

## **Buddhism: A Study of Cultural Contribution in Historical Perspective**

**RAJABABU MAURYA<sup>1</sup> AND YOGENDRA PAL SINGH SOLANKI\*<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Ph.D. Research Scholar and <sup>2</sup>Associate Professor  
Department of Ancient Indian History and Culture  
IOP College (Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University, Agra), Mathura (U.P.) India

### **ABSTRACT**

Baudh Dharam had emerged during the 600 BCE India. Buddha was born on 563 BCE at the Kapilbastu near Lumbini in village Amrakunj presently in Nepal. Conception about the religion has been always in the comprehensive way. The religion touches the matter of all the facts of the human life in perceptual way. According to the theological perception the religion is not the matter of facts related to the any specific religion but it is a type of the conduct and a way of standard of life which coordinates the role of particular man in the society in ethical way as so forever. From timely, the religion has been matter of understanding, Buddha told the conduct of behavior for this purpose to be lived rightfulness in the society as well. Slowly in time, the Buddhism had got emerged as the prominent religion in the society. In the Viharas, the religious activities had used to be activated time to time in ancient period. Buddhism and its contribution to Indian culture have influence of the beliefs Indian culture and its perspective. Buddhism originated in the 5th-6th century BCE in northern India. It has produced a wealth of philosophical and doctrinal literature in various languages and schools. Buddhism was founded by former prince Siddhartha who later renounced his family in search of enlightenment and was called Buddha. Buddhism's core teachings are that all of the sufferings in life are caused by desires and one must stop the life desires to stop the suffering, enlightenment can be achieved by following the Noble Eightfold path (Eight rules that guide the life and morals of the followers to achieve enlightenment). Buddhist beliefs denote that all actions bring rewards or retribution. Although, Buddhism is not widespread in India, where it originated, it has affected the culture of India in many ways.

**Key Words :** Buddhism, Baudh Vihar, Culture, Contribution, Dhamma, Heenayan, Logical, Philosophy, Pilgrimage, Mahayana, Mahaparinirvan, Religious Activities, Ritual, Stupas, Varshavas

### **INTRODUCTION**

Buddhism is a religion that was developed in ancient India. It was developed in India around 2500 years ago, some when from the 6th century to the 4th century BCE. Gautam Buddha started this tradition of the philosophical views among the people which later on became a religion. Tathagat Buddha and his preaching and the philosophical views of his have being detailed in the Tripitikas as well

as including in others Buddhist literature.<sup>1</sup> Buddhism in India is also a famous religion. At that time as after the death of Gautam Buddha, his followers started a movement to share his views among the people. Not only that, but many of the kings of that time has adapted this religion and spread it and also perspective of the universities and business relations between countries helped the rise of Buddhism.

The religion or the philosophical views started by

1. Yadav, Sailesh Baudh (2011). Sahtya me Dharmik Jeevan Unpublished Ph.D. Research Thesis, Mahatma Gandhi Kashai Vidyapeeth Varanashi, p.103.

**How to cite this Article:** Maurya, Rajababu and Solanki, Yogendra Pal Singh (2023). Buddhism: A Study of Cultural Contribution in Historical Perspective. *Internat. J. Appl. Soc. Sci.*, **10** (1&2) : 138-140.

Gautam Buddha within the period of 6th to 4th century BCE that is now known as Buddhism. Gautam Buddha had his name Rahul in childhood having the excellent thinking minded vision as well.<sup>2</sup> Gautam Buddha was the king of the Shakya republic of Nepal who was born at Lumbini. After leaving his home and starting a spiritual life, he became a spiritual leader and a teacher for his followers. This religious view is now known as Buddhism. This religion has been spread mostly over Asia and in some of the other countries in the world and had contributed in terms of cultural and literal perspective as well.

### **Societal Impact:**

Buddhism had a huge influence on Indian culture as it provided the Indian people with a popular religion that was simple to understand and follow. Buddhist teachings disavowed the social norms of that time, ritualism, sacrifices, and dominance of the priestly class prevalent in the 5th-6th BCE era and left a permanent influence on religious thoughts in India. Buddhism attracted the common people because of its simplicity and ease to understand, and the scriptures and teaching method, and monastic order were given in the language commonly spoken most. It gave a tremendous push for social equality and democratic values. It encouraged the abolition of social distinction and strengthened social equality, it opened a way for the women and Shudras to be involved in society and religion, and it disorganized the abstract philosophy of the Upanishads. Buddhism left a deep and significant impact on society

### **Moral Impact and Monastic System:**

Buddhism challenged the followers of orthodox Brahmanism. Buddhist literature focused greatly on love, compassion, equality, and non-violence. It emphasized that man is responsible for his destiny and actions. Religion had given a new dimension to the society as well always and the perception of religion had been a compressive perception in the society since earlier times and this

religious perception touches the holistic life of individual in all sphere of life as so well also. According to the Dharmacharyas, the conception of the dharma is no more related to a particular specific religion as so pertained but it is in so others way is a way of living standard as well. on others ways, this is a conduct of behavior, which gives the society a check and balanced system in which the valuation of the individual in the society is being evaluated in accordance with the good and bad deeds as so far being performed by the individual in the society as well. This proceeding makes the society to the ultimate destination of the human existence through the involvement of the moral as well human conduct of the behavior as so far in the society.<sup>3</sup> Through the perception of the Dharma<sup>4</sup> individual is being became to be the capable of having understanding the principles of the morality, logical tendencies of the minds and action of pro-justice as well. Religious inclination makes an individual having a capability of understanding morality in personal life.<sup>5</sup> It did not have any idea of a divine being as God. These concepts challenged the existing religious beliefs of that era and caused institutional changes in Indian society. The Buddhists followed a system in which Buddhist monks followed a common code of discipline and obeyed a common head and lived together in monasteries the head of the monastery was elected by the monks. Gradually with time and influence, this monastic system was also later adopted by Hinduism. Boddh Gaya is a that place where Gautam Baudha had got the enlightenment and a Baudh Vihar had created in the name of thahagat Buddha as so far seeing this Baudh Vihar the peoples not only form whole India but also from the entire world mainly including the South Asian countries like Cambodia, Indonesia, South Korea, China, Japan, Shri Lanka etc. come.<sup>6</sup>

