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Buddhism in Kashmir: A historical background

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Abstract:

Kashmir due to its location on the border between South and Central Asia remained one of the most significant hubs of contact during the early stages of history. The historical event of Buddhism's advent in Kashmir had a significant impact on how the religion developed and spread throughout Central Asia. The earliest historical treatises on Kashmir, Nilmatapurana and Rajatarangini, contain literary proof that the Buddhist faith has been practiced in the Kashmir valley since its inception. Even though Buddhism was widespread in the region even before Emperor Asoka came to power and had the support of both Buddhist and Hindu kings, it is believed to have become more popular in Kashmir during his reign.

Keyword: Buddha, Buddhism, Stupa, Vihara, Kashmir

Introduction

Historical Background: Sixth Century BCE was an era of huge spiritual upheaval. Great teachers like Lao-tzu^[1] and Confucius^[2] in China, Zoroaster^[3] in Iran, and Parmenides^[4] in Greece questioned the established socio-religious norms and focused more on ethical and moral values. In India the scenario was no different^[5]. India witnessed various new developments in the political, economical and social fields. The religious texts written during this age reflected the changing times^[6]. The emergence of the ruling class and hereditary nature of kinship led to the rise of small kingdoms and republics, out of which emerged some of the first great empires of ancient India^[7]. Frequent wars between the mahajanapadas^[8] created an environment of distrust and violence for the common people. They faced new materialistic challenges, felt insecure and searched for peace of mind^[9]. The period saw the increase in population, flourishing trade and emergence of coinage system^[10]. The rural economy also got developed^[11]. A number of people moved from one place to another quite often and brought their stories and views with them. The rigidity in the Varna system made the Brahmans powerful and the highest of all other varnas. They were the only ones to explain the Vedic religion to the common people. The importance of sacrifice increased manifold. The rituals became very costly. The shudras, the lowest Varna, had to lead a life of degradation^[12]. Many vaishyas had become rich through trade, but their social position still remained low^[13]. All these factors resulted in the rise and growth of new ideas and philosophies in the society and one of the most widely spread of these spiritual conquerors has been Buddhism.

The name Buddhism comes from the word "Bodhi" which means enlightened or awakened and thus Buddhism is the philosophy of awakening^[14]. According to tradition, its founder, Gautama Buddha (also Known as Sakayamuni/Tathagata) was born as Siddhartha in 563^[15] B.C.E on the full moon day of May^[16] at Lumbini Park^[17] near Kapilavastu^[18], Nepal to Suddhodhana^[19], Chief of the republican Sakya^[20] Clan who ruled from Kapilavastu in the Kosala kingdom. His mother Mahamaya gave birth and died seven days after his birth. Siddhartha was thus raised by his step mother Maha Pajapati Gotami^[21] it is believed that soon after he was born, certain Brahmins saw the 32 marks of a Mahapurusha (great man) on his body and predicted that either he would be a world Conqueror or world renouncer^[22]. This worried his father and he took every care to shield him from all sorrows, and brought him up in luxury and comfort. However, in spite of the protection, the inevitable happened.

After years of seclusion, Siddhartha gradually witnessed the four signs- an old man, a sick man, a dead man and a holy man^[23]. However, at the age of 29, he decided to become a wanderer. His meditative nature and limitless compassion did not permit him to enjoy the fleeting material pleasures of a royal household.

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Neither his charming wife nor his lovable son could deter him from altering the decision he had taken to renounce the world^[24]. He ordered his charioteer Channa, to saddle his favorite horse Kanthaka, in search of truth (Mahabhiniskramana/Great Renunciation)^[25] and wandered for six years^[26]. After practicing asceticism for six years, he attains enlightenment at the age of 35^[27] while mediating under a Bodhi tree^[28]. During this meditation, he entered a state of deep mental absorption or dhyana^[29], during which he discovered the four noble truths (Arya Sachchani): The world is full of sorrows (Dukha); Desires are the main cause of sorrows (Dukha-Samudaya); There is an end of sufferings (Dukha-Nirodha); To conquer the desire one must know the Eightfold path^[30] (Ariyo-Attangiko Maggo) consisting of Right Views(Samyak-Drsti), Right Aspirations(Samyak-Sankalpa), Right Speech(Samyak-Vaka), Right Action(Samyak-Karmanta), Right Living(Right Effort, Right Thought, and Right Concentration^[31]). By following this eight-fold path a person can attain Nirvana^[32] or salvation which is the highest goal for a Buddhist^[33]. And thus after a long period of spiritual ordeals and experimentations, physical suffering, ascetic practices and meditation, he decided to promulgate his message to the world^[34], and it was this message that he gave to his companions who sat before him at Sarnath^[35].

