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The Role of Sándor Csoma de Kőrös in Establishing the Foundations for the Dissemination of Vajrayāna Buddhism

Author & Corresponding Author*

1. Nguyen Thanh Trung
2. Thich Nguyen The
3. Phrakhrupalad Chotipath Acharashubho Thepa*

Affiliation:

1. Ho Chi Minh City University of Education, Vietnam.
2. Center for Religious Studies, Vietnam Buddhist Research Institute, Vietnam.
3. Faculty of Religion and Philosophy, Mahamakut Buddhist University, Thailand.

1. Email: trungnt@hcmue.edu.vn
2. Email: thichnguyenthe@gmail.com
3. Email: chotipath.the@mbu.ac.th

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Original Research Articles

The Role of Sándor Csoma de Kőrös in Establishing the Foundations for the Dissemination of Vajrayāna Buddhism

Nguyen Thanh Trung¹, Thich Nguyen The², & Phrakhrupalad Chotipath Acharashubho Thepa^{3*}

Abstract

This study investigates the intellectual contributions of Sándor Csoma de Kőrös to the understanding, systematization, and dissemination of Vajrayana Buddhism, with particular attention to his role as a non-religious European scholar who bridged Eastern and Western intellectual traditions in the nineteenth century. While Tibetan Buddhism and Vajrayana thought have been widely examined, Csoma's pioneering philological and translational efforts especially his systematic codification of Tibetan Buddhist terminology remains comparatively underexplored within Buddhist studies scholarship. The research aims to analyze Csoma's scholarly methodology and assess its impact on the global reception of Vajrayana Buddhism. Employing a qualitative historical-research design, the study utilizes historical-critical analysis, comparative textual study, and philosophical hermeneutics as its principal analytical frameworks. The primary research materials consist of Csoma's Tibetan-English dictionaries, grammatical treatises, translations of Vajrayana texts, personal correspondences, and contemporaneous academic records. These sources are examined in comparison with traditional Tibetan monastic interpretations to identify methodological innovations and intercultural dynamics. The findings reveal that Csoma developed a rigorous, systematic, and culturally sensitive approach to Buddhist scholarship, combining Western philological precision with deep engagement in Tibetan monastic learning environments. His work not only established foundational tools for Tibetan and Vajrayana studies but also facilitated cross-cultural knowledge transmission without religious proselytization. The study contributes scholarly value by enriching the historiography of Buddhist studies and re-evaluating the role of secular scholars in religious knowledge production. Practically, the findings offer insights for intercultural education, translation studies, and contemporary Vajrayana scholarship, highlighting Csoma de Kőrös's enduring influence on global Buddhist intellectual history.

Keywords: Sándor Csoma De Kőrös; Vajrayana Buddhism; Tibetan Studies; Philology; Intercultural Exchange

Introduction

If Xuanzang (Tran Huyen Trang) traversed 19,000 km over 17 years (627–645 CE) from Chang’an across the Gobi and Tian Shan to Bodh Gaya, thereby forging a symbolic legend in Buddhist, literary, and cultural history, then the 23-year odyssey (1819–1842) of Sándor Csoma de Kőrös—covering nearly 14,000 km from Hungary through Iran, Afghanistan, Lahore, to Ladakh (Zangla Monastery)—likewise merits recognition. Enduring war zones and epidemics in the Middle East and Central Asia, Csoma produced the first Tibetan dictionary and grammar for the West, sought the origins of the Hungarian people, and founded modern Tibetology. Yet his achievements remain less celebrated, owing to the turbulent nineteenth-century context, the austere conditions of remote monastic research, and his ascetic lifestyle among Tibetan cloisters. As a secular scientist and linguist, Csoma operated with systematic, modern methods distinct from indigenous monastic and scholarly traditions. He was too pioneering to be fully acknowledged in his era, yet insufficiently synthesized to transcend temporal constraints and profoundly influence contemporary Tibetology. Consequently, while Tibetan Buddhist studies have flourished, Csoma’s role as a non-religious scholar who systematized Vajrayāna knowledge – particularly his fusion of Buddhist philosophy with Western scientific method – remains underexplored.

