INTERVENTIONS

CAESURAE: POETICS OF CULTURAL TRANSLATION

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Theme for this Issue: Cultural Translations of Buddhism in Asia



Thangka painting by Jayita Sengupta

Editorial by Professor *****Godabarisha Mishra*

This inaugural section of the **Caesurae Journal (Vol 6:2),** presents a rich confluence of writings on literature, history, and the spiritual traditions of Buddhism, exploring how culture, faith, and art transcend time and space to shape the human spirit. We would continue on this theme for the **forthcoming 2016 (Vol 7:1) of the Journa**l as well, as we hope to publish more research essays on this area.

In this issue, we feature three articles that relate to and explore Buddhist thought. **Medha Sinha's article, *"In the Light of the Padas: Exploring Sexuality as a Means of Spiritual***

Transcendence from Caryāpadas to Vaiṣṇava Padāvalī," investigates mystical songs of realization within Vajrayāna and Sahajiyā Buddhism and their transformation into Vaishnava devotional poetry. Tracing texts like the *Caryācharyāviniścaya*, *Sri Kṛṣṇa Kīrtan*, and *Gītagovinda*, she uncovers the shared symbolism of love and divine union that unites Buddhist and Hindu devotional poetics in greater Bengal and neighbouring states like Bihar, Odisha, and Assam.

The second article by ***Tathagata Sagar Pal's "Understanding the 'Wrathful Compassion': A Reflection upon the Narratives and Forms of Yamāntaka"*** explores *karuṇā* (compassion) as the cornerstone of Mahāyāna thought. Through the figure of Yamāntaka—the wrathful form of Mañjuśrī, Pal reveals how compassion can assume fierce forms to annihilate ignorance and suffering, demonstrating that wrath and wisdom converge in the Bodhisattva's vow to liberate all beings. Drawing from canonical sources and iconographic representations, Pal argues that Yamāntaka's wrath embodies the protective and transformative aspect of compassion itself—destroying ignorance and inner afflictions to guide beings toward enlightenment - thereby illustrating how *wrathful compassion* extends the Mahāyāna ideal of universal salvation.

The issue concludes with ***"Transcending Power and Politics: Buddhism as a Foundation of Universal Peace and Harmony" by Godabarisha Mishra*** (yours truly). The essay examines Buddhist ethical and philosophical framework as a path toward universal peace. Drawing upon doctrines such as *Ariya Sacca*, *Paṭicca-samuppāda*, and *Brahmavihāras*, the essay argues that Buddhism offers not only an alternative to political and militaristic models of peace but also a profound vision for restoring harmony, within the self and across humanity.

We hope this issue continues to inspire our readers, reaffirming faith in compassion, reflection, and the enduring human quest for peace.



About the Editor

****Godabarisha Mishra** is a Professor and Dean of the School of Buddhist Studies, Philosophy, and Comparative Religion at the Nalanda University, Rajgir, India. He served as a Visiting Professor in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at the IIT, Bhubaneswar, from 2018 to 22. Formerly, he also worked as the Chairman of the School of Philosophy and Religious Thought, as well as the Professor and Head of the Department of Philosophy, University of Madras. He was the Editor at the Kuppuswami Sastri Research Institute, Chennai, from 1985 to 1988, and was also the Member Secretary of the Indian Council of Philosophical Research, New Delhi, from 2007 to 2011. His primary areas of specialization are Vedanta and Buddhism, with a focus on the classical and textual traditions. He has published over fifty research papers on Classical and Contemporary Indian Thought, Comparative Philosophy, and authored Numerous review articles, as well as five books.