merely secular; rather, it was strategically designed to equip him with the linguistic tools, moral discipline, and intellectual maturity necessary to navigate the complex world of Buddhist monasticism.[5]

This structured existence faced a profound turning point when Yijing was only twelve years old (646 CE). His primary preceptor (upadhyaya), Shan-yü, passed away, plunging the young novice into a deep emotional crisis. In his travel memoirs, Yijing reflects on this loss as a period of profound desolation, leaving him feeling utterly orphaned and stripped of his spiritual anchor. However, rather than stalling his development, this tragic event catalyzed a radical shift in his life's trajectory. The transience of life impressed upon him so deeply that he made a resolute vow to abandon the pursuit of secular literature entirely, redirecting his entire intellectual capacity toward the uncompromised mastery of the sacred Buddhist canon.

At the age of fourteen (648 CE), he formally received the Pravrajya (admission into the monastic order as a novice). Yijing records in his memoirs that as early as his eighteenth year (652 CE), the seed of a grand pilgrimage to Bodh Gaya and the sacred heartland of Buddhism was already planted in his mind. Although political and logistical constraints prevented him from realizing this ambition immediately, this lifelong aspiration sustained him through decades of preparation until it finally materialized in his thirty-seventh year (671 CE).[6] The depth of his spiritual commitment intensified during his late adolescence; at nineteen, rather than yielding to the worldly temptations typical of youth, he channelled all his vital energies into intensive scriptural study.[7]

At twenty years of age (654 CE), Yijing attained his full ordination (Upasampada), though historian Tansen Sen notes that some historical accounts place the completion of this milestone in his twenty-first year.[8] Following this transition, his Karmacarya (master of ceremonies), Hui-hsi, stepped forward to assume the vacant mantle left by the late Shan-yü, officially becoming Yijing's new preceptor.

On the very day of his full ordination, Upadhyaya Hui-hsi delivered a solemn charge that would imprint itself indelibly upon Yijing's psyche and dictate the course of his life's work. Warning him of the spiritual decay of the age, Hui-hsi declared:

‘It has been a long time since the Buddha entered Mahaparinirvana, and His teachings are now frequently misinterpreted. While many people are willing to bow before the precepts, very few actually observe them. You must remain steadfast and avoid the transgression of the first group (referring to Parajika offenses). If you commit any other grave offenses, I will suffer in hell because of you.’[9]

This grave admonition acted as a profound moral compass. Struck by his preceptor's words, Yijing perceived widespread corruption and misapplication within contemporary monastic guidelines and vowed to dedicate his life to rectifying these fundamental errors. Every scholarly endeavor, administrative reform, and translation project that Yijing undertook in later decades can be traced directly back to this foundational moment of mentorship, cementing Hui-hsi's words as the enduring architecture of his academic and spiritual legacy.[10]

Monastic Studies and Scholarly Pursuit

Profoundly influenced by his preceptor's solemn charge, Yijing devoted the next five years (654–658 CE) of his monastic life to residing within a forest monastery (Vana-vihara). During this intensive formative period, he

dedicated himself exclusively to the rigorous study of the Vinaya (monastic discipline) and its complex legal codes. Specifically, he immersed himself in the seminal commentaries and treatises authored by two of the most prominent and influential doctrinal masters of early Tang China: Fa-li[11] (d. 635 CE) and Dao-xuan (667 CE). He sought not merely to memorize these texts, but to internalize and meticulously integrate their administrative and ethical rules into his daily monastic conduct.[12] Recognizing Yijing's remarkable academic aptitude, profound grasp of monastic discipline, and exemplary character, preceptor Hui-hsi officially authorized him to lecture on Vinaya subjects to fellow monastics.[13]

Following his comprehensive mastery of the Vinaya, Yijing expanded his intellectual horizons into the study of the major Mahayana Sutras. During his residence in a serene mountain monastery, he also undertook the demanding practice of select Dhutangas (ascetic austerities) to purify his mind and strengthen his spiritual resolve.[14] Driven further by the intellectual curiosity inspired by his preceptor, he journeyed to Eastern Wei to study two foundational treatises composed by the master Asanga, which focused on the complex philosophy of the Abhidharma-pitaka. Building upon this foundation, he subsequently traveled to the western capital of Chang'an[15]. There, in the bustling epicentre of Buddhist learning, he pursued advanced studies in Vasubandhu's monumental Abhidharmakośa-śāstra and the Vijñāptimātratāsiddhi (Vidyamatrasiddhi), deeply grounding himself in Yogacara thought.[16]