This investigation into Sándor Csoma de Kőrös’s foundational role in disseminating Vajrayāna Buddhism carries profound scientific, practical, and educational significance. First, it re-evaluates Csoma’s contributions to shaping Vajrayāna scholarship – not merely through translation but by constructing scholarly tools (dictionaries, grammars) that integrate linguistics and philosophy in an interdisciplinary manner, laying groundwork for modern Buddhist and Vajrayāna studies. Second, it provides a framework for intercultural education programmes, promoting Vajrayāna as a globally relevant cultural heritage with substantial impact on psychology and contemporary philosophy. Finally, from an educational perspective, Csoma’s legacy inspires perseverance and creativity in cross-cultural exploration, particularly through authentic, effective fieldwork in divergent cultural contexts.

The research object comprises Csoma’s characteristics and contributions to Vajrayāna study and dissemination via translations, dictionaries, and intercultural engagement. The spatial scope centers on Csoma’s activities in Tibet and India, especially Ladakh and Zangla monasteries, where he engaged the Vajrayāna spiritual milieu. The temporal scope is confined to 1819–1842, the period of his seminal works. The textual scope is delimited to three core publications: *Dictionary Tibetan and English* (1834) – the first bilingual lexicon, enabling access to Vajrayāna terminology; *Analysis of Dulva Portion of Kah-gyur* (1836) – an examination of the Vinaya section of the Kangyur, offering insight into tantric doctrine and ritual; and *Sanskrit-Tibetan-English Vocabulary: Being an Edition and Translation of the Mahāvvyutpatti* (1984) – a trilingual lexicon

systematising terminology. These works not only established foundations for Vajrayāna research beyond Tibet but also reflect Csoma's visionary scope, facilitating deeper academic exploration of the tradition. The research aim is to elucidate Csoma's methodological characteristics in systematising and disseminating Vajrayāna knowledge through philology and cultural interchange, transforming esoteric wisdom into academic discourse and forging an East–West bridge via unique fieldwork. This aim entails analysing his translations and dictionaries, identifying shared traits, evaluating strengths and limitations, and assessing his impact on Buddhist scholarship.

Objective

1. Csoma applied creative philology to translate Vajrayāna texts, influenced by the Vajrayāna philosophical milieu.
2. Csoma rigorously systematised Vajrayāna texts, ensuring accuracy, within the Tibetan monastic environment.
3. Csoma connected East–West through an intercultural approach shaped by the Vajrayāna spiritual milieu.

Literature Review

Kőrösi Csoma Sándor (1784–1842), a Transylvanian-Hungarian scholar born into a Szekler family in Kőrös, devoted his life to tracing Hungarian ethnogenesis through an extensive Asian journey. After studying languages and history at Göttingen University, he departed in 1819, traversing the Balkans, Middle East, Iran, and Afghanistan to reach India and Tibet. There, he lived ascetically in monasteries, mastered Tibetan, compiled the first Tibetan – English dictionary and grammar, and studied local Buddhism before dying in Darjeeling en route to Lhasa. Csoma's biography, multilingual autodidacticism (over 20 languages), and pioneering Tibetology have attracted substantial scholarship. Biographical and linguistic studies underscore Csoma's foundational role in Tibetology. Theodore Duka's *Life and Works of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös* (1885) employs biographical and textual analysis to chronicle Csoma's journey and works such as the Tibetan-English Dictionary, hailing him as a pioneering Orientalist yet without detailed analysis of his engagement with Vajrayāna philosophy. Bettina Zeisler's "Alexander Csoma de Kőrös' contribution to Tibetan studies" (2015) evaluates his linguistic contributions, emphasising the dictionary and grammar as templates for subsequent scholarship due to their consistent structure. De Somogyi's "Alexander Csoma de Kőrös" (1935) summarises the linguist's life and Tibetological primacy but lacks depth and contemporary contextualisation. Overall, this cluster prioritises biographical and philological history; its strength lies in rich documentation, but a gap persists in interdisciplinary comparative analysis (e.g., linguistic, and literary Buddhist heritage). This informs Hypothesis 1 (H1): Csoma employed creative philology to translate Vajrayāna texts, influenced by the Vajrayāna philosophical milieu.

