Chapter 1

Origin and Development of Mahāyāna Buddhism

Introduction

This chapter is relevant to the rise of Mahāyāna Buddhism which much is relied on the understanding of the historical events of the development of Buddhism after the Buddha's passing away around 543 BCE. With respect to originate of Buddhism in India along with the conditions lead to the schism of Buddhism, the First Buddhist Council, and the Second Buddhist Council must be studied including the consequence of their results. Each period of Indian Buddhism is divided as the layout to see more clearly about the origin and development of Mahāyāna Buddhism. The fundamental causes give rise to the development of Buddhist orders in India are necessary to know. Students should familiar with the name of certain Buddhist orders including their main doctrinal teaching. This understanding will articulate to understand the origin of Mahāyāna Buddhism and its development step by step which will be described in the following chapter.

Indian Buddhism may be divided into the five periods as follows.

1) Early Buddhism or pre-sectarian Buddhism
2) Nikāya Buddhism or Sectarian Buddhism
3) Early Mahāyāna Buddhism
4) Later Mahāyāna Buddhism
5) Esoteric Buddhism

Although the five periods are arranged in the chronological order in which the traditions arose, they are also based on a categorization of types of Buddhism as much as historical criteria.

The teaching of the Buddha had preached during the last forty-five years of his life were recited at the First Council (*saṅgīti*). The Dharma and Vinaya traditionally are said to have been collected at the council. The teachings were committed to memory and passed down from one generation to the next. The

basic teachings of the Buddha and his disciples founded in the *Suttantapiṭaka* are considered together as "Early Buddhist doctrine". The first period is focused on the Buddha's time, a clear description of the Buddha's teaching such as the Four Noble Truths, the Five Aggregates, the Dependent Origination, and Buddhist cultivation.

The portrait of Early Buddhism is completed with a discussion of the Buddha's biography and an account of the establishment of the early Buddhist community. The community continued to develop after the Buddha's death. This chapter will focus the historical sources for this period.

Topics:

1.1 The Buddhist Council and Its Schism

1.2 The Process of the Development of Mahāyāna Buddhism

1.3 The Differences between Hinayana of Mahāyāna Doctrine

1.1 Early Schism in Buddhism

1.1.1 The First Council

Three months after the Buddha's *Mahāparinirvāṇa*, Mahākāśyapa (Pāli-Mahākassapa) proposed that a council be convened to organize and agree upon the content of the Buddha's teachings. He feared that if this were not done the Buddha's teachings would quickly decline. Obtaining the consent of some of the Buddha's disciples, he assembled five hundred monks at Rājagṛha. This meeting is generally called the First Council (*saṅgīti*). The term "*saṅgīti*" means "to chant together" and refers to the manner in which the early monks chanted in unison the teachings they memorized.

At the First Council, the most respected and elderly monk, Mahākāśyapa, presided at the Council. Two very important persons who specialized in the two different areas - the *Dharma* and the *Vinaya* - were present. One was Ānanda, the closest constant companion and disciple of the Buddha for 25 years. Endowed with a remarkable memory, Ānanda was able to

recite what was spoken by the Buddha. The other person was Upāli, a monk renowned for his deep knowledge, and remembered all the *Vinaya* rules.

Only these two sections - the *Dharma* and the *Vinaya* - were recited at the First Council. Though there were no differences of opinion on the *Dharma* (no mention of the *Abhidharma)* there was some discussion about the *Vinaya* rules. Before the Buddha's *Parinirvāṇa,* he had told Ānanda that if the *Sangha* wished to amend or modify some minor rules, they could do so. But on that occasion Ānanda was so overpowered with grief because the Buddha was about to die that it did not occur to him to ask the Master what the minor rules were. As the members of the Council were unable to agree as to what constituted the minor rules, Mahākāśyapa finally ruled that no disciplinary rule laid down by the Buddha should be changed, and no new ones should be introduced. No intrinsic reason was given. Mahākāśyapa did say one thing, however: "If we changed the rules, people will say that Ven. Gotama's disciples changed the rules even before his funeral fire has ceased burning."

At the Council, the *Dharma* was divided into various parts and each part was assigned to an Elder and his pupils to commit to memory. The *Dharma* was then passed on from teacher to pupil orally. The *Dharma* was recited daily by groups of people who often cross check with each other to ensure that no omissions or additions were made. Historians agree that the oral tradition is more reliable than a report written by one person from his memory several years after the event. The development of the *Sūtra-piṭaka* and the *Vinaya-piṭaka* were compiled from the time of the First Council until the canon assumed its present format.

1.1.2 The Second Council

At the time of the Buddha's passing away, the Buddhist community had spread only within central India. The Buddha's birthplace, Lumbinī, and the place where he died, Kuśinagara, were both on the northern fringes of central India. Buddhagayā, where he attained enlightenment, was in the southern part of central India. The Deer Park at Sārnāth, where he preached his first sermon, was in the western part of central India. These four sacred sites of reliquaries or memorials (*caitya*) soon flourished as pilgrimage centers.

After the Buddha's passing away, missionaries spread Buddhism from central India to the southwest along the southern route. Buddhism was also transmitted to western India, where it flourished in Mathurā, a city on the banks of the Jamuna to the southeast of modern Delhi. Mathurā is a considerable distance from central India, because it is the location where Kṛishṇa worship arose, it is a sacred place to Hindus. At one time, however, Buddhism flourished there, and it was stronghold of the Sarvāstivādin School. According to scriptures, Mahākātyāyana preached in Mathurā. No *sūtras* record the Buddha as preaching there. In fact, he stated that Mathurā had five major problems that made it unpleasant to live in (such as being dusty and having many mad dogs), and he therefore avoided it. Since Mathurā was far from central India, it would take some time before Buddhism reached it.

One hundred years after the Buddha's passing away, at the time of the Second Council, Buddhism was still not strong in Mathurā. The second Council was held because the monks of Vaiśalī were said to have adopted ten practices that violated the precepts. When a dispute arose over these practices, seven hundred monks assembled in Vaiśalī and determined that the monks of Vaiśalī were in error. Although deciding the status of the ten practices in question was the main reason for the meeting, the Dīpavaṃsa, a Sri Lankan chronicle, refers to the meeting as the "Second Council" because the canon was chanted after the other business had been completed.

According to Pāli sources the ten disputed practices and the rules they violated were as follows:

1. Carrying salt in an animal horn-violated a rule against the storing of food
2. Taking food when the shadow on the sundial is two fingers past noon—violated a rule against eating after noon
3. After eating, travelling to another village to eat another meal the same day--violating the rule against overeating
4. Holding several fortnightly assemblies within the same boundaries (*sīmā*)—violated procedures requiring all monks within the *sīmā* to attend the same fortnightly assembly

5. Confirming an ecclesiastical in an incomplete assembly and obtaining approval from absent monks afterward—violated the rules of procedure at monastic meetings
6. Citing habitual practice as the authority for violations of monastic procedures—violated the rules of procedure
7. Drinking milk whey after meals—violated the rule against eating special food when one was not sick
8. Drinking unfermented wine—violated the rule against drinking intoxicating beverages
9. Using a mat with fringes—violated the rule concerning the measurements of rugs
10. Accepting gold and silver—violated the rule prohibiting monks from receiving gold and silver

All of these practices were banned in the full sets of precepts for monks. Because observing the full precepts would have required special efforts by the monks, the advocates of the ten practices were attempting to liberalize monastic practice. The argument concerning the tenth practice, whether monks could touch gold and silver, was especially bitter. According to the "Chapter on the Council of Seven Hundred" from the Pāli *Vinaya*, a monk named Yaśas (Pāli Yasa-kākāṇḍakaputta) was traveling in Vaiśālī when he noticed that the monks of that area were receiving alms of gold and silver directly from lay believers. When he pointed out to them that their activity was in violation of the rules in the *vinaya*, the monks of Vaiśālī expelled him from the order. Yaśas then traveled west to seek assistance.

Yaśas appealed to monks from Avanti, Pāvā (Pāṭheyyakā), and areas along the Southern route. Avantī and other areas along the Southern Route had already been opened up to Buddhism by Mahākātyāyana" and Pūrṇa and thus must have been the sites of well-established communities by this time. The monks of Pāvā were probably from the western part of Kauśala. This area was to the far west of Śrāvastī, and included Sānkāśya and Kanyākubja. A little further to the west was Mathurā. Pāvā was the site of a very strong Buddhist community at this time. Thus, a century after the Buddha's death, Buddhism had spread beyond central India and was becoming an important force in western India.

Among the influential monks in the west was an elder named Sambhūta Sāṇavāsī, who lived on Mount Ahoganga. Another important elder was Revata, who was from Soreyya, a town on the upper reaches of the Ganges River near Sānkāśya, the center of the area around Pāvā. Because Yaśas sought help in the west, the argument over the ten points of *vinaya* is often thought of as a dispute between the monks of the east and the west. However, because some monks in the east (Magadha and Vaisālī) joined with those in the west in opposing the adoption of the ten points, the dispute should be viewed as one between a conservative group, which advocated a strict interpretation of the precepts, and a more liberal group, which wished to permit certain exceptions to the observance of the precepts.

The dissemination of Buddhism during the century after the Buddha's death led to an increase in the numbers of monks and its diffusion over a broader geographical area. Ample opportunities existed for differences of interpretation to lead to controversies involving the community. Most of the elders favored a conservative approach. Eventually, a decision was reached to appoint four monks from the west and four from the east to consider the ten points and judge their orthodoxy. The elders chosen as representatives ruled that all ten points should be rejected. Many monks, however, refused to accept their ruling, and their dissatisfaction contributed to a schism in the community.

The schism, often called the basic schism resulted in the formation of two schools: the Mahāsanghika, whose monks refused to accept the conservative ruling of the committee of eight monks, and the Sthaviravāda (Pāli Theravāda), whose monks agreed with the conservative ruling. The name Mahāsanghika means "great assembly" and suggests that many monks belonged to the liberal fraction.

In the book *A History of Indian Buddhism* by Hirakawa Akira described that according to the *Samayabhedoparacanacakra* (T2031-hereafter cited as *Samaya*), a work by Vasumitra from the northern tradition concerning the formation of the schools of Hinayāna Buddhism and their doctrines, the cause of basic schism was five teachings (faults) promulgated by Mahādeva. However, many modern scholars believe that Mahādeva's five points were in fact the cause of a later schism and that they mistakenly were considered by Vasumitra to have been the cause of the basic schism.

According to the *vinayas* of various schools and other sources, the controversy over the ten points of practice occurred a century after the Buddha's passing away. Moreover the Sri Lankan chronicles and the *Samaya* of the Northern tradition both date the basic schism to the same time. Still other stories concerning schism in the community are recorded in Tibetan sources; however, both Northern and Southern (Pāli) sources are in agreement that resulted in the formation of the Mahāsanghika and Sthavira schools occurred one century after the Buddha's time. Since the *vinaya* of Theravāda, Sarvāstivādin, Mahīśāska, and the Dharmagupta schools all record that the controversy over the ten points of vinaya occurred one century after the Buddha's passing away. This dispute must be considered to be the cause of the basic schism.

The five points of doctrine advanced by Mahādeva may have added to the controversy surrounding the first schism. Mahādeva taught that (1) *arahats* may be sexually tempted, (2) *arahats* have a residue of ignorance, (3) *arahats* may have doubts, (4) *arahats* may attain enlightenment through the helps of others, and (5) the path is attained with an exclamatory remark.

The five points indicate that Mahādeva had a low opinion of the enlightenment of *arahats*. Mahādeva five points of doctrine are included in the Sarvāstivādin school's *Samaya*, and *Mahāvibhāṣā*, as well as the Theravāda work, the *Kathāvatthu*. Mahādeva's five points of doctrine thus are representative of the issues debated by the schools of Hinayāna Buddhism.

In discussing the basic schism, the extent of Buddhism's spread in India and the difficulties in communication between areas of India must be taken into account. The schism probably did not occur over a period of days or months. Consequently, schism cannot determine exactly when it occurred or at what point it was completed. However, the schism clearly did occur a little more than a century after the passing away of the Buddha. As the dissension gradually spread and involved many of the orders in various parts of India, arguments over a number of different points arose. According to the *Samaya*, Mahāsaṅghika doctrine included certain views on the bodies of the Buddha and the concept of the bodhisattva that might have drawn opposition from more conservative monks. However, these doctrines were probably developed by later Mahāsaṅghika monks and do not represent Mahāsaṅghika doctrine at the time of the basic schism.

When a dispute arose over ten items of monastic discipline, seven hundred monks assembled in Vaisālī. According to the Chapter on the Council of Seven Hundred of the Pāli *Vinaya*, seven hundred elders discussed the ten items in accordance with the *vinaya*. Thus, their meeting is called a council on *vinaya* (*vinayasaṅgīti*). No mention is made in the Pāli *Vinaya* of the compilation of the *Sutra-piṭaka* or *Vinaya-piṭaka* after the investigation of the ten points was concluded. According to the Sri Lankan chronicles, the *Dīpavaṃsa* and *Mahāvaṃsa*, after the dispute over the ten items was concluded, the seven hundred elders with Revata as their leader held a council on doctrine (*dhamma-saṅgīti*) that require eight months to complete. This is called the Second Council (*dutiya-saṅgīti*) in the Theravāda tradition, which was held a hundred years after the Buddha's death during the reign of King Kālāsoka.

The *Dīpavaṃsa* account continues, adding that the dissenting monks who were expelled from the order then gathered ten thousand supporters and held their own council to compile the Buddha' s teachings. This was called the Great Council (*Mahāsaṅgīti*). These monks were said to have compiled false teachings, reject the canon agreed upon at the First Council, and compiled their own canon. They moved *sūtras* from one part of the canon to another, thereby distorting the doctrines of the five *Nikāyas*. They confused orthodox and heterodox teachings and did not distinguish between teachings to be taken literally and those requiring interpretations. They discarded parts of the *sūtras* and the *vinaya* and compose false scriptures, which they substituted for the rejected texts.

According to the *Dīpavaṃsa* account, the monks of the Great Assembly compiled new versions of the *sūtras* and *vinaya* quite different from those of Sthavīras. This group is called "the monks of the Great Council" (*Mahāsaṅgītika*) in the *Dīpavaṃsa* and "the Great Assembly" (*Mahāsaṅghika*) in the *Mahāvaṃsa*. The name "Mahāsaṅghika" meant that these monks constituted the majority of monks at the initial schism. Thus, according to the Sri Lankan tradition, after the initial schism the Theravāda and Mahāsaṅghika schools each held a separate council.

No mention of a council is found in the *Samayabhedoparacanacakra*, hereafter refer to as *Samaya*, a history and discussion of the schools of *Nikāya*

Buddhism according to Northern Buddhist traditions. According to the *Samaya*, hundred years after the Buddha's passing away, during the reign of King Aśoka, "four groups could not reach agreement in discussion about the five points of doctrine proposed by Mahādeva". Consequently, the Buddhist community was divided into two schools, the Sthavira and the Mahāsaṅghika. The four groups were the Nāga group, the group from the border area, the learned group, and the venerable group. Only three groups are mentioned in the Tibetan translation, but four groups are mentioned in Chinese translation.

Vinaya from both the Mahāsaṅghika and the Sthavira lineages agreed that a council of seven hundred monks was convened to discuss ten points of controversy. However, the ten points are not specifically mentioned in the *Mahāsaṅghikavinaya* (T1425). Thus there is agreement that a council was convened, but only Theravāda source such as the *Dīpavaṃsa* include statements that the *Sūtra-piṭaka* was recited and examined after the council. This series of event is generally referred to as the Second Council, but sources do not agree about whether the *Vinaya* to discuss ten points of controversy. *Vinaya-piṭaka* and *Sūtra-piṭaka* were recognized at this time. Since sources do agree that seven hundred monks did assemble and convene a council, at least this aspect of the tradition must be recognized as a historical fact.

1.1.3 Later Schism and the Third Council

1.1.3.1 Later Schism

After the initial split that resulted in the Sthavira and Mahāsanghika schools, further divisions occurred that led to a proliferation of schools. The Mahāsanghika School was the first to experience a schism, probably because it had more members and had adopted a more liberal attitude toward doctrinal issues. As a result, it was more difficult to administer than the Sthavira School. According to the *Samaya*, three additional schools, that is, the Ekakvyavahārika, Lokuttaravādin, and Kaukuṭika, split off from the Mahāsanghika during the second century after the Buddha's passing away. Two more schisms, which occurred during the second century after the Buddha's passing away, resulted in the Bahuśrutīya and the Prajñaptivādin schools. At the end of that century, Mahādeva proclaimed his five points at a *caitya* (reliquary) in southern India. The arguments that arose concerning the five

points resulted in the fourth schisms ad three new schools: the Caitika, Aparaśaila, and Uttaraśaila. Thus a total of eight new schools arose out of the Mahāsanghika School during the second century after the Buddha's passing away.

According to the *Samaya*, the Sthaviras maintained their unity during the century when the schools of the Mahāsanghika lineage were under going schisms. However, divisions in the Sthavira lineage began occurring during the third century after the Buddha's death. First, the Sravāstivadin (also known as Hetuvāda) School split away from the Sthavira (or Haimavata School). Next, the Vātsīputrīya School broke away from the Sarvāstivādin School. The Vātsīputrīya School subsequently gave rise to four more schools: the Dharmottarīya, Bhadrayānīya, Sammatīya, and Saṇṇagarika. In the fourth schism, the Sarvāstivadin School gave rise to the Mahīśāska School, which in turn, in a fifth schism, led to the formation of the Dharmagupta School. The Dharmagupta School claimed that its teaching had been received from the Buddha's disciple Maudgalyāyana. In the sixth schism, the Kāśyapīya (or Suvarṣaka) School broke away from the Sarvāstivādin School. The above six schisms occurred during the third century after the Buddha's passing away. The seventh, in which the Sautrāntika (or Sankrāntika) School broke away from the Sarvāstivādin School, occurred during the fourth century after the Buddha's time. The Sautrāntika School emphasized the importance of *sūtras* over *śāstras* and claimed that its teaching originated with Ānanda, the monk who had chanted the *sūtras* at the First Council.

The Sthavira lineage underwent seven schisms that resulted in eleven schools, while the Mahāsanghika School divided into a total of nine schools. The schisms in the two original schools thus resulted in a total of twenty schools. The phrase "the schisms into the eighteen schools," which is found in a number of Buddhist texts, refers to the eighteen schools produced by these later schisms, but not to the two original schools.[1]

The Mahāsanghika School continued to exist as a separate entity despite undergoing four schisms. The fate of the original school of the Sthaviras is not

[1] See Hirakawa Akira, tr. By Paul Groner, A History of Indian Buddhism, Delhi: Motolal Banarsidass Publishers, 1998., p.p. 112-113 Figure. 2

clear. The first schism in the Sthavira lineage resulted in the Sarvāstivadin and Haimavata schools. Although the Haimavata School is called the "original Sthavira School" in the *Samaya*, the Haimavata School was influential only in an area in the north and was far from the central India, where most of the important events in very early Buddhist history occurred. Moreover, the school does not seem to have been very powerful. The other schools in the Sthavira lineage split off from the Sarvāstivadin School. Consequently, the account found in the *Samaya* seems questionable. Vasumitra, the author, was a Sarvāstivādin monk, and may have written this account to demonstrate that the Sarvāstivādin School was the most important school among those in the Sarvāstivādin lineage. Vasumitra's overall position thus would seem to conflict with his statement that the Haimavata was the original Sthavira School.

In Sri Lankan tradition, the major sources for the study of the schisms are such works as the *Dīpavaṃsa* (Chronicle of the Island), the *Mahāvaṃsa* (Great Chronicle, historical poem written in *Pāli* language), and Buddhaghoṣa's *Kathāvatthu-atthakathā*.

1.1.3.2 The Third Council

The story of the Third Council is found only in Sri Lankan sources such as the *Dīpavaṃsa*, *Mahāvaṃsa*, and *Samantapāsādikā*. According to these sources, the Second Council was held a hundred years after the Buddha's time during the reign of King Kālāśoka; the Third Council (*tatiya-sangaha*) was held during the reign of King Aśoka, who was crowned 218 years after the Buddha's death. The Third Council is said to have been presided over by Moggaliputta Tissa, and the doctrines discussed at the council to have been recorded in the *Kathāvatthu* (Points of Controversy). The Sri Lankan tradition thus distinguishes bwteen the reigns of Kālāśoka and Aśoka and relates the story of two councils. In contrast, in the *Samaya*, a work in the Northern tradition, King Aśoka reign is said to have occurred a little more than a century after the Buddha's death. This latter time scale does not allow sufficient time for a Third Council to have been convened. Moreover, the work in which the disputes of the Third Council are said to have been collected, the *Kathāvatthu*, is found only in the Theravādin tradition. The Third Council is not mentioned in the literature of the other schools. Thus, it apparently involved only the Theravāda School.

The Sri Lankan account of the Third Council follows. During the reign of King Aśoka, the Buddhist community flourished because of the king's financial support, but many people became monks only because monasteries offered an easy way of life (*theyyasamvāsaka*). Monastic rules were not closely observed and religious practice was neglected. Disputes arose in the community. Not even the fortnight assembly was held. To correct such abuses, Moggaliputta Tissa with the support of King Aśoka purged the order. Those who agree that Buddhism was *vibhajjavāda* (the teaching of discrimination/analysis) were accepted as Buddhist monks; those who disagreed were expelled from the community. Moggaliputta Tissa then compiled the *Kathāvatthu* to explain the orthodox position, assembled a thousand *arhats*, and held a council to compile the Dharma. This was the Third Council.

The Sri Lankan Theravāda School understood Buddhism as the "teaching of discrimination" (*vibhajjavāda*). Nothing was to be adhered to in a one-sided manner. If people single-mindedly insisted that they understood the truth, arguments would inevitably ensue. Thus, reality was to be understood by "discriminating" between one-sided negative and positive positions. The Theravāda School was so called the Vibhajjavādin" School. The Third Council was probably held at some point within the Theravāda School and focused on this tradition of discriminating between extremes. Thus, the historicity of the Third Council cannot be completely denied.

According to the Sri Lankan tradition, the Third Council (*tatiya-sangaha*) was held during the reign of King Aśoka, who was crowned 218 years after the Buddha's passing away. Moggaliputta Tissa was invited to Pataliputra, where he defrocked heretics and purified the order so that those remaining adhered to Vibhajjavāda doctrine. Later he assembled one thousand monks and convened the Third Council. To specify orthodox doctrinal positions, he compiled the *Kathāvatthu* (Points of Controversy). These events occurred in approximately the eighteenth year of Aśoka's reign. However, if most of the schisms of *Nikāya* Buddhism had already occurred, as it stated in the Sri Lankan sources, it is unlikely that the various orders could have been purified and forced to conform to *Vibhajjavāda* doctrine. Moggaliputta Tissa probably would not have been able to stop the arguments between the monks of Kausambī, Sancī, and Sārnath. Moreover, if Moggaliputta Tisssa did assemble one thousand monks and convene a council, he probably would not have selected monks from other

schools. Consequently, the Third Council cannot be recognized as an event involving the Buddhist orders of all of India.

The contents of the *Kathāvatthu* are based on points of controversy that arose among the various schools of *Nikāya* Buddhism. The text thus presupposes the completion of the various schisms of the Schools. The present text of the *Kathāvatthu* must be dated at least one hundred years after Aśoka, perhaps during the last half of the second century B.C.E. If the text of the *Kathāvatthu* accurately reflects the issues of the Third Council, then that council must have occurred in the second century B.C.E. Japanese scholar, Hirakawa, identified that since the *Kathāvatthu* was compiled within the Theravāda tradition, some sort of council must have been convened. However, the council was held not during Aśoka's reign, but approximately a century after Aśoka.[2] Certain scholar, Heinz Bechert, thought that the Second Council was probably held at the time of Aśoka. Because it is often held by scholars that the Buddha died sometime around 480 B.C.E. Aśoka died in about 232 B.C.E. But Bechert advocates placing the death of the Buddha more than a century later than is usual, at roughly 370-368 B.C.E.[3]

This account should be assigned for students to research.

However, according to Sri Lankan chronicles, after the Third Council, Asoka's son, Ven. Mahinda, brought the *Tripiṭaka* to Sri Lanka, along with the commentaries that were recited at the Third Council. The texts brought to Sri Lanka were preserved until today without losing a page. The texts were written in Pāli which was based on the Magadhi language spoken by the Buddha. There was nothing known as Mahāyāna at that time.

1.1.4 Later Development in *Nikāya* Buddhism

The term "*Nikāya* Buddhism" refers to monastic Buddhism after the initial schism into the Mahāsanghika and Sthavira schools had occurred. Later on Buddhism had spread through India during King Aśoka's reign, it continued to develop. In the initial schism between Mahāsamghikas, and Sthaviras,

[2] Ibid., p.91

[3] Paul Williams, Mahayana Buddhism: The doctrinal foundations, London and New York: Routhledge, 1989, p.9.

most of the monks who supported the adoption of the ten items of monastic discipline in dispute had been associated with the Vṛjis (Vajjiputtaka) of Vaiśālī in central India; they had constituted the nucleus of Mahāsamghika order. Consequently, after the schism, the Mahāsamghikas became particularly influential in central India.

In contrast, the monks who opposed the ten items had been from Avanti in western India and from along the Southern Route. Consequently, the Sthavira order was more influential in western India. Aśoka's son, Mahinda, is traditionally credited with introducing Theravāda Buddhism to Sri Lanka. Mahinda's mother was from Vidiśā in Ujjayinī along the Southern Route. Mahinda assembled the materials for his journey in western India and set out from the west coast by ship. The Pāli language resembles the language found on inscriptions at Girnār. All of this evidence suggests that the Sthavira order was centered in western India.

Sarvāstivādin works lead to similar conclusions concerning the geographical distribution of the two schools. According to *Mahāvibhāṣā*, the dispute over the five issues that Mahādeva raised occurred during Aśoka's reign. After Sthavira monks were defeated in the debate by the greater number of Mahāsamghika monks and expelled from the Kukkuṭārāma monastery (established in Pāṭaliputra by Aśoka), they went to Kashmir. According to the *A-yu-wang-jing* (T 50:155c-156a, *Aśokarājasūtra*), Upagupta established Buddhism in Mathurā, and Madhyāntika established it in Kashmir. These traditions agree with the fact that Kashmir later became a stronghold of the Sarvāstivādin School. The great wealth the Sarvāstivādins accumulated in Kashmir enabled the school to develop a detailed *abhidhrama* philosophy.

Thus the Sthavira School was influential in the western and northern parts of India, while the Mahāsamghika School was dominant in the central and southern parts of India. Many inscriptions concerning the Mahāsamghika School have been discovered in southern India. In general, however, the

Mahāsanghika tradition was weaker than the Sthavira tradition. The names of many schools belonging to the Sthavira tradition, such as the Sarvāstivādin, Theravāda, and Sammatīya, are well known. In contrast, outside of the Mahāsamghika School itself, the names of relatively few schools from the Mahāsamghika lineage are well known. In tradition, many works belonging to schools of the Sthavira tradition have survived, but only the Mahāvastu, a biography of the Buddha from the Lokottaravādin School, and two or three other works from schools in the Mahāsanghika tradition are extant.

Many of the later schisms in *Nikāya* Buddhism occurred during the second century B.C.E. The reasons for the schisms are not clear. Nor is it known where most of the "eighteen schools" were located. Although Mahāyāna Buddhism had arisen by the first century B.C. E., *Nikāya* Buddhism did not decline. Instead, both *Nikāya* and Mahāyāna Buddhism flourished during the next few centuries. In fact, *Nikāya* Buddhism was the larger of the two movements.

Many scholars have argued that Mahāyāna Buddhism arose from the Mahāsamghika School. The Mahāsamghika School was not, however, absorbed by Mahāyāna Buddhism; it continued to exist long after Mahāyāna developed. Even during I-ching's (635-713) travel, it was counted among the four most powerful Buddhist orders in India.

There are relatively few materials extant regarding the later development of *Nikāya* Buddhism. The travel records of Chinese pilgrims to India are particularly valuable in this respect. (See the detail in A History of Indian Buddhism by Kirakawa Akira).

1.2 The Development Process of Mahāyāna Buddhism

Following (or leading up to) the schisms, each Saṅgha started to accumulate an *Abhidharma*, a detailed scholastic reworking of doctrinal material appearing in the *Suttas,* according to schematic classifications. These *Abhidharma* texts do not contain systematic philosophical treatises, but summaries or numerical lists. Scholars generally date these texts to around the 3rd century BCE, 100 to 200 years after the death of the Buddha. Therefore the

seven *Abhidharma* works are generally claimed not to represent the words of the Buddha himself, but those of disciples and great scholars. Every school had its own version of the *Adhidharma*, with different theories and different texts. The different *Adhidharmas* of the various schools did not agree with each other. Scholars disagree on whether the Mahasanghika school had an *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* or not.

The period of Early Mahāyāna Buddhism concerns the origins of Mahāyāna and the contents of early Mahayana Sutras.[4] The development of the various Early Buddhist Schools and the arising of Mahāyāna were not always consecutive. For example, the early schools continued to exist alongside Mahāyāna.

1.2.1 Origins of Mahāyāna Buddhism

The origins of Mahāyāna Buddhism are still not completely understood. Three sources appear to have made significant contributions to the rise of Mahāyāna Buddhism. The first source is *Nikāya* (Sectarian) Buddhism. Many modern scholars have maintained the view that Mahāyāna Buddhism developed out of the Mahāsanghika School. But since the Mahāsanghika School continued to exist long after Mahāyāna Buddhism arose, the rise of Mahāyāna cannot be explained simply as the transformation of the Mahāsanghikas into Mahayanists. While it is true that the many similarities between Mahāsanghika and Mahāyāna doctrines prove that the Mahāsanghika School did influence Mahāyāna Buddhism, teachings from the Sarvāstivādin, Mahīśāska, Dharmagupta, and Theravāda schools were also incorporated into Mahāyāna Buddhism. The doctrines of Sarāstivāda School in particular were often mentioned in Mahāyāna texts, and Sammatīya teachings also were influential. The relation between *Nikāya* Buddhism and Mahāyāna Buddhism clearly is not a simple one.

The second source is the biographical literature of the Buddha composed by people sometimes said to have belonged to the "vehicle that praised the Buddha". Although this literature may have had its origins in *Nikāya* Buddhism,

[4] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buddhism#cite_note-146#cite_note-146

it eventually developed in ways that transcended sectarian lines and contributed to the rise of Mahāyāna Buddhism.

The third source is *stūpa* worship. After the Buddha's death, his remains were divided and placed in eight *stūpas* built in central India. These became centers where pious Buddhists congregated. Later King Aśoka had *stūpa* built in other parts of India, further contributing to the spread of *stūpa* worship. These cults appear to have contributed significantly to the rise of Mahāyāna Buddhism.

There is another theory that the origins of Mahāyāna can be traced back to the activities of the laity.[5] A lay revolt against the arrogance and pretensions of the monks. This view was held strongly by the Etienne Lamotte. In one of his last articles he summed up his views on the origins of the Mahāyāna as follows:

> During the first five centuries of its history, Buddhism progressed considerably: nevertheless, it had to face both external and internal difficulties because of the divergent tendencies which formed at the heart of the community. Some monks questioned the authenticity of the early scriptures and claimed to add new texts to them; others leaned towards a more lax interpretation of the rules governing their life; the scholastic treatises, continuously increasing in number, became more and more discrepant; finally, and above all, the laity, considering the monks' previleges to be excessive, tried to win equal religious rights for themselves.
>
> (Bechert and Gombrich 1984:9o)

The view of the lay origins of the Mahāyāna, that lay people were instrumental in the formation of the Mahāyāna, is also widely held as established fact among contemporary Japanese scholars where, it should be said, their emphasis on lay communities of Bodhisattvas engaged in altruistic activities reflects rather closely the situation, interests, and concerns of much of contemporary Japanese Buddhism. An important and widely accepted case for considerable lay influence on the rise of the Mahāyāna was published in an article by Akira Hirakawa (1963). Hirakawa's main point appears to be that the Mahāyāna

[5] Opcit., Paul Williams, pp.20-22

grew up among an identifiable community of Bodhisattvas, composed of lay and renunciate members of equal status, centered on the *stūpas*, relic mounds, and relic shrine worship. The *stūpas* were administered by the laity, and as relic mounds were eventually identified with the Buddha himself. Hence the growth of Buddha cults and the importance of the Buddha in the Mahāyāna. According to Hirakawa these stupas were quite separate from, and in certain rivalry with, the monastic orders of the monks. Thus we find the development of an alternative religious tradition centered on Bodhisattvas and Buddhas, showing some hostility to the conduct and aspirations of the monasteries, particularly in respect to the definitely inferior status given to the laity in monastic Buddhism (on the role of the laity in Theravada, see Gombrich 1988:118ff.)

However, there are some western scholars reject these ideas by the reason given as follows.

The commonly expressed misconception that Mahāyāna started as a lay-inspired movement is based on a selective reading of a very tiny sample of extant Mahāyāna *Sūtra* literature. Currently scholars have moved away from this limited corpus, and have started to examine early Mahāyāna literature, which is very ascetic and expounds the ideal of the monks' life in the forest. A scholarly consensus about the origin of the Mahāyāna has not yet been reached, but it has been suggested that when Mahāyāna became popular, in the 5th century CE, it had become something it had previously objected to: a landed monastic institution with a lay orientation. Prior to this, the movement may well have been either a marginalized ascetic group of monks living in the forest, or a group of conservatives embedded in mainstream, socially engaged early Buddhist monasteries. Most scholars conclude that Mahayana remained a marginal movement until the 5th century AD.

1.2.2 Mahāyāna and Hinayāna

The term “Mahāyāna” is usually translated as “Great Vehicle” and the term “Hinayāna´as “Small Vehicle”. The appellation “Hinayāna” thus was a deprecatory term used by Mahāyāna practitioners to refer to *Nikāya* Buddhism. No Buddhist groups ever refer to themselves as Hinayanists.

It is unclear whether Mahayanists referred to the whole *Nikāya* Buddhism as Hinayāna or only to a specific group. The arguments of the

Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa (Ta-zhi-tu-lun T1509) are primarily directed against the Vaibhāsikas of the Sarvāstivādin School. The Sarvāstivādins were viewed as Hinayanists in this and many other Mahāyāna texts. Unfortunately, it is not known whether the term "Hinayāna" in Mahāyāna scriptures also referred to the Theravāda and Mahāsanghikas.

A comparison of Fa-hsien's travel diary to that of another Chinese pilgrim, Hsuan-tsang (pinyin: Xuanzang 600-664), *Hsi-yu chi* (A Record of Travels to Western Regions, T2087), clearly indicates that Fa-hsien used the term "Hinayāna" to refer to all of the schools of *Nikāya* Buddhism in approximately the same manner. Hsuan-tsang understood Indian Buddhism in approximately the same manner. Hsuan-tsang placed the epithet "Hinayāna" in front of the names of certain schools, such as the Sarvāstivādin, Sammatīya, and Lokuttaravādin Hsuan-tsang referred to the Sri Lankan Theravāda School as "the Mahāyāna Theravāda School". Thus, Hsuan-tsang did not regard all sects of *Nikāya* Buddhism as Hinayāna. However, he regarded the Lokuttaravādin sect, which is of Mahāsanghika lineage, as Hinayāna despite the many Mahāyāna element found in the Lokuttaravādin biography of the Buddha, the *Mahāvastu*.

Hinayāna and Mahāyāna Buddhism are not so clearly distinguished in I-ching (635-713) travel diary, A Record of Buddhism in India and the Malay Archipelago (Nan-hai- chi-kuei-nei-fa chuan, T 2125). I-ching observed no significant differences in the life styles of Hinayāna and Mahāyāna monks. Both follow the *vinaya*, were expected to use three robes and a begging bowl, and based their practice on the Four Noble Truths. I-ching noted that "those who paid homage to bodhisattvas and read Mahāyāna *sūtras*" were Mahāyāna practitioners, while those who did not do were Hinayāna. Only the Mādhyamika and Yogācāra schools were consistently referred to as Mahāyāna.[6] I-ching spent most of his time at the large monastery at Nālandā in central India. His use of the terms "Hinayāna" and "Mahāyāna" may indicate that the divisions between the two types of Buddhism were not very clearly observed at Nālandā in the seventh century.

[6] Opcit., A History of Indian Buddhism, pp.256-257.

Hsuan-tsang and I-ching traveled in India when Mahāyāna Buddhism was in its middle period. Their writings, consequently, do not describe Early Mahāyāna Buddhism. However, in general, the term “Hinayāna” was most often applied to the Sarvāstivādin School.

The term “*Śrāvakayāna*” (vehicle of the listener) and “*Bodhisattvayāna*” (vehicle of the bodhisattva) are seen older than the terms “Hinayāna” and "Mahāyāna”. Hinayāna was eventually substituted for *Śrāvakayāna* and Mahāyāna for *Bodhisattvayāna*. *Śrāvakayāna* was probably used to refer to *Nikāya* Buddhism in general.

1.3 The Doctrinal Differences between Hinayāna and Mahāyāna

The element *yāna* in the term’s “Hinayāna” and “Mahāyāna” literally means “vehicle,” and it refers to Buddhist doctrine. By practicing in accordance with doctrine, a person could across the river of cycle existence, traveling from the shore that represented the realm of delusion to the other shore, which represented the realm of enlightenment. Doctrine was compared to a vehicle that would take the practitioner to salvation.

The differences between Hinayāna and Mahāyāna doctrine are many. But the major difference, at least according to the Mahāyāna tradition, lies in the attitudes of each toward the salvation of others. The Mahāyāna tradition maintains that a person must save himself by saving others. The Mahāyāna descriptions of religious practice as the six perfections (*pāramitā*) illustrate how a person could benefit himself only by helping others. These doctrines reflected a view of the world based on the teaching of Dependent Origination.

In contrast, according to Sarvāstivādin and Theravādin doctrine, the goal of practice was to attain salvation for oneself by cutting off all defilements. Once salvation had been attained, the practitioner had accomplished all that was to be done and entered *nirvāṇa*. Saving others was not a necessary requirement for the completion of practice. Even after enlightenment had been attained, helping others was not required. *Śrāvakayāna* Buddhism was sometimes called “Buddhism for disciples” because it could be mastered by practicing under qualified teachers. The practitioner was not required to progress from being student to teacher. The term “*śrāvaka*”, which means “listener” or “one who

studies", also reflects these qualities. This lack of social concern is probably related to the understanding of the doctrine of Dependent Origination professed by many of the schools of *Nikāya* Buddhism. For them, Dependent Origination referred to the integration of discrete entities, each with its own nature.

Within the *Śrāvakayāna* tradition, teachings were transmitted from teacher to disciple. Preaching the Dharma and teaching were practices performed by monks. Because *Śrāvakayāna* doctrines did not require monks to help others as an integral part of their practice, however, these doctrines were considered "Hinayāna" by Mahāyāna advocates. While Mahayanists called the Hinayāna tradition "Buddhism for disciples," they conceived of the Mahāyāna tradition as a form of Buddhism that would allow them to become teachers. It was a teaching that would enable them to become Buddhas, to become equal to the Buddha, the teacher of the *śrāvakas*. Mahāyāna Buddhism encouraged the practitioner to teach even while he was studying, an attitude based on the premise that the practitioner already possessed the potential necessary to realize Buddhahood. A person who knew that he had this potential was called a bodhisattva.

The Mahāyāna conception of the bodhisattva was modeled on the accounts of Śākyamuni Buddha's former lives, which were related in Buddhist literature. Thus, Mahāyāna Buddhism was a teaching or vehicle for bodhisattvas, a *bodhisattvayāna*. Some Mahāyāna practitioners believed that all people, not only themselves, possessed the potential to become Buddhas. These practitioners wished to help all other people realize that they too had this potential and consequently stressed the importance of helping others. Their beliefs eventually developed into the doctrine that all sentient beings posses the Buddha-nature. Thus, Mahāyāna Buddhism was concerned with lay people and this world while Hinayāna Buddhism was a monastic form of Buddhism characterized by withdrawal from the everyday world.

These differences in attitudes between Hinayāna and Mahāyāna Buddhism resulted in a variety of divergent doctrines. For Hinayāna Buddhists, *nirvāṇa* was the final goal, characterized by some Mahayanists as the extinction of body and mind. In contrast, Mahāyāna Buddhists argued that the practitioner was to attain "active *nirvāṇa*" (*apratisthita-nirvāṇa*) in which he did not remain quiescent. Bodhisattvas such as Manjuśrī, Samantabhadra, and

Avalokiteśvara had more powers than Buddhas, but continued to devote themselves to saving sentient beings instead of attaining Buddhahood. Buddhas such as Amitabha or Śakyamuni (as an eternal Buddha) never entered extinction (*parinirvāṇa*). They continued to help sentient beings. Entering *nirvāṇa* was seen as nothing more than an expedient means to help save sentient beings. Nobody actually entered *nirvāṇa* as an ultimate state, according to this Mahāyāna view.

The emergence of these teachings was made possible by the development of the doctrine of nonsubstantiality (*śūnyatā*) and new interpretations of the concepts of the Middle Way and Dependent Origination that diverged from the views of *Nikāya* Buddhism. Mahāyāna views of the Buddha also differed from those of *Nikāya* Buddhism. Mahāyāna Buddhism distinguished three bodies of the Buddha: *dharmakāya* (dharma body), *sambhogakāy*a (body of bliss), and *nirmāṇakāya* (manifested body). The stages of practice for the Mahayanists led to the attainment of Buddhahood. Consequently, Mahāyāna paths to enlightenment such as the ten stages (*daśabhūmi*) or forty-two stages had little in common with the Hinayāna list of four candidates and four fruits or with the Hinayāna goal of becoming an *arhat*. Some Mahayanists conceived of the Buddha as a savior of helpless beings and developed doctrines concerning easier paths to salvation or the Buddha's use of his own power to save men. Such doctrines were found only in Mahāyāna Buddhism.

Though Mahāyāna texts do not describe the circumstances that gave rise to Mahāyāna Buddhism, it is believed that during 1st Century B.C. to 1st Century A.D., the two terms Mahāyāna and Hinayāna appeared in the *Saddharma Puṇḍarika Sūtra* or the *Sutra of the Lotus of the Good Law*. After the 1st Century AD., the Mahayanists took a firm stand and the terms of Mahāyāna and Hinayāna were introduced. Hinayāna sects developed in India and had an existence independent from the form of Buddhism existing in Sri Lanka (Theravāda Buddhism). However, during the 2nd Century A.D. Mahāyāna became clearly defined. Nāgārjuna developed the Mahāyāna philosophy of *Śunyatā* and proved that everything is Void in a small text called *Madhyamika-kārikā*. About the 4th Century, there were Asanga and Vasubandhu who wrote enormous amount of works.

We must not confuse Hinayāna with Theravāda because the terms are not synonymous. Theravāda Buddhism went to Sri Lanka during the 3rd Century B.C. when there was no Mahāyāna at all. Hinayāna sects developed in India and had an existence independent from the form of Buddhism existing in Sri Lanka. Today there is no Hinayāna sect in existence anywhere in the world. Therefore, in 1950 the World Fellowship of Buddhists inaugurated in Colombo unanimously decided that the term Hinayāna should be dropped when referring to Buddhism existing today in Sri Lanka, Thailand, Burma, Cambodia, Laos, etc. This is the brief history of Thervāda, Mahāyāna and Hinayāna.

Conclusion

Approximately one century after the Buddha's death, the early order split to Mahāsanghika and Sthaviravāda schools. Later, further schism occurred, resulting in a number of additional schools. Sectarian (*Nikāya*) Buddhishism Buddhist doctrine at that time was typified by the development of scholastic *abhidharma* philosophy. Because the tradition differed from Early Buddhism in many ways, most scholars distinguish between Early and Sectarian Buddhism. Sectarian Buddhism was a major force in India for over thousand years, but most of its important doctrinal development occurred during its first three centuries, between 150 B.C.E. and 150 C.E.

Of the more than twenty sects, the doctrines of only the Sarvāstivāda and Theravāda schools are understood in any detail today. Only a little is known about the doctrines of other schools because of the paucity of information concerning them. The Sautrāntika and Sammatīya schools flourished after the beginning of the common era. Although both probably had highly developed systems of doctrine, detailed information about them has not survived. When I-ching departed from Canton for India in 671, the Theravāda, Sarvāstivāda, Sammatīya, and Mahāsanghika schools were still thriving. Later, they gradually blended with Mahāyāna Buddhism. In addition, both Sectarian and Mahāyāna Buddhism were influenced by Esoteric Buddhism. Unfortunately little is known about the later phases of Sectarian Buddhism.

Mahāyāna scriptures were already in existence by the first century B.C.E., indicating that Mahāyāna Buddhism must have arisen around the beginning of the common era while Sectarian Buddhism was still developing. Early Mahāyāna practitioners were especially interested in teachings on

nonsubstabtiality or emptiness. Although mentions of nonsubstantiality can be found in Early Buddhist scriptures, Mahayanists stressed and developed this theme far beyond anything found in either Early or *Nikāya* Buddhism.

Activity 1

Find answers to these questions:

1) When was the First Buddhist Council convened?
2) What was the purpose of the First Buddhist Council?
3) When did the Second Buddhist Council take place?
4) Why was the Second Buddhist Council held?
5) What was the cause of basic schism ?
6) What was the result of basic schism?
7) How many periods are divided in Indian Buddhism?
8) What are the sources give rise to Mahāyāna Buddhism?
9) What is the meaning of Nikāya Buddhism? Can you give the names of Nikāya Buddhism in accordance with Sthavira' lineage, and Mahāsanghika' lineage?
10) What are the differences between Hinayāna and Mahāyāna doctrine?
11) In Sri Lankan tradition, what are the major sources for the study of the schisms?

Activity 2

Read some texts written on the Schism of Buddhism and discuss its information which is differed from the lecture.

References:

Hirakawa Akira. *A History of Indian Buddhism: from Sakyamuni to Early Mahayana*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1998.

Paul Williams. *Mahayana Buddhism: The doctrinal Foundations*. London and New York: Routledge. 1989

Etienne Lamotte . *Historire du Bouddhisme indien*. (1958)

Chapter 2

The Doctrinal Foundations of Mahāyāna Buddhism

Introduction

This chapter is relevant to the doctrinal foundation of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Both Theravāda and Mahāyāna Buddhism accept Śākyamuni Buddha as the Teacher. The Four Noble Truths are exactly the same in both schools. The Eightfold Path and the *Paṭicca-samuppāda* or the Dependent Origination is the same in both schools. Both traditions rejected the idea of a supreme being who created and governed this world. They accept *Sīla, Samādhi, Paññā* without any difference. These are the most important teachings of the Buddha and they are all accepted by both schools without question. However, there are also some points where they differ. The Mahāyāna has three main distinguishing elements.

Firstly, it emphasized the savior status and completely adopted the Bodhisattva path from the earlier traditions. Secondly, the Buddha was glorified as a transcendent being and this led to a new cosmology. Thirdly, a new understanding of meditation led to a new philosophical outlook and new interpretation of traditions. New beliefs have been added from the enormous store of Indian religious experience. This chapter will focus the essential doctrines which can be found in Mahāyāna *sūtras*. These obvious concepts are Buddha-nature, three-vehicles, three-bodies, the four great vows, six perfections, and ten stages of Bodhisattva.

Topics:

2.1 Buddha-nature

Buddha-nature (Classical Chinese: 佛性, modern pinyin *fó xìng*) literally corresponds to the Sanskrit *Buddha-dhātu*. The *Buddha-dhātu* is also usually translated as 'Buddha-element', and 'Buddha-principle', a term first used in the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* with the famous phrase "all beings possess Buddha-nature." It expresses the Mahāyāna conviction that all beings have the potential for Buddhahood. Buddha-nature is taught, within Mahāyāna Buddhism, to be an intrinsic, immortal potential for reaching enlightenment that exists within the mind of every sentient being.

The idea of the Buddha-nature may be traced to Abhidharmic thought, and ultimately to statements of the Buddha in the *Nikāyas*. Buddha-nature is not held as doctrinal by Theravādin schools of thought because the idea comes from later Mahāyāna *sūtras*. The idea is not explicitly denied in any form of Indian Mahāyāna, however some scholars, especially those associated with Madhyamaka, had no active interest in it. Nevertheless, the Buddha-nature doctrine became a cornerstone of East Asian Buddhist and Tibetan Buddhist soteriological thought and practice. Buddha-nature remains a widespread and important doctrine in much of Far Eastern Buddhism.[7] In Early Mahāyāna texts, no mention is made of a Buddha-element or nature, however, in the

[7] Williams, Paul (2000). *Buddhist Thought*. London: Routledge: p. 161

statements in Early Mahāyāna texts such as the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā-PP* (p.5), that the original nature of the mind is pure (*prakrtis cittasya prabhāsvarā.* This doctrine first appeared in the *Ajāsatukaukrtyavinodana*#, (T626)[8], and later in many other Mahāyāna texts.

A closely related concept to Buddha-nature is *tathāgatagarbha*. The *tathāgatagarbha* ("matrix," "seed," or "treasurestore of the *Tathāgata*") is a Mahāyāna Buddhist doctrine expressing the conviction that all beings have within themselves the virtues and wisdom of the *Tathāgata* (Buddha), but that these are hidden by a covering of defilements (*kleśakośa*). The third-century scripture, the *Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra,* introduced the doctrine and illustrated it with nine similes based on the different meanings of the word *garbha,* such as womb, store, calyx, husk, and seed. The *tathāgatagarbha* is likened to a Buddha hidden in the calyx of a flower; to a noble son hidden in the womb of a vile, ugly woman; to a seed hidden in a useless husk; and to a store of treasure hidden beneath a poor man's house. The compound therefore permits a wide range of legitimate translations including matrix, womb, embryo, germ, and treasure-store of the *Tathāgata*. Originally, the term *tathāgatagarbha* seems to have referred to beings themselves, who are *tathāgatagarbhas,* or "harborers of the *Tathāgata*."

The concept was developed further in later writings like the *Śrīmālādevī-sūtra* (*Discourse of Queen Śrīmālā*), where the term refers to an inner potential that enables beings to become Buddhas. Were it not for the *tathāgatagarbha*, this *sūtra* states, beings would be unable to feel aversion for suffering or to seek *Nirvāṇa*. The *sūtra* identifies the *tathāgatagarbha* as the *dharmakāya* of the Buddha, which pervades all beings. The *dharmakāya* is said to have the four perfections (*guṇa pāramitās*) of eternality, bliss, self, and purity, an assertion that has led some to question whether the *tathāgatagarbha* teaching might expound a form of Hindu monism, in which case it might contradict such fundamental Buddhist doctrines as *Anitya* (Impermanence), *Anātaman/Ātman* (No-Self/Self), and *dukkha*.

8 Opcit., Paul Williams, pp.297-298.

The only Indian Buddhist treatise devoted to the *tathāgatagarbha* is the fifth-century *Ratnagotravibhāga* (Chinese, *Baoxing fenbie dacheng jiujing yaoyi lun*; *Analysis of the Source of the [Buddha] Jewel*). The *Ratnagotravibhāga* identified the *tathāgatagarbha* as "thusness mingled with pollution" (*samalā tathatā*), whereas the *dharmakāya* is identified as "thusness apart from pollution" (*nirmalā tathatā*). *Thusness* means supreme truth apprehended by nondiscriminating wisdom. The Madhyamaka School understood *thusness* to mean the emptiness of all dharmas, but the *Ratnagotravibhāga*.

