

Contribution of Buddhism to the world culture

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India feels hounoured and proud for giving birth to Buddhism, which gradually developed as a world religion and which has played a vital role in weaving the fine fabric of world culture. The middle of the 1st millennium B.C. ushered into an era of intellectual resurgence and spiritual awakening of sages and thinkers in India and abroad giving vent to their thoughts with novelty. Lao Tzu and Confucious in China, Parmenides and Empedocles in Greece, Zarathustra in Iran and the Buddha and Mahāvīra in India were the main seers of the age¹. As such, it was a global phenomenon of thought churning process and India's contribution with two great leaders has been quite laudable.

It cannot be said with certainty if the Buddha really aimed at the creation of a new religion. The records and scriptures available with us suggest that the Master was keen and endeavoured his best to reform the already existing religion, which can be termed as Vedic, Aryan, Sanātana, Śāśvata, Brāhmanical or Hindu. The exact nomenclaturè remains obscure and some of these names may be of later origin but are suggestive of the ancient faith.

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan views that the Buddha did not announce a new religion- 'He was born, grew up and died a Hindu'². He was revitalizing or restoring the earlier ideals of the Indo-Aryan civilization. He was in agreement with the faith of his ancestors as far as the fundamentals of metaphysics and ethics were concerned; but of course, he raised voice against the Vedic rituals and sacrifices (*yajñas*), which largely depended on the animal killings. He rejected the idea of merit and happiness, which were accrued on depriving the happiness and life of other beings.

Gandhiji expressed his views on this issue in his speeches published in the papers between 1927 and 1938. He says, 'In my opinion, the teaching of Gautama Buddha was not a new religion... Gautama was one of the greatest Hindu reformers...'³. He observes again, 'He (Buddha) was saturated with the best that was in Hinduism, and he gave life to some of the teachings that were buried in the Vedas and which were overgrown with weeds... His whole soul rose in mighty indignation against the belief that a being called God required, for his satisfaction, the living blood of animals in order that He might be pleased - animals who were His own creation'⁴.

But there are scholars who do not subscribe to the above views. It is, however,

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distinct that the Buddha denounced only the ritual part of Vedas (*karmakāṇḍa*), while the other two parts, i.e. *jñāna* (knowledge) and *upāsana* (devotion) were not criticized. Jayadeva in his famous songs of **Gītagovinda**, accepting the Buddha as an incarnation of Keśava (Viṣṇu), states :

'O Lord! After seeing the slaughter of animals, your heart was filled with compassion and you had denounced such Vedic sacrifices and rituals. (For this reason) Keśava assumed the body of the Buddha'⁵. Further, he is remembered as the embodiment of compassion⁶.

Even some Buddhist scholars and poets express the same sentiments. Sambuddhāgama Cakravartī Rāmacandra says, 'You condemn only those parts of the Vedas, which narrate the process of killing of goat and horse, You are full of mercy and none can surpass you in compassion. The wealth of your virtues is beyond the grasp of those who fell envious of you and such foolish fellows absurdly say that Sugata (Buddha) opposed Vedas'⁷. Earlier, Aśvaghōṣa seems to make adjustment with the continued family traditions relating to religion but rejects the sacrificial killing⁸.

Since the Buddha did not agree with the Vedic rituals, he was often called as *nāstika*. The fact is that he did not accept God as creator and the later Buddhist texts completely discarded the idea of God. The Brāhmanic or Hindu traditions also have some schools, which do not depend on God, Who plays almost nil or scanty role. These are - Mīmāṃsā, Vaiśeṣika, Sāṅkhya, etc., yet these are not termed as *nāstika*⁹. There are certain occasions when the Vedic conventions have been criticized¹⁰, but such statements are general and casual and do not intend to humiliate the Vedas. Such references are to be compared with the bold indictment of **Gītā**¹¹, although it has much respect for them (Vedas)¹². The **Muṇḍakopaniṣad** pronounces that the Vedic rituals are like weak boat and their eighteen forms of deeds are of lower nature¹³.

There were true *nāstikas* of the age who did not believe in this or the other world. The birth or rebirth, as per merits and vices of deeds, were also negated by them. They were known as *ucchedavādins* and the foremost among them was Ajita Keśakambalin. The **Majjhimanikāya** explains their strange way of thinking and the Buddha never agreed with them¹⁴.

We are met with a reference in the **Aṅguttaranikāya** when the Master divides the Brāhmaṇas into the four categories, viz. Brahma, Devasama, Maryāda and Sambhinna-maryāda. These are in the descending sequence and the last category was also called Brāhmaṇa-cāṇḍāla¹⁵. The narration points to the fact that the Buddha paid respect to the Brāhmaṇas of good conduct, but certainly rebuffed those who were devoid of character. Emperor Aśoka followed the same principle and he considered both Brāhmaṇas and Śramaṇas worthy of charity¹⁶.