During his extended stay in the imperial capital in 664 CE, Yijing likely witnessed the grand and solemn state funeral procession of the legendary pilgrim-scholar Xuanzang, an event commissioned directly by the imperial court. The passing of Xuanzang—a towering figure who had braved incredible perils to retrieve sacred texts from India—left an indelible imprint on the young monk's imagination. Deeply inspired by Xuanzang's heroic legacy, moral integrity, and intellectual stature, Yijing became consumed by the ambition to emulate his predecessors and undertake his own arduous pilgrimage to India, the undisputed spiritual homeland of Buddhism. As Yijing's biographers note, he held a profound admiration for both Faxian and Xuanzang, whose pioneering chronicles and intrepid spirit provided him with the extraordinary courage required to face the daunting trials of a transcontinental journey.[17]

Yijing's Journey to India: Preparations, Departures, and Initial Alliances

Approximately fifteen years after his initial vows, during the first year of the Xianheng era (670 CE), Yijing traveled once more to the Tang capital of Chang'an. His primary objective was to deepen his scriptural studies and attend advanced religious lectures, but the capital also served as the central node where ambitious monks converged to plan transcontinental pilgrimages to India.[18] During this crucial period of networking, Yijing forged alliances with several like-minded scholars and monastics who initially committed to accompanying him to the sacred sites of Griddhakuta (Vulture Peak) and the Bodhi Tree in Central India. Among them were Ch'u-i, a respected teacher of the Dharma from Ping-pu; Hung-i, an esteemed scriptural scholar from Lai-chou; and two or three other eager companions.

However, the harsh realities and emotional trials of a long-distance pilgrimage soon fractured this coalition:

- **Ch'u-i** was forced to withdraw from the expedition at an early stage due to deep familial obligations, bound by intense affection and a sense of duty toward his aging mother.
- **Hung-i** redirected his spiritual trajectory toward Sukhāvatī (the Western Pure Land) after an encounter with Hiuen-chan in Kiang-ning, altering his destination entirely.
- **Hiuen-k'uei**, another core member of the party, journeyed southward as far as Kwang-tung before his resolve faltered; like the others, he abandoned the venture and turned back.

Consequently, through a cascade of shifting circumstances, all of Yijing's prospective companions dropped out one by one. Left with no prior acquaintances or support networks waiting for him in the unfamiliar terrain of India, Yijing found himself facing a daunting crossroad.[19]

Despite standing virtually alone, Yijing's resolve remained unshakeable. He recognized that hesitation at this juncture would mean surrendering a lifelong ambition. Before setting out on the perilous maritime expedition, a deep sense of filial and spiritual duty prompted him to return to his homeland one last time to seek the formal counsel and blessing of his master, Hui-hsi. Upon arriving, Yijing prostrated before his guru with profound reverence and declared:

'Respected Master, I am embarking on a long journey to India to witness sacred truths I have not yet experienced. If I succeed, it will be a matter of great pride. Since you are far senior to me in years and wisdom, I cannot fulfill this goal without your blessing and advice.'[20]

Recognizing the monumental courage and purity of purpose in his disciple, Guru Hui-hsi offered an empowering and unreserved reply:

'This is a rare opportunity that will not come twice. I am overjoyed to hear of your intended journey to India. If I live long enough to see you return, witnessing your attainment of wisdom will bring me supreme happiness. Go without hesitation; do not look back at what you leave behind. I fully grant you permission to undertake this sacred pilgrimage. Moreover, striving for the prosperity of the Dharma is undoubtedly your highest duty.'[21]

Armed with his master's explicit blessing, Yijing secured an authoritative spiritual mandate that fortified him against any remaining doubts. Before leaving his native region, he paid a final solemn visit to the tomb of his late preceptor, Shan-yü, offering prayers and seeking spiritual protection from his earliest mentor.

Journey to the Southeast Coast and Patronage

In the second year of the Xianheng era (671 CE), Yijing set out toward the southeast, arriving in Yang-fu (corresponding to modern Yangzhou or Hangzhou, near Shanghai).[22] He paused his journey there for a designated period to observe the annual rainy season retreat (Varshavasa), maintaining strict monastic discipline even while traveling.

