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## MAHAYANA BUDDHISM

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Western language of Japanese Buddhist sects, particularly the three derived from the Hinayāna.

Hajime, Nakamura. *Indian Buddhism: A Survey with Bibliographical Notes*. Hirakata, 1980. This large work brings into focus our knowledge of the whole of Indian Buddhism and contains an extremely rich and up-to-date bibliography. A long chapter concerns the Hinayāna sects (pp. 90–140).

Lamotte, Étienne. *Histoire du bouddhisme indien: Des origines à l'ère Śaka*. Louvain, 1958. A large part (pp. 571–705) of this excellent work discusses early sects, their origins and distribution, Buddhist languages, and the sects' doctrinal evolution.

La Vallée Poussin, Louis de, trans. *L'Abhidharma-kosa de Vasubandhu* (1923–1931). 6 vols. Reprint, Brussels, 1971. This French translation of the famous treatise includes copious notes and a very long introduction by the great Belgian scholar. It is rich in information on the doctrinal controversies that concerned the Sarvāstivādins.

Law, Bimala Churn. *A History of Pāli Literature*. London, 1923. Complete, very detailed description of Theravāda literature.

Masuda Jirō. "Origins and Doctrines of Early Indian Buddhist Schools." *Asia Major* 2 (1925): 1–78. English translation, with notes, of the *Samayabhedaparacanacakra*, an account of the Hinayāna sects and their main tenets.

Renou, Louis, and Jean Filliozat. *L'Inde classique*. Paris, 1953. Volume 2, pages 315–608, deals especially with the Hinayāna sects, their literature, and doctrines. The collaboration of the Sinologist Paul Demiéville and the Tibetanist Marcelle Lalou is invaluable.

Shizutani Massō. *Shōjō bukyōshi no kenkyū; Buha bukyō no seiritsu to benseri*. Kyoto, 1978. The most recent work on the origin and evolution of the Hinayāna sects. Detailed and complete study of literary and epigraphic sources.

Takaku Junjirō, trans. *A Record of the Buddhist Religion as Practiced in India and the Malay Archipelago (A.D. 671–695)* (1896). Reprint, Delhi, 1966. English translation of I-ching's account of his pilgrimage to South and Southeast Asia.

Warder, A. K. *Indian Buddhism*. 2d rev. ed. Delhi, 1980. Treats Hinayāna sects at length, offering interesting solutions to the problems they pose.

Waterson, Thomas, trans. *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, 629–645 A.D. 2 vols. London, 1904–1905. English translation of numerous extracts from the accounts of Hsüan-tsang's journey, with excellent commentary correcting most of the many errors of earlier translations (those of Stanislas Julien, Samuel Beal, etc.), which are today unusable.

The Sanskrit term *mahāyāna* literally means "the great vehicle [to enlightenment]." It refers to a form of Buddhism that developed in northern India and Central Asia from about the first century before the advent of the common era, and that is prevalent today in Nepal, Sikkim, Tibet, China, Mongolia, Vietnam, Korea, and Japan. Mahayāna Buddhism was also transmitted to Sri Lanka and the Indo-Chinese peninsula, but it eventually vanished from South Asia.

The name *Mahāyāna* is rendered *theg pa chen po* in Tibetan, *ta-sheng* in Chinese, and *daijō* in Japanese. The meanings "greater, numerous," and "superior" are all reflected in the *tz* or *dai* of the Chinese and Japanese translations, for, according to Mahayāna, its teachings are greater than those of the Hinayāna tradition, and those delivered from suffering by Mahayāna more numerous than those saved by the other, more conservative wing of the tradition. According to its devotees, the Mahayāna is therefore superior to Hinayāna. More objectively, it can be observed that when compared with Theravāda and other Hinayāna forms, Mahayāna is more speculatively ambitious, embraces a broader range of practices, some specifically intended to address the needs of lay practitioners, and is more frankly mythological in its conception of Buddhahood and the religious career that leads to it. Mahayāna Buddhism also stresses altruistic attitudes and proclaims as its goal the universal enlightenment of all beings. Its scriptures were originally written in Sanskrit, but most of these have been lost; many, however, have been preserved in Tibetan and Chinese. (Works for which no attested Sanskrit title is available are identified here by the title of the translation.)

### Origins

The origins of Mahayāna are not yet entirely understood. Its first proponents seem to have been homeless ascetics who did not belong to orthodox *sanghas* (Buddhist orders). Early Mahayāna *sūtras* address among their audiences *kulaputras* and *kuladubhirs* ("good sons and daughters"), suggesting that lay men and women were also of some importance in the first Mahayāna orders, which were probably entirely separate from the Hinayāna orders. These Mahayāna orders appeared in the second

century CE in northwestern India, and the movement later spread to other areas. One such order, the Śisayāna ("congregation of disciples"), seems to have devoted itself to altruistic activities.

The Mahāyāna movement probably began with groups of religious individuals whose activities centered around certain stupas. [See Stupa Worship.] These groups later became orders whose members, consisting of both clergy and laity, called themselves *bodhisattvas*, by which they designated as the goal of their practice nothing less than Buddhahood itself. They were led by preachers and reciters of scripture (called *dharmaśākhakas*) and by practitioners of meditation. Thus, in time the early Mahāyāna orders moved away from the worship of stupas and the building of temples—activities stressed in the Hinayāna *nikāyas* (what I have chosen to refer to here as Conservative Buddhism)—toward recitation of the *sūtras* (the sermons of the Buddha), an approach that had more appeal to (and was more practical for) the ordinary laity. The glorification of Buddhas and the magical character with which Mahāyāna endowed itself were also effective in the competition with the emerging *bhaktei* movements of the contemporary Hindu tradition. [See Bhakti; Vaishnavism; Kṛṣṇaism; Avatāra; and Śaivism.]

Epigraphic evidence and the dates of Chinese translations of Mahāyāna texts have been used by Shizutani Masao to distinguish between "Proto-Mahāyāna," a movement that did not use the appellation *Mahāyāna*, and the more self-conscious "Early Mahāyāna." (The first scripture to use the term *Mahāyāna* is the *Aśaṅkabharīka Sūtra*, dating in its earliest verses to perhaps the first century BCE but containing sections from later periods.) Shizutani designates the period 100 to 1 CE as the incipient stage of Proto-Mahāyāna, 1 to 100 CE as its developed stage, 50 to 100 as the incipient stage of Early Mahāyāna, and 100 to 250 as the developed stage of Early Mahāyāna. The development of the Mahāyāna *sūtras* began with the incipient Proto-Mahāyāna stage and culminated in about the seventh or eighth century. These *sūtras* as a group are often given the epithet *vaiḍūrya* ("extensive, glorious"). Many are literary masterpieces, artfully created to produce their effects. They contain no information about when and where they were created, but they were probably produced not only in India and the northern part of what is now Pakistan but also in Central Asia, where the Buddhist orders were also sizable. Some *sūtra* manuscripts discovered in Central Asia are very early; those written on birch bark may date to the first century BCE or the following century. Some *sūtras* appeared first in Prakrit or in the languages of Central Asia (e.g., Tocharian and Uighur), but by the sixth century, when the *sūtras* were studied at the university at Nālandā, they had been rewritten in Sanskrit (with some lingering traces of Prakrit colloquialism). It was the adoption of Sanskrit as the official language of the Gupta dynasty in 320 CE that caused the shift from Prakrit. Nearly all the inscriptions on pre-Gupta monuments and tablets are in Prakrit, but almost all similar inscriptions made after the founding of the Gupta dynasty are in Sanskrit. Large numbers of Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts have been discovered within the last hundred years at Gilgit (in Kashmir) and elsewhere in Central Asia. These, and others in Central Asian languages, are the basic material for modern study; their Chinese translations can be used for cross-reference. Significantly, the Sanskrit *sūtra* copies produced in Central Asia also differ from those discovered in Nepal.

Doctrinally, Mahāyāna Buddhism was not at first completely distinct from Conservative Buddhism. The *bodhisattva* doctrine, to which Mahāyāna owes its existence,

can in fact be traced to pre-Mahāyāna Buddhist literature. The concept of the *bodhisattva* apparently emerged between the beginning of the first century BCE and the middle of the first century CE, after the carving of the Bhārhuti sculptures and before the appearance of the early Mahāyāna scriptures. In fact, archaeological evidence from this period indicates that the *bodhisattva* idea preceded that of Mahāyāna itself: *bodhisattva* images have been found only in shrines of Conservative Buddhism that date from this time; none have been found at the sites of Mahāyāna structures. The various virtues emphasized in Hinayāna (e.g., the *pāramitās*) were also appropriated by the Mahāyāna, but in their hands the virtues of benevolence (*maitrī*) and compassion (*karunā*) became central. [See Karunā.] Another, related notion that emerged as a major feature of Mahāyāna is the belief in multiple Buddhas; this too has its antecedents in pre-Mahāyāna belief.