In the *Morajātaka*, the Buddha says- 'I salute those Brāhmaṇas who are well conversant with the Vedas. They may protect me. I salute the Buddhas, the Bodhi, the liberated ones and the salvation'¹⁷. He was pleased to recollect that there used to be learned Brāhmaṇas who were disciplined, meritorious and observed austerity. People were happy till the illustrious Brāhmaṇas continued to follow a pious life. The sentiments of the Buddha are to be seen in detail in the *Suttanipāta*¹⁸. Thus, the discrimination between the Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas or Śramaṇas, at least at the early stage, seems to be superfluous.

The forward vision of the Buddha with stress on good conduct and welfare of all helped Buddhism not only to flourish as a great religion, but also to emerge as a world religion crossing all geographical barriers. Beside the teachings and message of the Master, the other factors responsible for the rapid growth of Buddhism were the contribution of a number of learned followers and patronage given by some important kings, like Aśoka, Kaniṣka and Harṣa. Translating the travel accounts of the Chinese pilgrims, Beal maintains that the teachings of the Buddha were certainly distinct from the earlier Brāhmanical faith and the salient feature was their universal texture¹⁹.

The Brāhmanic view aimed at seeking favour of gods who were to be pleased through Vedic sacrifices (*yajñas*) and multiple modes of rituals. The heaven was the coveted goal of life, the religion was identified by the observance of some rituals and ceremonies and lastly the advantage and merit of religion was confined to the upper strata of society. The Buddhist thought introduced a radical change in these obsolete practices. As such, the gods were reduced to the insignificant or secondary position and no rituals were necessary to seek their favour. The goal of life became *nirvāṇa* and not heaven, and this meant extinction of desires (*tanhā*) and not to expand them by longing for heaven. The religion was to be recognized or appreciated through good conduct and eradication of evil thoughts. Lastly, the advantage and merit of religious practices became open to all and these did not remain confined to a few. This new wave of thought gained popularity with the passage of time and people of all sections and regions found these new tenets as appealing and blissful. The restrictions of cast, creed and sex became redundant.

When Buddhism commenced its journey towards international stature remains obscure, but there is some possibility of conjecture even in his lifetime. Just before *Parinirvāṇa*, the Buddha appreciates the land of Jambūdvīpa and its people - 'Colourful and rich is Jambūdvīpa and charming is the life of men'²⁰. The term 'Jambūdvīpa' stands for India or should be taken in the wider perspective, is open to guess. If the two merchants Tapassu and Bhallika²¹, who called on the Buddha in the eighth week after his Enlightenment, hailed from Gandhāra region, the event assumes an extraordinary

significance. They are reported to have come from Ukkala and were the sons of a leading trader (*sārvavāha*) of Pakkharvati town. Their second visit to the Master was at Rājagrha and this time they were admitted to the *saṅgha*²². This may, however, be pointed out that Ukkala is sometimes explained as Utkala, i.e. Kaliṅga²³. The **Lalitavistara** records that the two merchants came from Uttarāpatha and passed through Bodhagayā to offer honey and pieces of sugarcane to the Buddha²⁴. The **Mahāvastu** informs that honey and *ghee* were the gifts of these two devotees. Subsequently, Hiuen-tsang in the early 7th century says that these two followers on return erected *stūpas* at Asitanjana near Balkh²⁵. All these references indicate that the message of the Buddha was spreading and at least touching the north-western frontiers.

The personality of the Buddha was elegant, the delivery was logical, convincing, forceful and effective, the message was blissful, transparent and consoling and the language or dialect used was simple, clear and communicative. In the background were his princely birth, renunciation at the young age, wanderings in search of knowledge, big austerity and penance, firm determination and unshaken faith, extinction of all mortal desires in the fire of knowledge, victory over Māra and achievement of the final goal, i.e. the Perfect Enlightenment (*sambodhi*). It is interesting to note that a frieze of kuṣāṇa period in the state museum Lucknow (B. 208) shows Surya in the series of the life events of the Buddha. This may suggest the origin of his family from the sun, i.e. Sūryavaṁśī kṣatriya. (Doris Srinivasan, *Indian Museum Bulletin*, 1986, pp 63-64) and Benjamin Rowland, *the Art and Architecture of India*, 1956, (p. 90) All these natural and supernatural components made his a divine figure and a welcome guest at the entrance of the king's palace, the door of a wealth merchant and also at the hut of the farmer or a labourer. The doors of *saṅgha* were open to all who followed the prescribed code of conduct. Going under the shelter of 'trinity' or *ratnatraya*, i.e. *Buddha, Dharma* and *Saṅgha* was considered an act of great merit and devotees from different walks of society, representing varied age groups, thronged from distant quarters. To some extent it became the fashion of the day and extending invitation to the Buddha along with hundreds of his disciples was also a prestige issue for well-to-do citizens. The Buddhist literature furnished details of such events and occasions of gifts. Some of these incidents have been rendered in early sculptural art.