With the onset of autumn in the seventh month, Yijing encountered Feng Xiao-chuan (modern "Lingnan")[23], an imperial ambassador from Kang-chou who administered the contemporary Lingnan region. Under the protection and guidance of Ambassador Feng, Yijing advanced further south to the bustling coastal metropolis of Kwang-tung (modern Guangzhou, near Hong Kong)[24]. It was at this critical maritime gateway that fortune smiled upon the lone pilgrim: he successfully secured passage on an overseas Persian trading vessel. Furthermore, Ambassador Feng Xiao-chuan, alongside his younger brothers Xiao-tan and Xiao-chen and other members of their influential family, stepped forward as generous patrons. They provided Yijing with substantial financial gifts, provisions, and material assistance, ensuring that he possessed the necessary resources to navigate the initial hazards of his upcoming overseas voyage.[25]

Srivijaya was flourishing under the "Sailendra kings" during Yijing's visit in **671–695 CE**. Historically, the **Sailendra dynasty** rose to prominence in Central Java slightly later (primarily from the 8th to 9th centuries onward) and later established political links/unions with Srivijaya. During Yijing's 7th-century visit, Srivijaya was ruled by its foundational kings (such as Dapunta Hyang Sri Jayanasa, according to the Kedukan Bukit inscription of 682 CE).

Finally, in the eleventh month of 671 CE, Yijing and his young companion Shan-hing boarded a Persian (Bosi)[26] merchant vessel from the bustling southern port of Guangzhou (Canton) and set sail across the Southern Seas toward India. After enduring twenty days of open sea navigation, their vessel safely reached **Bhoja** (known in

Chinese records as Fo-shih or Shili-foshi),[27] a prominent political hub, religious center, and maritime trade emporium of the era. As documented by Tansen Sen, Bhoja was located within the heartland of the early Srivijaya Empire, corresponding to modern-day Palembang along the Musi River in Sumatra, Indonesia.[28]

Because Palembang served as a thriving international center where Sanskrit was actively studied and taught alongside Buddhist scriptures, Yijing chose to halt his journey here. He resided in Bhoja for six months, utilizing the time to master Sabdavidya (Sanskrit grammar, linguistics, and etymology). During this temporary residence, he cultivated favorable diplomatic relations with the local royal court. With the direct assistance and patronage of the Srivijayan monarch, Yijing was able to travel onward to **Malayu** (Moluoyu, corresponding to modern-day Kedah on the Malay Peninsula[29]). After spending two vital months in Malayu, he proceeded further to **Ka-cha**.[30]

Tragically, this phase of the pilgrimage brought profound personal grief. During their stay in the region, Yijing's sole remaining traveling companion, the young monk Shan-hing, fell gravely ill in Palembang. Despite medical efforts, his condition deteriorated to the point where he could no longer continue. This marked a deeply sorrowful turning point for Yijing, as he was forced to bid farewell to his last companion, who chose to abandon the pilgrimage and board a return ship to China. Left entirely on his own, Yijing had to press forward into the unknown alone.[31]

Crossing the Bay of Bengal and the "Land of Naked People"

By this point in time, nearly a full year of his journey had elapsed. Resuming his expedition around the twelfth month of 672 CE, Yijing secured passage on a royal ship (Wang Bo) commissioned by the Srivijayan king and sailed northwest across the Bay of Bengal toward eastern India.

Along the maritime route from Ka-cha across the eastern Indian ocean lanes, the ship drifted or navigated past an archipelago that Yijing vividly recorded as the **"Land of Naked People"** (Luoren-guo). According to his travel memoirs:

- The islands were densely populated with coconut and betel nut groves, but lacked cultivated agriculture.
- The indigenous inhabitants bartered bananas, rattan, and bamboo goods with passing mariners, displaying an obsessive preference for **iron**—likely due to a severe local scarcity of metal required for crafting basic tools and weapons. Refusing to trade iron could provoke violent hostility from the islanders.
- The locals subsisted primarily on coconuts, yams, and wild roots.
- Culturally, the men went entirely naked, while the women wore rudimentary coverings made of tree leaves, completely abstaining from woven textiles.[32]