Csoma's study of Vajrayāna texts such as the Kangyur and Tengyur in Ladakh and Zangla spurred research into Tibetan tantric preservation and translation, enhancing European understanding of Buddhism. The landmark volume *Tibetan and Buddhist Studies: Commemorating the 200th Anniversary of the Birth of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös* (1984, ed. Louis Ligeti) compiles international conference papers from Budapest, addressing Tibetan linguistics, Tibetan Buddhist history, and Csoma's legacy, with in-depth analyses of his dictionary, Indo-Tibetan journey, and influence on modern Tibetology. The Dalai Lama XIV's *The World of Tibetan Buddhism* (1995), applying philosophical and canonical exegesis, lucidly presents core Vajrayāna concepts – compassion, tantra, guru-yoga – for novice audiences. These studies provide robust theoretical frameworks for Vajrayāna but omit Csoma's scholarly role; this gap necessitates examining non-religious Orientalists, supporting Hypothesis 2 (H2): Csoma rigorously systematised Vajrayāna texts, ensuring accuracy within the Tibetan monastic environment.

Finally, Csoma's itinerary and collaboration with the Asiatic Society of Bengal have inspired research on East–West intellectual bridging and Vajrayāna dissemination in Europe. Géza Bethlenfalvy's "The Founder of Tibetan and Buddhist Studies – Alexander Csoma de Kőrös (1784–1842)" (2009) offers an accessible biographical overview within East–West cultural exchange yet lacks technical linguistic analysis. Atilla K.'s "History of Hungarian Buddhism and the Influences of Buddhism in Hungary until the 1920s" (2017) surveys nineteenth- to early twentieth-century Hungarian Buddhism, spotlighting Csoma as a cultural interchange icon via his quest for Hungarian origins through Asian linguistics and culture. Collectively, these works illuminate dissemination processes but neglect Csoma's intercultural methodology; this informs Hypothesis 3 (H3): Csoma forged East–West connections through an intercultural approach shaped by the Vajrayāna spiritual environment.

Materials and Methods

This article adopts a Buddhist-critical approach – examining the interplay and transformation between literature and Buddhist studies (Nguyen Thanh Trung, 2022) – integrating three specialised methods: cultural-historical analysis, textual comparison, and philosophical hermeneutics.

1. Cultural-historical analysis investigates cultural phenomena within historical contexts, stressing interactions among culture, society, and history, as exemplified in Bethlenfalvy (2009) on Csoma's East–West role through Tibetan linguistics and Vajrayāna. Procedures include data collection, contextual analysis, cultural factor identification, source comparison, and cultural-historical conclusion to verify textual authenticity and historical significance. This method provides multidimensional perspectives but risks lacking indigenous critique and demands extensive documentation. It is applied to Csoma's notes and translations to discern his Vajrayāna engagement within Tibetan monastic settings.

2. Textual comparison analyses manuscripts to identify similarities and differences in content, structure, and context. Procedures encompass manuscript selection, content/context analysis, meaning comparison, and cultural impact conclusion. This evaluates Csoma's accuracy and creativity in translating Vajrayāna concepts.

3. Philosophical hermeneutics, developed by Gadamer in *Truth and Method* (1960), interprets textual meaning through cultural context. By analysing Vajrayāna philosophy in Csoma's translations, it elucidates his rendering of concepts such as mantra, tantra, and mandala within Vajrayāna cultural space, probing philosophical depth. Based on the research object, hypotheses, and methods, the study model is presented below:

Table 1 Research Model

Research Hypothesis	Approach	Specialised Method	Object Characteristics	Research Aspect	Theoretical Literary Significance
H1. Csoma applied creative philology to translate Vajrayāna texts, influenced by the Vajrayāna philosophical milieu.	Buddhist Criticism	Textual comparison	Creativity	Philology	Expands philological approaches in Buddhist studies
H2. Csoma rigorously systematised Vajrayāna texts, ensuring accuracy, within the Tibetan monastic environment.		Historical-critical analysis	Rigour	Text systematization	Establishes foundations for Buddhist textual scholarship

