

Prelims Master Program (2023-24) – Ancient, Medieval, Art and Culture

Handout 6: Buddhism

Sources

Buddha's hagiographies (sacred biography) are contained in the **Buddha Vamsha (Sutta Pitaka)** and **Vinaya Pitakas**, but more detailed and connected accounts are given in later texts such as the **Lalitavistara**, **Mahavastu**, **Buddhacharita (of Ashvaghosha)**, and **Nidanakatha**—all of which belong to the early centuries CE.

His relatives:

- Name – Siddhartha
- Tribe – Shakya
- Father – Shuddhodhan
- Birth mother – Mahamaya
- Foster mother – Gautami (also maternal aunt)
 - Off-springs: Sundari Nanda, Nanda
- Wife – Yashodhara
- Son – Rahul

Buddha's Life

1. Conception and Birth

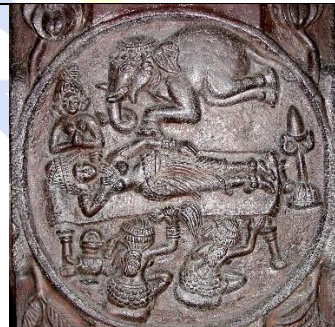
- a. Conception: According to Buddhist tradition, Maya dreamt that an auspicious white elephant entered her womb.
- b. Birth: Maya at mother's place for delivery. On the way to Lumbini/Rummindei, Buddha was born.
- c. On birth, Buddha took **seven steps** and lotus flowers sprang up in his footsteps.
- d. A wise astrologer **Asita** predicted that this child would be either a great emperor or a great religious leader.

2. Growing up

- a. As per the chief priest's instructions to his father, he was kept sheltered from the outside world in a palace. His father provided all luxuries in palace.
- b. Siddhartha married to Yashodhara of Koliya tribe
→ son Rahul.

3. Great Departure

- a. When he left the palace for the first time, he spotted 4 things which changed his life.
 - i. Charioteer Channa, Horse Kantaka.
 - ii. Four sights (**Chattaro Mahanimitta**) → old man, diseased/ill man, dead man (corpse) and a tranquil ascetic.



Maya's dream (Bharhut)



Birth of Buddha (Gandhara)


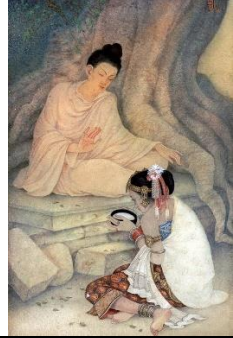

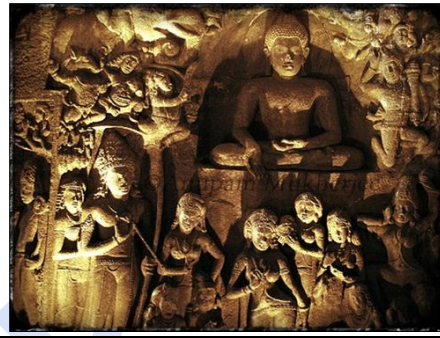


Buddha's Departure (Gandhara)

- b. **Samvega**: Internal struggle, sense of shock, dismay and spiritual urgency to reach liberation and escape from the suffering of samsara.
- c. Soon he woke up at night, decided to leave against the will of his father and live a life of wondering ascetic, as a renunciant. In his secret departure, channa/chandaka (charioteer) and kanthak (horse) accompanied him.
- d. His son Rahul was born to him on the very same day he left.

4. Enlightenment




- a. Wandered for 6 years in search of true knowledge in the company of other saints. He attached himself to various teachers but was not satisfied by their instruction. So, he failed to find the truth.

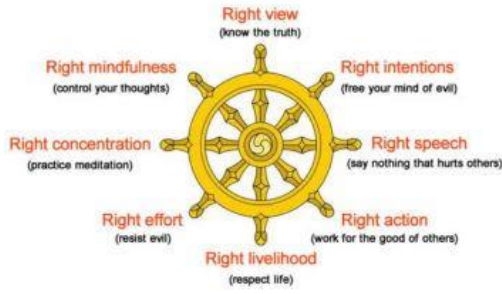
			
Fasting Buddha	Sujata by Kshitindranath Majumdar	Sujata offering kheer to Buddha by Bhuwan Verma	Mara Vijaya (Ajanta)

- b. At the age of 35, Siddhartha sat under a **Pipal** tree (Bo) at **Uruwela**, on the banks of **Niranjana** (present-day Phalgu). After 49 days (7 weeks) of meditation, he attained '**Nirvana**' (enlightenment), and became the Buddha.