Scholars widely identify the "Land of Naked People" described by Yijing as the **Nicobar Islands**, which lie directly on the historical maritime route from Southeast Asia to the eastern coast of India. Marco Polo's later travel accounts from the 13th century corroborate this exact sociological description, noting that both male and female inhabitants of the Nicobar chain lived in a state of absolute nudity.[33]

Regarding the staging post of **"Ka-cha"**, historical geography suggests it lay further south on the Sumatran-Malay transit corridor—potentially corresponding to modern Aceh province in Indonesia. Given that the direct maritime trajectory from Aceh leads cleanly to the Nicobar Islands without intervening landmasses, and considering that Yijing explicitly begins utilizing the term "ship" to describe ocean travel only after departing Ka-cha, it is plausible that his earlier transit through parts of Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula involved localized land or riverine travel before embarking on the deep-sea voyage across the Bay of Bengal.

Arrival in India and Travels in the Middle Kingdom

After sailing for another fifteen to sixteen days across the Bay of Bengal, on the eighth day of the second month in 673 CE, Yijing successfully arrived at the port of **Tamralipti**[34] on the coast of eastern India. In Tamralipti, a vital maritime and intellectual gateway, he met **Mahayanapradipa** (known in Chinese as Da-cheng-deng), an eminent disciple of the great pilgrim Xuanzang. Yijing chose to reside with Mahayanapradipa[35] for approximately one year, dedicating himself intensively to mastering Sanskrit (Brahma-bhasha) and Sabdavidya (linguistics and grammar) to prepare for academic discourse in the heartland of Buddhism. Assisted by Mahayanapradipa and local merchant networks, Yijing embarked on a westward route in 674 CE, heading directly toward "Central India" (Zhong Tianzhu).[36]

Calculations confirm that Yijing's arduous transcontinental journey from China to India spanned roughly fifteen to sixteen months, beginning with his departure in the eleventh month of 671 CE and culminating at Tamralipti in the second month of 673 CE.

While journeying through the interior of India, Yijing faced severe physical hardships. Stricken by a seasonal illness, he fell behind his travel companions. As evening fell, he was intercepted by a ruthless band of robbers who stripped him of all his possessions, money, and garments, leaving him entirely naked and vulnerable.

Undeterred by this humiliation and the constant threat to his life, Yijing improvised a survival strategy: he smeared his body with mud and wrapped himself in tree leaves to protect his skin from the scorching sun and insects. Walking alone for several days through unfamiliar terrain, he finally reached the legendary monastic center of **Nalanda**.

Pilgrimage to Sacred Sites and Residency at Nalanda

Upon his arrival at Nalanda, Yijing first offered prayers of gratitude at the sacred Mulagandha Kuti Vihara. He then undertook pilgrimages to key Buddhist holy sites associated with the life of the historical Buddha, climbing **Griddhakuta (Vulture Peak)** in Rajgir and proceeding to the **Mahabodhi Vihara** in Bodh Gaya, where he worshipped the great image of the Buddha with profound devotion. In addition to Bodh Gaya, his pilgrimage circuit included **Vaishali**, **Kushinagar**, **Mrigadava** (Sarnath/Varanasi), and **Kukkutapada Hill** (near Gaya).[37]

Following these travels, Yijing settled into a long-term residency at **Nalanda University**, where he spent approximately ten formative years (675–685 CE). During this decade, he immersed himself in advanced scriptural studies, engaged in scholarly debates, and collected hundreds of Sanskrit Buddhist manuscripts that would later form the basis of his monumental translations and historical accounts upon his return to China.[38]

Having gathered an extensive collection of Buddhist scriptures over the years, the time came for Yijing to transport these sacred texts back to China. In the year 685, Yijing departed from India and headed toward Tamralipti. Even before reaching Tamralipti, he encountered a band of robbers once again, but managing to escape safely, he continued on his journey. In 685, he took a ship from Tamralipti to Kedah, where he stayed for a year. Before arriving in Kedah, he also spent some time in Ka-cha. Yijing then returned to Palembang and remained there for approximately six years; during this extended stay, he undertook at least one journey to Guangzhou. In addition to compiling the Nan-hai-chi-gui-nei-fa-zhuan and the Da Tang Xiyu Qiufa Gaoseng Zhuan, Yijing also translated several Buddhist texts while in Palembang. In 691, he dispatched both his compilations and certain translations to Chang'an via a Chinese monk named Dejin[39], where Empress Wu Zetian (r. 690–705) had recently established her own dynasty and was utilizing Buddhism to legitimize her rule.[40]