Buddha-nature is not to be confused with the concept of Atman, or Self, but instead is viewed to be empty of defining characteristics (also see *Śunyatā* and Nondualism). In some *Tathāgatagarbha* scriptures, however, especially the Mahāyāna *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*, the Buddha-nature is defined as Self which is permanent, blissful and pure.[9]

There is a reference in the *Anguttara Nikāya* to a 'luminous mind', present within all people, but they corrupt or pure, and whether or not it is itself stained or pure.[10] When it is 'unstained', it is supremely poised for Arahantship, and so could be conceived as the 'womb' of the Arahant, for which a synonym is *tathāgata*. The *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra* describes the Arahant womb (*tathāgatagarbha*) as "by nature brightly shining and pure," and "originally pure," though "enveloped in the garments of the *skandhas*, *dhātus* and *āyatanas*, and soiled with the dirt of attachment, hatred, delusion and false imagining." It is said to be "naturally pure," according to this doctrine, but it appears impure as it is stained by adventitious defilements.[11] Thus the *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra* identifies the luminous mind of the canon with the *tathāgatagarbha*.[12] It also equates the *tathāgatagarbha* (and *ālaya-vijñāna*) with *nirvāṇa*, though this is concerned with the actual attainment of *nirvāṇa* as

9 Hopkins, Jeffrey (2006). *Mountain Doctrine: Tibet's Fundamental Treatise on Other-Emptiness and the Buddha-Matrix.* New York: Snow Lion Publications: p. 129

10 Harvey, Peter (1989). Consciousness Mysticism in the Discourses of the Buddha. In Werner, Karel, ed., *The Yogi and the Mystic*. Curzon Press: p. 94. The reference is at A I, 8-10.

11 Ibid. pp. 96-97

12 Ibid. p. 97

opposed to *nirvāṇa* as a timeless phenomenon.[13] The canon does not support the identification of the "luminous mind" with nirvanic consciousness, though it plays a role in the realization of *nirvāṇa*.[14] Upon the destruction of the fetters, according to one scholar, "the shining nibbanic consciousness flashes out of the womb of arahantship, being without object or support, so transcending all limitations."[15]

The Buddha-nature doctrine centres on the possession by sentient beings of the innate, immaculate buddha-mind or buddha-element (*Buddha-dhātu*), which, prior to the attainment of complete buddhahood, is not yet blossomed into full buddhahood. Buddha-nature is not the same as Atman, or Self, which plays a role in Hindu philosophy. Buddha-nature is also considered to be the non-dual nature of all reality: something like perfection (also see Nondualism and Emptiness), which has no name[16] in that it cannot be described with dualistic logic, and is often described in negation (also see Apophatic theology).

The Buddha-nature is equated in the *Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* with the changeless and deathless true self of the Buddha. In the *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, however, it is said that the *tathāgatagarbha* might be mistaken for a self, which according to this *sūtra*, it is not. This Buddha-nature is described in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* to be incorruptible, uncreated, and indestructible. It is eternal awakeness (*bodhi*) in dwelling *saṃsāra*, and thus opens up the immanent possibility of liberation from all suffering and impermanence.[17]

No being of any kind is without Buddha-nature (*Buddha-dhātu*). It is indicated in the *Angulimaliya Sūtra* that if the Buddhas themselves were to try to find any sentient being who lacked the Buddha-nature, they would fail. In

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13 See page 36 of Henshall, Ron (2007), *The Unborn and Emancipation from the Born*, this thesis by a student of Peter Harvey

14 Opcit., Harvey, Peter (1989). pp. 94- 97

15 Ibid. p. 99

16 The Diamond Sutra

17 Yamamoto, Kosho, trans.; Page, Dr. Tony, ed. *The Mahayana Mahaparinirvana Sutra in 12 Volumes*. London: Nirvana: Volume 2, *passim*

fact, it is stated in that *sūtra* that it is impossible for Buddhas not to discern the presence of the everlasting Buddha-nature in every being:

Even though all Buddhas themselves were to search assiduously, they would not find a *tathāgata-garbha* (Buddha-nature) that is *not* eternal, for the eternal *dhātu*, the *buddha-dhātu* (Buddha Principle, Buddha Nature), the *dhātu* adorned with infinite major and minor attributes, is present in all beings.[18]

The eternality, unshakeability and changelessness of the Buddha-nature (often referred to as "*tathāgatagarbha*") is also frequently stressed in the *sūtras* which expound this Buddha element. The *Śrīmālā Sūtra*, for example, says:

The *Tathāgatagarbha* is not born, does not die, does not transfer [Tib: *'pho-ba*], does not arise. It is beyond the sphere of the characteristics of the compounded; it is permanent, stable and changeless.

The development of the Buddha-nature doctrine is closely related to that of Buddha-matrix (Sanskrit: *tathāgatagarbha*). In the *Anunatva-Apurnatva-Nirdeśa*, the Buddha links the *tathāgatagarbha* to the *Dharmadhātu* (ultimate, all-equal, uncreated essence of all phenomena) and to essential being, stating: What I call "be-ing" (*sattva*) is just a different name for this permanent, stable, pure and unchanging refuge that is free from arising and cessation, the inconceivable pure *Dharmadhātu*.[19]

This eternal refuge of the *Dharmadhātu* or *Buddha-dhātu* is transcendentally empty of all that is conditioned, afflicted, defective, and productive of suffering. It is equated in the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* with Buddhic Knowledge (*jñāna*). Such Knowledge perceives both non-self and the self, emptiness (*śūnyatā*) and non-emptiness, wherein "the Empty is the totality of *samsāra* [birth-and-death] and the non-Empty is Great *Nirvāṇa*."[20]

It is a recurrent theme of the *Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* that the Buddha-nature is indestructible and forever untarnished. Professor Jeffrey

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[18] Tathagatagarbha Buddhism" http://www.webspawner.com/users/tathagatagarbha21/index.html)

[19] 言眾生者即是不生不滅常恒清涼不變歸依。不可思議清淨法界等異名。T668.477c08

[20] Yamamoto, Kosho, trans.; Page, Dr. Tony, ed. *The Mahayana Mahaparinirvana Sutra in 12 Volumes*. London: Nirvana: Vol. 8, p. 22

Hopkins translates several passages from the *sūtra* in which the Buddha speaks of this topic and defines the Buddha-nature as pure, eternal, truly real self: ... that which has permanence, bliss, Self, and thorough purity is called the "meaning of pure truth".

Permanent is the Self; the Self is thoroughly pure. The thoroughly pure is called 'bliss'. Permanent, blissful, Self, and thoroughly pure is the one-gone-thus [i.e. Buddha];

Self means the matrix-of-one-gone-thus [i.e. the *tathāgatagarbha*/ Buddha-nature]. The existence of the buddha-nature in all sentient beings is the meaning of 'Self'.

The buddha-nature, by its own nature, cannot be made non-existent; it is not something that becomes non-existent. Just the inherent nature called 'Self' is the secret matrix-of-one-gone-thus; in this way that secret matrix cannot be destroyed and made non-existent by anything.[21] In explaining what is meant by sentient beings' having the Buddha-nature, the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* distinguishes three ways of understanding the term "to have":

Good son, there are three ways of having: first, to have in the future, secondly, to have at present, and thirdly, to have in the past. All sentient beings will have in future ages the most perfect enlightenment, i.e., the Buddha nature. All sentient beings have at present bonds of defilements, and do not now possess the thirty-two marks and eighty noble characteristics of the Buddha. All sentient beings had in past ages deeds leading to the elimination of defilements and so can now perceive the Buddha nature as their future goal.

Thus according to Heng-Ching Shih, the teaching of the universal Buddha nature does not intend to assert the existence of substantial, entity-like self endowed with excellent features of a Buddha. Rather, Buddha-nature simply represents the potentiality to be realized in the future.[22]

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21 Hopkins, Jeffrey (2006). *Mountain Doctrine: Tibet's Fundamental Treatise on Other-Emptiness and the Buddha-Matrix*. New York: Snow Lion Publications: p. 129

22 Shih, Heng-Ching. *The Significance Of 'Tathagatagarbha' -- A Positive Expression Of 'Sunyata.*

This type of interpretation of the Buddha-nature is not, however, universally accepted by Buddhists or scholars. Shenpen Hookham, Oxford Buddhist scholar and Tibetan lama of the Shentong tradition, for example, writes of the Buddha-nature or "true self" as something real and permanent, and already present within the being as uncompounded enlightenment. She calls it "the Buddha within", and comments:

In scriptural terms, there can be no real objection to referring to Buddha, *Buddhajnāna* [Buddha Awareness/ Buddha Knowledge], *Nirvāṇa* and so forth as the True Self, unless the concept of Buddha and so forth being propounded can be shown to be impermanent, suffering, compounded, or imperfect in some way ... in Shentong terms, the non-self is about what is *not* the case, and the Self of the Third Dharmacakra [i.e. the Buddha-nature doctrine] is about what truly is.[23] Buddhist scholar and chronicler, Merv Fowler, writes that the Buddha-nature really is present as an essence within each being. Fowler comments:

The teaching that Buddha-nature is the hidden essence within all sentient beings is the main message of the *tathāgatagarbha* literature, the earliest of which is the *Tathāagatagarbha Sutra*. This short *sūtra* says that all living beings are in essence identical to the Buddha regardless of their defilements or their continuing transmigration from life to life... As in the earlier traditions, there is present the idea that enlightenment, or *nirvāṇa*, is not something which has to be achieved, it is something which is already there... In a way, it means that everyone is really a Buddha *now*.[24]

Writer on Zen Buddhism, Peter Haskel, likewise indicates this idea of already and ever-present enlightenment (the Buddha-nature) within all beings. In his book, *Bankei Zen*, he explains how the Zen master, Bankei, taught that the Buddha-nature or Buddha mind is inherent in each being from birth, is uncreated, unborn, and is of the same "one substance" as past Buddhas and present beings, without any difference - just like the one water of the vast ocean.[25] In the Tibetan Book of the Dead, it is taught that at death there is an encounter with this true inner nature, *sugatagarbha* or *Dharmatā*, when the

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23 Hookham, Shenpen (1991). *The Buddha Within*. State University of New York Press: p. 104, p. 353

24 Fowler, Merv (1999). *Buddhism: Beliefs and Practices*. Sussex Academic Press: pp. 100–101

25 Haskel, Peter (1984). *Bankei Zen*. New York: Grove Weidenfeld: pp. 77–78

veils of egocentricity tend briefly to drop away, and shining, unobstructed awareness is disclosed to us. In line with Tibetan Nyingma doctrine, Tibetan lama, Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche, equates this radiant essence with the Buddha Nature. He writes: ... all sentient beings already possess an enlightened essence, the *sugatagarbha* [i.e. the Buddha-nature]. This essence is present and permeates anyone who has mind, just as oil completely permeates any sesame seed ... The moment our ego-clinging falls apart, then our innate wisdom, the luminosity of *dharmatā*, will vividly, nakedly appear. This ground luminosity is not just empty; it is also luminous - aware.[26]

An important Sanskrit treatise on the Buddha-nature, the *Ratnagotravibhāga* sees the Buddha-nature (*tathāgatagarbha*) as 'suchness' or 'thusness' - the abiding reality of all things - in a state of tarnished concealment within the being. The idea is that the ultimate consciousness of each being is spotless and pure, but surrounded by negative tendencies which are impure. Professor Paul Williams comments on how the impurity is actually not truly part of the Buddha-nature, but merely conceals the immanent true qualities of Buddha mind (i.e. the Buddha-nature) from manifesting openly:

The impurities that taint the mind and entail the state of unenlightenment (*samsāra*) are completely adventitious ... On the other hand from the point of view of the mind's pure radiant intrinsic nature, because it *is* like this [i.e. pure and Buddhic], it is possessed of all the many qualities of a Buddha's mind. These do not need actually to be brought about but merely need to be allowed to shine forth. Because they are intrinsic to the very nature of consciousness itself they, and the very state of Buddhahood, will never cease.[27]

2.1.1 Development of Buddha-nature

The Buddha-nature doctrine may be traced back, in part, to the abhidharmic debate over metaphysics, which arose among the *Nikāya* schools as they attempted to reconcile various perceived problems, including how to integrate the doctrine of *anattā*, which stipulates that there is no underlying self, with Buddhist psychology (i.e., what is the subject of karma, suffering, etc.?; how do these processes occur?) and soteriology (what is the subject of

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[26] Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche; Erik Pema Kunsang (translator) (2004). *The Bardo Guidebook*. North Atlantic Books. pp. 116, 121.

[27] Williams, Paul (2000). *Buddhist Thought*. London: Routledge: p. 166

enlightenment?; (how) does enlightenment occur?). Debates between different *Nikāya* schools at this time provided a context for the later origination of the Mahāyāna and Mahāyāna concepts. The concept of "seeds" espoused by the Sautrāntika in debate with the Sarvāstivādins over the metaphysical status of phenomena (*dharmas*) is a precursor to the store-consciousness of the Yogācāra school and the *tathāgatagarbha*, the latter of which is closely related to Buddha-nature and the former of which is identified with it in Yogācāra.[28]

2.1.2 The Lotus Sūtra

The development of the doctrine can also be associated with the Lotus Sūtra and its influence on later sūtras. One of the unique themes in the Lotus Sūtra, particularly in the tenth chapter titled "Teachers of the Dharma", is that everyone has the ability to become a Buddha. In other words, this ability is not limited to monks, nuns, laypeople, *śrāvakas*, or bodhisattvas, but the chapter insists that other beings such as non-human creatures, dragon kings, centaurs, etc., also have this ability.[29] It also insists that all living being not only have the ability to become a Buddha, but can be a 'teacher of the Dharma' here and now.

A connotation to Buddha-nature is also found within the twelfth chapter of the Lotus Sūtra titled 'Devadatta'. It gives no information about the historical Devadatta, but gives the encouragement to understand that just as Devadatta, known everywhere to be evil, has the potential to become a buddha, so too with everyone else. The story of Devadatta is followed by another story about a dragon princess who is both a nāga and a female whom the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī proclaims will reach enlightenment immediately, despite her being what she is. This goes contrary to common prejudices and informed opinion.

2.1.3 Variety of interpretations of Buddha-nature

Schools and scholars of Buddhism have varying interpretations of what the Buddha-nature consists. In Chinese Ch'an Buddhism the Buddha-nature tends to be seen as the essential nature of all beings. Writing from this tradition, Master Hsing Yun, forty-eighth patriarch of the Linji School of Ch'an Buddhism, equates the Buddha-nature with the *Dharmakāya* in line with

[28] Gethin, p. 252

[29] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buddha-nature#cite_note-Reeves-26

pronouncements in key *tathāgatagarbha* sūtras, defining these two as: the inherent nature that exists in all beings. In Mahāyāna Buddhism, enlightenment is a process of uncovering this inherent nature … The Buddha nature [is] identical with transcendental reality. The unity of the Buddha with everything that exists.[30] The 19th/20th-century Tibetan Buddhist scholar, Shechen Gyaltsap Gyurme Pema Namgyal, sees the Buddha nature as ultimate truth, nirvana, which is constituted of profundity, primordial peace and radiance:

Buddha-nature is immaculate. It is profound, serene, unfabricated suchness, an uncompounded expanse of luminosity; nonarising, unceasing, primordial peace, spontaneously present *nirvāṇa*.

In the Tibetan Kagyu tradition, Thrangu Rinpoche sees the Buddha nature as the indivisible oneness of wisdom and emptiness:

The union of wisdom and emptiness is the essence of Buddha-hood or what is called Buddha-nature (Skt. *Tathāgata-garbha*) because it contains the very seed, the potential of Buddhahood. It resides in each and every being and because of this essential nature, this heart nature, there is the possibility of reaching Buddhahood.[31]

The 14th Dalai Lama, representing the Gelukpa School of Tibetan Buddhism, and speaking from the Madhyamaka philosophical position, sees the Buddha-nature as the 'original clear light of mind', but points out that it ultimately does not exist independently, because, like all other phenomena, it is of the nature of emptiness:

Once one pronounces the words 'emptiness' and 'absolute', one has the impression of speaking of the same thing, in fact of the absolute. If emptiness must be explained through the use of just one of these two terms, there will be confusion. I must say this; otherwise you might think that the innate original clear light as absolute truth really exists.[32]

In a similar vein, the Buddhist scholar, Sallie B King, sees the Buddha-nature (*tathāgatagarbha*) as merely a metaphor for the potential in all beings to

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30 Hsing Yun, Master; tr. by Tom Graham (1999). *Being Good: Buddhist Ethics for Everyday Life*. New York: Weatherhill: pp. 152-153

31 Thrangu Rinpoche, Khenchen. *Buddha Nature and Buddhahood: the Mahayana and Tantra Yana*

32 Dalai Lama, the (1999). *Buddha Heart, Buddha Mind*. New York: Crossroad: p. 110

attain Buddhahood, rather than as an ontological reality. She writes of the *Tathāgatagarbha Sūtra* in particular:

The *tathāgatagarbha* [Buddha Nature] is here a metaphor for the ability of all sentient beings to attain Buddhahood, no more and no less.

Paul Williams puts forward the Madhyamaka interpretation of the Buddha-nature as emptiness in the following terms:

… if one is a Madhyamika then that which enables sentient beings to become buddhas must be the very factor that enables the minds of sentient beings to change into the minds of Buddhas. That which enables things to change is their simple absence of inherent existence, their emptiness. Thus the tathagatagarbha becomes emptiness itself, but specifically emptiness when applied to the mental continuum.

Speaking for the Tibetan Nyingma tradition, Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche sees an identity between the Buddha-nature, *Dharmadhātu* (essence of all phenomena and the noumenon) and the three *vajras*, saying:

Dharmadhātu is adorned with *dharmakāya*, which is endowed with *dharmadhātu* wisdom. This is a brief but very profound statement, because '*dharmadhātu*' also refers to sugata-garbha or Buddha nature. Buddha nature is all-encompassing ... This Buddha nature is present just as the shining sun is present in the sky. It is indivisible from the three vajras [i.e. the Buddha's Body, Speech and Mind] of the awakened state, which do not perish or change.

The Nyingma meditation masters, Khenchen Palden Sherab and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal, emphasise that the essential nature of the mind (the Buddha-nature) is not a blankness, but is characterised by wonderful qualities and a perfection that is already present and complete:

The nature of the mind is not hollow or blank; it is profound and blissful and full of wonderful qualities... meditation practice reveals our true nature as being totally perfect and complete. They add:

The true nature of mind is beyond conception, yet it is present in every object. The true nature is always there, but due to our temporary obscurations we do not recognize it ... The primordial nature is beyond conceptions; it cannot be explained ... cannot be encompassed by words. Although you can say it is clarity and vastness, you cannot see it or touch it; it is beyond expression.

2.1.4 Buddha-nature vs. Self

The *tathāgatagarbha*/Buddha nature does not represent a substantial self (*ātman*); rather, it is a positive language expression of emptiness (*śūnyatā*) and is the potentiality to realize Buddhahood through Buddhist practices; the intention of the teaching of *tathāgatagarbha*/Buddha nature is soteriological rather than theoretical.[33]

Some scholars favor one interpretation of the Buddha-nature over others. However, other scholars take a more nuanced approach. Thus, in discussing the problems with and the inadequacy of much modern scholarship on Buddha-nature and the *tathāgatagarbha*, Sutton states, "one is impressed by the fact that these authors, as a rule, tend to opt for a single meaning disregarding all other possible meanings which are embraced in turn by other texts".[34] He goes on to point out that the term *tathāgatagarbha* has up to six possible connotations. Of these, the three most important are:

1. an underlying ontological reality or essential nature (*tathāgata-tathatā-'vyatireka*) which is functionally equivalent to a self (*ātman*) in an *Upaniṣadic* sense,
2. the *dharma-kāya* which penetrates all beings (`sarva-sattveṣu dharma-kāya-parispharaṇa`), which is functionally equivalent to brahman in an *Upaniṣadic* sense
3. the womb or matrix of Buddhahood existing in all beings *(tathāgata-gotra-saṃbhava*), which provides beings with the possibility of awakening.[35]

Of these three, only the third connotation has any soteriological significance, while the other two posit Buddha-nature as an ontological reality and essential nature behind all phenomena. According to Matsumoto Shiro and Hakamaya Noriaki, essentialist conceptions of Buddha-nature are un-Buddhist, being at odds with the fundamental Buddhist doctrine of dependent origination.

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33 Shih, Heng-Ching. *The Significance Of 'Tathagatagarbha' — A Positive Expression Of 'Sunyata.*

34 Sutton, Florin Giripescu (1991). *Existence and Enlightenment in the Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*. SUNY (ISBN 0-7914-0172-3): p.51

35 Florin Giripescu Sutton, *Existence and Enlightenment in the Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*, SUNY(ISBN 0-7914-0172-3): p.53

The Jonangpa School of Tibetan Buddhism, whose foremost historical figure was Dolpopa, sees the Buddha-nature as the very ground of the Buddha himself, as the "permanent indwelling of the Buddha in the basal state". Dolpopa comments that certain key *tathāgatagarbha* sutras indicate this truth, remarking:

These statements that the basis of purification itself, the matrix-of-one-gone-to-bliss [i.e. Buddha Nature], is Buddha, the ground of Buddha, and the pristine wisdom of a one-gone-thus [Tathagata] also clear away the assertion by certain [scholars] that the matrix-of-one-gone-to-bliss [Buddha Nature] is not Buddha.

Other sutras which mention the self in a very affirmative manner include the *Lankāvatāra Sūtra*, the *Śūraṅgama Sūtra*, the *Mahāvairocana Sūtra*[36] and the *Sutra of Perfect Wisdom* called *The Questions of Suvikrantavikramin*:

...one who wisely knows himself (*atmanam*) as nondual, he wisely knows both Buddha and Dharma. And why? He develops a personality which consists of all dharmas ... His nondual comprehension comprehends all dharmas, for all dharmas are fixed on the Self in their own-being. One who wisely knows the nondual dharma wisely knows also the Buddhadharmas. From the comprehension of the nondual dharma follows the comprehension of the Buddhadharmas and from the comprehension of the Self the comprehension of everything that belongs to the triple world. "The comprehension of Self", that is the beyond of all dharmas.[37]

The *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* specifically contrasts its doctrine of the self with that of the *Astikas* in order to remove the reifying notion that the self was a little person or homunculus, the size of a grain of rice or of one's thumb, sitting in the heart of the being, thus: "mundane [philosophers] mistakenly imagine it to be a person (*puruṣa*) the size of a thumb, the size of a pea or a grain of rice that dwells shining in the heart." This, the Buddha says, is a misconception of the nature of self, for "that opinion of theirs is a mistaken

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36 "Those who have been initiated into the Mahayana Mandala Arising from Great Compassion, who are honest and pliant, and who always have great compassion ... They know their hearts to be the Great Self" — Hodge, Stephen, trans. (2003) *The Maha-Vairocana-Abhisambodhi Tantra*. London: Curzon: p.355.

37 Conze, Edward, trans. (2002). *Perfection of Wisdom: The Short Prajnaparamita Texts*. Totnes, Devon: Buddhist Publishing Group: p.32

opinion, one that is transmitted onwards from person to person, but it is neither beneficial nor conducive to happiness." The self of which the Buddha speaks is said by him to be the "essential intrinsic being" (*svabhava*) or even "life-essence" (*jīvaka*) of each person, and this essential being is none other than the Buddha himself - "radiantly luminous" and "as indestructible as a diamond".

Moreover, the Buddhist tantric scripture entitled *Chanting the Names of Mañjuśrī (Mañjuśrī-nāma-saṅgīti)*, as quoted by the great Tibetan Buddhist master, Dolpopa, repeatedly exalts not the non-self but the self and applies the following terms to this ultimate reality:[38]

"the pervasive Lord" (*vibhu*)

"Buddha-Self"

"the beginningless Self" (*anādi-ātman*)

"the Self of Thusness" (*tathatā-ātman*)

"the Self of primordial purity" (*śuddha-ātman*)

"the Source of all"

"the Self pervading all"

"the Single Self" (*eka-ātman*)

"the Diamond Self" (*vajra-ātman*)

"the Solid Self" (*ghana-ātman*)

"the Holy, Immovable Self"

"the Supreme Self"

In the *Ghanavyuha Sūtra* (as quoted by Longchenpa) this immutable, universal and salvific Buddha essence (the true self of the Buddha) is said to be the ground of all things, but it is viewed by fools as something changeful and impermanent, whereas in fact it is stated by the Buddha to be the very opposite of such impermanence:

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38 cf. Hopkins, Jeffrey, trans. (2006). *Mountain Doctrine: Tibet's Fundamental Treatise on Other-Emptiness and the Buddha-Matrix.* NY: Snow Lion: pp.279-294

... the ultimate universal ground also has always been with the Buddha-Essence (*Tathāgatagarbha*), and this essence in terms of the universal ground has been taught by the Tathagata. The fools who do not know it, because of their habits, see even the universal ground as (having) various happiness and suffering and actions and emotional defilements. Its nature is pure and immaculate, its qualities are as wishing-jewels; there are neither changes nor cessations. Whoever realizes it attains Liberation ...[39]

The Buddha in the *Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* insists that the self of the Buddha (the Buddha-nature which is present in all beings) is everlasting, pure and blissful and is most definitely not transitory and impermanent: The Buddha-Nature is the Eternal, Bliss, the Self, and the Pure ... The Buddha-Nature is not non-Eternal, not non-Bliss, not non-Self, and not non-Purity. The Buddha-nature is, in fact, taught in such *tathāgatagarbha* sutras to be ultimate, conceptually inconceivable, immortal reality.

If the original nature of the mind is pure, then the manifestation of that original nature is equivalent to the attainment of Buddhahood. The Mahayanist's vow to attain Buddhahood was based on the belief that the mind is innately pure. The people who cultivated the aspiration to attain enlightenment (*bodhicitta*), who vowed to realize Buddhahood, were called bodhisattvas. A related teaching is found in many Mahāyāna Sūtras: all dharmas are innately pure (sarvadharmāh prakrti parisuddhāh, Conze, *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*-PP, [p.42]).This teaching appears in such Mahāyāna sūtras as the *Prajñāpāramitā*, Ta-chi ching (T379, *Mahasamnipāta-sūtra*), and *Saddharmapuṇḍarika-sūtra* (v.102 of the "Chapter on Expedient Teachings" in the Sanskrit text). This doctrine implies that the mind is not different from all dharma.[40]

2.2 Three Vehicles of Practice

The full form of the term "*bodhisattva*" is *bodhisattva mahāsattva*. "*Bodhisattva*" means "a being (*sattva*) who seek enlightenment (*bodhi*)." "*Mahāsattva*" means "a great person" and refers to a person who makes the great vow to become a Buddha and undertakes the strenuous practice required

[39] Thondup Rinpoche, Tulku (1989). *Buddha Mind*. Ithaca, New York: Snow Lion: p.218

[40] Opcit, Hirakawa Akira, pp.297-298

to attain that goal. A *bodhisattva* must believe that he has the character or nature necessary to become a Buddha. In this respect, the Mahāyāna practitioner's position differs from that of both the Hīnayānist and those people who praised the Buddha.

The earliest extant example of the Mahāyāna usage of the term "*bodhisattva*" occurs in *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* PP* (T224). The term is used in this sūtra in a way that suggests that it had already been in use with its Mahāyāna sense for a considerable time before the text was compiled. Thus the advocates of perfection of wisdom built upon the theories of the *bodhisattva* and his six perfections developed by the people who praised the Buddha, but then broadened the term "*bodhisattva*"." Consequently, Mahāyāna was at first called "*bodhisattvayāna*". Later, this usage was extended further and applied to the Three Vehicles as *srāvakayāna*, *pratyekabuddhayāna*, and *bodhisattvayāna* (or *Buddhayāna*).

The concept of Three-vehicles practice and One-vehicle practice, has been the ground for much debate by Buddhist scholars. Is the practice of Three-vehicles an expedient path or the ultimate path? Does the One- ehicle mean the practice of Mahāyāna (greater vehicle) in the Three Vehicles? Does the One-vehicle practice take us further than the Three-vehicle practice? It appears that researchers have not come to any conclusions.

Dharmarakṣa, who is known as Dun Huang Bodhisattva, translated the *Xiu Xing Dao Di Sūtra*. This author has also translated the Lotus Sutra (*Saddharma puṇḍarika Sūtra*). It is found that there is an ancient interpretation of the One-vehicle and the Three- vehicle practice. It is simple and clear.

From the view point of aspiration, there are people who are weary of life and death, while others possess the great *Bodhicitta* (Bodhi-mind). Thus, the former will enter *Nirvāṇa*, while the latter, Buddhahood. However, since the sentient beings' spiritual foundations differ, the Buddha taught us many different paths. Consequently there are the paths of the Three-vehicles and the One-vehicle. There are people who practise the greater vehicle and then degrade to the smaller vehicle and vice versa.

2.2.1 The *Srāvakas*

There are two types of *Srāvakas*. The first type is the people who practice the path of the smaller-vehicle and who never cultivate any *bodhicitta*. They learn and practise the Dharma from the Buddha for their own salvation. They cannot put up with a life that seems meaningless and without ending. Their only pressing problem is to be free from suffering. As long as they are at peace, they do not bother about anyone else. This is the attitude they have towards others. When they hear the worlds of the three realms, they shiver and scare.

Practitioners of this character are weary of not being able to be free from rebirth, and not being able to attain ultimate liberation. For these people, the Buddha condemned the suffering of rebirth, and praised *Nirvāṇa*. He showed them the abode of the Enlightened Ones and guided them to understand the Four Noble Truths. The Buddha hoped that they could be free from suffering. Practitioners of this character believe that they have reached the ultimate path. They do not automatically progress to cultivate the path of the greater vehicle. The Buddha will have to wait for the moment when they are about to enter into *Nirvāṇa* to show them the path of the greater-vehicle. They will then realize that they have not attained the ultimate practice and be encouraged to develop their *bodhicitta.*

The second type is those who have compassion but find it difficult to practice. They practise giving, the precepts, meditation, wisdom, and aim at freeing themselves from rebirth. They vigorously meditate and contemplate so that they may attain eternal *Nirvāṇa*. However, they know that the attainment of arahantship is not the ultimate goal. Thus they automatically want to follow the path of the *Bodhisattva*. They learn from the teachings of the Buddha and develop themselves to seek the greater path. They cultivate their great loving kindness and compassion and the Six Perfections, progressing towards the state of non attachment and emptiness. They may even choose to be reborn in order to teach and save sentient beings.

2.2.2 Pratyeka-Buddhas

Pratyeka-Buddhas are those who once developed themselves to cultivate their bodhicitta, but gave up the practice at a later stage. They had the bodhicitta, but forgot it and lost their aim. They may have also practised the Six Perfections, and meditated on the Buddha but became attached to the physical phenomena of the manifestations.

For sentient beings with spiritual foundation as such, the Buddha taught them the path of the Three-vehicles. The fact that there was Buddha born in the world, these practitioners would lead a life of the hermit, live in a remote mountain cave or hut by themselves, contemplate and observe the existence of the myriad beings. They would realize that all existences are subject to causes and conditions and subsequently gain enlightenment.

The two types of practitioners above, have similar characteristics. They have initiated their bodhicitta, but did not progress further into its deeper context. They attach themselves too much to the well-being of the physical manifestations of the Buddha. However, eventually they may come back to seek the greater path. When they have ended rebirth and entered Nirvana, the Buddha will show them "the path of Mahayana which integrates the Three-vehicle", and they will detach themselves from the realms of existence and *Nirvāṇa,* and progress along the path of the great vehicle.

2.2.3 The Path of the *Bodhisattvas*

Bodhisattvas are practitioners who have cultivated their *bodhicitta*. Apart from those who later degenerate to become pratyeka-buddhas, we can further divide such practitioners into two groups.

1. There are those who will follow a gradual and progressive path. They realize that the three realms of existence are merely illusions and that all phenomena are void. They practice the Six Perfections vigorously and accumulate boundless merits. One step after another, they go forward. Eventually they possess skilful means, and gain enlightenment via expedient path. They attain the stage of no rebirth, and their position never recedes.

2. Then there are those who find instant attainment. They gain the stage of no rebirth, and do not recede as soon as they cultivate their bodhicitta. They immediately understand the immaterial personality and voidness of all myriad beings. They realize that all manifestations are void and are non-obtainable and non-distinguishable.

2.2.4 The Awakened Mind Clings to Nothing

Does mental defilement pollute and constrain our mind? Because of our ignorance, we attach to our ego and possessions. We are constrained by them. If

we are free from attachments, and do not cling to any belongings, then we will be free from suffering. This is the ancient patriarch's teaching in guiding practitioners to the stage of no rebirth.

The teaching continues; "The wise ones observe the three realms of existence. They realize that the Five Skhandas are illusions. When they realize that there is no external object to cling to, they attain the state of no rebirth." There is no fast track nor short cut to the path of Bodhi. When the mind understands that the source of all is void, it's like suddenly seeing the light at the end of a tunnel. We do not feel in a state of gain or loss, past or present, when we attain this wisdom. The awakened mind clings to nothing. It understands the absolute truth and the void nature of all things.

It attains understanding of voidness, equality, and great wisdom. It does not attach itself any longer to the three realms of existence nor *Nirvāṇa*. Nor will it attach itself to the fact that it is ferrying the suffering sentient beings over to the other shore of *Nirvāṇa*. Neither will it attach itself to attaining Buddhahood. It will work vigorously to cultivate the Six Perfections. The awakened mind will utilize the expedient path to help all beings. These are the ones who have the Bodhisattva spiritual foundation. (According to the Nāgārjuna Bodhisattva, this spiritual foundation can be further divided into three different levels.)

The aim of returning to one path allows us to concentrate on attaining the universal wisdom of understanding the truth of voidness. Generally speaking, cultivating the path of the greater-vehicle is equivalent to practising the One-vehicle. But the teachings of Buddha-Dharma propagate according to the minds and the conditions of the time and space. The classification of the Three Vehicle or One Vehicle depends on the practitioner's mind and aspiration. It is rather common for practitioners to classify which sutra or teaching is the greater vehicle, and which is the smaller vehicle. In fact, this is not the right way of classification. There are people who practice the Mahāyāna path, but who do not attain the Mahāyāna goal. Sometimes they may even deteriorate to follow other beliefs. This commonly happens.

The point is, practitioners should always examine their motivation of practice — is it for the sake of freeing themselves from rebirth? Or to ferry all sentient beings to attain enlightenment? How do we practise the Dharma? Are

we practising the path of relieving ourselves, or the path of the Six Perfections? What do we realize? Do we attach ourselves to phenomena and existence? Have our minds realized voidness and thus attained the stage of no rebirth? Eventually all sentient beings will become Buddhas and realize the great wisdom of the One-vehicle. But before we come to that stage, we cannot classify ourselves as the practitioners of One-vehicle simply because we are reading the One-vehicle sutra or learning the One-vehicle Dharma![41]

2.3 The Four Great Vows

The fundamental vow of the bodhisattva is to delay their *nirvāṇa* until all beings have been liberated from suffering. This aspiration is expressed in the formal vow that, when taken, signifies one's entrance into the path of the bodhisattva:

The fourfold vow is indicated below in several languages:

English	Chinese (pinyin)	Chinese (hanzi)
The Four Great Vows	Sì hóng shì yuàn	四弘誓願
I vow to liberate all beings, without number	Zhòng shēng wúbiān shì yuàn dù	眾生無邊誓願度
I vow to uproot endless blind passions	Fánnǎo wújìn shì yuàn duàn	煩惱無盡誓願斷
I vow to penetrate dharma gates beyond measure	Fǎ mén wúliàng shì yuàn xué	法門無量誓願學
I vow to attain the way of the Buddha	Fó dào wúshàng shì yuàn chéng	佛道無上誓願成

The First Vow: 'Living beings are numberless, I vow to help them all to cross over the sea of suffering, the sea of birth and death.'

According to the *Principle of Impermanence*, the existence of living beings is ever-changing. Some are born, some die. The absolute number at any given moment cannot be identified, therefore it is regarded as being numberless.

41 http://www.buddhanet.net/cbp2_f3.htm (Also see Translated by Lim Yang, edited by Ke Rong, proofread by Shi Neng Rong. (6- 7-96)

The Second Vow: 'Though afflictions are endless... afflictions such as difficult moods, aversion, greed, confusion... though these afflictions seem inexhaustible and endless, I vow to penetrate and to cut through them all.'

The Third Vow: 'Dhamma doors are measureless, I vow to cultivate them all.'

The Fourth Vow: 'Though the Buddha Path is unsurpassed I vow to realise it.'

In addition to this formal bodhisattva vow, Mahāyāna texts enumerate dozens of other vows [42] and there are variations from country to country (most noticeably between Tibet and others). The ten most common and important vows are as follows:

1 Not to harm any being

2 Not to take that which is not given

3 Not to engage in any form of sexual misconduct

4 Not to misuse speech

5 Not to take intoxicants

6 Not to gossip about the faults and misdeeds of others

7 Not to praise oneself or disparage others

8 Not to be stingy or abusive towards those in need

9 Not to harbor anger or resentment or encourage others to be angry

10 Not to criticise or slander the Three Jewels

In the Tibetan tradition, laypeople are often encouraged to take on the first five vows as a way of producing good karma and avoiding actions that produce negative results:

> "At any given time, one may swear to one, two, up to all five precepts. In one typical tradition, one takes vows only for one day. If someone wants to carry the practice to the next day, he or she will take the vow again the

[42] See http://buddhism.kalachakranet.org/resources/bodhisattva_vows.html for a full list

next morning... The daily taking of precepts is important... one's commitment to them needs to be renewed frequently to keep one's intention and investment fresh."

The Buddha Path condition that which gives rise not only to peace but to Anuttara Samyak Sambodhi. It means `perfect', `big', and `full' Enlightenment: the Enlightenment that not only knows how to let go and be peaceful but the Enlightenment that also knows how to perfectly respond to conditions in a way which is a true blessing for all beings.

Three men were walking through the desert. They were lost and about to die from thirst and hunger. They come to a very high wall and the first one climbs up, shouts for joy and jumps over the wall never to return. The next man climbs up the wall and he too, exclaims in ecstasy, jumps off the wall and never comes back. Now the third man climbs up the wall. He gets to the top and sees a sort of Garden of Eden place with water and lots of fruit trees. He smiles, turns, goes back down the wall, returning to the desert to help others find their way to this paradise. He chooses to go back into the desert of the world and help others find their way.[43]

For a *Bodhisattva*, the eradication of one's own suffering is joined with the desire to aid in the eradication of all others' suffering as well. The real Bodhisattva identifies the immeasurable distress of all sentient beings as his own. With this Immeasurable Compassion (*Mahā-karuṇā*), one can take the second vow:

The desire to win Supreme Bodhi, convert and liberate sentient beings, aid in the eradication of their distress, etc., should not be an impulse based on idle sentimentality or romantic notions of spiritual life. This noble aspiration can only come to completion provided that there is a strong foundation of wisdom. With wisdom only, and not otherwise, can one spread the Dharma and assist living beings. This wisdom arises from a keen desire to learn and practice the Buddha-dharma. Therefore, the Buddha said, "All Buddhas in the three periods arise from learning and practice." One who is not willing to learn will remain eternally foolish, and what foolish man or woman ever completed the Bodhi Tao, spread Dharma and assisted sentient beings?

43 http://sped2work.tripod.com/fourvows.html

2.4 The Six (Pāramitās) Perfections [44]

Pāramitā or *Pāramī* (*Sanskrit* and *Pāli* respectively)[1] :"The word *pāramī* derives from *parama*, 'supreme,' and thus suggests the eminence of the qualities which must be fulfilled by a bodhisattva in the long course of his spiritual development. But the cognate *pāramitā*, the word preferred by the Mahāyāna texts and also used by Pāli writers, is sometimes explained as *pāram* + *ita*, 'gone to the beyond,' thereby indicating the transcendental direction of these qualities." (Velthuis convention lettering replaced with Pali diacrits.) means "Perfect" or "Perfection". In Buddhism, the Paramitas refer to the perfection or culmination of certain virtues. In Buddhism, these virtues are cultivated as a way of purification, purifying (*karma*) and helping the aspirant to live an unobstructed life, while reaching the goal of Bodhi.

2.4.1 The *Pāramīs* in Theravāda Buddhism

The Theravādin teachings on *Pāramīs* can be found in books (the *Buddhavaṃsa*, *Jātakas* and *Avadānas*) and commentaries which have been added to the Pāli Canon at a later time, and thus they are not an original part of the Theravādin teachings[2]. Also, the oldest parts of the *Sutta Piṭaka* (for example: *Majjhima Nikāya*, *Dīgha Nikāya*, *Samyutta Nikāya* and the *Anguttara Nikāya*) do not have any mention of the *pāramitās*[3]. Some scholars even refer to the teachings of the *pāramitās* as a semi-Mahāyāna[4] teaching which was added to the scriptures at a later time, in order to appeal to the interests and needs of the lay-community, and to popularize their religion[5].

2.4.1.1 Canonical sources

In Theravāda Buddhism's Pali Canon *Buddhavaṃsa*[6] the Ten Perfections (*dasa pāramiyo*) are (original terms in *Pāli*): *Dāna pāramī* : generosity, giving of oneself*Sīla pāramī* : virtue, morality, proper conduct*Nekkhamma pāramī* : renunciation *Paññā pāramī* : transcendental wisdom, insight *Viriya (also spelt vīriya) pāramī* : energy, diligence, vigour, effort *Khanti pāramī* : patience, tolerance, forbearance, acceptance, endurance *Sacca pāramī* : truthfulness, honesty *Adhiṭṭhāna pāramī* : determination, resolution *Mettā pāramī* : loving-kindness*Upekkhā (also spelt upekhā) pāramī* : equanimity, serenity Two

44 http://sakya.org.au/LibraryResources/Wiki/SixPerfections.aspx

of the above virtues, *Mettā* and *Upekkhā*, also comprise two of the Four Immeasurables (*Brahmavihāra*).

2.4.2 The Pāramītas in Mahāyāna Buddhism

In Mahāyāna Buddhism, the Lotus Sutra (*Saddharmapuṇḍarika*) lists the Six Perfections as (original terms in Sanskrit):

1. *Dāna pāramitā*: generosity, giving of oneself (in Chinese, 布施波羅蜜)
2. *Śīla pāramitā*: virtue, morality, discipline, proper conduct (持戒波羅蜜)
3. *Kṣānti pāramitā* (*Kṣānti*): patience, tolerance, forbearance, acceptance, endurance (忍辱波羅蜜)
4. *Vīrya pāramitā*: energy, diligence, vigour, effort (精進波羅蜜)
5. *Dhyāna pāramitā*: one-pointed concentration, contemplation (禪定波羅蜜)
6. *Prajñā pāramitā*: wisdom, insight (智慧波羅蜜) Note that this list is also mentioned by the Theravāda commentator Dhammapāla, who says it is equivalent to the above list of ten.[8]

In the *Daśabhūmika Sūtra*, four more *pāramitās* are listed:

7. *Upāya pāramitā*: skillful means
8. *Pranidhāna (pranidhāna) pāramitā*: vow, resolution, aspiration, determination
9. *Bala pāramitā*: spiritual power
10. *Jñāna pāramitā*: knowledge

2.5 The Ten Stages of Bodhisattva[45]

2.5.1 Bodhisattva(s)

The term *bodhisattva* (Pāli, *bodhisatta*; Tibetan, *byang chub sems pa*; Chinese, *pusa*; Korean, *posal*, Japanese, *bosatsu*) refers to a *sattva* (person) on a Buddhist *marga* (Path) in pursuit of *Bodhi* (Awakening) or one whose nature is awakening. In the Mahāyāna tradition, a bodhisattva is a practitioner who, by habituating himself in the practice of the *Pāramitā* (Perfection), aspires to

45 http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Bodhisattva

become a Buddha in the future by seeking *Anuttarasamyaksambodhi* (Complete, Perfect Awakening) through *Prajñā* (Wisdom) and by benefiting all sentient beings through *Karuṇā* (Compassion). A *bodhisattva* is one who courageously seeks enlightenment through totally and fully benefiting others (*parārtha*), as well as himself (*svārtha*). A bodhisattva is also termed a *mahā sattva* or "Great Being" because he is a Mahāyāna practitioner who seeks *anuttarasamyaksambodhi* and who is equipped with the necessities for enlightenment—*puñyasambhāra* (accumulation of merits) and *jñānasambhāra* (accumulation of wisdom)—and the quality of *upāya-kauśalya* (skillful means); that is, he knows how to act appropriately in any situation. According to the *Bodhisattvabhūmi,* the *bodhisattvayāna* (spiritual path of a *bodhisattva*) is considered to be superior to both the *śrāvakayāna* (spiritual path of the disciples) and te *pratyekabuddhayāna* (spiritual path of a self-awakened buddha) because a bodhisattva is destined to attain enlightenment by removing the *kleśajñeyāvaraṇa* (emotional and intellectual afflictions), whereas those on the other two spiritual paths aspire for *Nirvāṇa*, that is, extinction of emotional afflictions only.

The bodhisattva is known by different appellations; for example, in *Mahā yāna-sūtralaṃkāra* XIX: 73–74, the following fifteen names are given as synonyms for *bodhisattva*: *mahāsattva* (great being); *dhīmat* (wise); *uttamadyuti* (most splendid)*; jinaputra* (Buddha's son); *jinādhāra* (holding to the Buddha); *vijetr* (conqueror); *jināṅkura* (Buddha's offspring) ; *vikrānta* (bold) ; *paramāścarya* (most marvelous) ; *sārthavāha* (caravan leader); *mahāyaśas* (of great glory) ; *krpalu* (compassionate); *mahāpuñya* (greatly meritorious); *īśvara* (lord) ; *dhārmika* (righteous).

Bodhisattvas are of ten classes:

1. *gotrastha* (one who has not reached purity yet)
2. *avatīrṇa* (one who investigates the arising of the enlightenment mind)
3. *aśuddhāśaya* (one who has not reached a pure intention)
4. *śuddhāśaya* (one who has reached a pure intention)
5. *aparipakva* (one who has not matured in the highest state)
6. *paripakva* (one who has matured in the highest state)

7. *aniyatipatita* (one who although matured has not yet entered contemplation)
8. *niyatipatita* (one who has entered contemplation)
9. *ekajātipratibaddha* (one who is about to enter the supreme enlightenment)
10. *caramabhavika* (one who has entered supreme enlightenment in this life).

There are other classifications of *bodhisattvas*, such as those who enter enlightenment quickly and those who enter gradually; those who are householders and those who are not, each divided into nine classes; those who are extremely compassionate, such as Avalokiteśvara; and those who are extremely wise, such as Mañjuśrī. Maitreya bodhisattva is considered to be the future Buddha who is prophesized to appear in this world. Śākyamuni himself is understood to have been a bodhisattva in his past lives and is so called in the accounts of his previous births (*Jātaka*). In order to distinguish him from the *śrāvakas* and *Pratyekabuddhas*, who benefit only themselves, a Mahāyāna bodhisattva is characterized as one who makes vows to benefit all sentient beings, as well as himself. In the Pure Land tradition, for example, according to the *Larger Sukhāvatīvyuha Sūtra*, the Bodhisattva Mahāsattva Dharmākara makes forty eight vows and becomes the Buddha of Infinite Light and Life (Amitābha or Amitāyus), who resides in the Western Quarter and functions as a salvific buddha. Among the well-known bodhisattvas, Avalokiteśvara and Maitreya are probably the most popular in East Asia. In the East Asian Buddhist tradition, Avalokiteśvara, better known by the Chinese name Guanyin, is worshiped by both clergy and laity as a mother figure, a savior, and a mentor, who responds to the pain and suffering of sentient beings. In Tibet, Tenzin Gyatso, the fourteenth Dalai Lama, is considered to be a reincarnation of Avalokiteśvara. Maitreya (Pāli, Metteyya) bodhisattva, who is said to dwell in Tusīta heaven, is known as the "future Buddha" because he will appear in this world to reestablish Buddhism after all vestiges of the current dispensation of Śākyamuni Buddha have vanished.

Tradition holds that Asanga went to Tusīta to study under Maitreya, where he received five treatises from him that became the basis for establishing the Yogācāra School. Worship of Maitreya as the future Buddha has also contributed to Millenarianism and Millenarian Movements in several Buddhist

traditions. Mañjuśrī and Samantabhadra are bodhisattvas who are often depicted in a triad together with the primordial Buddha Vairocana. Samantabhadra stands on Vairocana's right side and Mañjuśrī on his left. Samantabhadra is also often shown seated on the back of a white elephant, holding a wish-fulfilling jewel, a lotus flower, or a scripture, exemplifying his role as the guardian of the teaching and practice of the Buddha. Mañjuśrī, by contrast, represents wisdom, and is depicted wielding a flaming sword that cuts through the veil of ignorance. Buddhist scholars and savants of India, such as Nāgārjuna and Vasubandhu, have been referred to as bodhisattvas; in China, Dao'an, for example, is known as Yinshou *pusa*. In more modern times, founders of new Buddhist movements in China, Taiwan, Japan, and the United States are considered by followers to be bodhisattvas and, in some cases, even Buddhas.

The bodhisattvas are distinct from the arhat in three ways: 1) their motivation seeks to aid all beings rather than themselves, 2) their goal is complete enlightenment for all instead of extinguishing merely one's own suffering, and 3) they see *śunyata* (emptiness) as the deepest truth.[46] As a result, the bodhisattva path is often presented as distinctive practices of Mahāyāna Buddhism that distinguish it from the Theravādin tradition. This doctrine provides a model of an engaged form of Buddhism that does not run away from the suffering of the world, but actively seeks to end it for all beings.

Scholars are still unsure of when or how bodhisattvas emerged as such an important force within Mahāyāna Buddhism. The concept of celestial *bodhisattvas* and the practices that constitute the bodhisattva vehicle (*bodhisattva-yāna*) were well established by the second century C.E., as evidenced in their prominence in the then recent Mahāyāna *sūtras*.

The archetype of the *bodhisattva* emerged out of the past life stories of the Buddha, which tell of his lives before he was fully enlightened. Mitchell relates the story of what was perhaps the most critical moment of the Buddha's past lives:

In the Pāli texts, there is a story about a person named Sumedha, who lived eons ago and during his lifetime met a Buddha named Dīpamkara.

46 http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Bodhisattva#cite_note-0

Sumedha decided not to become a disciple of Dīpamkara and strive to be an arhat. Rather, he decided to follow what is called the Path of the Bodhisattva in order to become a Buddha... Sumedha was successful and eventually became Gautama Buddha. (96)

Most of these jātaka stories were ascribed to the Buddha posthumously, and seem to have their origins in folk tradition rather than canonical sources. Likewise, Western scholars believe that many celestial bodhisattvas may have their roots in local religious movements that worshiped a particular divine being. In a practice typical to Mahāyāna Buddhism, these figures were incorporated into the pantheon as bodhisattvas.

The Pāli texts also speak of a future Buddha, Maitreya, who is presently a *bodhisattva* training for a future time when the world is in need of a fresh transmission of the dharma (Buddhist teachings). So while Theravadins recognize the existence of the *bodhisattva-yāna*, they do not see it as an appropriate path for most people, who would be better suited to the pursuit of *nirvāṇa*.

2.5.2 Celestial Bodhisattvas

Mahāyāna Buddhists believe that celestial bodhisattvas are advanced beings who are no longer bound by the suffering of birth and death, but are not yet fully enlightened Buddhas. The most popular ones are considered to be *mahāsattva* (great truth) bodhisattvas such as Avalokiteśvara, Tārā, and Vajrasattva. These beings can be prayed to for particular needs, such as protection (Tārā), and are often portrayed as the attendants of Buddhas.