Research Hypothesis	Approach	Specialised Method	Object Characteristics	Research Aspect	Theoretical Literary Significance
H3. Csoma connected East–West through an intercultural approach shaped by the Vajrayāna spiritual milieu.		Philosophical hermeneutics	Interculturality	Cultural exchange	Promotes intercultural dialogue in academia

Results

This study aimed to examine the scholarly methodology of Sándor Csoma de Kőrös in his engagement with Tibetan Buddhism—particularly Vajrayāna—by analysing three defining research characteristics: creativity, rigour, and interculturality. The findings demonstrate that Csoma’s long-term residence and scholarship in Ladakh and Zangla monasteries generated a foundational model for Western Buddhist studies that was both scientifically systematic and culturally embedded.

Creativity in Knowledge Production and Conceptual Translation

The findings reveal that creativity constituted a central dimension of Csoma’s research practice. This creativity is most clearly evidenced in his simultaneous compilation of Tibetan grammar and the Tibetan–English Dictionary (1834), which established the first comprehensive scholarly infrastructure for Western engagement with Tibetan language and culture. Csoma explicitly articulated this objective, noting that these works would secure “the foundation of a knowledge of the Tibetan language” for future scholars. Beyond linguistic documentation, Csoma demonstrated creative innovation by transforming Vajrayāna esoteric knowledge into academically legible forms. Through close collaboration with a Zangla lama, he standardised religious and esoteric terminology into systematic academic signs. For example, honorific language—integral to Tibetan religious discourse—was marked with the symbol *h.* in the dictionary, enabling Western readers to decode hierarchical and ritual layers of meaning previously inaccessible. Creativity is further reflected in Csoma’s thematic rather than alphabetical organisation of the dictionary. Words were grouped into semantic classes, a structure that prioritised conceptual relationships over lexical convenience. This approach

facilitated philosophical interpretation and connected philology directly with Vajrayāna doctrinal systems. Additionally, Csoma's treatment of Buddhist narrative sources demonstrates creative integration of mystical elements—dreams, omens, and miraculous signs—within academic biography. In his account of Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana, dream symbolism and bodily marks are presented not as folklore but as meaningful cultural indicators of spiritual attainment. This approach reflects Vajrayāna epistemology, in which dreams and extraordinary signs function as legitimate modes of knowledge, and illustrates Csoma's ability to incorporate indigenous spiritual frameworks into scholarly discourse without dismissing their intellectual value.

Rigour in Philological Methodology and Canonical Analysis

The results also confirm a high degree of methodological rigour in Csoma's scholarship. The Tibetan–English Dictionary (1834) demonstrates systematic lexical organisation, semantic precision, and grammatical validation achieved through sustained collaboration with Tibetan monastic scholars. This partnership ensured linguistic accuracy under traditional Tibetan academic standards and produced reference works that remain authoritative in Tibetan Buddhist studies. Csoma's rigour is explicitly articulated in his assessment of Tibetan literature as a corpus of faithful Sanskrit Buddhist translations dating from the seventh century CE. He positions Tibetan as a scholarly "vehicle" for accessing ancient Indian Buddhist knowledge, drawing a direct analogy with Latin's role in medieval Europe. Unlike European languages that borrowed technical vocabulary, Tibetan rendered Sanskrit philosophical, scientific, and religious terms through systematic translation, reinforcing its analytical coherence. His long-term residence in monasteries enabled Csoma to read and catalogue the entire Kangyur (100 volumes) and Tengyur (240 volumes). The findings show that he classified the Kangyur into seven major divisions, adapting the Tripitaka framework while incorporating tantric materials. This classificatory work reflects both fidelity to Indian canonical structures and responsiveness to Tibetan Vajrayāna developments. The Analysis of the Dulva (1836) exemplifies Csoma's perseverance and scholarly precision. Rather than merely listing texts, he analysed meanings, traced Sanskrit origins, and cross-referenced canonical structures. Frequent references to manuscript "leaves" indicate direct engagement with handwritten and woodblock sources, highlighting meticulous attention to textual detail under conditions of extreme material scarcity. This depth of fieldwork confirms a rigorous research methodology grounded in immersive textual analysis.

