

## **Bhikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita's Interpreting and Translating Buddhism in Indonesian Cultural and Political Contexts**

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### **Background**

Since Indonesian independence in 1945, the founders of this new state had agreed on a proposed ideology as a national foundation for uniting all ethnicities, religions, and races. Proposed by Sukarno, *Pancasila*, the ideological foundation consisting of five principles of the new state was finalized by the Committee of Five (*Panitia Lima*) in the form of the Indonesian Charter (*Piagam Jakarta*). The first principle is the *Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa*, or commonly translated as the “Belief in One Supreme God,”<sup>1</sup> which has been a major problem for Buddhism. As a religion that differs in its teaching of the theistic aspect, Buddhism has been struggling for dealing and accommodating the state-imposed concept of god originally derived from monotheistic religions.

*Bhikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita*, who had a major role in the awakening of Buddhism in the country, along with a number of his disciples (*panditas*),<sup>2</sup> came up with *Sanghyang Ādibuddha* as the answer for the quest for god in Buddhism. He and the *panditas* ‘skillfully’ offered the concept as a response to the critical situation of the State’s reinforcing of the *Pancasila* after a communist coup in 1965. To be officially recognized by the State as a one of the major religions, and thus, not suspiciously seen or accused as atheism, Buddhism must be able to prove that it has god as the center of faith and practice. While the State seemed to be easily satisfied with his assurance, questions came from their fellow Buddhists and, later, also Ashin Jinarakkhita's primary disciples who were on the same boat with him in the beginning. Since then, debates, disintegration, and splits could not be avoided within Buddhist organizations. The strongest opposition was coming from the Theravādan members, and it seemed to happen partly because of the influence of the Thai Buddhist’s purification movement started in the nineteenth century by King Mongkut as later on many Thai *bhikkhus* coming to Indonesia. Though there were also Buddhist monks coming from Sri Lanka, such as Bhikkhu Narada Thera and Mahasi Sayadaw and his group, they only came a few times during these early years.

This paper will be focusing on the background of the inventing of the concept *Sanghyang Ādibuddha* by Bhikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita and his disciples. There have been a number of studies on the subject with an emphasis on the Buddhological assessment of the concept itself, which originally comes from the Tantrayāna tradition. Other studies are concerned more with the political aspect of the situation that triggered the promotion of *Sanghyang Ādibuddha*, particularly on the dilemma the Indonesian Buddhists in accommodating *Pancasila* as an ideological foundation of the State. I am examining it from the standpoint of the one of the originators, Bhikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita. By understanding his socio-cultural background, we might be able to understand the factors that brought him to his choice, not only of the concept of *Sanghyang Ādibuddha*, but also of his ‘unique’ form of Buddhism which later be known as Buddhayāna.

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<sup>1</sup> This principle has been translated differently and it will be discussed in the third section of this paper.

<sup>2</sup> *Pandita* is lay Buddhist people who is assumed to be accomplished in Buddhist teaching and the leader of the laypeople.

## **Bhikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita: Leading to the Awakening of an Indonesian Buddhism**

Bhikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita was a Buddhist name given to Tee Boan An<sup>3</sup> when he was ordained as a monk in Burma in 1953 within Theravāda tradition. A prominent Burmese meditation teacher, Mahasi Sayadaw, was his preceptor and his meditation teacher. Previously he had been ordained as a *sramanera*<sup>4</sup> according to Mahāyāna tradition by a Chinese monk, Mahābhikṣu Pen Ching who was residing in *klenteng*<sup>5</sup> Kong Hoa Sie in Jakarta. His *sramanera* ordination name was Ti Chen. The reason he was searching for a *bhikkhu* ordination in Burma and not in China as a Mahāyāna Buddhist country was because a diplomatic relationship between Indonesia and China had not been established.<sup>6</sup> *Sramanera* Ti Chen's desire for becoming a full-fledged Buddhist monk and then carrying out his mission to spread the Buddha's teaching was very strong. This might explain why he did not mind to receive his ordination within either Mahāyāna or Theravāda tradition.