The knowledge, which the Bodhisattva Gautama Siddhārtha gained and after which he was called the 'Buddha', was the realization of the 'Laws of Causation', a cycle of twelve causes and effects conditioning the universe. It was later known as *Dvādaśa-pratītyasamutpāda*²⁶. The revelation was so deep and subtle that he enjoyed this Bliss alone for forty days and did not think proper to share with others, as most of the people

were not worthy of it. He then pondered over deeply and felt that at least some noble souls should be benefited and he left for Isipatana (Sarnath) to share his Supreme Joy with the five Brāhmaṇa ascetics, who had earlier deserted him²⁷.

The essence of his First Sermon at Sarnath is explained through Middle Path (*majjhima-paṭipadā*). The event became popular as *Dharmacakrapravartana*. It was during this discourse that the Four Noble Truths (*Catvāri-āryasatyāni*)²⁸ and Eight-fold Way (*Aṣṭāṅgamārga*)²⁹ were manifested by the Buddha. Broadly, the Sermon has two layers, i.e. philosophical and moral, but both are interwoven³⁰. Buddhism gives high priority to *vinaya* or *śīla* and the Buddha considered it of greater significance than learning. Begun with god conduct and modesty, this aspect culminated into *Pañcaśīla*, preparing a ground for peace, harmony and coexistence in the world. This policy is relevant even today as was when propagated by the Master in the 5th century B.C. This is a unique contribution of Buddhism towards the world culture.

These basic teachings of the Buddha grew into volumes of scriptures, philosophical works and commentaries thereupon with the passage of time. Some are in Pāli, others in Sanskrit and many in foreign languages, as per requirements of the country. These efforts of devout disciples and *Ācāryas* helped a lot in spreading the message of the Buddha at the global level. Despite the appearance of number of sects and their subdivisions, like Hīnayāna, Mahāyāna, Tantrayāna, Vajrayāna, etc.³¹, the respect for the Buddha and his teachings not only continued but also increased everywhere. The *Tripīṭakas* and the *Buddhavacanas* naturally commanded greater respect than other texts, as the Master had his own style of expression, which won even the opponents. When the *Brāhmaṇa* Bhāradvāja, working in his fields in the eleventh year of Buddha's *vassāvāsa* at Rājagṛha, asked him why does he beg and not sow and plough the fields, the Enlightened One promptly responded: 'I too, plough and sow and it is thus that I find my livelihood'. When Bhāradvāja asked to show the plough, yoke, bullocks, etc., the Buddha spoke again, 'the faith is the seed I sow; devotion is the rain; modesty is the plough-shaft; the mind is the tie of yoke; mindfulness is my ploughshare and goad. Energy is my team and bullocks, leading to safety, and proceeding without backsliding to the place where there is no sorrow'. The speech made a lasting impact and Bhāradvāja surrendered to the *saṅgha*³².

The first, best, effective and historic initiative to globalise Buddhism was taken by Emperor Aśoka in the 3rd century B.C. It is gathered from his Pillars and Rock Edicts³³ that he paid visits to the sites sanctified by the Buddha and paid his homage. His policy of *Dhamma* clearly bore the imprint of Buddha's preachings. *Vihāra-yātrās* were replaced by *Dharma-yātrās*. Pillars were erected with inscriptions at several places to propagate the code of conduct and also to inform the subject about different charitable and pious

projects implemented for the welfare of people and also for care of flora and fauna. Some rockshelters were finished by him and his successors for the rest and meditation of monks in Bihar. Some ministers (*Dhammamahāmātyas*) and *Kumāras* (princes) were appointed to ensure the success of this network³⁴.

The Śrīlaṅkan Chronicles inform that Aśoka deputed Thera Mahendra (son or brother) with four others to preach the teachings of the Buddha in Laṅkā, and particularly the reigning king Devānampiyatissa (247-207 B.C.) and his courtiers. The mission was a big success and a large number of population embraced Buddhism. *Stūpas* and monasteries were built and rich endowments were received for their maintenance. Queen Anuḷā and other ladies requested for ordination, but a monk was not supposed to grant this request. Hearing this, Aśoka sent Saṅghamitrā, sister of Mahendra for this purpose. We are aware of the fact that on constant persuasion of Ānanda, the Buddha had very reluctantly admitted his foster mother Mahāprajāpati to the *saṅgha* and this encouraged hundreds of women to become nuns. The history was repeated in Śrīlaṅkā under the blissful stewardship of Saṅghamitrā. During the second visit, Mahendra carried the sapling of the Bodhi-Tree to the Island, and after about two centuries, the tooth of the Buddha was also brought from India for proper installation and worship³⁵. All these events made Śrīlaṅkā as a big citadel of Buddhism and several important Buddhist texts were either authored or translated.