For the next forty five years he spent the rest of his life in preaching his doctrine from one place to another. He preached to the people in their vernacular^[36], and won their heart and mind by his noble teachings, kindness, moral grandeur, and deep sympathy^[37]. Princes^[38] and peasants, all extended their support to him, and within a short time his Sangha^[39] grew into a mighty organization^[40], enrolling Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, low-caste^[41] men, and even women^[42] within his order^[43]. But unlike many spiritual teachers, he did not name a successor; before his passing^[44]. Thus at the age of eighty, by traditions he passed away at Kushinagara^[45]. And at the end the remains of Buddha were divided into eight portions^[46].

Meanwhile within a few days of his cremation, the sub line teaching which he expounded during his long and successful ministry was written down by his followers, in the eighth year of king Ajatasattu's^[47] reign, and five hundred pre-eminent arahants concerned with preserving the purity of the doctrine held convocation at Rajagaha to rehearse it^[48]. Ananda, his cousin and principal disciple, recited the Sutta-Pitaka^[49], while Upali recollected other teachings, including the Vinaya-Pitaka^[50] this was in effect the first great council^[51]. A little more than a century after the death of the Buddha, the Buddhists held a second council at vaisali in Bihar resulting in a schism. One section came to be called the Mahasanghika (the great community), the other the Theravada or sthavirada (followers of or believers in the teachings of the elders)^[52]. The differences, at first, were small, but soon grew, and at the third great council, held at patliputra, during the reign of the emperor Asoka, the Sthaviradin was established as the orthodox doctrine^[53] and one of the momentous result of this council was the dispatch of missionaries to the different countries of the world to Egypt, Macedonia, Syria, Cyrene (Lybia), Epirus (Al-Bania), Sogdiana, Srilanka (Ceylon) under the charge of his son Mahendra and his daughter Sangamitra^[54]. He after that sent missionaries charged with the sacred duty of spreading Buddhism too far off Bengal in the east, to Kabul and Kandhar in the west, to the Konkan, Maharastra and Mysore in the South^[55].

Even if there is an argument about the beginning of Buddhism in Kashmir, but according to popular belief^[56] Buddhism really made an influence during the period of Ashoka when

Kashmir formed part of his empire^[57]. While Asoka's presence in Kashmir is not supported by even a single archaeological find. Though after Ashoka, the fate of Buddhism fluctuate with the attitude of rulers^[58] and it was in Kashmir under the rule of Kanishka that Buddhism again continued to receive royal patronage^[59], and the fourth Buddhist Council was held which split into two distinct schools of thought subsequently as Hinayana and Mahayana^[60]. Soon after Mahayana Buddhism became a recognized phase of religion, and it gradually passed from Kashmir to Ladakh, Central Asia, China, Korea and Japan, Tibet, Bhutan, Mongolia and ultimately in the Far East border of U.S.S.R. where it is still a living religion^[61]. And gradually replaced by what is called Vajrayana^[62] Buddhism. No doubt, Buddhism spread in Kashmir and to some extent, threw into background the indigenous faiths. But after enjoying a golden period of ten centuries, it suffered a reverse and fades away due to many reasons, and could never resurface as a dominant religious ideology.

Conclusion

The evidence from literary sources is in many ways contrary to the established archaeological records in Kashmir valley. The introduction of Buddhism in Kashmir valley has been solely attributed to Mauryan Emperor Ashoka, while there is not even single archaeological evidence pertaining to Asoka's presence in Kashmir. Similarly, the evidence from material culture retrieved from archaeological excavations has thrown an ample light on the contributions of Kushan rulers especially Kaniska, but the same has not been recorded in literary sources like Rajatarangini of Kalhana.