5. First Sermon

- a. After his awakening, the Buddha met **Taphussa** and **Bhallika** — two merchant brothers from the city of Balkh in what is currently Afghanistan.
 - i. They offered first alms to Buddha and became his first lay disciples.
- b. Then he dashed straight to Sarnath.
 - i. There he gave the **first** sermon, and those Brahmins became his first disciples. (**Dhammachakka Pavattana sutta**)

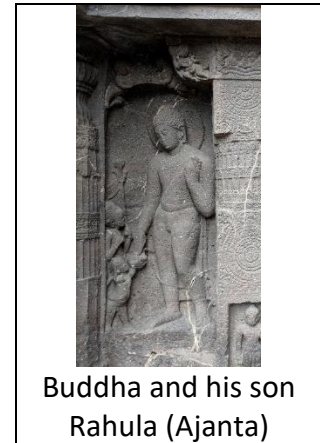
		
Buddha preaches to Koundinya and his four colleagues	Adoration of Dharmachakra at the Deer Park, Sarnath	Buddha's first sermon (Sarnath style)

4 Noble Truths (Arya Satya)	Nibbana	Ashtanga Marg
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Everyone is unhappy (Dukkha) There is cause (Dukkha Samudaya). Its desire (Dukkha Nirodha) Cessation path → magga (Dukkha Nirodha Gamini Pratipada) 	<p>Nibbana (release from cycle of rebirth, ie samsara) could be attained in this life extinction of the "three fires/poisons"; passion (raga), aversion (dvesha) and ignorance (moha/avidya). It doesn't mean physical death.</p>	

Tilakkhana	Middle Path (madhyamapratipada)	Ahimsa	God
<p>Delusion due to tilakkahna of existence:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Sabbam dukkha due to trishna (tanha/desire) Anicca (non-permanence) Anatta (non-atman). <p>It is not the soul which transmigrates. Rather, it is the 'Chetna' (consciousness) which becomes the medium for rebirth.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Madhyam-marga in Spiritual practice: no extremes of asceticism and sensual indulgence. Philosophical Madhyam-marga: Pratitya samutpada 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Critique of Brahmanical sacrifices. Emphasis on ahimsa did not necessarily entail vegetarianism. There are some exceptions however—certain kinds of flesh were never to be accepted—that of humans, elephants, snakes, dogs, and horses 	<p>Buddha remained silent when asked about the existence of God.</p> <p>Most modern historians concur that Buddhism was an atheistic religion.</p> <p>Achinteya (imponderable, incomprehensible) Things which are beyond the scope of reason and therefore the questions remain unanswerable.</p>

- 45 years of preaching

- Buddha went in many parts of UP and Bihar (not entire India). For the remaining **45 years of his life, travelled** in the Gangetic Plain, teaching a diverse range of people: from nobles to servants, murderers such as Angulimala, and cannibals such as Alavaka.
- Continued to travel throughout the year, except during the four months of the Vassa rainy season when ascetics of all religions rarely traveled. The first *vassana* was spent at Varanasi when the **sangha** was formed (at Sarnath). It was established as an order of monks (bhikkhus) and nuns (bhikkhunis).