Tee Boan An was born in Bogor, West Java on January 23, 1923 into a Chinese descent family. Since studying in elementary school, he had shown his interest in spirituality. He liked to visit *klentengs* and to ask questions about spirits, ghosts, and deities to the *klentengs*' keepers. Muslim clerics and pastors became his companions in discussing spirituality, though he was just a teenager. Going to mountains and doing meditation became his routine activities. His appeals to spirituality were something that his father did not agree with, but it seemed to be his biggest drive in his life. This was proven when after finishing his studying at HBS (in science)<sup>7</sup> and HCS (in natural science),<sup>8</sup> he went to the Netherlands, studying chemistry at the Universiteit Groningen, but then he decided to quit from his school and following his spiritual quest.<sup>9</sup> It is clear that Boan An had been engaged in the spiritual realm since the very beginning and not limited to Buddhist spirituality, but with other religions as well.

Boan An met with a member of the Theosophical Society in the mount Gede, who later gave him two books in spirituality, *The Ancient Wisdom* and *The Secret Doctrines*, as an introduction to theosophy. From this Dutchman, Boan An learned about healing by means of magnetism energy, which he often performed to help others.<sup>10</sup> While studying abroad, Boan An began actively involved in Theosophical Society organization. If previously he shown interest in diverse religions and belief systems, now he directed his attention and learning more towards Buddhism. Upon his return to Indonesia Boan An was appointed to be the Deputy Chairman of the *Perhimpunan Pemuda Theosofi Indonesia* (Indonesian Association of Young Theosophists).<sup>11</sup> He opted to commit himself to be an *anagarika*, one who devotes his life for Dharma and taking a celibate life, but not yet a monk.

Anagarika Boan An was traveling throughout Java giving talks on Buddhism. He attracted attention of people coming from different background and ethnicities. The

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<sup>3</sup> In other writings his name is spelled as The Boan An and The Bwan An. I am using Tee Boan An as it is in his biography written by Edij Juangari, *Menabur Benih Dharma di Nusantara: Riwayat Singkat Bhikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita*, Bandung: Yayasan Karaniya, 1995.

<sup>4</sup> *Sramanera* is a Sanskrit term for a male Buddhist novice, *samanera* in Pali.

<sup>5</sup> *Klenteng* is a place of worship for a three-united religion or *Tridharma*: Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism.

<sup>6</sup> Juangari, Edij. *Ibid.*, pp. 48-50.

<sup>7</sup> HBS was an equivalent for senior high school, and B division is in science.

<sup>8</sup> Now Technological Institute of Bandung

<sup>9</sup> Juangari, Edij., *Ibid.*, pp. 29-30.

<sup>10</sup> See Kandahjaya about this Dutchman known as van der Stock. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>11</sup> There is a different account on his return to Indonesia; Juagari puts early 1951, while Brown writes 1949, based on his personal interview and on *Sang Pengasuh, 30 tahun Pengabdian Suci Y.A. Maha Nayaka Sthavira Ashin Jinarakkhita*. Brown, Iem. "Contemporary Indonesian Buddhism and Monotheism," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (Mar., 1987), pp. 109.

*Kejawen* communities (Javanese indigenous beliefs) were inviting him to have spiritual exchange with him. The *Sam Kaw Hwee* or Three Religions Organization (later on changed into *Tridharma*), an ethnic Chinese organization and the theosophical Society were very supportive to Anagarika Boan An's work of spreading the Dharma throughout Java. Eventually his idea to hold a national commemoration of the Vesak at the Borobudur temple for the first time after the demise of Buddhism in the fifteenth century became materialized in May, 1953. Buddhists from different provinces gathered together in the great temple, even government representatives and delegates from a number of Buddhist countries attended the sacred event.<sup>12</sup> Following this Anagarika Boan An was gaining more popularity among Buddhists. With the help of his teacher, Mahābhikṣu Pen Ching and his colleagues, he managed to go to Burma learning *vipassana*<sup>13</sup> meditation and then receiving a full ordination as a *bhikkhu*.<sup>14</sup> In the following years Bhikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita traveled both cities and villages, in Java and other provinces to awaken Buddhism.