References

1. Lao-Tzu, also known as Laozi or Lao-tze was a Chinese philosopher credited with founding the philosophical system of Taoism. He is best known as the author of Laozi (later retitled the Tao-te Ching translated as "The Way of Virtue" or "The Classic of the way and Virtue"). D.C Lau, Lao-Tzu Tao Te Ching, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, England: c1963, p.7
2. Confucius is the Latinized form of K'ung Fu-tzu, Master K'ung, who was born in the city state of Lu in Northern China in 551 BC and died in 479 BC. Confucius came from an aristocratic family and founded his own private school, one of the first in china. His true teachings are contained in the Analects (Lun-yu), a small book of his sayings recorded by his pupils. James Mitchell, The Illustrated Reference Book of Ancient History, Leicester Windward: c1982, p. 90
3. Zoroaster also known as Zarathustra or Ashu-Zarathustra was an Ancient Iranian spiritual leader who founded what is now known as Zoroastrianism. His teachings challenged the existing traditions of the indo-Iranian religion and inaugurated a movement that eventually became the dominant religion in Ancient Persia. L.H Gray, Zorostra, Foundations of Iranian Religion, K.R Cama, Oriental institute, Bombay: c1929, p. 29; Geoffrey Parrinder, World Religions from Ancient History to the Present, Infobase Holding Publishers, London: c1971, p. 190-191; Mary Boyce, A History of Zoroastrianism, The Early Period Vol 1, Brill Leiden, New York: c1996, p. 3-4
4. Parmenides was Greek philosopher, who expounded his philosophy in a single didactic poem in Greek Hexameters. After an allegorical introduction, the work is divided into two parts, the way of truth and the way of opinion. Graham Speake, A Dictionary of Ancient