Yijing departed from Palembang in the year 693 and finally arrived in Luoyang in 695, where he received a grand welcome. Some accounts note that Empress Wu personally greeted him at the city gates.[41]

In Luoyang, Yijing collaborated with foreign monks such as Shicanduo (Siksananda, 652–710) from Khotan and Bodhiruci (727?) from South India to support the legitimization of Empress Wu's reign. These two monks are believed to have been specifically involved in the manipulation of Buddhist texts to promote Empress Wu as the legitimate ruler of China [4]. Later, when Yijing commenced his own translation work, Empress Wu personally wrote the preface for one of the translated texts.[42]

Following the restoration of the Tang dynasty in 705 by Emperor Zhongzong (r. 684, 705–710), Yijing remained closely connected with the imperial court. Similar to Wu Zetian, Emperor Zhongzong authored a preface for one of the completed translations by Yijing and sponsored the monk's other projects. He also provided Yijing and his translation bureau with special quarters inside the Dajianfu Temple (i.e., the Small Wild Goose Pagoda) in Chang'an. Additionally, the emperor occasionally invited Yijing to reside in his palace and translate Buddhist texts there.

When Yijing passed away in 713 at the age of seventy-nine, the ruling Emperor Xuanzong (r. 712–756) dispatched imperial officials to express condolences, bestow gifts, and award Yijing the posthumous title of Honglukuang (Chief Minister of the Court of State Ceremonials). Yijing had translated over fifty Buddhist texts and authored five other compositions. He also created a Sanskrit dictionary of terms titled Fanyu Qianziwen (A Thousand Sanskrit Words). Forty years after Yijing's death, Emperor Suzong (r. 756–762) ordered the construction of a temple named Jinguangming Si in Luoyang to mark Yijing's contribution to the propagation of Buddhism in China.[43]

Conclusion

Yijing's monumental pilgrimage and scholarly career left an indelible mark on the landscape of Buddhist transmission and Sino-Indian relations. Returning to China in 695 CE after more than two decades abroad, he dedicated his remaining years to translating sacred scriptures, compiling critical historical records such as the Nan-hai-chi-gui-nei-fa-zhuan and Da Tang Xiyu Qiufa Gaoseng Zhuan, and collaborating closely with the imperial courts of Wu Zetian and Emperor Zhongzong. By the time of his passing in 713 CE, Yijing had translated over fifty Buddhist texts, authored vital linguistic tools like the Fanyu Qianziwen, and cemented a legacy that bridged the maritime trade routes of Southeast Asia with the academic epicenter of Nalanda. His life's work—born from a young novice's vow to preserve the purity of the Dharma—transformed him from a lone voyager into one of antiquity's greatest cultural and spiritual architects.

Notes and References:

[1] Zhang Wenming (张文明) was Yijing's childhood name. This name was given to him before he left his home.

[2] Emperor Tai-zong (T'ai-zong, 唐太宗) reigned from September 4, 627, to July 10, 649 CE; he was the second ruler of the Tang dynasty.

[3] A native of Qizhou (present Li-cheng County in modern Shandong province, near Beijing).

[4] Sen, Tansen, *Yijing and the Buddhist Cosmopolis of the Seventh Century*, Cambria Press, 2018, p. 348.

[5] I-tsing, translated by J. Takakusu, *A Record of the Buddhist Religion as Practised in India and the Malay Archipelago (A.D. 671–695)*, Clarendon Press, 1896, p. xxv.

[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 204, xxv–xxvi.

[7] *Ibid.*, pp. xxv–xxvi.

[8] Sen, Tansen, *Yijing and the Buddhist Cosmopolis of the Seventh Century*, Cambria Press, 2018, p. 348.

[9] I-tsing, translated by J. Takakusu, *A Record of the Buddhist Religion as Practised in India and the Malay Archipelago (A.D. 671–695)*, Clarendon Press, 1896, p. 209.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. xxvi.

[11] Note: Fa-li (法离, Fǎ-lí) died in 635 CE; he was a teacher of the Nirvana School and author of a commentary on the *Caturvarga-vinaya*.

[12] I-tsing, translated by J. Takakusu, *A Record of the Buddhist Religion as Practised in India and the Malay Archipelago (A.D. 671–695)*, Clarendon Press, 1896, p. 209.