Devotionalism directed towards bodhisattvas remains the most common form of practice in the Mahāyāna tradition, and it is common for laity to offer incense, food and prayers to these figures. Buddhists believe that bodhisattvas are able to help ordinary beings by transferring their good karma to them. This act creates a feedback loop, because giving selflessly of ones own merit in turn creates more merit, so that they are able to continuously offer their aid. While the worship of bodhisattvas may seem odd to some Westerners who see Buddhism as a religion of pure reason devoid of any "religious" features, it is extremely common and is encouraged by the monastic community as a way for the laity to generate good karma, and to bring about the qualities represented by

the bodhisattvas into their minds. For instance, in praying to Avalokiteshvara, bodhisattva of compassion, this quality automatically arises in the mind of the devotee, thius helping to generate what is for Buddhists the most important of traits.

This last feature is also particularly important in the meditative practices of Buddhist tantra, where bodhisattva's are visualized in order to bring their qualities into practicioners' minds. As Powers points out, "such bodhisattvas are not creating a delusional system in order to hide from the harsher aspects of reality. Rather, they are transforming reality, making it conform to an ideal archetype" Celestial bodhisattvas are also credited with starting various tantric lineages, appearing to advanced meditiators in their sambhogakaya ("enjoyment body") form and initiating them into new practices (such as in the Kagyü school of Tibetan Buddhism).

Mahāyāna Buddhists also believe that these beings can create numerous emanation bodies, which may take any form that they choose. Famous saints are often posthumously said to have been emanations. The most renowned example of this is the Dalai Lama, who is simultaneously the reincarnation of the first Dalai Lama, Gendun Drup (1391-1474 C.E.), and a *nirmāṇakāya* of Avalokiteśvara.

2.5.3 The Bodhisattva Path

The bodhisattva path (often referred to by Vajrayāna practitioners as the "gradual path of perfections and stages") offers Mahāyāna Buddhists a systematic guide to their development through the use of special vows, the generation of the six *pāramitā* (perfections), and a map of personal development through ten *bhūmi* (stages), all of which is said to culminate in full Buddhahood. This path is outlined in detail in Mahāyāna literature by authors such as Nāgārjuna (the Precious Garland), Chandrakīrti ("Entry Into the Middle Way"), Asanga ("The Stages of a Bodhisattva"), Śantideva (the Way of the bodhisattva), and Gampopa (the Jewel Ornament of Liberation).

2.5.4 The Ten Stages

The ten *bhūmi* (literally "ground") correspond directly to the *pāramitā*, and provide a map for the development of a bodhisattva on their journey to Buddhahood. They practice all of the paramitas during each stage, but one is

emphasized in each *bhūmi*. The primary source for these stages is the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* (*Flower Garland Sūtra*), and it is also outlined in texts such as Candrakīrti's *Madhyamakavatāra* (*Entry into the Middle Way*).

1. *Pramuditā: Great Joy*: After the accumulation of enough merit, bodhicitta arises for the first time in the bodhisattva. This causes enormous generosity to arise, which in turn results in enormous joy, as Chandrakīrti explains:

> "Even the happiness that comes from entering the peace [of nirvana] is unlike that happiness experienced by the son of the conquerers (buddhas) when he thinks about the word *give*. What can be said [about the joy that arises] from abandoning all [inner and outer posessions]?" [47]

> 歡喜地 The 'stage of joy.' (*pramuditā*) The stage where the wisdom of the middle path is first produced to benefit self and others, and where there is great happiness; , joy at having overcome the former difficulties and now entering on the path to Buddhahood.

2 . *Vimalā: Stainless*: In accomplishing the second bhumi, the bodhisattva is free from the stains of immorality. The emphasized virtue is moral discipline (*śīla*), which, at this stage, eliminates all harmful actions, even in the dreams of the bodhisattva.[48]

3. *Prabhākarī: Luminous*: The third bhumi is named 'Radiant', because, for a bodhisattva who accomplishes this bhumi, the light of Dharma is said to radiate from the bodhisattva for others. This luminosity is said to shine forth from the fire of non-dualistic realization that consumes the last traces of discursive thought. Without the chatter of the wandering mind, the bodhisattva is able to develop perfect patience.

4. *Arciṣmati: Radiant*: Through the bodhisattva's vigor (virya), "a brilliance is produced which is superior to the shining of brass, and any [reified

47 http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Bodhisattva#cite_note-11

48 http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Bodhisattva#cite_note-12

concepts] associated with the philosophical view of a subjective self are completely eradicated." [49]

5. *Sudurjayā: Difficult to conquer*: At this stage, the bodhisattva has developed extraordinary strength of meditation (*dhyāna*), so that they are very difficult to disturb, even for "all the forces of *Māra*" (Ibid), who symbolizes both inner and outer distractions. They also study in numerous fields (the arts, medicine, and the sciences) in order to benefit sentient beings.[50]

6. *Abhimukhī: the Directly Facing*: At this stage, they are brought face-to-face with what Mahāyāna Buddhists teach to be the true nature of reality: emptiness. This is the perfection of wisdom (*prajñā*), and with this realization, they could choose to pass into nirvana upon their death but because of their non-attachment to nirvana, as well as their deep compassion, they continue along the path to buddhahood.

7. *Dūraṃgamā: the Far Advanced*: Through the powerful skillful means (*upāya*) developed by the bodhisattva at this stage, they are able to see into the hearts and minds of beings, and therefore know precisely how best to act in order to bring them closer to enlightenment. It is also said that at this point, in order to advance further, they will have to stop taking birth as human being, and instead manifest as celestial bodhisattvas, a choice they freely make at this stage in which they overcome birth and death. [51]

8. *Acalā: the Immovable*: In this bhumi, the bodhisattva's aspiration becomes invincible, and there is no possibility of them faltering on their path. Buddhahood becomes inevitable, and progression through the last stages becomes much more rapidly than previous ones.

9. *Sādhumatī: the Unerring Intellect*: In this stage, the celestial bodhisattva attains a number of supernatural powers (bala) to aid them in their quest to liberate all beings. Examples include the ability to understand all languages.

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49 http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Bodhisattva#cite_note-13

50 http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Bodhisattva#cite_note-14

51 http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Bodhisattva#cite_note-15

10. *Dharma-megha*: C*loud of dharma*: At this stage, the bodhisattva is almost indistinguishable from a Buddha. Their primordial wisdom (*jñāna*) is said to pour down effortlessly, like rain.

Conclusion

The bodhisattva is the central figure of the Mahāyāna path. They present followers with an outlet for devotional practice, as well as offer a model for practitioners to guide them on the path to enlightenment. They remain an important part of Mahayana Buddhism today, and an inspiration for monastics and laypeople alike. Finally, the bodhisattva doctrine provides a model for Mahāyāna Buddhists of an engaged form of Buddhism that does not run away from the suffering of the world, but actively seeks to end it for all beings.

Activity 1

1. Discuss the term "Buddha".
2. Explain Mahāyāna concept on the Buddha-nature.
3. Explain the Bodhisattva ideal of Mahāyāna tradition? List the name of Mahāyāna Bodhisattvas at least four.
4. What is the Three Vehicles of practice? What are they?
5. Explain the "six perfections or ten perfections" according to Mahāyāna tradition.
6. In Mahāyāna tradition, how many stages in the *Bodhisattva bhūmi*? What are they?
7. Explain the Three *Kāyas* concept of Mahāyāna Buddhism.
8. Discuss the term "*bodhi*", and "*bodhicitta*"
9. What are the most important qualities of Bodhisattva in Mahāyāna tradition?

10. Buddha-nature is the doctrinal foundation found in which *sūtras*?

Suggested Topic for discussion

Buddha(s)

The term *Buddha,* literally "awakened one," is one of many Indian epithets applied to the founder of the Buddhist religion. A Buddha is defined, first and foremost, as one who has undergone the profoundly transformative experience known as *Nirvāṇa* and who, as a result, will never be subject to the cycle of birth and death again. Women and men who experienced this same awakening by following in the footsteps of the Buddha were referred to as Arhats or "worthy ones," an epithet also applied to the Buddha himself. These disciples, however, were not themselves referred to as Buddhas, for that term was reserved for those rare individuals who experienced Bodhi (Awakening) on their own in a world with no knowledge of Buddhism. Moreover, to attain awakening without the help of a teacher was not in itself sufficient to be classified as a buddha, for those who did so but did not teach others how to replicate that experience were known instead as Pratyekabuddhas, a term variously explained as "individually enlightened" or "enlightened through (an understanding of) causation." In addition to attaining *nirvāṇa* without assistance from others, the classical definition of a Buddha includes teaching others what one has found. A Buddha is, in sum, not only the discoverer of a timeless truth, but the founder of a religious community. It is possible—though far from certain—that the earliest Buddhist tradition knew of only one such figure, the so-called historical Buddha, Siddhārtha Gautama, also known as Śākyamuni (sage of the Śākya clan). But the notion that other Buddhas had preceded him appeared at an early date, and may well have been assumed by Śākyamuni himself. Over the next four to five centuries Buddhists came to believe that other such Buddhas would also appear in the distant future; some even claimed that buddhas were living at the present time, though in worlds unimaginably distant from our own. While the belief in past and future Buddhas came to be accepted by all Buddhist schools, the idea of the simultaneous existence of multiple buddhas appears to have gained general currency only in Mahāyāna circles.

Buddhas of the past

The earliest datable evidence for a belief in the existence of Buddhas prior to Śākyamuni comes from the time of King Aśoka (ca. 300–232 B.C.E.), who claimed in one of his inscriptions to have enlarged the memorial mound (*Stūpa*) of a previous Buddha named Konākamana (Pāli, Konāgamana; Sanskrit, Konākamuni or Kanakamuni). No names of other Buddhas are mentioned, and there is no way to determine whether Aśoka viewed Konākamana as belonging to a larger lineage scheme. Within a century or so after Aśoka's time, however—and possibly much earlier, depending on what dates are assigned to materials in the Pa_li canon—other names had been added to the list as well.

Seven Buddhas

A wide range of literary, artistic, and epigraphical sources refers to "seven buddhas of the past," a list including Śākyamuni and six prior buddhas: Vipaśyin, Śikhin, Viśvabhū, Krakucchanda, Kanakamuni, and Kāśyapa. A *terminus ante quem* for the emergence of this tradition is again supplied by an inscription, in this case on a stūpa railing at Bhārhut in north-central India (ca. second century B.C.E.), where Śākyamuni's predecessors (with the exception of Śikhin, where the railing has been damaged) are mentioned by name. The same six Buddhas, together with S´a_kyamuni, are prominently featured on the gateways to the great stūpa at Sāñcī (ca. first century B.C.E.). Subsequently, they appear, both in artistic works and in inscriptions, at a host of other Buddhist sites. The widespread agreement on both the number and sequence of these previous buddhas in surviving sources—including canonical scriptures preserved in Pāli and Chinese that can be attributed to several distinct ordination lineages (*nikāya*s)—suggests that th list of seven was formulated at an early date. More specifically, it points to the likelihood that this list had been standardized prior to the first major schism in Buddhist history, the split

between the selfproclaimed "Elders" (Sthaviras) and "Majorityists" (Mahāsamghikas, or Great Assembly), which took place between a century and a century and a half after the Buddha's death. The most detailed discussion of Śākyamuni's predecessors in early (i.e., non-Mahāyāna) canonical literature is found in the Pāli *Mahā padā na-suttanta* (*Dīghanikāya, sutta* no. 14) and in other recensions of the same text preserved in Chinese translation (*Taisho*_1[1], 2, 3, 4, and 125[48.45]). Here the lives of the seven Buddhas, from Vipaśyin (Pāli, Vipassī) to Śākyamuni himself, are related in virtually identical terms, from a penultimate existence in the Tusīta heaven, to a miraculous birth, to the experience of *nirvāṇa* and a subsequent preaching career. Only in minor details—such as the names of their parents, their life spans, and the caste into which they were born—can these biographies be distinguished. Implicit in this replication of a single paradigmatic pattern is the assumption that all buddhas-to-be (Sanskrit, Bodhisattva) must carry out an identical series of practices, after which they will teach a dharma identical to that of their predecessors. In subsequent centuries this would lead to the idea that by replicating the deeds of Śākyamuni and his predecessors in every detail, other Buddhists, too, could strive to become buddhas rather than arhats. Not all the members of this list of seven, despite their parallel life stories, appear to have played equally significant roles in cultic practice. If we divide the list into subgroups of "archaic" Buddhas said to have lived many eons ago (Vipaśyin, Śikhin, and Viśvabhū), and "ancient" buddhas described as preceding Śākyamuni in the present eon (Krakucchanda, Kanakamuni, and Kāśyapa), a clear pattern can be discerned. While the ancient Buddhas are all associated with known geographical locations, the towns where the archaic buddhas are said to have lived have no clear historical referent. When the Chinese monk Fa Xian (ca. 337–ca. 418) visited India at the beginning of the fifth century C.E., for example, he was taken to three towns in northeast India (all within range of the city of Śrāvastī), where the ancient buddhas were said to have lived, and he was shown stūpas said to contain their remains. No comparable pilgrimage sites connected with the three archaic Buddhas are mentioned, either in Faxian's report or in those of subsequent Chinese visitors. Based on surviving images and inscriptions, as well as on further data found in the travel accounts of Faxian and later Chinese pilgrims, J. Ph. Vogel has suggested that the Buddha Kāśyapa may have been an especially popular object of veneration.

Twenty-five Buddhas

An expanded version of the list of seven, totaling twenty-five Buddhas in all, is attested in the Pāli *Buddhavamsa,* though it appears to be little known outside the Theravāda tradition. This list extends still further into the past to begin with the Buddha Dīpamkara, in whose presence the future Śākyamuni made his initial vow to attain buddhahood. Although the story of Dīpamkara is not included in the Pāli collection of Jātaka tales recounting Śākyamuni's former lives, it does appear in the *Nidānakathā,* an introduction to that collection that is generally assigned to the fifth century C.E. and quotes directly from earlier sources such as the *Buddhavamsa* and the *Cariya piṭaka.* The story is frequently depicted in art from the Gandha_ra region, though it is virtually absent from other Buddhist sites, suggesting that it mayhave originated at the northwestern fringes of the Indian cultural sphere. Though no occurrence of the list of twenty-five Buddhas of the past has yet been identified in Mahāyāna scriptures, the first Buddha in this series, Dīpamkara, plays a significant role in these texts. Since Śākyamuni Buddha was portrayed as having made his initial vow to become a buddha in the presence of Dīpamkara, this motif became quite common in the writings of advocates of the bodhisattva path in subsequent centuries.

Buddhas of the future

The earliest lists of multiple Buddhas referred only to Śākyamuni and his predecessors. Around the turn of the millennium, however, a shorter list of five—consisting of four Buddhas of the past (the ancient Buddhas Krakucchanda, Kanakamuni, Kāśyapa, together with Śākyamuni) along with one buddha of the future (Maitreya; Pāli, Metteyya)—was compiled. The weight of this tradition is still anchored firmly in the past, but the door was now open to speculation on other Buddhas who might also appear in the future. Besides introducing a buddha-of-the-future for the first time, this list was also innovative in its optimism about the nature of the present age, for these five figures were labeled Buddhas of the *bhadrakalpa* (fortunate eon). The list of five Buddhas remained standard in the Therava_da tradition, but a longer list of one thousand buddhas of the *bhadrakalpa* frequently appears in Mahāyāna scriptures. An intermediary list, consisting of five hundred buddhas of the *bhadrakalpa,* appears to have circulated mainly in Central Asia. In all of these systems Maitreya holds pride of place as the next Buddha to appear in our world. Like all buddhas-to-be, he is said to be spending his penultimate life in

the Tusīta heaven, from which he surveys our world to determine the right time and place to be born. Estimates varied as to the amount of time that would elapse between our own age and the coming of Maitreya. One of the most common figures was 5.6 billion years; other traditions offered a figure of 560 million. While many Buddhists worked to acquire merit in order to be born here on earth in that distant era when Maitreya would at last attain Buddhahood, others strove to be reborn more immediately in his presence in the Tus_ita heaven. Still others strove for visionary encounters with Maitreya, through which they could see him in his heavenly realm even before departing from this life.

Buddhas of the present

All of the traditions discussed above share the assumption that only one Buddha can appear in the world at any given time. Each Buddha is portrayed as having discovered a truth about reality (i.e., an understanding of the dharma) that had, prior to his time, been utterly lost. Since a Buddha can appear, therefore, only in a world without any knowledge of Buddhism, only one such figure can exist at a time. This restriction applies, however, only if one posits the existence of just one world system, and around the turn of the millennium some Buddhists began to articulate a new view of the universe that consisted not of one, but of hundreds or thousands of such worlds. This made possible, for the first time, the idea that other Buddhas might currently be living and teaching, albeit in worlds unimaginably distant from our own. Scriptures reflecting this perspective speak of other world systems located "throughout the ten directions"—that is, in the four cardinal directions, the four intermediate directions, the zenith, and the nadir. Many Indian texts refer simply to these Buddhas of the ten directions in the aggregate, but occasionally particular figures are named, some of whom appear to have gained a strong following in India. By far the most prominent are the Buddha Akṣobhya, said to dwell in a world known as Abhirati (extreme delight) far to the east, and the Buddha Amitābha (also known as Amitāyus), dwelling in the land of Sukhāvatī (blissful) in the distant west. These two figures, together with others currently presiding over comparably glorious realms, have come to be known in English-language studies as *celestial buddhas.*The term *celestial buddha* has no precise equivalent in Sanskrit (nor for that matter in Chinese or Tibetan), yet it can serve as a convenient label for those buddhas who are presently living and

teaching in worlds other than our own and into whose lands believers may aspire to be reborn. Conditions in these lands are portrayed as idyllic, comparable in many respects to Buddhist heavens; indeed, this comparison is made explicit in scriptures describing the worlds of celestial Buddhas, such as the *Aksobhyavyūha* and the larger Sukhāvatīvyūha Sūtra. Yet these realms are not heavens in the strict sense, but "amputated" world systems, shorn only of the lower realms (*durgati*) of hellbeings, animals, and ghosts. In addition to inhabiting such glorious places—said to be the by-product of their activities as bodhisattvas, and in some cases (most notably in the*Sukhāvatīvyūha*) described as resulting from specific "world-designing" vows—celestial Buddhas, like the archaic buddhas of our own world, are described as having immensely long life spans. Yet the factors that elicited these seemingly parallel circumstances are not the same. In the case of the archaic buddhas, their long life spans are the corollary of their being placed at a point in the cycle of evolution-and-devolution where human life spans in general stretch to between sixty thousand and eighty thousand years; the same is true of the future Buddha Maitreya, who is scheduled to appear in our world when the maximum life span of eighty thousand years has again arrived (Nattier 1991). In the case of celestial Buddhas, on the other hand, their long life spans are necessitated by their role as the presiding Buddhas in other realms to which believers from other worlds might aspire to be reborn. Such an aspiration for rebirth makes sense, of course, only if the believer is confident that the Buddha in question will still be alive when he or she arrives. Celestial Buddhas are not, however, described as immortal; the *Aksobhyavyūha* makes much of Aksobhya's eventual *parinirvāṇa* and autocremation, while early translations of the *Sukhāvatīvyūha* make it clear that Avalokiteśvara will succeed to the position of reigning Buddha of Sukhāvatī after Amitābha has passed away. Thus the lives of these Buddhas—while far more glorious in circumstances and far longer in duration—still echo the pattern set by Śākyamuni. Other developments would subsequently take place, such as the claim that Śākyamuni Buddha had already attained *nirvāṇa* prior to his appearance in this world and the concomitant assumption that his life span was immeasurably, though not infinitely, long, and the even grander claim that all buddhas who appear in this or any other world are merely manifestations of an eternal dharma-body. Throughout most of the history of Buddhism in India, however, Buddhas continued to be viewed as human beings who had achieved awakening as S´a_kyamuni did, even as the list of their qualities and their attainments grew ever more glorious.

Bodhi in the Mahāyāna

The characterizations of awakening sketched above are common to the whole of Buddhism. Among notions of bodhi that are especially emphasized in Mahāyāna one must note its conception as an object of noble aspiration. The ideal Mahāyāna practitioner, the Bodhisattva, is essentially defined as one who aspires to bodhi, one who dedicates himself to the enactment of bodhi for himself but also and especially for all beings. This is the sense of the word operative in the term *bodhicittotpada,* the arousal of Bodhicitta (Thought of āwakening), a locution rich in conative significance that conveys the affective dimension, the emotive power, of liberating knowledge, as well as its necessary association with the virtue of *Karuṇā* (Compassion). Also characteristic of Mahāyāna is a recurrent concern with identifying the source of the capacity for awakening. Is it natural or inculcated? In sixth-century China there appeared a text entitled the Awakening of Faith (Da Sheng Qi Xin Lun) that was attributed to Aśvaghosā but was probably a Chinese contribution to the evolving tradition of *Tathāgatagarbha* (matrix or embryo of buddhahood) thought. This text coined the term "original awakening" (*benjue*), contrasting that with "incipient awakening" (*shijue*). The former refers to an innate potential awakening, a natural purity of mind (*cittaprakṛtiviśuddhi*) or underlying radiance of mind (*prabhāsvaratvam cittasya*), which enables practice and so engenders the actualization of awakening. The latter refers to the process of actualization itself, by which one advances from the nonawakened state, through seeming and partial awakening, to final awakening. Drawing upon a usage of linguistics, we might speak of the pair as awakening in the mode of competence and awakening in the mode of performance. The notion of a natural enlightenment that abides as a potency in the very sentience of sentient beings (later called buddha-nature) and issues in the gradual enactment of actual awakening stood in contrast to alternative views found in certain traditions of the Yogācāra School of Buddhism, according to which awakening is the outcome of the radical transformation of a mind that is naturally or inveterately defiled. This notion proved very fruitful throughout East Asian Buddhism but fostered in the Japanese Tendai (Chinese, Tiantai) school an especially powerful and enduring doctrine of Original Enlightenment (HONGAKU) that left its mark on nearly all of medieval and early modern Japanese Buddhism. It also had profound ethical implications insofar as the notion of original or natural awakening was commonly invoked, or was said to be invoked, for antinomian

or laxist purposes on the grounds that one's originally awakened condition rendered effortful practice otiose. Comparable to the idea of original awakening, but even stronger and bolder, is the startling claim resonant in much of Chinese, Korean, and Japanese Buddhism that awakening is not merely potentially present in the mundane sentient condition but actually identical with the worst of that condition. This seemingly paradoxical assertion is classically conveyed in the aphorism, "the afflictions (*kleśa*) are identical with awakening." In conventional theory, bodhi is the eradication of the *kleśa* (affective hindrances like anger, lust, greed, etc.); the assertion that the *kleśa* and bodhi are one and the same would therefore seem, at least at first glance, to be not only heterodox but also perverse and self-contradictory. It appears to stand the conventional view of awakening on its head. However, justification for so seemingly outrageous a claim is to be found in the doctrine of *Śūnyatā* (Emptiness), according to which any sentient event or condition, being necessarily empty (*śūnya*) of self-nature or own being (*svabhāva*), mysteriously incorporates all other sentient events or conditions. Hell entails Buddhahood; evil entails good; and vice versa. Thus, even an impulse of lust or hatred harbors the aspiration for awakening, and awakening is not a condition or process that depends upon or consists in the complete extinction of imperfection.

Bodhi as "enlightenment"

It was noted above that the most common English rendering of *bodhi* (or *wu* or *satori*) is "enlightenment." There are grounds for such a translation. Some of the earliest usages of the word *enlightenment* show it to have meant something like spiritual illumination, and spiritual illumination is not so far from "awakening." However, the term *enlightenment* is also commonly employed in the West to designate an age in European intellectual and cultural history, roughly the eighteenth century, the dominant voices of which were those of philosophers like Voltaire, Condorcet, and Diderot, who all declared the supremacy of reason over faith, and the triumph of science and rational ethics over religion. Such thinkers were harshly dismissive of the kinds of piety, faith, asceticism, and mystical insight that we saw above to be among the components or factors of bodhi. To be sure, the awakening of the Buddha was not a suspension or an abrogation of reason, but neither was it simply an exercise of what Voltaire would have meant by *reason*. Better then to use the more literal rendering of "awakening," which also has the advantage of

conveying the concrete imagery of calm alertness and clear vision that the Buddhist traditions have always had in mind when speaking of bodhi.

Bodhicitta (Thought of Awakening)

The English phrase "thought of awakening" is a mechanical rendering of the Indic term *bodhicitta.* The original term is a compound noun signifying "thought directed at or focused on awakening," "a resolution to seek and/or attain awakening," or "the mind that is (virtually or intrinsically) awakening (itself)." The concept is known in non-Mahāyāna sources (e.g., *Abhidharmadīpa,* pp. 185–186, 192) and occurs in transitional texts such as the Mahāvastu, but gains its doctrinal and ritual importance in Mahāyāna and tantric traditions.

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Chapter 3

Biographies of Eminent Monks in India and Their Important Mahayana Works

Introduction

Mahāyāna Buddhists strove to emulate the Buddha, following the same path and achieving the same status as he did by realizing Buddhahood and saving all sentient beings. Mahāyanists denigrated Sectarian Buddhists, claiming that Sectarian Buddhists were content to remain disciples of the Buddha instead of striving to equal his achievement. Mahāyana Buddhists referred to Sectarian Buddhism as "*śrāvakayāna*" (vehicle for disciples or hearers). Sectarian Buddhists were criticized as being content to study for their own benefit while Mahāyānists strove to teach others and bring them salvation. Mahāyāna Buddhists referred to themselves as "*bodhisattvas*" (beings who aspired to realize supreme enlightenment) and to their teachings as the "*bodhisattvayāna*" (vehicle for *bodhisattvas*).

From approximately 100 B.C.E. to 100 C.E., large numbers of Mahāyāna scriptures were composed by nameless bodhisattvas. The fourth period of Indian Buddhism, later Mahāyāna Buddhism, four major types of thought developed:

(1) Mādyamika, which arose after the second century C.E.

(2) Yogācāra teachings of ideation-only, which appeared one century after Mādhyamika;

(3) Tathāgatagarbha doctrines that developed in parallel with Yogācāra thought;

(4) Buddhist logic, which arose after the above three traditions.

The Mādhyamika tradition eventually split into two schools of thought: the Svātantrika and the Prāsanngika. Later, some Mādhyamikas and Yogācāra groups joined to produce a Yogācāra Mādyamika tradition.

Topics:

3.1 Nāgārajuna , Ārayadeva and their works

3.2 Asaṅga, Vasubandhu and their works

3.3 The theory of "*Śūnyata*" of Mādhayamika School

3.4 The theory of "*Vijñāna*" of Yogācāra School

3.1 Nāgārjuna

3.1.1 Biography of Nāgārjuna

The most important of Indian Mahāyāna scholars to influence the development of Mahāyāna scriptures was Nāgārjuna. He lived approximately in the third and fourth centuries, about 700 years after the *parinirvāṇa* of the Buddha. Nāgārjuna was in Kashmir in the period of the kings Huska, Juska and Kaniṣka. Much has been said and written about his life, much of it probably inaccurate. The most reliable account is probably the *Life of the Bodhisattva Nāgārjuna*,[52] translated into Chinese by Kumārajīva about 405 CE.[53] According to this biography, Nāgārjuna was born a Brahmin in southern India, studied the four Vedas and learned all the sciences. Through his magic arts he was able to make himself invisible, and, accompanied by three friends, he secretly entered the royal palace, where they began to violate the women.

[52] 龙树菩萨传

[53] Kumārajīva introduced the works of Nāgārjuna to China.

They were discovered. Nāgārjuna's three companions were sentenced to death, but he escaped after vowing to become a monk. He fulfilled his vow and studied the whole of the three Piṭakas in 90 days, grasping their meaning. He was not satisfied and began to seek other sutras. He travelled to the northern region, along the way studying many scriptures, until at last he received a Mahayana sutra from a very aged monk in the Himalayas. With the aid of Nāgarāja, a *nāgā* king, he discovered and acquired the Prajñāpāramitā sūtras, which had been lost to the world of men since their exposition by the Buddha. He returned to the world with the *sūtras*, and through his magical ability was able to live for many centuries.

Nāgārjuna also became the friend and advisor of a great king, and used his magic in order to keep the king in full vigor and youthfulness. However, even with magic and compassion it is impossible to please all of the people all of the time. The crown prince, impatient to succeed to the throne, appealed to Nāgārjuna to commit charitable suicide. He wanted the Master to demonstrate perfect generosity by donating his head. The only weapon which could be used to behead Nāgārjuna was the blade of sacred grass, a result of the time when Nāgārjuna accidentally killed some insects while gathering grass for his meditation cushion. It is said that when the time is ripe Nāgārjuna's head and body will rejoin and again work for the benefit of sentient beings. After death Nāgārjuna was reborn in Sukhāvatī, the Pure Land of Amitabha Buddha.

Nāgārjuna's ideas were developed in part from the doctrines of the *Mahāsamghika* of southeastern India and in part from the, as yet little known, Mahāyāna scriptures acquired at Nāga's Palace. Nāgārjuna composed many treatises, as a result of which he has been called the Master of 1,000 *Śāstras*.[54] His works initiated Mahayana teachings as a distinct system. However, there are differences between the important works that entered the Chinese Buddhist tradition and those that entered the Tibetan Buddhist tradition. His teaching has *Bodhi*[55] as the central teaching and includes the "middle view", 中观 , with its methodological significance, the characteristic of "emptiness", 空义 , the "eight

[54] 千部论主

[55] 菩提资

negations", 八不 , "dependent origination", 缘起 , "absolute reality",[56] and *nirvāṇa*. Nāgārjuna's teachings had much influence on the later development of Mahayana Buddhism.

3.1.2 Overview of the works of Nāgārjuna 龙树

Nāgārjuna wrote many works. Twenty types of his work were translated and preserved in Chinese, 17 among them being of the greatest importance. The important works of Nāgārjuna maybe divided into four categories. The first category consists of commentaries to the *sūtras*;[57] the second category has to do with the organization of Buddhist doctrine, including, for example, the *Bodhisambhāra-sūtra,*菩提资糧论 and 庄严佛道论 ; the third category is controversy, including, for example, the *Madhyamaka-sūtra* and its commentary; the last category deals with governance and includes 宝行王正论 , and 劝诫王颂 .

The most important commentary ascribed to Nāgārjuna is the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra-śāstra*, also known as the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-śāstra*,[58] 大智度论 or 智度论 or 智论 or 大论 , the commentary to the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra*, 大品般若 . Nāgārjuna's biography notes that the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-śāstra* was written in the *upadeśa*[59] style with 100,000 verses. Although the Chinese translation extends to 100 volumes, it is not complete. It is said that an elaboration in the first chapter took up 34 volumes and that a complete translation would have occupied over 1000 volumes. Kumārajīva, the translator, supposing that the Chinese would dislike such a long

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56 *Bhūtathatā*: *Dharmatā*: 实相 .

57 释经

58 大智度论 *Śāstra on the Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra.*

59 优波提舍 , 406a: finalized teaching or, 论议 , dogmatic treatise. 论议（*upadeśa*，优波提舍、论议）：这是指与略说不同的广说，是一种详细注释的说法。并不一定是佛所说的。后世阿毗达磨论书也可以包含在论议中。所谓注释，是原始经典中与"略说"不同的"分别"（*vibhaṅga*），这个意思下的分别经在阿含经中随处可见。另外与总说（*uddesa*，法说）不同的义说（*niddesa*，义释）也有注释的意思。

enumeration of trivial details, selected only important issues for translation. His final translation occupied 100 volumes.

Another important commentary is the *Daśabhūmika-vibhāṣa śāstra*, (*Exposition of the Ten Abodes*), 十住毗婆沙论 ,[60] an exegesis and commentary to the *Avatamsaka-daśabhūmika-sūtra*, 华严十住经 .[61] The later translation of this text is called 十地经. *Vibhāṣa* is a style of wider interpretation and the exegesis is not on the prose, but on the verse. The sutra itself includes both prose and verse; the verse sections are divided into "front" and "back", with the back part called "hard" verse. The Chinese translation filled 17 volumes, elaborating only the first and second abodes. Although not complete, this translation has been regarded as an important text in Nāgārjuna studies.

Nāgārjuna was the founder of the *Mādhyamika* school.[62] He is the author of the *Mūlamadhyamaka-kārikā*, or *Madhyamaka-kārikā*, the *Madhyamika-śāstra,* 中观根本智论 , 中观论 , or 中论 ,[63] which presents in a systematic manner the *śūnyatāvāda* as taught in the Mahāyāna sutras. The work consists of 400 memorial verses[64] (*kārikās*) in 27 chapters, on which the author himself has written a commentary, the *Akutobhayā* (The Safe One), 无畏论 , in 100,000 verses. Nāgārjuna was perhaps the first to make use of this style of presentation which was so greatly favoured in the scientific literature of the Indians, that is, memorial verses with a commentary by the author himself. The *Akutobhayā* has not survived in Sanskrit, but exists in a Tibetan translation. Commentaries by Buddhapālita[65] and Bhāvaviveka have also come down in

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60 *Daśabhūmika-vibhāṣa Śāstra* ("exposition of the 10 abodes")

61 华严十住经, later on called 十地经 is the core of the *Avatamsaka* literature. See. Lv Cheng, *The Collections of Buddhist Studies of Lv Cheng*, vol. 4, (Chinese) p. 2059.

62 One of the most important schools of the Mahayana

63 *Memorial Verses on the Middle Teaching*; *The Doctrine of the Mean*; *An Exposition of the "Middle Way"*; *Treatise of the "Middle Way"*; *On the Mean*; *Basic Verses on the "Middle Way"*.

64 But the Chinese text has 500 verses. See Lv Cheng, op. cit., p. 2067

65 佛护 (约 470-540), or 觉护 , or 佛陀 波利 ; *Mulamadyamaka-vritti* (Buddhapalita's Commentary on the Doctrine of the Mean), 中观论佛护释 .

Tibetan translation only. The commentary entitled *Prasannapadā*, (*The Clear-worded*), or 中观明句论, by Candrakīrti, who on several occasions argues against his two predecessors, is the only one which now exists in Sanskrit. The *Madhyamika* system, which was taught by Nāgārjuna and his pupil Āryadeva and which found one of its chief exponents in Candrakīrti derives its name, "the middle doctrine" or "middle way", from the fact that it declares nothing either positively, or negatively, but merely relatively. The work begins with the famous eight negations.

The *Madhyamaka-śāstra* was composed in the form of a controversy in order to defeat each theory of every school of thought of the *Śrāvakayāna*, including schools of thought whose texts were to be translated by Kumārajīva. The Sanskrit version of *Madhyamaka-śāstra* had 500 verses and with Āryadeva's commentary[66] filled four volumes. By Kumārajīva's time there were more than 70 commentaries to the text, but he thought that Āryadeva's was best.

Another of Nāgārjuna's treatises, the *Dvādaśadvāra-śāstra*, 十二门论,[67] is the first phase, or entrance, to the *Madhyamaka-śāstra*. | The *Madhyamaka-śāstra* has 27 chapters while the *Dvādaśadvāra-śāstra* has 12 issues, simplifying the *Madhyamaka-śāstra*. The exegesis was done with a few verses, mostly explaining the fundamental theory of the *Madhyamaka-śāstra*. Both commentaries, as well as the *Madhyamaka-śāstra*, were translated into Chinese by Kumārajīva. Nāgārjuna's most important work has been translated into Chinese, but the original Sanskrit texts have been lost. Only the verses of the *Mūlamadhyamaka-kārikās* have been preserved, through Candrakīrti's quotation of Nāgārjuna in the *Madhyamakāvatāra*, (*Introduction to* Madhyamaka).[68]

3.1.2 Āryadeva, 圣提婆 or 圣天

Āryadeva was one of Nāgārjuna's pupils. From Ceylon, he was also known as Kāṇadeva, "the one-eyed deva" and Nīlanetra, "the blue-eyed". Āryadeva's biography was translated into Chinese by Kumārajīva about 405 CE

66 青目（提婆）.

67 十二门论.

68 月月称释的牒引, *Madhyamakāvatāra*("introduction to *Madyamaka*")

together with those of Aśvaghoṣa and Nāgārjuna. Many works are ascribed to Āryadeva, but few have survived. His most famous works are *Catuḥ-śataka*, or *Catuḥ-śataka-śāstra-kārikā*, 四白论(*The 400 Verses*), and *Śataka-śāstra*, 白论 (*Hundred Verses Treatise*).[69]

Catuḥ-śataka-śāstra-kārikā like the *Madhyamika-śāstra* consists of 400 memorial verses (*kārikā*) with 16 chapters. This treatise, in fact, is divided into two parts, the first eight chapters called "the teaching of the hundred meanings doctrine".[70] The latter eight chapters are called "discussion of the hundred meanings reality". Only the last half of this treatise was translated by Xuan Zang, and named *Śata-śāstra-vaipulya*, 广百论本. With Candrakīrti's commentary on *The 400 Verses*, 四百论广释, *Bodhisattva-yogācāra-catuḥ-śataka-tikā*, it belongs to the fundamental works of the *Mādhyamika* school.

The Sanskrit original of the *Hundred Verses Treatise* has not survived, but was translated into Chinese by Kumārajīva with a total of 10 chapters in a canonical style.[71] It was intended as a preface to *The 400 Verses*, similar to the *Dvādaśadvāra-śāstra*, 十二门论 ,[72] ascribed to Nāgārjuna and intended as a preface to the *Madhyamaka-śāstra*.

There are in the Chinese Tripiṭaka two short treatises translated by Bodhiruci (508-535) and ascribed to Āryadeva which constitute a kind of commentary on those sections of the *Lankāvatāra* which deal with heretical doctrines of *nirvāṇa*. There is another short treatise by Āryadeva, the *Hastavāla-prakaraṇa*.

After the works of Nāgārjuna and Āryadeva came to China through Kumārajīva's translations, the doctrines of Nāgārjuna had a great influence on the development of Chinese Buddhism. *The Three Śāstras*, comprised of the *Madhyamaka-śāstra*, the *Dvādaśadvāra-śāstra*, and the *Śata-śāstra*, became the doctrinal basis of the Three Śāstra School of which Nāgārjuna was regarded as

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69 四百论 *Catuḥ-śataka-śāstra-kārikā* ("the 400 verses").

70 说法百义

71 修多罗体裁 See Lv Cheng , vol.4, op.cit., p.2087

72 十二门论 *Dvādaśadvāra-śāstra* ("treatise on the 12 gates")

the first patriarch. Nāgārjuna was also regarded as the first patriarch of the Hua Yan School, because its doctrinal basis was the *Avatamsaka* literature for which the chapter on the ten abodes in Hua Yan, 华严 十住品 , of the *Daśabhūmika-vibhāśa-śāstra* played an important exegetical role. Nāgārjuna was regarded as the first patriarch of the Buddha Land School as well because of the chapter on reincarnation in the Buddha Land, 十住毗婆沙论　易行品 , in the *Daśabhūmika-vibhāśa-śāstra*, which played an important exegetical role on the Buddha Land.

Down to the present day, Nāgārjuna's *Madhyamaka-śāstra* together with Āryadeva's *Catuḥ-śataka*, or *Śataka-śāstra*, and the *Dvādaśadvāra-śāstra*, form the basis of the Sanron sect in Japan.

3.2 Asaṅga

The story of Asaṅga (310-390?) was well known in Tibet. The strove for many years to have a vision of the celestial Bodhisattva Maitreya, at that time residing in the Tuṣita heaven awaiting his time to return to earth as the next Buddha. Despairing of the results of his meditation Asaṅga gave up, but when, full of compassion, he stooped to help a suffering dog by the roadside that dog became Maitreya himself. Maitreya is always there, but he is only seen through the eyes of conpasssioate holiness. Maitreya took Asaṅga to Tusuta and there taught him five new texts.

1. *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*--the treatise on Perfection of Wisdom practice
2. *Madhyāntavibhāga*--The Discrimination of Middle from Extremes
3. *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga*--The Discrimination of dharmas and their True Nature.
4. *Mahāyānasūtralaṃkāra*—The Ornament of the Mahāyāna Sūtras.
5. Finally, the *Ratanagotravibhāga,* often known as the *Uttaratantra*, a treatise on the *Tathāgatavibhāga* or Buddha-essence doctrines which mentioned in the previous chapter.

Modern scholars, doubting the divine, having disagreed over whether this story indicates that Asaṇga himself really composed these texts, or whether they can be traced to a genuine human author called Maitreya, perhaps Asaṇga's teacher, sometimes referred to as Maitreyanātha to distinguish him from any mythological figure. Erich Frauwallner has argued that had Asaṇga considered himself inspired in a vision by the Bodhisattva Maitreya he would have written not philosophical treatises (śāstras) but rather sūtras. Since these three texts are, according to Frauwallner, unitary philosophical works, and differ somewhat from works known to be by Asanga, so this indicates an authorship by Maitreyanātha rather than by the Bodhisattva Maitreya.[73]

Among works attributed to Asaṅga himself are the *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, a text which constructs a Mahāyāna Cittamātra Abhidharma and indicates that the Mahāyāna was by no means completely opposed to the Abhidharma, the *Mahāyānasaṃgraha*, an important general treatise on *Cittamātra-Yogācāra* doctrine, and the *Yogācārabhūmi*—the Stages of *Yogācāra*. The *Yogācārabhūmi*, however, is attributed by the Chinese tradition to Maitreya, and is almost certainly the work of a school, a compilation over some time, lacking a number of characteristic *Cittamātra* doctrines and rather earlier than Asanga.[74]

Asaṅga's important works are the *Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra*, 瑜珈师地论, the fundamental textbook of the *Yogācāra* school which derived from Maitreya; *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra*, 大乘庄严经论 (the *Ornament of the Mahāyāna Sutras*); *Mahāyāna-śamparigraha-śāstra*, 摄大乘论 or 摄论, (*Compendium of the Mahayana*), a treatise composed in prose and verse that expounds the basic teachings of the *Yogācāra*; and the *Guhyasamaja Tantra*, 密集金刚续.

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73 See Frauwallner 1956:297 referred by Paul Williams, Mahāyāna Buddhism:The doctrinal foundations, London and New York: Routledge, 1989,pp.80-81

74 Ibid.

The *Abhisamayālamkāra-kārikā*, also known as the *Prajñāpāramitopadeśa-śāstra,* 现观庄严论 (*Ornament of Clear Realization*, *Ornament of Emergent Realization*, or *Ornament of Direct Comprehension*) is certainly the work of Maitreya. This treatise is a commentary to the *Pañcavimśatisāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*.

3.2.1 Vasubandhu and his works

Some scholars place Vasubandhu's life from ca. 320 to 400, but a date of around 450 seems more reasonable. To explain the various problems concerning Vasubandhu's dates, Erich Frauwallner has suggested that two men named Vasubandhu might have played key roles in Buddhist history. The earlier Vasubandhu would have lived around 320-380 and been the younger brother of Asanga, while latter would have been the author of the *Abhidharmakośa* with dates 400-480. However, Frauwallner's argument has not gained wide acceptance. It's more reasonable to view Vasubandhu as a single figure with dates around 400-480.

Vasubandhu is said to have been Asaṅga's brother, the author of the *Abhidharmakośa* and its commentary (*Bhāṣya*), the principle source in Tibet (and extant in Sanskrit) for the study of the non-Mahāyāna *Sarvāstivāda-Vaibhāṣika Abhidharma.* Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa* is a skillful and systematic presentation of the Sarvāstivādin position. However, because Vasubandhu sometimes criticized Sarvāstivādin doctrines from the Sautrantika point of view. Saṅghabhadra wrote a treatise, the [*Abhidharma*] *Nyāyānusāraśātra*, (A-pi-ta-mo shun-cheng-li lun, T1562), presenting the position of the Kashmri Sarvāstivādin School. In his work, Saṅghabhadra refuted the teachings of the *Abhidharmakośa* and defended orthodox Sarvāstivādin doctrines; but even Saṅghabhadra was influenced by the *Abhidharmakośa* and advanced some new doctrines that differed from the traditional positions maintained by Sarvāstivādins. Consequently, his teachings are reffered to as doctrines of "the new Sarvāstivādin (School)."

The *Abhidharmakośa* profoundly influenced subsequent Buddhism. After it was written, the study of the *Abhidharmakośa* became the major activity of later abhidharma researchers, and a number of commentaries on it were written. Guṇamati (480-540) and Vasumitra are both credited with

commentaries on the *Abhidharmakośa*, but neither commentary is extant, Sthiramati's (510-570) commentary, the *Tattvārtha*, survives in a complete Tibetan translation (Peking no. 5875) and in fragments in a Chinese translation (T 1561).[75]

Asaṅga is held to have subsequently converted his brother to Mahāyāna. Two important Cittamātra works attributed to Vasubandhu are the *Viṃśatikā* (20 Verses) and the *Triṃśikā* (30 Verses). Among the other works said to be by Vasubandhu, the brother of Asaṅga, are commentaries on the *Madhyāntavibhāga* and *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga*, and a series of verses known as the *Trisvabhāvanirdeśa*, the Teaching on the Three Aspects. A commentary to the *Mahāyānasūtralaṃkāra* may be by Asaṅga or by Vasubandhu.[76]

Two other important Indian writers on Cittamātra should also be mentioned—Sthiramati and Dharmapāla. Both these masters appear to have lived during the sixth century, and were roughly contemporaneous with the Svātantrika-Mādhyamika Bhāvaviveka, with whom they engged in written debate. Sthiramati and Dharmapāla represent different subschools of Cittamātra. Sthiramati's tradition was associated with the University of Valabhī, founded in the sixth century by Sthiramatī's teacher Guṇamati, who had left Nālandā tradition, although it is unclear how far he also innovated. Hsuan-tsang studied *Cittamātra* at Nālandā and upon his return to China established the Dharmalakṣaṇa School purporting to follow the interpretation of Dharmapāla. The basic text of this school in China was the *Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi* (Cheng-wei-shih lun), a translation of Vasubandhu's *Trimśikā* together with a commentary composed of ten Indian commentaries, with precedence given to that by Dharmapāla. Among the most important Cittamātra works of Sthiramati were his commentaries on the *Triṃśikā* and the *Madyāntavibhāga*, both of which survive in Sanskrit. The *Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi* itself is the main source for

75 Hirakawa Akira, op.cit., p.137.

76 Paul Williams, op.cit., p.81

Dharmapāla's views, although some other works do survive in Chinese translation.[77]

3.3 The theory of "*Śūnyatā*" of Mādhayamika School

Nāgārjuna was the founder of the *Mādhyamika* School. Some people think that Voidness or *Sunyatā* discussed by Nāgārjuna is purely a *Mahāyāna* teaching. It is based on the idea of *Anattā* or non-self, on the *Paṭiccasamuppāda* or the Dependent Origination, found in the original Theravāda Pāli texts. Once Ananda asked the Buddha, "People say the word *Śūnya*. What is *Śūnya?"* The Buddha replied, "Ananda, there is no self, nor anything pertaining to self in this world. Therefore, the world is empty." This idea was taken by Nāgārjuna when he wrote his remarkable book, *"Madhyamika Kārikā"*.

When the Madhyamaka speaks of all dharmas as empty (*śūnya*), it means specifically that all dharmas (and therefore all things) are empty of inherent existence. They have no essence. They are only relative. It is inherent existence which is opposed by the Madhyamaka, not tables and chairs as such, but table and chairs conceived as inherently existing and therefore, in the Buddhist context, as permanent and fully satisfying. These conceptions can be refuted easily by pointing out that dharmas, or the Self cannot have inherent existence since they are causally dependent, they are part of a causal and conceptual flow. 'It is dependent origination [pratityasamutpāda] that we call emptiness [śunyatā]', Nāgārjuna says (*Madhyamakakārikā* (MK) 24:18). We might gloss this by saying that it is because entities originate in dependence on causes and conditions that they lack inherent existence, they are empty.[78]

Emptiness, Nāgārjuna asserts, was taught by the Buddhas as an antidote to all dṛṣtis, a word whih must indicate here a viewpoint or dogma holding to the real existence of something as having inherent existence. Those who take emptiness as a dṛṣtis are declared to be extremely difficult to help (MK 13:8). Referring to two false interpretations of emptiness: one takes emptiness as equaling nihilism: nothing exists at all on any level; the other that emptiness is some sort of really existing, Ultimate Reality or Essence—perhaps like the

77 Paul Williams, op.cit.,p p.81-82

78 Paul Williams, opcit., p61

Brahman of Hinduism or the Godhead of other religions. Emptiness is thus not for the Madhyamaka the Ultimate Truth in the sense that it is an ultimately existing or inherently existing entity.[79]

3.4 The theory of "*Vijñāna*" of Yogācāra School

The Yogācāra school, whose name is taken from one of its foundational texts, the *Yogācārabhūmi* (*Stages of Yoga Practice*), provided perhaps the most sophisticated examination and description in all of Buddhism of how the mind works—in psychological, epistemological, logical, emotional, cognitive, meditative, developmental, and soteriological modes. At once a rigorous, rational philosophy and an elaborate system of practice, it provided methods by which one could identify and correct the cognitive errors inherent in the way the mind works, since enlightenment meant direct, immediate, correct cognition.

The founding of Yogācāra, one of the two major Indian Mahāyāna schools, is usually attributed to the half-brothers Asanga and Vasubandhu (fourth to fifth century C.E.), but most of its unique concepts had been introduced at least a century earlier in scriptures such as the *Samdhinirmocana Sūtra* (*Sūtra Elucidating the Hidden Connections* or *Sūtra Setting Free the* [*Buddha's*] *Intent*). Yogācāra forged novel concepts and methods that synthesized prior Buddhist teachings into a coherent antidote (*pratipaks*a) for eliminating the cognitive problems that prevented liberation from the karmic cycles of birth and death.

3.4.1 Historical overview Yogācāra outside India

In the early sixth century in China, while translating Vasubandhu's commentary on the *Ten Stages Sūtra* (Sanskrit, *Daśabhūmikasūtropadeśa*; Chinese, *Dilun*), the two translators, Bodhiruci and Ratnamati, parted due to irreconcilable differences of interpretation. Bodhiruci favored a more orthodox *Yogācāra* approach, while Ratnamati was drawn to a *Yogācāra-Tathāgatagarbha* hybrid ideology. The former emphasizes removing mental obstructions, whereas the latter stresses an ontological pure nature that shines forth once defilements are removed. Their feud had an immediate and lasting impact on Chinese Buddhism, with followers of Bodhiruci's interpretation

79 Ibid., p.63.

developing into the so-called Northern Dilun School and Ratnamati's followers becoming Southern Dilun. That feud dominated contemporary Chinese Buddhism, and it intensified when in the mid-sixth century the Indian translator Paramārtha (499–569) introduced another version of *Yogācāra*, amenable to the *tathāgatagarbha* ideology, that reified a ninth consciousness (*amalavijñāṇa,* pure consciousness) that would emerge with enlightenment, even though no Indian text attests to this concept. Asaṅga's *Mahāyānasaṃgraha* (Chinese, *Shelun*) became the key text for Paramārtha's followers, so their school was dubbed Shelun.

In 629, seeking to resolve the disputes between these schools, Xuanzang (ca. 600–664) traveled to India, returning in 645 with over six hundred texts—seventy-four of which he translated—and a better understanding of Indian Yogācāra as taught at Nālandā (the prime seat of Buddhist learning at that time). His successor, Kuiji (632–682), founded the Weishi school (Sanskrit, *Vijñaptimātra*), also called Fa Xiang (Dharma Characteristics).