We have found out that Bhikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita was a unique personality; he was a combination of an ethnic Chinese who was acquainted with the *Kejawen* teachings and practices. Embracing two different Buddhist traditions, by receiving teachings and ordination from Mahayana and Theravada, he was enriched by the two without finding contradiction. Having an enormous fascination in spirituality and mysticism since an early age was in fact not conflicting with his natural science and physics schoolwork. During his missionary work upon his return from Burma, he taught both the Theravada tradition under which his monk ordination was conferred and the Mahayana teachings and chanting where he was receiving an early training from his teacher, the Mahābhikṣu Pen Ching. Even the way he dressed as a monk was also an amalgamation of a Mahāyānist (Chinese) and a Theravādan monk dressing in yellow-Theravādan robes, but letting his beard growing long as if in a Buddhist Chinese custom.<sup>15</sup> Shortly we will be coming to the point in which his model of Buddhism and teachings, and most importantly, the proposal for god for Indonesian Buddhism has been controversial. All of this seems to be the representation of his unique characteristics as an Indonesian Buddhist as a product of and thus in turn also producing a blended diverse elements obtaining from the Indonesian soil.

### **Re-enforcing the *Pancasila*: A Crisis of Authority**

Before the communist coup in September 1965, the concept of god was never a crucial part of Bhikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita's concerns during his spreading the teaching of Buddha.<sup>16</sup> His invention of *Sanghyang Adibuddha*, then, seemed to be in response to the political turmoil caused by the communist coup which made the reinforcement of the *Pancasila*, with a strong emphasis on the first principle, the *Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa*.

As I briefly mentioned previously, there have been a multiple translations of this principle. The most widely accepted is the "Belief in One God." Others translate it as "Divine Omnipotence," "An All-embracing God," "the Being of Supreme Deity,"

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<sup>12</sup> Juangari, Edij. *Ibid.*, pp. 45-46.

<sup>13</sup> *Vipassana* meditation is also known as insight meditation, a mediation practice to pursue spiritual enlightenment. Another meditation form in the Theravada tradition is known as *samatha*, a meditation practice to achieve a single-focused of mind (mental calmness).

<sup>14</sup> Juangari, Edij. *Ibid.*, p. 56.

<sup>15</sup> In the Theravada tradition, a monk has to shave their head, eye brows, mustache, and beard, while in the Mahayana tradition only requires a shaven head.

<sup>16</sup> Brown, Iem. "Contemporary Indonesian Buddhism and Monotheism," the *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (Mar., 1987), p. 111. In Juangari's book, though not explicitly stated, the discussion about the concept *Sanghyang Adibuddha* also occurs only after the communist coup; there is no such mentioning of the concept of god in the early stages of Bhikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita's talks on Buddhism.

“Oneness of God,” “One Lordship.” Dharmaputera argues that all these are not the translations of the Pancasila’s first principle, but interpretations, and all are wrong ones. His own interpretation, which he deems to be the only correct one, is the “Recognition of One Lordness.” His argument is that the word Tuhan in Indonesian word originates from “Allah” (Arabic) as it was debated in the formulation of the *Piagam Jakarta* (the Jakarta Charter), thus, it is to be translated as “Lord.” With the addition of prefix and suffix, it changes the noun into an adjective “Ketuhanan” or “Lordness.” “Yang Maha Esa” means the “One.”<sup>17</sup> His interpretation, because he relates it to the historical background of the formulation of the *Pancasila*, is understood to be informed by an Islamic perspective, though he himself is probably unaware of his bias in choosing the word “Lord” which signifying a male gender, while in Islam, god is none of either gender. Hidayah points out that the translating or interpreting the first principle as the Recognition of the Divine Omnipotence, based on C.A. O. von Nieuwenhujie’s translation is more corresponding to the Indonesian understanding.<sup>18</sup>