[13] *Ibid.*, pp. 209–210, xxvi.

[14] *Ibid.*, pp. xxvi, 56.

[15] Note: Chang'an is modern Xi'an, Shaanxi, China.

[16] I-tsing, translated by J. Takakusu, *A Record of the Buddhist Religion as Practised in India and the Malay Archipelago (A.D. 671–695)*, Clarendon Press, 1896, pp. 210, xxvi.

[17] *Ibid.*, p. xxvi.

[18] Sen, Tansen, *Yijing and the Buddhist Cosmopolis of the Seventh Century*, Cambria Press, 2018, p. 348.

[19] I-tsing, translated by J. Takakusu, *A Record of the Buddhist Religion as Practised in India and the Malay Archipelago (A.D. 671–695)*, Clarendon Press, 1896, p. xxvii.

[20] *Ibid.*, p. xxviii.

[21] *Ibid.*, p. xxviii.

[22] Tansen Sen, "The Travel Records of Chinese Pilgrims Faxian, Xuanzang, and Yijing: Sources for Cross-Cultural Encounters between Ancient China and Ancient India," *Education About Asia* 11.3 (2006): 24–33.

[23] Sen, Tansen, *Yijing and the Buddhist Cosmopolis of the Seventh Century*, Cambria Press, 2018, p. 348

[24] Tansen Sen, "The Travel Records of Chinese Pilgrims Faxian, Xuanzang, and Yijing: Sources for Cross-Cultural Encounters between Ancient China and Ancient India," *Education About Asia* 11.3 (2006): 24–33.

[25] I-tsing, translated by J. Takakusu, *A Record of the Buddhist Religion as Practised in India and the Malay Archipelago (A.D. 671–695)*, Clarendon Press, 1896, p. xxix.

[26] Sen, Tansen, *Yijing and the Buddhist Cosmopolis of the Seventh Century*, Cambria Press, 2018, p. 348.

[27] Bagchi P.C. India and China: A Thousand Years of Cultural Relations, Saraswat Library, 1981, Page no. 100

[28] Sen, Tansen, *Yijing and the Buddhist Cosmopolis of the Seventh Century*, Cambria Press, 2018, p. 348.

[29] *Ibid.*, p. 348.

[30] I-tsing, translated by J. Takakusu, *A Record of the Buddhist Religion as Practised in India and the Malay Archipelago (A.D. 671–695)*, Clarendon Press, 1896, p. xxx.

[31] Sen, Tansen, *Yijing and the Buddhist Cosmopolis of the Seventh Century*, Cambria Press, 2018, p. 348.

[32] I-tsing, translated by J. Takakusu, *A Record of the Buddhist Religion as Practised in India and the Malay Archipelago (A.D. 671–695)*, Clarendon Press, 1896, pp. xxx–xxxi.

[33] Travel of Marco Polo, page no. 376 ch. xvii

[34] Note: Tamralipti (Bengali: তাম্রলিপ্ত) was an ancient port city located on the Bay of Bengal. Scholars suggest that modern Tamluk corresponds to ancient Tamralipti. It is believed to have served as a major commercial exit point for the Maurya Empire toward South Asia and Southeast Asia.

[35] Chinese name: Da-cheng-deng (大乘燈).

[36] I-tsing, translated by J. Takakusu, *A Record of the Buddhist Religion as Practised in India and the Malay Archipelago (A.D. 671–695)*, Clarendon Press, 1896, p. xxxi.

[37] *Ibid.*, pp. xxxi–xxxiii.

[38] *Ibid.*, pp. xxxi–xxxiii.

[39] Sen, Tansen, *Yijing and the Buddhist Cosmopolis of the Seventh Century*, Cambria Press, 2018, p. 349.

[40] *Political Propaganda and Ideology in China at the End of the Seventh Century: Inquiry into the Nature, Authors and Function of the Tunhuang Document S. 6502 Followed by an Annotated Translation* (Napoli: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1976), pp. 156–160.

[41] This is similar to the reception reportedly accorded to Xuanzang upon his return from India. Reports of rulers welcoming Buddhist monks at city gates in both cases were likely conventional literary tropes.

[42] Sen, Tansen, *Yijing and the Buddhist Cosmopolis of the Seventh Century*, Cambria Press, 2018, p. 349.

[43] *Ibid.*, p. 350.