## Major Features

Mahāyāna Buddhism is characterized by a variety of doctrines, practices, and orientations that at once distinguish it from the Hinayāna tradition.

### WORSHIP OF MULTIPLE BUDDHAS AND BODHISATTVAS

In early Buddhism the term *bodhisattva* referred to the Buddha (or, later, to a Buddha) prior to the time of his enlightenment, including all previous existences during which he had aspired to become a Buddha. In keeping with the soteriology and cosmology of these early teachings, it was assumed that there was only one *bodhisattva* in any one world cycle. Later, this idea was elaborated and integrated into the Jātaka stories, tales of Śākyamuni Buddha's previous lives. A few Conservative Buddhists embraced the belief that there were many Buddhas at any one time, but this belief was most highly developed in Mahāyāna, where myriads of Buddhas are said to inhabit myriads of world systems simultaneously. [See Buddha.]

Some Mahāyāna *sūtras* enjoin adoration of all Buddhas in an equal manner (e.g., *The Sutra Enumerating Buddha's Names*) and some twenty-one *sūtras* extol recitation of the names of many Buddhas. Repeated utterance of the names of Buddhas and *bodhisattvas* is also encouraged in the *Nāmasaṃgīti*. Another *sūtra* (T.D. no. 427) describes invocations of eight specific Buddhas; in the *Ramacandra-pariprcchā Sūtra* Śākyamuni calls for worship of ten Buddhas who dwell in Pure Lands in each of the ten directions, while the *Bhadra-kalpa-saṃdhī Sūtra* (one of twelve similar *sūtras*) extols the thousand Buddhas that are said to live in the present age and calls for the practice of eighty-four thousand "perfections" (*pāramitās*). This text seems to have been composed between 200 and 250 CE.

But it is not simply in their profusion that the Buddhas of the Mahāyāna differ from their Hinayāna counterparts. Mahāyāna Buddhas enjoy many more superhuman and divine traits than does the single Buddha of the Conservative tradition. Nonetheless, they retain many of the same physical and spiritual characteristics. Glorification of and speculation on the nature of Buddhas led Mahāyāna practitioners to develop the theory of the "triple body" (*triśūla*) of the Buddha, in which the Buddha is conceived as having three aspects or "bodies": a cosmic body (*dharmaśākya*), the ineffable Absolute itself, an "enjoyment" body (*sambhogakāya*), a body of magical transformation that the Buddha "enjoys" as the fruit of the merit generated through

aeons of religious practice (often conceived as surrounded by a supernal region, a Pure Land, similarly generated); and the body that appears in living form to save people from suffering (*nirmānakāya*). Śākyamuni, of course, is such a Buddha (i.e., *nirmānakāya*) for our age. [See Celestial Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.]

In Mahāyāna Buddhism, the common hope for rebirth in a heaven often took the form of yearning for the Pure Lands of various Buddhas, where, it was believed, the Law was preached for the benefit of the beings born there. [See Pure and Impure Lands.] Aksobhya Buddha's Pure Land in the east and that of Amitābha in the west appear in contrast throughout Mahāyāna scripture. The *Karunāpundarīka* (Lotus of Mercy) *Sūtra* describes the Padma wonderland of the Buddha Padmottara, whose life lasted for thirty ages of the world, but the text also responds to those *sūtras* that praise Aksobhya and Amitābha by praising the compassion that Śākyamuni exercises within this world. An important figure in this *sūtra* is Mahākarunika Mahāśramaṇa, who saves living beings from suffering. A similar figure is the *bodhisattva* Vāyuviṣṇu, *avatāra* of the deity Viṣṇu.

The *bodhisattva* Mañjuśrī plays an important role in many *sūtras*. One *sūtra* (T.D. no. 463) describes the efficacy or worship of Mañjuśrī at the moment of death. In another (T.D. no. 464), Mañjuśrī explains enlightenment; and elsewhere (T.D. no. 843) he demonstrates ānimitta ("formlessness") through magical power. In the *Aciṇṭyabuddhahṛdayanirdeśa* he explains *bodhisattva* practices. Mañjuśrī often appears with a counterpart *bodhisattva*, Samantabhadra. The association of Mañjuśrī with Wu-t'ai Shan, a mountain in China, was established by the seventh century and was widely known even in India. The *bodhisattva* Samantabhadra is often mentioned in conjunction with Mañjuśrī. [See Mañjuśrī.]

As in Hinayāna Buddhism, the *bodhisattva* Maitreya was worshipped as a Buddha of the future, one who, at some time to come, will leave his present abode in the Tusita Heaven and be born on earth for the benefit of sentient beings. Devotees of Maitreya thus focused their aspirations on rebirth in Tusita and eventual descent to earth in his company. Three Maitreya *sūtras* were especially esteemed in China and Korea: the *Mi-le ta-ch'eng-fo ching*, composed in the third century CE; the *Mi-le hsi-sheng ch'eng-fo ching* (*Maitreyayāñekarana* or *Maitreyasamitī*), also composed in the third century; and the *Kuan-mi-le shang-tou-shuai-i'en ching*, composed at the end of the fourth century. In the *Maitreyaapariprcchā* the Buddha Śākyamuni explains *bodhisattva* practices to Maitreya. The *Adhyāśayasaṁcodana Sūtra* tells how sixty *bodhisattvas* who had fallen into distraction and laziness are led into the presence of the Buddha by Maitreya, who seeks advice on their behalf. This *sūtra* is well known for the phrase, "whatever is well spoken is spoken by the Buddha." [See Maitreya.]

But the *bodhisattva* most adored throughout Asia is Avalokiteśvara, the "Lord Who Looks Down [with infinite pity on all beings]." His name appears as Avalokiteśvara in early manuscripts. Some of his features are those of the Vedic deity Asvin. Avalokiteśvara is regarded as a savior of suffering beings and his response to petitions for aid is immediate. The best-known scripture concerning his virtues is the twenty-fourth chapter of the *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka* (Lotus *Sūtra*), which emphasizes the rewards in this world that he grants to believers and the virtue of helpfulness to others that he represents. In the *Gandayūha*, his homeland is called Pojala. In Pure Land Buddhism, he is Amitābha's companion and attendant. [See Avalokiteśvara.]

Chapters 22 and 23 of the Chinese version of the *Lotus Sūtra* shows how another *bodhisattva*, Bhaisajyaguru ("king of the art of healing"), protects his worshippers and grants wishes. This idea was further developed in the figure of Bhaisajyaguru, who also became the object of intense adoration, and independent scriptures consecrated to him extolled his powers. One of these, the *Bhaiṣajyaguru-vaiduryaprabhā-pūrṇapradīpaniśāsanīśāra Sūtra*, is concerned with benefits in this world as well as the future and describes paradises in both east and west. [See Bhaisajyaguru.]

But if there is one feature of the Mahāyāna *bodhisattva* doctrine that truly separates it from that of other forms of Buddhism, it is the Mahāyāna insistence that the goal of all religious practice is Buddhahood itself, making all those whose conceive of the aspiration to be liberated *bodhisattvas*, or future Buddhas. Mahāyāna practice thus begins with the formulation of this aspiration (*bodhicitta*, the "mind set upon enlightenment") in a vow (*pravṛddhāna*) leading to the goal. The conspicuous feature of this vow and practice, however, is the resolve of the practitioner to delay final liberation, to remain "in the world," as it were, until all beings have been saved. The Mahāyāna *bodhisattva* is committed to work ceaselessly for the benefit of other beings and to transmit to them the merit generated by his or her own religious practice. While a few *bodhisattvas*, some mentioned above, are frankly mythological in their conception, they represent, ideally, spiritual attainments accessible to all practitioners. In the words of one Mahāyāna scripture, the Buddha nature (i.e., enlightenment) is the endowment of all beings without exception. [See Bodhisattva Path.]

#### DISCIPLINES

There is no unanimously agreed upon code of discipline in Mahāyāna, reflecting the fact that it is institutionally less coherent than is Conservative Buddhism. But Mahāyāna distinguishes two ways of practice: the *śrāvaka-mārga* ("way of the disciples") for those who follow the Hinayāna practices and the *bodhisattvamārga* ("way of bodhisattvas") for those who adhere to Mahāyāna values, particularly the intention to save other suffering beings. Those who practice the latter way are deemed worthy of worship and are relied upon because they have refrained from entering Buddhisthood, preferring instead to dwell among the living in order to save them from their suffering. The *bodhisattvamārga* was first described in pre-Mahāyāna works collectively called Avādānas. At first, these described *bodhisattvas* who resembled the person and character of the historical Buddha Śākyamuni, but later other qualifications for the *bodhisattva* were appended, namely, vows (*pravṛddhāna*) and practice (*bhāvanā*). All *bodhisattvas* make the same basic vows, but some (e.g., Amitābha) add certain others that are unique to them. The privilege of becoming a *bodhisattva* is open to all who seek enlightenment; hence the *bodhisattva* ideal is accessible to every human being.