Students who had come from Korea and Japan to study with Xuanzang and Kuiji brought the teaching back to their countries, where it thrived for many centuries, and survives today in Japan as Hosso (the Japanese pronunciation of Faxiang). Although the Weishi School came under attack from the newly emerging sinitic Mahāyāna schools, such as the Huayan School, for challenging ingrained orthodoxies, ironically those orthodoxies were themselves largely grounded in developments from the earlier Yogācāra oriented Dilun and Shelun schools. The Chan School, which started to institutionalize around the time of Xuanzang and Kuiji, initially drew on the *Lankāvatāra Sūtra*, a *Yogācāra-tathāgatagarbha* hybrid text, as one of its main scriptures. Thus, much of the later developments in East Asian Buddhism can be seen as arising out of inter-*Yogācāra* rivalries. *Yogācāra* entered Tibet in the eighth century with Śāntaraksita (ca. 725–790) and his disciple Kamalasīla (ca. 740–795) who were among the earliest Buddhist missionaries there. While never established in Tibet as an independent school, *Yogācāra* teachings became part of the curriculum for other Tibetan schools, and exerted an influence on Rnying Ma (Nyingma) and Dzogs Chen thought. Tsong Khapa (1357–1419), founder of the Dge Lugs (Geluk) School, devoted considerable attention to Yogācāra, especially the works of Asaṅga and the *Saṃdhinirmocana-sūtra,* with particular attention to the Korean monk Won Chuk's (613–696) commentary on the latter.

Won Chuk was a Korean disciple of Xuanzang; the final chapters of his *Saṃdhinirmocana* commentary are no longer extant in the original Chinese, the complete work surviving only in its Tibetan translation. The Tibetan understanding of *Yogācāra*, therefore, is drawn from East Asian as well as Indian sources. Many of the Tibetan debates on *Yogācāra* thought, which have continued until today, appear to be replays of the controversies that raged in China and East Asia centuries earlier, sometimes with new wrinkles.

3.4.2 *Vijñaptimātra*

Yogācāra encapsulates its doctrine in the term *vijñaptimātra* (often rendered "consciousness-only" or "representation-only"), which is not meant to suggest that only the mind is real. Consciousness (*vijñāṇa*) is not the ultimate reality or solution for Yogācāra, but rather the basic problem, as Vasubandhu's *Twenty Verses* illustrated. *Vijñapti* is grammatically a causative form, "what makes known," and thus indicates that what appears in cognition is constructed, projected by consciousness, rather than passively received from outside by consciousness. Since nothing appears to us except within our acts of consciousness, all is *vijñaptimātra.* The inability to distinguish between our interpretations of the world and the world itself is what Yogācāra calls *vijñaptimātra.* This problem pervades ordinary mental operations and can be eliminated only when those operations are brought to an end. It is not that there is nothing real outside an individual mind. Yogācāra rejects solipsism and theories of a universal mind that subsumes individuals.

According to Yogācāra, each individual is a distinct consciousness stream or mental continuum (*cittasantāna*), and individuals can communicate with each other, teach and learn from each other, and influence and affect each other. If this were not the case, learning about Buddhism would be impossible. Even *rūpa* (sensorial materiality) is accepted, if one realizes that physicality is only known as such through sensation and cognition. Everything we know, conceive, imagine, or are aware of, we know through cognition, including the notion that entities might exist independent of our cognition. Although the mind does not create the physical world, it generates the interpretative categories through which we know and classify the physical world, and it does this so seamlessly that we mistake our interpretations for the world itself. Those interpretations, which are projections of our desires and anxieties, become

obstructions preventing us from seeing what is actually the case. In simple terms, we are blinded by our own self-interests, our own prejudices, our desires. Unenlightened cognition is an appropriative act. Yogācāra does not speak about subjects and objects; instead, it analyzes perception in terms of graspers (*grāhaka*) and what is grasped (*grāhya*). The Buddhist notion of karma is intimately connected to the notion of appropriation (*upādāna*). As the earliest Buddhist texts explained, suffering and ignorance are produced by karma. Karma, according to Buddhism, consists of any intentional activity of body, speech, or mind. Intention is the crucial factor, and intention is a cognitive condition, so whatever is devoid of cognition must be nonkarmic and nonintentional. Thus, by definition, whatever is noncognitive can have no karmic implications or consequences. Intention means desiring something. Physically, linguistically, or mentally, we try to "get it." Stated another way, only cognitive acts can have karmic repercussions. This would include meaningful bodily gestures that communicate intentions (such gestures are also called *vijñapti*). Since Buddhists seek to overcome ignorance and suffering by eliminating karmic conditioning, Buddhists need focus only on what occurs within the domain of cognitive conditions (*cittagocara*). Categories such as external object and materiality (*rūpa*) are cognitive constructions. *Materiality* is a word for the colors, textures, sounds, and so on that we cognize in acts of perception, and it is only to the extent that they are perceived and ideologically grasped, thereby becoming objects of attachment, that they have karmic significance. There is nothing intrinsically good or bad about gold, for example; rather our *ideas* about gold's value and uses, which we project and then act upon, lead to good or bad consequences. Materialism is not the problem. The incessant propensity (*anuśaya*) to appropriate (*upādāna*) what consciousness projects is the problem. These projections are not just things, but moral qualities, status, ideals, religious and national doctrines and identities, the *holding* of opinions, whatever we can make our own, or make ourselves to be. A deceptive trick is built into the way consciousness operates at every moment. Consciousness constructs a cognitive object in such a way that it disowns its own creation, pretending the object is "out there," in order to render that object capable of being appropriated. Even while what we cognize is occurring within our act of cognition, we cognize it *as if* it were external to our consciousness.

Realizing *vijñaptimātra* means exposing this trick at play in every act of consciousness, catching it in the act, as it were, and thereby eliminating it.

Consciousness engages in this deceptive game of projection, dissociation, and appropriation because there is no "self." The deepest-seated erroneous view to which sentient beings cling, according to Buddhism, is *ātmadṛṣṭi,* the view that a permanent, eternal, immutable, independent self exists. No such self exists, and deep down we know that. This makes us anxious, since it entails that no self or identity endures forever. In order to alleviate that anxiety, we attempt to construct a self, to fill the anxious void, to do or acquire something enduring. The projection of cognitive objects for appropriation is consciousness's main tool for this construction. If I own things (ideas, theories, identities, material objects), then "I am." If there are eternal objects that I can grasping, Yogācāra texts say: Negate the object, and the self is possess, then I too must be eternal. To undermine this erroneous appropriative also negated (e.g., *Madhyāntavibhāga,* 1:4, 8). Intentional acts also have moral motives and consequences. Since effects are shaped by their causes, an act with a wholesome intent would tend to yield wholesome fruits, while unwholesome intentions produce unwholesome effects.

Asaṅga has usually been thought of as the founder of the Yogācāra school, while, in fact, his teacher, Maitreya, was the founder of that school. This school teaches the *vijñānavāda* doctrine: that nothing exists outside consciousness. Thus, like *śunyatāvāda*, it denies the reality of the world of phenomena, but yet, in a certain sense, recognizes existence as contained in thought and consciousness. The absolute soul, however, which embraces this consciousness, which, in its turn includes in itself all psychic processes (*ālayavijñāna*), is *Bodhi*, the one and only truth.

The expression *Cittamātra*, together with *Vijñaptimātra* and sometimes *Vijñanavāda* which are also used for this school, all refer to its principle classical doctrine, which is that of Mind (*citta/vijñāna*) Only (*mātra*). Another name, possibly older, is *Yogācāra,* which seems to refer to monks dedicated particularly to the practice of yoga, here meaning meditation. It is possible that some of the key doctrines of *Cittamātra*, classical Yogācāra, were the product initially of reflection on meditative experience.

Lambert Schmithausen has stressed, the 'formulation of universal idealism' in *Cittamātra* arose out of a generalization of reflections on meditative practice, and not originally from purely theoretical or doctrinal,

philosophical concerns (Schmithausen 1973a:176). Moreover, the fact that all is experienced in meditation to be only mind enables the yogin to engage in the world and manipulate it in what appears to be a wholly miraculous way.

Cittamātra is a complex and sophisticated tradition, much less studied in the West than *Madhyamaka*. It is certainly should not be presupposed tha all or even most of the *Cittamātra* masters and texts teach exactly the same doctrine. Nevertheless, they do have some teachings in common, and central to *Cittamātra* thought is that of the Three Aspects (*Trisvabhāva*). The teaching of the Three Aspects is for the *Saṃdhinirmocana Sūtra* the final correct doctrine, requiring no interpretation or adaptation, the antidote to the nihilistic interpretation of emptiness.

All things which can be known can be subsumed under these Three Aspects. The first Aspect is called the constructed or conceptualized aspect (*parikalpitasvabhāva*). The *Saṃdhiniramocanana Sūtra* connects it with the falsifying activity of language. It is the realm of words which attribute inherent existence to things. More informatively, the *Mahāyānasaṃgraha* and its commentaries explain that the conceptualized or constructed aspect is appearance as an object when really there are only perceptions (*vijñānaptimātra*). By 'object' here is meant both poles of an experience, both experience and that which experienced, referred to in *Cittamātra* terminology as 'grasper' and 'grasped'. The conceptualized aspect is the world as it is experienced by everyday unenlightened folk, the world of really existing and separate objects. It is how things appear to us, the realm of subject-object duality.

The second Aspect, the dependent aspect (*paratantrasvabhāva*), is, according to *Saṃdhiniramocana Sūtra*, the dependent origination of dharmas, that is the causal flow. According to the *Trisvabhāvanirdeśa* it is that which appears, in opposition to the way in which it appears, which is the first Aspect, the conceptualized aspect. All things, objects of experience and oneself, the one who is experiencing, are as just a flow of perceptions. We do not know that there is something out there. We have only experiences of colors, shapes, tactile data, and so on. We also do not know that we ourselves are anything other than a further series of experiences. Taken together, there is only an ever-changing flow of perceptions—*vijñāptimātra*. The flow of perceptions which

forms the basis for our mistaken constructions is the dependent aspect. Indicating its nature, we might say that the dependent aspect is the flow of experience which is errorneously partitioned. The *Mahāyānasaṃgraha* describes it as the support for the manifestation of non-existent and fictive things.

However, that for the *Cittamātra* falsification requires a really existing substratum. This point is strongly made in the very earliest phase of Yogācāra thought, in the *Yogācārabhūmi*. One has to avoid both under-and-over-negation.

The final aspect is called the perfected aspect 'Suchness' or 'Thusness' (*tathatā*, the true nature of things, which is discovered in meditation. It is said to be the complete absence, in the dependent aspect, of objects. The perfected aspect is, therefore, the fact of non-duality, there is neither subject nor object but only a single flow. It is also emptiness, explained for this tradition as meaning that one thing is empty of another. That is, the flow of perceptions is empty of enduring entities. The dependent aspect is empty of conceptualized aspect. What remains, the substratum which is empty of those enduring entities, the flow of perceptions themselves, nevertheless does exist.[80]

All the phenomenal world depends in some sense on consciousness. However, cittamātra tradition was not content to leave the matter at this point. Rather, it distinguished eight types of consciousness: the five sense consciousness plus the mind (*manovijñāna*)—a sense which on the one hand apprehends psychic events, and on the other synthesizes experiences supplied by the other five senses—the 'tainted mind'(*kliṣṭamanas*), and the substratum consciousness (*ālayavijñāna*; literally storehouse consciousness). The tainted mind takes the substratum consciousness as its object and mistakenly considers the substratum consciousness to be a true Self. These eight forms are the working out of the discrimination into subject and object. [81]

[80] Paul Williams, opcit., pp.84-85

[81] Ibid.

3.4.2.1Three natures (*trisvabhāva*)

Yogācāra devised a model of three self-natures (*trisvabhāva*) to explain *vijñaptimātra* more concisely. The pervasive mental constructions that obstruct our view of what truly is the case are called *parikalpita* (imaginative construction). The actual webs of causes and conditions at play are called *paratantra* (dependent on other [causes]). Other-dependence is so-called to emphasize that no thing exists as an independent, eternal self; everything arises dependent on causes and conditions other than itself, in the absence of which it ceases to be. Ordinarily *paratantra* is infested with *parikalpita. Parinispanna* (consummation) is the removal of *parikalpita* from *paratantra,* leaving only purified *paratantra.*

Since the notion of "self-nature" is itself a parikalpic idea that presumes self-hood, it too must be eliminated. Thus the three self-natures are actually three non-self-natures (*tri-nih svabhāva*). *Parikalpita* is devoid of self-nature since it is unreal by definition. *Paratantra* lacks self-nature, since other-dependence precludes "self" nature. *Parinispanna* the Yogācāra counterpart to the Madhyamaka notion of *śūnyatā* (emptiness), which stands for the lack of self-nature in everything—is the antithesis of self-nature. Thus the three self-natures are ultimately understood as three non-self-natures.

3.4.2.2 Eight consciousnesses

Prior to Yogācāra, Buddhists discussed six types of consciousness: the five sensory consciousnesses (visual, auditory, gustatory, olfactory, and tactile) and mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*). The consciousnesses were said to be produced by contact between a sense organ (e.g., the eye) and its corresponding sense field or objects (e.g., colors, shapes). The mind (manas) operated like the other senses, mental consciousness arising from the contact between manas and mental objects (thoughts, ideas), though it could think about what the other senses perceived, while the five senses could not cognize each other's objects. Yogācāra found this theory sound but inadequate because it did not ex- plain the origin of the sense of self-hood with its appropriative propensities, various problems with continuity of experience, or the projective activity of consciousness.

If causality requires temporal contiguity, how can consciousness temporarily cease during sleep, unconscious states, certain forms of meditation, or between lives, and then suddenly recommence? Where did it reside in the interim? If karmic consequences occur long after the act they are requiting was committed, and there is no substantial self, what links the act to its eventual karmic effect, and in what does this linkage reside? Most importantly, how can consciousnesses that are derivative of contact between organs and objects become projective? Yogācāra's eight consciousnesses theory answered these questions. *Manovijñāna* became the organ of the sixth consciousness, rather than its by-product; manas became the seventh consciousness, responsible for appropriating experience as "mine" and thus infesting experience with a sense of self-hood (and thus also called *ādānavijñāna,* "appropriative consciousness," and *kliṣṭamanas,* "defiled mind"). The eighth consciousness, the *ālayavijñāna* (warehouse consciousness), was Yogācāra's most important innovation. Experiences produce seeds (bījā) and perfuming (*vāsanā*) that are deposited in the *ālayavijñāna.* These seeds, embodying wholesome or unwholesome implications, regenerate new seeds each moment. These causal seed chains remain latent until a new conscious experience causes the seed to sprout, infusing a new cognition. Hence the *ālayavijñāna* was also called *vipākavijñāna* (karmic requital consciousness). Like a warehouse, the *ālayavijñāna* serves as a repository for seeds that are stored there, across a lifetime or many lifetimes, until dispatched. So it was also called all seeds consciousness (*sarvabījakavijñāna*). *Vāsanās* "perfume" the *ālayavijñāna,* like the smell of incense perfumes a cloth in its proximity. The smell may seem intrinsic to the cloth, but it is adventitious and can be removed, returning the cloth to its original state. Various *Yogācāra* texts debate whether seeds and perfuming describe the same phenomenon with different metaphors, or whether they are different types of mental events. In either case, the *ālayavijñāṇa* flows onward like a constant stream, changing each moment with each new experience, thus providing karmic continuity as the seeds reach fruition. The *ālayavijñāṇa* continues to function even while the other consciousnesses become temporarily inoperative, unconscious. Hence it is also called "foundational consciousness" (*mūlavijñāṇa*). Although it stores karmic seeds and engenders their projection, the *ālayavijñāṇa* is a karmically neutral mechanical process (*avyākṛta*). *Manas* appropriate the activities of the other consciousnesses, thinking they are "my" experience, and it appropriates the

ālayavijñāna as a "self." Karmic continuity ceases by overturning the basis (*āśrayaparāvṛtti*), in which the *ālayavijñāṇa* and the other consciousnesses cease to function. The consciousnesses (*vijñāṇa*) become direct cognitions (*jñāna*). *Ālayavijñāna* becomes the "great mirror cognition" (*mahādarśanajñāna*), no longer holding on to or engendering new seeds, but reflecting everything impartially in the present moment, like an unobstructed mirror. Manas loses its self-prejudicial nature and becomes the immediate cognition of equality (*samatājñāna*), equalizing self and other. *Manovijñāna,* which discriminates cognitive objects, becomes immediate cognitive mastery, in which the general and particular characteristics of things are discerned just as they are. The five sense consciousnesses, now devoid of mental constructions, become immediate cognitions that accomplish what needs to be done, thereby engaging the world effectively. *Yogācāra* texts differ on which overturning occurs at which stage of practice, but they agree that full enlightenment entails accomplishing all of them.

Conclusion

The Indian philosopher Nāgārjuna (ca. second century C.E.) is probably the single most important Buddhist philosopher. Nāgārjuna saw his philosophy as itself part of the spiritual project of enlightenment, of "seeing things the way they really are" (*yathābhūtadarśana*). His arguments should be placed in the context of Buddhist philosophy (preceding Abhidharma thought), which he both presupposed and the ontology of which he trenchantly criticized. It was Nāgārjuna who first explained philosophically the concept of Śūnyatā (Emptiness). According to Nāgārjuna, emptiness is a property (a *-ness*) possessed by each thing without exception. It is the property of lacking intrinsic existence (*niḥsvabhāvatā*) as a result of being one way or another, the result of causal processes. Existing is nothing more than an intersecting point of causal factors. Absolutely nothing can resist the process of analytical deconstruction, investigating its coherence through reasoning. Thus Nāgārjuna's works embody arguments in the style of a skeptic, debunking concepts like existence and nonexistence, causation, perception, time, motion, and even religious concepts like the Buddha, or enlightenment itself. Nāgārjuna also offers methodological reflections on what he is doing, why he is not a nihilist or even really a skeptic, and how his practice fits into the overall Buddhist project. For Nāgārjuna this project is a deep "letting-go," which nevertheless also facilitates

compassionate reengagement. Nāgārjuna was enormously influential in India. The Madhyamaka School of philosophy, which he probably founded, was the earliest of the two great Indian schools of Mahāyāna thought. In Tibet, Madhyamaka is said to represent the highest philosophical standpoint, the final truth. In East Asian Buddhism, the influence of emptiness can be seen in Chinese and Japanese art, in poetry, in the martial arts, and even, ostensibly, in Japanese business practice.

In the West, attempts have been made to compare Nāgārjuna's thought with Immanuel Kant, G. W. F.Hegel, or Francis Herbert Bradley, and more recently with Jacques Derrida (deconstruction, particularly of egocentricity) and Ludwig Wittgenstein (liberation of others from philosophical predicaments that result from fundamentally confused preconceptions; return to the everyday world of praxis). Emptiness has also been portrayed as a philosophy of relativity, or ecological cosubsistence.

Asaṅga (ca. 320–ca. 390) is regarded as the founder of the *Yogācāra* tradition of Mahāyāna philosophy. His biography reports that he was born in Puruṣapura, India, and converted to Mahāyāna from the Hīnayāna, later convincing his brother Vasubandhu to make the same move. Together they systematized the teachings of *Yogācāra*, authoring the main *Yogācāra* commentaries and treatises. Asaṅga's many works include *Abhidharmasamuccaya* (*A Compendium of Abhidharma*), which presents and defines technical terms and usages, and the Xianyang shengjiao lun, extant only in Chinese translation, a text that summarizes the truly compendious *Yogācārabhūmi* (*Stages of Yogic Practice*), with which he is also connected as author/editor. Other commentaries are attributed to him on important *Yogācāra* and some Prajñāpāramitā and Madhyamaka works as well. By far his principal work is the *Mahāyānasaṃgraha* (*Summary of the Great Vehicle*), in which he presents the tenets of Yogācāra in clear and systematic fashion, moving step by step, first explaining the basic notion of the storehouse consciousness and its functional relationship to the mental activities of sensing, perceiving, and thinking, then outlining the structure of consciousness in its three patterns of the other-dependent (dependent arising applied to the very structure of consciousness), the imagined, and the perfected, which is the other-dependent emptied of clinging to the imagined. He then sketches how the mind constructs its world; he develops a critical philosophy of mind that, in place of

Abhidharma's naïve realism, can understand understanding, reject its imagined pattern, and—having attained the perfected state of *Śūnyatā* —engage in other-dependent thinking and action. Asaṅga thereby reaffirms the conventional value of theory, which had appeared to be disallowed by earlier Madhyamaka dialectic. He treats the practices conducive to awakening (perfections, stages, discipline, concentration, and nonimaginative wisdom) and finally turns to the abandonment of delusion and the realization of Buddhahood as the three bodies of awakening. Asaṅga's work is a compendium of critical *Yogācāra* understanding of the mind.

Activity

Answer these questions

1. Who was the founder of Madhyamika School? Explain its theory.
2. Who was the founder of Yogācāra ṣchool? Explain its theory

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Chapter 4

Philosophical Concepts of Mahāyāna Schools in China

Introduction

Buddhism spread from India to Central Asia and China via an overland network of major and minor routes popularly called the Silk Road. This network connected Buddhist centers in Northwest India, western Central Asia, the Tarim basin, and China during the first millennium C.E. In the broadest sense, the silk routes extended from China to the Mediterranean, incorporating routes through Syria, Mesopotamia, and Iran. Primary routes in western Central Asia ran through Margiana and the Oxus River (Amu Darya) valley, reached Bactria in northern Afghanistan or branched northward to Sogdiana, and continued to the Tarim basin in eastern Central Asia. Capillary routes through the Karakoram mountains in northern Pakistan directly linked the silk routes of eastern Central Asia with the major arteries for trade and travel in Northwest India. Northern and southern routes around the Tarim basin rejoined at Dunhuang, the westernmost outpost of the Chinese empire, and proceeded through the Gansu corridor to central China. The transmission of Buddhism from India to Central Asia and China corresponded with the development of the silk routes as channels for intercultural exchanges. Chinese contacts with the "Western Regions" (*Xi-yu*) of Central and South Asia expanded during the Han dynasty (206 B.C.E.–220 C.E.). By 111 B.C.E., the Han controlled the Gansu corridor to Dunhuang, and garrisons and irrigated agricultural oases around the Tarim basin were established in the first century B.C.E. Although Chinese control of these areas fluctuated, prosperous trade in luxury items (including silk) and dynamic cultural exchanges continued.

Chinese historical chronicles of the Han period refer to the gradual migration of Yuezhi nomads from the area around Dunhuang through the Tarim basin to Bactria in the second century B.C.E. The Kushans, a branch of the Yuezhi, advanced from Bactria across the Hindu Kush into Northwest India in the first century C.E. By the second century C.E. during the reign of Kanishka,

the Kushan empire controlled the routes that connected northern India with the silk routes. Kushan control accelerated economic and cultural contacts and stimulated the movement of Buddhism beyond South Asia to Central Asia and China.

Translators of early Chinese Buddhist texts came to China from western Central Asia and Northwest India via the silk routes. An Shigao, Lokakṣema, and other Parthian, Sogdian, and Indian translators arrived in Luoyang beginning in the middle of the second century C.E. Buddhist monasteries emerged near irrigated oases at Khotan, Kucha, Turfan, and Dunhuang on the northern and southern branches of the silk routes during the third to fifth centuries C.E. Certain scholarly monks, including Dharmarakṣa (ca. 233–310 C.E.) from Dunhuang and Kumārājīva (350–409/413 C.E.) from Kucha, came directly from Buddhist centers in the Tarim basin. Many anonymous monks who traveled between India and China along the silk routes were responsible for the transmission of Buddhism outside the monastic community. Chinese pilgrims to India returned with manuscripts, relics, and stories about sacred places in the Buddhist heartland. Fa Xian (ca. 337–418 C.E.) and Xuan Zang (ca. 600–664 C.E.) were the most famous Chinese pilgrims; their accounts contain valuable details about social political, and religious conditions in Central Asia and India. Stūpas (reliquaries), cave paintings, and manuscripts discovered by Aurel Stein and other explorers in the early twentieth century illustrate the role of the Silk Road as a path for the expansion of Buddhism. Stu_pas at Buddhist sites on the southern route in the Tarim basin adopted architectural features from Northwest India. A Gāndhārā manuscript of the *Dharmapada* (Pāli, Dhammapada) from Khotan and approximately one thousand Kharoṣṭḥ documents from Niya, Endere, and Loulan show that the Gāndhārā language continued to be used along the southern silk route until the fourth century C.E. Numerous Buddhist paintings in caves along the northern silk route display close stylistic affinities with the art of Gāndhāra, western Central Asia, and Iran, while others incorporate Chinese and Turkish elements. The distribution of Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts from the second to sixth centuries C.E. indicates that Buddhist centers along the northern silk route were generally affiliated with mainstream Buddhist Schools (particularly the *Sarvāstivāda*), but the Mahāyāna tradition was prevalent in southern silk route centers such as Khotan. After the sixth century, Buddhist literature was written in Central Asian vernacular languages, including Khotanese Saka, Tocharian,

Sogdian, Uighur, Tibetan, and Mongolian. Buddhist artistic and literary traditions continued to flourish in Central Asia along with Zoroastrian, Manichaean, and Nestorian Christian traditions in the middle to late first millennium C.E. Despite this historical legacy, with the exception of the surviving Buddhist traditions in Tibet and Mongolia, Buddhism disappeared from the Silk Road regions of Central Asia as these areas gradually Islamicized in the second millennium C.E.

After Buddhism came to China, different sects began to emerge. The Tiantai sect was the first, and it was followed by seven others. This chapter renders a brief account of the origin of each of these sects and their tenet

Topics:

4.1 The Tian-tai School

4.2 The Sunlun School (The Three Śāstras School)

4.3 The Hua-yen School

4.4 The Ci-en School (The Dharma Lakṣaṇa School**)**

4.5 The Chan School

4.6 The Vinaya School

4.7 The Pure Land School

4.8 The Esoteric School

4.9 Faith and Rituals

Though Buddhism spread into China from India during the Han Dynasty around the first century B.C.E. However, it took some 6oo years for Buddhism to become part of the Chinese cultural environment. While its basic creeds

remain largely intact, major changes hae taken place in both the spiritual and material life of the cloisters. Such changes were conducive to the dissemination and development of Buddhism, for dogmatism and conservatism would have gotten this religion nowhere in alien land. After Buddhism met its demise in India, China became its second cradle and the origin for various sects in many other countries and regions.

Often described as the first genuinely Sinitic school of Buddhism, the Tiantai school traces its ancestry back to Nāgārjuna (ca. second century C.E.) in India, not by any direct transmission but through the reading of translated texts by its proto-patriarchs, Huiwen (Beiqi *zunzhe,* mid-sixth century) and Huisi (Nanyue *chanshi,* 515–577). There are around ten schools in Chinese, but later on some school were absorbed by certain school. Therefore there are total 8 schools as well known.

4.1 The Tian-tai School

The earliest school to emerge in Chinese Buddhism was the Tian-tai School, founded by the prestigious monk Zhiyi (538-597) during the interregnum between the Chen (557-589) and Sui (581-618) dynasties. A native of Huarong (present day Jianli), Hubei Province) whose style names were De-an and Zhizhe, Zhiyi is said to have had double pupils in each of his eyes. When he was 18 he became a noice under the tutelage of Monk Faxu of the Guoyuan Temple in Xiangzhou (present day Changsha, Hunan Province) and began learning the commandments from another monk by the name of Huikuang. Two years later he was ordained with *Upasampana* (complete commandments). With a penchant for meditating on the *dharmaparyāya* (dharma door), he arrived at Dasu Mountain in Guangzhou (present-day Guangshan County, Henan Province) in 560 (1st year of the Tianjia reign, Chen Dynasty), where he soon won the favor of his master, Monk Huisi. In 567 (1st year of the Daguang reign, Chen Dynasty), he settled down in the Waguan Temple of Jinling (present –day Nanjing, Jiangsu Province), where he preached the methodology of dhyana (meditation) and began writing. In 575 (7th year of the Taijian reign, Chen Dynasty) he arrived at Tiantai Mountain (in present-day Tiantai County, Zhejiang Province) for his own meditation sessions. In 585 (3rd year of the Zhide reign, Chen Dynasty), Shu Bao, the last emperor of the Chen Dynasty, bestowed great respect on Zhi Yi by sending for him to lecture in the Hall of Supreme Being in Jinling. Then, after the down fall of the Chen Dynasty, he

settled at Mount Lushan (in present-day Jiangxi Province). In 591 (11th year of the Kaihuang reign, Sui Dynasty), he was invited to Yangzhou to ordain the Bodhisattva Sīla for Yang Guang, the son of Yang Jian, or Emperor Wendi, who had just been decorated as the king of Jin, with Yangzhou as his fiefdom. A year later he returned from Yangzhou to his native town of Jingzhou, where he built the Yuquan Temple on Yuquan Mountain in Dangyang. After the temple was completed he resided there for two years as a preacher. In 595 (15th year of the Kaihuang reign of the Sui Dynasty), he visited Yangzhou once again at the invitation of Yang Guang, and returned to Mount Tiantai in the 9th lunar month of that year.

Zhiyi was posthumously honored as the Grand Master of Tiantai on account of the long years he had spent on Mount Tiantai. Because he regarded Mount Tiantai as his domain, the school he founded was named "Tiantai School".

Historical records indicate that in his effort to establish the Tiantai School, Zhiyi had the indispensable assistance of a disciple, Guanding (561-632), who took notes of all his lectures ad remarks and compiled them into books to serve as the canons for this school. The most important of this books are the *Penetrating Exposition on the Saddhamma-puṇḍarika-sūtra (Lotus Sutra)*, compiled on the basis of the "five graduated series of deeper meanings", the Interpretative Commentary on *Saddharma-puṇḍarika-sūtra*, and *Mahā-samatha-vipaśayana* that provides a methodology for self-cultivation.

The philosophy of the Tiantai School originated in the teachings of Huiwen, a monk of the Northern Qi Dynasty (550-577). From his research into the *Mahāprajñāparamitā śāstra* and the *Mādhyamika śāstra* he derived the theory that "the three kinds of wisdom[82] of Buddhism can be obtained through one's own mind," and came up with the idea of "three kinds of enlightenment with one mind."[83] Huiwen's philosophy was inherited by his disciple Huisi, and

[82] According to the Tiantai School, the three kinds of wisdom are: 1) earthly or ordinary wisdom; 2) supra-mundane, or spiritual (sravaka and pratyeka-buddha) wisdom; and 3) supreme wisdom of Bodhisattvas and Buddhas.

[83] Thethree kinds of enlightenment with one mind refer to 10 study of all as void, or immaterial, 2) study of all asunreal, transient, or temporal; and 3) as the via media inclusive of both. If one achieves one kind of enlightenment, he can achieve the two other kinds as well.

when Zhiyi learned it from Huisi, he developed the theory that "the Great Chiliocosm or Universe exists in one mind"[84] The theory later became the guideline for the Tiantai school.

The Tiantai School is also known as the Fahua School because it derives its majordoctrine from the *Saddharmapuṇḍarika-sūtra*. Following the theory of this sūtra, members of the Tiantai School divided the life of Śakyamuni into "five periods"[85] and summarize the instructions of different preachers into "eight classifications of the Buddha's teaching".[86]

The Tiantai School became popular in Chinese religious life during its early days, but went on a decline by the mid-Tang Dynasty when other schools emerged. This prompted monk Zhanran (711-782) to work to rejuvenate the Tiantai School, and he produced a wealth of writings. But his efforts proved short-lived as most of the literature of this school was damaged or missing as a result of the persecution of Buddhism under the 841-846 reign of Emperor Wuzong of the Tang Dynasty. Thanks to the effort of some followers during the period that encompassed the Five Dynasties (907-960) and the Song Dynasty (960-1279), some of the missing materials were retrieved fom Korea and Japan. The Tiantai School then showed some sign of revival.Towards the end of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), a famous monk by the name of Zhixu (or Ouyi) delved into the study of the Tiantai School, but he was not a follower of this school, and his research covered the philosophies of other Buddhist schools as well. During the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) and the Republic (1912-1949), the monk Dixian (1858-1935) made name for himself as a self-styled advocate of the Tiantai School, thus giving some hope to resurrecting the waning sect. Today, there is no lack of persons studying the teachings of the Tiantai School, but few claim to be members.

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[84] Derived from the "three kinds of enlightenment with one mind," this is another method of meditation of the Tiantai School, meaning that the Great Chiliocosm exists only in one's mind.

[85] The "five periods" of time: 1) the period of preaching theAvatamsaka Sūtra, 2) the period of preaching Āgama Sūtras, 3) the period of preaching Vaipulya Sūtras, 4) the period of preaching the Pranna Sūtra, and 5) the period of preaching the Lotus Sūtra and the Nirvāṇa Sūtra.

[86] The "eight classifications of the Buddha's teaching": Four modes of teaching: 1) direct teaching, 2) gradual teaching, 3) esoteric teaching, and 4) indefinite teaching; four periods of teaching: 5) Hinayana teaching, 6) interrelated teaching, 7) differentiated teaching, and 8) completed teaching.

4.2 The Sanlun School

The Sanlun School, also known as the "Three Śāstras" School, derives its name from three books, the *Mūlamādhyamaka-kārikā*, the *Śataka-śāstra*, and the *Dvādaśamukha-śāstra*. Its founder was Jizang (549-623), an eminent monk who lived during a period that spanned the late Sui and the early Tang dynasties.

Jizang was a descendent of a man who had fled his native land of Parthis (present-day Iran) as a reut of a family feud, and who first arrived at Nanhai (in present-day Guangxi) and then settled in Jinling (present-day Nanjing). Jizang himself was born in Jinling, and his name was given by Paramartha (499-569), the great Idian scholar who was translating Buddhist scriptures there.

During Jizang's childhood hs father often brought him to lectures given by Falang (507-581) at the Xinghuang Monastery. At the age of seven, he was tonsured as a novice under the tutelage of Falang. At 19, he showed unusual talent for reciting Falang's lectures and he had already come long way in hisstudy of the ThreeSāstras. At the time, the country was torn apart by war between the failing Chen Dynasty and the rising Sui Dynasty. As a result many Buddhist temples were abandoned and monks became homeless. During the turmoil, Jizang scavenged missing Buddhist texts from the ruins of monasteries, and learned a great deal from what he found. After the Sui Dynasty restored peace to the Baiyue region (present-day Zhejiang and Fujian provinces), Jizang went to Huiji (present-day Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province), and settled in the Jiaxiang Temple. By that time he had achieved virtuosity in his cultivation of Buddhist theories, and he began teaching Buddhist doctrines in the temple. His lectures were often attended by more than a thousand listenwrs. For this he was respectfully addressed as "Master Jiaxang".

In 606 (2nd year of the Daye reign, Sui Dynasty), Yang Guang, or Emperor Yangdi, summoned him toYangzhou and put him up in the Huiri Temple. Later he went to Chang-an (present-day Xi-an), where he was warmly received by the royal family and was settled in the Riyan Temple.His lectures in Chang-an attracted listeners from various parts of the country.

In 618, when Li Yuan entered Chang-an as the founding emperor of the Tang Dynasty after conquering the Sui, Jizang was one of the ten eminent monk

the emperor invited to run Buddhist affairs for him. During his lifetime Jizang was a prolific writer. Incomplete statistics show that he wrote at least 91 volumes on 21 subjects, most of which were about the doctrines of the Sanlun School.

Of the three treastises that from the foundation of the Sanlun School, the *Mūlamadhyamaka-kārikā* and the *Dvādaśamukha-śāstra* were works by Nāgārjuna (c. 3rd century), a major scholar of Mahāyāna Buddhism in India, and the Sata-sāstra was the work of his disciple, Ārayadeva (3rd century). At the center of the theories of these three treatises is the principle that all things arise from conditional causations without nature. The three classics were translated into Chinese by Kumārajīva (344-413), a celebrated monk from Kuqa. For this reason, Nāgārjuna and ārayadeva are regarded as forefathers of the Sanlun School. Kumārajīva is worshipped as a patriarch of a later time.

After Kumārrjīva translated the three classics into Chinese, most of his disciples dedicated themselves to disseminating the doctrines contained in these works, but only one of disciples, Shengzhao, was able to inherit Kumārajīva's ideas and to safeguard the theories of the theories of the three books. The books first circulated in the North, and found their way south of the Yangtze River with the arrival of Senglang at Mount Sheshan (present-day Xixia Mountain in the suburbs of Nanjing), where Senglang became the abbot of the Xixia Monastery. In 512 (11th year of the Tianjian reign of the Liang Dynasty), Empeor Wudi dispatched ten monks to the monastery to learn the three classics from Senglang,engquan, the top student among the ten, later became the master of a monk named Falang, who eventually rose to fame and acquired a large group of followers on his own. But none of Falang's followers compared favorably with Jizang, who drew on the quintessence of the three books and founded the Sanlun School, Jizang's new interpretations of the three ancient books were later dubbed the "New Threee Classics".

The Sanlun School's theories boil down to the belief that the mulritude of things in the universe, both material and spiritual, came into being because of hetupratyāya, that is, internal and external causations. Only when all the necessary conditions become available can a thing come into existence. Otherwise nothing can happen. For the same reason, all things owe their

existence to the availability of various conditions, and their own identities are empty and unattainable. Such is the Buddhist philosophy: "All things are void."

The Sanlun School divides the teachings of Śakyamunī into two piṭakas or three dharma-cakras. The two piṭakas refer to *Śrāvaka* Canon that belongs to the Hinayāna doctrine and the Bodhisattva Canon that belongs to the Mahāyāna doctrine. The three theories are the fundamental dharma-cakra, the incidental dharma-cakra, and the from-the-incidental-to-the-fundamental-cakra,[87] which classify the Buddha's teachings in a chronical manner.

The Sanlun School had its heyday when it was first created during the Sui Dynasty, but it began to decline after the mid-Tang Dynasty, following the emergence of the Huayan (*Avatamsaka*), Ci-en, and other Schools, at a time when "a hundred flowers were blossoming and a hundred schools of thought were contending". The reason behind the decline of this school is perhaps its delineation of the theory of "the void and unattainable," which was so thorough that human beings either found it unacceptable or were simply scared of it. The lack of successors is another reason for its decline. As a matter of fact, there was no lack of people engaged in the study of the Sanlun School, but few regarded themselves as followers. This situation remains to this day.

4.3 The Hua-yen School

The Hua-yan School, also called the Xianshou or Avatamsaka School, is predicated on the *Buddhāvatamsaka-mahāvaipulya-sūtra* (*Garland Sutra*). Its founder was Fazang (643-712), an eminent monk of the Tang Dynasty.

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87 The preachings of the Buddha are symbolized by the *dharma-cakra*, meaning "wheel of dharma." The fundamental *dharma-cakra* refers to the first sermon the Buddha delivered to some bodhisattvas on the *Buddhavatamsaka-mahāvaipulya-sūtra* (Garland Sutra) in the Deer Park and showed them Ekayāna (the One Vehicle) on the second 7th day after he received Buddhahood. The incidental *dharma-cakra* means "all other teachings" he preached for the next 45 years, during which time he lectured on the *Triyāna* (the three vehicles which carry living beings across *samsāra* or mortality to the shores of *nirvāṇa*) to different audiences. At a dharma-flower ceremony prior to his entry into *Nirvāṇa*, the Buddha preached the *Saddharma-puṇdarika-sutra*, in which the "branches and leaves" of the truth are reunited with the root; hence the term, "from-the-incidental-to –the fundamental *dharma cakra*."

Fazang, a native of Soghdiana who was styled as Xianshou, grew up in China and was educated in Chinese culture as an intelligent, boy prodigy. At 17, he went to Mount Taibai and became a disciple of the famous monk Zhiyan (602-668). He won his master's favor by excelling in his studies of the Garland Sutra. In 670 (3rd year of the Zongzhang reign, Tang Dynasty), Fazang passed an imperial examination and won the opportunity to be sworn into his monkhood at the imperial court. Empress Wu Zetian personally selected ten famous monks to preside over the ordination ceremony for him and named him "Xianshou". For a while, he was part of the celebrated monk Xuanzang's team of Buddhist translators, but he quit after failing to see eye to eye with Xuanzang on some translation problems. Together with Yijing, who had just returned from his studies in India, he joined Śiksānanda (652-710) in translating the 80-volume *Buddhāvatamsaka-mahāvaipulya-sūtra*. After this work was finished he participated in a translation workshop organized by Yijing.

A prestigious Buddhist during the Tang Dynasty, Fazang personally bestowed the Bodhisattva Commandments on two Tang emperors, Zhongzong (reigned 705-709) and Ruizong (reigned 710-712). For this he decorated as an "Imperial Tutor". With his wide knowledge and high moral accomplishments, he made great contributions to the development of Buddhism during his lifetime. He left behind a wealth of works, most of which were findings on his research into the *Buddhāvatamsaka-mahāvaipulya-sūtra*. He became the father of the Hua-yan School.

Though the Hua-yan School was founded by Fazang, the idea for it was Du Shun's.

Du Shun (557-640), also known as Fashun, was an expert on *dhyāna* and *samādhi*. Legend has it that he was also in posssion of certain divine skills. Li Shimin, or Emperor Taizong of the Tang Dynasty, adored him and bestowed on him the title "Heart of the Emperor." Hence his nickname was "Venerable Heart of the Emperor". According to historical records, Du Shun had the following divine skills:

1. Once, Du Shun asked a patron to donate a meal for a large crowd. The man prepared enough food for 500 people, but unexpectedly more than 1,000 arrived. The patron flushed with embarassament and did not know what to do. Du Shun comforted him and asked him to go ahead and serve the meal as if

nothing had happened. The result was that all those present were able to eat their fill.

2. A herdsman by the name of Zhang Hongchang took the cows and horses he had raised to the market, but these animals were so ferocious nobody dared to buy them. When Du Shun saw what was happening, he murmured into the ears of the cows and horses, which, as if having seen the point, immediately became docile and obedient.

3. Du Shun and his disciples were practicing austerities and meditating on the Buddha's holy words in a monastery where they had to grow their own vegetables. But the vegetable garden was infested with insects, making it impossible for them to sow the seeds. When Du Shun heard about this, he went to the garden and said somethings to himself. After that the garden was disposed of all the insect pests.

These anecdotes may sound ridiculous to a layman, but Buddists have never doubted their credibility, because they firmly believe that the force of divinity is a real thing.

Du shun classified the teachings of Śakyamunī into five divisions,[88] and formulated five forms of meditation. Zhiyan inherited and built on the ideas of Du Shun. But it was Fazang who summarized all the research results of the *Buddhāvatamsaka-mahāvaipulya-sūtra* and established the Huayan School.

The Huayan School has adopted the five kinds of techings established by Du Shun as its guidance. Actually, the doctrines of this school cover all the Five Divisions of Buddhism and the ten schools[89], the six characteristics, and the Ten Metaphysical Entrances of Thought. The universe is all-inclusive. All the things in it, be they *samskrta* (active beings) or *asamskrta* (non-active beings),

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[88] The five divisions of teachings of ua-yan are: the Hinayāna Teachings for Sravākas, which interprets nirvāṇa as annihilation; the Primary Teachings of the initial stage of Mahāyana, with two sections—the realistic and idealistic; the terminal teachings of Mahāyāna in its final stage, teaching the Universal Buddhahood, the Teachings for Immediate Comprehension, applied in Mahāyana as the key to immediate enlightenment by right concentration of thought, or faith, and the complete techings of the Hua-yan school, combining all the rest into one all-embracing vehicles.

[89] This is the ten schools of thought in Buddhism.

have their origins be they *samkrta* (active beings) or *asamskrta* (non-ctive beings), have their origins in *pratityasamutpāda* (conditional causations), interact with one another in harmony, and form what looks like a multi leveled and inexhaustible network. From the perspective of the nature of the arious doctrines, one is all, and all is one, and the relationship between all things is one of harmony and mutual incorporation, with no distinctions made between them. Such a relationship is not only one of interdependence between the phenomenal and the noumenal, but also interdependence among the phenomenal. That is why the Huayan School is called the school of perfect harmony without impediments.

After the Huayan School was establishedduring the Tang Dynasty, it spread extensively, but its dissemination was cut short by Emperor Wuzong's persecution of Buddhism during his reign (841-846) of the Tang Dynasty. All the literature of this school was lost as a result, though some of it was later retrieved from Korea and Japan during the Song Dynasty. Some people were devoted to study and rejuvenation of this school during the Yuan, Ming, and Qing dynasties. Among those in modern times were Yuexia (1858-1917) and Ying-ci (1873-1965). In 1914 (3rd year of the Republic), Yuexia established Huayan University in Shanghai and Hangzhou, and made his contributions to the Huayan School by training a contingent of successors.

4.4 The Ci-en School

The Ci-en School, that is, the Dharma Lakṣaṇa or Vijñāṇavāda School, was founded by Xuanzang, the celebrated Buddhist translator who once resided in the Ci-en Monastery of Xi-an, and his disciple Kuiji (632-682).

Xuanzang (600-664), a native of Goushi (present-day south Yanshi County, Henan Province) with the surname of Chen, lived in a monastery during his childhood with his elder brother, Changjie, who was a monk. At the age of 13 he also became a monk and began studying Buddhist doctrines. As he grew up, his religious knowledge also grew. In 622 (5th year of the Wude reign, Tang Dynasty), he received his ordination in the commandments and began travelling and calling on Buddhist masters. Puzzled by contradictions and discrepancies in the Buddhist instructions then available in this country, he hit upon the idea to study in India. In 629 (3rd year of the Zhenguan reign, Tang Dynasty), Xuanzang began his pilgrimage to the West. In 633 (7th year of the

Zhenguan reign, Tang Dynasty), having weathered all the hardships of the road, he arrived at the central India's Nalanda Monastery, the Buddhist and cultural center of India, and started learning the philosophy of Yogācāra under the tutelage of Sīlabhadra (c. 6th -7th century), a famous Buddhist scholar who happened to be the abbot of the monastery. During his stay in India Xuanzang was able to travel widely, and for his superb accomplishments in his studies, Indian Buddhist scholars honored him as a Mahāyānadeva, or deity of Mahāyāna. In 649 (19th year of the Zhenguan reign, Tang Dynasty), he returned to China with a full load of scriptures and treatises in Sanskrit. With the support of Imperial court, he put together a translation workshop, and personally translated 75 scriptures in 1,335 volumes, an unprecedented feat in Chinese Buddhist translation history. One of his translations was the *Vijñāṇamātrasiddhi-śāstra* (Treatise on the Establishment of the Doctrine on Consciousness Only), which became the foundation for the Ci-en School that he established. But it was through the efforts of his disciple Kuiji tht the Ci-en School finally stood on its own as an independent religious school.

Kuiji, a man of Chang-an with the secular surname of Chiwei, was a son of noble house who began reading Confucian classics and writing as a child. His talent was not lost on Xuanzang, who offered to accept him as a disciple in 648 (22nd year of the Zhenguan reign, Tang Dynasty). It is said Kuiji's parents were happy about the offer but that their son thought otherwise. Finally he raised three conditions for accepting the offer: first, he would never abstain from worldly desires and feelings: second, he would be allowed to eat meat; and third, he would be allowed to eat in the afternoon. All these conditions violated Buddhist taboos. Xuanzang feigned consent in order to obtain this gifted disciple, but his true intention was to educate the boy after he became the monk. The following story shows the result of this education.

For a time Kuiji was known as the "Monk with Three Carts," a nickname he earned during a lecture tour in which he employed an impressive procession of three carts. While the chart that led the way was packed with scriptures and reference books, he himself rode on the cart in the middle and had the third cart loaded with his concubine, maidservants, and food. Midway along the road, he came across a respectful old man, who, attract an exchange of pleasantries, asked him what was loaded in the first cart. After he received the answer, the old man asked what was on the cart at the back. Kuiji was nonplussed by the

questioning, but, feeling compelled to give a reply, he told the old man the truth. The man smiled faintly, and said, "Your Excellency is such a well-known Buddhist master, yet you are preaching Buddhist doctrines by bringing your concubine and servants along. Doesn't that clash with the holy teachings?" Kuiji was so embarrassed that he immediately asked his concubine and servants to go home, and traveled on alone with the cart loaded with sūtras.

Despite this unseemly tale about his nickname, Kuiji's reputation remains untarnished. He was a famed scholar and Xuanzang's most trusted student. In Chinese Buddhist history, he was the "Master Explainer of a Hundred Scriptures." It was through his efforts that the Ci-en School emerged as a major Buddhist school in China.

At the heart of the Ci-en School is the philosophy of idealism that had its origin in the teaching of Maitreya, Asanga, and Vasubandhu, who lived during the 4th and 5th centuries in India. Vasubandhu was the author of *Vijñāptim ātrasiddhi-trimśika-kārikā-śāstra* (Idealism in Thirty Lines), which was later studied and enunciated by ten masters. While in India, Xuanzang studied *Vijñāṇavāda* under Śīlabhadra. After his return to China, his study was concentrated on the theories of Dharmapāla (mid 6th century) on Vasubandhu's work. Incorporating the theories of the other nine masters, he compiled the *Vijñaptimātrata-siddhi-śāstra*, which became the canon of the Ci-en School.

It is the belief of the Ci-en School that the "three realms originate from the mind, and the cornucopia of laws are geared to realism." That is to say, all things in the universe are converted into reality through the heart's perception. There are eight major perceptions, of which *ālayavijñāṇa* (storage consciousness), whose store of seeds spawn all the things in the universe, is the most important. The Ci-en School's doctrine boils down to the *pañcadharma*

(five dharmas), [90] three aspects of the nature of things (*trisvabhāvatā*), [91]eight kinds of consciousness, [92]and two categories of *anātman* (non-ego).[93]

[90] The five dharmas (laws) govern 1) phenomena; 2) their names; 3) ordinary mental discrimination; 4) corrective wisdom, which corrects deficiencies and errors; 5) absolute wisdom, reached through the understanding of the law of the absolute.

[91] Trisvabhavata consists of three aspects : the illusory (parikalpita), the dependent (paratantra) and the perfected (parinispanna).

In this school the Buddha's fall into three periods of time: Bhava Canon (the teaching of reality of ego and things), Śūnya Canon (the teaching of unreality of ego and things, and Madhyama Canon (the teaching of the mean, that mind or spirit is real while things are unreal). The Ci-en School's analyses of conception are so meticulous that they are akin to modern psychology.

The fact that the Ci-en School has been a subject of academic study since its founding during the Tang Dynasty perhaps has something to do with prestige of Xuanzang. However, this did not protect it from the destructive blow sustained during Emperor Wuzong's crack down on Buddhism. Its literature fell into oblivion as a result, and some of it was not retrieved from Japan until the modern times. During the interregnum between the Qing Dynasty and the Republic, there was an upsurge in the study of the *Vijñānamātrasiddhi-sāstra*. Today, the treatise is a compulsory course for students at the Chinese Buddhist Seminary.

4.5 The Chan School

The Chan or Dhyana School is a major school of Chinese Buddhism whose establishment was made possible through the efforts of Huineng, an eminent monk of the Tang Dynasty.

Huineng (638-713) was a native of Fanyang (present-day Zhuoxian, Hebei Province) whose secular surname was Lu. His father was an official who was demoted to Xinzhou (present-day Xinxing County, Guangdong) on the South Xhina Sea, and died when Huineng was a child. The family fortune declined as a result. Fter he grew up, he had to sell fagots to proide for his mother. One day, overhearing someone recite the *Vajracchedikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* (Diamond Sūtra), he became impressed with its good meaning. Huineng asked the man who had taught him the scripture, and learned that the teacher was Master Hongren at a place known as Huangmei. He reported this to his mother, and asked for her permission to go to Huangmei and

[92] The eight kinds of consciousness include the five senses of 1) seeing (caksur-vijnaa), 2) hearing (srota-v), 3) smelling (ghrana-v), 4) tasting (jihva-v), and 5) touch kaya-v), as well as 6) intellect or the mental sense (mano-vijnana), 7) the discriminating and constructive sense (klista-mano-vijnana), and 8) the basis from which come all "seeds" of consciousness (alaya-vijnana).