Interculturality and Conceptual Mediation Between Traditions

The third major finding concerns interculturality, manifested in Csoma's sustained integration into Tibetan monastic life and his ability to mediate between Vajrayāna thought and Western intellectual frameworks. His translations and definitions reveal a deliberate strategy to render Tibetan Buddhist concepts intelligible within European scholarly language without erasing their indigenous specificity. For example, meditation (བསམ་, *bsam*) is defined as "thought; a

thinking, meditating on,” while the verbal form (བསམ་པ་, *bsam pa*) is translated as “to think, meditate, muse on; to consider.” By expanding “meditation” to include “musing” and “consideration,” Csoma reframes Vajrayāna contemplative practices as cognitive and analytical processes, making them accessible to Western psychology and philosophy. The equivalence of “meditation” with “contemplation” further bridges Tibetan Buddhist practice with Western contemplative traditions rooted in Latin *contemplatio*. Csoma’s intercultural mediation extends to his treatment of the indigenous Bon religion, which he defines as a “religious sect” with “customs and rites,” employing terminology analogous to Christian denominations (“Pon church”). By situating Bon within a European chronological framework (“till the ninth century of our era”), he renders Tibetan religious history intelligible to Western readers while preserving its distinct ritual character. In *Analysis of the Dulva* (1836), Csoma further employs terms such as “priest” and comparative references to Indian traditions (e.g., Sanskrit *Ṛddhika*) to integrate Tibetan monastic structures into familiar Western religious categories. These translational choices demonstrate a deliberate intercultural strategy aimed at fostering mutual intelligibility rather than cultural reduction.

Collectively, the results demonstrate that Csoma de Kőrös’ scholarship was not merely descriptive but methodologically innovative, rigorously systematic, and interculturally transformative. His work established enduring foundations for Tibetan Buddhist studies by combining creative conceptual translation, rigorous philological analysis, and deep intercultural engagement within Vajrayāna spiritual environments.

Discussion

Hungarian Cultural Context: Foundations and Objectives

Csoma’s creativity stemmed from his passion to trace Hungarian origins, believing the Szekely descended from Huns and Central Asian tribes. This drive propelled him from humble beginnings – self-funded travel and learning – to scholarly mastery of 13 languages at Göttingen (1816–1818). His adaptability enabled assimilation as a Persian native, monastic practice as a Tibetan monk, and pedestrian traversal of the Middle East, India, and Himalayas for national and scientific ends. Csoma epitomized Hungarian exploratory spirit; his homeland honored him by renaming Kőrös village Csomakőrös (1904), establishing the Kőrösi Csoma Society (1920) to foster intercultural research, and reinforcing Hungarian identity as a European nation with Asian roots.

Csoma’s rigour resulted from Göttingen education fused with Zangla and Phuktal monastic spiritual ambience; his dictionary compilation involved Buddhist textual cross-verification. His journey elevated Hungarian scholarship, advancing Oriental and Tibetological studies. Nationally recognized via postage stamps (1932, 1984) and a memorial park (1992), Csoma bolstered Hungary’s image as an intellectual, resilient Euro-Asian community.

Csoma’s interculturality emerged amid nineteenth-century Austro-Hungarian subjugation, failed revolutions (1848–1849), World War I misalliances, and territorial loss post-Trianon (1920).

Rejecting Finno-Ugric theory (aligning Hungary with peaceful Uralic Finns and Estonians), Hungarians embraced Asian nomadic warrior descent (Ural-Altaic). Csoma's ethnic quest transcended narrow nationalism, opening Eastern cultural portals via Vajrayāna rituals, mantras, and symbols. His Tibetan sojourn forged an East–West bridge: collaboration with William Moorcroft (1822 sponsor) and a local lama; integration of Western scholarship into monastic life; translation of tantric texts in European idiom. This enriched Hungarian culture, broadening national identity to emphasize Euro-Asian connectivity. Csoma's intercultural achievements transcended Hungary – venerated as a bodhisattva in Japan (1933), memorialized at Tokyo Buddhist University; the Kőrösi Csoma Society continues global exchange. Through Csoma, Hungary became an East–West cultural conduit within the European Union.