The basic institutional structure of the Conservative Buddhist order (specifically, the Vinaya, or monastic rules) continued to be observed in Mahāyāna, but Mahāyāna set its orders apart from its Hinayāna counterparts. [See Vinaya.] When the Chinese pilgrim Hsuan-tsang visited India in the first half of the seventh century, he found that some monks were specifically called Mahāyāna-Sthaviras. Some Mahāyāna *sūtras* prescribe ethical practices for both monks and nuns, lay-men and lay women.

In particular, practice of the "ten virtues" (*dāsakusalaśīlāni*) was encouraged. Compared to the ethics of Conservative Buddhism, Mahāyāna ethics were more flexible, and were altered in various environments. The ideal virtues were codified as six "perfections" (*pāramitās*) incorporated within the *bo-dhīsattva* ideal: liberality (*dāna*), morality (*sīla*), effort (*vīrya*), forbearance (*kṣanti*), meditation (*dhīra*), and transcendental insight (*prajñā*). A seventh perfection, "expedient means" (*upaya*), was added in some texts, and others expanded the concept to ten perfections. In general, *dāna*, or selfless giving (the rendering of help to others) was stressed. The *Aryasamgītigāthāśākya* is a collection of one hundred verses in praise of this perfection. The Buddha's great compassion was interpreted as his gift to sentient beings. The transference of merit to others (*paritīkāmanā*) was also encouraged as a form of giving. [See Pāramitās and Merit, article on Buddhist Concepts.]

Mahāyāna ethics were most explicitly set forth in the "Discipline Sūtras," the essence of which is altruism. Among the sūtras that provided the theoretical basis for the Mahāyāna orders is the *Sarvadharmapravartinīdasa*, which was highly esteemed by the Japanese monk Saichō (767–822). Others that explicated Mahāyāna discipline are the "Buddha Treasure Sutra" (T.D. no. 653), the "Enlightenment-mind Sutra" (T.D. no. 837), and the *Dharmavinayaśamāñḍibī Sūtra*. Some texts reflect the Mahāyāna idea that discipline is to be practiced by both clergy and laity; one, the *Bodhisattvaprātimokṣa Sūtra*, sets forth the "Vinaya" of *bodhisattvas*, here referring to both clerics and lay practitioners. The precepts in the *Śrīmālādevī Sūtra* were well known in China and Japan.

The most famous and controversial of these texts is the *Brahmajālā Sūtra*. Greatly esteemed in China, it became the fundamental discipline text for Japanese monks. Scholars now believe that this text was produced in China, where there is evidence that it was in use in some form as early as the year 350. Another text bearing on the conduct of the *bodhisattva*, the *Bodhisattvabhbūmi*, calls upon all aspirants to the Way of *Bodhisattvas*—both monks and laymen—to observe three kinds of *bodhisattva* practice: adherence to all the precepts (*samvaraśīla; prātimokṣa*), practice of all virtuous deeds (*kuśalaharmasamgrahakam Śīlam*), and the granting of mercy to all sentient beings (*sattvārtha-kṛtyāśīlam*). The first element in this code represents a return of the traditional Vinayas of Conservative Buddhism, while the second and third are expressions of Mahāyāna ideals.

The *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, Śāntideva's eighth-century compendium of Mahāyāna literature, explains that the principle of compassion can even sanction physical love; according to Śāntideva, carnal desire is not nearly so sinful as anger. Eventually, married monks appealed among the Mahāyāna orders. In the fifth century, King Meghavāhana's consort built a monastery in Kashmir, half of which was occupied by *bhikkus* ( mendicants) whose conduct conformed to the precepts, and half of which was reserved for those who had wives, children, cattle, and property. Some later sūtras (e.g., the *Mahāśamnipāta Sūtra*), however, refer to the marriage of monks as evidence of decadence in the orders. Today, Nepalese monks are free to marry, and marriage is to some extent common among Tibetan and Burial Mongolian monks as well. The Jōdo Shin sect was the first in Japan to sanction the marriage of monks; since the introduction of Western civilization, marriage of Japanese monks has become more common.

Repentance is the theme and object of several Mahāyāna sūtras. One of these sūtras (T.D. no. 1493) shows that repentance leads to delight in the deeds of others,

moral admonition, and transference of merit. Another text teaches that a reaffirmation of the insight that all things are originally pure can dissolve the obstacles created by *karmān* (T.D. no. 1491). Bondage in *karmān* (*karmāvarana*) can be destroyed by repentance, meditation, or by repeated application of magical formulas. While some sūtras describe and promote various meritorious deeds (T.D. no. 683, for example), others focus on specific practices such as circumambulation of stupas (T.D. no. 700) and the offering of votive lights at stupas and *cātulas* (T.D. no. 688). The worship of both stupas and Buddhas was combined in others (T.D. no. 688). The merit attributed to the manufacture of images of Buddhas and *bodhisattvas* (T.D. nos. 692–694) suggests the fervor of image-making activity in Gandhāra and Mathos. Another sūtra gives details of the rite of anointing Buddha images (T.D. no. 697). The use of rosaries, a practice adopted from the brahman priests, is extolled in yet another sūtra (T.D. no. 788). Originally, brahmans, not Buddhist monks, were officiants at South Asian funerals, but eventually Mahāyāna monks took their place. One sūtra encourages the observance of funeral rites as an affirmation of impermanence (T.D. no. 801). Later, officiating at funerals was to become a major duty of Japanese monks.

#### LAY BUDDHISM

The position of the layman was recognized and exalted by most Mahāyāna texts, although a few display a tendency to place the ascetic life of the monk above the lay life. However, the notion of emptiness (*śūnyatā*) that is the foundation of most Mahāyāna thought provides for the identity of liberation and mundane existence, *nirvāṇa* and *samsāra*, thus providing a rationale for the sanctity of lay life. This led many to the conclusion that the essence of religion should be sought in the life of householders rather than in the life of renunciants; hence, lay Buddhism came to be advocated in the Mahāyāna as a religious ideal. The grace of *bodhisattvas* was believed to extend to laymen; Mañjuśrī, for example, is said to save ordinary laymen and even nonbelievers.

To be sure, many Mahāyāna practitioners were *bhikkus*, and some were termed *bodhisattva bhikkus* (in the *Mahāśāmasūtrālambākara*, the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, etc.). But the tendency toward lay Buddhism remained conspicuous. The *Ugradattapariścchā*, an early Discipline Sūtra composed before Nāgārjuna (fl. 150–250), prescribes five conditions for the lay practice of the Mahāyāna. Later, codes of discipline intended specifically for laymen were composed. Among the disciplines required of laymen was observance of the regulations for *uposatha* days (when the fortnightly confessions were made).

The *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa Sūtra*, in which the pious layman Vimalakīrti gives a sermon to monks and denounces the homeless ascetic life they lead, is perhaps the best expression of the lay Buddhist ideal. This sūtra was composed no later than 150 or 200, and was studied and lectured upon frequently in China and Japan. Other sūtras represent extensions of its teaching, and in some the central figures are laywomen. In the *Candottarādarikā-nyākarana Sūtra*, the central figure, Vimalakīrti's daughter, expresses views that meet with the Buddha's approval. The central figure of another sūtra (T.D. no. 818) is a prostitute who teaches Buddhist doctrine to her lover during a rendezvous in a forest. The *Śrīmālādenśimhanāda Sūtra* (which became quite important in China and Japan) is delivered by a queen, with the Buddha's

sanction. An eight-year-old girl, Sumati, delivers a sermon in the *Sumatidārikā-parīcchā*. These *sūtras* defy the stereotypical view (otherwise common to most Mahāyāna texts) that women are mentally and physiologically inferior to men—assumptions that reflected the inequality of the sexes in Indian society.