[93] The two categories of anatman (no-ego) means 1) there is no permanent human ego, or soul, and 2) no permanent individuality in or independence of things.

seek out the truth. His mother consented, but Huineng did not set out on his journey north until he had raised enough money and supplies for her. When he arrived in Huangmei, Hongren (602-675) asked him where he came from and what the purpose of his visit. He answered that he came from south of the Five Ridges (present-day Guangdong and Guangxi and that he wanted to become a monk. When Hongren said that men from south of the Five Ridges had no aptitude for Buddhahood, Huineng replied, "Men may come from south or north, but the capacity to comprehend Buddhismknows no geographical distinction." Hongren, impressed by the reply, immediately knew that he was facing a man who could be taught and would likely amount to something, and he soon arranged for Huineng to work in a rice-husking workshop.

Eight months later Hongren decided that he would choose from his disciples someone who could inherit his mantle by asking each of them to compose a hymn on their understanding of the Buddhist doctrines. Shenxiu, his top disciple, came up with a verse that said, "I have a body like the bodhi tree and a heart like the mirror on a pedestal. I want to clean them from time to time, so as to keep them free from dust." Huineng, on seeing the monk pasting up the verse on the wall while reading it aloud, immediately improvised a peace in response, "The bodhi never has a tree, nor has the mirror a pedestal. The heart of a Buddhist is calm and clean—how can they be contaminated by dust?" Not knowing how to read and write, Huineng asked a fellow monk to write down this composition beside Shenxiu's. When Hongren read the two pieces, he immediately knew that Huineng had a better understanding of Buddhism. That night, he invited Huineng to his abode and passed on to him the most secret part of his instructions, and gave him a monastic habit as a token of his trust.

Huineng immediately went on a journey back home tha very night when he learned the secret to the Buddhist doctrines. Upon his arrival in the South, he followed Hongren's instructions and consigned himself for 15 years to an anonymous life among a team of hunters. While the hunters ate meat, he adhered to a vegetarian's diet by picking out the vegetables mixed in meat dishes. During a visit to the Faxing onastery (present-day Guangxiao Monastery of Guangzhou) as a lay Buddhist, he attended Monk Yinzong's lecture on the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*. He saw two monks among the audience who were arguing about whether a stream moved because of the wind or by itself. As the two of them became all worked up over the argument, Huineng chipped in, "Why don't you stop arguing? The stream moves not because of the wind nor

by itself—it moves because both of your heart are moving." Yinzong the lecturer was taken aback when he overheard the remark. "I have long heard of the arrival of a master from Huangmei," Yinzong said, coming down from his podium. "Are you that distinguished guest?" Huineng showed him the gift his teacher had given him. Yinzong was impressed and he arranged for the lay Buddhists to settle down in the Faxing Monastery for a period of time, Huineng moved to the Baolin Monastery (present-day Nanhua Monastery) in Shaozhou. Once, delivering a lecture in the Dafan Monastery at the invitation of the provincial governor Wei Qu, he brought the house down. His disciple, Fahai, recorded the lecture and compiled it into what is today's widely read classic, *Analects of the Sixth Chan Patriarch Huineng*.

In 705 (1st year Shenlong reign, Tang Dynasty), Emperor Zhongzong (reigned 705-710) sent a messenger to Nanhai (present-day Guangdong) to summon Huineng to the capital city of Luoyang. Hineng turned down the invitation on the basis of being a long forgotten hermit, his old age, and his poor health. Avery sympathetic Zhongzong bestowed on him a *kāśaya*, a patchwork outer vestment, and large quantities of daily supplies.

Throughout his life, Huineng was devoted to dissiminating the Chan doctrines in the South. His unique interpretations of the doctrines had a tremendous influence on the development of the Chan School, and because of this he is regarded as the de facto patriarch of it.

The traditional history of Buddhism, however, regards the Indian monk Bodhidharma the father of the Chan School. After he arrived in China, his theories were passed down along the following the line: Huike (487-593), Sengcan (?-606), Daoxin (580-651), Hongren (602-675), and Huineng. So Huineng was the sixth and last patriarch of Chan School. This line of heritage was composed by Qisong (1007-1072), a preeminent monk of the Song Dynasty. As a matter of fact, the Chan prior to Huineng was merely a disciple of learning than a School of Buddhism.

During his lifetime, Huineng had a large team of disciples, and the three most influential among them were Xingsi (?-740), Huairang (677-744), and Shanhui (686-760). Xinsi was a native of Luling (present-day Ji-an, Jiangxi Province) who became a novice while yet a child. After he obtained the secret instructions from Huineng, he returned to Luling and settled in the Qingju

Temple on Qingyuan Mountain. His mantle, carried forward by his disciple Xiqian, or Monk Shitou, later evolved into three of the five subsects of the Chan: Caodong, Yunmen, and Fayan. Huirang (677-744) came from Ankang (present-day An Ankang, Shanxi Province) and became a monk at age 15. After he studied for a time under Huineng, he settled on Mount Hangshan, the Southern Mountain Sanctuary, and recruited Daoyi as his disciple.

Daoyi (709-788) was a native of Shifang, Hanzhou (present-day Shifang, Sichuan Province) and arrived at Mount Hengshan during the Kaiyuan reign of the Tang Dynasty and practiced meditation all day long. Huairang, who lived nearby in the Guanyin Temple, immeditately knew this was a young man of promise and paid him a visit. Seeing Daoyi meditating, Huairang asked what he was doing, sitting there like that. Daoyi said he was trying to attain enlightenment and achieved Buddhahood. At this reply Huairang said nothing but picking up a brick started grinding it against a stone. Daoyi, curious, asked, "Why do you grind the brick?" Huairang answered, "To turn it into a mirror." Daoyi, even more bewildered, asked again, "How can a brick become a mirror?" Huairang answered, "knowing that a brick cannot become a mirror, can meditation alone turn you into a Buddha?" Daoyi was taken aback, and he asked Huairang for advice. After the encounter Daoyi became Huairang's disciple, and, inheriting his teacher's methodology, finally emerged as the patriarch of the Weiyang and Linji subsects of the Chan School. Later the Yangqi and Huanglong subsects merged as the Linji sect. Thus the Chan School became a School of Chinese Buddhism with five branches and seven subsects.

Shenxiu, a disciple of Hongren, continued to disseminate Chan teachings after his master's death and, with the monks at the eastern capital of Luoyang and western capital at Xi-an all becoming his followers, exerted a great influence on the religious life in north China. When Shenhui, a disciple of Huineng, arrived in the North from present-day Guangdong, he was somewhat resentful of what was happening there, and he began advocating that Huineng's southern branch of the Chan School was better than Shenxiu's northern branch. He set up a pancaparisad (quinquennial assembly)[94] at the Dayun Temple of Huatai (present-day Huaxian County, Henan province) for a debate between the

[94] Pancaparisad, the quinquennial assembly where men and women, old and young, share the alms both in kind and in spirit on an equal footing; it is also an occasion for confession, penance, and remission.

two branches. During the debate the conclusion was reached that the southern branch was for immediate enlightenment and should thus be called the "instantaneous subsect of Chan," and that the northern branch was for gradual enlightenment and should thus be called the "progressive subsect of Chan." Hence Chan School was divided into two geographical branches. However, as the instantaneous subsect spread northward, Shenxiu's northern subsect went on a decline and gradually disappeared. In all this, Shenhui played a major role. Yet his southern subsect also met its demise by the sixth generation. At the same time, another southern branch of Chan headed by Huairang gradually spread to the North.

The five branches and seven subsects of the Chan School each flourished at different periods of time, but the Linji subsect was the most influential, with the Caodong subsect ranking second. For a time the adage among Buddhists in China was: "While the Linji subsect of Chan has the entire country under its influence, the Caodong subsect manages to control half the country."

The creeds of Chan School are transmitted from mind to mind, without recourse to language, words, or writngs, and above all, without the use of any scripture. Chan advocates attaining Buddhahood by discovering one's own innate Buddha nature. Legend has it that once Sakyamuni brandished a bouquet of flowers during an audience at the Nirvāṇa Assembly. While most of the audiences were bewildered by this gesture, only Kaśyapa, one Śakyamunī's ten disciples, smiled in tacit understanding of the Buddha's intentions. That transmission of the Buddha's holy words by the mind has been inherited through the ages, and the 28th –generation disciple, Bodhidharma, brought thishod to China. It is the belief of the Chan School that man's mind is pure and clean to start with, but such purity fails to manifest itself because it has been obliterated by worldly worries. Once the mind obtains the straightforward guidance of the knowledge of benevolence, it can immediately see its true nature and achieved Buddhahood.

Because the Chan School chose to dispense with written scriptures, it suffered no loss of literature during the presecution of Buddhism under the reign of Emperor Wuzong of the Tang Dynasty. That is why during the long period from the Five Dynasties to the Song Dynasty (907-1279), the School was able to achieve the acme of its development. After the Song Dynasty, however, some of its subsects gradually went on a decline.

The tradition of the Chan School to do without recourse to writing was challenged by emergence of quite a few books on the quotations of Chan masters after the Song Dynasty. This was something unheard of in previous Chan history. However, it is precisely because of these quotations that posterity has been able to cherish Chan literature as a major component of the cultural heritage of Chinese Buddhism, so much so that in modern times the celebrated Buddhist scholar Taixu maintained that the "Chan Pitaka" should be added to the Tripitaka of Chinese Buddhism. By the "Chan Pitaka" he meant precisely the collection of quotations of Chan masters.

4.6 The Vinaya School

The Vinaya School is also called the "Vinaya sect of the South Mountain" because its founder, the prominent Tang monk Daoxuan, lived on Zhongnan Mountain in the south. Daoxuan (596-667) came from Wuxing in present-day north Zhejiang. He began reading Confucian classics while a child and by nine was able to compose poetry and rhapsodies. At 16 he began his monastic life with Monk Zhijun as his master, and at 20 he was bestowed with the Upasampada (complete commandments). He then came under the tutelage of Zhishou, an erudite in the vinaya (monastic rules), who taught him the commandments and the *Dharmagupta Vinaya*. However, after he finished one round of study of the vinaya he dicided that was not what he wanted. Instead, he wished to start learning Chan Buddhism. His master was not reconciled to this and demanded that he repeat his lesson 20 times on the Dhanrmagupta Vinaya before staring his Chan lessons. The master's word was final, and he had no choice but to continue to study under Zhishou. In 624 (7th year of the Wude reign, Tang Dynasty), he went to Zhongnan Mountain and settled in the Baiquan Monastery. Shortly afterwards, he went on an itinerary to collect different theories of Buddhist discipline. On the basis of the *Dharmagupta Vinaya*, he drew on the strengths of different schools of Buddhism and came up with his own understanding of the vinaya, thereby creating the Vinaya School of the Southern Mountain.

The *vinaya* is a code of conduct for Buddhists. Chinese Buddhists began to be disciplined in the commandments during the Jiaping reign (249-254) of the kingdom of Wei during the Three Kingdoms Period, when the Indian monk, Dharmakāla (3rd century) translated *The Heart of Sanghika-vinaya* and started training Chinese monks in the commandments. Translations of more canonical

writings on the commandments emerged in the years that followed. During the Southern and Northern dynasties (420-589), studying the vinaya became quite popular among Chinese Buddhists. The *Dharmagupta Vinaya* was translated into Chinese by Sramaṇa Buddhayaśas from Kubha, and Zhu Fonian, a Chinese monk translator. The *Dharmagupta Vinaya* was put together by Dharmagupta one hundred years after Śākyamuni achieved *niravāṇa* by garnering passages from the canons of Theravāda that he thought were identical to his own viewpoints, and his compilation comes in four parts: commandments for mendicants, commandments for nuns, the code for peaceful life, and the code for huses and miscellany.

Famous persons who made names for themselves in the study of the *Dhamagupta Vinaya* prior to Daoxuan was Facong and Huiguang, both of whom lived during the reign of Emperor Xiaowen of the Northern Wei Dynasty (471-499). During the Tang Dynasty, joining Daoxuan in preaching the Dharmagupta Vinaya were Fali (569-635) of the Riguang Temple at Xiangzhou and Huaisu (625-698) of the Dongta Temple of the West Taiyuan Monastery. These three masters all wrote works on the creed, and they held different opinions on the embodiment of commandmnts. By "embodiment of commandments" is meant the function a Buddhist acquires to forestall errorneous thoughts and to prevent evil in his heart when he is ordained with the commandments. According to Fali, the embodiment of commandments is neither *rūpadharma* (physical phenomenon) nor mental dharmas. Daoxuan, under the influence of Xuanzang's Yogācāra theory, believed that the embodiment is a mental thing. Huaisu, on his part, held that it is a physical phenomenon. Their depositions on the *Dharmagupta Vinaya* were known as the "Three Major Commentaries", which circuated in society at the same time, but only the Vinaya School of South Mountain founded by Daoxuan has been able to survive to this day.

The Vinaya School of South Mountain divides the teachings of the Buddha into two categories, that is, the classics desiged to educate the multitudes, such as Agama Sutras, and Pranna Sutras which provide the code of conduct for the multitudes.

The Vinaya School of South Mountain has had its ups and downs like other religious Schools in Chinese history. It flourished when someone was advocating and disseminating it. Otherwise, it just went down hill. By the Yuan-

Ming interregnum the Vinaya School of South Mountain sank to an all-time low, and it did not shows signs of a revival until the early Qing Dynasty, when Jiguang , the abbot of the Longchang Monastery on Baohua Mountain in Jurong County (Jiangsu Province), and a disciple of Ruxin, who was then preaching the *Dharmagupta Vinaya* at the Linggu Temple of Jinling (present-day Nanjing), converted his monastery into a grand domain for the preaching of the Vinaya School principles only. The facility was later continuously expanded thanks to the efforts of Jiguang's disciples, and it soon achieved a nationwide reputation as the uninterrupted venue for two major summons ceremonies (one held in spring and other in autumn) for the ordination of commandments every year.

During 20th century Hongyi (1880-1942) came to the fore because of his studies and dissemination of the Dharmagupta Vinaya. Born in Tianjin to a rich family whose ancestral home was in Zhejiang. Hongyi devoted himself to vinaya studies after he became a monk in 1918, the seventh year of the Republic. He was the author of A Record of Forms of Bhiksu Rules in the Four-division Vinaya and Some Important Contents of the Southern Mountain Vinaya Prepared for Reading at Home. He was held in high esteem by Buddhists at home and abroad for his exemplary practice of the commandment.

4.7 The Pure Land School

The Pure Land School, or the Jingtu School in Chinese, also known as the Sukhāvatīvyūha School or Lotus School in China. The Pure Land is named because it is the aspired destination for a monk in meditation. It was established in China by Shandao during the Tang Dynasty.

The Pure Land School is developed considerable lore based on the idea of different Buddhas and bodhisattvas dwelling in buddha-fields (*buddhakṣetra*). It is common for practitioners to meditate on, make offerings to, chant sūtras about, and recite the name or *Mantra* of a particular Buddha or Bodhisattva. These Mahāyāna expressions developed out of the *darśana* complex, which is well documented in the earliest materials, and were seen as part of the overall institutional fabric of Indian Mahāyāna. (Buddha *darśana* refers to "seeing" the Buddha and entering his nirvanic power, which leads to spriritual progress.) The core Mahāyāna idea is to cultivate a *dars´anic* relationship with the Buddha and thus gain awakening, or one could aim at future birth in the

buddha-field. The genre of Mahāyāna literature that developed these ideas was instrumental in the formation of the tantras. Amitābha Buddha and his accompanying bodhisattvas, Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta, are the focus of the Pure Land tradition in East Asia.

In China, the institutionalization of the Pure Land teachings and the first line of transmission began with the founding of the White Lotus Society by Huiyuan (334–416) on Mount Lu. This society's practice was based on the *Pratyutpannasamādhi Sūtra*. The lead devotee was Liu Yimin, one of the eighteen sages of Mount Lu, who wrote the society's manifesto and a collection of chants. The area became a center of Pure Land teachings.

Shandao (613-681), whose secular surname was Zhu, was a native Linzi (present-day Zibo, Shandong Province). In his studies of Buddhist classics, he found that the Dharma Door for Reciting the Buddha's Name was the most convenient and easily achieved of all Buddhist commandments to be mastered, and thus he became a convert of the Pure Land School. He once went all the way to Mount Lushan to explore the cultural heritage left by the prominent Eastern-Jin monk Huiyuan. In 641 (15th year of the Zhenguan reign, Tang Dynasty), he settled at the Xuanzhong Temple in Bingzhou (present-day Taiyuan, Shanxi Province) to learn the creeds of the Pure Land from Daochuo. In 645 (19th year of the Zhenguan reign) Daochuo died, and Shandao then went to Chang-an to disseminate the Dharma Door for the Reciting of Buddha's Name. practicing the most stringent type of austerities and meditation, he devoted all his time to chanting the name of the Buddha except when he was out begging for alms. It is said that he copied 100,000 volumes of the *Amitābha Sūtra* (Sūtra of Buddha of Boudless Light), and drew 300 or so pictures that tell stories about the Pure Land School. He was also the author of five works on the *dharmaparyāya* (dharma door) to the Pure Land, which established him as the father of the Pure Land School in China.

The Pure Land is the Paradise of the West. According to the *Amitābha Sūtra*, it is a place of sublime beauty and the people living there are happy and don't know what pain is. Access to the Pure Land is through chanting Amitābha Buddha's name as many times as possible. Chanting Amitābha Buddha's name calls for the union of the three behaviors, that is to say, one should personally pay homage to the Amita Buddha, always chant his name, and always bear him

in one's mind. Shandao developed a whole collection of methods and set a series of requirements for his followers. According to him, those practicing the Dharma Door for the Reciting of the Buddha's name should first set their minds at ease. Setting their minds at ease, calls for sincerity, profundity, and parinamana (readiness for the transference of one's merits to somewhere). After one has focused one's mind on these three aspects and has begu self-cultivation, one is bound the name of the Amita Buddha. There are not many theories to speak of in this school of Chinese Buddhism, which advocates nothing but self-cultivation by chanting the Amita Buddha's name.

Chanting the name of the Buddha is a way of self-cultivation, and self-cultivation is one of the *triśikṣā* (three studies) that is a must for all schools of Buddhism despite differences in methodology. When chanting the name of the Buddha one is required to dispel all worldly thoughts and concentrate on a certain point—the point of the Amita Buddha. To perform well in chanting the Buddha's name is *Samādhi* (concentrating on Buddha).

In China the Dharma Door for Chanting the Buddha's Name was initiated by Huiyuan, a monk who resided on Mount Lushan during the Eastern Jin Dynasty. Huiyuan (334-416), a native of Loufan (present-day Daixian County, Shanxi) with the secular name of Jia, was a disciple of the famed monk Dao-an. Because of his rich knowledge and moral integrity, he was able to recruit many social dignitaries to study under his tutelage. These included Liu Yimin of Pengcheng (present-day Xuzhou, Jiang su), Lei Cizong of Yuzhang (present-day Nanchang, Jiangxi), Zhou Xuzhi of Yanmen (Daixian County, Shanxi), Bi Yinzhi of Xincai (in present-day Henan), and Zongbing of Nanyang (present-day Henan). By the time Huiyuan established the White Lotus Society with 18 prominent personages at Mount Lushan, he had recruited 123 local people, who gathered to offer sacrifices to a statue of Amita Buddha, and collectively chanted his name with the hope that after their death they would be reborn in the Pure Land.

By the Southern and Northern Dynasties, another eminent monk emerged in the Pure Land School. Tanluan (476-542) began his religious life as a Taoist intent on finding a pill of longevity. He once went all the way to the Maoshan Mountain in the South to seek the instructions of Tao Hongjing, and returned to the North with ten volumes of the Tao's book *Classics on Immortality*. When he came across Bodhiruci (5^{th}-6^{th} centuries) during a visit to Luoyang, he asked the

Indian monk if there was any book on longevity. Bodhiruci told him there was no such thing as immortality because every person in this world dies, but there were ways to prolong one's life. The monk give him a copy of Amitayur-dhyana Sutra (Discourse Concerning Meditation on Amitayus),telling him that this was the Buddhist book on long life, and asked him to practice self-cultivation according to what the book said. Tanluan, enlightened, destroyed the *Classic on Longevity*, and concentrated on the study and practices of the Pure Land School. He eventually rose to fame, and the ruler of the Northern Wei Dynasty (386-534) adored him as the "Celestial Luan".

Both Huiyuan and Tanluan silently chanted the name of the Amita Buddha. It was not until Daochuo of the Sui and Tang dynasties began chanting the name aloud that Buddhists everywhere did likewise. Daochuo (562-645), a native of Wenshui in the Bingzhou Prefecture (present-day Wenshui, Shanxi Province), whose secular surname was Wei, also began his religious life as a Taoist. During a visit to the Xuanzhong Temple up the Shibi Mountain in 609 (5^{th} year of the Daye reign, Sui Dynasty), he read a stone tablet inscription on how Tanluan chanted the name of the Amita Buddha and practiced the doctrines of the Pure Land School of Buddhism. He was so moved by Tanluan's assiduousness that he converted to this school. After that he made it a point to chant the name of the Amita Buddha 70,000 times a day. He would coun the times of his incantation with beans or with a string of golden rain nuts, thus becoming the first Buddhist in China to use a rosary in religious meditation. With his great personality, Daochuo acquired quite a following in and around Wenshui, and his chanting the name of the Amita Budha aloud became a fashion. His disviple, Shandao, inherited the method and turned this name chanting into a school of Chinese Buddhism, the Pure Land School.

The Pure Land's method is simple and feasible to practice. What appeals most is its belief that with the power of the Buddha people can achieve reincarnation in the Pure Land of the Amitabha Buddha with karmas. The literature of the Pure Land school is generally limited to three sutras and one treatise, and there are three theories on its differential instructions.

The Pure Land School has been thriving for more than one thousand years since its establishment. In modern times Ven. Yin Guang was the most influential personage in this sect. Even today, the school remains most

influential and has the largest following among all the Buddhist schools in China.

4.8 The Esoteric School

The Esoteric school of Buddhism, known in China as the Zhenyan (True Word) School, was founded during the Kaiyuan reign (713-741) of the Tang Dynasty. Its founders were three Indian monks in China, Śubhakarasiṃha, Vajarabodhi, Amoghavajara, who were collectively known as the "Three Major Scholars of Kaiyuan."

Śubhakarasiṃha (637-735) , a scion of an Indian royal became clan, a military commander when he was only ten years old, and he was ascended the throne when he was 13. After he quelled an armed rebellion launched by his younger brother who was jealous of him, he abdicated the throne and went on the road to pursue a religious life. He first studied Buddhism at a temple in a coastal area of South India, then he travelled to Magadha where he was recruited to the Nalanda Monastery to study Tantrism. In 716 (4^{th} year of the Kaiyuan reign, Tang Dynasty) Subhakarasimha arrived in Chang-an, where Emperor Xuanzong revered him and made him a "Patriarch". A year later he began translating Buddhist scriptures. Upon learning that the Huayan Monastery in Chang-an held some Sanskrit versions of the Buddhist sutras brought back by Chinese monks returning from studies in India, he received the blessing of the emperor ad went to the monastery with his disciples to return with a number of such books. In 724 (12^{th} year of the Kaiyuan reign), he followed the emperor to Luoyang where he resumed his translation work at the Xianfu Temple. The four sutras he translated there were all Tantric classics, one of which was the Mahavairocana-sutra, the fundamental canon of the Esoteric School. Because of this Subhakarasimha is regarded as the father of the Esoteric School of Chinese Buddhism.

Vajrabodhi (669-741), a south Indian born into the Brahman caste, was a child prodigy able to recite ten thousand words a day. He began his religious life as the Nalanda Monastery. Later, he traveled to Simhala (present-day Sri Lanka), where he boarded a ship going to Pulau Sumatera in present-day Indonesia. His journey eventually brought him to Guangzhou in 719 (7^{th} year of the Kaiyuan reign, Tang Dynasty. Emperor Xuanzong received word of his arrival and summonded him to Chang-an. A major Tantric master, Vajarabodhi

acquired many followers and presided over the abhisakana ritual (consecration by pouring wather on the head of followers). The books he translated on Tantric methodology and rituals laid a solid foundation for the introduction of Tantrism into China.

Amoghavajra (705-774), a northern Indian (another theory says he was from Simhala) born of the Brahman caste, arrived in China as a young child with his uncle. He became a disciple of the Indian preacher Vajrabodhi at 13, achieved his monkhood at 15, and was awarded the Mendicant Commandments at 20. For his high intelligence and photographic memory, he won the favor of his mentor, Vajrabodhi, who died in 741 (29th year of the Kaiyuan reign). A year later (1st year of the Tianbao reign, Tang Dynasty), Amoghavajra carried out his mentor's will by leading a 37-member Chinese delegation on a pilgrimage to Simhala, where his studies covered both the open and Esoteric schools of Buddhism. At the end of the journey, which brought him to India, he returned to Chang-an, put together a workshop to translate large numbers of Sanskrit Buddhist scriptures and treatises into Chinese, most of them Tantric classics, and emerged as one of the four major translators in Chinese Buddhism history. He then established his own domain for the Esoteric School of Chinese Buddhism.

A salient feature of the Esoteric School is the establishment of an altar on which to practice austerities and to recite Honored One's spell (*mantra*). Chinese versions of the Tantric mantra and classics had become available as early as the Three Kingdoms Period (220-265), when some monks from India or the West Territories, well-versed in the *mantra*, were already spreading Tantrism in China. Among them were Fu Tucheng (232-348) and Bodhiruci (5th-6th century), who were masters of the *mantra*. A legend about Bodhiruci's mantra reciting power has it that one day, when he went to fetch water from a well without bringing a pail, he found the water level in the well was so low that it was impossible to draw water from it. He tossed a tiny poplar tree twig into the well and recited the *mantra* again and again for some time. Before long the water began to rise until it reached the brim of the well, allowing him to ladle out the water with his hands. The Chinese monks who were watching were naturally surprised, and they called him a sage. Bodhiruci hastened to explain that he was no sage at all, and that things like this were not uncommon in India though they were unknown to the Chinese. He declined to pass on the secret to

the Chinese for fear that odd things like this would have a pernicious influence on society.

At that time Buddhism was still a novelty to the Chinese, the number of esoteric scriptures translated into Chinese was few and far between, and no monks were working to introduce this school of Buddhism in to China. That was why Tantrism failed to become a school in its own right during Bodhiruci's time. The situation changed during the Kaiyuan reign (713-755) with the arrival of the three Tantric masters— Śubhakarasiṃha, Vajrabodhi, Amoghavajra. Thanks to the work of this trio, Esotericism emerged as one of the schools of Chinese Buddhism.

The Esoteric school in Han-inhabited regions of China falls into two categories, the *vajradhātu* (diamond element) and the *garbhadhātu* (womb treasury). *Vajra*, or diamond, means solidity, which is a property to be utilized; while the womb denotes sustainability and concealment.

The esoteric School of the Chinese tradition, like other Buddhist schools, was subject to suppression under Emperor Wuzong of the Tang Dynasty. The crackdown was followed by the war and turmoil of the Five Dynasties (907-960), and as a result the once prosperous Exoteric School gradually disappeared from the Chinese landscape. The Chinese Esoteric School, however, had spread to Japan, where it is as thriving today as before. In modern times, Ven. Chisong (1894-1972) devoted himself to rejuvenating the Esoteric School in China. He made two tripsto Japan to learn the secrets with intention of bringing the sect back to China. His efforts, however, failed.

The Esoteric School was introduced into Tibet from India during the 7th century. After Tibet became part of China during the Yuan (1271-1368) Dynasty, the Yuan emperors all became pious followers of this school. Tantrism, however, was placed under government control during the Ming dynasty (1368-1644), but by the Qing dynasty (1644-1911), for political purposes, the imperial court held this school of Buddhism, followed by the Tibetans, in high esteem. During the Republican years, the Tibetan School of Esoteric Buddhism was able to spread far and wide through the interior of China.

4.9 Faith and Rituals

4.9.1 Ullambana, the Festival in Memory of Ancestry. This is a routine ceremony held in a monastery on the 15th day of the seventh lunar month every year to redeem the souls of ancestors. According to the *Ullambana Sūtra* Mahāmaudgalyāyana, one of the ten major disciples of Śakyamunī, acquired divyacakṣus (clairvoyance) and found that his deceased mother was suffering among hungry ghosts. Wanting to come to his mother's rescue, he asked the Buddha for instruction. The Buddha told him to perform the *Ullambana* Service, at which he was supposed to offer generous delicacies to fete the hungry ghosts. By this virtuous deed he could deliver his mother from the misery. "*Ullam*" is Sanskrit term that means "hang something upside down," and "*bana*" denotes utensils for holding alms. Using the "*bana*" to offer alms can immediately deliver the hungry ghosts from the pain of being upside down. The Ullambana Sevice is also performed in Mahayana monasteries in Thailand for monks to show great mercy for those in misery.

The Ullambana, the most widespread Buddhist ancestral festival, is also called the Ghost Festival and Merit Transfer, or *yulanpen* (Chinese; Japanese, Obon), which was recorded in Chinese Buddhist sources as early as the fifth century. During the Ghost Festival, ancestors are invited back to this world for a feast, which is prepared by the family members.

This *yulanpen* festival unites the Buddhist components of hungry ghosts and salvation with Chinese indigenous belief in pacifying dead spirits. In China, imitation paper money andminiature furniture and houses are burned to enrich the dead in the netherworld. With proper family offerings, these spirits can be transformed into protective ancestors.

This legend of *yulanpen* is based on Chinese Buddhist scriptures, but the idea of food offerings for ancestors also existed in pre-Buddhist India. An example of this is the main feature of the śraddha feast, where sacred rice balls, or *piṇda,* were offered to ancestors. In these Indian rites, a feast is provided for the Brahmans, and the merit of this act is transferred to the ancestors.This kind of direct and indirect ritual feeding of ancestors has been incorporated into Buddhist ancestral rites such as *yulanpen* and other rites to feed hungry ghosts.

In *yulanpen* and related rites, an altar outside the main chapel was set up with food for the hungry ghosts, and various sūtras were recited in order to feed them and provide prayers for the pretas' possible future enlightenment. This kind of ritual act of *pūjanā* or, as Lynn deSilva calls it, "spiritual nourishment" was made for various revered objects such as the "three jewels" of the Buddha, dharma, and san˙gha, as well as for parents, teachers, elders, and the souls of the dead. The objects of offering were primarily food but also included incense (fragrance), clothes, bedding for monks, flowers, lights (candles and other bright lights), music, and right actions. In these offering ceremonies, the Buddha is symbolically invited into the ceremonial place and given praise and offerings. Confessional prayers are recited and certain *Mantra* (e.g., nenbutsu, *Dhāranī*, or Daimoku, depending on which Buddhist school one belongs to) are chanted in front of the Buddha. The merit accrued from these offerings and sūtra recitations is transferred to the dead.

In Sri Lanka, the deceased who did not reach the proper afterworld are feared by the living. Various sicknesses and disasters are alleged to be caused by these floating spirits of the dead. In order to pacify such ghosts, Buddhist monks are called upon to perform the *pirit* rites and to distribute magic threads and water to those afflicted. These floating spirits are eventually transformed into benevolent ancestors by the power of the *pirit* rites. Thai and Burmese Buddhists observe the same rite, but it is called the *paritta* ritual (Spiro, pp. 247–250). In Thailand, *bun khaw saak* (merit-making with puffed rice) and *org phansa* (end of Lent) are held annually in *wats* (monasteries), and offerings are made to the ancestors collectively. The merit of such acts is transferred to the deceased, yet Stanley Tambiah is reluctant to call these ceremonies ancestral worship since they do not involve systematized or formalized interaction between the deceased and the living. Nevertheless, he notes that the Buddhist monks act as mediators between death and rebirth, and they eliminate the dangers and pollution of death. In Korea, Buddhist monks do not widely deal with death rituals or rites of feeding deceased spirits and ancestors, unlike Thai or Japanese monks, even though Koreans have similar beliefs in spirits as those of other East Asian people. Shamans (Korean, *mudang*) largely deal with these ancestral rites.

4.9.2 Śakyamunī's Birthday

Śakyamunī's birthday, his achievement of enlightenment, and his entry into *nirvāṇa* are the occasions for the three foremost festivals for Buddhists the world over. However, they are marked on different date in China including Mahāyāna Buddhism in Thailand than they are in various Theravāda countries of Southeast Asia. The Mahayanists celebrate Śakyamunī's birthday on the 8th day of the 4th lunar month and his achievement of Enlightenment on the 8th day of the 12th lunar month, and commemorate his entering *nirvāṇa* on the 15th day of the 2nd lunar month. For followers of Theravāda Buddhism in Southeast Asian countries, these festivals fall on the same day, the 15th day of the 4th lunar month (the day of the full moon in May). There is no ready explanation for this difference.

The festivals marking Śakyamunī's achievement of Enlightenment and *nirvāṇa* are based on legend instead of history. The pantheon of Mahāyāna Buddhism in Thailand includes quite a few Buddhas and bodhisattvas apart from Śakyamunī for example, birthday of Maitreya, the Buddha of the Future. It is on the 1st day of the 1st lunar month; birthday of Avalokiteśvara, the Goddess of Mercy. It is on the 19th day of 2nd lunar month, and so on.

Conclusion

There are two important schools, Chan and Pure Land, which are popular in present-day in Chinese Buddhism.

The Pure Land School in China is based on The *Larger Sukhāvtīvyūha Sūtra*, a major text in the tradition, had been translated twice by the midthird century. In 402 the *Amitābha Sūtra* (also called the *Amida Sūtra* or *Smaller Sukhāvatīvyūha Sūtra*) and later the *Daśabhūmikavibhāṣā* (*Treatise on the Ten Stages*), attributed to Nāgārjuna (ca. second century), were translated by Kumārajīva (350–409/413). The *Guan Wuliangshou jing* (*Contemplation of the Buddha of Limitless Life Sūtra*) is claimed by tradition to have been translated between 424 and 453, though it is probably a Chinese or Central Asian composition. Once these three major su_tras and one main commentary became available, the Pure Land teachings moved away from being solely based on the *Pratyutpannasamādhi Sūtra.*

Tanluan (476–542) became interested in Pure Land teaching through the influence of Bodhiruci (sixth century), who translated the *Jingtu lun* (*Discourse on the Pure Land)* attributed to Vasubandhu (fourth century) in 531. Tanluan wrote an extensive commentary to this work, as well as *Zan Amitofo ji* (*Verses in Praise of Amida Buddha*) and *Lüe lun anlejingtu yi* (*An Abridged Discourse on the Pure Land of Peace and Bliss*). Tanluan accepted the *Daśabhūmikavibhāṣā*'s distinction of the difficult Path (the path of sages) and the easy path (the Pure Land path). He believed that Amitābha's Pure Land was the ultimate reality; that reciting Amitābha's name (Chinese, *nianfo*; Sanskrit, *buddhānusmṛti*) eliminates negative karma; and that the practice of *nianfo* requires a mind of true "confidence." He also described how an accumulation of positive karma aids rebirth and is distributed when returning to aid sentient beings, and he accepted the divisions of the dharmakāya into a dharma-nature aspect and an expedience aspect. Tanluan coined the term *other power,* meaning not relying on one's false notion of a self and its abilities but on the nirvanic power of Amitābha, a refinement of the Mahāyāna concept of *adhiṣṭhāna* (base, power, approach, establish). According to Japanese sources, this constitutes a second transmission lineage.

One of the greatest successors in Tanluan's line is Daochuo (562–645), who, inspired by Tanluan's writings, wrote *Anle ji* (*A Collection of* [*Passages Concerning Birth in the Land of*] *Peace and Bliss*), and promoted the idea of the Decline of the Dharma and the idea that the *nianfo* samādhi was the highest samādhi. Shandao (613–681) was the most influential master in this lineage. At first he studied on Mount Lu and achieved some success practicing according to the *Pratyutpannasamādhi-sūtra.* He later became Daochuo's disciple and was able to attain the *nianfo* samādhi. Shandao reaffirmed Tanluan's and Daochuo's positions while developing further the overall doctrine. Although he discussed many Pure Land practices, he placed great emphasis on *nianfo*; he taught that *nianfo* was sufficient for rebirth in the Pure Land and that Amitābha was a *sam bhogakāya* Buddha. Shandao delineated three types of confidence: sincere confidence, deep confidence, and confidence that seeks rebirth. Shandao also taught visualization methods and repentance, and developed the famous parable of the two rivers (fire-anger and water-greed) and the white path (the Pure Land path leading from samsāra to nirvāṇa) over the rivers. On the near side Śākyamuni stands, indicating that we should cross. On the far side, Amitābha stands, indicating that we should come. A third line of Pure Land began with Cimin (680–748), who had traveled in India and began spreading Pure Land teachings after his return. Cimin composed *Jingtu cibei ji* (*The Pure Land Compassion Collection*; partially extant), *Xifang zan* (*Western Quarter Chant*), and *Pratyutpannasamādhi Chant.* His teachings emphasized meditation, study, recitation, and precepts. The line that developed from the *Pratyutpannasamādhi*

sūtra also become part of the Tiantai School as Zhiyi (538–597) incorporated it into his system of practice.

Zhiyi was a devotee of Amitābha (and other Buddhas). In addition, he worked on the problem of classifying the different types of Pure Lands and developed the *constant walking samādhi,* which is focused on Amitābha, a core practice for Tiantai. From the Tang dynasty on, Tiantai forms of Pure Land practice were influenced by developments both within the school and from outside. Tiantai followers helped make Pure Land part of daily life during the Song dynasty (960–1279) and thereafter by forming White Lotus societies and engaging in other activities to spread the tradition.

The Pure Land teachings were also influential in the Chan School. The Tiantai form influenced the fourth Chan patriarch Daoxin (580–651). Xuanshi, a disciple of the fifth patriarch, Hongren (688–761), founded the Southern Mountain Chan of the Nian Fo Gate school. Baizhang (749–814) incorporated Pure Land practices into his Chan rules, which are the behavioral code for Chan monasteries. Yanshou (904–975) was influenced by Cimin's line. Of particular note is Yinyan Longqi (1592–1673), who became the founder of the Obaku Zen school in Japan.

The idea of Pure Land practice even becomes the Ko'an, "Who recites the *nian fo.*" There were many significant figures in Chinese Buddhist history who, although masters of different teachings such as Huayan and Sanlun, were influential in the overall development of Pure Land thought and practice. In fact, Pure Land teachings became so ubiquitous in Chinese Buddhism that to speak of them as a *school* is a misnomer.

Faith and rituals are Ullambana, the Ghost Festival and merit transfer, The Buddha's Birthday**.**

Activity

1. Discuss about Ko'an

2. Discuss other Buddhist festivals in China

Suggested Topic for discussion

Ko'an (Chinese, *gong'an*; Korean, *kongan*; "case for judgment" or "public case") is an administrative and legal term that was first adopted by the Chan (Korean, So˘n; Japanese, Zen) school in Song-dynasty China (960–1279). The Japanese pronunciation of the term, *ko'an,* has become standard in English usage. The term mainly refers to the usually enigmatic, frequently startling, and sometimes shocking stories about legendary Chan masters' encounters with disciples and other interlocutors. The ko'an may be the most distinctive feature of Chan Buddhism, where it is understood as an unmediated articulation of enlightenment (Chinese, *wu*; Japanese, *satori*; awakening).

Since the tenth century, Chan students throughout East Asia have studied and pondered ko'ans in order to gain a sudden breakthrough of insight into the minds of the ancient Chan masters and into their own primordial buddha-minds. The best-known ko'an is probably the one about the Tang-dynasty (618–907) Chan master Zhaozhou Congshen (778–897), who reportedly was asked: "Does a dog have the buddha-nature or not?" to which he replied "It doesn't" (Chinese, *wu*; Japanese, *mu*; Korean, *mu*), or simply "no." Zhaozhou's answer poses an impossible and confusing contradiction of the Mahāyāna Buddhist notion, central to all of Chan, that every sentient being is endowed with the buddha-nature or *Tathāgatagarbha*.

Another famous ko'an is the one about the master Nanquan Puyuan (748–835), who is said to have challenged two monks who were fighting over the ownership of a cat to demonstrate their enlightened minds to him on the spot. When neither could do so, Nanquan Puyuan hacked the cat in two, in gross violation of the Buddhist precept against killing. Other ko'an stories about Tang Chan masters describe shouting, hitting, and other erratic behavior, although some ko'an stories seem utterly mundane, such as when Zhaozhou is said to have told a student who asked for instruction to go wash his breakfast bowls. Ko'ans are understood to embody the enlightened minds of the ancient Chan masters and to communicate a truth that cannot be expressed in ordinary discourse.

Many ko'ans, like "Zhouzhou's dog" and "Nanquan's cat," can be interpreted as being about transcending habitual dichotomies like subject and object, and recognizing the oneness of everything in the universe, but such

rational analysis is considered foolish and futile. Truly comprehending a ko'an is thought to entail a sudden and direct nondualistic experience of an ultimate reality, which fundamentally differs from any intellectual understanding.

Since the tenth century, ko'an commentary has been a favorite means of instruction in all the East Asian Chan schools, and later ko'ans also came to be used as objects for meditation. Although initially only stories that were held up for special comment by a later Chan master were considered ko'ans, eventually virtually any story about a Chan master could be called a ko'an. The term also came to refer to any phrase or saying that was used to challenge students of Chan, such as "Why did Bodhidharma come to the West?" or "What is the sound of one hand clapping?"

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Chapter 5

Concepts and Rituals of Mahāyāna Traditions in Japan

Introduction

This chapter will study the important concepts and rituals of Mahayana traditions in Japan which must be traced to the Buddhist relations between Korea and Japan date back to the mid-sixth century. In 552 (2nd year, Tianzheng reign of the Liang Dynasty), the king of Baekje, a Korean kingdom, presented a brilliant image of the Buddha along with scripture-scrolls and ornaments to the Japanese Emperor Kimmei. This event marked the beginning of Buddhism in Japan. Later on the Buddhist monks of China and Japan were in direct contact with each other. The historical event clearly recorded that the Japanese came to China study Buddhism, Chinese monks went to Japan to preach, particularly when Buddhism of China reached its zenith during the Sui and Tang Dynasties. This attracted many Japanese to China to learn about Buddhism during the 593-628 period (from the 13th year of the Kaiyuan reign of the Sui Dynasty to the 2nd year of the Zhenguan reign of the Tang Dynasty).

In 607 (3rd year of the Dayi reign, Sui Dynasty) Prince Shotoku of Japan, who advocated Buddhism and Chinese culture, dispatched an envoy to China to establish friendly relations. The pious Prince Regent Shotoku (A.D. 574–621) was appointed regent to the Empress Suiko, at which time he declared Buddhism as the official religion. Prince Shotoku was a great statesman and a devout Buddhist. He strongly believed that only with Buddhist teachings could he make Japan a unified and culturally refined country. The following year began sending more people to China to learn Buddhism. More Japanese monks arrived in China later on, and their pursuits went beyond Buddhism to cover all Chinese culture.

Prince Shotoku's Support of Buddhism by issued the 17–Article Constitution in 604, which emphasized Buddhist and Confucian principles.

Article II of this injunction reads, “Fervently respect the Three Treasures.” Prince Shotoku stressed that everyone should faithfully revere the Three Treasures (the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha) as the supreme and unmistakable guidance. He also ordered the government to build many Buddhist temples among which the most famous is Horyu-ji temple, the world’s oldest wooden structure now standing near the former capital of Nara. It was because of his patronage and devotion that Buddhism was firmly established on Japanese soil.

It can be seen that in the beginning the introduction of Buddhism to Japan was highly motivated by political and cultural reasons. The court wanted to establish a system in which the existing clans could be consolidated. Buddhism offered both moral and intellectual benefits which Shinto lacked and it was these cultural learnings that attracted the court. Since Japan did not have a formal written language at the time, all of the Buddhist scriptures that were used were in Chinese. Thus at first, Buddhism was almost exclusive to the court families. However, the subsequent history of Buddhism in Japan demonstrated a gradual process of Buddhist acculturation downward through a ladder of social strata. It is regarded as cultural benefits of Buddhism.

In 625 (8^{th} year of the Wude reign, Tang Dynasty), the Korguryo monk Keikan began his lecturers in Japan on the Sanlun (Three Treatise) sect, but he failed to establish it in Japan. It was not until the return of some Japanese monks from studies in China that this sect was established there. More Japanese returned later from China, and as a result the Yogācāra, Huayan, Chan, Pure Land, Tiantai, and Esoteric sects were established one after and another. The one exception was the Vinaya Sect, which was founded in Japan by the Chinese monks Ganjin. This chapter will render a brief account of certain sects in Japan such as the Kegon School (Huayen), the Tendai School (Tiantai), the Zen School (Chan), the Jodo School (Pure Land), and the Nichiren School (New Lotus).

Topics:

5.1 The Tendai School (Tiantai)

5.2 Shingon Buddhism

5.3 Pure Land Buddhism (Jodo)

5.4 Zen Buddhism

5.5 Nichiren and the *Lotus Sutra*

5.1 The Tendai School (Tiantai)

National Support of Buddhism in the Nara period (A.D. 710–784), after the death of Prince Regent Shotoku, Buddhism continued to flourish among court nobles, monks, and artisans. National Buddhist temples, called *kokubunji,* were built by the Emperer Shomu in every province, the headquarters of which was at Todai-ji temple in Nara. Buddhist scriptures were introduced from China and without much modification they were studied by the Japanese monks. Buddhist images and ornaments were made by the Japanese artisans, some of which can still be seen in the older temples in Japan.

Buddhist temples in those days were the center of culture; they were not only used as places of worship, but also as schools, hospitals, dispensaries, orphanages, and refuges for older people. The monks were also school teachers, physicians, engineers, and developers of many construction projects. Therefore, the Japanese government encouraged and supported the Buddhist institutions and monks spiritually and materially, so that they could work with the government and the people more effectively.

The Six Nara Schools of Buddhism in Japan, as the numbers of monks increased, they were gradually classified into six Buddhist schools; namely, the Sanron, Hosso, Kegon, Ritsu, Kusha, and Jojitsu. These schools were direct importations from China and were studied at the various government-established temples.These six schools were not independent sects, but existed in one temple side by side just like various departments in a college, and each school contributed much to the development of later Buddhist thought in Japan.

Among the Japanese monks who studied in China during the Tang Dynasty was the outstanding Saicho (767–822), or Dengyo Daishi. According to the historical record of Japan, Saicho went to Nara and studied the Tiantai doctrine when he was twenty under some scholars who came to Japan with the Vinaya master, Kanjin. He also read the three great works of Zhi-yi. When he was half way through in his second perusal of those works, he received an Imperial order to go to China for Buddhist study.

In 784, the Japanese capital was transferred from Nara to Kyoto, and accordingly became the Buddhist center of Japan. Soon after, two new Buddhist schools were introduced from China, namely Tendai and Shingon. The six Buddhist schools were gradually overshadowed by these two schools.

Saicho established a Japanese Tendai school on Mount Hiei near Kyoto, and tried to synthesize all the then existing philosophical concepts. While in China, he studied Esotericism, Zen, and Pure Land Buddhism along with the Tiantai Buddhism. He also studied the *Brahmajala Sutra (Bonmokyo),* a modification of the Hinayana precepts. Upon his return to Japan he refuted the standpoints of all other schools, particularly of the Sanron and Hosso schools, and instead expounded the Ekayana doctrine based on the *Saddharma Pundarika Sutra.* It emphasized the belief that all forms of life stood on an equal basis in attaining Buddhahood, so that even conciliation between Buddhism and Shinto was made possible.

5.1.1 **Establishment of a Mahayana Ordination Platform**

In those days all the Buddhist monks had to accept the Hinayana precepts at the official ordination platform *(kaidan),* otherwise they were not admitted or qualified as Buddhist monks. Saicho, dissatisfied with this rule, wanted to be recognized under the Mahayana precepts which were suitable for Japanese monks. Several times he submitted a petition to the Emperor Saga to open a Mahayana ordination platform on Mount Hiei, and only after his death was the request granted by the Empreror in 822 in the Heian Period (A.D.794-1185). From this time on, the Tendai School gained independence from the older schools in Japan, and from the fetter of the Hinayana precepts.

After Saicho there were two outstanding leaders in Tendai Buddhism: Ennin (794–864) and Enchin (814–891), who had studied both Tendai philosophy and the rituals of esoteric Buddhism in China. It was due to their contributions that Japanese Tendai could meet the desires of its supporters for esoteric rituals. Saicho, their master and the founder of Japanese Tendai, was not able to embrace the esoteric teachings completely. In the course, however, his successors were to fulfill the unfinished work of their master Saicho. Saicho's all inclusive Buddhism was thus gradually enriched by his faithful disciples. The educational head quarters on the Mount Hiei was established by Saicho and became the greatest center of Buddhist learning in Japan. Once there

were some 3,000 monasteries to house the students thronging there from all branches of Buddhism, exoteric and esoteric. At present there are three branches of the Tendai School; namely Sammon, Jimon and Shinsei, the last being an Amita-pietism. The monasteries belonging to the three branches number more than 4,000 at the present time.[95]

5.2 Shingon Buddhism

Kukai (774–835) was a contemporary of Saicho, and he also studied Esoteric Buddhism in China. Upon his return to Japan, he established the Shingon school on Mount Koya, and expounded the mystical teaching of Oneness with Vairochana Buddha based on the text of the *Mahavairocana Sutra (Dainichikyo)*. Unlike Saicho, Kukai did not deny the validity of the Hinayana precept. He accepted both the Hinayana and the Mahayana precepts and interpreted them according to his own esoteric teaching. He classified Buddhist thought into two parts: esoteric and exoteric, and taught that all schools of Buddhism other than Shingon were exoteric, because they were known and revealed by the historical Shakyamuni Buddha.

On the other hand, in esoteric Buddhism, truth is hidden and must be revealed. There are in the universe the knower and the known, and they must be identical with Vairochana Buddha through the mystical practices of mantra (invocations) and mudra (hand gestures) in order for the universe to be in harmony. Kukai also classified the then existing concepts into ten parts according to the degree of profundity: 1) No doctrines at all; 2) Confucianism and Taoism; 3) The Sankya and Vaiseshika schools; 4) The Kusha school; 5) The Jojitsu school; 6) The Hosso school; 7) The Sanron school; 8) The Tendai school; 9) The Kengon school; and 10) The Shingon school. According to him, the Shingon school is the supreme and complete form of religion, while the other schools are lesser and incomplete.

5.2.1 Rising Power of Tendai and Shingon

However, the philosophical speculation of Tendai and the mystical ritualism of Shingon had only attracted the minds of court nobles, monks, and

95 Junijiro Takakusu, The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy, (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1998), p.136.

scholars who were weary of studying Buddhism theoretically without religious practice. The monks, belonging to either the Tendai or Shingon schools, became independent from the six schools and defended themselves from the influence of the government.

Once they obtained the privilege of being monks, they lived together at the leading temples and became a third power standing against the Imperial government and its counterpart. The temple life became lax and there was degeneration and corruption among some of the monks in Buddhist institutions. Seeing this, the ordinary people were greatly discouraged and deeply impressed by the impermanency and vicissitudes of life.