The Rock Edicts of Aśoka (no. II, V and XIII) inform that missions were sent to Syria, Egypt, Macedonia, Cyrene and Epirus in west. On the other hand, the **Mahāvamsa** informs that as per resolution of the Third Council, met at Pāṭaliputra during the reign of Aśoka, missionaries were despatched to distant places including Kashmir, Gandhāra, Yavana, Laṅkā and Suvarṇabhūmi (far East)³⁶. Within a millennium after Aśoka, Buddhism spread with speed and embraced China, Tibet, Nepal, Gandhāra, Burma, Thailand, Korea, Japan, etc. Kaniṣka's role was also dominant in the 1st-2nd centuries and the appearance of image of Buddha considerably accelerated the process of expansion, despite some casual setbacks and sectarian rivalry in the mainland.

Harṣa's patronage, visit of Chinese pilgrims to India and the friendly attitude of Pāla kings gave much strength to Buddhism, although the Tantric, mystic and a number of other strange practices played a negative role and such a wonderful and popular religion started disintegrating and confined itself to some eastern parts of India. Repeated attacks of the iconoclastic rulers proved fatal to culture of peace, harmony and co-existence initiated by the Buddha.

The message of the Buddha and the Buddhist philosophy has been a big force and source of inspiration to the entire humanity, especially for the believers in religion

and moral values. At the same time, some thinkers have tried to analyse from the social and economic angles. Koppen thought that Buddha was an emancipation of the oppressed and a great political innovator³⁷. Being a close associate of Marx and Engeles, Koppen was naturally influenced by their views. Oldenberg took Buddhism as pessimism emerged due to weak physical constitution of Eastern Indian people³⁸. Kosambi observed that non-violence in Buddhism and Jainism had economic base to save cattle herds from slaughtering in sacrifices³⁹. D.P. Chattopadhyay, R.S.Sharma, Romila Thapar and others attribute this change in human consciousness to a change in social being⁴⁰. In their opinion, the teachings of the Buddha were an 'urban response' as he addressed to the urban people and not to the rural audience. Heterodox movements have sometimes been explained to symbolize the Kṣatriya challenge to the spiritual supremacy of Brāhmaṇas and this was to be compared with the Protestant movement in the Medieval Christian Church, connected by some scholars with the rise of capitalism and middle class⁴¹.

All these social studies, although imbibed with a new flavour, present only a scanty and single sided picture of the issue. The spiritual, metaphysical, moral and humanitarian angles, which emerge as *sumum bonum* of the Buddhist thought are either missing or remain neglected in their logic. This should also be made clear that the so-called challenge by the Kṣatriyas to Brāhmaṇas has nothing to do with Buddhism and Jainism, as there are numerous references of royal philosophers in the Upaniṣadic literature and the important names are - Pravāhaṇa Jaivali of Pāñcāla, Ajātaśatru of Kāśī, Aśvapati of Kekaya and Janaka of Videha⁴². We come across the *Kṣatriya-vidyā* in early scriptures⁴³. The tradition of *yoga* was handed down from generation to generation among the learned Kṣatriyas who were known as *Rājaraṣis*⁴⁴. As such, both Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas frequently participated in the spiritual or philosophical discourses. Jacobi viewed that, 'the germs of dissenting sects, like those of Buddhists and Jains, were contained in the institution of the fourth *āśrama*'⁴⁵. But he ignored the fact that the *Sannyāsa Āśrama* (fourth in sequence) was a later addition⁴⁶. Anyway, these social studies seem to concentrate on only a fragment of Buddha's great personality and vision (*virāṭrūpa*).

Beside high philosophy, non-violence, compassion and assurance for removal of sufferings and cycle of rebirth, the other important factors in popularising Buddhism and installing it on the world pedestal have been art and architecture. The majority of early sites and monuments is Buddhist in nature. At the same time, the recognition of Indian art and architecture at the international level is largely attributed to Buddhism. Rock-dwellings for monks, construction of a large number of *stūpas*, monasteries, assembly halls, meditation places and temples erected, developed and renovated from time to time are the great accomplishments. The statues of Buddha, Bodhisattvas and

Buddhist pantheon were fashioned in different countries and consecrated. Some of these images or paintings were of life-size, heroic-size and some of unusually large dimensions. Their installation at important places, trade routes and strategic points helped a lot in spreading the message of the Master and lakhs of people started coming to the fold. No force was used but the ideals of the Buddha, the knowledge of the devout followers, saints and scholars was deep and their style of teaching and preaching was so impressive and consoling that people listened to them spell-bound and many of them automatically became converts and some even took shelter in the *saṅgha*, which assured their future well-being and provided a congenial atmosphere for inner growth, leading to Arhatahood and even to salvation⁴⁷.

