

Echoes Across the Azure: Language and Legacy Along the Buddhist Maritime Corridor

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Abstract

The Maritime Silk Road emerges as a vibrant tapestry of human connection, its threads spun not from silk alone but from the restless tides of history. This proposed paper explores the interplay between linguistic exchange and cultural transmission along the ancient maritime networks that connected South, Southeast, and East Asia. This study will trace how Buddhist teachings, carried across the Indian Ocean, the Bay of Bengal, and the South China Sea, were mediated through languages such as Sanskrit, Pali, and vernacular dialects, fostering hybrid intellectual and spiritual traditions. Key case studies, such as the Tamil merchant guilds of *Nagapattinam*, the cosmopolitan hubs of Srivijaya, and the coastal Chinese monasteries of Quanzhou, reveal the interplay between language preservation and innovation in sustaining religious connectivity. This also examines the enduring legacies of these exchanges, visible in architectural motifs, lexicons, and performative practices that continue to echo the corridor's cosmopolitan ethos. Ultimately, this work repositions the Buddhist Maritime Corridor or Buddhist Maritime Silk Route as a transformative space where linguistic fluidity and cross-cultural negotiation forged a shared heritage, offering insights into the resilience of interconnected systems of belief in an age of globalization.

Keywords: Culture; Heritage; Linguistic; Silk Route; Trade.