5.3 Pure Land Buddhism

Buddhism was confined to the privileged classes of court nobles, monks, scholars, and artisans who had enough time to master the complicated philosophy and rituals of Buddhism. It was in the Kamakura period (A.D. 1192–1333) that a drastic change took place in the field of religion; Buddhism became for the first time the religion of the masses.

The old court eventually fell to a new military government which brought about the Kamakura period. The increasing discord and chaos of the times led to disillusionment and a call for the revival of faith. It was during these troubled time that Honen (1133–1212), Shinran (1173–1262), Eisai (1141–1215), Dogen (1200–1253), Nichiren (1222–1282), and other Buddhist leaders appeared and expounded their teachings of salvation for all.

The development of popular Buddhism has begun. They were always on the side of the masses, discarding the existing aristocratic Buddhist hierarchy and its theoretical implications. Before this, only the elite class could enjoy the grandeur of Buddhist art and ceremony represented by glorious images, paintings, and ornaments. Strongly dissatisfied with these phenomena, these Buddhist leaders tried to reevaluate Buddhism through their own painful life experiences. The conclusion reached was that everyone had a potential Buddha Nature and thus could be saved by the mercy of the Buddha if one had firm faith in him. The new thoughts were based on the Bodhisattva doctrine of Mahayana Buddhism, particularly that of the Tendai School, which advocated that every sentient being has a Buddha Nature and is capable of becoming a Buddha.

As the new military government was established by Minamoto no Yoritomo at Kamakura in 1192, five prominent Buddhist schools were founded one by one, namely the Jodo, Jodo Shin, Rinzai Zen, Soto Zen, and Nichiren. They had common stand-points; they were established on the foundation of the Tendai doctrine and yet transcended it in their own respective ways.

5.3.1 Honen and Jodo (Pure Land) School

Honen (1133–1212) studied the Tendai doctrine thoroughly on Mount Hiei, and yet he was dissatisfied with a teaching which only taught the definition of salvation and the superiority of the Tendai doctrine as opposed to other schools of thought. However, what he wanted was a way to relieve others from suffering and to gain salvation himself. One day he came across the Genshin's *Ojoyoshu* (The essentials of rebirth) in which he found a passage by the Chinese monk Shandao, "Only call the name of Amida Buddha with one's whole heart—whether walking or standing still, whether sitting or lying—this is the practice which brings salvation without fail, for it is in accordance with the original vow of the Buddha."

In this passage he had at last found what he was seeking. He did not, however, deny the validity of other elaborate teachings and methods found in other schools. But he was convinced that this simple and straight forward calling of Amida Buddha was the only way for him and for everyone else who needed relief in that turbulent and degenerate age, because it required no elaborate rituals or complicated philosophy, but only the *nembutsu,* "Namu Amida Butsu," which anyone can do anywhere.

5.3.2 Opposition to Pure Land Buddhism

In 1175, Honen established the independent Jodo (Pure Land) school which was based on three canonical texts, the *Larger Sukhavativyuha Sutra (Muryojukyo),* the *Smaller Sukhavativyuha Sutra (Amidakyo),* and the *Amitayurdhyana Sutra (Kan Muryojukyo)*. He wrote the *Senchakuhongan Nembutsushu* (Passages on the selection of the *nembutsu* in the original vow) in order to defend his standpoint against the orthodox schools, and preached the teaching of the *nembutsu* (the recitation of Namu Amida Butsu) to the masses of the people.

However, his ever-increasing popularity among them encountered strong opposition from other schools and government, so that in 1207 his teachings were prohibited and he was exiled to the Isle of Shikoku with a handful of disciples. Later he was permitted to return and his teachings were officially recognized. One of Honen's disciples, Shinran, further developed his teachings and established the Jodo Shin School.

5.3.3 Shinran and Jodo Shin School

Shinran (1173–1262) deeply perceived the weak nature of human beings, and had become convinced that salvation could only be found in self-surrender and in complete reliance on the saving power of Amida Buddha. What mattered to Shinran was no longer Amida Buddha, as the object of worship, but "Namu Amida Butsu." Amida Buddha as *upaya* (expedient device) can be objectified, but not "Namu Amida Butsu," for it is the actual interrelationship between subject and object; it is not a static "thing;" but a dynamic "event."

He totally abandoned the precepts of both Hinayana and Mahayana which were "musts" for all monks in those days. Instead he got married and called himself the most wicked man in the world. He simple wanted to identify himself with ordinary people in order to save his wretched self and to pave the way of relief for other suffering people.

The principal difference of the Jodo School from that of Shin is in the treatment of the repetition of the Buddha's name. With Jodo the devotional repetition of the Buddha's name is a necessary action of the pious to deepen the faith, without which salvation will never be complete; while according to Shin School it is simply an action of gratitude or an expression of thanksgiving, after one's realizing the Buddha's power conferred on one. The Shin School holds the exclusive worship of the Amitābha, not allowing even that of Śākyamunī the strict prohibition of prayers in any form on account of private interests, and the abolition of all disciplinary rules and the priestly or ecclesiastical life, thus forming a community of purely lay believers, i.e., householders. As the orthodox Jodo School with all kindred sects still conforms to the old priestly life, it differs extensively from the Shin School.

5.3.4 The Ji School of Pure Land Buddhism

The Ji School of Pure Land Buddhism (Amita-pietism) is somewhat different in 1276, by Ippen (1238-1289). He set forth the rule of reciting the hymns of Shan-dao (Zendo) six times every day, hence the name Ji (time). In theory he derived his idea from the Lotus as did Ryonin of Yūzūnembutsu, but in practice he followed Kūya who invented a popular dance for the popularization of the Amita-faith. Thus the school has a totally different feature from the other schools of Amita-pietism. Ippen is said to have visited Kumano Shrine in Kii in 1275 where he was inspired by a holy verse of four lines, which he believed to have come from the deity of the shrine. Each of the first three lines was headed by a numeral, 6, 10, 10,000 and the last line by 'people', altogether making up 'six hundred thousand people.' He at once made up his mind to save that number of people by a propagation of the Amita-faith. Now Amita-pietism with all its kindred school taken together has more than one-half of the Japanese population as adherents.

5.4 Zen Buddhism

5.4.1 Rinzai Zen: Zen Buddhism was introduced to Japan by Eisai and firmly established by Dogen. Eisai (1141–1215) studied the Tendai doctrine on Mount Hiei and then went to China where he found that the Tendai (Tiantai in Chinese) had already declined and the study of Zen was flourishing. He therefore studied Zen and brought back to Japan many Zen texts such as the *Linchi-lu* (Analects of Master Linchi; known as the *Rinzai-roku* in Japan), the *Pi-yen-lu* (The blue cliff record; known as the *Hekigan-roku* in Japan), and the *Huaiangou-yu* (The story of the country Huaian; known as the *Kaian Kokugo* in Japan), and established Rinzai Zen. Zen Buddhism teaches that there is nothing to rely upon but one's true self. Everyone has the Buddha-nature and the potentiality to become a Buddha, and yet it is hidden because of our illusions.

The aim of Zen is to throw off one's illusions and all artificiality and to see directly into the innermost nature of one's being. In order to awaken oneself and gain an intuitional understanding of life, Rinzai Zen stresses the practice of sitting in meditation and koan study. The koan is a pedagogic device which generally is put in the form of a problem. For example, "What was your original face before your mother gave birth to you?" or "When your corpse is cremated and the ashes are scattered to the winds, where are you?" These highly

metaphysical questions must be answered immediately without resorting to any kind of logical reasoning process, because Zen is not a philosophical exercise but a way of life. This teaching was greatly favored by the military class, particularly by the Hojo family at Kamakura, and the government assisted the building of monasteries and temples for Eisai and his disciples.

5.4.2 Soto Zen

Dogen (1200–1253) also studied Zen in China, and upon his return to Japan he established Soto Zen. From the beginning, Dogen disliked to engage in worldly affairs and hated to submit to the authority and power of the military government. He built Eihei-ji, the mountain monastery, in Fukui Prefecture and wrote 95 volumes of essays. Soto Zen teaches that the practice of sitting in meditation is the sole means to discover our true selves and to attain enlightenment. It does not require any reasoning or inferring.

Zen meditation is not a mystic union with Buddha or the simple confrontation with a religious object for one in a prescribed discipline at a specific time and place, but rather a way of life for everyone in any circumstances. It teaches a way to live and to die peacefully, meaningfully, and pleasantly. This teaching particularly attracted the warriors whose lives were constantly threatened by their enemies. The Bushido, the warrior's spirit, developed out of its teaching.

5.5 Nichiren and the *Lotus Sutra*

Nichiren (1222–1282) studied the then existing Buddhist schools of thought extensively, from which he chose the *Lotus Sutra (Saddharma Pundarika Sutra)* as the most reliable text. He established the Nichiren school which is of Japanese origin and proclaimed that the eternal life of the historical Buddha is revealed in us. He stressed that by reciting the name of this text, "Namu Myohorenge Kyo" in Japanese, with our whole heart, we can become one with the eternal Buddha and gain enlightenment. He denounced all other existing schools strongly on the ground that their teachings refer to salvation only in the next world.

According to him, no texts except the *Lotus Sutra* are a direct and authentic revelation to us who are living in this world. Since he wrote the

Rissho Ankokuron (The establishment of righteousness in the rule of the country) and tried to persuade the government also to be blessed and ruled by his teaching.

To know Nichiren and his school we must first know the Lotus text on which all his ideas and arguments are founded. What is the Lotus text? A text-criticism shows that originally the Lotus text consisted 21 sections and was later enlarged into 28 sections by addition and division. The earliest translation was by Dharmarakṣa in 286 C.E., the second by Kumārājiva in 406 C.E., and the third (complete translation) by Jñānagupta and Dharmagupta in 601 C.E.. The existing text in 28 sections was used by Zhi-yi, Saicho and Nichiren himself. It is the only translation of the text used in Japan, either within or without the Nichiren School.

By Tendai philosophy Nichiren meant not what he found there at hand but what was taught by Dengyo Daishi himself. The original Tiantai of Zhi-yi was chiefly theoretical, whereas the Japanese Tendai of Dengyo was practical as well as theoretical. But after the two great masters, Jikaku and Chisho, the practical sides of Tendai were either mystic rituals or Amita-faith; that seemed to them important. The fundamental truth of the Lotus doctrine seemed to be lais aside as if it was a philosophical amusement. Nichiren could not accept this attitude and so returned in 1253 to his old monastery at Kiyozumi where he proclaimed his new doctrine that the Lotus alone could save the people of the depraved age, the essential formula being "Homage to the text of the Lotus of the True Ideal." It is Dharma-smṛti (thought on Dharma) and not Buddha-smṛti as was the Amita-formula. Dharma is the ideal realized by the original Buddha. All being are saved through homage to the Lotus of Truth, and this alone, he declared is the true final message of the Buddha.

The abbot and all other opposed him and he had to escape to Kamakura where he built a cottage and lived for a while. He preached his doctrine in streets or in parks, attacking other schools as violently as ever. He wrote a treatise on the *Establishment of Righteousness as the Safeguard of the Nation*, which he presented to the Hojo Regent in 1260. His main arguments were against the Amita-pietism of Honen, which he considered to be chiefly responsible for the evils and calamities within and without the nation.In the treatise he condemned Hoonen as the enemy of all Buddhas, all scriptures, all sages and all people. It was the duty of the government, he said, to terminate his

heresy even with the sword. His idea of the identification of religion with national life is manifest throughout the work.

According to Nichiren School, the Tendai is too much inclined to the theoretical side of the Truth, thereby forgetting the practical side of it. Nichiren holds that the realm of origin teaches the effective state of enlightenment and the Buddha's person is the center of Truth; the reality of the phenomenal worlds centers in the personality of the Buddha; and all aspirants should be guided to realize the Ideal-body of the Buddha.[96]

Nichiren contended that national peace and properity could be attained only through the unification of all Buddhism by the doctrine of the Lotus of Truth. Later, he attacked the religious schools then extant and formulated his views as follows: Jodo (Amita-pietism) is hell, Zen (meditative intuitionism) is devil, Shingon (mysticism) is national ruin, and Ritsu (discipline) is traitorous. These four cover practically all existing schools of his time and were the doctrines that had been subordinate to Tendai.

As Amita-faith propagated by Honen, Shinran and others was most influential among the people at large, the Zen trend of thought, specialy appealing to the ruling military class of the time, was probably the second influential doctrine. Owing to the activities of Eisai, Dogen, and Enni in Kyoto, and the Chinese teachers Rankei, Sogen, and Ichinei, in Kamukura, the Zen school was certainly asserting its position in the national life and culture. As to Shingon, the power of mystification which it cherished never lost its hold on the mind of the people; the Shingon School was influential all over Japan. The Ritsu was a school of discipline reformed by Eison who prayed against the Mongol invasion at the Shinto shrine of Iwashimizu by an Imperial order, when Emperor Kameyama himself was present and vowed to sacrifice his life for the safety of the nation. Thus the Ritsu must have been quite influential at the Court.

Nichiren's attack against these schools became violent than ever when he was mobbed in 1261. In 1271 he was arrested, tried and sentenced to death. In a miraculous way he escaped the execution and was banished to the remote island of Sado at the end of the same year. Later he was pardoned to return to

[96] Junijiro Takakusu, Opcit., p.194.[Ideal-body should be Dharma-kāya]

Kamakura. He built the Kuon-ji temple on Mount Minobu afterward and settled there for the rest of his life. He died at Ikegami, near Tokyo, in 1282. His worldly and patriotic spirit accelerated the rise of the new subsects which we see in contemporary Japan.

5.5.1 Peak of Religious Consciousness

There were many other fine personalities living during this period, but they are somewhat less significant compared to the above mentioned Honen, Shinran, Eisai, Dogen, and Nichiren. No new major schools have arisen since the Kamakura period. Those that did arise were more or less the filling-in and working-out of details in the existing ones. That is, after the Kamakura period, there was nothing that stimulated the growth of new thought except the flourishing Jodo, Zen, and Nichiren schools of the Kamakura period.

Although during this period little productivity in art and literature was seen, a well-disciplined and concentrated spirit, as well as religious zeal and originality were crystallized by the founders of the newly established schools. Therefore, it was a time in Japanese history that religious consciousness attained its highest peak, and individual minds were freed from all the external bondages which had long obstructed spontaneous growth.

5.5.2 Flourishing of Culture in the Muromachi Period

Though the military government at Kamakura unified the country and won battles against the two Mongol invasions of 1274 and 1281, it began to decline and collapse in the next century. Once again Japan was in chaos and encountered great political and social unrest with many civil wars. The ordinary people were perplexed and ill at ease. As a natural consequence, the people were obliged to seek solace by relying on religion. The worship of Avalokiteshvara (Kannon), the Bodhisattva of Infinite Compassion, flourished among the people at large.

When the new military government was established by Ashikaga Takauji in 1336, Japan was once again unified. More temples and monasteries were built through the patronage of the government or by contributions from the people. Buddhist culture also became highly developed during this period. The introduction of painting, calligraphy, tea ceremony, flower arrangement, and

gardening by the monks from China greatly influenced the formation of refinements in Japanese culture that have continued to develop up to the present time.

5.5.3 Powerful Buddhist Institutions and Secluded Zen Temples

However, partial favoritism of certain schools by the government or the Imperial Household caused jealousy among Buddhist institutions and they either fought against each other or against the government. Particularly the leading temples on Mount Hiei and Mount Koya became the citadel of the priest-warriors of the Tendai and Shingon schools. The priests were more conspicuous as a military and political force than in their proper religious sphere.

Zen temples and monasteries, however, became hermitages for the monks who detached themselves from worldly affairs and either concentrated their minds on meditation or engaged in artistic creation. The Jodo and Jodo Shin schools were less significant during this period, but they quietly and steadily increased their influence among the populace.

5.5.4 Suppression of Buddhism by Oda Nobunaga

The Momoyama Period (A.D. 1573–1603) was when Oda Nobunaga overthrew the military government of Ashikaga in 1573, he actively suppressed Buddhist institutions because he feared the increased power of the leading temples and monasteries which sided with his enemies. He favored the newly introduced foreign cult of Christianity for purely political reasons.

After the death of Nobunaga, Toyotomi Hideyoshi took over his stand and also suppressed Buddhist institutions with the idea of bringing the ecclesiastical completely under the sway of the secular. With the surrender of the Buddhist institutions to the secular power of Nobunaga and Hideyoshi, Buddhist art gradually lapsed into insignificance and was replaced by secular art.

The isolation of Japan and the Proscription of Christianity began in the Edo period (A.D. 1603-1867). When Tokugawa Ieyasu established the Tokugawa shogunate in 1603 at Edo (the present Tokyo), he prohibited the Japanese to leave the country and foreigners to enter with few exceptions. The isolation of Japan lasted for the next 260 odd years; and during that time,

Buddhism became purely ecclesiastical. The temples and monasteries destroyed by Nobunaga and Hideyoshi were restored by Ieyasu as comparatively modest and unfortified buildings. Ieyasu personally favored the Jodo school and assisted in building Zojo-ji temple in Tokyo, Chion-in temple in Kyoto, and other temples.

He also assisted in building Higashi Hongan-ji for financial and administrative reasons and divided the Jodo Shin school into two subsects—Nishi Hongwanji and Higashi Hongwanji. The following successors of Ieyasu also followed his policies and continued to patronize Buddhism and to prescribe Christianity. These measures were taken in order to weaken and control the power of the Buddhist institutions and to protect Japan from foreign invasion. During this period, all temples became registry offices where births, marriages, deaths, and funerals had to be registered with the priest in charge and they were accordingly considered family temples. The priest lived in ease and idleness and they often gave the people cheap and worldly instruction.

Despite these unfavorable circumstances, Zen Buddhism continued to show some vitality. Hakuin appeared and revitalized Rinzai Zen with his fine personality and sermons. Basho, who brought into fashion the 17-syllable haiku poetry, owed much to Zen. Ingen established Obaku Zen when he was invited from China to Japan in 1655. Tetsugen published a reprint of the Ming edition of the Buddhist canon *(Tripitaka)* in 1681 which is remarkable for its clear type printing.

However, from the 17th century on, the influence of Buddhism gradually declined and was overshadowed by the rise of the rival religious and political philosophies of Confucianism and Shinto. In the first place both Buddhism and Shinto were identified by the decree of 1614, but later due to the roles of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Shinto, the three were completely separated; i.e., Buddhism functioned in the sphere of religion; Confucianism in the moral; and Shinto in state politics. The idea of separation of these roles was consciously or unconsciously implanted in the minds of the Japanese and has been continuously held by them up to the present time. Buddhism was no longer a vital religion, but retained only its tradition which was handed down by the priests and monks from the Kamakura period.

5.6 Proscription of Buddhism in the Meiji Era

The Meiji Restoration in 1868 ended the long isolation of Japan and restored the power of the Imperial Household which had been under the shadow of successive military governments for the previous 800 years. Japan opened its door to the world and encountered the impact of Western culture and technology. The policy of the Meiji government, therefore, went to both extremes in order to cope with modern nations. That is to say, Japan adopted Western culture and technology as a means of modernizing Japan and reaffirmed the Imperial Household, which was transferred from the ancient capital of Kyoto to the present day Tokyo in 1868, as the supreme sovereignty of Japan.

The Emperor was the object of worship as a living god of Shinto; and since Buddhism had no room in this schema, it was completely separated from Shinto. Buddhist beliefs and worship were banned by the order of the Meiji government in 1868. Many temples and valuable works of Buddhist art were either destroyed or sold. A large number of priests and monks were forced to return to lay life, although this ban was later lifted. The Buddhist institutions were, however, classified under 13 denominations and 56 subsects and the founding of any new sect was strictly prohibited.

Conclusion

The story of Buddhism in Japan is often told primarily through an accounting of the basic doctrines and founding figures recognized by the major denominations (or their groupings into related traditions). Because of the emphasis on the founders, the history of the religion is typically punctuated by the dates of the origins of the schools, which fall into three distinct phases, located in the periods of Nara (710–784), Heian (794–1185), and Kamakura (1185–1333). The first of these phases covers those schools (traditionally numbered as six) founded in the years between the introduction of Buddhism from the mainland (usually dated 552) and the end of the Nara. The second is associated with the two schools of Tendai and Shingon, introduced near the start of the Heian period.

To the last are assigned the traditions of Zen, Pure Land, and Nichiren, all of which look back to founding figures in the Kamakura period. To the extent

that these three periods are plotted in a larger historical narrative, it is often one of recurrent spiritual renewal and decline. Thus, the founding of the Heian schools of Tendai and Shingon are seen as a reaction by the founders (Saicho and Kukai, respectively) against the stale scholarship and corrupt politics of the Nara Buddhist establishment, and the rise of the "new Buddhism of the Kamakura" (*kamakura shin bukkyo_*) is understood as a reformation, led by famous founders such as Honen, Shinran, Dogen, and Nichiren, in response to a Heian Buddhism increasingly dominated by the secular concerns of its aristocratic patrons. The period following the Kamakura is often seen as another time of decline, during which the reforming spirit of the Kamakura founders was lost once again.

As Amita-faith propagated by Honen, Shinran and others was most influential among the people at large, the Zen trend of thought, especially appealing to the ruling military class of the time, was probably the second influential doctrine. Owing to the activities of Eisai, Dogen, and Enni in Kyoto, and the Chinese teachers Rankei, Sogen, and Ichinei, in Kamukura, the Zen school was certainly asserting its position in the national life and culture. As to Shingon, the power of mystification which it cherished never lost its hold on the mind of the people; the Shingon School was influential all over Japan.

The Heian period witnessed Amitābha sages who helped spread the teachings to the general population. Several of these are historically significant. Koya (903–972), a Tendai monk, performed many good works and taught the *nenbutsu* in the Nagoya, Kyoto, and northern Japan. Senkan (918–983), Koya's disciple, wrote *Gokurakukoku Mida wasan* (*Sukhāvatī Realm Amida Chant*) and many other works. Koya strictly observed the Precepts and established eight rules and ten vows for his disciples. In addition, masters associated with many other schools of Japanese Buddhism also practiced and promoted Pure Land teachings.

Activities

1. Discuss the difference teaching of Pure Land Buddhism in China and Japan.
2. Discuss the main features in Nara period and Heian period and Kamagura period of Buddhism in Japan.

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Chapter 6

Concepts and Rituals of Mahāyāna Traditions in Korea

Introduction

This chapter will study the important concepts and rituals of Mahayana traditions in Korea which must be traced to the Buddhist relations between China and Korea date back to the fourth century, as well as the history of Korea Buddhism, its transmission and development. The historical event of Buddhist scholars who went to China to study Buddhism with the establishment of Buddhist sects in Korea will also be mentioned briefly.

Topics:

6.1 The Trasmission and Development of Korean Buddhism

6.2 Art and Culture in Korean Buddhism

6.3 Korean Buddhist Rites and Ceremonies

6.1 The Trasmission and Development of Korean Buddhism

Korea history usually is divided into four periods: the Three Kingdoms (?-668 A.D.), the Unified Silla Kingdom (668-935 A.D.), the Kogryo Dynasty (935-1392 A.D.), and the Joseon Dynasty (1392-1910 A.D.). Although there is evidence of earlier contact with Buddhism, the official date for the introduction of Buddhism to Korea from China is 372 A.D. in the Three Kingdoms period.

6.1.1 The Three Kingdoms (?-668 A.D.)

According to the name of the Three Kingdoms, the land was composed of three different Kingdoms: Goguryeo, Baekje, and Silla. Each kingdom accepted Buddhism at a different time and by a different route.

Prior to the arrival of Buddhism, the main religious practice in Korea was that of Shamanism which still holds a significant place in Korean life. Shamanism holds that human beings as well as natural forces and inanimate objects all possess spirits which must be appeased. Since Shamanism was not seen to be morally in conflict with Buddhism, the two religions blended to produce a form of Buddhism that is uniquely Korean.

It is assumed that the kingdom of Goguryeo -located in the northern area- was first invited a monk from China with Chinese Buddhist texts and Buddha statues in 372 A.D. It was an elementary form of Buddhism that he taught, consisting of the teaching of Karma and the search for happiness which seemed to blend well with the indigenous Shamanism, so it was quickly assimilated. Later on, Buddhism was introduced to the kingdom of Baekje, located in the southwestern area- from Goguryeo in 384 A.D. In the case of the above two kingdoms, the royal families first practiced Buddhism. However, in the kingdom of Silla, the common people were attracted to Buddhism. After Lee Chadon's martyrdom, King Beopheung officially recognized Buddhism in 527 A.D. The spread of Buddhism produced a significant effect on the development of many aspects of national culture. Because of various invasions and careless preservation, only a few records- archaeological sites, historical remains, and books- exist. But it can be considered that Buddhism at this time not only contributed to the development of spiritual civilization, but also flourished in the development of art: bells, pagodas, architecture, and paintings.

6.1.2 The Unified Silla Kingdom (668-935 A.D.)

In 668 A.D., the kingdom of Silla conquered the other two kingdoms and this period came to be called the Unified Silla period. Throughout the Unified Silla period, Buddhism continued to prosper, and grew both academically and culturally. Various rituals were developed and performed as spiritual requests for protection from foreign invasions. During this time some of the finest Korean Art was created. In particular, the famous rock statue of the Buddha in Seokguram Grotto in Gyeongju was carved in 732 A.D. with the beautiful Maitreya image and the Pulguksa temple in Gyeongju with its famous twin stupas. Towards the end of the Unified Silla period, Zen Buddhism was introduced from China and this added a new dimension to Korean Buddhism because the Zen school emphasized meditation and direct experience rather than concentration on studying Buddhist texts.

According to Chinese records, there were several monks studied Buddhism in China respectively as follows:

In 628 (2nd year of the Zhenguan reign, Tang Dynasty), the Kogryo monk Todung arrived in Chang'an to study under Jizang as a Dharma preacher. Hinbang, a famed monk from Kogryo, distinguished himself in his study in China during the Tang Dynasty, and was summoned by the emperor to join Xuanzang's scripture translation workshop at the Hongfu Monastery. Another monk from Kogryo, Wonchik, a Vijñāvāda scholar and disciple of Xuanzang, enjoyed the same prestige as another of Xuanzang's disciples, Kuiji.

In 638 (12t year of the Zhenguan reign), the Kogryo monk Chachang arrived in Chan'an with a dozen of disciples to study vinaya and preach the commandments. The Tripiṭaka he brought back to his country was the first of its kind in Korean history.

In 661 (6th year of the Xianqing reign, Tang Synasty), another monk from Kogryo**,** Uisang, became a classmate of Fazang (the founder of Huayen sect) at the Zhixiang Monastery on Zhongnan Mountain. While there, both of them studied the Garland Sutra. After he returned to his country he became the patriarch of the Huayen School of the East Asia.

Many Korean monks studied Esoteric Buddhism in China.

In 632 (6th year of the Zhenguan Reign), the Kogryo monk Myonglang arrived in China to study miscellellaneous Tantrism. In 635 (9th year of Zhenguan), he returned to become the founder of Tong-hae-shin-in sect. Many Kogryo monks studied Tantrism in China during the Kaiyuan reign (713-741) of the Tang Dynasty.

But even more Korean monks came to China to pursue Chan studies. According to historical records, Pomlang arrived during the early Tang Dynasty to study under Daoxin, the fourth generation patriarch of Chan School. When Pomlang's disciple Shinhaeng came to China, he became a student of Zikong, a disciple of Shengxiu.

The *Quotations of Buddhists in the Jingde Reign of the Dynasty* mentions many Korean monks who were studying Chan Buddhism in China. One of them is particulary worth mentioning. He was Gim Kyokak, a scion of the imperial

family of Silla, who arrived in China during the mid-Tang Dynasty and settled down on Mount Jiuhua in present –day Qingyang County, Anhui province. He soon won the respect of local Buddhists. Three years after his death in 803 (19th year of the Zhenyuan reign, Tang Dynasty), his remains, contained in a sitting posture in a stone receptacle, remained in perfect condition, prompting local Buddhists to believe that he was the reincarnation of Kṣitigarbha. Thus Mount Jiuhua became one of the four Major mountain sanctuaries of Chinese Buddhism and a mecca for tens of thousands of pilgrims from all over the world.

Sino-Korean Buddhist relations continued into the Song Dynasty. In 989 (2nd year of the Duangong reign, Song Dynasty), the King of Kogryo sent the monk Yoka to China to ask for an edition of the Tripitaka, a request that was readily granted by Zhao Gui, Emperor Tazong. The rulers of the Liao and the Jin dynasties also gave gifts of the Khitan. The rulers of the Liao and the Jin dynasties also gave gifts of the Khitan Tripiṭaka to Kogryo.

Throughout the history of Korean Buddhism, the Korean style of Buddhism could be understood both academically and practically. The Avatamsaka Sutra and the Lotus Sutra were the main focus of study in Buddhist academic study. As for the practice, Pure land and Zen Buddhism have been the most popular and effective ways of practicing. Pure land Buddhism concentrates on Amitabha, the Buddha of Universal Light, and Avalokitesvara, the Boddhisattva of Compassion. The Zen Buddhism (Chan in Chinese and Seon in Korean) emphasizes meditation and direct experience over concentration on studying the texts.

Although Buddhism was first introduced to Korea during the Three Kingdoms period, the distinctive character of Korean Buddhism emerged during both the Unified Silla and the Goryeo periods. During these two periods Korean monks continually traveled to China to study new Buddhist ideas. After mastering their study, some Korean monks remained in China, but most of them came back and tried to introduce new Buddhist ideas to Korean culture and people.

The study of Avatamsaka Sutra and the practice of Pure Land Buddhism were popular during the Unified Silla period. Masters Wonhyo and Uisang were important monks who introduced and adopted these two ideas in Korea.

Wonhyo wrote many important treatises in which he explained 'One Mind,' the interrelatedness of everything in the universe. The development of this view was due to an event in his life.

Wonhyo and his friend, Uisang, departed for China to study Buddhism. One night during the journey, Wonhyo awoke thirsty. Searching around, he found a container with delicious cool water in it. He drank the water. The next morning, he realized that the water was in a skull. Suddenly he attained enlightenment. Then instead of going to China, he came back home.

Master Uisang arrived in China and studied for ten years under a great master. When he returned home, he presented a poem to his teacher. This poem, which is the shape of a seal, contained the essence of Avatamsaka Sutra.

Towards the end of the United Silla period, the Zen school was introduced from China and this added a new dimension to Korean Buddhism. Nine different schools emerged. They were known as the Nine Mountains of Zen.

6.1.3 The Goryeo Dynasty (935-1392 A.D.)

During the Kogryo period, Korean Buddhism reached its zenith. The Koryo Dynasty, the present day Korea, assumed power in the 10th century. During the first part of this period, the Korean Buddhist community was active in the publication of the Tripiṭaka Koreana, one of the most inclusive editions of the Buddhist sutras up to that time. It was the most complete collection of the Buddhist scriptures carved by hand in Chinese characters on over 80,000 wood blocks. Many monks of Kogryo were skilled at copying Buddhist sutras with gold powder.

In the Kogryo period, a monk by the name of Ui-chon (1055-1101) published an outstanding three volumes bibliography of Buddhist literature by spending his research for 25 years. Ui-chon also sponsored the growth of the Tiantai sect in Korea. He emphasized the need for cooperation between Chan and other “Teaching” schools (schools which emphasize studying scriptures) of Korean Buddhism.

During the Kogryo period, master Ji-nul (1158-1210), known as Bojokuksa, founded Songgwang-sa Temple on Mt. Jogyesan, which remained

the headquarters of the Zen sect for over 300 years. The nine schools of zen were unified by Master Taego (1301-82) under the name of Jogye, which has remained the main sect of Korean Son to this day.

Toward the end of the Koryo period, Buddhism began to suffer from internal corruption and external persecution, especially that promoted by the Neo-Confucians. The government began to put limits on the previleges of the monks, and Confucianism replaced Buddhism as the religion of the state.

6.1.4 The Joseon Dynasty (1392-1910 A.D.)

Buddhism slowly declined as the new rulers of the Joseon Dynasty adopted Neo-Confucianism. The new interest in Confucianism led to the oppression and restriction of Buddhism by some Joseon kings. Temples could not be built near towns. Instead, the government permitted Buddhist monks to stay in the mountains. While the government persecuted Buddhism, politically and socially, the common people continued to believe in it.

The Yi Dynasty (1392-1910) continued the restrictions toward Buddhism, and since the end of World War II, Buddhism in Korea has been hampered by communist rule in North Korea and by the great vitality of Christianity in South Korea. Despite these challenges, Buddhists, particularly in South Korea, have both preserved the old traditions and initiated new movements. as well as the birth of the famous monk Ji-nul who stressed a balance between the "mind only" meditation practice of Son and the study of the scriptures which is today the main feature of Korean Son practice.

With the Japanese occupation from 1910 to 1945, Buddhism was again tolerated but the celibate monks were forced to take wives. Today, Korea, which was once a leading Buddhist country, is only 50% of the population practicing this religion.

6.2 Art and Culture in Korean Buddhism

The 2,500 year history of Korean Buddhism has given rise to many large temples. Among them, the Three Jewel Temples are the most famous and largest Korean Buddhist temples. The three jewels in Buddhism are Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. The Three Jewel Temples represent each aspect: Tongdosa Temple represents the Buddha because there is a famous stupa (or pagoda)

housing relics of Buddha from China; Haeinsa Temple represents the teaching or Dharma, because there is a large number of Buddhist scriptures; and Songgwangsa Temple represents the Buddhist community or Sangha, as about fifteen Korean patriarchs have come from this temple.

6.2.1 Tongdo-sa Temple

Tongdo-sa Temple was built in 646 by Master Jajang during the reign of Queen Seondeok. One of the great monks in Korean Buddhism, Master Jajang, carried Buddha's relics from China and he enshrined them at Tongdosa Temple. As a result, unlike other temples, there is no statue of Buddha in the Main Hall. Instead, Buddhists worship the Stupa**.**

The Diamond Precepts platform is behind the Main Hall. On the platform is a bell-shaped stupa surrounded by a stone barrier. The gate is finely decorated with dragons, clouds and two protector guardians. There are protective deities on the four corners of the platform. The ball-shaped stupa is decorated with lotus patterns, lotus blossoms, lotus petals, the Four Virtues and gods on the base and upper parts. In front of the stupa lies the lovely Nine Dragons Pond. Originally very large, the pond was home to nine dragons**.**

6.2.2 Haein-sa Temple

Haein-sa Temple is the second representative temple. Its name means "reflection on a smooth sea." It is the description of deep meditation in the Avatamsaka Sutra. Originally, Haeinsa Temple was a small hermitage built by Master Sunung and Master Ichong at the time of their return from China in 802. The wife of King Aejang was sick, and the two monks had helped to cure her. The King built Haeinsa Temple in honor of the monks. The temple has since been enlarged. Behind the Main Hall are two buildings that were constructed in 1488 housing the wooden blocks of the Tripitaka Koreana and the Buddhist scriptures. The Tripitaka Koreana was originally carved in the 11th century in a temple on Ganghwa Island. The possession of these wooden blocks was said to protect the country against invasion**.**

However, the blocks were burnt by Mongol invaders. In the 13th century, production of a new set of blocks was undertaken at the order of King Gojong. It took about 16 years to carve 52,330,152 characters on 81,258 blocks. These

were transported from Ganghwa Island on the heads of nuns to Haein-sa for safe-keeping.

6.2.3 Songgwangsa Temple

Songgwang-sa Temple means “Spreading Pine Temple” and it was established on Mt. Jogye by Master Jinul (1158-1210). In 1190, Jinul created a “Concentration and Wisdom Community” for practicing Buddhism together. Searching for the ideal location, he carved a crane out of wood, which he then released. The crane flew away and finally landed in the place where Songgwang-sa Temple is today. The Master's Portrait Hall was built and the temple came to represent the Sangha, the followers of Buddha.

Jinul's Buddhist philosophy created an ancient Buddhist debate that continues today. He believed that enlightenment could be quite easily reached, but that practice must continue afterwards in order to get rid of the habit energies. This is called the Sudden Awakening and Gradual Cultivation as opposed to Sudden Awakening and Sudden Cultivation, wherein after a struggle to reach the difficult stage of enlightenment, cultivation is no longer necessary.

Most Korean temples are located in mountain valleys. Each temple has several buildings; these include the gate or gates, halls and shrines, stupas, bell pavilions, academies, living quarters, etc.

Most large temples have several gates before reaching the Main Hall. These gates delineate the land of Buddha and the secular world. The One-Pillar gate is the first gate in the temple. While the gate actually has two pillars, from a Buddhist point of view, it is referred to as a "One-Pillar" gate as it symbolizes that one who enters into the temple should have one mind and take the first step towards the Pure Land**.**

The second gate is the Four Guardians' gate. These guardians are in charge of the four cardinal directions; North, South, East, West, and the four seasons. The guardians are of ancient Indian religious origin. After listening to the Buddha's teaching, they became deities. Their duties include defense of the temple and crushing demonic opponents. They carry a lute, sword, dragon or pagoda, respectively, in one hand**.**

The Main Hall is the temple's architectural and spiritual center. The name of the Main Hall is determined by the Buddha's image that is enshrined inside. An image of Buddha usually stands on the main platform, which is adorned with carvings of many animals and flowers to represent Mount Sumeru. On the wall to the right of the Buddha image is a painting of the guardians. They serve to protect the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha.

Usually Buddhist paintings are drawn on the outside wall of the Main Hall. One series of paintings is entitled "Eight Scenes of the Life of the Buddha," and the other is called "the Ox-Herding Paintings." The "Eight Scenes of the Life of the Buddha" are eight scenes that include the most important events of his life. The Ox-Herding paintings originally came from China, and depict a profound metaphor for Zen (Chan in Chinese, Seon in Korean) Practice. The pictures depict a young man searching for an ox. The young man represents the practitioner and the ox is his mind. The paintings are usually divided into ten stages, and thus they are called the Ten Ox-Herding Pictures.

In front of the Main Hall, there is usually a stupa. Before Buddha's images were created, the stupa was the object of worship and was regarded as Buddha and his teachings. As such, there are two types of stupas; one is for Buddha and the other is Dharma, Buddha's teachings. Over the centuries, stupas were built of various materials in East Asian Buddhist countries. Stupas in Korean Buddhism are usually made of stone, and on the surface of the stupa figures are carvings of Buddha, Bodhisattvas, and Devas**.**

On the left side of the Main Hall there is a two-story tower-like structure, which is the Bell Pavilion. There are four instruments inside, the Dharma Drum, the Wooden Fish, the Cloud-shaped Gong and the large Brahma Bell. These are used to announce the temple's daily schedule and regulate monastic life**.**

6.3 Korean Buddhist Rites and Ceremonies

6.3.1 Da-do Ceremony

Da-do is a tea ceremony. Rather than just drinking tea, this is a form of meditation. While drinking tea one should sit quietly. Tea in Korean Buddhism was first introduced in the sixth or seventh century, likely by Buddhist monks who had returned from China. There are early reports of tea in Samguk-yusa and Samguk-sagi, which are famous ancient Korean history books. Reports

noted that Queen Seondeok of Silla (ruled 632-47) drank tea and King Munmu, in 661, ordered tea.

During the Kogryo Dynasty, between the tenth and thirteenth centuries, tea was offered not only in the ancestral ceremonies but also Buddhist ceremonies. One such Buddhist ceremony was known as Hon-ta, in which green tea leaves were offered in front of Buddha statues in the temples. The tea culture was closely related with Buddhism, but when Confucianism became the dominant philosophy at the end of the fourteenth century, both consumption and ceremonial use of tea was prohibited**.**

During the Joseon Dynasty there is little evidence of tea culture surviving in Korea, until the great restorer of tea culture in Korea came along, a young Buddhist monk known as Cho Ui (1786-1866). In 1836, Cho Ui stayed at the Iljiam hermitage above Daehung-sa temple near Haenam in the far south of Korea; it was here that he composed a great poem celebrating a tea known as Dongdasong. Unlike the Japanese tea ceremonies, Korean tea etiquette focuses on remaining natural while partaking. Korean style preparation of green tea requires a tea set consisting of three or five cups as needed. In a tea set there is a Korean tea pot, which is little larger than Chinese ones, and a smaller bowl for cooling the hot water with a lip for pouring.

6.3.2 Bul-gong Ceremony

Korean Buddhist rites can be divided into two groups, one for the living and one for the deceased. The Buddhist offering Bul-gong falls into the first class of ceremony.

6.3.2.1 Sa-si-ma-ji

The Buddhist offering is usually held between 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. It is called 'Sa-si-ma-ji' or 'Sa-si-gong-yang.' Sa-si indicates the time 9-11 a.m. It originated in the period of the Sakyamuni Buddha's life. In India, the Sakyamuni Buddha had only one meal a day at Sa-si. From this origin, Korean Buddhists offer food, fruit, incense, candles, and money to Buddha and Bodhisattvas at Sa-si.

The Buddhist offering has two meanings; one is to take refuge in Buddha, his teachings, and his disciples (the Three Jewels), and the other is to devote

oneself to making promises, and to transfer all positive aspects to other beings for happiness and spiritual wealth.

6.3.3 'Da-bi' Funeral Ceremony

There are a variety of Buddhist ceremonies among the second group, including funerals, Cheon-do-jae, Su-ryuk-jae, and Ye-su-jae. Buddhist funerals are based on Buddhist doctrines of living and dying. In Buddhism, after a person dies, the body is separated from earth, water, fire, and air, but the results of karma, which are made by actions of the body, speech and mind, continue. This is called rebirth or reincarnation.

After someone dies, his or her consciousness remains in a stage of 'Jung-yu' or 'Jung-eum.' This is a middle stage between the present life and the next life. At this time, Si-da-rim, a Guiding Ceremony comprised of Buddha's teachings, is held to guide the spirit to the Pure Land or back to Earth**.**

Traditionally, Buddhists are cremated. This ceremony is called 'Da-bi, 'the monastic funeral. The platform for cremation is set up with wood, charcoal, and a straw mat. After burning the platform, people collect the bones of the cremated person and then crush them into powder. People choose either to scatter the powder around a temple or mountain or to keep the ashes in the charnel house.

6.3.4 Guiding Ceremony

6.3.4.1 Cheon-do-jae

After cremation, the 49 days Guiding Ceremony takes place in the temple. The purpose of this ceremony is to yield a good rebirth in the next life. Cheon-do-jae is another guiding ceremony to guide the spirits of ancestors to the Pure Land. In this ceremony, descendants make offerings and pray to Buddha to purify their ancestors' karma so that they may be reborn in the Pure Land.

6.3.4.2 Su-ryuk-jae

Su-ryuk-jae is the Guiding ceremony for Earth and Water. It is a special offering for the hungry ghosts in the Earth and Water. It stems originally from China. In the Yang Dynasty in China, King Mu dreamt that a monk called on

him to hold a ceremony for the hungry ghosts in the Earth and Water. The monk told the King that this would be his most worthy contribution. The King adhered to the monk's request. Thus originating in China, Su-ryuk-jae is practiced nationwide in Korea.

6.3.4.3 Ye-su-jae

Ye-su-jae is the Preparation Ceremony. It is held to practice cultivation and merits for the next life after death. It is considered to be one's own 49 days Guiding Ceremony in advance. People can be reborn in a good realm by repenting bad karma, keeping the precepts, and practicing charity**.**

6.3.5 Scroll Painting Ceremony

Gwoibuljae refer to the Buddhist paintings that are hung behind an alter in a big outdoor Dharma assembly or special ceremonies such as Youngsan-jae, Yesu-jae (ceremony for preparation for death by accumulating merit for future lifetime) and Suryuk-jae (ceremony for lonely, wandering ghosts in the water and on earth). Gwoibul-jae (Scroll Painting Ceremonies) refers to Dharma assemblies or ceremonies outdoors where a Gwoibul is hung behind the alter. The process of hanging a Gwoibul is Gwoibul Moving Ceremony**.**

Depending upon which assembly or ceremony is being held, a certain scroll, representing certain characteristics, is chosen. They are also Taenghwas (Thangkas) and depict the Buddha and the Bodhisattvas**.**

There are many themes in scroll paintings: the Assembly at Vulture Peak Mountain, the Kshitigarbha Bodhisattva, the Avalokitesvra Bodhisattva (Bodhisattva of love & compassion), the Naga King, the Ten Judges and so on. Depending upon which assembly or ceremony is being held, a certain scroll, representing certain characteristics, is chosen**.**

In the case of the ceremony for the Assembly at Vulture Peak Mountain, when longevity and rest in the Pure Land are wished for, the painting of the Assembly at Vulture Peak Mountain, in which the Seokgamoni (Sakyamuni) Buddha expounds sermons on Vulture Peak .

The Jijang Bosal (Kshitigarbha Bodhisattva) or Amitabul (Amitabha) is hung in the case of the Yesujae (ceremony for preparation for death and next

lifetime) or the Suryukjae (ceremony for lonely, wandering ghosts in the water and on earth). The scroll paintings of the Gwanseum-bosal (Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva) is hung on the Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva Day is hung for the Yongwangjae (Naga King Ceremony) and the painting of the mountain spirits is hung for the Sanwangdaesindo (Mountain Spirits Ceremony). However, it is rare to hang a scroll painting because there are only a few scroll paintings at each temple. Also it is difficult to hang one outdoors and they are too large to hang in where most big Dharma assemblies are held.

The Gwoibuljae (Scroll Painting Ceremony) of Mihwangsa is held in November every year and it celebrated its 3rd Gwoibuljae in 2004. Many locals and tourists gather and watch the scroll painting inspiring faith and fully enjoy the beauty of the Buddhist culture along with nature. This is one of many Buddhist ceremonies

Activity:

1. Discuss the famous festivals of Korean Buddhism such as Tripitaka Koreana Festival, and Lantern Festival.

2. Disscuss the most interesting content of this chapter according to the students' opinion.

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Chapter 7

Concepts and Rituals of Vajrayāna Buddhism in Tibet

Introduction

This chapter will study the important concepts and rituals of Vajrayāna traditions in Tibet. The concept of Vajrayāna or Tantrayāna or Matrayāna will be explored including Tibetan Buddhism, and Tibetan Ritual Texts.

Topics:

7.1 Overview the Concept of Vajrayāna

7.2 Tibetan Buddhism or Lamaism

7.3 Tibetan Ritual Texts

7.1 Overview the Concept of Vajrayāna

7.1.1The Meaning

Vajrayāna is an umbrella designation that denotes the final form of Buddhism to evolve in India; this term first comes into evidence in the eighth century. The Vajrayāna is often taken to be identical with Mantrayāna or Guhyamantrayāna, the vehicle of secret spells or incantations. In a very general sense, Vajrayāna means the vehicle (*yāna*) of the thunderbolt or of the adamantine scepter (*vajra*), although the designation of the male member as the *vajra* sometimes caused the Vajrayāna to be interpreted as the erotic vehicle, wherein sensuality may be employed for liberation.

The modern attempt to proliferate terms with *-yāna* as a final element —(e.g., Kālacakrayāna, Sahajayāna, etc.) —is in error and none of these inauthentic neologisms appears in the literature. The Vajrayāna scriptures are the Tantras, and they with their commentaries present several different strategies to discuss the theoretical nature of this latest vehicle: Vajrayāna as a

subset of the Mahāyāna, Vajrayāna as the fruitional or advanced vehicle, and Vajrayāna as the third discipline of the sorcerer. Each of these will be considered in order.

7.1.2 Mahāyāna subset

According to this schematism, normative Indian Mahāyāna revealed two distinct ways (*naya*): the method of the perfections (*pāramitānaya*) and the method of Mantras (*mantranaya*). The former consists of the standard six or ten *Pāramitā* (Perfections) of the Mahāyāna and requires three incalculable eons to achieve the condition of buddhahood—the highest perfect awakening at the tenth or eleventh stage of the Mahāyānist path. The method of mantras, however, is said to confer this state in a single lifetime: buddhahood in this very body, as the literature affirms. This accelerated progress is possible because of the very powerful techniques associated with the use of mantras, so that the activity of the yogin's entire body, speech, and mind are employed in the process. Thus, the yogin visualizes Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, or esoteric Divinities either before him or identical to himself, recites mantras associated with such figures, and employs breathing techniques and other forms of physical yoga to accelerate the process of identification. Those following the esoteric path often maintain that the difference between the methods of perfection and the methods of mantras stems from their respective attitudes toward defilement. Whereas the method of perfections requires the elimination of defilement, in the method of mantras none of the physical or psychological functions are abandoned, but they are transformed into forms of the gnosis of awakening. In this light, the method of mantras was considered an easy path, without the difficulties inherent in the method of perfections.

Similarly, the Vajrayāna was sometimes said to be preached as a response to the needs of those with inferior ability, who could not renounce the world but had to maintain a householder's position. However, as a subset of the Mahāyāna, a follower of the method of mantras is also expected to adhere to the vows of the bodhisattva, to practice the perfections as well and to operate on a continuum with the decorum expected of the bodhisattva.

7.1.3 Fruitional vehicle

The Vajrayāna may also be called the fruitional vehicle (*phalayāna*), with the Mahāyāna classified as the causal vehicle (*hetuyāna*). In this schematism, the Mahāyāna is a prelude to the Vajrayāna, for the latter is an advanced

practice. Accordingly, one of the more important of the tantric scriptures, the *Guhyasamāja Tantra,* proclaims that the reason it had not been preached before was that there were no beings sufficiently advanced to hear it. It became revealed in the world once bodhisattvas with advanced practice arose to receive it. This means that the Vajrayāna is not just another, albeit faster, method but is inherently superior to normative Mahāyāna and not to be revealed to those of inferior faculties. In this way, the awakening conferred by the Vajrayāna was also different, for while the Mahāyāna led to the tenth or eleventh stage of the bodhisattva path, the citadel of the Eternal Buddha Vajradhara was said to be on the thirteenth stage, far advanced over the Mahāyānist idea of buddhahood.

7.1.4 Tantra

Tantra in Western nomenclature has achieved forms of signification independent from its Sanskritic use and has become a somewhat promiscuous category applied to various rituals otherwise not easily classified. In general parlance, tantra indicates the pan-Indic religious system that became emulated in Buddhist, Hindu, and Jain circles, and tantra is often understood as having an erotic component. This entry will discuss the idea of tantra in East Asia.

In Buddhism, tantra is usually understood to include the use of Mantras authorized by a preceptor on a disciple during a complex initiation rite that confers the disciple with the authority to engage in many different kinds of ritual associated with a specific class of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, or Buddhist Divinities. Included in the rituals are the construction or visualization of sacred circles (*maṇḍala*), the use of hand gestures (*mudrā*), and the employment of fire sacrifice (*homa*), all of which may be for the purpose of specific soteriological or nonsoteriological goals. These latter are usually the four ritual actions of the pacification of obstacles, the increase of prosperity, the subjugation of difficulties, and the destruction of enemies; they may be performed for the practitioner’s own ends or on behalf of a patron.

However, many of these elements had already enjoyed a lengthy precedent in Buddhist ritual long before the coalescence of mature esoteric Buddhism—to which tantra may properly be applied—in the late seventh and early eighth centuries. It is historically misleading to understand normative Mahāyāna rituals as tantric in any significant sense, despite the fact that many of them make use of several of the elements eventually included in esoteric Buddhism. Moreover, many of the Buddhas, bodhisattvas, and Buddhist

divinities that originated in the Mahāyānist ritual environment eventually made the easy transition to the esoteric milieu.