- History, Basil Blackwell Publishers, Massachusetts, USA: c1994, p. 466
5. The sixth century B.C was a period of spiritual unrest and intellectual ferment throughout the world. To quote R.C Majumdar "the sixth century B.C saw the rise of Buddhism, Jainism and other religious sects heralding that protestant movement which was destined the questioned supremacy of Vedic religion and culture." Sir Charles Eliot, *Hinduism and Buddhism, An Historical Sketch, Vol I*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London:1921, p. xix
 6. The Upanishads greatly contributed to the rise of new religions by creating favorable atmosphere for their emergence. The validity of the various Vedic rites was challenged by the Upanishads and they emphasized the importance of knowledge for attainment of salvation. Benimadhab Barua, *A History of Pre-Buddhistic Indian Philosophy*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi: c1921, p. 192-193; Charles Francis Aiken, *The Dhamma of Gotama The Buddha and The Gospel of Jesus The Christ*, Boston Marlier and Company, U.S.A: c1990, P. 47; S.C Raychoudhary, *History of India, A Detailed Study of Social, Cultural, Political and Economic Aspects*(From earliest times to 1760 A.D), Surjeet Publications, Delhi:2006, p. 102
 7. The Sixth Century B.C. has been described as a history of struggle between various states for supremacy and which ultimately ended in the victory of Magadha and the founding of the Magadhan Empire. R.C Majumdar, *Ancient India*, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi: c1952, p. 95-96
 8. Around 600 B.C, as many as sixteen mahajanapadas (very big janapadas or states) emerged as distinct political entities. The mahajanapadas had fortified capitals where the rajas government offices and the royal residence were located. Most of these states arose in the upper and mid-gangetic plains, including the doab area covered by the Ganges, Yamuna and their tributaries. They were mostly situated north of the vindhayas and extended from the north-west frontier of Bihar called Solasa (16) Mahajanapadas. Hemchandra Raychaudhuri, *Political History of Ancient India, From the Accession of Parikshit to the Extinction of the Gupta Dynasty*, Siendranath Kanjilal Publications, Calcutta: c1953, p. 95; R S Sharma, *India's Ancient Past*, Oxford University Press, New-Delhi; c2005, p. 146
 9. The advocacy of several theories to relieve the people from suffering and liberate their souls also greatly contributed to the rise of new religious movements. The priestly class insisted on observance of karma marga for the deliverance of people, while certain others insisted on tapas marga or self-mortification as the only way for this deliverance. Naturally the advocacy of so many theories for the attainment of salvation greatly confused the people and they were not able to decide which one of them could lead them to salvation. Herman Kulke and Dietmar Rothermund, *A History of India*, 3rd Edition, Routledge, London: c1986; S.C Raychoudhary, *History of India, A Detailed Study of Social, Cultural, Political and Economic Aspects* (From earliest times to 1760 A.D) p.103
 10. Romila Thapar, *The Penguin History of Early India From the Origins to AD 1300*, Penguin Books, India; c2002, p.173
 11. The Second Century B.C, is known as the era of 2nd urbanization in the Indian sub-continent. Expansion of agriculture resulted in improved food supply and helped in the development of craft production, trade, and urban centres. More than sixty towns and cities such as Patliputra, Rajagriha, Shravasti, Varanasi, Vaishali, Champa, Kaushambi, and Ujjain developed between 600-300 BCE. These cities became centres of craft production and trade, and were inhabited by a large number of artisans and merchants. For more details see; R.S Sharma, *India's Ancient Past*, Oxford University Press, New-Delhi; c2005, p. 159.
 12. In the first place, the Vedic religion which was quite simple to begin with had come to be laden with numerous ritual ceremonies and sacrifices. The rigidity of the caste system also contributed to the discontent among people. By this time the Hindu society had come to be divided into four water-tight compartment cases with the Brahmans acquiring an over domineering position. L.J Trotter and W.H Hutton, *History Of India, From The Earliest Times To The Present Day*, Indian Reprint Publishing, New-Delhi: c1977, p. 12
 13. The general economic progress had led to the rise of the vaishyas and other mercantile groups, who wanted better social position than what the Brahmans gave them. Due to these changes, traditional equality and brother-hood gave way to inequality and social conflict.
 14. Basham AL. *The Wonder That Was India*, Rupa Publishers, Calcutta: c1981,p. 258; Ishwar Chand, *Buddhist Metaphysics and Ethics with Special Reference to Hinayana and Mahayana*, S.K. Publishing Company, Ranchi; c2011, p.83
 15. The date of Birth of Gautama Buddha is usually placed about the year 563 B.C.E
 16. Ven Narada Mahathera, *The Buddha And His Teachings*, Educational Foundation Taipei, Taiwan: c1998, p. 1
 17. The route to this spot was marked out towards the close of the second century by a row of pillars erected by King Asoka, to commemorate the event. R.W Frazer, *A Literary History Of India*, K.M Mittal Publications, Delhi: c1897, p. 119
 18. Kapilavastu was the capital of the sakyas. For more details see; T.Watters, *Kapilavastu in the Buddhist Books*, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 1898, p. 534
 19. To quote Sir-Monier, Sakyas may have been originally a non-Aryan tribe, connected perhaps with certain nomad immigrants from Tibet or northern Asia, who may have immigrated into India at various periods and had become aryanized. Sir Monier Monier-Williams, *Buddhism in its Connexion with Brahmanism and Hinduism and Its Contrast with Christianity*, Macmillan and Co, New York: c1889, p.81
 20. Gotami was the younger sister of Mahamaya who was also married to the king and adopted the child, entrusting her own son Nanda to the care of the nurses. J. Barthelemy Saint -Hilaire, *The Buddha And His Religion*, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, New Delhi: c1997, p. 33
 21. The eighth Brahman insisted that there was only one course open; that of Buddha hood. This prediction was that of Kondanna, one of the five who sat before the Buddha in the Deer Park at Sarnath. Michael Ridley, *The Art of World Religions Buddhism*, Heritage Publishers,