Where, how and when the Buddha image was introduced is a highly controversial and delicate issue. It was certainly an extraordinary event in the history of development of world art and a magnificent contribution of Buddhism to the world culture. The scholars are divided into two distinct groups. One favours Gandhāra origin and led by Foucher, Smith and Grünwedel, etc. and the other votes for Mathurā origin with the champions like Iwasaki Masunvi, Goloubew, Coomaraswamy, Lohuizen and V.S. Agrawala⁴⁸. A reference in the **Divyāvadāna** hints that a painting of the Master was prepared in his lifetime at the request of King Bimbisāra. Accordingly, the Buddha sat in the sun and shadow was allowed to fall on a spread-out cloth for drawing the outline. Later, the colours were filled and some sayings were written on it. Thus, a banner painting or *Taṅkhā* was prepared⁴⁹. Another Buddhist text **Korala Bimba Varṇavo** informs that a gilded sandalwood image of the Master was made with the permission of the Buddha. It was placed in a monastery to console those visitors who came from large distance but felt disappointed when learnt that the Master was out⁵⁰. Similarly, the **Mahāvamsa** (Śrīlāṅka) records that a golden statue of the Buddha in the attitude of Enlightenment was kept in the relic chamber *Ravanavati Dagoba* of King Duthagamani in the mid-2nd century B.C., beside the statues of some other deities⁵¹. But such references have not so far been corroborated through archaeology.

In the art of Bharhut and Sanchi, 2nd century B.C. to about 50 A.D., the Buddha appears through symbols only. At Mathurā, there seems reluctance to show him in the human form. The background behind this embargo was the tradition of **Diḡghanikāya** convention, which declared that the cause of the bondage of his body had extinguished and the people and gods could see it (body) only till it existed⁵². The orthodox Buddhists (Hīnayānins or Theravādins), therefore, did not favour the presentation of the Buddha in human form and the Mathurā artists for sometime remained content with the depiction of the Master in aniconic way. But soon, the impact of Mahāyānīs grew and a phase of

transition in the sculptural art of Mathurā is noticed when the symbols are gradually transformed into the anthropomorphic form. The lead seems to have been taken by the Jainas through the *Ayāgapaṭas* as there was no such prohibition to show their pontiffs.

The competitive spirit to disseminate their path, inspired Buddhists also and they did not wait for long. Some tiny and rudimentary figures were introduced. When bigger statues were required to be installed, these were shaped as Buddha but recorded, as Bodhisattva, probably to avoid conflict. The famous Kaṭrā Buddha/Bodhisattva⁵³ is the best citation of the experiment in the reign of Kaniṣka in the last quarter of 1st century A.D. The model was followed for more than half a century till there was a wedlock between the Mathurā and Gandhāra, the two great schools flourished simultaneously under the patronage of the Kuṣāṇa emperors. The statues carved in these studios were exported for consecration to distant quarters. While Mathurā was confined to a limited area, the Gandhāra style dominated in a large region with several sub-styles and impact from multi-cultural currents, giving birth to a mixed school. The great Bamiyan Buddha images, destroyed in recent past by the Talibans, were the amazing creations of Gandhāra art. The Gandhāra ateliers were largely responsible for projecting Buddhism as real world religion. The interaction between India and Central Asia in religious, cultural and trade realms was furthered by the spread of Buddhism and Buddhist art.

The other important centres of Buddhist art and architecture, which sprang between 1st century B.C. and 6th century A.D., were Amaravati, Nagarjunikonda, Ajanta, Bhaja, Karle, Kanheri, later Sarnath and eastern India, etc. where aesthetically developed figures were chiselled out and architecturally, wonder in mountain was created. Ajanta is a unique combination of rich rock-cut caves, beautiful statues and superb wall-paintings. The great *stūpas* like Bharhut, Sanchi and Amaravati bespeak of a national pattern of architecture, evolved in the post-Mauryan era. Some of the monuments, especially the Bharhut rails, furnish valuable information through votary inscriptions. Several illustrations of the Jātakas and life-events and other episodes have been given labels for identification; thus, the *Stūpa* served as an Open-Air Museum or Art Gallery⁵⁴. Inscriptions further inform that the devotees from different parts of country willingly contributed for the erection of that complex. Epigraphs from other Buddhist establishments are equally significant. The excellent Buddhist bronzes from 6th to 13th centuries, produced in Eastern India, are adorning the galleries of museums in the world.