The presence of the notion of filial piety, another lay ideal, in Buddhism represents an accommodation and syncretization of values that occurred under the stimulus of Chinese culture. Filial piety was the most important virtue in Confucian ethics, which required one-sided obedience from children toward their parents. [See Hsiao.] This idea was never more than a minor one in Indian Buddhism. There is no single term in the original Sanskrit and Prakrit texts that corresponds to the Chinese *hsiao* (filial piety), but the character is found frequently in Chinese versions of scripture. To reconcile the two traditions, Chinese Buddhists created such spurious *sūtras* as the *Fu-mu-en-chang ching* and the *Tai-pao-fu-mu-chung ching*, which teach filial piety in the guise of Buddhist morality. A Buddhist concept of filial piety also took shape in the *Ullambana Sūtra*, which exorts a rite that centers on offerings to one's dead parents. The *sūtra* appears to have originated in part in India and was later expanded upon in China. The Ullambana rite itself became a very important one in China, Vietnam, Korea, and Japan (where it is called Obon). [See Worship and Cultic Life, article on Buddhist Cultic Life in East Asia.]

## Major Scriptures

Unlike the various recensions of the Hinayāna canon, which were virtually closed by the early centuries of the common era and which shared, at least ideally, a common structure (Vinaya, Sūtra, Abhidharma; i.e., the Tripitaka), the Mahāyāna scriptures were composed in a variety of disparate social and religious environments over the course of several centuries, diverge widely from each other in content and outlook, and were in many cases meant to stand as individual works representing (it has been conjectured) rivals to the entire Hinayāna corpus. Thus, when treating this literature it is perhaps most fruitful to consider the various textual classes that constitute Mahāyāna Sūtra literature.

### THE WISDOM SŪTRAS

The earliest Mahāyāna *sūtras* are those that deal with *prajñāpāramitā* ("perfection of wisdom"); they constitute the philosophical basis of much of later Buddhist thought as well. The earliest Prajñāpāramitā text is almost surely a version in eighteen thousand stanzas, the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā Sūtra*, dating in the earliest of its verse portions to perhaps 100 BCE and probably completed in the first century CE. The Pūrvasailas, a Hinayāna sect, are said to have possessed the Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras in a Prakrit edition, but most Japanese scholars claim that these *sūtras* first came into existence in South India, perhaps in Andhra, among the Mahāśāṅghikas. Others maintain that the Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras were initially composed in Northwest India. The origins of the *Vajracchedikā-prajñāpāramitā Sūtra* (The Diamond Cutter Sūtra) and the *Prajñāpāramitādaya Sūtra* (The Heart Sūtra) should be placed between 150 and 200 CE. The *Diamond Cutter* is actually the ninth section of an extremely long text, the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā Sūtra*; the *Heart Sūtra* is an even more condensed version. The *Mahāprajñāpāramitā Sūtra* is very early and was very enthusi-

astically transmitted, recited, explained, and commented upon in Central Asia, Tibet, China, Korea, and Japan, where interest in it is far greater than in India, the land of its origination. Other Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras, for instance, the *Pañcaminśisāhasrikā*, *Daśesāhasrikā*, *Saptasāhasrikā*, and *Adhyardhāsāhasrikā*, followed the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*. These generally represent either inflations or conflations of the basic text.

Most of the technical terms used in the Wisdom Sūtras were inherited from Conservative Buddhism, but the ideas presented here are very new indeed. The central theme of these texts is that the "perfection of wisdom"—recognition of the truth of human existence—can be attained only through the realization that nothing exists in and of itself, that all things are like dreams or are the creations of magical power (*māyā*). [See Māyā.] The ultimate truth of existence is comprehended by the term "emptiness" (*śūnyata*), one of the subtlest and most sophisticated concepts in the philosophical armory of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Understanding of *śūnyata* entails the awareness that all things rely for their existence on causal factors and as such are devoid of any permanent "own-being" (*svabhāva*). The purely relative existence of all *dharmas* taught by this doctrine entails the realization that the things of this world, the self (*ātman*) included, are merely the reifications of conceptual and linguistic distinctions formed under the productive influence of fundamental ignorance (*cavidhā*). Insofar as the things of this world derive their reality solely from a nexus of causal conditions (*pratityasamutpāda*), their nature, what they all share, is precisely a "lack" of self-nature. [See Śūnyam and Śūnyatā; Dharma, article on Buddhist Dharma and Dharmas; Avidyā; and Prajñā-samupādā.]

In practical terms, the perfection of wisdom involves the cultivation of a nondual insight into this fundamental (non)nature, characterized in the Mahāyāna as *abhar-matā* ("dharmalessness") or *tathātā* ("suchness"), that is, things just as they are without the duality imposed by conceptual categories. Other synonyms for emptiness are *abarnaḍbhātu*, *abharakāya*, and *buddhadhātu*. The Wisdom Sūtras reinterpreted the traditional concept of *nirvāṇa* and transmigration in this light: the goal of salvation is no longer *nirvāṇa* but an understanding of the reality of transmigration as emptiness. Ultimately, emptiness itself is ineffable, but the idea of emptiness can be taught in accordance with the mental ability of those who would learn about it. Thus, "expedient means" (*upāya*) are established in the Wisdom Sūtras as the link between emptiness and compassion. In order to be effective guides to the liberation of beings, the *sūtras* teach, the Buddhas must make concessions to the understanding of their audience. While it may be that the self and all *dharmas* lack real existence, to baldly assert such without any preliminary preparation would engender lack of confidence in the Dharma and a nihilism that is far from what is meant by *śūnyata*. Thus the Buddhas have recourse to a variety of "expedient" teachings by which they prepare the practitioner for the revelation of final truth. In literary terms, such devices are often couched as metaphors and parables (this is especially true of texts such as the *Lotus*, a *sūtra* from another Mahāyāna tradition) that offer the devotee a more simple (if imperfect) grasp of the teachings of the Buddhas. [See Prajñā; Tathatā; Upāya; and Nirvāṇa.]

All of the Wisdom Sūtras encourage an attitude of nonattachment. Devotees of Wisdom Sūtras held that the theory of emptiness is not nihilism but rather a basis for practice, and the wisdom literature does offer practical assistance: those who desire to diminish their personal cares may use these *sūtras* as a guide to the practice of the disciplined contemplation of spiritual truths and the cultivation of the Six

Perfections. Nor do the scriptures overlook the necessity for the gradual development of the mind of the aspirant to enlightenment; the texts proclaim a series of ten stages (*bhūmi*) through which the practitioner may approach enlightenment. Another important contribution of the Wisdom Sutras is the concept of the "original purity of mind" (*cittasya prakṛityaprabhāsvarata*), a concept fundamental to Mahāyāna soteriology.

#### MEDITATION SŪTRAS

The Meditation Sutras of Mahāyāna may have originated among the Yogācāras, a Buddhist tradition that emphasized the practice of meditation. Of course, esteem for meditation characterized the Buddhist tradition from its inception and both early Buddhism and the Hinayāna *nikāyas* had their own characteristic meditative disciplines. [See Meditation, article on Buddhist Meditation.] In Mahāyāna, meditation on various Buddhas and their "Pure Lands" became a means for calming the mind, eliminating mental defilements, and attaining awareness of emptiness. Meditation was also held to confer miraculous powers on the practitioner.

The *Yogācārabhūmi Sūtra* (for which the Sanskrit has been lost) sets forth a systematic scheme of the stages of meditation. It is, in essence, an anthology of passages relevant to meditation by Saṅgharakṣa. The *Dharmatāradhīyāna Sūtra* gives a systematic explanation of meditations as understood by Dharmatāra and Buddhasena. It was important in the development of Ch'an (Zen) Buddhism and the meditation on *mandalas* of Vajrayāna Buddhism. The *Pratyuttanna-buddha-samnubhāvasthitasamādhi Sūtra* teaches a *samādhi* that makes all the Buddhas in the ten directions visible to and present with the practitioner. Other *sūtras* (e.g., the *Kuan-fo san-mei-bai ching*) teach a meditation on just one Buddha, Amitabha. The *Samādhibhāṣṭa* or knowledge by means of a series of meditations that culminate in the "king of meditations" (*samādhibhāṣṭa*).

#### TRANSMIGRATION SŪTRAS

Another group of *sūtras* describes aspects of the transmigration of living beings. Some depict sufferings in five spheres (*gati*) of transmigratory existence: the spheres of gods, men, beasts, ghosts (*preta*), and denizens of the Buddhist hells. In the *Sad-ganikārīkā*, a sixth sphere, that of the *asuras* (warlike demons), is also depicted. Other *sūtras* analyze the patterns of karmic retribution that lead to rebirth in one sphere or another. In one, Mañḍalyāyana responds to a *preta*'s questions about these causal patterns. The *Saddharmaśmṛtyupasthāna Sūtra* and the *Dharmasariṇī Sūtra* place this analysis in the larger context of Buddhist cosmology, then turn to meditations upon the human body. The *Cham-cha-shan-e-pao ching*, which enumerates the forms of retribution for specific good and bad deeds, was probably composed in China.

