



Comments on the paper 'Tibetan Culture Area'

(Critical Response to Arnab Anjaria's "The Tibetan Culture Area: Contours and Civilizational Linkages")

The author has a deep knowledge about the history of the discussed areas The author discusses about a historical phenomenon in a vast area. Therefore, such a relatively short paper cannot fulfil such a task in full. However, I am aware of the limitations in word limit and other conventions of publications. This paper deserves publication given that a few points are addressed or corrected Despite certain shortcomings, I recommend the publication of this paper.

- Anonymous

Deeper understanding of Buddhism: does it promote peace or is it used instrumentally?

(Editorial Note to Arnab Anjaria's "The Tibetan Culture Area: Contours and Civilizational Linkages")

Tibetan or Mongolian Buddhism is a subject that deserves more attention, certainly in the context of current happenings. I believe that Buddhism deserves more in-depth study from scholars. According to my understanding Buddhism has been treated in the West more in an idealistic, romantic way, or as an Eastern philosophy and wisdom distant from society, rather than one with a real impact on a society.

Buddhism has often been regarded as a peaceful religion which commands peace and harmony. It has been the basis of many New Age and hippy alternative philosophies and lifestyles in the West. However, the conflicts in Sri Lanka and Myanmar reveal that also Buddhists can be engaged in conflicts and behave aggressively. Even though it did not have a root in the Buddhist philosophy, the genocide in Cambodia did nevertheless occur in a Buddhist cultural area.

It can be argued that this type of Buddhism has been Theravada Buddhism and that the Tibetan/Mongolian or Vajrayana Buddhism may have been peaceful. Then, how can the aggressive and expansive political behavior of the Mongolian empire under Genghis Khan and his successors be explained? It can be argued that Genghis Khan and his successors were not Buddhists and adhered to their Shamanistic traditions. One could also argue that their adherence to Buddhism or Shamanic tradition may have been irrelevant. In other words, Buddhism, like other religions, may or may not influence human political behavior. This, however, is a legitimate subject to be studied more deeply.

This paper does not discuss the impact of Buddhism in political behavior and conflict. The author never mentions that it is the scope of its paper and therefore it will not be fair to criticize the author in this way. Nevertheless, the author's initiative to frame this study in geopolitical concepts is applaudable and is a good initiative to bring Buddhist studies under the attention of the social and political sciences.