

## THE EMERGENCE OF THE EARLY INDIAN BUDDHIST SCHOOLS: *DĪPAVAṂSA AND VASUMITRA'S TREATISE*

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During the time of the Buddha, the *Saṅgha* was united as one group. Nevertheless, about a hundred years after the demise of the Buddha, the initial schism emerged which divided the *Saṅgha* into two branches, the *Sthaviravāda* and the *Mahāsaṃghika*. It marks a defining moment in the history of Buddhism. Later, there were a number of subdivisions that emerged from both *Sthaviravāda* and *Mahāsaṃghika*. *Nikāya* Buddhism refers to the Early Indian Buddhist Schools. The period of emergence of the 18 or 20 Early Indian Buddhist Schools happened in about 100 to 350 years after the demise of the Buddha. All of the Early Indian Buddhist schools ceased to exist except *Theravāda* Buddhism. Some Buddhist texts have mentioned the classification of the Early Buddhist Schools but *Dīpavaṃsa* and Vasumitra represent the Southern tradition of *Sthaviravāda* and Northern tradition of *Sarvāstivāda*. Therefore, the researcher selected *Dīpavaṃsa*, "Chronicle of the Island", dated 3<sup>rd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> Century A.C and Vasumitra's treatise (異部宗輪論) translated by Ven. Xuan Zang (602-664 A.C.), to trace the emergence of Early Indian Buddhist Schools. This research has two goals: (1) identifying the initial schism and the nature of dispute which led to the emergence of 18 or 20 early Indian Buddhist Schools; (2) identifying the convergence and divergence between the *Dīpavaṃsa* and Vasumitra's Treatise on the emergence of the Early Indian Buddhist Schools. This research mainly depends on Buddhist literature and other relevant Buddhist sources. The study shows that *Theravāda* emphasizes the importance of *Vinaya* whereas *Sarvāstivāda* emphasizes the importance of *Dharma*. Both *Dīpavaṃsa* and Vasumitra's Treatise mention different initial schematic reason of the *Saṅgha* and due to different natures and disputes there emerged 18 to 20 Early Indian Buddhist Schools. Both texts the *Dīpavaṃsa* of the *Theravāda*, and Vasumitra's treatise of *Sarvāstivāda* record the historical moment of the emergence of 18 to 20 Early Indian Buddhist Schools. Even though both Schools, the *Theravāda* and *Sarvāstivāda*, are the subdivisions of *Sthaviravāda*, they have recorded the facts in different ways; the researcher hypothesizes that the reason for this maybe because *Theravāda* emphasizes the importance of *Vinaya* whereas *Sarvāstivāda* emphasizes the importance of *Dharma*.

*Keywords:* Early Indian Buddhist Schools, *Dīpavaṃsa*, Vasumitra's Treatise