Some of these *sūtras* treat in detail the theory of *pratīya-samapāda*, or "dependent origination," the classic Buddhist explanation for the conditions that account for the genesis of sentient beings and their involvement in the cycles of samsaric existence. Some devote particular attention to the concept of ignorance (*avidyā*) as the first of the series of causal links (*ārga*) that make up sentient existence. In the

*Śālistambha Sūtra*, the theory of dependent origination in twelve links is metaphorically likened to the growth of a rice plant.

#### THE LOTUS SŪTRA AND RELATED WORKS

Probably the single most influential Mahāyāna *sūtra* is the *Saddharmaśūnya-darika Sūtra* (The Lotus of the Superb Religion). Its central part was probably composed by the end of the first century ce, and the whole *sūtra* was most likely completed around the end of the second century in Gandhāra or perhaps in the area of Kapīsa. The *sūtra* as a whole is a narrative drama in which scenes change often and suddenly; Buddhas, *bodhisattvas*, and mortals interact in lively discourse. Some scholars believe that the character of the *sūtra* was influenced by Indian theatrical forms that may have been themselves influenced by the conventions of Greek drama.

The *Lotus* refers to all living beings as "children of Buddha," and its teachings are esteemed for their insistence that all those who have faith in the Buddha and his Dharma will become Buddhas. In the first half of the *sūtra* the traditional division of soteriological paths into those of the *śrāvaka* (the Hinayāna devotee), the *prātihara-buddha* (those who are enlightened without having heard the Dharma preached), and the *bodhisattva* (the Mahāyāna practitioner) is declared a mere "expedient device" (*upaya*) conceived by the Buddha to lure to the Dharma beings of differing levels of spiritual attainment. In reality, the *sūtra* declares, the "three vehicles" are but one vehicle (*ekayāna*): the Buddha vehicle itself. Under this dispensation, the spiritual destiny of all beings is nothing less than Buddhahood.

The second half of the *sūtra* reveals that the Buddha's existence among beings in this world—his birth, renunciation, enlightenment, and death—are mere elements in a cosmic drama of salvation. In reality, the Buddha is eternal, and his apparent enlightenment at Bodh Gaya a mere device to provoke faith in his teachings. The Buddha has always (or so the text implies) been enlightened. These teachings, and the dramatic and moving way in which the text presents them, have made the *sūtra* enormously influential, especially in East Asia. In particular, the Tien-t'ai tradition and its derivatives have looked to this text as the revelation of the Buddha's true message and the very justification for his appearance on earth. [See Tien-t'ai and Tendai-shū.]

Several *sūtras* present ideas related to those expounded in the *Lotus*. The "Sutra on the Immeasurable Meanings" (T.D. no. 276) presents the concept of emptiness as the theoretical basis of "one vehicle" thought and teaches the way to attain sudden enlightenment. Some scholars think that this *sūtra* was composed in China; the *Samantabhadra-bodhisattva-dhyānacaryādharmā Sūtra* claims that it was taught by the Buddha at the end of his life. The *Mahāśāya-nirgranthaputra-nyikarana Sūtra* and its prototype (T.D. no. 173) are scriptures that expand upon the conciliatory character of the *Lotus*. Here, the spirit of tolerance is personified in the figure of a Jain ascetic who preaches Buddhist teachings. The *Svarṇaprabhā Sūtra* also has traits that are comparable to the *Lotus*. It elucidates the infinity of the life of the Buddha, addresses political ideas, and reflects Esoteric trends; it also describes worship of the (originally Hindu) goddess Sarasvatī. [See Sarasvatī.] Its magical qualities and the ritual for repentance appended to this text made it very popular in China and Japan.

THE BODHĀVATĀSAMĀKĀ SŪTRA

The *Buddhāvatansaka Sūtra* has been influential in many Buddhist cultures. The work is a composite of various smaller, independent texts and textual cycles that by about 350 CE had been redacted into a single work comprising in its first complete Chinese recension some sixty fascicles. References to China and Kashgar in the *Buddhāvatansaka Sūtra* suggest that its compilation took place somewhere in Central Asia. Some scholars believe that portions of the *sūtra* were extant prior to the second century CE. Its major components, the Sanskrit texts entitled the *Gandavyūha Sūtra* and the *Daśabhūmika Sūtra*, were both known to Nāgārjuna. The *Daśabhūmika Sūtra* was compiled between 50 and 150 CE, and linguistic evidence indicates that the *Gandavyūha* probably belongs to the same period; it may have been composed early in the Kusāna dynasty. Scenes and characters from it are represented in the eighth- and ninth-century reliefs at Borobudur. The influence of the text was felt most strongly in China, Korea, and Japan, where, in the Huayen, Hwaõin, and Kegon traditions, respectively, its teachings were made the basis of perhaps the most subtle and doctrinally sophisticated systems of the tradition. The great Buddha image at the Tōdaiji in Nara, the Daibutsu, is a representation of the Buddha Vairocana, the cosmic figure who is the central focus of the text. [See Mahāvairocana and Huayen.]

Unlike most *śūtras*, in which it is Śākyamuni who preaches, this sermon is delivered by *bodhisattvas* and other divine beings as well as by mortals, who preach in eight assemblies in a variety of locales, including the Buddhist heavens. Their teachings are given religious sanction and authority insofar as the beings who preach them live in the period immediately following the Buddha's enlightenment. This text undertakes to set forth the content of the Buddha's enlightenment exactly as it was, without concession to the spiritual capacities of its audience. This ultimate state of the Enlightened One is here characterized as the "ocean seal meditation" (*sagara-mudrā samādhiḥ*), symbolizing in its images of depth and boundlessness the ineff-

In the *Dāśabhrānikā* portion of the text the doctrine of the ten *bodhisattva bhūmis* is systematically outlined, while the *Gandavyūha* relates the spiritual quest of the youth Sudhana, who seeks instruction from some fifty-two teachers in his search for enlightenment. His quest, a metaphor for our own, is itself a depiction of the *bodhisattva* career. The *sūtra* also stresses the interconnection between each individual being and the whole universe; it asserts that the altruistic spirit of benevolence or compassion is the fundamental principle of Mahāyāna. The Buddha's own great compassion toward living beings (*tathāgatagarbha-sambhava*) is seen as the force that causes all manner of Buddha activities to arise from his cosmic body. The *Avatamsaka* also holds that the essence of the *Tathāgata* exists "in embryo form" in all living beings, even though there are unawarenesses of it.

**PURE LAND TEXTS**

Pure Land Buddhism probably appeared first among early lay orders. It focuses on a Buddha who is known by two names: Amitāyus ("limitless life") and Amitabha ("limitless light"). The latter name appeared earlier, and later was associated with the Jataka-like story of the monk Dharmakara, who is said to have made a series of vows (forty-eight in one recension of the text that recounts the story) to save beings from suffering. The vows express Dharmakara's intention to establish a "pure

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**THE RATNAKUTA SUTRA**  
The *Mahāratnakūta-dharma-paryaya-śatasāhasrikā-grantha* "took its present form sometime after the fifth century. Its core, now its forty-third part, is the *Kāshyapa-*

"Land" where sentient beings, free from all manner of affliction, could hear the Dharma preached by a Buddha and hence win enlightenment. The text of each vow includes Dharmakāra's resolution to refuse final enlightenment until the terms of the vow shall have been fulfilled. The *sūtra* goes on to relate that Dharmakāra is now, aeons later, the Buddha Amitābha, and that he resides in a splendid land in the western quarter of our universe known as Sukhavati ("land of ease"). Beings who have faith in this Buddha, the *sūtra* relates, and who focus their mind upon him for up to ten successive moments can be reborn in this Pure Land, and can attain enlightenment easily from there. [See Amitābha.]

Because in the fully elaborated Buddhism of Mahayana Buddhism other buddhas, residing in their own Pure Lands, were also acknowledged, it is not surprising that these figures should also become the focus of cultic activity. (Aksobhya is conspicuous in this respect.) But the special quality of compassionate concern for suffering beings that pervades the Amitabha mythic cycle made this Buddha a figure of great popular appeal, especially in East Asia, where the various Pure Land traditions, Ching-t'u, Jōdoshū, Jōdo Shinshū, and others enjoy wide followings. [See Ching-t'u; Jōdoshū; and Jōdo Shinshū.]