Ethical Code of Conduct	Caste/Varna/Inequality	Women						
<p>Monks and nuns – Patimokkha rules of monastic discipline (Vinaya Pitaka)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Uposatha ceremony (day for observing Buddhist principles)• Parajaka four most serious offences• Pavarana confession and atonement for offences by monks• Pravrajya ceremony to begin probation.• Upasampada to finish probation and complete entry	<p>The Buddha’s doctrine was certainly more socially inclusive than the Brahmanical tradition, but it did not aim at abolishing social differences. Thus, restriction on joining of soldier, slave and debtors without permission of king, master etc.</p> <p><u>Meaning of Varna:</u> The Buddhist tradition considered varna man-made and not divine. Anguttara Nikaya declares that when a person joins the sangha, he becomes without varna (vevanniyanti). Thus, Varna was supposed to be irrelevant for aspirants to the sangha.</p> <p>However,</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. There was a significant proportion of upper-class (Brahmins, Kshatriya) members during Buddha’s life.2. The Pali canon reverses the Brahmanical order of rank and places the Kshatriya higher than the Brahmana.3. Meaning of the term Brahmana – sometimes figurative for character, sometime derisive in opposition, sometime self-congratulation on conversion.	<p>Prajapati Gotami: first woman allowed by Buddha to join sangha.</p> <p>General portrayal: Women as wicked and creature of passion, patriarchal idea.</p> <p>Yet two important features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bhikkhuni Sangha• Nirvana possible						
<p>Ethics for Lay people:</p> <table><tr><td>Duties of Laity</td><td>Sigalavada Sutta</td></tr><tr><td>Man’s duty towards family</td><td>Mahamangala Sutta</td></tr><tr><td>Wife’s duty</td><td>Anguttara Nikaya</td></tr></table>			Duties of Laity	Sigalavada Sutta	Man’s duty towards family	Mahamangala Sutta	Wife’s duty	Anguttara Nikaya
Duties of Laity	Sigalavada Sutta							
Man’s duty towards family	Mahamangala Sutta							
Wife’s duty	Anguttara Nikaya							

(Comment: A tradition's progressiveness has to be judged by the standards of its own time. However, there is no doubt that Buddha on the stage of world religions is a moral icon on par with Jesus.)

- Death at the age of 80 (Mahaparinivvana Sutta)

- a. His last days were at **Kushinagar**.
- b. House of iron smith **Chunda**. Piece of meat was offered. Buddha developed some sort of food poisoning or dysentery. He got Mahaparinirvana.

- i. *"Whatever Dhamma and Vinaya I have pointed out and formulated for you, that will be your Teacher when I am gone."* (Buddha in Mahaparinibbana Sutta)

- ii. The Buddha's final words: "All composite things are perishable. Strive for your own liberation with diligence."



Buddhist Councils

Year	Venue	Patron King	President	Important Developments
403 BCE	Rajgir	Ajatashatru	Maha kashyapa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immediately after death to preserve the teachings. Sutta (by Ananda) & Vinaya (by Upali) Pitakas were compiled.
386 BCE	Vaishali	Kalashoka	Sabakami	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disagreement over 10 Vinaya rules: Decision not to relax them and censured the behavior of the monks violating them. Thus, the dispute was not settled → emergence of Sects.
<p>First schism in the Sangha.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Sathviravadin (minority): insisted on rigorous Mahasanghikas (majority): breakaway group which justified departure based on majority. <p>Both went on to develop their own systems, each claiming to have preserved the true teachings of the Buddha. Gradually, the difference became wider than the Vinaya and about nature of Buddha. From that, 18 Nikaya schools emerged.</p>				
250 BCE	Pataliputra	Ashoka	Mogaliputta Tissa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To purify the Buddhist movement, end corruption in Sangha and oust heretical views. Abhidhamma Pitaka was compiled (completion of Tripitaka) Missionaries sent outside India by Ashoka.
Separate northern and southern tradition – Mahanaya and Hinayana				
72 CE	Kundalvana, Harwan	Kanishka	Vasumitra Ashvaghosha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exclusive council of Sarvastivadins (later Mahayana) Abhidhamma texts, systematized and translated into Sanskrit.
1 st c BCE	Sri Lanka	King Valagamba		In response to a famine year in which many Buddhist monks died of starvation, there was threat to oral culture