- Delhi: c1980 p.13; Philip Wilkinson, Buddhism, D.K Publishing Hudson Street: New York; c2003, p. 14
22. James Vaughan, The Religious History Of India, Shubhi Publications, Delhi: c1992, p. 120
 23. Paul Carus, Buddha and Buddhism, Chander Grover, New Age Publishers, New Delhi: c1980, p. 14.
 24. Sue Penney, World Beliefs and Cultures, Buddhism, Heinemann Library, Chicago; c2000, p.6
 25. According to traditions, it is said that, the Buddha cut off his hair and beard, put on the yellow robe of a mendicant monk and returned his jeweled sword to his father. This dramatic departure is known as the great departure or great renunciation. Edward J. Thomas, The Life of Buddha as Legend and History, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London: c1927, p. 55. See also;
 26. Niels C. Nielsen, et al., Religions of the World, Saint Martin Press, New York: c1988, p. 204.
 27. Wells HG. History Of The World, Vol II, Atlantic Publishers And Distributors, New Delhi: c1994, p. 430
 28. Gautama was at that time about thirty-five years of age. It was then, and not till then, that his Bodhi-sattvaship ended and he gained a right to the title Buddha, 'the Enlightened.' Peter Heehs, Indian Religions, The Spiritual Traditions Of South Asia- An Anthology, Permanent Black, New Delhi; c2002, p. 104
 29. To quote H.G Well, extraordinary attention has been given to the tree under which Gautama had this sense of mental clarity. It was a tree of the fig genus, also called Bo-Tree, Peepal tree or Asvattha. H.G Wells, History of the World, Vol II, p. 434. See also; Sue Penney, World Beliefs and Cultures, Buddhism, Heinemann Library, Chicago; c2000, p.6.
 30. For the Buddhists, Dhyana is the road and preliminary conquest of Nirvana. It is needless to add that the monk, who gives himself up to Dhyana or contemplation lives in complete solitude, and deliverance from all earthly cares and troubles, thinks of nothing but eternal salvation. Pranabananda Jash, Buddhism: An Offshoot of Brahmanism, (Ed.), Researches in Indian Archaeology, Art, Architecture, Culture and Religion, Volume II, Sundeep Prakashan, Delhi: c1995, p. 329.
 31. The Noble Eightfold path is called the Middle path-a path of moderation away from the extremes of self-indulgence and self-mortification. For more details see; I.G Edmonds, Buddhism, Franklin Watts, U.S.A: c1978. p. 13-14.
 32. Ninian Smart, The World's Religions, Old Traditions and Modern Transformations, Cambridge University Press: c1997 .p. 62.
 33. According to Buddha, these eight paths can lead to eliminate desires and attain salvation. Right speech, Right action and Right living lead to physical control or sila. Right mindfulness and Right concentration lead to mental control or Samadhi. Right view and Right intentions lead to the development of insight or Prajna. Kenneth W. Morgan, The Path Of The Buddha, Buddhism Interpreted by Buddhists, The Ronald Press Company New York: c1956 .p. 42.
 34. Nirvana literally means "The blowing out" or extinction of craving, of the desire for existence in all its forms, and the consequent end of suffering. Robert S. Ellwood, Many Peoples, Many Faiths, An Introduction to the Religious Life of Humankind, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, U.S.A; c1976 .p. 118.
 35. Arun Bhattacharjee, A History Of India, From the Beginning to 1947 A.D., Rajesh Publications, New-Delhi: c1986, p.55.
 36. To quote A.K Majumdar, after enlightenment, the Buddha was wondering whether or not he should teach the dharma to human beings. He was concerned that, as human beings were overpowered by greed, hatred and delusion, they would not be able to see the true dharma, which was subtle, deep and hard to understand. However, at the intervention of Brahma, he agreed to preach at least for the benefit of those who were spiritually advanced. A.K Majumdar, A Concise History of Ancient India (Hinduism: Society, Religion and Philosophy) Vol ii, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Ltd, New Delhi: c1983, p. 348.
 37. The sermon or the concrete message that he preached to his five Bhiksus, who had abandoned his company in the forests of Uruvela, can be expressed as called Dharma-Chakra-Pravartana-Sutra (The turning of the wheel of law) as it marked the beginning of the propagation of his religious views to the Pancavaggiyas who were living there. Kanai Lal Hazra, The Rise and Decline of Buddhism in India, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, New-Delhi; c1995 .p. 6.
 38. The Buddha spoke not in Sanskrit, the language of the Vedic priesthood, but a related language based on a north-west Indian vernacular, known as Pali-Bhasa (canon-language). Peter Heehs, Indian Religions, The Spiritual Traditions of South Asia-An Anthology, p. 105
 39. For forty-five years until he was eighty, he travelled about, teaching and consolidating the organization of the sangha. He visited the great new cities of the region-Banaras, Uruvela, Rajagriha, Vaisali, Sravasti, Kausambi, and his own town Kapilavastu. According to Sri Lankan chronicles, the Buddha made three journeys to the island in his life time, one being to the peak of Samanakata, later called Adam's Peak, where he left a huge footprint which became the focus of the island's most important pilgrimage. Rama Shankar Tripathi, History of Ancient India, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi: c1942, p. 101. For foot note see also; Ninian Smart, the World's Religions, Old Traditions and Modern Transformations, Cambridge University Press: c1997 .p. 60.
 40. Among the Buddha's converts were princes, scholars, sophists, philosophers and men of all occupations and castes. When he stayed in the city of Rajagriha, King Bimbisara himself came to do him honour with a retinue of "twelve myriads of men." P. Thomas, Epics, Myths and Legends of India, A Comprehensive Survey of the Sacred Lore of the Hindus, Buddhists and Jains, D.B. Taraporevala Sons & Co., Bombay: c1980 .p. 120.
 41. The members of the Sangha (a Buddhist monastic order) were to strive after the attainment of Nibbana or Nirvana; they were exhorted to be strictly pure in thought, word and deed. The life of the monks in Sangha was strictly governed by rules, of which the basic ten are prohibitions against (1) taking life, (2) taking what is not given, (3) sexual misconduct, (4) lying (5) drinking liquor, (6) not to take part in singing and dancing, (7) not to use ornaments, flowers or perfumes, (8) not to eat at odd hours, (9) not to sleep on comfortable beds, (10) not to accept or keep money. The Buddha thus prescribed a severely practical code of conduct for his disciples, and discouraged philosophic speculation considering it unprofitable for one's spiritual advance. What was still