Amitābha Buddha figures in many *sūtras*, but the teaching of the Pure Land as ultimate land of Amitābha is based chiefly on three scriptures: the "smaller" *Sukhāvatīyūha Sūtra*, the "larger" *Sukhāvatīyūha Sūtra*, and the *Kuan wu-liang-shou Sūtra*. The *Larger Sukhāvatīyūha Sūtra* was compiled (*Amitāyurbuddhādhyāna Sūtra*). The *Larger Sukhāvatīyūha Sūtra* was compiled before 200 CE, during the Kuṣāṇa dynasty, by an order of the Mahīśāsaka *bhikkhus* of Gandhara. The *Amitāyurbuddhādhyāna Sūtra* is more advanced than the *Sukhāvatīyūha Sūtra* in that it deals less with elaborate descriptions of the blessed land than with the practice of meditations (*abhyāna*) on Amitāyus and the Pure Land by means of which the meditator may reach it. Cultivation of the *bodhi* (enlightenment) mind, hearing the name of Amitābha, directing one's thoughts toward him, and planting roots of goodness are all described by this text as causes for birth in the

Pure Land.

But meditation on Amitābha (*buddhānusmṛti*) is the essential practice espoused by all the Pure Land scriptures of India. These emphasize the attainment of a pure and tranquil state of mind (*prasāda*). The original concept of faith in the Pure Land *sūtras* was not *bhakti*, devotional faith in the Buddha who preached them, but *śrādha*, or faith in their teachings, a much different conception than that advocated by later Chinese and Japanese Pure Land Buddhists. The magical character of Amitābha worship was especially appreciated in China, where the inescapable resonances between worship of a divinity of "immortal life" and Taoist conceptions of immortality went far toward guaranteeing the popularity of Pure Land practices. In a reflection of this trend, the Chinese monk Shan-tao reinterpreted *buddhānusmṛti* (Chin., *nien-fō*; Jpn., *nembutsu*) as the oral recitation of the *name* of Amitābha. This remained the normative interpretation of *nien-fō* among subsequent Pure Land thinkers, especially in Japan. [See Nien-fō.] Later, in a more intellectual and sophisticated view of Amitābha as "principle" (Chin., *lì*) rather than person, his essential body was interpreted as "universal law."

*rivaria.* The whole text consists of a long series of "questions" (*paripr̥c̥bās*), the contents of many of which have not yet been fully analyzed.

### THE MAHĀPARINIRVĀNA SŪTRA

The Sanskrit original of the Mahāyāna version of the *Mahāparinirvāna Sūtra* (Sutra of the Great Decease [of the Buddha]) must have been compiled between 200 and 400 CE. (A text of Hinayāna province of the same name is much earlier; both purport to record the final sermon of the Buddha.) One passage quotes Śākyamuni's prediction that "seven hundred years after my *nirvāna* Mara will gradually destroy the *saddharma*" ("true Dharma"). This and other passages seem to reflect the deterioration and persecution of the order that was taking place at the time of the *sūtra*'s composition. [See Mappō.]

As the text claims to be the last sermon preached by Śākyamuni before his death, it allegedly reveals secret teachings that had not been preached before (i.e., that had not appeared in other *sūtras*). Basic Buddhist doctrine denies the existence of a permanent underlying element, an *ātman*, or "soul," in sentient beings; here, however, the Buddha teaches a theory of a "great *ātman*" and a view of *nirvāna* as "permanent, joyous, personal, and pure," assertions that were characteristically denied in other Buddhist texts. The *sūtra* emphatically maintains that the cosmic body of the Buddha is permanent and eternal, and that every human being is endowed with Buddhahood. The Buddhist order represented in the first part of the *sūtra* consists of homeless monks and nuns, like those of Conservative Buddhism, but in the latter half of the text the Buddhist order clearly is taken to include laymen, and faith is emphasized as the force that binds the order together. Harsh punishment, even execution, is prescribed for those who slander Mahāyāna teachings—an attitude that is rarely expressed in Buddhist literature.

### YOGĀCĀRA SŪTRAS

The *sūtras* instrumental to the development of the Yogācāra tradition, that branch of Mahāyāna that sees consciousness as constitutive of all phenomena, include especially the *Mahāyāna-abhidharma Sūtra* (now lost but quoted in other works), the *Samdhinirmocana Sūtra*, and the *Lankāvatāra Sūtra*. The *Avatamsaka*, another text with a pronounced idealistic orientation, is often mentioned as having influenced the tradition. The *Samdhinirmocana Sūtra* brings together for the first time the variety of terms and doctrines commonly associated with Yogācāra thought: "storehouse consciousness" (*ālaya-vijñāna*), the "three natures" and "triple unreality" of phenomena, and a detailed accounting of meditative practices (*śamatha* and *vipasyanā*) enabling the practitioner to gain insight into the fundamental role of consciousness in constructing phenomenal existence. The *Lankāvatāra Sūtra*, a less than completely systematic work, also emphasizes that phenomena are the products of mind, lacking all independent reality (*svacitita-dṛṣya bāhyatāvibhāva*); it also asserts the identity of the *ālaya-vijñāna* with the *tathāgata-garbha* ("matrix [womb] of the Tathāgatas"), a concept expressive of the fundamental enlightenment present in all beings.

### THE MAHĀSAMNIPĀTA AND OTHER SŪTRAS

The various chapters of the *Mahāvaiḍūhya-mahāsamnipāta Sūtra* seem to have been composed at different times. Some claim that the completed text dates from between

200 and 300 CE, but it probably did not achieve its present form until much later. This *sūtra* expresses the pessimistic belief that the Buddha's "True Religion" would last for a mere thousand years, after which the order would suffer gradual decay until its complete disappearance from the world. This notion may reflect the social tumult contemporary with the composition of the text caused by the invasion of India by the Ephthalites in the sixth century.

The *Lien-bu-mien-ching* was probably produced in Kashmir in the first half of the sixth century. Its content appears to be influenced by the invasion of India by the Ephthalites and the destructive conquests of Mihirakula, which occurred between 502 and 542; the work was translated into Chinese in 584, so it must have been written between 542 and 584.

Worship of the *bodhisattva Kṣitigarbha* (Chin., Ti-tsang; Jpn., Jizō) may have originated in the belief in the Vedic earth goddess, Pr̥thīvi. Some scholars believe that when Iranian peoples immigrated to the southern region of the Tarim Basin in the fourth century, they introduced the idea of angels from Zoroastrianism; this may have led to worship of Kṣitigarbha as an independent *bodhisattva*. Tri-sang was also worshiped in Chinese Manichaeism. In the many *sūtras* extolling him—the *Dasa-cakra-Kṣitigarbha Sūtra* and the *Kṣitigarbha-pranidhāna Sūtra* are our principal scriptural sources—he is always represented as a monk. Passages of *Sūtras* extolling him are also cited in Mahāyāna treatises. [See Kṣitigarbha.]

The *Ākāśagarbha Sūtra* describes the virtues of the *bodhisattva* Ākāśagarbha and the benefits he bestows on those who believe in him. The *sūtra* seems to have been written by Iranian Buddhists in Kashgar, and shows the influence of conceptions of written by Iranian Buddhists in Kashgar, and shows the influence of conceptions of Amitābha.

### The Philosophical Schools

To what extent the rise of Mahāyāna *sūtra* literature represents the growth of philosophical "schools" is not at all clear. Like much of Indian social history, the institutional history of the *saṃgha* presents a puzzle that perhaps will never be entirely understood. Certainly, we can infer from the contents of specific works a group of practices or doctrines that characterized a given religious community; but beyond this bare inference, the origins of the texts and the life of the communities that produced them remains obscure. We know of course that the Mahāyāna first conceived of itself as an alternate soteriological path centered around the figure and career of the *bodhisattva*. At a certain point in the history of the movement figures appear to whom doctrinal treatises (*sāstras*)—often commentaries on scripture—can be attributed. These figures produced works on a variety of subjects: meditation, logic, epistemology, liturgy, and so forth. Around such works clusters of commentaries, subcommentaries, rebuttals, and refinements developed, enabling us to speak in textual terms at least of various philosophical and practical traditions. But little information is available to us concerning the institutional profile of such traditions.

One of the earliest, and certainly the greatest, of the Mahāyāna *ācāryas* was Nāgājuna (fl. 150–250), the *de facto* founder of the first doctrinal "school" of Mahāyāna, the Mādhyamika (Madhyamaka). Nāgājuna was the first Mahāyāna thinker whose works survive to address the topics raised by the Mahāyāna *sūtras*, particularly the *Prajñāpāramitā* *corpus*, in a philosophically self-conscious and critical way.

teachings of the San-lun (Jpn., Sanron), or Three Treatises, school there. [See the biographies of Āryadeva and Kumārajīva.]