Buddhist Pali Literature

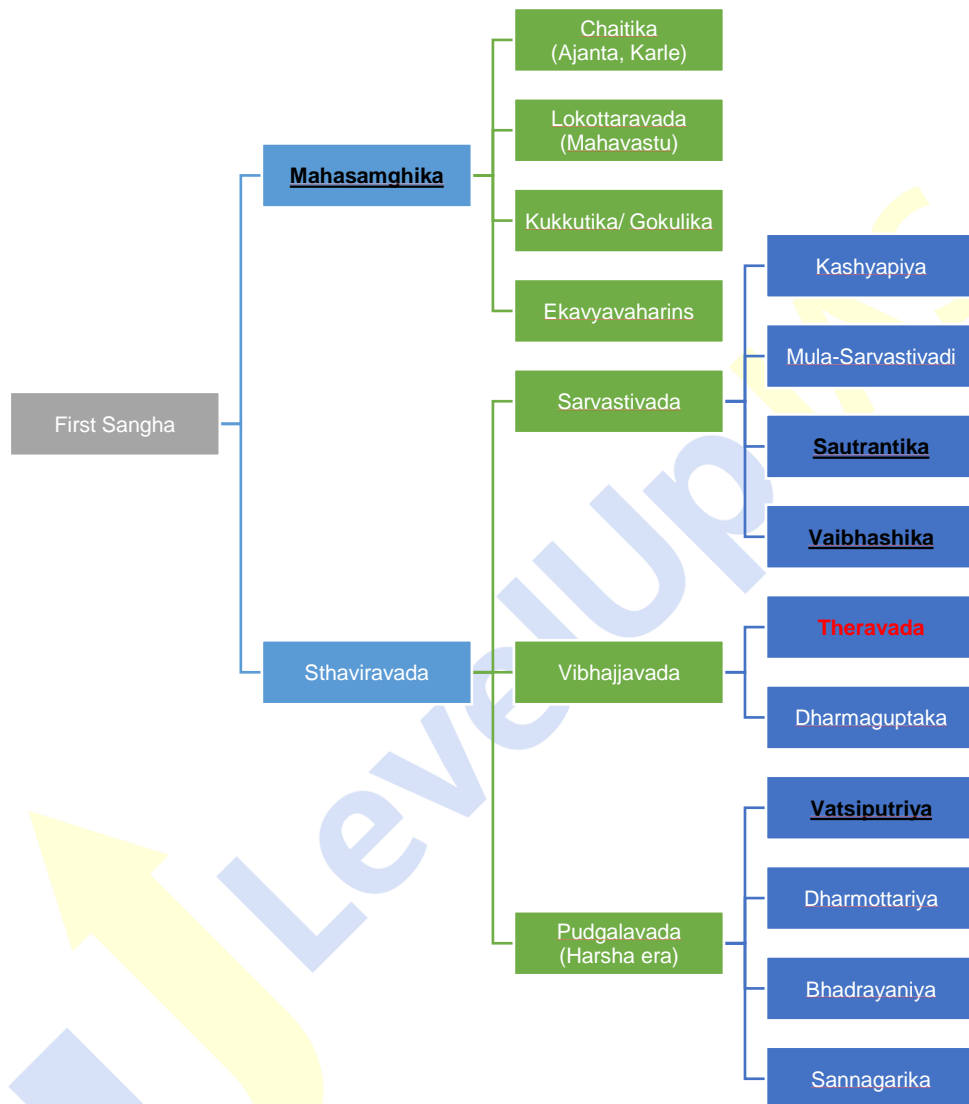
Vinaya Pitaka (Upali)	Sutta Pitaka (Ananda)	Abhidhamma Pitaka
It consists of the rules of the Sangha to be observed by Bhikkhus and Bhikkunis.	It contains Buddha's teachings.	Philosophical aspect, deals with metaphysics (relation between man and universe)
1. Suttavibhaga 2. Khandhaka a. Mahavagga b. Chullavagga 3. Parivara	1. Digha, Majjhima, Samyukta, Anguttara, Khuddaka 2. Imp Sutta: DCP, MPN, Agganna, Ambattha 3. Khuddaka Nikaya a. Dhammapada, b. Suttanipata, c. Theri Gatha d. Thera Gatha e. Jataka Katha f. Milind Panho	There are 7 books. Of them, the most imp is Kathavattu by Mogaliputta Tissa.

