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Did the Image of Buddha originate in Gandhara state or in India?

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ABSTRACT

The debate on the problem of appearing the statute of the Lord Buddha is not much special cases of studies for Indian people. Because, between B.C 2500 and 1500, taking refuge in statues carved by Indian people in ancient times during Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa era, has been already developed. But for Buddha statue, the sculptors have carved yet neither at the time of Lord Buddha, nor the time of King Asoka. Besides, Buddha's statue has not been carved yet till 2nd century B.C. In the context of mention above, It was proved that Sanchi stupa built by King Asoka in 3rd century BC we can see symbols of Sunflower, Bodhi tree, and footprint carved instead of Buddha and we can see some symbols on its commemorative pillars erected beside a gateway of Sanchi stupa. Later, another Buddhist sect came up and split from the majority Mahasamghikas Sect after unsuccessfully trying to modify the Vinaya after second council (approximately in 383 BC) and that Sect defined according to their understanding the meaning of the Buddha's teachings. Since then, within the Buddhism appeared a separate religious Sect. At the present time, among the different sects, Mahayana and Theravada Sects are most popular. Tow hundreds later, Mahayana Buddhist sect mixed up teachings of the Buddha with Hinduism which is in favor of idols. Since then statue of Load Buddha was carved as the great man form and took refuge in image of the Buddha. The main purpose of carving and taking refuge in the statue of the Buddha is to understand and realize profound teachings, loving-kindness, great compassion and wisdom of the Load Buddha

Key Words : Origination of Buddha image, Activities of King Asoka, Former situation of northern part of India, Symbols

INTRODUCTION

A Study of the Buddha's statue is to give some knowledge to Buddhists and the people who interested in Buddhism. The Buddhism was established by Gautama Buddha who realized four noble truths and eight paths. His teachings and guidance are not supported to depend on Him personally and He encouraged his followers to be favor of His ways only. In this case, for obvious reasons, I would show some evidence "there was a monk who had the greatest respect for Buddha while the lord Buddha was alive. "His name was "Vakkali". After he was born by his mother, the baby" Vakkali" was offered by his parents to the Lord Buddha, because of afraid of Giant. The Lord Buddha also accepted the offering with aim of saving the life of the boy. At the age of 7, he became a novice and his was named venerable "Vakkali "in religious title .After he became a monk

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, he never went and stayed away from the Lord Buddha. For he was not content to behold appearance of the Lord Buddha covered in glory. Then, the Lord Buddha reminded venerable Vakkali, "Dear Vakkali, why do you love so much the body adored by the foolish men only? If you know Dharma taught by me, you will see me ,without knowing Dharma ,you will never see me, even though you see me personally " And then Buddha continuously taught as follow, the body has endless sufferings, the body is like a tree grow fruits of poison, the body is like a place where is full of disease and it is like a place where collects sufferings . That is why you don't depend individually on me and depend on Dharma shown and revealed by me. Nobody exists permanently in the world and everything is impermanent, impersonality and sufferings. It is very clear what Buddha said. So the Lord Buddha didn't support to take refuge in Him individually, in same way, He didn't encourage to take refuge in the statue of Him .He however, admonished his followers to practice Dharma only taught by the lord Buddha himself.

It can see that thoughts, writings, cultures of Myanmar are considerably influenced by Buddhism. In the same way, both Buddhism rose up various sorts of arts and encouraged and developed sculptured of the Buddha's image. So, in enquiring Buddha's image, it needs to observe background of northern part, (Gandhara State before, now known as peshawar state in Pakistan) of India ,where Buddha's teachings developed and prospered in successful way and where the place carved Buddha's image earliest. It is said that this place (Gandhara State) was the earliest region where Buddha's image was carved as first .The earlier supporting evidence discovered on Gandhara State is Behistun inscrimption of King Darius (B.C. 516). According to the scrimption, Gandhara state included in Persian weapon territory of king Darius .It is clear that Gandara state was dominated by culture of Persian because of subordinate country of Persian. But some B.C 327-326, The Alexander the Great, Ancient Greek kingdom fought, marching over Indus river site, northern part of India. The Alexander the Great however, withdrew from that place because weather of northern part of India was so hot in summer and other reasons. Seleucides, commander in-chief, who appointed by Alexander the Great to administer Babylon, fought again until India

Chandragupta and his Maurya Empire (reign: 321-297 BCE) :

After that, some BC 324, Chandragupta retaliated against an attack to Seleucides, Greece commander in-chief who invaded India and conquered his invasion with throughout India country. And then, the King Chandragupta founded Maurya weapon country.

The northern land under the monarchical kings :

After 144 years later, the Maurya weapon country disintegrated, experiencing various reasons and Demertios, Bactria sub divisional officer, became a king who controls northern part of India. Again a Greek captain named Eukratides, rebelled against Demertios and seized state power of northern land of India. In addition to, a Greek captain also known as Eukratides, took over the Bectria country, since then, the county was in control of Eukratides. After that, Panjab and northern part of India were under Scythian, Kushan races and Mongol empire.