### EARLY VIJĀNAVĀDA

The origins of the Mādhyamika school are obscure. Some scholars assert that it was influenced by the Mahāśāṃghika school. [See Mahāśāṃghika.] Its central philosophy of emptiness (*śūnyata*) was propounded by Nāgārjuna, whose influence in the Buddhist tradition is so great that he is regarded as a patriarchal figure of eight schools by the Japanese. A great number of works are attributed to him, including the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, the *Dvātaśadvāra Śāstra* (extant only in Chinese), the *Vigrabharayāvartanī* (a refutation of Nyāya thought), the *Vaidhyasūtra* and its auto-commentary, the *Vaidhyaprakarana* (both refutations of Nyāya thought), the *Uttisastikā*, the *Sūnyatāsaptati* (extant only in Tibetan), the *Ramānavīśa* and the *Subrilekha* (both discourses on statecraft), the *Pratyayasaṃputpādaśāstra*, the *Dāśabūmikanibhāṣā Śāstra*, and the *Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa* (extant only in Chinese). The authenticity of some of these works, however, is highly questionable.

Nāgārjuna strove not to establish a fixed dogma but to prove the fallacies of other doctrines; he sought to refute all dogmatic views (*drṣṭi*) by showing how their initial propositions lead to unwarranted conclusions. This method of refutation is called *pravṛtta (reductio ad absurdum)*, and Nāgārjuna's works were dominated by it. With it he eschews discussion of metaphysical problems, reduces the verbiage of speculative philosophy, and dismisses meaningless propositions. No substance can abide forever, he holds; all things are dependent upon causal conditions; nothing has independent existence.

The notion of *śūnyatā*, the core of Mādhyamika thought, is explained in many ways in Nāgārjuna's writings. In the *Madhyamakakārikā*, for example, it is identified with dependent origination (*pratītya-samutpāda*): since things arise dependently, he argues, they are without essence of their own; as they are without essence, they are void (i.e., devoid of the thing itself), and hence empty of "own-being." The "Middle Way" is a synonym in Nāgārjuna's writings for "voidness" and dependent origination; enlightenment, according to Mādhyamika thought, is the realization of the Middle Way. The term "itself" was also here equated with voidness, explained here as substancelessness (*nātmanibhāvā*), which was declared the true nature of reality itself. The Mādhyamika adoption of these ideas led to its theory of two kinds of truth, *saṃvṛti-satya* and *paramārtha-satya*. The former is our everyday, mundane, linguistically constructed truth; the latter is the ultimate, inexpressible truth, the truth of the lack of own-being of all *dharmas*. Under this doctrine, however, the two truths depend upon each other. Mundane and ultimate truths do not constitute separate "essences," for the distinction between mundane and ultimate, *samsāra* and *nirvāṇa*, is itself empty of reality. [See Mādhyamika and the biography of Nāgārjuna.]

Nāgārjuna's most famous disciple was Āryadeva (c. 170–270), whose harsh attacks on other schools made him an object of hatred and led to his assassination. His works include the *Saṃkāśāstra*, *Caṇubhāṣāka*, and *Aksarāśākā*; others attributed to him are spurious but philosophically important. A set of twenty-one verses in praise of the *Prajñāpāramitā* by his follower Rāhula (or Rāhulabhadrā, c. 200–300) is preserved in both Sanskrit and Chinese. Nāgārjuna's *Madhyamakakārikā* and *Dvātaśadvāra Śāstra* and Āryadeva's *Saṃsāraśāstra*, all translated into Chinese by Kumārajīva (d. 413), were highly esteemed in China and Japan, and formed the basis of the

Mādhyamika thought, in its refusal to posit any "view" (proposition) whatsoever, was content to employ its critical philosophy against the views of others, views, the Mādhyamika thinkers contended, that were themselves the source of karmic suffering. Not content with this purely critical spirit, the Vijnānavādins (or Yogacāras, as they are also known) sought to systematically account for the origin of sentient existence and the relationship between mundane existence and enlightenment. As the name *Yogacāra* indicates, they advocated the practice of meditation as the means for attaining release from *samsāra*.

Mādhyamika analysis had gone beyond the assertions of early Buddhism, which declared the "self" (*ātman*) a poisonous fiction that was the source of suffering, to declare that the *dharmas* (elements of existence) themselves were empty of independent existence. Like the Mādhyamika, Yogacāra thought denies the reality of the phenomenal world, but it accepts the reality of the consciousness that produces it. It is from this doctrine that the school derives its alternate name, Vijnānavāda, the doctrine that all existences are the creation of consciousness.

For the Yogacāras, all phenomena are mere manifestations of "seeds" (*bija*) deposited by past actions. These seeds are held in a "receptacle" or "storehouse" consciousness (*ālaya-vijñāna*), by which is designated, however, no substantial entity but merely the collectivity of the seeds themselves. The aggregation of the *bijas* is itself the *ālaya-vijñāna*. Under the appropriate conditions, these seeds manifest themselves as our psychophysical selves and as the contents of our everyday consciousness—the various sensory events that present themselves to us as an objective world. Thus, no object exists apart from the function of cognition by the subject; objects appear only on the basis of this cognitive function of the subject. Vijnānavāda incorporation of the concept of the Middle Way led to a description of all things as neither "decidedly existing" nor "decidedly nonexistent," and the claim that realization of the Middle Way is achieved through active insight into the fact that phenomenal existences are none other than "mere representations" (*vijñaptimātrāv*) appearing in our consciousness. The *ālaya-vijñāna* was identified as the basis of the twelve links of dependent origination. [See Ālaya-vijñāna.]

The founder of this school of thought was Maitreya (Maitreyanātha, c. 270–350), sometimes identified with the *bodhisattva* of the same name. Maitreya's works include:

1. *Yogācārabhūmi*, the fundamental text of the Yogacāras. One of its sections, the *Bodhisattvabhbūmi*, sets forth the *bodhisattva*'s discipline and describes his ideal life. The work is attributed to Maitreya's disciple Asanga (c. 310–390) by the Tibetans.
2. *Mahāyānasūtrālambākara*, a systematic exposition of the stages of the *bodhisattva* that shares the same structure as the *Bodhisattvabhbūmi* section of the aforementioned *Yogacārabhūmi*. The work is attributed to Asanga by the Chinese.
3. *Madhyāntavibhāga*, a discussion of the theories of *vijñaptimātrāv*, the triple body of the Buddha, the three natures of reality, and other Yogacāra topics. The

prose section is often attributed to Vasubandhu (c. 320–400), allegedly Asaṅga's younger brother.

4. *Abhisaṃgajālīmākāra*, a synopsis of the contents of the *Asṭasākṣarikā*, thus not specifically a Yogācāra work. The work was commented upon in the eighth century by Haribhadra.

5. *Dharmadharmaśāntābhūtibhāṅga*, a short treatise on the function of “unreal imagination” (*abbhūta-parikalpa*) in the production of phenomenal existence.

6. *Vajracchedikāyākhyā*, a treatise on the *Diamond Cutter Sutra*.

The *ratnāgata-garbha* theory is discussed in several of Maitreya's works and in the *Ratnagotravibhāgama-mahāvīrauttaratantrā Śāstra*, attributed in the Tibetan tradition to Maitreya but probably composed by Sāramati (c. 350–450). All of the works of Maitreya and his followers hold that the Buddha nature underlies the existence of all living things.

Maitreya's disciple Asaṅga inherited and systematized Maitreya's teachings. In the *Mahāyānasamgraha* he presents a three-part classification of phenomena conceived by the human consciousness. Under this analysis, all phenomena have three “natures”:

1. *Parikalpita-svabhāva*: as fictive creations of mind, things are in this sense devoid of original substance and are thus not real.
2. *Paratantra-svabhāva*: to the extent that things are the products of dependent origination they have a provisional or temporary existence, one dependent upon causes.
3. *Parinispanna-svabhāva*: the nature of reality in and of itself as perfect suchness (*tathatā*), divested of all false imaginings that go toward the construction of images in our consciousness.

*Paratantra-svabhāva* is a mixture of pure and defiled aspects; it makes possible the turn from defilement toward purity. Realization of *parinispanna-svabhāva* is tantamount to attainment of “representation only” awareness.

Other of Asaṅga's works include the *Abhidharmasamuccaya* and the *Hsien-yang-sheng-chiao lun* (“Āryadeśanāvīkyāpāna”). This latter work is an abridgement of the *Yogācārabhūmi*. [See the biography of Asaṅga.]