Other important works:

- **‘Dipavamsa’** and **‘Mahavamsa’**: These were Sinhalese works written by Buddhist scholars in Sri Lanka, probably in the post-Mauryan era.
- **Buddhaghoshala** (at Anuradhapura Monastery): **Vishuddhimagga**, most important Theravada text outside Tripitaka

Buddhist Sects in India

	450 BCE ^[note 1]	250 BCE	100 CE	500 CE	700 CE	800 CE	1200 CE
India	Early Sangha	Early Buddhist schools		Mahāyāna		Vajrayāna	



Mahayana

- New ideas about **Buddha**
 - He is considered divine being.
 - Trikaya Doctrine
 - Nirman/Rupa Kaya – Physical Buddha (Gautam Siddhartha)
 - Sambhoga Kaya – Enjoyment/Bliss Buddha (with various Bodhisattvas)
 - Dharma Kaya – Ultimate Reality
- **Bodhisattva**: An important concept in Mahayana
 - Bodhisattvas are those personalities who have got Nirvana but refuse Parinirvana. Instead, they have decided to stay in the world to guide others on the path to Nirvana.
 - Why: Maha-Karuna and thus self-sacrifice
 - Thus, Mahayanism is Bodhisattva path: to achieve Nirvana.
- **Doctrine** and Teaching of Buddha
 - Early Buddhism: Asthanga-marga
 - Mahayana: Accepted faith and grace.
 - Six Paramita (Perfection)
 - Central to a bodhisattva's practice
 - 6 – Generosity (dana), Morality (shila), Patience (kshanti), Courage (virya), Meditation (samadhi), Wisdom (prajna)
 - Later 4 – skilfulness in means (upaya-kaushalya), determination (pranidhana), power (bala), and knowledge (jnana).
 - **Punya → Prajna → Nirvana**
 - Ten Bhumis (stations)
 - Stages of spiritual progress of Bodhisattva
 - Scheme of ten stages, each a major landmark on the way to nirvana
- **Important Bodhisattvas**:
 - **Avalokiteshvara Padmapani**: Embodies Buddha's compassion, carries lotus in hand
 - Worshipped the curer of the sick, as the saviour of mariners from shipwreck.
 - **Vajrapani**: Embodies Buddha's power and is depicted with a Vajra (lightning bolt) in the hand.
 - **Manjushri**: Embodies Prajna, wisdom. Depicted with a flaming sword in his hand
 - **Akashagarbha** and **Kshitigarbha** (Twin brothers)



Figure 8.2 "Lity of Avalokitesvara, Ajanta, cave 4. Photo: Ormund Bopprachchi, Courtesy: Archaeological Survey of India."



- Akashgarbha embodies Buddha's wisdom
- Kshitigarbha is regarded as the protector of children
- **Mahasthamaprapta**
- **Maitreya**: Future one, yet to come (similar to Kalki in Hinduism)
- **Samatabhadra** ('universal worthy') is associated with meditation.
- **Amitabha**: infinite light.
 - He assured his devotees entry into Sukhavati by transferring to them some of the infinite merit he acquired during eons of practice as a bodhisattva.
- **Vairochana** (shining Buddha): Embodiment of concept of Shunyata.
- **Dipankara**: More important in Theravada

Mahayana Sanskrit Literature: The Mahayana preferred Sanskrit literature.

- **Various Sutras:** Lalitavistara, Prajnaparamita Sutra, Lotus Sutra, Diamond Sutra, Heart Sutra, Amitabha Sutra, various Agamas
- **Mahavastu:** Mahavastu is the most famous work in Sanskrit which has been restored from its Chinese translation. It consists of voluminous collection of legendary stories. It is the most famous 'Avadana'.
- **Lalitavistara:** Lalitavistara is one of the holiest of the Sanskrit literature. It belongs to the first century. It contains the miracles, which the superstitious people have ascribed to Buddha.
- **Ashvaghosha:**
 - a. Buddhacharita
 - b. Saundarananda
 - c. Sariputraprakarana
 - d. Vajrasuchi

Comparison between Hinayana and Mahayana sects

Hinayana	Mahayana
Conservatives. Don't want to change.	Progressive and liberal. Change with time.
Buddha – a guide/teacher who came to this world to show path. You must trace the path yourself.	Buddha – god. God takes you to the destination, give you success.
Highest aim – to get Nirvana	Highest aim – to become Bodhisattva
Symbolic representation of Buddha	Worship of idols started. Developments of Gandhara, Mathura styles.
Language – Pali	Language – Sanskrit
Region - South India, SE Asia	Region - North, Afgh/Central Asia, China to Japan
Imp thinkers – Buddhaghoshala	Subsects and personalities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Madhyamaka – Nagarjuna. Doctrine of Shunyavada • Yogachara – Asanga, Vasubandhu, Sthrimati, Dharmakirti (chittamatra, mind only)
Texts: Tripitaka	Texts: various Sutras
Great Patron – Ashoka	Great Patron – Kanishka

Vajrayana

Later on, another Buddhism came up – as an offshoot of Mahayana – called as **Vajrayana**. It is **Tantrik Buddhism**.