- more important is his healing declaration that all could partake of his message, irrespective of sex, age, or position in society. See T.W. Rhys Davids, Buddhism London, 1877.;
42. Kern JHC. Manual of Indian Buddhism Strasburg; c1896.
 43. Keith AB. Buddhist Philosophy in India and Ceylon Oxford; c1923.
 44. Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy, Vol. 1, London: c1923 .p. 340-703.
 45. Christmas Humphreys, Buddhism, Penguin Books Ltd, England: c1951 .p. 38.
 46. About caste, the Buddha said it was a matter of common consent and not of birth. "Birth cannot make a Brahmin any more than a non-Brahman. It is by work and merit, by his wisdom, piety and self sacrifice that one becomes a Buddha. P. Thomas, Epics, Myths and Legends of India, A Comprehensive Survey of the Sacred Lore Of the Hindus, Buddhists and Jains, p. 120
 47. Despite Buddha's reported reservations, women were accepted as nuns and were allowed to found a separate order. For more details see Sister Nivendita and Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, Hindus And Buddhists, The Mystic Press, London: c1987 .p. 279.
 48. Pushendra Kumar, Religious Sects in Ancient India, (Ancient & Medieval), Eastern Book Linkers, Delhi: c1928 .p. 90.
 49. The Buddha in the sangha faced a strong opposition from his cousin and brother-in-law, Devadatta, who was very jealous of the Buddha because of his great popularity and influence. He requested Buddha several times to mention his name as his successor. After Buddha's refusal, Devadatta then tried to bring a schism in the sangha by telling the monks to disapprove the rules and regulations introduced by Buddha and left the Sangha with Vrijiian monks for Vesali and Stayed at Gayasisa. Kanai Lal Hazra, The Rise and Decline of Buddhism in India, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, New-Delhi; c1995 .p. 8.
 50. The precise contents of the Buddha's final meal are not clear, due to variant scriptural traditions and ambiguity over the translation of certain significant terms; the Theravada tradition generally believes that the Buddha was offered some kind of pork, while the Mahayana tradition believes that the Buddha consumed some sort of truffle or other mushroom. Whatever it might have been it was difficult to digest and the Buddha was taken ill with dysentery. His illness, however, did not prevent him from going on to Kusinagara, lying on his right side between two sal trees, which the texts reports miraculously bloomed out of season. P.V Bapat, 2500 Years of Buddhism, The Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, New-Delhi: c1956, p. 28;
 51. Edward J. Thomas, The Life of Buddha as Legend and History, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London: c1927, p. 149; tr.
 52. W. Woodville Bockhill tr. The Life of the Buddha and the Early History of his Order, Derived from Tibetan Works in the Brah-Hgur and Bstanghur, Trubner & Co., Ludgate Hill, London: c1884 .p. 145.
 53. Eight nations of northern India divided the sacred remains of the physical body of the Buddha. Ajatastru of Magadha obtained one portion, and erected a mound over it at Rajagriha. The Licchavis of Vaisali obtained another portion, and erected a mound at that town.