### **Development of Language and Literature:**

The Buddha preached his messages in the Pali language, the language of common people. During the time of Kanishka, the Buddhist monks preached the

2. Pandey, Surendra (2014). *Pracheen Bharat*, Prayagraj Academy, p.121.

3. Kade, B. P. (2014). *Dharmashastra ka Itihas*, New Delhi, p.121.

4. Radhakrishnan (2014). *Religion and Society*, Prayagraj Academy, pp.105-106.

5. Radhakrishnan (2014). *Religion and Society*, Prayagraj Academy, pp.105-106.

6. [http/ www.uptourism.gov.in](http://www.uptourism.gov.in)

7. Shrivastva Krishna, Kumari (1995.) *Pali Jataka ek Sanshkritik Adhyan*, Sangam Publication, New Delhi, p. 221.

message of Buddha in the Sanskrit language, the language of common people at that time. The spread of Buddhism in these languages gave various works of literature and enriched them.

### **Development of Universities:**

The Buddhist temples and monasteries were used as educational institutes. Taxila, Nalanda, Udyantpuri, Vikramshila, Vallabhi, and other cities progressed greatly at the height of Buddhist teaching centres; it helped in the development and enhanced the literature in Pali, the common language spoken by most people. The scriptures documented in Pali and Sanskrit were enriched and developed by scholars of the Hinayana and Mahayana sects. The Buddhist texts like Tripitakas, Jatakas, Miliandpanho, Lalit Vistara, Buddha Charita and Mahavibhasa, are assets to Indian literature and culture

### **Arts, Architectural Sculpture and Paintings of Buddhism:**

One of the most prominent contributions of Buddhism to Indian culture is in the state of architecture, the Stupas, the sculpture and paintings, the Viharas and the Chaityas that were built at Sanchi, Bahrut, Amravati, Taxila, Bodhgaya, Nalanda, and other places are spectacular and showed the flourishing of art in Buddhism. The Sanchi Stupa, decorated with beautiful ornamental *torans* is considered a magnificent masterpiece in architecture. The cave temples of Ajanta, Karle, Bhaja, Ellora, etc. show their achievement in rock-cut cave temples. The paintings in Ajanta depicting touching scenes of Buddha's life are world-famous. The paintings bear testimony to the heights the arts reached in the Buddhist period in the domain of painting. This Buddhist art initiates a glorious part of the history of Indian art and architecture that fostered a new awareness in the field of culture. Asoka visited the Lumbini the birth place of Gautam Buddha and had lodged the stupas in that memory of journey in the Lumbini.<sup>7</sup> There the so many sculpture and Viharas had built in the Kushinagar during Kanishka and later in the Gupta periods as so far. there have been received the coins of Kanishka <sup>8</sup> from the Kushinagar from the place where the Gautam Buddha got Mahapariniraman and so many types of architectural

and sculpture ha taken place as well.

### **Contact between India and Foreign Countries:**

Buddhism established a close relationship between India and foreign countries. Buddhism has spread in many foreign country and were sculptured Buadh Viharas and were spreaded the religious thoughts as well.<sup>9</sup> The Buddhist monks and scholars travelled to foreign countries preaching about the teachings of Buddha and spreading the word of Buddhism from the 3rd century BCE onwards and in making Buddhism a prominent religion in Asia. The foreign students and pilgrims who came to India in search of knowledge and foreigners were bewitched by the rich Indian culture and gave up their names and heritage and adopted the Indian culture and Hindu names and faith. Buddhism hugely impacted the formation of modern Hindu society. Buddhist teachings gave importance to animal life and its protection, the holiness of nature, and non-violence. The faith of Ahimsa Paramo Dharma was popularised by it. Buddhism calls for the protection of nature and animals.

### **Conclusion:**

Buddhism gave India many things, it influenced the society away from social hierarchy and towards equality, it allowed and gave equality to women and Shudras, and challenged the orthodox philosophy of that era. Its teachings stated that one is responsible for his actions and destiny. Its scriptures are given in the common language Pali at first and then Sanskrit helped develop and enriched it. Buddhism's teaching is simple and the scriptures, the common language of people at the time, made it popular. The use of its monasteries and temples as teaching institutes and spreading its teaching in foreign countries attracted many in search of knowledge like scholars, pilgrims, and students to India, some of whom were fascinated by India's culture, gave up their former lives, and adopted Hinduism and Indian culture. Art, architecture, paintings of Ajanta, rock-cut temples, show that art flourished during the Buddhist era.

Buddha and Baudh religion had given the priorities to the human-kind and contemporary circumstances in historical perspective if it could see as well. Buddhism thoughts were much relevant at that time and now in present time have also relevant as were in past as well.

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8. <http://www.upgov.in>

9. Uttar Pradesh Sarkar Samatamulak Samaj ki Aur, UP Baudh Paryatan Book, p.25.