Abroad, the spread of Buddhism left imprint on the architecture planning of the religious edifices from the pre-Christian era. Nepal, being the next-door neighbour and associated with the birth of the Buddha, underwent almost the same wave of experience as India. The Piprawa excavations conducted on the Indo-Nepal border prove that the

Buddhist *stūpas* were constructed for worship of relics just after the demise of the Buddha and these followed the earlier tradition when such monuments were put up to pay homage to the great kings (*Cakravartins*) and the Buddha had also granted such permission. These contained relics either of corporeal (*śārīrika*) or memorial (*uddeśika*) or objects in use (*pāribhogika*) not only of the Buddha, but also of the other sacred persons like Arhats and Pratyekabuddhas⁵⁵. The practice started in India was followed abroad also. Svayambhūnātha in Kathmandu, Manikyala in Rawalpindi and Ahin Posh in Jalalabad in Pakistan are the elaborate version of *stūpa* architecture of the pre-Christian centuries. The pattern of multi-storeyed terrace and staircase in four directions continued for long and was adopted in the Mingalazedi Pagoda in Pagan, Burma and also in the great monument of Borobudur, Java. In Tibet, Buddhism was received along with the script from India in the early 7th century A.D. Indian missionaries presented some Buddhist texts to the king of Tibet, Tho-tho-ri, but there was nobody to read them. His successor Sron-bstan took vow to get rid of backwardness and to introduce literacy. With script and study, Buddhism continued to grow in different ways including the rendering of wall and banner paintings.

Buddhism was introduced in China in the 1st century B.C. and soon the country became its stronghold. Pilgrims from China and scholars from India made untiring efforts in spreading the message of Tathāgata among the Chinese people. Eight important schools, which developed are - Ch'an (*Dhyāna*), Vinaya, Tantra, Vijñānavāda, Sukhāvativyūha, Avataṃsaka, Mādhyamika and T'ien-tai⁵⁶. Buddhist establishments were also provided with images in varied styles. The Dun-huan cave paintings have close resemblance with Ajanta. Same is the case with the Sīgīria frescos in Sri Lanka⁵⁷, which are marked for grandeur as Ajanta and Bagh. It was from China and also Korea that Buddhism entered Japan just in the beginning of the 9th century. Most of the Buddhist sects came from China and the number increased to thirteen; but five, which became more popular are - Tendai, Shingon, Pure Land (*Amitābha*), Zen and Nichiren⁵⁸. It is a fascinating theme to make a comparative study of the Indian and Japanese Buddhist deities. In Korea, the Buddhism was introduced in 372 A.D. by a Chinese monk. Its peak period was under Wang Dynasty in the 11th century.

Thailand is a country where Buddhism is the state religion and as such, Buddhist studies, Buddhist monuments and arts are taken good care. Cambodia and Laos are also actively engaged in patronizing Buddhist culture⁵⁹. It would not be possible to deal with even the important features in the Buddhist world in this brief address.

To conclude, it may be submitted that Buddha and Buddhism are remembered

for compassion, Golden Middle Path, humanitarian outlook, nonviolence, peace, modesty and self-elevation. These are the virtues of universal appeal. After Enlightenment, the Master devoted his entire life for removing ignorance and sufferings of people and these were the outstanding contributions of Buddhism to the World Culture. The barriers of cast, creed, sect, sex and regions were shattered and people listened to him, his disciples later monks and *ācāryas* with patience and a keen desire to reform themselves. Philosophy, art and monuments further concretised these values of life. Even at the last stage, just before his *parinirvāṇa*, the Tathāgata reminded⁶⁰ :

'Verily, I say unto you now, O monks! All things are perishable, work out your deliverance with earnestness and enlighten yourself'.

I hope, the issues summarily touched here will be discussed in detail by the learned participants in the four-day conference. I sincerely thank the organizers for granting the opportunity to unfold a few petals of the magnificent lotus of the great world religion before the galaxy of scholars. I close this address with my very deep and personal homage to the *Viśvaguru Buddha*⁶¹.