- Similarly the Sakyas of Kapilavastu, the Bulis of Allakappa, the Koliyas of Ramagrama, the Mallas of Pava, the Mallas of Kusinagara and a Brahman Vethadipaka obtained portions of the relics and erected mounds over them. The Moriyans of Pippalivana made a mound over the embers, and the Brahman Dona made a mound over the vessel in which the body had been burnt. R.C. Dutt, Buddhism and Buddhist Civilization in India, Seema Publications, Delhi; c1983 .p. 36.
54. Ajatasattu was a powerful ruler. Who ascended the throne of Magadha after Bimbisara in the 72nd year of Buddha's life. From a tradition recorded in several Buddhist texts Ajatasattu, killed his father at the instigation of Devadatta. T.W Rhys-Davids and J. Estlin Carpenter, The Digha-Nikaya, Vol 1, The Pali Text Society, London: 1890, p. 85 H.C
 55. Raychaudhary, Political History of Ancient India, 3rd ed., p. 140.
 56. The first council was accordingly held in the Sattapanni Cave in the Vihara hill near Rajagriha under the presidency of aged Maha Kasapa, who was the first members of the order, with whom The Buddha had once exchanged robes as a symbol of unity. T.W. Rhys Davids, Buddhism, A Sketch of the Life and Teachings of Gautama, The Buddha, Wyman and Sons, London: c1870, p. 213; N. Dutt, Early Monastic Buddhism, Calcutta Oriental Books, India: c1941 .p. 335.
 57. The Sanskrit word Sutra (Pali Sutta) or discourse is the name generally given to any text said to contain the words or teachings of the Buddha. The Sutta-Pitaka consists five Nikayas (collections): c1 Digha Nikaya (Collection of long Discourses) 2 Majjhima Nikaya (collection of Middle length Discourse) 3 Majjhima Nikaya (Collection of Kindred Sayings) 4 Anguttara Nikaya (collection of Gradual Sayings) 5 Khuddaka Nikaya (Smaller collection) the fifth is sub-divided into 5 books. Nyanaponika Thera and Hellmuth Hecker, Great Disciples of the Buddha, Their Lives Works and Legacy, Wisdom Publications, Boston: U.S.A, p. xxix-xxx; Robert E. Buswell, Encyclopedia of Buddhism, Macmillan Reference Gale Group, USA; c2004, p. 810
 58. The word vinaya is derived from a Sanskrit verb that means to lead or take away, remove; to train, tame, or guide. In short vinaya is the body of teachings and texts that tell the ordained follower of the Buddha how he or she should or must behave. The Vinaya-Pitaka consists of the following five books: c1 Parajikapali Vibhanga (Major offences) 2 Pacittiya Pali (Minor offences) 3 Mahavagga Pali Khandaka (Greater Section) 4Cullavagga Pali (Lesser Section) 5 Parivara Pali (Epitome of the Vinaya). Hinuber Oskar Von, "Buddhist Law According to the Theravada-Vinaya. A Survey of Theory and Practice." Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies 18, No. 1 (1995), p. 7-45.
 59. William Montgomery Mc Govern, An Introduction to Mahayana Buddhism, Pravin Publications Varanasi, India: c1972, p. 116; Richard H. Robinson, The Buddhist Religion A Historical Introduction, Wadsworth Publishing Company, U.S.A: c1997, p. 51
 60. There is no room for doubt that the council marked the evolution of new schools of thought. In the history of the succession of schools, it is found that the first schism in the sangha was followed by a series of schism leading to the formation of different sub-sects, and in the course of