It was, indeed, the principle of acknowledging of god by all religions and beliefs systems (*kepercayaan*) in the country that had already been a serious issue from its inception. The final configuration of *Pancasila* took out the word “Allah,” the particular god of the Muslims—and perhaps also of the Christians so far as the god who is creating the world and all beings is being concerned—from the fifth principle. The phrase constituting the observation of the *sharia*’ was also omitted from this principle. By changing the order of the fifth principle into the first, the State was ensuring the recognition of ‘one’ god for all religions, thus, accommodating the concern of the Islamists. Thus, belief in god is the most critical aspect to all religions and belief system (*aliran kepercayaan*). The acknowledgment of ‘one’ god became “a foundation which leads is to the ways of truth, justice, goodness, honesty, human-brother- (and sister) hood, etc. With it, the State strengthens its own foundation”<sup>19</sup>

Dharmaputera argues that the influence from the Islamic faction in the drafting of the Jakarta Charter was viable, and he admits that it is understandable if we come to conclude that the change of order of the five principles by putting the principle of belief in one god in the first position is to satisfy this group.<sup>20</sup> Thus, even their urge to choose Islam as the state foundation was declined, the principle of monotheism (*tawhid*), the most essential Islamic basis of faith is granted in the first place. While this was giving a firm foundation for unifying all differences in one single ideological foundation, it has been creating problems for other religions and belief system that their perception of the ultimate truth has not always been in the form of such a ‘god’ as in the monotheistic religions.

Why was then, that, the Indonesian State reinforced the *Pancasila* as its ideological foundation? The modern nation state of Indonesia itself being newly freed from the colonial occupation, had been facing what Keyes identifies as the *crisis of authority* - the Indonesian state made its effort “to-opt, reshape, marginalize, and, in some cases, suppress religious communities within the territories under their control.”<sup>21</sup> It might be a price to pay for the modernization and national-building projects of the Indonesian state. The State was in its crucial stage to anchor its authority over any other

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<sup>17</sup> Dharmaputera, Eka. *Pancasila and the Search for Identity and Modernity in Indonesian Society*, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1988, p. 153.

<sup>18</sup> Hidayah, Sita. “Religion in the Proper Sense of the Word: the Discourse of “Agama” in Indonesia,” Unpublished M.A. thesis, the Center for Religious and Cross-cultural Studies, Graduate School, Gadjah Mada University, 2008, p. 1.

<sup>19</sup> *Panitia Lima, Uraian Pancasila*, p. 42, in Dharmaputera, Eka. *Ibid.*, p. 152.

<sup>20</sup> Dharmaputera, Eka. *Ibid.*, p. 153.

<sup>21</sup> Keyes, Charles F. et al (ed.). *Asian Visions of Authority: Religion and the Modern States of East and Southeast Asia*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, p. 1

potential authorities and communities to ensure its uncontested power. Moreover, Indonesia confronted the communist coup only twenty years after its independence, which made its position to be even more vulnerable. Therefore, *Pancasila* was re-imposed upon any organizations both secular and religious, with the emphasis on the principle of belief in Divine Omnipotence as the strong rejection of communism. All religions and belief system in Indonesia must not give an opportunity for the State to suspect them as atheistic, which was equated with communism. Hidayah notes that: "...for more than thirty years, some Indonesians - and especially *adat* communities—have been labeled as communist."<sup>22</sup>