Because tantra arose in a culture of fragmentation, there is little textual unity, and the works classified by later authors as tantric may call themselves by other titles: discourse (*sūtra*), meditative aid (*dhāraṇī*), secret spell (*mantra*), incantation (*vidyā*), ritual (*kalpa*), as well as *tantra*. The textual sources gain added complexity through the tendency of later authors to read esoteric directions into earlier Buddhist scriptures and to incorporate these scriptures in their exegesis. Accordingly, the Heart Sūtra is often taken as a tantric text, since it contains a mantra, even though this text predates any tantric Buddhism per se.

Classificatory systems thus had to wrestle with great differences in texts, and consequently there is no unanimity on tantric typology. Perhaps the most basic scheme is that employed by Buddhaguhya and others in the mid-eighth century: Tantras are those that emphasize external ritual activity (*kriyānaya-tantra*) or those that emphasize internal yogic practices (*yoganaya-tantra*). The fourfold classification favored by Tibetans has been often cited: Tantras are those that enjoin ritual action (*kriyā*), behavioral practice (*caryā*), meditation (*yoga*), or the highest yoga (*anuttarayogatantra*).

Textual examples include the *Susiddhikara* (*kriyā*), the *Vairocanā bhisambodhi* (*caryā*), the *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha* (*yoga*), and the *Guhyasamāja* (*anuttara-yoga-tantra*). The latter category was often subdivided into two, with the *Guhyasamāja* being a *mahāyoga-tantra* and works like the *Cakrasaṃvara* classified as a *yoginī-tantra.* It must be emphasized, though, that there were many other typologies—some with seven or more categories. Neither was there unanimity on which texts actually belonged to which categories, irrespective of the number of categories. Some important texts, like the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti* or the *Hevajra,* might be classified into two or three categories, depending on the interpretation.

Linguistically, the tantras reflect the regionalization of Indian society. They are written in regional or nonstandard Sanskrit—often influenced by colloquial expressions or grammar—and some of those composed in Eastern India use vernacular-based literary languages. Siddhas would also compose adamantine songs (*vajragīti*) to express their understanding or to critique others, and they often provided a signature line to identify the author.

Consequently, tantric Buddhism returned to the autobiographical voice and the use of non-Sanskritic languages, as had been done in the early days of Buddhist literature but had been largely abandoned under the influence of the classical Mahāyāna.

Ritually, the fundamental meditative ritual became the *sādhana,* a rite wherein the meditator visualized the Buddha or divinity as before him or identical to himself, prior to performing specific activities: recitation of mantras, yoga, fire sacrifice, initiation, tantric feast, and so on. The visualization sequence most often included imagining a royal palace inside a protective sphere, and visualizing a lotus on which is placed a seed syllable (*bījamantra*), which transforms first into a symbol of the divinity and then into the divinity itself. Thus, the syllable *om* might turn into a wheel and then into the Buddha Vairocana. If the practice contained a full *maṇḍala* of Buddhas or divinities, the meditator would perform the same act (or an abbreviated version) for each figure. Because the *maṇḍala* is generated or born, this meditative form is sometimes called the birthing or developing process (*utpattikrama*).

Many of the later tantras also discuss an esoteric yogic physiology, sometimes called the *vajra*-body, in which the body contains psychic ganglia that may be represented in the form of wheels (*cakra*) or other arrangement. Generally, they contain the letters of the Sanskrit alphabet, the vowels and consonants, in one or another of many specified combinations.

7.2 Tibetan Buddhism or Lamaism

7.2.1 Tantric Buddhism

Tantric Buddhism became quickly popular in the areas immediately contiguous to Northern India—Burma, Nepal, Tibet, Nanzhao—and spread into Central Asia and China. Tantric works were eventually translated into the Central Asian languages of Khotanese, Uighur, Tangut, and Mongolian, but TIBET became the most important area of tantric development. Three of the four major Tibetan orders—Sa Skya, Sakya-pa, Kagyu-pa, and Ganden-pa—maintained a more or less conservative approach, following closely the later Indian tantras and other Indian scriptures translated in the astonishing efforts of the eighth through the fifteenth centuries.

While the content of many of the works is only beginning to be explored, our catalogues classify the *Old Tantric Canon* into the standard fourfold

division accepted by most Tibetans (*kriyā,* etc.), with the difference that the Highest Yoga tantras are further divided into three: *mahāyoga, anuyoga,* and *atiyoga.* Generally, it is considered that the first two correspond in content to the division of Indian tantras into *mahāyoga* and *yoginī-tantras* (while the texts themselves are mostly different) but the *atiyoga* category is understood to be a Rnying ma category, even though the term was used in India to describe a stage of meditative ritual. In Rnying ma parlance, *atiyoga* is generally Hayagṛva, a Buddhist wrathful deity, shown with his consort.

Atiyoga tantras are also qualitatively different from Indian works by their increased emphasis on doctrinal and philosophical expressions rather than performative ritual systems, so that they constitute some of the more interesting expressions of Buddhist ideology.

7.2.2 Tibetan Buddhism

Tibetan Buddhism is the school of Buddhism predicated on scriptures that have been translated into Tibetan. Because its monks are known as lamas in the Tibetan language, Tibetan Buddhism is also called “Lamaism”.

The development of Tibetan Buddhism falls into two stages. The first stage lasted for approximately 200 years from the mid-seventh century to the mid-ninth century; the second stage has continued to this day since the mid-tenth century.

Prior to the seventh century, the Tibetans had no written language. In the early seventh century, under the rule of the wise and far-sighted king Songtsan Gampo, Tibet began to grow in strength by gradually expanding its territory and unifying the tribes on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. To create a written language so that he could issue orders and exchange documents with neighboring countries, he selected a group of noble house children and sent them to study in Kashmir. Among these was Thonmi Sambhota, who excelled in linguistic studies and returned home to become the inventor of a grammar and written language for Tibet, thereby furnishing favorable conditions for the translation and dissemination of Buddhist literature.

The invention of this written language encouraged Songtsan Gampo to step up the introduction of Buddhism into Tibet. Under his leadership, translators teamed up to work on the scriptures, and the sculptures of the

Buddha and other deities in the Buddhist pantheon were enshrined for local worshipers. To show goodwill to neighboring countries, he married Princess Bhrkuti of Nepal in the West and Princess Wencheng of the Tang Dynasty to the East. Both bridges brought their countries versions of Buddhist statues with them when they arrived in Lhasa. Construction of temples thus proceeded in Tibet for these statues. Songtsan Gampo formulated laws according to the principles of Buddhism, and ushered Tibet into civilized society.[97]

7.2.3 Tibetan Buddhist Scriptures

7.2.3.1 Early Stage

Tibetan literature attributes the formal introduction of Buddhism to the reign of its first emperor, Srong btsan sgam po (Songtsen gampo, d. 649/650). Undoubtedly, though, proto-Tibetan peoples had been exposed to Buddhist merchants and missionaries earlier. There is a myth that the fifth king before Srong btsan sgam po, Lha tho tho ri gnyan btsan, was residing in the ancient castle of Yum bu bla mkhar when a casket fell from the sky. Inside were a gold Reliquary and Buddhist scriptures. While the myth is not early, it possibly reveals a Tibetan memory of prior missionary activity. We do know that official contact with Sui China was accomplished from Central Tibet in 608 or 609 and that, as Tibet grew more powerful, Buddhist contacts increased. Nonetheless, two of Srong btsan sgam po's wives—Wencheng from China and Bhrkut from Nepal—were credited with constructing the temples of Magical Appearance (Sprul snang, or the Jo Khang) and Ra mo che. Other temples were built as well, and twelve were later considered limb-binding temples, where a demoness representing the autochthonous forces of Tibet was subdued by the sanctified buildings. Srong btsan sgam po is also credited with having one of his ministers, Thon mi Sambhota, create the Tibetan alphabet from an Indian script and write the first grammars.

Buddhist progress occurred with the successors to Srong btsan sgam po. Notable was the foundation of the first real monastery in Tibet, Bsam Yas (Samye, ca. 780) and the influx of Indian, Chinese, and Central Asian monks around that time. Particularly influential were Śāntarakṣita, an important Indian scholar, and his disciple Kamalaśīla. Śāntarakṣita and his entourage were

[97] Zheng Lixin, opcit., pp.17-18

responsible for the first group of six or seven aristocratic Tibetans to be ordained in Tibet.

These authoritative monks did much to cement the relationship between Indian Buddhism and Tibetan identity. Another teacher, Padmasambhava, was a relatively obscure tantric guru whose inspiration became important later. Translation bureaus in Dunhuang and Central Tibet were opened by the Tibetan emperors, from Khri srong lde'u btsan (Trisong détsen, ca. 742–797) through Ral pa can (r. 815–838), but unofficial translations were recognized sources of concern. While the official bureaus emphasized the Mahayana monastic texts, unofficial translations tended to feature more radical tantric works. During the reign of Sad na legs (r. 804–815) a council was convened to regularize Tibetan orthography and to establish both translation methods and a lexicon of equivalents for official translators. The result was the emergence of classical Tibetan, a literary language developed to render both sophisticated Buddhist terminology and foreign political documents into the rapidly evolving Tibetan medium. Translations were initially made from several languages, but principally from Sanskrit and Chinese, so that a consistent tension between Indian and Chinese Buddhist practice and ideology marked this period. The Northern Chan School was present in Tibet, but from 792 to 794 a series of discussions between Indian and Chinese exegetes at the Bsam Yas Debate was ultimately decided in favor of the Indians. Eventually, Buddhist translations from Chinese were abandoned for exclusively Indic sources.

7.2.3.1.1 Fragmentation and the later spread of the dharma

The last of the emperors, Dar ma 'U dum btsan (r.838–842) began a campaign of suppression of Buddhism contemporary to the Huichang suppression in China. Dar ma was assassinated by a Buddhist monk, and the vast Tibetan empire fragmented over imperial succession. The period from 850 to 950 was a chaotic time marked by popular revolts and warlordism. Surviving Buddhist monks fled, and monastic practice was eclipsed in Central Tibet for approximately a century. Aristocratic clans that had accepted Buddhism, however, continued to develop indigenous rituals and new literature based on the received tradition. This is the time that the classical persona of the nonmonastic religious teacher coalesced: the lay Lama, sometimes a mystic inspired by visions of imperial preceptors. With the reestablishment of records in the late tenth century, we see active lay Buddhist behavior—Pilgrimage, lay

rituals, autochthonous divinities as protectors, and so on—that was to endure to the present. Yet the monastic religious form was closely allied to the memory of the empire, and Bsam yas stood empty. Eventually several Tibetans under the leadership of Klu mes from Central Tibet traveled to Dan tig Temple, in modern Xining, and received monastic ordination from Tibetan monks who had maintained it. Returning to Central Tibet around 980, Klu mes and others began to refurbish Bsam yas as well as construct networks of new temples. Their position, though, was often threatened by the lay lamas called Ban de, and the new monks were sometimes physically attacked. One line of the imperial house established itself in Gu ge, in West Tibet, and some two dozen men, preeminently Rin chen bzang po (958–1055), were sent to study in Kashmir. Like the Tibetan emperors, the Gu ge kings supported Mahāyāna scholarship and were critical of extreme tantric behavior, whether Tibetan or Indian. While Rin chen bzang po principally translated esoteric works, many other translators, especially Ngog Blo ldan shes rab (1059–1109), specialized in Mahāyāna hilosophical treatises, rendering many into Tibetan for the first time. Thus, the *Five Treatises of Maitreya* and much of the work of Dharmakīrti and other scholastic authors were introduced to Tibetans through their activity. A great translator's convocation, where scholars discussed their texts and procedures, was called by the Gu ge king in 1076. In Central Tibet, the later translation movement began with 'Brog mi (ca. 990–1060), who studied in Vikramaśīla and elsewhere in India. Following him, Dgos lo, Rwa lo, Mar pa, Kyung po rnal 'byor, and other scholars began the new translation or revision of Indian works. Many of these eleventh-century Central Tibetan translators were concerned with the newly evolving Tantras, which they presumed had not been revealed to earlier Tibetans. They also believed that the imperially sponsored systems had become mixed with indigenous Tibetan practices and derided them as "old style" (*rnying ma*).

7.2.3.2 The Second Stage

In 1042 the important Indian missionary, Atisha Dīpaṃkara Śrījñāna (982–1054), arrived, invited by the Gu ge king. Atisha introduced the popular Bengali cult of the goddess Tārā and reframed tantric Buddhism as an advanced practice on a continuum with monastic and Mahāyāna Buddhism. This systematization, already known in India, became designated the triple discipline (*trisaṃvara*: the monastic, bodhisattva, and tantric vows) and Atisha embedded

this ideal in his *Bodhipathapradīpa* (*Lamp for the Path to Awakening*). Atisha also promoted the basic Mahāyāna curriculum of his monastery Vikramaśīla, where works like Śāntideva's *Bodhicāryāvatāra* (*Introduction to the Conduct That Leads to the Enlightenment*) were fundamental to monastic stability. Atisha's lay lama disciple 'Brom ston Rgyal ba'i byung gnas (1004–1064) founded the monastery of Rwa sgreng in Central Tibet (1057) and organized the Bka' gdams pa order. The tantric orders evolved out of the activity of the early Central Tibetan translators. Preeminent were the various traditions of the Dwags po Bka' brgyud that derived from Mar Pa (Marpa, 1002/1012–1097). While some of Mar pa's disciples were concerned with tantric scholarship, it was Mar pa's poet disciple Mi La Ras Pa (Milarepa, (1028/40–1111/23), and Milarepa's disciple Sgam po pa, who effectively grounded the tradition in both tantric and monastic practice. Likewise, 'Brog mi's center in Mu gu lung did not last, but his later follower 'Khon Dkon mchog rgyal po (1034–1102) founded Sa Skya (Sakya) Monastery in 1073, and the Sa skya order became widely acknowledged through the influence and learning of 'Khon clan members. Beyond these, many smaller lineages were received from Indian masters but only partially succeeded in the institutionalization process of the twelfth century, eventually becoming subsets of one or another of the major orders.

7.2.4 Tanguts, Mongols, and Buddhist efflorescence in the twelfth to fourteenth centuries

By the twelfth century, small lineages began developing into specific orders that compiled the writings of exemplary figures. The initial cloisters were expanded, becoming "mother" monasteries for a series of satellite temples and monasteries. Orders established dominion in their areas, so that lay practice tended to come under the aegis of important teachers. Buddhist doctrinal and philosophical material became an important part of the curriculum. Translation activity continued, but with an emphasis on the revision of previous translations. A Canon of translated scripture and exegesis was compiled throughout this period, so that by the end of the fourteenth century its major outlines became relatively clear. Finally, the aura of the emerging orders attracted the interest of Central Asian potentates, beginning with the Tanguts and extending to the grandsons of Genghis Khan. The Rnying ma order had coalesced around the received teachings derived from the Royal dynastic period, whether transmitted in a human succession (*bka' ma*) or as revealed

treasure teachings (*gter ma*). Preeminently, Vimalamitra and Padmasambhava among the Indians, and Bai ro tsa na among the Tibetans, were the mythic sources for treasure scriptures. The important treasure finder Nyang ral Nyi ma 'od zer (1142–1192) and his school in southern Tibet promoted Padmasambhava over other figures. From Nyang ral's group came the *Man_ i Bka' 'bum,* the vehicle for the spread of the cult of Avalokites´vara as the special protector of Tibet, purportedly embodied in Emperor Srong btsan sgam po. Treasure hagiographies of Padmasambhava by U rgyan gling pa (1323–?) have proven classics of the genre. Karma gling pa revealed the *Bar do thos grol,* widely known in the West as the *Tibetan Book Of The Dead*. Although Rnying ma philosophical authors were relatively few, Klong chen rab 'byams pa (1308–1363) set the standard for tantric scholarship. Basing himself on treasures of the *Snying thig* (seminal drop) tradition of the Great Perfection, Klong chen pa authored important discussions of Rnying ma theory and practice. The 'Khon clan continued to develop Sa Skya Monastery, with the help of such individuals as Ba ri lo tsāba (1040–1112), who assembled many relics at Sa skya. Sa chen specialized in tantric scholarship, writing the first summary of the tantric path in Tibet and compiling eleven commentaries on the central text of the esoteric *Lam 'bras* (*Path and Fruit*), attributed to the Indian saint Virūpa.

Sa chen's sons, Bsod nams rtse mo and Grags pa rgyal mtshan, contributed to the myth of the Buddha, established tantric exegesis, commented on Śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatāra,* and codified the Sa skya understanding of the tantric path. With Sa skya Paṇḍita, the Sa skya took to conservative philosophical scholarship, and the Sa skya order came to be known for its maintenance of the triple discipline and its defense of Dharmakīrti's epistemological system. However, many original Tibetan contributions to Buddhism also came from this period. Among his innovations, Phya pa Chos kyi seng ge (1109–1169) developed philosophical definitions, doctrines of universals, and methods of argumentation; many challenged Indian assumptions, especially those of Dharmakīrti. In an entirely different direction, seminal Bka' Brgyud (Kagyu) representatives, like Sgam po pa bsod nams rin chen (1079–1153), delineated the doctrines of the self-sufficient white remedy (*dkar po gcig thub*). These doctrines posited a soteriology of a single meditative method under the rubric of the Great Seal (*mahāmudrā*). Another Bka' brgyud pa, 'Bri gung 'Jig rten mgon po (1143–1217), additionally proposed that all the Buddha's statements were of definitive meaning, so that they all had the same

intention (*dgongs gcig*). Also based on esoteric Buddhist ideals, Dol bu pa Shes rab rgyal mtshan (1292–1361) represented the newly formed Jo nang School, a tradition grounded in *Kālacakra* exegesis. Dol bu pa's reading of *Śūnyatā* (Emptiness) emphasized an emptying of attributes from a ground of reality and became technically known as the "other emptiness" (*gzhan stong*). This position stood in opposition to the "self emptiness" (*rang stong*) of orthodox Madhyamaka School philosophy. Like the ideology of the eighth-century Chinese Heshang Moheyan and the more radical Rnying ma doctrines, most of these Tibetan contributions became refuted by the orthodox, who adhered to a narrow definition of acceptable statements based on conformity to Indian texts by specific authors.

The Sa skya were granted control over Tibet during the Yuan dynasty, with the fifth of the great Sa skya teachers, 'Phags pa blo gros rgyal mtshan (1235–1280) proclaimed Kublai Khan's national preceptor in 1261. Sa skya leaders supported Mongol policies, such as the first census of Tibet, and some scholars became influenced by Mongol and Chinese literature, with Chinese imperial records translated into Tibetan. However, about 1350, during the Yuan decline, the Bka' brgyud pa monk Ta'i si tu Byang chub rgyal mtshan (1302–1364) challenged the Sa skya for control of Central Tibet. He was successful in some measure, and his Phag mo gru pa subtradition was the dominant political force for most of the next century. One result was the formalization of the Tibetan canon under Ta'i si tu's patronage, by Bu Ston Rin chen grub (1290–1364). Bu ston catalogued the tantric canon (*rgyud 'bum*) section of the translated scriptures (*Bka' 'gyur*) and compiled the translated authoritative treatises (*Bstan 'gyur*). In thecanonical compilation process, Bu ston wrote a history of the dharma, where scriptures and treatises were set out in a grand schematism of history, cosmology, and mythology. About the same time, the learned Sa skya hierarch, Bla ma dam pa Bsod nams rgyal mtshan (1312–1375), wrote the *Rgyal rabs gsal ba'i me long* (*Mirror Illuminating Royal Genealogy*), representing the popular mythology of the imperial period and origin of the Tibetan people. Moreover, the peculiarly Tibetan office of the reincarnate lama became institutionalized. One of Sgam po pa's important disciples, the Karma Pa I Dus gsum mkhyen pa (1110–1193) was said to have prophesied his own rebirth as Karma pa II Karma Pakshi (1204–1283). While earlier teachers were said to be the reembodiment of specific saints or Bodhisattvas, this was the first formalization of reincarnation, with the previous saint's disciples maintaining

continuity and instructing his reembodiment. Following the lead of the Bka' brgyud pa, most traditions eventually appropriated the institution.

7.2.5 Great institutions and the Dga' ldan pa in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries

If the previous three centuries represented an intense struggle with intellectual and canonical issues, the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries demonstrated the struggle for institutional authenticity. In part because of the political power wielded by the Sa skya and Bka' brgyud orders, many of the cloisters had become more social or political institutions, with religious involvement in the hands of the great clans or landed interests. Indeed, Tibetan monasteries were ripe for reformation, with great wealth and political authority eclipsing aspects of spirituality. The most important event of this period was the rise and development of the reform order of Tsong Kha Pa bzang grags pa (1357–1419). Born in Amdo, Tsong kha pa originally studied in many traditions, but his most important intellectual influence was the Saskya monk Red mda' ba (1349–1412), who had championed the radical Prāsangika-Madhaymaka system of Candarakīrti (ca. 600–650). However, Tsong kha pa became dissatisfied with the contemporary understanding of monastic institutions and more general aspects of scholarship. With successive visions of Mañjuśrī, Tsong kha pa understood that he was to emphasize the system that Atisha had brought to Tibet. Eventually, after many years of wandering through Tibet bestowing instruction, he was persuaded to settle down and in 1409 founded the monastery of Dga' ldan, the Tibetan translation of Tus_ita, the name of Maitreya's heaven. Tsong kha pa's order was called the Dga' ldan pa, although it was also known as the new Bka' gdams pa or the Dge Lugs (Geluk; Virtuous Order). He changed the color of their hats to yellow as well, giving them the name Yellow Hats in the West.

In a series of important treatises, he articulated a systematization of the exoteric Mahāyāna meditative path (*Lam rim chen mo*) and the esoteric practice according to the Vajrayāna (*Sngags rim chen mo*). In the latter instance, he employed interpretive systems developed by exponents of the *Guhyasamāja tantra* to articulate a systematic Hermaneutics that could be applied to all tantras. Tsong kha pa, though, is best noted for his intellectual synthesis of the Madhyamaka and Yogācāra systems of Buddhism, using

Indian treatises as a basis for his great commentaries and subcommentaries, and emphasizing the philosophical position of Candrakīrti. Three of his disciples were most important in the continuation of his work. Rgyal tshab Dar ma rin chen (1364–1432) was Tsong kha pa's successor at Dga' ldan and was especially noted for his orthodox summaries and commentaries that became the basis for much of Dge lugs pa scholasticism. Mkhas grub Dge legs dpal bzang (1385–1438) succeeded him at Dga' ldan and was known for his acerbic tone toward his contemporaries as well as his epistemological treatises and his *Kālacakra tantra* exegesis. Dge 'dun grub pa (1391–1474, posthumously the first DALAI LAMA) founded the great monastery of Bkra shis lhun po in 1447 and was also noted for his scholarly work on epistemology. The rush to construct new Dga' ldan pa monasteries continued through the fifteenth century, with 'Bras spung (1416) and Se ra (1419) founded in the area of Lhasa, while others spread out east and west. Some of these monasteries eventually enrolled several thousand monks and were virtual religious cities. Part of this process led to the mission of Bsod nams rgya mtsho (1543–1588) to the Mongols, who had lapsed from Buddhist practice after their involvement with the Sa skya. Widely received, he was given the title Dalai Lama by Altan Khan, a title extended to his earlier incarnations beginning with Dge 'dun grub pa. Bsod nams rgya mtsho's reincarnation (Dalai Lama IV, Yon tan rgya mtsho, 1589–1616) was discovered as the great-grandson of Altan Khan, the only Dalai Lama not Tibetan by birth. The intellectual and institutional vitality of the Dga' ldan pa did not go unopposed, and the Sa skyain particular found much to criticize. Interestingly, the Sa skya tradition also became involved in its own reform movement. Ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po (1382–1456) founded the monastery of Ngor E wam chos ldan in 1429 and established it as the most important tradition of esoteric Lam 'bras instruction, supplemented by the personality and work of Tshar chen Blo gsal rgya mtsho (1502–1566). The sixteenth century was a high-water mark for scholarship in other traditions as well. Karma pa VIII, Mi bskyod rdo rje (1504–1557), questioned the basis for Dga' ldan pa confidence and provided a critique of the Rnying ma as well. The Bka' brgyud pa historians Dpa' bo Gtsug lag phreng ba (1504–1566) and 'Brug chen Pad ma dkar po (1527–1592) forcefully established their readings of Tibetan history and the tantric movement. Mnga' ris pan chen Pad ma dbang rgyal (1487–1542) formulated the classic Rnying ma statement of the triple discipline. Sog bzlog pa Blo gros rgyal mtshan (b. 1552) compiled the statements of Rnying ma opponents and established a defense of Rnying ma and treasure legitimacy.

7.2.6 The Dalai Lamas and Rnying ma revitalization in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries

The Tibetan religious landscape changed dramatically again in the seventeenth century. Clans in the provinces of Dbus and Gtsang had been warring for several decades, and each had its associated religious affiliation. In Dbus, the fifth Dalai Lama—affectionately known to Tibetans as the Great Fifth (Za hor ban de Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho, 1617–1682)—had developed a base of power in ’Bras spung Monastery. The Great Fifth Dalai Lama was extraordinarily learned, with teachers from the Dga’ ldan, Sa kya, Zha lu, and Rnying ma traditions. He was also highly ambitious and built on the previous Dalai Lamas’ Mongolian connections, finally using the military might of Gushri Khan’s Qoshot Mongols to solidify control over Tibet in 1642, inaugurating the reign of the Dalai Lamas. Some traditions favored by the Great Fifth were greatly benefited. Because of his strong Rnying ma connections (he was one of the very few Dgan’ ldan pa treasure finders) the Rnying ma tradition prospered. This was an important time for treasure traditions, with visionaries like Mi ’gyur rdo rje (1647–1667) and U rgyan gter bdag gling pa (1616–1714) revealing new textual cycles. Likewise, Rnying ma scholarship flourished, with scholars like Lo chen Dharmaśrī (1654–1717). Virtually all the greatest Rnying ma monasteries were built during this period—Rdo rje brag (1632), Kahtog (originally 1159 but resurrected in 1656), Dpal yul (1665), O rgyan smin grol gling (1670), Rdzogs chen (1685), and Zhe chen (1735). Despite a short-lived suppression from 1717 to 1720, the Rnying ma tradition in the eighteenth century was graced by exceptional figures as well, especially the historian Kahtog rig ’dzin Tshe dbang nor bu (1698–1755) and the Omniscient ’Jigs med gling pa (1730–98). ’Jigs med gling pa was to dominate Rnying ma meditative traditions for the next two centuries with his Klong chen snying thig revelations. Conversely, traditions not favored by the Great Fifth experienced significant problems. Most notoriously, he suppressed the Jo nang order, which had been undergoing a revival through the profound influence of Jo nang Tārānātha (1575–1634), an erudite scholar and historian. However, after 1642 the monastery was placed in Dga’ ldan pa hands, the literature of the Jo nang pa was suppressed, and the order survived only in a few minor convents in far northeastern Tibet. The works of scholars critical of Tsong kha pa or his disciples were also suppressed, so that copies survived only in rare collections. The unfortunate sectarianism displayed by the Dga’ ldan pa at this time was

embodied in the literary form of the monastic syllabus (*yig cha*), the obligatory textbook of sectarian principles. Sectarianism was occasionally mitigated by open-minded Dga' ldan scholars like Lcang skya rol pa'i rdo rje (1717–1786).

This period was the great printing period for Tibetan Buddhism. Despite Tibetan forays into woodblock printing as early as the thirteenth century in Mongolia, the entire Tibetan canon (*Bka' 'gyur* and *Bstan 'gyur*) was not completely printed until the eighteenth century. The first *Bka' 'gyur* editions were printed under Chinese patronage, which continued through the eighteenth century (Yongle, 1410; Wanli, 1606; Kangxi, 1684–1692, 1700, 1717–1720; Qianlong, 1737). Editions produced in Tibet included the Li tang (1608–1621), Snar thang (1730–1732), Sde dge (1733), Co ni (1721–1731), and the Lha sa (1930s). The *Bstan 'gyur* editions include the Qianlong (1724), Sde dge (1737–1744), Snar thang (1741–1742), and Cho ni (1753–1773). In this same period, the collected works of the Sa skya masters were printed in Sde dge (ca. 1737), and 'Jigs med gling pa reorganized and expanded the *Old Tantric Canon*; it was eventually printed from 1794 to 1798.

7.2.7 The Modern Nonsectarian Movement and Intransigence in the Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries

The nineteenth century saw the rise of a nonsectarian movement in Eastern Tibet (Khams), where the Sa skya and the Rnying ma orders were especially supported. This movement tried to move Tibetans from a narrow view of lineage toward an ecumenical vision of Buddhist study and practice and specialized in the collection and publication of compendia of religious practice and ideas. 'Jam dbyang Mkhyen brtse'i dbang po (1820–1892) received training in both Sa skya and Rnying ma schools, and he promoted the study of their esoteric systems. Kong sprul Blo gros mtha' yas (1813–1899) developed a synthetic vision of treasure, one that integrated Rnying ma, Bon po, and Bka'brgyud systems all together in his great *Rin chen gter mdzod* (*Treasury of Gems*). In the Sa skya order, 'Jam dbyang Blo gter dbang po (1847–ca. 1914) brought together two great compendia of new translation practices, as well as editing and publishing the Sa skya esoteric system of the Lam 'bras in the face of criticism about the loss of secrecy. Two Rnying ma scholars established specifically Rnying ma scholastic syllabi: 'Ju Mi pham (1846–1912) and Mkhan po Gzhan dga' (1871–1927), the former studied by Rnying ma students, while Gzhan dga' was also favored by the Ngor pa subsect of the Sa skya. By the turn

of the twentieth century, Tibetans were becoming exposed to the wider world, especially through the Younghusband expedition (1904). With a British trade agent forcibly placed in Tibet, the Chinese responded, and the thirteenth Dalai Lama alternatively took refuge with the Chinese and the British, with Tibetans becoming aware that the world was unexpectedly changing. Sometimes this awareness had unforeseen consequences, and the scholar Dge 'dun chos 'phel (1901–1951) was especially provocative, as a monk with an interest in journalism, erotic literature, and intellectual criticism.

7.2.8 Communism and the Tibetan diaspora

The Communist Chinese military success of 1949 and subsequent invasion of Tibet in 1950 succeeded in subduing Tibet, where centuries of prior Chinese efforts had failed. For Buddhist traditions, the initial destruction of temples and monasteries in Eastern Tibet was still relatively modest, and many believed that Tibet could negotiate with Mao Zedong. The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution of 1966 to 1976 changed everything, with the resultant massive destruction ofvirtually all monastic institutions and much of the religious art and literature. Some had read the signs, and Tibetans carried out or hid an astonishing amount of their portable art and books. The fourteenth Dalai Lama had already fled Tibet in 1959, and over the next decade a steady stream of refugees began to populate the camps on Indian soil—perhaps 100,000 in all. Ever true to their traditions, Tibetans immediately set about to construct temples, monasteries, monastic schools, and print their sacred books. The latter project was assisted by the Public Law 480 Program of the United States, especially when directed by the brilliant Tibetologist E. Gene Smith, so that Tibetan (and other) books were purchased as part of Indian debt servicing to the United States. The Public Law 480 Program allowed foreign scholars access to Tibet's great literature for the first time, while publishers could provide monasteries with discounted copies of their literature.

7.2.9 Post-Maoist Tibet

Since the opening of Tibet after the Cultural Revolution, there has been a resurgence of Buddhist practice. The Chinese have resurrected religious buildings—the Potala, Norbulinka, the Jo khang, and so on—as museums for tourism, and Tibet's cities have become Han Chinese enclaves, but Buddhism is thriving in the countryside. Ever suspicious of religion, the Chinese have sought

to control monastic construction and the number of clergy. The participation of monks (and foreign sympathizers) in insurrections has exacerbated Beijing's mistrust. Even then, individual teachers have temporarily managed against great obstacles, although their building efforts are often dismantled. Certain lamas find allies in Han businessmen, who provide capital and political legitimacy to construction projects. China has also played politics with the process of reincarnation, installing its own Panchen Lama and incarcerating the Dalai Lama's choice. More curiously, Tibetan publishing has taken off in the People's Republic of China since Mao's death, making many rare chronicles available for the first time. The continued tug-of-war between the Dalai Lama's government in Dharamsala and Beijing over human rights and religious freedom is in part incomprehension by Beijing, in part stalling tactics until the Dalai Lama's death. Many young Tibetans in diaspora chafe at the Dalai Lama's pacifism, and there is unhappiness among some Tibetans in India or Nepal about either the Dalai Lama's policies or his ecumenical religious position. Some Dga' ldan pa sectarianism continues and promotes Rdo rje shugs ldan, a divinity representing the dominance of the Dga' ldan pa. American movie stars and the 1989 Nobel Prize for peace for the Dalai Lama have provided legitimacy to Tibetan aspirations, at the cost of some integrity. Yet, despite tensions inside Tibet and elsewhere, there can be little doubt that Buddhism and national identity are so intertwined in Tibetans' minds that the continuation of some sort of Buddhist practice by Tibetans is assured.

7.3 Tibetan Ritual Texts

The *Tibetan Book of the Dead* is the title created by Walter Yeeling Evans-Wentz (1878–1965), its first Western-language editor, for a collection of Tibetan ritual and literary texts concerned with death, intermediate states (Sanskrit, *antarābhava*; Tibetan, *bardo*), and rebirth. In Tibetan the collection is actually titled *Bar do thos grol chen mo* (*Great Liberation upon Hearing in the Intermediate State*) and belongs to a much larger body of ritual and yogic literature called *Zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol* (*Self Liberated Wisdom of the Peaceful and Wrathful Deities*). Tradition attributes authorship of this cycle of funerary literature to the eighth-century Indian yogin Padmasambhava, who is believed to have concealed it as a religious "treasure" (Tibetan, *gter ma*) so that it could later be revealed at a more appropriate time. The basic texts of this hidden treasure were excavated by an obscure fourteenthcentury "treasure-revealer" (Tibetan, *gter ston*) named Karma Gling pa. His "Tibetan Book of the

Dead" tradition originated and was initially fostered in the southeastern Tibetan region of Dwags po and attracted followers from both the Rnying Ma (Nyingma) and Bka' Brgyud (Kagyu) orders. Its rituals were refined and institutionalized sometime in the late fifteenth century in nearby Kong po, from where it was eventually transmitted throughout other parts of Tibet, Bhutan, Sikkim, Nepal, India, and later Europe and the United States.

The literature of the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* contains esoteric yoga teachings and liturgical directives focused on a *maṇḍala* of one hundred peaceful and wrathful deities and includes detailed religious instructions to be employed at the moment of death and during the perilous intermediate state leading to a new existence. Its combination of ideas and practices are founded upon older conceptions originating in late Indian Buddhist tantra and in Tibetan Buddhist and non-Buddhist indigenous formulations that began to emerge in Tibet around the eleventh century. The literature's fundamental conceptual premises are derived essentially from the religious doctrines of the Great Perfection (Tibetan, *rdzogs chen*) tradition, an innovative Tibetan system standardized in the late fourteenth century and promoted especially by followers of the Rnying ma and non-Buddhist Bon orders. According to this tradition, dying persons and those already deceased are presented during their last moments and in the interim period between lives with a series of diminishing opportunities for recognizing the true nature of reality. It is held that if the dying and deceased are capable of perceiving correctly the confusing and often terrifying death and postmortem visions as mental projections reflective of previous habitual thoughts and karma (action), then enlightened liberation can be attained, leading directly to buddhahood. Failure to recognize the nature of these visions, however, leads eventually to rebirth and further suffering in the cycle of existence. Traditionally, to help the dying and the dead regain clarity of awareness at the moment of death and in the intermediate state, a Lama (Tibetan, *bla ma*) or lay religious specialist will recite guiding instructions and inspirational prayers from the ritual cycle of the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*. The Evans-Wentz edition of the *Tibetan Book of the Dead,* first published in 1927, was compiled from original Tibetan translations drawn up by the Sikkimese teacher Kazi Dawa Samdup (1868–1922). The book includes translations of only a small number of texts belonging to the literary tradition of the *Bar do thos grol chen mo.* The formal arrangement of this small group of texts as a unified and coherent "book" is misleading and obscures the fact that in Tibet

there exists a variety of arrangements of this large ritual and literary cycle, each reflecting a different lineage of transmission and the localized interpretations of specific religious communities. Popular enthusiasm for the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* has grown to such proportions that it now stands arguably as the most famous Tibetan book in the West. The Evans-Wentz edition has gone through numerous reprints in America and Europe, and it has inspired since 1927 several new translations from the original Tibetan texts.

Conclusion

Tibet became one of the last major zones in Buddhist Asia to accept Buddhist ideology and rituals into its culture, which assumed a unique position as the perceived source for true dharma study during the twelfth to the twentieth centuries. Throughout their religious history, Tibetans have emphasized a balance of scholarship, contemplative Meditation, and the indivisibility of religious and secular authority; most of these values were formulated under the aegis of Buddhist tantrism. Tibetan Buddhism matured over the course of fourteen centuries and will be assessed in this entry in phases that, if somewhat contested in scholarly literature, still represent important stages in its development.

Activities

1. Discuss the Schools of Tibetan Buddhism
2. Discuss the Bardo Ritual

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Chapter 8

Concepts and Rituals of Mahayana Traditions in Vietnam

Introduction

This chapter will study about the history of Buddhism in Viet-Nam which has evolved side by side with the history of the country including the development to Modern Buddhism. Influence of Buddhism on the Life and Thought of the Vietnamese, the practicing, and the Buddhist festivals in Vietnam will also be studied briefly.

Topics:

8.1 The Introduction of Buddhism to Vietnam

8.2 Modern Buddhism

8.3 Influence of Buddhism on the Life and Thought of the Vietnamese

8.4 Conception and Practice of Buddhism in Vitenam

8.5 Monastic Life and Festivals

8.1 The Introduction of Buddhism to Vietnam

Buddhism appears to have been introduced in Viet Nam towards the end of the second century by way of China, having been preceded by Confucianism and Taoism. Four hundred years later, when Viet Nam succeeded in freeing itself from Chinese domination, it progressed by leaps and bounds under the patronage of the ruling families. Since then, in spite of the antagonism of other rival religions, it continued to expand almost uniterruptedly both in extent as well as by conviction. During a particular epoch of history, from 968 to 1414 it was given the status of a State religion.

Several emperors of the Ly and Tran dynasties even went so far as to practise what they preached: some as faithful followers, some as monks proper, having abdicated and chosen the monastic way of life. A curious fact, this, and it would indeed be interesting to study it without necessarily digressing from the subject of the present paper.

Vietnamese Buddhism continues to hold this supremacy in our own times, not in public life it is true, but in the hearts of a good majority of the people. It is therefore easy to understand how great an influence the Dharma of Buddha has had on the VietNamese mind, and the generous contribution it has made to the moral and spiritual training of a people whose gentleness and simple outlook on life predisposed them to accept the «Religion of Compassion.»

The dominant trait in the person of the Great Teacher made his teaching known and felt throught the country. The artist, the philosopher and the poet of those days imbibed it and many of those of modern times still continue to draw their inspiration from it.

An European author, tracing back the history of Chiese philosophy[2] wrote: «Buddhism was the first foreign influence which had a powerful bearing on the evolution of Chinese thought; and the effect of such an influence was to rekindle, stimulate and develop to the highest pitch not only the religion but also all the other spheres of its civilisation A casual glance, even by one who is almost completely unaware of the spiritual world of China, at the plastic arts of China shows how completely they stem from the spirit of Buddhism and how wonderfully they blossomed forth during the Buddhist period….» Without going too deeply into the matter, it can be said that this remark can apply word for word to the Vietnamese scheme of things as regards Buddhist influence in VietNam on architecture, sculpture and painting. Those examples which have withstood the ravager of time and the havoc of

war testify to what a degree art developed under this benign influence, as also the interesting and profitable research work done by archoeologists prior to 1945.

But if in some countries and in cetain respects the artist rather than the monks is closer to the community of the faithful in interpreting their interests and daily pursuits, a view which is held by Professor Paul Mus, in Vietnam it is actually the literateurs on whom this task devolves, especially on the poets who are also philosophers of note. That – for reasons which are difficult to explain – is because if the Vietnamese is capable of expressing his wonder at the form and colour of things, cnanot really be deeply stirred except by vibrations of sounds. This tendency makes him an ardent lover of the theatre, of music which is not only instrumental or vocal, but of words whose music is magic to his ears; in other words, Poetry. Hence we seem to have been guided not towards Art but towards Letters which are the true repositories of thoughts – and Letters, only, assuming the rarity of literary works which are either lacking in philosophical reflections or which contribute nothing to the development of moral themes – if one is to know what good Vietnam has derived from her seventeen centuries of conversion to Buddhism.

In order to do that it is necessary to go back to the sixth century when the monastries both centres for the spread of Buddhism as well as schools for training men of letters. There were no public schools and besides there were few young men who were keen to study the Chinese characters apart from the Buddhist monks who were prompted by a desire to delve deep into Chinese translations for the essence of a doctrine which they found wonderful but which failed to satisfy them because they were conveyed orally up to then. The tradition was passed on from one epoch to another so that between 1010 and 1225 during the Ly dynasty it was almost impossible to find a poet with more than average talent outside the religious circle, all the Masters of Dhyana from

the famous School of Meditation stemming from the themes developed by these poet-monks were generally beyond the comprehension of the general public, the work of these monks nevertheless contributed not a little towards raising the prestige of Buddhism which had already gained considerable popularity.

The position was reversed at the beginning of the fifteeth century. The literary figures who were supporters of Confucianism profited by the existing rivalry and supplanted the Buddhists by winning imperial trust and favours. This defeat however was but temporaty. The hold of Buddhism remaied firmly anchored in the minds and hearts of the people and soon became as strong as it had been in earlier times from the birth in China of syncretism whose source also gave rise to Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. The literary luminaries of Vietnam had perforce to submit to it without unduly protesting since after some initial hesitation they firmly admitted, like their Chinese predecessors, that the value of a true culture was based on the possession of the «three teachings.» The result of this for literature and philosophy was to enlarge their sphere of action to say the least.

However, great though the progress was which Buddhism had made during the period under review, as regards literature, it fell far short of that which was made later in the seventeeth and eighteeth centuries following the advent of «Chu-nom» a national calligraphic system which was invented to replace the Chinese characters. This was the golden age: authors and speakers spoke the same language; the obstacles provided formerly by syntax and foreign phonetics having been removed, the translation of thought into speech and writing became direct and rapid. This event provided an enormous stimulus to the spread of syncretism already referred to which it would be good to study.

It must first of all be remembered that even if there had been belief bases on prejudice no religious fanaticism existed either in China or in Vietnam to the point of provoking bloodshed as has happened in some countries. Furthuer, by seeking to know the adversary better in order the better to fight it, the adherents of each camp would have ended by noting existing lacunae in their doctrine and at the same time the identity of certain apparently contradictory declarations. For example, the Confucianist system while stating its belief in an all-powerful heaven, recogises man's personal responsibitity. Weak indeed are the nuances between its tenets and the Buddhist *Karma* that they cannot be reconciled or brought nearer to each other. Besides, Confucianist positivism, whatever one may say, is far too materialistic to satisfy the aspirations common to all men, who in the world is there who does not want to study the beyond, to lift the veil of «after-death» to question the future, and so many other questions to which the Sage's Teachings provide no answer. The poets of the old Vietnam were undoubtedly not indifferent to their metaphysical preoccupations. That is the explanation which appears most plausible to account for the fusion of thoughts of such different origins and which from the point of view of application is proof of the widest rationalism and very straitlaced logic by attributing to each of these religions, a sphere of influence which normally belongs to each. As a general rule, the doctrine of Confucius is responsible for governing earthly affairs (organisation and administration of the family, society, etc.) and for Buddhism and Taoism together to settle problems of a much higher order.

True it is that from the point of view of orthodoxy, such a mixture is hardly desirable but viewed from another angle it must be realised that it has produced – apart from appeasing the restless spirit – beneficial effects on minds and hearts, to say nothing of the fact that it has made it possible for the

masses to understand the elementary ideas which each of the systems in combination needed to spread on their individual behalf.

A detailed study of the poems of the period written in «Chu-nom» – prose works were still very rare – will not fail to reveal the brighter side of that which unsuspecting persons would be tempted to refer to disdainfully as a doctrinal tangle or an unpardonable heresy. A good example of this is KIM VAN KIEU, a masterpiece which enjoys unrivalled popularity because of its lively musical quality, the beauty of its verse which is incomparable, and above all because of its rich treasure-house of thoughts from noble Buddhist inspiration. It would be no exaggeration to state that this poem which elaborates a theme which is akin to the life of the country, has of itself achieved much more than thousands of treatises on morals or philosophy as regards the good fight it led for the triumph of goodness, forgiveness, purity of thoughts, and loftiness of ideals. Even now a hundred years later and in spite of the attractions of modern culture, it still is for some a sort of encyclopoedia of the Vietnamese language or a sort of literary Bible, and for others a civic and moral code, and finally for the whole world a manual of elementary and practical Buddhism. Accepted by all social circles, loved by men and women equally, Kim Van Kieu brought and still brings the light of Salvation to all by drawing attention to the inexorable Karma-ist reactions, by extolling interior peace promised to «those who root out passion from their lives, by putting men on their guard against evil reincarnations if they do evil.» All this may seem very commonplace; but what it asks and no more is simple minds for whom all religions appear to have been founded.

In Vietnam, Buddhist influence is not limited to the realm of Art, Letters and Philosophy. It inspires the theatre, serves as a basis for certain good, customs, inspires stories and legends, provides suggestions for popular songs and proverbs. If Buddhism is the source at which intellectuals quench their

thirst it is also the breast which suckles spirits enamoured of spirituality; it is in its school of wisdom that passion-troubled spirits awaken; it is the Enlightenment of its illustrious founder that Vietnam is learning to find herself, to know herself; finally it is under the roofs of her monasteries that her devotees meditate devoutly and her unfortunates seek consolation.

Because Buddhism is so intimately bound up with the Vietnamese citizens, existence and daily life it has become a vital necessity.

It was a forein religion.

It is a national religion.

The predominant form of Buddhism in Vietnam is a combination of Pure Land and Zen. Zen practice, with its emphasis on meditation is mostly pursued among the monks and nuns, while Pure Land philosophy and practice is preferred by the lay-people.

Truc Lam's Zen Monastery, in South Vietnam's Da Lat City is about 300 km from Ho Chi Minh city. It is located on the Highland which has been famous for its temperate climate and scenery since the time Vietnam was a French Colony.

This is one of the largest Zen meditation study centres in Vietnam, with equally large numbers of nuns and monks. The centre has many English speaking members. The centre is not only popular locally but also among Vietnamese abroad for meditation studies. The centre is under the teaching of the Venerable Thich Thanh Tu, a renowned teacher in meditation over many decades. The Venerable's teachings and lectures are embraced, practiced and circulated in many different forms of media around the world by Vietnamese Buddhist

In the south there is a sizeable minority of Theravadin Buddhist, mainly among the ethic Khmer people (Khmer Krom), but also among the

Vietnamese. Theravadin monks study alongside Mahayana monks at Saigon's Van Hanh Buddhist University.

There is also a unique Vietnamese form of Buddhism which evolved in the southern provinces, and is a successful combination of Theravada and Mahayana. While much of the philosophy is Mahayana, the Sangha (monks and nuns) follow the Vinaya rules (code of ethics) quite strictly, and go on the traditional alms round every day. As for example, the Venerable Minh Dang Quang (see picture) who was the founder of the Vietamese indigenous Buddhist order.

8.2 Modern Buddhism

Starting in 1920, after the manner of similar events in Nationnalist China, a new movement was launched simultaneously in the three main regions of Viet Nam: North, Centre and South. The movement aimed at a regeneration of Buddhism and even serious obstacles were not able to stop it. But it was not until 1931 that the first Association of Buddhist Studies was founded at Saigon Similar associations were founded at Huế in 1932 and Hanoi in 1934.

Each association naturaly had its own programme but, composed as they were of both monks and laymen, it was their task to improve conditions in the monasteries, tighten up discipline, instruct a new generation of monks, who should be both devout and well educated and finally to ensure a wide diffusion of the Doctrine in the language of the country and not, as in the past, through the medium of Chinese characters. With such aims in view many magazines and translations from the Buddhist Canon, both Theravadin (Southern) and Mahayanist (Northern), were published. It is paradoxical that while *Zen* lost its influence it was Amidism that took its place, which it retains at the time of writing.

This movement to revive Buddhism met with success and there was a change of opinion among the intellectuals, who were disillusioned with Western materialism. Many joined the movement and supported it not only financially but also with their help in the work of Buddhist instruction. Unfortunately the second World War just about put a stop to all these efforts but they began again in 1948 when the situation seemed a little clearer. At Hanoi the communities of monks broken up by the war were reformed and the Buddhist community was reorganized, together with the Association of laymen. A year later, thanks to the initiative of Venerable Tố Liên and Trí Hải and the strong support of the laity, an orphanage, a school, a printing press and social works to help the victims of the war raging in the countryside, were also established at Hanoi. Similar reorganization was carried out at Huế. Ruined temples in several places were rebuilt or restored; old publications reappeared and authors and translators went back to work with energy.

Two year later a new Association of Buddhist Studies came into existence at Saigon, to replace the previous one that was no longer active.

On May 6th., 1951, a national Buddhist Congress was held at Huế, attended by about fifty monks and laymen. Important resolutions were passed, concerning the unification of the three Associations, the reorganisation in depth of the Sangha, the standardisation of ceremonies. Buddist instrution for adults and the formation of Buddist youth movements. The Congress further ratified the support given by Venerable Tố Liên, delegate from the North, to the World Fellowship of Buddhists, which came into existence as a result of the first World Congress held at Colombo in 1950.

The second World Congress, held at Tokyo in September 1952, gave to Vietnamese Buddhism, now unified, an opportunity to show its vigour. The Singhalese delegation to this Congress were taking a relic of the Buddha to Japan, aboard the French steamer «La Marseillaise», which had to stop for a

day at Saigon. It was decided to accord a devout reception to this relic and under the auspices of unified Vietnamese Buddhism 50,000 people, who had assembled in less than six days, gave the capital of Vietnam an impressive view of faith, devotion and discipline such as had not been sen before.

This peaceful demonstration had happy results. From the North to the South a reinvigorated Buddhism, warmly acclaimed, was able to broaden its scope and offset the effect of unorthodox sects. Since then social works, shools for monks, private schools under Buddhist auspices and youth organizations have increased and flourished. Progress was made in making known Buddhist thought and it was only the partition of the country into two zones by the Geneva Agreement that hindered still more far-reaching results.

8.3 Influence of Buddhism on the Life and Thought of the Vietnamese

In theory there are three main religions in Vietnam: Taoism, Confucianism and Buddhism; but in fact there is only one, which is an amalgam of these three doctrines, each of which represents a particular aspect of the whole. This state of affairs makes it difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish three separate religious communities among the Vietnamese. There are perhaps some people who follow either Taoism or Buddhism but they are in a minority. The bulk of the popolation remains unprejudiced and is not interested in sectarian distinctions. A Buddhist family for example will visit Taoist temples and perform the rites belonging to the Confucian cult of ancestors.

Though this confusion sometimes fosters superstitious practices and ignorance it also has its good points and exerts a tolerant influence on life and thought. Many scholars are really products of Buddhism, though they do not deny the principles of Confucianism. Even if there is no direct borrowing of ideas many Buddhist concepts such as impermanence, *karma* (action),

causality, rebirth and earthly sufferings are found in their writings, so that there can be little doubt about their common origin.