The place where the image of Buddha originates :

Here, there is one point that we should be aware, since several years, it is that northern part of India was under the rule and influence of Greek –for northern part of India has been Indu river site and Panjab state which are well fertile regions. Because those places have been under the Greeks' domination, we can see there not only Greeks' culture and arts but also an art of carving the image

of Buddha, mixing with Persian style, Greek style and Indian thoughts.

Missionary work of King Asoka (Maura dynasty) :

At the time of king Asoka, (B.C. 272-232) Maura dynasty, as king Asoka extended his missionary works into Yona (The Yona is mentioned in the Asoka's inscription, along with the Kamojas, as two societies where there are only nobles and slaves) and Gandhara north-west of India. Therefore, Buddha's teachings quietly flourished in that region by the agency of King Asoka. When the Greek cultures and arts were being flourishing since the time of the Alexander the Great in Gandhara encountered with Buddhism, it became an extraordinary Greco-Buddhist School of Art. As a result of emerging the Buddhist arts in that region, it was found the sculptors who carved the image of Buddha in style of Greek differed from Indian style about one century A.D.

Did the sculptors carve the image of Buddha earlier A.D. one century? :

It is needed to scrutinize that, was Buddha's image carved earlier than one century or after one century A.D.? Before Christian, at B.C. 623, Buddha was born and passed away at 543 B.C. It is important fact to know whether Buddha's image was carved at the time of Buddha or not?

The vattinguli raja story included in Yun pannasa was taught by the load Buddha? :

Here We Myanmar educated monk, Mon wyaySayadaw mentioned in his " Samantacakkhu Dipani" tittle Vol. 1, page 414 to 419 as the following .

At the once upon, While the Buddha toured Dharma journey, King Kosala came to Jetavana monastery to make a pay respect to the Buddha, holding flowers and aromatic substance in his hand, then, he felt alarmed, having not seen the Buddha .After that he had to come back, paying respect to Buddha's place or the sacred throne only, saying so "there was nothing to take refuge in the world". When the Buddha got back from Dharma touring to jetavana monastery, King Kosala came to the Buddha and informed the Buddha with following words,

"Venerable Sir, when you passed away, there won't have anything of refuge for us, so allow us to make the pattern similar to your form for taking refuge instead of you" Then, Buddha said, "the great king, according to his ability or attribute, either small form or, middle form or large form should be made by the lump of solid or hard thing and in the same way, former wise men also have ever done so". In this regard, the Buddha wanted to show the past story and taught "vattinguli raja story". Having heard Buddha's teaching, King kosala came back from the Jetavana monastery .It is known that King kosala sculpted the Buddha's image carving of sandalwood and took refuge in it. Mon wyaysayataw, however, commented that vattinguli raja story comes from yunpannasa (fifty jatakas not taught by Buddha) but also it does not include holding Buddhist council so, wise men and Theravada Buddhist monks did not accept that story.

Important points on the Lord Buddha's image :

Let us consider the facts, there was denying the fact that took refuge in Buddha's image since the time of the Buddha. Some scholars moreover, said that taking refuge in Buddha's image can be during the one century after appearing Jesus, making an evaluation of art work and Buddha's statue, Gandara work carved in Gandhara state, north-west of India.

Besides, there were not valid documents to say that there was taking refuge in Buddha's statue since lifetime of the Buddha. Therefore, there was full of suspects to accept that king kosala took refuge in Buddha's image carved with sandalwood.

Why we didn't see the Lord Buddha's statue earlier than one century A.D.?

We needed to study in detail whether the statues were ruined after carving or statues have been carved with easy materials to be broken or the statues have not been carved at all then? To my knowledge, there is the fact we can consider in Dighanikaya scripture taught by the Lord Buddha. It is mentioned as the following,

"Ucchinnabhavanettikobhikkhavetathâgatassakâyoti??hatiYâvassak
âyothassatitâvana?dakkhanatidevamanussâkâyassaBhedâuddha?j?
vitapariyâdânânana?dakkhanatidevamanussâ

As long as my Body exists in the world, you all will behold my body, after I pass away, you all won't behold my body anymore. When we consider above words of Lord Buddha, even Lord Buddha is subject to death certainly and nobody can escape from death and all living beings are mortal, so it is clear that in Buddhism's earlier literature, taking refuge in Buddha's image carved as living Buddha was not mentioned. Truly speaking, it cannot have been Buddha's image carved as the Great man earlier than one century A.D. Before the pillars of the Buddhist era, there have already been statues of deity (Deva), statues of ogre (yakkha) and statues of dragon, since then, old Indian people took refuge in the statues. But there is some doubt about taking refuge in statues of deity in human form and there are more with the symbolic qualities of the spiritual figure. Later, we have founded some traces and documents of images and idols in Brahman scriptures, sutras, and poem of epic proportions. Once again, Patanjali, the author of the mahabhasya, an ancient treatise on Sanskrit Grammar, mentioned in his book about the statue of Shiva and sakhanda, the general of Deva etc…..Broadly speaking, we may remark that Dravidians people began taking refuge in idol and image and Aryan people began taking refuge in symbols.

The following images of the Buddha took from google

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