Features:

- Along with Buddha, **Tara** worship became important.
- Popular especially in **East India**
- Role of **Guru** for esoteric transmission of ideas and practices
- Also known as – Devatayoga, Mantrayana
- **Literature:** Guhyasamaja Tantra, Hevajra Tantra, Mahavairochana Tantra, Kalachakra Tantra
- Two sub-schools

Hevajra Tantra	Sahajayana
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It advocates the attainment of liberation by using and sublimating sexual energy. • 5M – Madya (alcohol), Mamsa (meat), Matsya (fish), Mudra (gesture), Maithuna (sexual intercourse) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taught by the Mahasiddha Saraha • Opposed Tantra-Mantra (black magic), rituals and obtuse philosophy. • Main emphasis on Yoga practice. • In course of time, assimilated into Shaktism and Vaishnavism.

Tibetan Buddhism

Important Personalities:

- Shantarakshita (725-88 CE) of Nalanda
- Padmasambhava (Guru Rimpoche)
- Atisha Dipankar (982-1053)

Features:

- The status of the teacher or Lama
- Important role of rituals and initiations
- Rich visual symbolism:
 - Thangka paintings on clothe (typical in Sikkim/Bhutan/Tibet)
 - Mandalas
- Mantras and meditation practice

Subsects within Tibetan Buddhism: Nyingma-pa, Kagyu-pa, Sakya-pa, Gelug-pa

Decline of Buddhism

“The faith of the Buddha, which in the days of Asoka, and even so late as Kanishka, was still pure enough to be a noble inspiration, we now discover absolutely lost in a wilderness of preposterous rubbish, a philosophy of endless Buddhas, tales of manifestations and marvels like a Christian pantomime, miraculous conceptions by six-tusked elephants, charitable princes giving themselves up to be eaten by starving tigresses, temples built over nail-paring and the like... And in competition with this Buddhism, intellectually undermined as it now was and smothered in gilded decoration, brahminism was everywhere gaining ground again, as Yuan Chwang notes with regret.”

HG Wells, The Outline of History

Buddhism flourished in the subcontinent until the early medieval period, i.e., the 7th-8th centuries CE, and thereafter declined rapidly. It did not completely disappear but relegated to the geographical, political, and cultural margins.

- **From within**

- It didn't retain a distinct identity. At the end of its existence in India, Buddhism exhibited **many philosophical and cultural affinities with Hinduism**.
- The **shift of focus** from individual agency towards **Bhakti**, the beginning of **idolatry** and rigid **ritualism** created an avenue for **priestly intervention**.
- After Mahayanism, Buddhism was no longer the simple spiritual and moral doctrine given by the Buddha, but had become **highly ritualised and complex**, making it difficult for the common man to follow.
- Also
 - 'Degeneration' brought in by increasing Tantric influences.
 - Internal conflicts and competition between Buddhist sects
 - Corruptions in Buddhist Sanghas
 - Use of Sanskrit which was an elite language instead of Pali.

- **From West**

- First Huna invasions, and then Turks who destroyed many Buddhist institutions and monasteries. (e.g. Takht-e-Bahi)

- **From South:** Revival of Brahmanism and bhakti movement from 5th century onwards.

- Bhagavatism, Vaishnavism and Shaivism were more democratic, egalitarian, accessible, inclusive, and tolerant.
- Salvation was attainable by personal devotion to God, without the involvement of complex rituals, costly sacrifices, and priestly domination. Thus, the revived Brahminical faith became more attractive.
- 'Avataravad' was an essential feature of Vaishnavism in which 10 incarnations of Lord Vishnu were worshipped. The followers of Buddhism were incorporated under the umbrella of Vaishnavism, when the Buddha came to be celebrated as Vishnu's 9th incarnation.
- The philosophers Kumarila and Shankara were strongly opposed to Buddhism. In their journeys throughout India they vehemently debated with Buddhists and tried

to persuade kings and other influential people to withdraw their support from Buddhist monasteries – thus reducing laymen and political patronage.