Contributions to Buddhist Studies, Philology, and Vajrayāna

Csoma's findings deepen Vajrayāna comprehension by converting monastic esoteric concepts into Western academic forms. He systematized Tibetan Buddhist terminology – largely Sanskrit translations – clarifying meditation, mantra, and ritual terms. Dictionary entries include བསམ་གཏན་ (bsam gtan, “meditation, contemplation”) and བསམ་པ་ (bsam pa, “to think, meditate, muse on”) (Csoma de Kőrös, 1834, 125 – 126), directly relating to vipassanā and śamatha in Vajrayāna. ལྷག་ས་ (sngags, “mantra, incantation”) is rendered “religious formula or incantation” (p. 228), reflecting mantra's role in summoning enlightenment energy within tantric practice. “Bla ma” is translated “a master, spiritual guide” (18). In Vajrayāna, the lama is central to guru yoga visualisation of the teacher as the enlightened essence for empowerment transmission. Csoma's rendering clarifies bla ma as both knowledge master and spiritual guide conducting esoteric rites (abhiṣeka, mantra).

From a philological-literary perspective, Csoma's work highlights Vajrayāna textual academization. The Tibetan-English Dictionary (1834) upholds grammatical classification, distinguishing parts of speech, tenses, and contexts (p. x); seamlessly linking philosophy and psychology in definitions like “rational,” “inconceivable,” rendering “meditate” a cognitive process aligned with nineteenth-century Western psychology, achieving relative accuracy and objectivity. Analysis of the Dulva (1836) opened Western scholarly access to hitherto esoteric Tibetan Buddhist literature. Cataloguing and analysing the Kangyur Vinaya section provide the ethical foundation (śīla) for Vajrayāna practices such as empowerment and mantra.

Issues for Further Discussion

Despite monumental contributions, Csoma's works are constrained by volume, contemporaneity, and Eurocentric source culture. For Dharmachakra (“chos kyi 'khor lo,” མཚན་ལྷན་ལོ་མོ་)—comprising “chos” (dharma), genitive “kyi,” and “'khor lo” (wheel)—symbolizing the Buddha's teaching propagation, Csoma translates: “manners or morals of the Buddhists; the Buddhistical

sect” (1834, 78). This emphasizes socio-ethical and sectarian aspects, framing dharma as practical morality rather than profound philosophical layers, reflecting nineteenth-century European views of Buddhism as an ethical “sect” akin to Christianity. Using Latin-derived moral terminology familiarized dharma yet curtailed its symbolic depth.

Csoma’s Kangyur classification in *Analysis of the Kanjur* (1836) merits deeper scrutiny. He divides it into seven sections (Vinaya 13 vols, Prajñāpāramitā 21, Avataṃsaka 6, Ratnakūṭa 6, Sūtra 30, Nirvāṇa 2, Tantra 22) under “De-not-sum” (Tripitaka), treating Tantra (Gyut, 22 vols) as a Sūtra extension rather than an independent “fourth basket.” However, Butön Rinchen Drup (1290–1364) separates Tantra (rgyud) from Sūtra, underscoring its centrality in tantric practice (mantra, visualization, empowerment). Csoma’s integration diminishes Tantra’s autonomy in Vajrayāna, possibly due to reliance on local editions and limited exposure to full tantric transmission, applying Theravāda/Mahāyāna Indian Tripitaka frameworks rather than Tibetan tantric developments.

Moreover, the gap between theoretical lexicography and Vajrayāna praxis remains wide. Csoma defines mandala as “a circle or any plan designed for performing mystical ceremonies” broad and imprecise. In Sanskrit, mandala denotes a sacred circle or cosmogram; Csoma stresses “designed plan” while omitting its microcosmic representation of the five wisdoms (pañca-jñāna) and pure realms, functioning as a transformative device for siddhi. Similarly, mantra as “a mystical hymn of praise, prayer, formula”, approximates Christian prayer, missing its tantric role as sacred sound activating mahāmudrā or elemental control (dhātu).

Conclusion

This study has examined the foundational role of Sándor Csoma de Kőrös in the establishment and global dissemination of Vajrayāna Buddhism through a detailed analysis of his philological creativity, methodological rigour, and intercultural engagement. By situating Csoma within Tibetan monastic environments while employing Western scholarly techniques, the research demonstrates that his contributions extended far beyond linguistic translation to include the systematic reconfiguration of Vajrayāna knowledge into academically accessible forms.