- time eleven such sub-sects issued from the Mahasanghikas. Later, there appeared other sub-sects also. All these branches appeared one after another in close succession within three or four hundred years after the Buddha's Parinirvana. Christmas Humphreys, Buddhism, Penguin Books, Harmonds Worth Middlesex, London: c1951, p. 45-46; P.V Bapat, 2500 Years of Buddhism, p. 99-100
61. One of the primary purposes of this council was to debate the philosophical issue which has divided the Sthaviras and the Saravastivadins. In the end the matter was decided in favour of the former and propounded the abhidhamma treatise, during the council. Geoffrey Parrinder, World Religions From Ancient History to the Present, Infobase Holding Publishers, London: c1971, p. 281.
 62. Conze E. Buddhism A Short History, One World Publishers, London: c1980 .p.32;
 63. Bapat PV. 2500 Years of Buddhism, p.45
 64. Mahendra was followed to Ceylon by his sister Sanhamitra, who brought with her a cutting of the Bodhi Tree of Bodh Gaya, which is still in the ruins of Anuradhapura, the then capital. Christmas Humphreys, Buddhism, Penguin Books, Harmonds Worth Middlesex, London: c1951 .p. 46, 62.
 65. Mircea Eliade, Loan P. Couliano, Hillary S. Wiesner, The Harper Collins Concise Guide to World Religions, Harper San Fransico Publishers, New York: c1991 .p. 29.
 66. Alexander Cunningham, Bhilsa Topes; or Buddhist Monuments of Central India, Smith Elder and Co., Cornhill, London: c1854, p.1.
 67. Charles Eliot, Hinduism and Buddhism, An Historical Sketch, Vol I, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London: c1921, p. XXIII;
 68. Law BC. Buddhistic Studies, The Indian Research Institute Manicktolla Street, Calcutta: c1945 .p. 208.
 69. Khuihami GH, Tarikh-i-Hassan. Research and Publication Department Jammu and Kashmir Government, Srinagar: c1954 .p. 426.
 70. Edward Conze, Buddhism A Short History, p.58-60
 71. Immediately after the death of Asoka, Mauryan Empire fell apart, and the Sunga dynasty, (185-28 B.C.), which overthrow the Mauryas, leaned more towards Brahmanism by introducing animal sacrifice and witnessed the persecution of Buddhists and unforced re-conversion in India. Romila Thapar, The Penguin History of Early India From the Origins to AD 1300, p. 206; Sailendra Nath Sen, Ancient Indian History and Civilization, New Age International Ltd, New Delhi, India: c1999 .p. 152-153.
 72. Since the demise of Asoka, Buddhism continued its existence in north-west India with the patronage of Sakya-Yavanas and Kushanas. In the reign of Kaniska, it once more came to the forefront of Indian religions and recovered its lost popularity. Nalinaksha Dutt, Mahayana Buddhism, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi: c1978, p. 18.
 73. Majumdar RC. Ancient India, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi: c1987 .p. 122-123.
 74. The terms Hinayana and Mahayana were invented by the Mahayanists. All the early eighteen sects of Buddhism are collectively called Hinayana. The scriptures of the Hinayanists are written in Pali, those of Mahayanists are done in Sanskrit. Sometimes called Pali School and the Sanskrit School respectively. Again, while Hinayana mainly dominated in Ceylon and Burma and as a result was called "Southern Buddhism", Mahayana prevailed in Nepal, China, Tibet, Mongolia, Korea and Japan and was consequently given the name "Northern Buddhism". William Montgomery Mc Govern, An Introduction to Mahayana Buddhism, Pravin Publications, Varanasi: c1972 .p. 1.
 75. Arun Bhattacharjee, A History of India, (From the Beginning to 1947 A.D.), Rajeesh Publications, New-Delhi; c1986 .p. 56.
 76. Donald S. Lopez, Asian Religions in Practice; An Introduction, Princeton University Press, New Jersey: c1999 .p. 61.
 77. From Kashmir both Indian and non- Indian monks risked their lives by travelling on foot or mules over the hilly regional and mountainous tracks at the foot of the Himalayas in order to carry the message of Buddha. Nalinaksha Dutt, Early History of the Spread of Buddhism and the Buddhist Schools, Luzac and Co., Great Russell: London: c1925, p. 46; Nalinaksha Dutt, Mahayana Buddhism, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi: c1978, p. 24; Advaitavadini Kaul, Buddhist Savants of Kashmir Their Contribution Abroad, Utpal Publications, Srinagar: c1987 .p. 10.
 78. Vajrayana literally means "Vehicle of Thunderbolt". The Vajrayana or Diamond Vehicle is also referred to as Mantrayana, Tantrayana, Tantric, or Esoteric Buddhism. It marks the transition from Mahayana speculative thought to the enactment of Buddhist ideas in individual life. It is an esoteric extension of Buddhist thought and practice which sees itself as a quicker, more effective path to enlightenment. Its followers believed that salvation can be best attained by acquiring the magical power, which they called Vajra. Shashi Bhusan Dasgupta, An Introduction to Tantric Buddhism, Sibendranath Kanjilal, Calcutta: c1950, p. 71-73.
 79. See also; Donald S. Lopez, Asian Religions in Practice; An Introduction, Princeton University Press, New Jersey: c1999, p. 61.
 80. John S. Way of Buddhism, Thorsons, London; c2001, p. 14.