

The Source is Dry

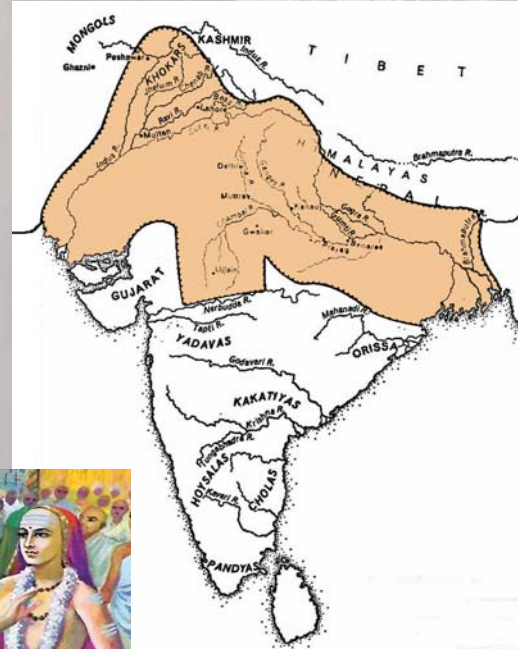
The Decline of Buddhism in India



Ruins of Nalanda Vihara



Adi Shankara incorporated several Buddhist tenets into Hinduism while converting many Buddhists.



Map of Muslim expansion on the sub-continent (1236)



Mohammed Ghori and his descendants destroyed Nalanda

The decline of the Buddhist faith in the Indian subcontinent had incalculable consequences for the Roof of the World. Four factors are usually mentioned to explain this decline: the revival of Hinduism mainly after the conversions undertaken by Adi Shankaracharya; the degeneration of Buddhism; the loss of princely patronage in Northern India. The *coup de grâce* came with the arrival of the Turkish armies who slaughtered monks and destroyed the *viharas*.



With the decline of the Pala Dynasty, royal patronage shifted from Buddhism to Hinduism.

The monasteries of Tibet became the last repositories of the ancient wisdom which virtually disappeared in its land of origin.

A Tibetan monk, Dharmasvamin who visited Nalanda in 1235 witnessed only destruction. He could not recover a single manuscript from what was once, one of the richest libraries of the world. He could however meet a 90 year old monk who taught him Sanskrit. When he was warned that the Muslim troops were approaching, he carried his master on his shoulders and hid until the raiders had gone. This image symbolized the end of India's cultural influence over Tibet.



Dharmasvamin (Chag Lotsawa) may have carried his guru between these buildings



Some of the Indian artists who migrated to Western Tibet may have painted these exquisite frescoes.