Buddhism does not have a reference of a god as the creator and the granter of reward and punishment, but it does have an ultimate goal that has the quality of a god, and this placing this non-theistic religion to be easily seen as "atheist."<sup>23</sup> There was another problem caused by the imposing of the definition of *agama* or religion by the Ministry of Religion in 1952, which was and still is dominated by the *santri* (Islamists).<sup>24</sup>

Walubi (Perwalian Umat Buddha Indonesia or the Indonesian Buddhist Council Association)<sup>25</sup>, has generalized many debates, conflicts, and disintegration among Buddhist organizations, partly because of its adoption of the definition of *agama* in defining what to be accepted as Indonesian Buddhism/s. In the congress the representatives of Buddhist *sanghas* and councils came to authorize the characteristics of Indonesian Buddhism, which later being authorized in the founding document of the Walubi: 1) all Buddhist sects in Indonesia have belief in *Tuhan Yang Maha Esa* (we will be discussing shortly), 2) all Buddhist sects appreciate difference addresses for God that is fundamentally one and the same God, 3) all Buddhist sects acknowledge the Buddha Gotama as prophet, have the foundation on the Tripitaka scripture, and dutifully performing the Guidelines for Instilling and Implementing Pancasila (*Ekaprasetya Pancakarsa* or P-4), 4) all Buddhist sects have different followers throughout the archipelago. The congress produced the verdict on the criteria for Buddhism in Indonesia, that there is *Tuhan Yang Maha Esa*, *Triratna-Tiratana*, (*trilaksana-tilakkhana*), *Catur Arya Satyani/Cattari Ariya Saccani*, *pratitya samutpada/paticca samuppada*, *karma/kamma*, *punarbhava/punnabhava*, *nirvana/nibbana*, and *Bodhisattva/Bodhisatta*.<sup>26</sup>

In short, in the effort of fortifying its authority as a new modern state, Indonesia necessitated what Gramsci's defines as legitimate and rational, rigid boundary, hegemony approved religions.<sup>27</sup> Adhering to this principle, Indonesian Buddhism in Indonesia was also obliged to be compliant with the State's definition. Buddhayāna, as a blend of Mahāyāna, Theravāda, and even later on, Tantrayāna traditions, was considered to be 'syncretic.' It was under Walubi's verdict that Buddhayāna and its organizations were forced to leave Walubi's membership (1994) as they were seen to be not Buddhist, to be syncretic, and not in line with what was defined to be Indonesian Buddhism.

### ***Sanghyang Adibuddha: A Skillful Compromising***

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<sup>22</sup> Hidayah, Sita. *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

<sup>23</sup> Though there is indeed, no such a god as it is described in monotheistic religions, some Indonesian Buddhists leaders and/or clerics have been very careful in explaining this issue. They seem to be "appropriating" or "explaining" the concept of *nibbana* or *nirvana*—the deemed-to be an equal concept of god in Buddhism—within the language of the monotheism., i.e.: Bhikkhu Uttamo in his article "KeTuhanan dalam Agama Buddha."

<sup>24</sup> Dharmaputera, Eka. *Ibid.*, p. 83.

<sup>25</sup> Walubi was established in 1979, then, abolished, and reestablished again in 1998.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> Hidayah, Sita. *Ibid.*, p. 34.

In this section we will be discussing the skillful act of Bhikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita and some *panditas* who came up with a *Sanghyang Ādibuddha* in response to the political and religious upheaval in the country after the 1965 coup. Bhikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita and his disciples promulgated the concept of *Sanghyang Ādibuddha* by deriving their reference from the ancient Javanese Buddhist scripture *Sanghyang Kamahayanikan*, thus, rooting in the Indonesian culture. It did not cause so many debates initially. But later on, with the frequent visits from Thai monks who carrying with them a message of purifying the Buddhist teachings, and the sending of Indonesian *bhikkhus* and *samaneras* to studying Buddhism in Thailand and Sri Lanka, opinions began to change. Some of Bhikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita's disciples who were in the beginning having no objection to the concept and even supporting of the concept, eventually took a different stand and left him and his *Sanghyang Ādibuddha* idea by establishing their own organization. These people mostly belonged to the Theravādans who eventually split from Bhikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita's *sangha* affiliation and became the Indonesian Theravāda Sangha. We get a glimpse at the Thai *bhikkhus*' opinion regarding this concept of god through a published diary of a visit to Indonesia for conferring a *bhikkhu* ordination in 1969. In their diary they say that Indonesian Buddhists have tried to deal with the subject of god, but they saw it was not a wise compromise.<sup>28</sup>