Buddhism has had a particularly strong effect on morals and behaviour. Even uneducated Vietnamese and non-Buddhists fear the results of bad actions conceiving them in the symbolism of the «Ten Hells» and this fear often makes them avoid such actions, encouraging them instead to be kind. Strengthened by the Five Precepts, or basic morality of Buddhism, it is part of the reason for the gentle manners, which came to pervade Vietnamese life, thanks firstly to the opportunity for happiness out of the ordinary inherent in Amidism. Vegeterianism is followed by the laity on specific dates and is the standard diet for monks. It has the merit of mitigating the sanguinary instinct common to all.

The influece of the three religions is clear in the artistic field, where that of Buddhism is predominant. Architecture, painting and sculpture are often inspired by two of the key ideas of Buddhism, which are Purity and Compassion. The flower of the lotus is a frequent motif and the various representations of Avalokiteshvara are greatly venerated, especially by women.

8.4 Conception and Practice of Buddhism in Vitenam

Though the movement for reform which started in 1920 achieved good results it is still far from reaching the goal put forward by its sponsors. The efforts of these enthusiasts succeeded to some extent in throwing light on the essence of Buddhism and ridding it of certain excrescences. Vietnamese Buddhism remains faithful to the Mahayana tradition, of which the emphasis is on Compassion, as is well known, represented by the Bodhisattva doctrine, based on the exhortation of the Buddha: *«Delivered, deliver; enlightened, enlighten.»* For this reason the supporters of the movement, monks and laity alike, continually try and improve their spiritual life and translate into action

the truths that they have found in the texts. They now see ceremonies and moral precepts for what they are: means to attain wisdom and peace of mind, but not ends in themselves. They have a clear conception of Mahayana symbolism and understand its essence. If they subscribe without reservation to the orthodoxy extolled by the Theravadins, who have had a group in Saigon for a few years now, they also accept the later works based on it by Nagarjuna, Asvaghosa, Vasubandhu and others, as well as Amidism or the Pure Land School, which they know to be the form of meditation most easily accessible to the majority.

8.4.1 Present position of Buddhism

Under this chapter it is dealt with the actual situation of Buddhism in VietNam seen from the standpoint of the General Buddhist Association of Viet-Nam. This Association, as compared with other coexisting groups, is by far the most important, the best organized, the only dynamic and also the only one that is officially recognized as being fully qualified to represent the millenary Buddhism of the country. For these purposes, it would not be necessary to mention further, still it is the only organization that reflects faithfully the genuine picture of the Vietnamese Buddhism.

Moreover, it should be noted that the General Buddhist Association of Viet-Nam (G.B.A) is a menber of the World Fellowship of Buddhists since the foundation of this latter in 1950 at Colombo. It has thus attended several international Buddhist conferences and is in good relation with numerous Buddhist countries in the world.

Organization.- Under the GBA's authority and general direction, are grouped, on the one hand, 3 Sanghas numbering well over 3.000 monks and about 600 nuns, on the other hand, three communities of disciples which branch out their ramification as far as to remote hamlets. The figures of adherents to these three legally constituted about 1,000,000, to which it shoud

be added an important number of no-associate disciples by as much as threefold.

The responsibility is assigned as follows: the Sanghas are responsible for all spiritual tasks and to the lay communities comes the duty of relieving the religious from all material preoccupations.

Propagation of the Dharma.- For the spiritual training of both associates and non associates, the propagation of the *Dharma* is organized on a large scale: weekly lectures in Saigon, periodical conferences in the provinces with movies utilization of radio – cars equipped with movies projectors, wide dissemination of magazines and vernacular pamphlets coming out of the GBA's press with a monthly rhythm of 30,000 copies. In addition, special courses are open, in Saigon and in its vicinities for commencing, to the intention of people who need a higher knowledge of the Doctrine. Activity of this kind is also assisted by the presence of numerous libraries provided with or without reading rooms.

Formation of cadres.- The foregoing activities raised the problem of cadres resulting from the increasing of cadres resulting from the increasing number of monastic schools (4 in 1956, 10 in 1962) and the creation of a Preaching Corps without mentioning the sending of young monks abroad to attend perfection courses (3 at Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, 4 in Japan).

In monastic schools, the educational program is mixed, there the students learn canonical texts and the official curriculum as well. Many of them are attending or already terminated their high study at the Saigon and Hue Universities.

Buddhist Youth.- Lay youths, aged from 8 to 20 years, are incorporated in a Youth Movement, known under the name of *Gia dinh Phat tu* (Buddhist Family).

Etablished in 1940, this widespreading Movement aims to give these youths a religious education, susceptible to make them, later on, fervent buddhists, practitioners, capable of sacrifices for the maintenance and expansion of their parents' religion, to become honest citizens and useful to the society.

After 23 years of existence, this Movement, benevolently conducted by a 3,000 trainer Corps, numbers about 70,000 youngsters and unequally dividing into 1.000 groups from the city to the country. One fouth of these youngsters attend private, primary and secondary schools established by lay associations, and their brilliant success at different examinations began to attract the attention of the public.

Social welfare.- Other efforts have been realized in the social welfare sphere, for instance the installation of sanitary units (clinics, dispensaries, maternities). Among these, the clinic at the Xa loi Pagoda, GBA's head-office, is most important, where free medical cares are distributed to over 200 poor patients daily. It is conducted by a Doctor, member of the Association of Saigon, assisted by two young monks working as nurses and five specialists physicians for particular cases.

Two day-nurseries are functioning in Saigon and Dalat, where nuns gratuitously take care of the children from workers' families, without discrimination of race nor distinction of religion.

Every week on Thursday, a Committee of Dames visit either a hospital or a maternity in Saigon to bring comfort and material aid to needy patients.

To these social works, which are created, conducted and financed by members of lay communities, it should be added the special relief works contributed by both rich and poor to the benefit of victims of public disasters, more particularly fires which are frequent.

8.5 Monastic Life and Festivals

Vietnam was and still is a profoundly Buddhist country. The Sangha are very involved in the community, and temples often run schools, orphanages, medical clinics, and homes for the disabled. Lay people play an important role in religious life. Because of historical circumstances, Vietnamese Buddhists have faced much persecution in the last fifty years.

Most monks and nuns enter at a young age, and within the temples, education is greatly valued and encouraged. Most Vietnamese Sangha go to university, and now some hold jobs as teachers, doctors, lawyers and journalists. Many are also proficient in foreign languages, especially Chinese and English.

The main Buddhist festivals are Vesak (Buddha's Birthday) and Vulan (Ullambana). Vietnamese traditionally visit the temple on the fifteenth day of the Lunar month (Ram), and also in the various festival days of the Mahayana Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Committed lay people go through a formal ceremony of "taking refuge", where they are given a Buddhist name. They wear a traditional grey costume over their normal clothes when they go to the temple, to signify their status as serious Buddhists. There is a large and well organised lay youth movement called "Gia Dinh Phat Tu" (Lit: Family of Buddha's children) which is similar to the scouts. The official American name of the organization is "Vietnamese Buddhist Youth Association". This organization has an official website in Vietnamese at: www.gdpt.net.

There is great equality between monks and nuns, as there is between men and women throughout Vietnamese society. Monks are addressed as "Thay" (Teacher), Nuns as "Su Co" (Sister). All Sangha take the name "Thich", to signify that they have left their worldly family, and have joined the family of the Buddha. Buddhists greet each other by placing their palms

together at chest level and saying, "Mo Phat" (Praise Buddha). An alternative form of greeting is to recite the name of Amitabha Buddha.

During colonial times, many hybrid Buddhist sects evolved, and most are still active today, especially among overseas Vietnamese communities. These include Hoa Hoa, a lay-based, militant, form of Buddhist Protestantism, and Cao Dai, a Vietnamese attempt to combine the worlds great religions, which emphasises prophecy and ritual, and is organised along the lines of the Catholic church, with a Holy See, Popes, and Cardinals, etc.

8.5.1 Effects On Vietnamese Life

Buddhism today retains a deep influence on the mass of the people and its effects go far beyond religion, touching on behavior, the arts, and craft forms. Buddhism presented to Vietnam a new look at the universe, the individual and life. It had a particularly strong effect on morals and behavior. All the arts show the Buddhist influence. The creation of Buddha's image affected the arts of the entire Far East, for giving human characteristics to Buddha's image and to those of the Bodhisattvas opened up a whole new field in the arts. Episodes from the life and teachings of Buddha as well as the effects of good and evil deeds have been the subjects for paintings, engravings and murals. Sculpture, painting and architecture often have been inspired by two key virtues of Buddhism; purity and compassion.

Buddhism also served as a vehicle for bringing Indian and Chinese art to Vietnam, and influenced designs in lacquer work, weaving, embroidery, jewelry and metal work. Most of the prose and poetry of the first independent national dynasty was written by Buddhist monks who exchanged their verse with the great poets of China.

The spiritual warmth and brilliance which drew thousands of followers to Buddha during his life and has drawn millions since, is illustrated in the

literature based on his teachings and parables. One of the best known has become a folk tale allover the world: "What Is An Elephant?"

Nguyen Du's famous poem, "Kim Van Kieu," based on the teachings of Buddha, has been popular for more than a century. Vietnamese children memorize long passages from its 3,254 verses. One of the main factors that made it popular is its treatment of Karma.

The effect of Buddhism on Vietnamese life was summed up in Buddhism in Vietnam by Chanh-Tri and Mai Tho-Truyen: "In Vietnam, Buddhist influence is not limited to the realm of art, letters and philosophy. It inspires the theater, serves as a guide for certain good customs, inspires stories and legends, provides suggestions for popular songs and proverbs."

In Vietnam the fourth day of the 15th lunar month, which normally comes in April or May, is observed as Buddha's birthday. It is a national holiday. The same day is commonly observed as the date of his death and of his enlightenment, although the eighth day of the 12th month is officially observed as the date of his enlightenment.

The first and 15th days of each lunar month are Buddhist holy days.

Buddhism was introduced into Vietnam in the second century A.D., and was spread for the next four centuries by Chinese and Indian monks. This was the first of three stages in the spread of Buddhism in Vietnam. Buddhism reached its greatest heights in Vietnam in the second stage which ran roughly from the seventh to the 14th centuries. With expulsion of the Chinese in 939, Confucian scholars with their Chinese education were exiled temporarily from political life and Buddhism received official support. A second reason for its growth was that pagodas also served as repositories of culture.

Between 1010 and 1214, the Ly dynasty made Buddhism a state religion. Monks were used as advisers in all spheres of public life, a Buddhist hierarchy established, and many temples and pagodas built. This was the high-water mark for official support of Buddhism. By the close of the eleventh century, Buddhism has planted its roots so deeply in Vietnamese culture that it was no longer considered an imported religion. It had been the court religion; now it had filtered down to the villages and hamlets. Here mixed with Confucianism and Taoism it has become an indigenous part of the popular beliefs of the people.

The decline of Buddhism began with this adulteration of the pure religion and progressed with the lessening of official support. In the 15th century the rulers again favored Confucianism which continued as the more influential religion in public life until the present century.

The admixture of the three religions, Taoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism, continued and formed the religion of many Vietnamese. Rites and practices of animism also influenced popular beliefs.

A revival of the purer forms of Buddhism and the establishment of an Association of Buddhist Studies in Saigon in 1931 were halted by Word War II. Centers of Buddhist revival were opened also in Hanoi and Hue, where the movement became strongest.

Since 1948, although with temporary setbacks, Vietnamese Buddhist groups have strengthened their organizations, developed lay and youth activities, worked toward unifying the various branches and sects, and joined the World Buddhist Organization.

This brief statement on modern Buddhism in Viet-Nam shows the enormous efforts performed by both religious and laities of a country which is practically in war since 1940, to maintain not only their faith but also to

develop and give it a vitality conformable to the fundamentals of Buddhism: the Compassion. This effort is more meritorious especially as it is fulfilled with their own means only without any external aid.

The social reformative tendency inspired by all activities of the General Buddhist Association is a hilarious initiative. It is quite sure that with the return of peace, more encouraging results will be obtained to the mightiest glory of Buddha.

Activity:

1. Read more information about Buddhism contribution to literatures and philosophy

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Chapter 9

Mahāyāna Buddhism in Thailand

Introduction

This chapter will study the history of Buddhism in ancient Thai, and Mahāyāna Buddhism in Ratanakosin Period including the faith and impact of Mahāyāna Budhhism in Thailand briefly.

Topics:

9.1 Buddhism In Ancient Thailand

9.2 Buddhism in the Thai Kingdom

9.3 Mahāyāna Buddhism In the Ratanakosin (Bangkok) Period

9.1 Buddhism in Ancient Thailand

As has already been pointed out, a group of missionary bhikkhus was sent by King Aśoka to the remote countries of the Indo-China Peninsula. This group was conducted by the Venerables Sona and Uttara. In the course of their journey by land from India they must have first passed Burma before going on to other south-eastern countries. In Thailand, the antiquities at the town of Nakhon Pathom, 50 kilometres west of Bangkok, seem to give practical evidence as to where Buddhism first settled down. These include stone inscriptions, Buddha images, the Buddha's Footprints and the great Pagoda itself which, if stripped of its later-constructed top, would be of the same design as the stupas of the great King Aśoka at the town of Sanchi, in India.

It was at first doubtful as to how the missionary bhikkhus would have managed to make themselves understood by the people of the places they landed at or reached. But in the case of the two holy ones who arrived in Thailand that time, it was rather fortunate for them that there had been Indian

traders and refugees living all along the Malay and Indo-China Peninsulas. Some of these Indian tribes were known to have fled from Aśoka's invasion before he was converted to Buddhism by the horrors of war. Therefore it is not without reason to say that the first preaching of the Message would at first have been among the Indian themselves and then, through these Indian interpreters, to the people of the country, who at that time are supposed to have been a racial stock of people known as the Mon-Khmers and Lawas.

9.1.1 The Fu-Nan Period

We have learnt how Buddhism prospered in the Indo-China Peninsula, which to some extent may rightly be called Suvannabhūmi (lit. the Golden Land). The inhabitants of this region at the time, however, were supposed to be the Mon-Khmers and 'Lawa', whose superiors, or rulers, were either the Indians themselves or of Indian blood or lineage by marriage. From this fact it was certain that Indian culture and civilization were prevailing all over the land. Thus, with the exclusion of the north-east, which is now the northern part of Vietnam, Theravāda Buddhism had spread all over the Indo-China Peninsula and when, in course of time, the Burmese and the Thais evacuated from Tibet and Yunnan, they were also impressed with Buddhism and later on adopted it as their religion.

With the rise of the Mahāyāna school in India in the sixth century B.E., missionaries were sent abroad both by sea and by land. Travelling by land they made their journey through Bengal and Burma, while on their sea voyages they first landed on the Malay Peninsula and in Sumatra, from whence they made the second part of their voyage to Cambodia. Also during this time there arose a 'Fu-Nan' or Phanom Kingdom, covering the land of Cambodia and also the north-eastern and central areas of Thailand. The people of this Fu-Nan Kingdom are known to have professed the two schools of Buddhism, viz. Theravāda and Mahāyāna. So much so that in the tenth century B.E. some Fu-Nan bhikkhus were recorded as having gone forth to China for the purpose of studying and translating the Buddhist texts there. Of these courageous bhikkhus, the most well-known were Sanghapāla and Mandarasena.

But the Fu-Nan kingdom was, in the eleventh century B.E., on the decline and was eventually overrun and defeated by one of her own colonies, the Jen-La

Kingdom. This also brought about a halt, if not a deterioration, in the progress of Buddhism in this land.

9.1.2The Dvāravatī Period

During the eleventh century B.E., when Buddhism was more or less affected by the decline of the Fu-Nan Kingdom the Mons, who lived in the territory of Chao Phya River, took the opportunity to declare themselves independent and build up the 'Dvāravatī' kingdom. Due to its once having been a seat of culture and civilization, the new kingdom made rapid progress in the arts and religion. It was also unique in maintaining and strictly observing the doctrine of Theravāda Buddhism learned from one of Aśoka's missionary groups. Since it had close contact with the Indians of the Ganges, Buddhist art of this period was very much like that of the Kupta dynasty Pathom up to Lop Buri and Lamphun.of India. The capital, or centre of the Dvāravatī Kingdom must have been in the present town of Nakhon Pathom. But in the following, i.e. the twelfth, century B.E. the kingdom extended upwards – firstly to the town of Lop Buri and then to the northern provinces of Thailand. One evidence of this fact was that Queen Cāmadevī, who was a Mon of the Dvāravatī period, became the ruler of the town of Haribhunjaya, or the present town of Lamphun (some 700 kilometres north of Bangkok) and had invited 500 bhikkhus, all well-versed in the Canon, to preach their doctrine to her people. This was one reason why the Theravāda Buddhism of Dvāravatī had gained ground in the northern provinces of Thailand at that time. (It was also then in the possession of the Thais evacuating from Yunnan.) The Mons' domination over the northern region lasted for many centuries and inscriptions in ancient Mon characters can be found from the town of Nakhon

In the fourteenth century B.E. the Jen-La kingdom was replaced by the ancient Khmer (Cambodian) kingdom, which also expanded its territory into some parts of the Dvāravatī Kingdom, with the exclusion of the latter's north and north-eastern provinces.

9.1.3The Śrīvijaya Period

During the time the Dvāravatī kingdom was still flourishing there were in the south of Thailand several states, two of which, as mentioned in the Chinese record, were Siah-Tho (Red Earth) and Phan Phan. The former was situ

at years. Evidence of this may be found in that in the town Bara-Link, there is a rock inscription in Sanskrit characters dated as far back as B.E. 1318 (715 A.D.), mentioning the suzerainty of a Śrīvijaya king. Also, in the fifteenth cened somewhere near the state of Sai Buri, in the Federated Malay States (some archaeologists also confirm that this state was somewhere near the town of Madrid in Burma). Its people professed Buddhism. The latter town was what is now Surat Thani in Thailand (some 650 kilometres south of Bangkok). Its people were said to have accepted Theravāda Buddhism as their faith. These states used to have close communications with the Dvāravatī. In the twelfth century B.E. there arose in Sumatra a Śrīvijaya kingdom, whose dominating power and territory, extending to the Malay Peninsula, was bordered by that of the Dvāravatī kingdom. In these states during this time, however, Śrāvakayāna Buddhism, according to the Chinese missionary I-Ching's record, was still flourishing, since their rulers and people firmly adhered to the rules and the practices of the doctrine. But when the Pāla dynasty of Magadha-Bengal began its rise to power, Mahāyāna Buddhism, especially the Mantrayāna sect, was energetically patronized, and since the country also came into contact with the equally mighty kingdom of Śrīvijaya, now in control of the southern seas and the Malay Peninsula, the Mahāyāna sect was accepted by the Śrīvijaya kingdom as their faith for the next five hundred of Nakhon Si Thammarat, which was then known as Tam-tury B.E., there was mentioned a great religious teacher of Tibet, called Dīpankara Atisha, who for 12 years had his residence at the Dhamma-Kīrti in Sumatra. Next to thesecan be seen the Vihāra of Borobudur in Javā, of which there is now no further question regarding the greatness of its constructor. Especially in Thailand, several places of worship, such as the pagoda or Chedi enshrining the Buddha relics at the town of Chaiya and the innermost Chedi within the Ceylonese style Chedi at the town of Nakhon Si Thammarat are, among many others, un-deniable evidences of Śrīvijaya influence accompanied by the Mahāyāna Buddhism of those days.

These evidences, along with several others, tell us that there were two periods when Śrīvijaya influence was spread overseas to the land of Kam-Bhoo-Ja (Cambodia) and to her colonies in the present Chao Phya River territory. The first period was in the thirteenth century B.E., whereas the second one was in the middle of the sixteenth century. King Suriya Varaman the First (B.E. 1546-1592) of Cambodia was also of Śrīvijaya lineage and this was the reason why Mahāyāna culture once flourished in the countries of Thailand and Cambodia from the thirteenth century B.E.

9.1.4 The Lop Buri Period

The period of the fifteenth to the eighteenth century B.E., when Cambodian influence was predominant in Thailand, was called the Lop Buri period. Some of these Cambodian kings, however, were Buddhists while others were Brahmanists. As for the Buddhism then prevailing, there were mentioned both Theravāda and Mahāyāna: the former not so ardently supported as the latter, since north of Bangkok). These were all made according to the belief of Mantrayāna Buddhism, which was later on the breeding ground of a sort of 'black' magic that was added to the corpus of Buddhism in neighbouring countries as well as in Thailand.most Kings were inspired by Mahāyāna Buddhism, which had struck firm roots in this soil since the Fu-Nan period. Though it was on the decline for some time during the Dvāravatī period, it was subsequent to the decline of the Dvāravatī kingdom that the Mantrayāna sect of the Mahāyāna School was adopted from Śrīvijaya and quickly became the dominating power in Cambodia and in some parts of Thailand, such as in the central plains and the north-eastern tableland. The well-known rock temple at the town of Phimai (on the north-eastern tableland) bears evidence of the dominating power of this Mahàyàna sect. This is supposed to have been built in the sixteenth century B.E., while the triple 'prang' (a kind of pagoda) at Lop Buri was also known to be dedicated to Mahāyāna Buddhism. Besides, a countless number of Buddha amulets were found in several towns of Thailand, such as in the town of Nakhon Si Thammarat (some 800 kilometres south of Bangkok), Lop Buri, Suphan Buri and Sawankhalok (some 500 kilometres north of Bangkok). These were all made according to the belief of Mantrayāna Buddhism, which was later on the breeding ground of a sort of 'black' magic that was added to the corpus of Buddhism in neighbouring countries as well as in Thailand.

9.2 Buddhism in the Thai Kingdom

Buddhism as a movement in Thailand had always undergone development and dealt with various obstacles according to the situation of the country that patronized it. Generally speaking, when a country is peaceful and safe from outside enemies, the Buddha light is aglow and the study and practice of Buddhism is always encouraged by the public as well as by the king or rulers. But when a country is in decline, although the spirit of Buddhism – the Buddha light within – may still be shining in the hearts of the people, Buddhism as a

movement is inevitably more or less affected. The teaching of the history of Buddhism in Thailand therefore, is not possible without referring to the periods when each dynasty ruled over the country and when the capital was moved generally southward, for the sake of security and in search of a better, more productive land.

9.2.1 The Ai-Lao Period

The 'Ai-Lao' kingdom of the Thais, in the province of Yunnan, so far as we learn from history, was founded in the fifth century B.E. and in the following century Buddhism was believed to have reached China. Meanwhile, one of the Thai kings of the Ai-Lao, called Khun Luang Mao, (there were at that time several independent tribes of the Thais) was known to have formally declared himself as a Buddhist. This was the first Thai ruler to make himself known as an upholder of Buddhism, which was presumably Śrāvakayāna rather than Mahāyāna; but whether or not it was really the Theravāda school is still an unsettled question. (The Śrāvakayāna was – according to its history in Pāli and Sanskrit texts – subdivided into eighteen smaller groups.)

9.2.2 The Nan-Chao Period

Towards the close of the seventh century B.E. the Thais, in conflict with the Chinese, chose to migrate southwards to the Indo-China Peninsula. Then there arose a Thai King whose name was Pi-lok, who founded the Nan-Chao Kingdom, which lasted five centuries, with its capital at the town of Ta-Li-Foo. It was during this time that Mahāyāna Buddhism, upheld by the Tang dynasty of China, was also believed to have flourished in Thailand. One of the tributes paid to a king of the Sung dynasty was known to be a text of the Vajra Prajñā-Pāramitā sūtra which, of course, was definitively of Mahāyāna origin.

But in the following century (the eighteenth) the Nan-Chao Kingdom was overrun by Kublaikhan's army. This was the cause of further migration southward of the free-spirited Thais and they consequently came into contact with those of their compatriots who had previously settled in the Indo-China Peninsula.

9.2.3 The Chiang Saen Period

The Chiang Saen or Yo-Nok (16th-21st century B.E.) was founded in the sixteenth century B.E. by Thais migrating from their Ai-Lao kingdom. They seemed, however, to have at this time a more cosmopolitan outlook in their religious beliefs, for while some were known still to be ardent supporters of the Buddhism of their former kingdom (Ai-Lao), others adhered strongly to the Theravāda of the Mons, others to the Mahāyāna of Cambodia and still others to the Mahāyāna of the Nan-Chao kingdom. But in the course of time, some parts of the kingdom were under the suzerainty of the Burmese, who had been used to adopting and re-adopting the various faiths that reached their land. They, as well as the Thais, first professed the Theravāda Buddhism of the Mons and then changed to the Mantrayāna sect of the Mahāyāna school, which reached Burma from Bengal in India. Then, in the sixteenth century B.E., when King Anoradha of Burma re-adopted the former Theravāda as his faith, the seat of Buddhism was at the town of Phu-Kam (or Pagan), where Theravāda Buddhism had had its golden days. This led to a misunderstanding by some historians, who concluded that the Buddhism then belonged to another system of thought and practice and therefore incorrectly named it 'Theravāda of the Pagan Style'. In fact, it was none other than the former School of the Mons, which had once been on the decline and was afterwards revived during the great King Anoradha's reign.

Due to the efforts of his mighty forces the north-western part of Thailand and some of the towns on the Chao Phya River were also under his power. The town of Nakhon Pathom was also overrun during his reign. Thus, Theravāda Buddhism also gained ground in these parts of the land, but owing to their being so accustomed to their former practices, Mahāyāna Buddhism was still firmly adhered to by those who had once been under Cambodian power.

9.2.4 The Lankāvaṃśa (Ceylon) Period

In the seventeenth century B.E. there reigned in Ceylon a great king, whose name was Parakkamabahu. Being himself a devoted follower of the Buddha, he had dedicated much of his personal property and his own happiness to the promotion of Buddhism in his land. His unique achievement was that he had managed to unite the bhikkhus of various sects who had some minor doctrinal differences and also had them convene a Council of well-versed Theras (or Elders) for the sake of settling on the contents of the three Baskets of the

Buddhist Canon, as had been done previously in Ceylon and India. Due to the success of this Council, the Pāli language was once again revised and proclaimed as the formal language for the research and study of Buddhism. His fame having spread far and wide to foreign lands, several Buddhist countries, such as Burma and Thailand, then sent out groups of bhikkhus to further their study of Buddhism in Ceylon. Seeing with their own eyes how the Ceylonese bhikkhus were well-behaved and well-grounded in theirtaught his people, they were always backed by his own example.

Thus, with the rise of Ceylonese Buddhist culture under the devoted king's patronage came the decline of the once flourishing school of Mahāyāna. This was undoubtedly due to doctrinal as well as disciplinary differences in the several major practices and ideals. The former Theravāda School, not differing widely in spirit and modes of practice held its ground for the time being, but finally had to give way and assimilate itself with the more influential Lankāvaṃśa party. Obviously this movement bears a paramount and lasting influence upon the Buddhist disciplinary practice from then to the present time. One practical evidence to be seen even today is that around the Uposatha, or the main shrine of several Aramas or temples, both in the Sukhothai and the Chakri (the present dynasty) period there can be found sets of two, or even three, boundary stones set up within an arched stone canopy. This was possibly because of an aversion on the part of the Ceylonese bhikkhus to performing religious rites within the former boundary stone which, to them, might not have been correctly built or formally erected in strict accordance with the disciplinary rules. Therefore they had one, or even two more, built and formally erected according to their own standard of belief. That most of the royal Aramas or temples in Bangkok today can be seen with two or three blocks of boundary stones is evidence of how deep-rooted were the establishment of Lankāvaṃśa ideals in Thailand.

9.2.5 The Sukhothai Period

The eighteenth century B.E. saw the decline of Cambodian power, which paved the way firstly for the independence of the Thais and then to the establishment of the Sukhothai kingdom by the free Thais under the leadership of Poh-Khun (Lord or chief) Intrathit and Ban Muang. The people of Sukhothai professed Buddhism, both Mahāyāna and Theravāda, while those of the north-east and of Nakhon Si Thammarat in the south, being independent of Sukhothai, adhered firmly to Theravāda. In the reign of the great King Ramkamhaeng, third

king of the Sukhothai lineage, the kingdom was greatly extended as far north as the town of Luang Phra Bang and as far south as the Malay Peninsula. In the East it was bordered by the river Mae Khong and in the west it annexed the whole of the Mon kingdom. The flood of Śrīvijaya power was now ebbing, due to the downward press of the Thais together with the upward press of Javā. And, just as before, with the ebbing away of military power came the decline of its accepted faith. Thus, it was now the turn of Theravāda to gain spiritual power over the people, whereas the Mahāyāna sects of Cambodia and Śrīvijaya, having once risen to power together, would now share equally their declining days.

Now that the Lankāvaṃśa Buddhism was well patronized by King Ramkamhaeng of the Sukhothai dynasty, it finally dominated the existing beliefs of the Theravāda and Mahāyāna. Sanskrit, the language held sacred by the Mahàyanists, was accordingly replaced by Pāli, the sacred language of the Theravādins and the Lankāvaṃśa. The study of Pāli was certainly at that time greatly enhanced – so much so that one of the later kings of the Sukhothai dynasty, called Phya Lithai, was counted among well-known Pāli Scholars as one who was widely famed for his experience in Buddhist study and devotion to its way of life. He had also crystallized his research into the form of a book called, in Thai, Triphoom Phra Ruang, which is considered to be the earliest manuscript of Thailand. Its index and bibliography tell us how extensive his research was and how well-known he was among Buddhist scholars of that time. From a book by a lady called Nophamas, presumably one of the lesser queens of the Sukhothai kings, there were ample evidences of how Buddhism was at that time flourishing – both in study and in practice.

One of the stone inscriptions (B.E. 1835) from the reign of the great King Ramkamhaeng tells us further that the Buddhist hierarchy of Ceylon was also adopted in Thailand. In another inscription (B.E. 1904) from the reign of the later King Lithai of Sukhothai there was mentioned a partriarch of Ceylon, Mahā Swāmī, being invited to be the partiarch Mahā Sangha Rāja of Thailand. Also in his reign it was recorded that the bhikkhus were divided into two groups, viz. the Gāmavāsī – those living together within the towns (or villages) and the Araññavāsī – those living alone in the forest. This system must have originated from the two aspects of the study of Buddhism in the scriptures, viz. Ganthadhura – the business of learning (or book-studying) and Vipassanādhura – the business of practising or meditating for the development of Insight. These

two categories of bhikkhus, though not formally divided, may actually still be seen, even in the present time.

Throughout the Sukhothai period Buddhism had played a very important role as the foundation of culture, architecture and Buddha image construction, some evidences of which may be seen in the exquisite worksmanship displayed in the images of the Buddha, called Jinaraj, in the grand temple of Phitsanulok, 400 kilometres north of Bangkok and Jinasri, in the temple of Pavaranivesa in Bangkok. The star of the Sukhothai, however, had by then risen for one hundred and twenty years and from that time it began to gradually fall, until the kingdom was finally annexed to Ayutthaya.

9.2.6 The Chiang Mai Period

While one of the Thai tribes of the Chao Phya River was founding the Sukhothai kingdom, another tribe in the north-western tableland, called Lannā, was also successful in driving out the Mon influence from the river Ping. In the nineteenth century B.E. King Meng-Rai, of the ancient Chiang San dynasty, was known to have defeated King Ye-Ba, the Mon king of the town of Lamphun, and later built his capital at Chiang Mai. During this time the Theravāda Buddhism of Ceylon had been brought from its flourishing states in the Mon country and in Sukhothai to the north-western tableland, but was not able to take firm root there. In the twentieth century B.E., through the royal order of King Kue-Na, several Lankāvaṃśa bhikkhus, both from Moulmein (Mau-Ta-Ma) and from Sukhothai, were invited to Chiang Mai (750 km north of Bangkok) to preach their doctrine. Of these bhikkhus, along with their followers one, named Ananda, was from the town of Mau-Ta-Ma in the Mon country and the other, called Sumana, was from Sukhothai.

In the following century (B.E. 2020) under the auspices of King Tilokaraj the Thirteenth of the Chiang Mai dynasty and under the leadership of Dharmadinna Thera, a general Council of Bhikkhus, which lasted one year, was convened at the Mahā Bodhivaṃśa Vihāra. Practically, this was the first Council held in Thailand and reflected the intensive study of Buddhism during that time. A collection of Pāli texts compiled by the Theras of that glorious age were now prized by those who wished to further their research of Buddhism in the Pāli language. Some of these texts were: Abhidhammayojanā, Mūlakaccāyanayojanā, Vinayayojanā, Vessantaradīpanī and

Mangalatthadīpanī. In the following (twenty-second) century Chiang Mai was taken by the Burmese and from that time on it became an unhappy town, alternately torn by two superior powers, i.e. Burma to her north and the kingdom of Ayutthaya to her south.

9.2.7 The Ayutthaya Period

Towards the close of the nineteenth century B.E., which witnessed the decline of the Sukhothai kingdom, King U-thong of Suphannaphum, once under Sukhothai domination, proclaimed his state as independent of Sukhothai power and built up his capital at a town called Si Ayutthaya, south of Sukhothai. This kingdom, which lasted for 411 years, was ruled over by 33 kings.

After more than four centuries comprising the age of the Ayutthaya kingdom, Theravāda Buddhism in Thailand seemed to have reached its zenith of popularity. Within and without the city of Ayutthaya there were scattered innumerable temples and pagodas, which served as places of education, hospitals and general meeting places, thereby exerting a great influence on the spiritual life of the people. Buddhist art, both in the field of architecture and in Buddha image construction, flourished. An illustrative example of this fact may be seen today in the Temple of the Footprints at Saraburi. There was also a tradition, which is still in practice today, for every young Thai man to be ordained at least once as a bhikkhu. Several kings, including Phra Borom Trai Lokanatha, the eighth king, in following the example set by King Lithai of the Sukhothai period, temporarily renounced the throne to be ordained as bhikkhus.

During the reign of Phra Borom-Kote, the thirty-first king of the Ayutthaya kingdom, there reigned in Ceylon a king named Kitti-Siri-Raj-Singha who, being discouraged by the decline of Buddhism in his island country and learning that the Buddhism of Thailand was purer than that of any other country, sent forth his religious embassy to the Thai king asking, as a favour, for some Thai bhikkhus to revive the spirit of Theravāda Buddhism, which had almost died out in his land. This was a good occasion, enabling Thailand to repay her debt to Ceylon and the Venerable Upāli, together with his followers, was sent to Ceylon. Thus, the community of Ceylonese bhikkhus ordained then by the Thai bhikkhus has ever since been called Upāli-Vaṃśa or Siam-Vaṃśa. It is a well-known and highly revered sect in Ceylon.

The religious literature of Ayutthaya abounded in both Pāli and Thai languages, but most of it was most regrettably destroyed when the kingdom was ruthlessly overrun by the enemy in B.E. 2310 (1767 A.D.).

9.2.8 The Thon Buri Period

There is not much to say about Buddhism in the short-lived Thon Buri period (B.E. 2310-2325 or 1767-1782 A.D.). During the prelude of fifteen years, a greater part of which was occupied in driving out the enemy and restoring the peaceful situation of the country, what could be done was merely a general revival of Buddhism and the compiling of new texts and other measures for the propagation of Buddhism. During his reign King Thon Buri had several temples repaired, monastic rules settled, religious texts collected and the study and practice of Buddhism revived to some degree. With regard to such texts as the Tripiṭaka, the Commentaries and Sub-commentaries, which had been destroyed by fire, he had them borrowed or copied from those of neighbouring countries, such as Cambodia. However, it is safe to say that Theravāda Buddhism – in the form of that of the Ayutthaya period – still prevailed in the Thon Buri period.

9.2.9 The Ratanakosin (or Bangkok) Period

King Rama I

The reign of King Rama I of the Chakri dynasty began in the year B.E. 2325, with the town of Bangkok as its capital. Although there were some wars with outward enemies, he often managed to find time to encourage the study and practice of Buddhism. Numerous temples, both inside and outside the capital, were repaired. Of these temples, the Jetuvana Vihara (or Wat Pho, in the vernacular), which ranks among the most important, had undergone seven years of repair and the well-known Wat-Phra-Keo (Temple of the Emerald Buddha), which is regarded as the most important temple in Thailand, was also built during his reign. From the deserted northern provinces, such as from Sukhothai, a number of Buddha images (about two thousand in all) were brought in order to be preserved and enshrined in the Uposatha of various temples in Bangkok.

In B.E. 2331 a Council of Bhikkhus was convened for the sake of – as before – settling on the contents ofthe Tripiṭaka and having those chosen passages written down with styluses in books made of corypha palm leaves. Such books were numbered 345 in all, i.e. 80 for the Vinaya, 160 for the Suttas, 61 for the Abhidhamma and 53 for the Saddavisesa texts. The Council, held at

the present Wat Mahadhat under the chairmanship of a Supreme Patriarch (whose name was Sri), lasted five months. The participants were 218 bhikkhus, together with 32 lay scholars. This was the second council held in Thailand.

Religious literature during King Rama I's reign was compiled both in Pāli and in Thai. Of these, one work – a Pāli treatise called Sangītiyavaṃśa – was written by Somdech Phra Vanarat of Jetuvana Temple.

King Rama II

King Rama II, formerly called Phra Buddha Lert Lah, came to the throne in B.E. 2352. Buddhist activities during his time were notable in sending a religious goodwill mission group to Ceylon and organizing the research and study of Buddhism. It was during this time that the course for studying Buddhism in Pāli language was divided into nine grades, such as had once been done in the Ayutthaya period. Other activities included the repairing of existing temples and the building of new ones. The latter included the Prang of Wat Arun (Temple of the Dawn), symbolic of Thailand for all foreigners.

King Rama III

Phra Nang Klao, the third of the Chakri dynasty, succeeded his father in B.E. 2367. Having a natural bent for architecture, besides being a pious king himself, he had more temples built, both inside and outside Bangkok. The temple of Jetuvana, in the reign of King Rama I, became a treasury of religious knowledge for Buddhist scholars and the symbolic 'Prang' of Bangkok was completed to perfection in his reign. Also, two groups of goodwill missionary bhikkhus, one after the other, were sent to Ceylon. His piety in Buddhism may be seen in his pioneer undertaking to translate the Pāli Tripiṭaka and some other Pàli texts into Thai. However, his reign came to an end before this was completed.

In B.E. 2372 there was a religious movement which marked a cornerstone for the study and practice of Buddhism in Thailand – the birth of the Dhammayutta group of bhikkhus. This was due to Prince Monkut, the King's younger brother, who had been ordained as a bhikkhu for 27 years. Through this long period of seclusion he was endowed with a thorough knowledge of the Buddhist scriptures, including the Tripiṭaka, its commentaries, sub-

commentaries and other Pāli texts as well. With such a wealth of knowledge, gained and digested as a result of long and profound thinking, he was able to distinguish more clearly between what was right and what was wrong in the Master's doctrine. He then set about putting into practise what was mentioned and regarded as righteous in the Tripiṭaka. By doing so, he unwittingly Thammarat (some 800 kilometres south of Bangkok) made a great impression on those who, inspired by his conduct, took it upon themselves to follow his way of life. This group of people, in course of time, grew bigger and more popular, eventually becoming a separate gathering of bhikkhus called the Dhammayutta group, as distinct from the former group, which was called the Mahānikāya. Thus, since that time there have been two groups of bhikkhus in Thailand. Besides being proficient in religious knowledge, Prince Monkut also had a good command of Sanskrit and English, and his act of establishing the Dhammayutta group of bhikkhus might be compared with that of the Venerable Rahula Thera who, through his exemplary mode of practice, had founded the Lankāvaṃśa group of bhikkhus at the town of Nakhon Si.

One example of Thai religious literature was the Pathom-Som-Bodhi-Kathā (Life of Buddha), compiled by the Supreme Patriarch Prince Paramanujit Jinorasa of Jetu-vana Temple. Of the works in Pāli one, called Sīmā Vicarāna (Treatise on the Sīmā, or boundary, of a main shrine) and compiled by Prince Monkut himself, has won high respect in Ceylon.

King Rama IV

King Rama IV, or Prince Monkut, who was obliged to disrobe after his brother's passing away, came to the throne in B.E. 2394. He was formally known as Phra Chom Klao. During his reign, bhikkhus were greatly encouraged in their study and practice of Buddhism, so that they were well-behaved as well as well-educated in the Buddha's doctrine. Some rules and regulations for the betterment of the administration of the community of bhikkhus as a whole were laid down; a number of religious goodwill missions was sent forth to Ceylon; and the community of Dhammayutta bhikkhus was also established in Cambodia.

Never was the construction work neglected. The Raj-Pra-Dit Temple, one of the most important temples in Bangkok, is evidence of this fact. The greatest and highest chedi, or pagoda, of Nakhon Pathom, called the Pathom Chedi –

second to none in its design and decorations – also bears witness to his constructive genius and serves to remind the Thai people of its historical importance.

As a result of much earnest study in Buddhism there were now more books in the Thai language expounding the tenets of the Buddha's doctrine. This movement opened up a new trend of modern thought in its dissemination of the Dhamma to the people on a broader scale, instead of – as formerly – seeming more to monopolise it for the realization of a minority 'intelligentsia'. Of the Pāli literature, a volume by the Supreme Patriarch Prince Pavares Variyalongkorn, named Sugatavidatthividhāna is the most important of its time.

King Rama V

The reign of King Rama V, formerly called Phra Chula Chom Klao, began in the year B.E. 2411 and lasted 42years. He was also one of the few monarchs who temporarily renounced his throne after his coronation in order to be ordained as a bhikkhu. This was because most of the Thai kings since the Ayutthaya period were customarily ordained before the coronation day.

Being no less devoted to Buddhism than his predecessors, he managed to found two Buddhist Universities with the aim of increasing the progress and stability of Buddhist education.

These two were Mahāmakuta Rāja Vidyālaya and Mahaculalongkorn Raja Vidyalaya, each of which has played a very important role in the field of Buddhist study. He also enacted a law concerning the administrative system of the community of bhikkhus, declaring that the Buddhist Church should be a self-governing, holy community, while the state would be the patron under the direction and for the welfare of the Church. Another of the major construction works was Wat Benjamabophit, which is well-known among foreigners for its impressive Buddha image in the Uposatha.

In B.E. 2431 a Council of Bhikkhus, under the chairmanship of the Supreme Patriarch Prince Pavares Variyalongkorn, was held for the purpose of transliterating the existing Tripiṭaka from the palm-leaf books with their Cambodian characters to printed books using Thai characters. This required 39 printed volumes for each set of the entire Tripiṭaka. Besides the Message itself,

some Commentaries and other Pāli texts were also transliterated from Cambodian to Thai characters and then printed in the form of paper books.

One of the king's elements of religious success, however, undoubtedly comes from the zealous efforts of one of his great helpers. This was none other than his own half-brother, the Supreme Patriarch Prince Vajirañānavarorasa, who had a profound knowledge of English as well as Pāli and Sanskrit. Thus, by virtue of his ability and his high position (as the king's brother and as chief of the whole community of bhikkhus) the theoretical and practical sides of Buddhism under the far-sighted and able patriarch were greatly encouraged. Most of his noble works are even now studied by the public as well as by students, and it is no overstatement to say that he blazed a trail for modern thought in the study and practice of Buddhism.

In B.E. 2431 (1894) the Mahāmakuta Rāja Vidyālaya, one of the two Buddhist Universities, published a religious periodical, called Dharma Cakṣu, which has now reached its 86th anniversary and is, therefore, the oldest and most long-lived religious periodical in Thailand.

King Rama VI

King Rama VI, the poet and philosopher formally known as Phra Monkut Klao, ascended the throne in B.E. 2453 (1910). In order to imbue the spirit of Buddhism into the minds of his citizens without any distinction of position, profession or sex, he organized a new branch of Buddhist studies in the Thai language. This was successfully donebecause there had been several texts on Buddhism compiled in the reign of his royal father, together with many writers during his own reign (mostly by the Supreme Patriarch Prince Vajira¤ànavarorasa). He himself never neglected to do so, and thus there were written many religious books which were both instructive and understandable by all. His wealth of religious literature included such books as Addresses to Scouts and What did the Buddha Realize? So it could be said that the study of Buddhism was now accessible to all, whether they knew Pàli or not, whether they wanted to study it for a long time or within a limited period of time and whether they were male or female. For those with a limited time for studying, it was advised that they should study Buddhism from the texts written in Thai. If they were ordained as a bhikkhu or sāmaṇera (novice), they were called 'Nak Dhamma' (Dham-miko – the Dhamma student). The (almost) same course for

lay men or women was called ‘Dhamma-Suksa’ – (Dhamma-Sikkha – Dhamma student).

As regards the transliteration work done in the reign of King Rama V, more commentaries, sub-commentaries, Tīkā, and other Pāli works were transliterated during his reign.

King Rama VII

Phra Pok Klao, or King Rama VII, came to the throne in B.E. 2468 (1923). Besides preserving all the movements for the promotion of Buddhism as King Rama VI had done, he also had a Council of Bhikkhus convenedA special hospital for bhikkhus was built and two Buddhist universities, in the real sense of university, were established. These two are Mahamakuta University, situated in the temple of Bovaranives, opened in B.E. 2489 (1946), and Mahachulalongkorn University, situated in the temple of Mahadhat, opened in B.E. 2490 (1947). These two Buddhist universities are actually managed by bhikkhus, with a subsidy from the Government and contributions from the public. Also studying in these universities are bhikkhus from neighbouring countries such as Laos and Cambodia. Up to the present day there have been several groups of graduated students. This is a good omen for Buddhism in this age of trouble and turmoil.

In B.E. 2499 (1956) King Bhumibol temporarily renounced the throne for the purpose of ordination. During this period as a bhikkhu he attentively studied Buddhism in its theoretical and practical sides. This moved the people to a general appreciation and rejoicing and on this occasion there was also an amnesty of many prisoners. The Supreme Patriarch was the Preceptor (Upajjāya) in this royal ceremony of ordination.

9.3 Mahāyāna Buddhism in the Ratanakosin Period

Mahāyāna Buddhism might have theoretically or nominally been lost from Thailand in the eighteenth century B.E., but all through this time some of its ideals have been adhered to practically and with some degree of sincerity by the general public. The general belief that everybody is or can be a Buddha and that the king is a Boddhisatva (or future Buddha) – including the efficacy of charms and amulets that make a believer invulnerable to weapons and dangers

and misfortunes – are evidence that the spirit of Mahàyàna still has some influence on the minds of the people.

Mahāyāna Buddhism came into Thailand for the first time with the Mantrayāna sect. Then, for the second time, Mahāyāna was introduced during the reign of King Thon Buri in the Ratanakosin period by refugees from Vietnam or Annam. Owing to a state of revolution in their country there were many noblemen and people who were immigrants from Annam. They later built a temple of their own. With a second wave of immigrants, two more Annam temples were built in Bangkok. In the reign of King Rama III, three more temples of Annam Buddhism, one in Bangkok and two in the country, were built by a third group of immigrants.

In the reign of King Rama V there came from China a Chinese bhikkhu who later became very popular among Thailand's ethnic Chinese. He built two Chinese temples, one in the countryside and the other in Bangkok, which was called, in Chinese, Leng Nei Yee, or Wat Mang Kon Kamalavas, which is the biggest Mahāyāna temple in Thailand. When ecclesiastical titles were given to the Chinese and Annam bhikkhus, he was one of those who was offered an honourable title. It should be noted, however, that Mahāyāna Buddhism in Thailand, introducedby the Chinese and the Annam bhikkhus, belonged to the Sukhāvati sect.

Another progressive step of Chinese Buddhists during this reign was the building of another temple of their own – the first temple in Thailand that, due to the presence of Sīmā (formal boundary marks as prescibed in the Vinaya or Book of Discipline), can be used as a place wherein to perform the religious rite of ordination. This eliminated one of the previous problems of the requirement for a Chinese bhikkhu to be ordained from China. In addition to this there were also many Buddhist associations founded by the Chinese Buddhists for the purpose of propagating their Mahāyāna doctrine. Nevertheless, their propagation was practically restricted to their fellow-countrymen. This was possibly because the Mahāyāna bhikkhus are generally more relaxed in their behaviour and less educated in their study.

9.3.1 Some Propagation Activities

It has been traditional for every wat or temple in Thailand to arrange for the delivery of a sermon four times a month. This is done on the Buddhist holy days called, in Thai, Wan Phra which, calculated from the lunar calendar, fall on full-moon day, the half-moon days (of the waxing moon and the waning moon) and the day before new moon day. In addition to this there was later arranged a sermon on Sunday which, like those on the four holy days, was broadcast from various radio stations. The days of the Buddhist events, such as Visakha Day, Māgha or All Saints' day and the day of Rains Retreat, are proclaimed official holidays. On these days there is no killing whatsoever in any slaughter-house. There is also a department of religious affairs which is responsible for the welfare of bhikkhus and for the upholding of Buddhism (and other religions), for which purpose an annual subsidy from the Government is given. Bhikkhus who are well versed in the study and practice of Buddhism are offered a noble title by the king, according to their ability, and are also given some financial help by the government.

Practically every aspect of life requires a Buddhist cere-mony or observance in one way or another. Birth, marriage, death and many other occasions in an individual's life, as well as state ceremonies, often require the participation of bhikkhus by chanting, delivering a sermon or in some other way. In every school, before beginning the morning lessons the pupils say their prayer to the Triple Gem (i.e. the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha), and the life of Buddha and his doctrine are among the compulsory subjects in the school curriculum. Also, for a long time there has been a tradition that every Thai youth must be ordained once as a bhikkhu for a Vassa (a rainy season, i.e. three months). It is all the better for him if he can remain a bhikkhu for longer than that – even for the rest of his life.

At present there are several Buddhist associations under the management of devoted lay adherents. Some of these are the Buddhist Association and the Young Buddhist Association of Thailand, both with affliated societies inalmost every town in the country. By the efforts of these associations programmes for a lecture, talk or discussion on the Dhamma are arranged for the public at regular intervals, in addition to the publication of their own periodical.

Thus it is an undeniable fact that the everyday life of a Thai, from the cradle to the grave, so to speak, together with his arts and crafts, literature, culture and other elements of his life, are all based upon and moulded by one common factor – the spirit of Buddhism.

Conclusion

Although Śākyamuni Buddha did not affirm the existence of an unchanging soul, Buddhism, in its development over many centuries in different parts of Asia, provides a rich theoretical and ritual basis for ancestral rites. One aspect of this basis is the idea of repeated birth in the lower six realms of existence: the realms of the hells, hungry ghosts, animals, humans, demigods (asura), or heavenly deities, depending upon one's karma from past lives. This idea of karma, of ancient Indian origin, was inherited by Buddhists and is understood as the continuing individual process that undergoes the cycle of rebirth. The concept of Pratītyasamutpāda (Dependent Origination) also contributed to ancestor worship, as the theory was understood, especially by the laypeople, to mean that past, present, and future lives are connected. Moreover, the idea of *Nirvāṇa*, which is often explained with the analogy of extinguishing a candle, evolved into the idea of *dharmakāya* or dharma body, which is not affected by the death of the physical body of the Buddha (Sanskrit, *nirmāṇakāya*). The Buddha's funeral and the subsequent development of relic worship gave further impetus to the worship of ancestors. The main concept underlying Buddhist ancestral rituals is the transfer of merit, which is practiced in almost all Buddhist countries. In the rituals of merittransfer, giving offerings to the Buddha is regarded as the same thing as offering to ancestors. The unity of the living and the dead or the bond between descendants and ancestors is assured and affirmed by participating in and observing the Buddhist ancestral rites. In Southeast Asia, ancestor worship is not as evident as in East Asia, but the continual transfer of merit though offerings to monks and the sangha provides the opportunity to commemorate and nourish ancestral spirits.

Activities

1. Discuss the Ghost Festival in various Buddhist countries.

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See www.buddhanet.net/pdf_file/buddhinthai.pdf

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