The findings confirm that Csoma’s creative philology enabled the transformation of esoteric Buddhist concepts into structured terminological systems without stripping them of cultural meaning. His rigorous engagement with canonical sources—particularly the Kangyur and Tengyur laid the groundwork for modern Tibetan and Vajrayāna studies by establishing reliable grammatical, lexical, and classificatory frameworks. Moreover, his intercultural methodology functioned as an intellectual bridge between Eastern spiritual epistemologies and Western academic rationalism, facilitating cross-cultural understanding without religious proselytization.

The study thus affirms the three proposed hypotheses, demonstrating that Csoma’s scholarship was shaped by Vajrayāna philosophical environments, executed with exceptional philological discipline, and oriented toward intercultural mediation. His legacy challenges

conventional narratives that privilege religious insiders as sole authorities in Buddhist knowledge production and highlight the crucial role of secular scholars in preserving, systematising, and transmitting religious traditions.

Despite these contributions, the research acknowledges limitations arising from restricted access to unpublished archival materials and the historical constraints of nineteenth-century Orientalist discourse. Nevertheless, Csoma de Kőrös emerges as a seminal figure whose work continues to inform contemporary Buddhist studies, intercultural education, and translation theory. His life and scholarship exemplify a model of immersive, respectful, and methodologically sound cross-cultural research that remains highly relevant in an increasingly globalised academic landscape.

Suggestions

Suggestions for Implementation

Based on the findings of this study, several practical implementations are recommended for academic, educational, and cultural institutions:

1. Curricular Integration Universities and research institutes should incorporate Csoma de Kőrös's dictionaries, grammatical works, and translations into curricula for Buddhist studies, Tibetan studies, translation studies, and intercultural humanities, recognising them as foundational scholarly resources.

2. Intercultural Research Training Csoma's immersive monastic fieldwork model may serve as a pedagogical example for training scholars in culturally sensitive research methodologies, particularly in religious and area studies.

3. Translation and Lexicography Practice Contemporary translators of Buddhist and religious texts may adopt Csoma's systematic approach to terminology, balancing philological precision with philosophical interpretation to avoid reductive or overly literal renderings.

4. Public Humanities and Cultural Dialogue Museums, cultural centres, and Buddhist organisations may utilise Csoma's intellectual legacy to promote informed public understanding of Vajrayāna Buddhism as a global cultural heritage rather than a purely esoteric or sectarian tradition.

Suggestions for Future Research

To extend and refine the insights generated by this study, future research may pursue the following directions:

1. Comparative Scholarly Analysis Comparative studies between Sándor Csoma de Kőrös and other early Western Buddhist scholars—such as Eugène Burnouf or Brian Houghton Hodgson—could clarify distinct methodological trajectories in nineteenth-century Buddhist studies.

2. Monastic Reception Studies Ethnographic and textual research examining contemporary Tibetan monastic assessments of Csoma's translations would contribute valuable indigenous perspectives to his scholarly legacy.

3. Archival and Manuscript Research Further investigation into unpublished manuscripts, personal correspondence, and lesser-known notes preserved in European and Asian archives may yield deeper insight into Csoma's engagement with Vajrayāna practice and philosophy.

4. Digital Humanities Applications Digitisation and computational analysis of Csoma's dictionaries and translations could enhance accessibility, facilitate terminological mapping, and support interdisciplinary research across linguistics, philosophy, and religious studies.

Declaration of Interests

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial or personal interests that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this article.

Ethical Considerations

This study is based entirely on historical texts, published materials, and archival sources. It does not involve human participants, living subjects, or sensitive personal data. All sources have been cited in accordance with academic standards, and the research was conducted with respect for Tibetan Buddhist traditions and cultural heritage. No ethical approval was required for this study.

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Definition of Conflicts of Interest

A conflict of interest refers to any situation in which personal, financial, professional, or institutional relationships could reasonably be perceived to influence the objectivity, integrity, or interpretation of research outcomes. In the context of this study, no such conflicts exist.

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