The effort to spread the “pure” Buddhist teaching, I suspect, began earlier than the coming of the Thai Buddhist influence on the archipelago. The Dutch theosophists who took the initiative to reintroduce the Buddhist teaching were likely to conceive Buddhism as textual and philosophical religion. Their understanding of the religion, I assume, to be different from that of the popular or living Buddhism as widely practiced in society or, most commonly in villages. This is quite reasonable since these theosophists came from Europe which at the time—the nineteenth century—was somewhat employing the Orientalist mentality: religion is extracted and separated from its socio-cultural context into the form of texts. In Tambiah's words when he talks about Rhys Davids, a well-known Orientalist scholar working on Buddhism propagating a “Pali Text Society mentality” which “essentialized Buddhism in terms of its ‘pristine’ teachings.”<sup>29</sup> Philosophical teachings were the main concern of these people to be isolated from its ritual aspects.

According to the Thai reformists/puritans, what is “pure” and then, a “true” Buddhism is the one that is based on the *Tipitaka* Pali (Sanskrit: *Tripitaka*) scripture. In this discussion we are focusing on the Theravada tradition since the strong opposition to the conception of the *Sanghyang Adibuddha* was from the Theravadan group. The concept of *Sanghyang Ādibuddha* is not derived from the *Tipitaka* Pali scripture; therefore, it is not a Theravāda teaching or, it is simply “not pure” and “not true” (Theravāda) Buddhism. It is a syncretic (Buddhist) religion. There is even an accusation that Buddhayāna is also adopting the teaching of the *Sai Baba*<sup>30</sup> teaching.<sup>31</sup>

Bhikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita's search for a reference of ‘god’ in his Buddhist heritage was, I would argue, deeply informed, both consciously and unconsciously, by his socio-cultural background. Before receiving the meditation guidance and the *bhikkhu* ordination from a well-known meditation master according to the Theravada disciple, he

<sup>28</sup> Mills, Laurence-Khantipalo, *A Record of Journeys in Indonesia: for the Ordination of Five Bhikkhus at the Great Stupa of Borobudur by Phra Sāsana Sobhana from the 6th of May to the 13th May 2513*, Bangkok: Mahamakut Press, 1971, p. 5.

<sup>29</sup> Tambiah, Stanley Jeyaraja. *The Buddhist Saints of the Forest and the Cult of Amulets*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984, p. 7.

<sup>30</sup> Sai Baba is a kind of Hindu modern movement which led by Sai Baba who is believed to be the living incarnation of the god Siva by its followers.

<sup>31</sup> [http://bhagavant.com/home.php?link=sejarah&tipe=sejarah\\_buddhisme\\_Indonesia\\_6](http://bhagavant.com/home.php?link=sejarah&tipe=sejarah_buddhisme_Indonesia_6) Retrieved: April 5, 2010.