References:

1. Radhakrishnan, S., *Foreword to 2500 years of Buddhism*, 1956, p. III.
2. *Ibid.*, p.IX
3. 'Young India' 1.12.1927.
4. *Ibid.*, 24.11.1927.
5. 'निन्दसि यज्ञ विधेरहह श्रुतिजातं सदय हृदय दर्शित पशुघातम् केशव धृत बुद्ध शरीर' गीत गोविन्द 1.13
6. 'कारुण्यमातन्वते' गीत गोविन्द 1.16
7. यत्रच्छाग तुरङ्ग मारण विधिर्वेदेऽपि तं निन्दसि प्रेम्णा प्राणभृतामतः सकरुणस्त्वत्तो महान् नापरः।
एवं ते गुण सम्पदो न विषया बुद्धेरसूयात्मनां ते मूढा प्रलपन्ति हन्त सुगतो यद्वेद निन्दत्ययम्॥ बुद्धि भक्तिशतक, 96
8. यदात्थ चापिष्ट फलां कुलोचितं कुरुष्व धर्माय मख क्रियामिति।
नमो मखेभ्यो न हि कामये सुखं परस्य दुःख क्रियया यदिष्यते॥ बुद्धचरित, XI.64
9. Sharma, R.C., 'Interaction between Brāhmanical and Buddhist Art' *Jñāna-Pravāha Bulletin* No. 6, 2002-3, p. 164.
10. Canki of *Majjhimanikāya* and Tevijjasutta of *Dīghanikāya*.
11. यामिमां पुष्पितां वाचं प्रवदन्त्यविपश्चितः।
वेदवाद रताः पार्थ नान्यदस्तीति वादिनः॥
कामात्मनः स्वर्ग परा जन्म कर्मफलप्रदाम् ।
क्रियाविशेष बहुलां भोगैश्वर्य गतिं प्रति॥ गीता, 2.42-43
12. *Ibid.*, 10.22 and 15.1, 15
13. प्लवा ह्येते ह्यदृढा यज्ञरूपाः अष्टादशोत्तमवरं येषु कर्म। मुण्डक, 1.2.7
14. Sharma, op. cit., p. 165
15. *Doṇasutta of Aṅguttaranikāya*.

16. ब्राह्मण समणानं साधु दाने।
17. ये ब्राह्मणा वेदगु सब्ब धम्मो ते मे नमो ते च मं पालयन्तु।
नमत्थु बुद्धानं नमत्थु बोधिया नमो विमुत्तानं नमो विमुत्तिया। मोर जातक, सं. 159
18. इयसो पुब्बका आसुं सज्जंतता तपस्सिनो। पंच काम गुणे हित्वा अत्तदत्थमचारिसुं॥
न पसू ब्राह्मणानासुं न हिरञ्जं न धानियं। सज्जायधनधञ्जासुं ब्रह्मनिधिमपालयुं॥
ब्राह्मणा से हि धम्मो किच्चा किच्चेसु उत्सुका। याव लोके अवित्तिसु सुखमेदित्थयं पजा॥ सुत्तनिपात, 19 ब्राह्म धम्मिक सुत्तं
The earlier Brāhmaṇas were disciplined and observed austerities. They avoided five types of luxuries and their conduct aim at self-elevation.
They did not possess cattle, gold or even grains and their only wealth was studies, which they cared for.
The people remained happy till the illustrious Brāhmaṇas continued to follow their pious duties.
19. Beal, Samuel, *Travels of Fah-hian and Sung-yun*, 1869, Reprint 2003, Introduction, p. XLIX.
20. चित्रं जम्बूद्वीपं, मनोरमं जीवितं मनुष्याणाम्।
21. *Vinayapiṭaka*, Mahāvāgga, Nalanda Ed., pp.5-6.
22. *Theragāthā Aṭṭakathā*, Vol. I, pp. 68-70.
23. Ramesan, N., *Glimpess of Buddhism*, 1961, p.22
24. *Lalitavistara*, Ch.24
25. Sharma, R.C., 'Keynote Address to the International Seminal on Buddhism and Gandhāra Art', *Jñāna-Pravāha Bulletin* No.5, 2001-2, p.68.
26. Ācharya Narendra Deva, *Bauddha Dharma Darśana* (Hindi) Reprint, 1984, Ch. I, s.5
27. Dutt, Nalinaksha, Ch.XIX Buddhism, *Age of Imperial Unity*, Reprint 1960, pp. 36768.
28. Four Noble Truths: दुःख (misery of sufferings) दुःख समुदय (thirst and attachment as cause of misery), दुःख निरोध (suffering can be ended by eradication of thirst - tṛṣṇā) दुःख निरोध मार्ग (path exists for destruction of thirst)
29. The last Noble Truth suggests the Eight-fold Way: सम्यक् दृष्टि (Right Vision), सम्यक् संकल्प (Right Mental Resolve) सम्यक् व्यायाम (Right Exertion), सम्यक् स्मृति (Right Mindfulness), सम्यक् वाक् (Right Speech), सम्यक् कर्मान्त (Right Action), सम्यक् आजीव (Right Livelihood) and सम्यक् समाधि (Right Concentration).
30. Joshi, C.V., 'Life and Teachings' *2500 Years of Buddhism*, 1956, p.29.
31. These sects or schools are : स्थविर वादिन् (थेरवादिन्) महीशासक, सर्वास्तिवादिन्, हैमवत, वास्तीपुत्रीय, धर्मगुप्तिक, काश्यपीय, सौत्रान्तिक (संक्रान्तिवादिन्) महासांघिक चैत्यक, बहुश्रुतिय, माध्यमिक, योगाचार, Banerjee, A.D., 'Principal Schools and Sects of Buddhism', Ch. VI, *2500 Years of Buddhism*, 1956.
32. Coomaraswamy, A.K., *Buddha and the Gospel of Buddhism*, 1974, p.50.
33. Rock Edict III and VIII.
34. Mookerji, R.K. Ch. V, *The Age of Imperial Unity*, Reprint 1960, pp. 84-85.
35. Majumdar, R.C., Ch. V, *2500 Years of Buddhism*, 1956, pp. 84-85.
36. *Ibid.*, p.84
37. Koppen, C.F., *Die Religion des Buddha* 2 vols. 1857-59.
38. Oldenberg, *Buddha*, 1881.