- **From East** – The Last surviving fortress of Buddhism in India
 - The Senas, after Palas, were followers of Shaivism/Vaisnavism. Thus, the royal support to Buddhism diminished.
 - It could not withstand the onslaught of Muhammad Bakhtyar Khalji who destroyed Nalanda University and burnt down its famed libraries.
 - Some Buddhist monks outlived persecution by Muslim invaders fled to Nepal, Tibet or Bhutan. Those who stayed back either converted to Islam or integrated into Brahminical/Bhakti tradition.

However,

- It should also be noted that some of the monasteries that were established in Tibet and in the western Himalayas during these centuries have a continuous history right down to the present.
- The decline of Buddhism did not result in its total disappearance from the land of its birth, and it continued to survive in various forms of popular worship, rites and rituals.
- The renewal of Buddhism in India today is attributed to Dr BR Ambedkar, who led the mass conversion of millions of untouchables to Buddhism in 1956.

Practice Questions: Buddhism

Milindapanho is in the form of a dialogue between the king Meander and the Buddhist monk (1997)

- (a) Nagasena
- (b) Nagarjuna
- (c) Nagabhatta
- (d) Kumarilabhatta

In the Mahayana Buddhism, the Bodhisatva Avalokiteswera was also known as (1997)

- (a) Vajrapani
- (b) Manjusri
- (c) Padmapani
- (d) Maitreya

The concept of Eight-Fold path forms the theme of (1998)

- (a) Dipavamsa
- (b) Divyavadana
- (c) Mahaparinirvan Sutta
- (d) Dharma Chakra Pravartana Sutta

In ancient Indian Buddhist monasteries, a ceremony called Pavarana used to be held. It was the: [2002]

- (a) Occasion to elect the Sanghparinayaka and two speakers one on Dhamma and the other on Vinaya.
- (b) Confession by monks of their offences committed during their stay in the monasteries during the rainy season.
- (c) Ceremony of initiation of new person into the Buddhist Sangha in which the head is shaved and when yellow robes are offered.
- (d) Gathering of Buddhist monks on the next day to the full-moon day of Ashadha when they take up a fixed abode for the next four months of the rainy season.

Consider the following statements (2006)

1. The Ikshvaku rulers of Southern India were antagonistic towards Buddhism.
2. The Pala Rulers of Eastern India were patrons of Buddhism.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Why did Buddhism start declining in India in the early medieval times? (2010)

1. Buddha was by that time considered as one of the incarnations of Vishnu and thus, became a part of Vaishnavism.
2. The invading tribes from Central Asia till the time of last Gupta king adopted Hinduism and persecuted Buddhists.
3. The Kings of Gupta dynasty were strongly opposed to Buddhism.

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Lord Buddha's image is sometimes shown with the hand gesture called 'Bhumisparsha Mudra'. It symbolises (2011)

- (a) Buddha's calling of the Earth to watch over Mara and to prevent Mara from disturbing his meditation
- (b) Buddha's calling of the Earth to witness his purity and chastity despite the temptations of Mara
- (c) Buddha's reminder to his followers that they all arise from the Earth and finally dissolve into the Earth, and thus this life is transitory
- (d) Both the statements (a) and (b) are correct in this context

Which one of the following best describes the concept of Nirvana in Buddhism? (2013)

- (a) The extinction of the flame of desire.
- (b) The complete annihilation of self.
- (c) A state of bliss and rest.
- (d) A mental stage beyond all comprehension.

Which of the following kingdoms were associated with the life of the Buddha? (2015)

- 1. Avanti
- 2. Gandhara
- 3. Kosala
- 4. Magadha

Select the correct answer using the codes given below.