was practicing meditation and also accepting a *sramanera* ordination from a Mahayana teacher and tradition. Kandahjaya assumes that the *bhikkhu* ordination he received within Theravada tradition was made possible by the encouragement and effort of his Mahayana teacher. This exemplary act out of compassion and wisdom inspired Ashin Jinarakkhita's spirituality and strategy in shaping his Indonesian Buddhism.<sup>32</sup> His knowledge and experiences in exploring the spiritual realms were the cumulative results of his engagements with clerics and spiritual practitioners from diverse systems. He acquired a harmonious fusion of rationality and mysticism within his personality. This process of finding of his sense of self might be a source of his route-map towards his finding of the kind of Buddhism that suited him and his understanding of what it is to be an Indonesian Buddhist. His ability to maintain harmony between the two Buddhist traditions - Theravāda and Mahāyāna - might also be informed by his strong conviction that the most appropriate Buddhism to be practiced in Indonesia is the one that is inherited from an Indonesian ancestor.<sup>33</sup> It is the *Siwa-Buddha*, a mixture of different religious traditions (Hinduism and Mahāyāna-Vajrayāna Buddhism) of the ancient time, particularly the Sriwijaya and the Majapahit empires.

I have no proof yet to say that Ashin Jinarakkhita's choosing of his Buddhayāna is mainly in response - and a sort of special (or personal) sentiment - to Sukarno, the first Indonesian president's notion of building an Indonesian characteristics (*kepribadian Indonesia*). But it is tempting to relate his promotion of the *Sanghyang Ādibuddha* by comparing to Sukarno's speech on June 1, 1945, known as the founding of *Pancasila*, that he was doing was only re-discovering the five pearls from the Indonesian soil.<sup>34</sup> *Sanghyang Adibuddha* is not something that is foreign to Buddhists in Indonesia, it is written in the ancient Javanese scripture. What Ashin Jinarakkhita was doing was rediscovering the concept. This might also strengthen his foundation in deciding to employ the concept; the historical basis that it was originating in the Majapahit Empire. Again, this kingdom, along with Sriwijaya, were the two kingdoms brought up as the examples of the golden era of the Indonesian, by Sukarno in his *Lahirnya Pancasila* speech.<sup>35</sup>

Aside from my assumption, it is reasonable enough to conclude that the promotion of the *Sanghyang Ādibuddha* by Ashin Jinarakkhita was a "skillful means"<sup>36</sup> to response to the State-imposed ideology of the Pancasila's first principle. One must remember that the opposition toward this idea was likely to come after the Thai Buddhism gave much influence to the Theravādan tradition in Indonesia. In addition to this, Ashin Jinarakkhita's form of Buddhism—Buddhayāna Buddhism that embraces different schools of Buddhism - was built upon his cross-cultural spirit of individuality. His conviction of the appropriate adoption of a certain kind of Buddhism to live by in Indonesia was not wavered despite of the strong influence from the Thai Buddhists. It seems too that he was aware of the multi-ethnic Buddhists living in his time, with the biggest population presumably the Chinese. So he did not want to give up his Chinese (Mahāyāna) Buddhist tradition that flowing within his blood. I would conclude by saying that he was building a bridge that uniting different ethnicities in his time; the time of struggling for awakening Buddhism from its long hibernation and with the challenge from

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<sup>32</sup> Kandahjaya, Hudaya, "Via Kong Hoa Sie to Borobudur," a paper presented at the IABS, Taiwan, June 2011, p. 9.

<sup>33</sup> In Juangari, Edij, *Ibid.*, p.185, it is stated that Bhikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita always encouraged his 'intellectual' followers to discover the Buddhist teachings that had already been rooted in the Indonesian culture.

<sup>34</sup> Pidato Sukarno "*Lahirnya Pancasila*," also in Soekarno, Ir. *Filsafat Pancasila Menurut Bung Karno*, Yogyakarta: penerbit Media Pressindo, in Dharmaputera. Eka. *Ibid.*, p. 68.

<sup>35</sup> Pidato Sukarno "*Lahirnya Pancasila*."

<sup>36</sup> Skillful means (*upaya kausalya*) is a Buddhist idiom, coming from the Mahayana philosophical teaching designating a wise thought and/or action to apply a Buddhist teaching in a certain context.

the new State to establish its identity in line with the ideological foundation of this new State.

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