39. Kosambi, D.D., *Introduction to the Study of Indian History*. 1956.
40. Dube, S.N. *Bodhirashmi*, 1984.
41. Rawney, R.H. *Religion and Rise of Capitalism*
Marx, K., *Das Capital* I, p.51.
42. Dube, S.N., 'Heterodox Movements in India in the 6th and 5th centuries B.C.', *Life, Thought and Culture in India*, 2001, pp, 475-76.
43. *Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad* 6.2.8
44. एवं परम्परा प्राप्तमिमं राजर्षयो विदुः। गीता 4.2
45. Jacobi, H., *Jaina Studies* Pt. I, p. xxxii
46. Pande, G.C., *Studies in the Origin Buddhism*, p.p. 322-26.
47. There are three main ascending stages of the spiritual elevation of a devotee in Buddhism, i.e.
(a) *Śrāvaka*: higher than a common man (*pṛthaks jana*) and conversant with the process of being removed from sorrows and sufferings. He is not able to attain *nirvaṇa* although desires are burnt.
(b) *Pratyeka Buddha*: higher than *Śrāvaka* and does not require preachings to attain *Bodhi*, which is bound to come to him due to his meritorious earlier deeds. He preaches without speech.
(c) *Samyak Buddha*: Enlightened One. Supreme Knowledge obtained as a result of austerity and penance in several births, full of compassion and free from dualism.
Introduction to book *Bauddha Dharma Darśana* of Acharya Narendra Deva by MM Pt. Gopinath Kaviraja.
48. Sharma, R.C. *Buddhist Art - Mathura School*, 1995, p. 136.
49. *Divyāvadāna*, Story No. 37 titled 'Rudrāyanāvadānam' ... 'भगवानाह तथागत प्रतिमां पटे लिखांपयित्वा प्राभृतमनुप्रेषय। तेन चित्रकारा आहूयोक्ताः तथागत प्रतिमां पटे चित्रयथ। ... तत्र भगवतः छाया उत्सृष्टा, उक्ताश्च रंगैः पूरयत। तस्याधस्ताच्छरणगमन शिक्षां पदानि लिखितव्यानि। अनुलोम प्रतिलोम द्वादशाङ्ग प्रतीत्य समुत्पादो लिखितव्यः गाथा द्वयं च लिखितव्यम्।'
50. Anand, Mulkraj, 'Origin of the Buddha Image', *Marg* XV, No. 2, 1962, p.10.
51. *Ibid.*
52. *Dīgghanikāya*, *Brahmajālasutta* 2.3.23
53. Sharma, R.C., *Buddhist Art, op, cit.*, p. 146
54. Sharma, R.C., *Bharhut Sculptures*, 1994, p.13.
55. Ramachandran, T.N., 'A Brief Survey of Buddhist Art (in India)', *2500 years of Buddhism*, 1956, p.278.
56. Sasaki, G.H., Ch. VI B, *Ibid.*, p.p. 124-30.
57. Dabral, V.K., *Buddhist Art in India and Sri Lanka*, 2000, pp. 49-74
58. Takasaki, J.N., *Ibid.*, pp. 131-35
59. Bapat, P.V., *Ibid.*, pp. 137-38
60. हन्द दानि भिक्खवे आमन्तयामि वो
वय धम्मा संखारा, अपपमादेन सम्पादेशेति
अत्त दीपा विर हथ
61. तथागतः बुद्ध विशुद्ध बुद्धिः प्रवर्तको मध्यम मार्ग ग्राह्यम्।
चत्वारि सत्यानि प्रवर्तितानि दुःखं हि शून्यं क्षणं भंगुरं जगत्॥