- (a) 1, 2 and 3 only
- (b) 2, 3 and 4 only
- (c) 3 and 4 only
- (d) 1, 3 and 4 only

With reference to the religious history of India, consider the following statements (2016)

- 1. The concept of Bodhisattva is central to Hinayana sect of Buddhism.
- 2. Bodhisattva is a compassionate one on his way to enlightenment.
- 3. Bodhisattva delays achieving his own salvation to help all sentient beings on their path to it.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

With reference to the religious history of India, consider the following statements (2017)

- 1. Sautrantika and Sammitiya were the sects of Jainism.
- 2. Sarvastivadin held that the constituents of phenomena were not wholly momentary but existed forever in a latent form.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2

With reference to Indian history, who among the following is a future Buddha, yet to come to save the world? (2018)

- (a) Avalokiteshvara
- (b) Lokeshvara
- (c) Maitreya
- (d) Padmapani

Consider the following: (2019)

1. Deification of the Buddha
2. Treading the path of Bodhisattvas
3. Image worship and rituals

Which of the above is/ are the feature/ features of Mahayana Buddhism?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 1 and 2 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

With reference to the cultural history of India, which one of the following is the correct description of the term 'paramitas'? (2020)

- (a) The earliest Dharmashastra texts written in aphoristic (sutra) style
- (b) Philosophical schools that did not accept the authority of Vedas
- (c) Perfections whose attainment led to the Bodhisattva path
- (d) Powerful merchant guilds of early medieval South India

With reference to the religious history of India, consider the following statements (2020)

1. Sthaviravadins belong to Mahayana Buddhism.
2. Lokottaravadin sect was an offshoot of Mahasanghika sect of Buddhism.
3. The deification of Buddha by Mahasanghikas fostered the Mahayana Buddhism.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

1. **Gautama Buddha delivered his first sermon at which one of the following places? (NDA 2007 II)**
 - a) Kushinagar
 - b) Sarnath
 - c) Bodh Gaya
 - d) Lumbini
2. **Who among the following was the contemporary of Gautama Buddha? (NDA 2008 I)**
 - a) Nagarjuna
 - b) Kanishka
 - c) Kautilya
 - d) Mahavira
3. **Where did Buddha attain Parinirvana? (NDA 2009 I)**
 - a) Bodh Gaya
 - b) Kushinagar
 - c) Rajgriha
 - d) Vaishali
4. **Who among the following was associated with the formulation of the basic ideas of the Mahayana Buddhism? (NDA 2014, II)**
 - a) Nagarjuna
 - b) Kashyapa Matanga
 - c) Menander
 - d) Kanishka
5. **Which one of the following is the common element among Rajagriha, Vaishali and Pataliputra? (NDA 2015)**
 - a) Pali canon of the Sthaviravadins was compiled there.
 - b) Ashokan Major Rock Edicts were found here.
 - c) Places where Buddhist Councils were held.
 - d) Places associated with the compilation of Buddhist canon of the Mahasanghikas
6. **The Buddha delivered his first sermon, known as 'Turning of the wheel of law' at (CDS 2008, I)**
 - a) Sanchi
 - b) Sarnath
 - c) Sravasti
 - d) Bodh Gaya
7. **In Buddhism, what does Patimokkha stand for? (CDS 2008, II)**
 - a) A description of Mahayana Buddhism
 - b) A description of Hinayana Buddhism
 - c) The rules of the Sangha

d) The questions of king Menander

8. Consider the following pairs:

Symbol

Meaning

- | | |
|-------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Elephant | - Prosperity |
| 2. Bull | - Entering Buddha in his mother womb |
| 3. Horse | - Renunciation |
| 4. Lion | - Youth stage |

How many pairs given above are correctly matched?

- (a) Only one pair (b) Only two pairs
(c) Only three pairs (d) All four pairs

9. Consider the following statements regarding disqualification for Buddhist Sangha

1. He/she should not be under the age of 18.
2. He/she should not be a diseased person.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2

10. With reference to Buddhism, consider the following statements:

1. It does not recognize the existence of soul.
2. In comparison with Brahmanism, Buddhism was more liberal and democratic.
3. The use of Prakrit language helped in the spread of Buddhist ideas.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
(b) 1 and 2 only
(c) 2 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3

11. The Mahayana Buddhist Council that led to final division in Buddhism, was held at which of the following site?

- (a) Rajagriha
(b) Srinagar
(c) Vaishali
(d) Pataliputra

12. Which one of the following features distinguishes Buddhism from Jainism?

- (a) Rejection of the authority of the Vedas.
(b) Non-injury to living beings.
(c) Extreme form of conduct and self-mortification
(d) Belief in good action