In his many works, Vasubandhu carried on the systematization of *vijñaptimātrātā* philosophy and in the process became the tradition's greatest systematic thinker. His *Vimsatikā* (Twenty Verses) refutes the belief in the objective world; the work betrays the influence of Sautrāntika thought. Vasubandhu is alleged to have been an exponent of the philosophy of Conservative Buddhism prior to his conversion to Mahāyāna by his brother, Asaṅga. His *Trīṁśikā* (Thirty Verses) explains how *vijñānapariṇāma* (“modification of consciousness”), the process by which the various consciousnesses (the six sense consciousnesses of early Buddhism and an “I consciousness” called *manas*) arise from the *bijas*, takes place. This, perhaps the fundamental text of the Yogācāra tradition, was widely commented on by later thinkers. Other of Vasubandhu's works include a treatise on the Buddha nature known in China as the *Folding lun*; the *Karmasiddhibhāskaraṇa*, treating the notion of *karman* from a Vījñānavāda standpoint; the *Trisvabhāvānirdeśa*; and the *Pancaskambaprakarana*, a Hinayāna-oriented work on the *skandhas*.

In Vasubandhu's works, the philosophical system of Vījñānavāda, which rests on

the theory of *ālayavijñāna*, contains an idealistic or spiritualistic individualism: its description of *manas* and *ālāna* (“seizing”) consciousnesses suggests Buddhist counterparts to the Western concept of “I” or “ego.” This school also considered the problem of subjectivity, a fundamental element in Buddhist philosophy. The strict idealism espoused by Vasubandhu—his denial of the existence of objects in the external world—provoked severe criticism from other schools. [See *Yogācāra and the biography of Vasubandhu*.]

#### LATER DEVELOPMENTS IN VĪJĀNAVĀDA AND MĀDHYAMIKĀ

After Vasubandhu, a number of philosophers made further developments in the ideas of their predecessors. Both Mādhyamika and Yogācāra developed as independent schools, side by side with the Sarvāstivāda, Saurāntika, and other philosophical schools of Conservative Buddhism, and they exchanged ideas with one another. These schools conflated, diversified, and separated into distinct branches.

**The Vījñānavādins.** One branch, the Nirākāra-vījñānavāda, which held that consciousness is pure and possesses no forms, that is, that the forms of both object and subject are of fictive nature and hence unreal, was expounded by Śthiramati (c. 510–570) and others and introduced into China by Paramārtha (499–590). The Yogācāra teachings introduced to China by Paramārtha were called there the She-lun teachings, after Asaṅga's *Mahāyānasamgraha* (Chin., *Sbe-lun*), the basic text of the school.

Another branch of Yogācāra thought, the Sākāra-vījñānavāda, which maintained that consciousness is necessarily endowed with the forms of the subject and the object, originated with Dignaga (c. 400–480), was transmitted by Asvabhāva, and systematized by Dharmapāla (530–561). Dharmapāla's system was conveyed to China by Hsüan-tsang, where, as the Fa-hsiang (“dharma characteristic”) school, it enjoyed a brief vogue. Thereafter, it was transmitted to Japan (where it was known as the Hossō school) and became one of the major scholastic traditions of the Nara period (710–785). Other exponents of the Sākāra-vījñānavāda tradition include Śīlabhadra and Śubhagupta (c. 650–750). [See the biographies of *Śthiramati*, *Paramārtha*, *Dignaga*, *Dharmapāla*, *Hsüan-tsang*, and *Śīlabhadra*.]

Dignaga's philosophical works led to innovations in Vījñānavāda thought. In his *Prajñāpāramitā-piṇḍārtha-saṅgraha* he discusses eighteen “emptinesses” and ten types of discriminative knowledge (*vikalpa*). The subject (*vijñāna*) is held to exist, but objects (*vijñeyas*), as mere *parikalpita*, do not. However, in the undifferentiated, perfect form of knowledge (*prajñāpāramitā*) there is no confrontation of subject and object. Other of his works include the *Ālambanapariśeṣa*, the *Hastavatāpārakaranya*, the *Samānyalakṣaṇapariśeṣa*, the *Yogānātāra*, and the *Trikālapariśeṣa*. These analyze cognition and the theory of “representation only.” Dignaga's studies of logic were also important for later philosophers.

Dharmapāla is best known for his *Vijñaptimātratāśādhi*, a commentary on Vasubandhu's *Thirty Verses*. Dharmapāla admitted the reality of objects of cognition (*parikalpita*) in one sense. He also drew a distinction between “that which changes” and “that which is changed” in consciousness. In addition to introducing the notion of eight consciousnesses, he distinguished four aspects of consciousness: its subjective aspect, objective aspect, self-conscious aspect, and self self-conscious aspects. The first three aspects may have been admitted by his predecessors, but Dharmapāla clearly was responsible for the addition of the fourth. Dharmapāla also taught that

things may exist, in a relative sense, in the objective aspect of consciousness. It was Dharmapāla's unique understanding of Yogācāra thought that became normative in East Asian Vijñānavāda.

The scholar Śāntiraksita (c. 680–740) and his disciple Kamalaśīla (c. 700–750) revived the ideas of the Nirākāra-vijñānavāda school. The former wrote a voluminous tract, the *Tathāgatamgraba*, to which the latter produced commentaries. Śāntiraksita knitted together the Mādhyamika and Yogācāra doctrines; Kamalaśīla established this combination as a synthesis superior to either of the two independent traditions. Śāntiraksita's idealistic views deny the assertion of the existence of external objects and see self-cognition (*svaçamavedana*) as the unity of all cognition. Śāntiraksita held, however, that every cognition is devoid of both "the cognized" and the "cognizer." [See the biographies of Śāntiraksita and Kamalaśīla.]

**The Mādhyamikas.** Disputes between two great scholars of Mādhyamika after Nāgājuna, Buddhapālita (470–540) and Bhāvya (or Bhāvaviveka, c. 490–570), led to the formation of two schools, known by the names given them in the Tibetan tradition: the Prāsaṅgika school of Buddhapālita and the Svātantrika school of Bhāvya. The best known of Bhāvya's works are the *Prajñāpradīpa*, a commentary to the *Mādhyamakakārikā*; the *Mādhyamakabṛdayakārikā* and its autocommentary, the *Tarkajvālā*; the *Mādhyamārthasamgraha*; and the *Karandharatna*. Bhāvya's school admitted degrees of reality and levels of insight that are dependent on spiritual maturity and the degree of *samadhi* achieved, arguing therefore that it is possible to make assertions about the existence of things from the standpoint of conventional truth. Bhāvya held that all the works of the Buddha as they appear in the sūtras are *pramaṇa* (right knowledge) and do not require verification by reason (*yukti*); the function of *yukti* is a correct understanding of scripture (*āgama*), not a verification of it. Bhāvya also tried to demonstrate *nibṣubhabhātu*, or *sāṃyatā*, by way of syllogism, a departure from the more common Mādhyamika view that all such assertions are ultimately self-contradictory (*prasanga*). His use of independent inference (*svatantra-anumāna*) in this respect gave his school of thought its name Svātantrika. Kamalaśīla inherited and developed this method and was instrumental in its transmission to Tibet. [See the biography of Bhāvaviveka.]

Buddhapālita, on the other hand, extended Nāgājuna's use of the *prasanga* form of argumentation and denied the use of independent inference. His *Mūlamadhyamakārthī*, a commentary on the *Mādhyamakakārikā*, is the sole extant treatise by his hand. Buddhapālita's thought was later championed by Candrakīrti (c. 600–650), who defended the *prasanga* method of reasoning against the attacks of Bhāvya and hence is himself classed as a Prāsaṅgika by Tibetan sources. Candrakīrti is also known for his refutation of Yogācāra doctrines concerning the reality of consciousness and the Absolute. His major works include the *Prasannapadā*, a commentary on the *Mādhyamakakārikā*, and the *Madhyayamakānūtāra*. [See the biographies of Buddhapālita and Candrakīrti.]

Another important Mādhyamika thinker was Śāntideva (c. 650–750). In his *Bodhicaryāvātarā*, an introduction to the practices of the *bodhisattva*, he criticized the theory of self-consciousness (*svasaṃvid*) of mind (*vijñāna*) from an epistemological standpoint while admitting its temporary existence, a view he maintained without contradicting the notion of emptiness. An exponent of the Prāsaṅgika tradition, he also embraced the Nirākāra concept of mind. Other of Śāntideva's major works

include the *Śikṣasamuccaya* and the *Sūtrasamuccaya*, both anthologies of Mahāyāna scriptural passages. [See the biography of Śāntideva.]

### TATHĀGATA-GARBHA THOUGHT

The notion of the *tathāgata-garbha*, or "womb of the Tathāgata," represents the tendency of some Mahāyāna scriptures toward a more kataphatic way of regarding ultimate reality. In contrast to the assertions of the Śūnyavādins, who spoke of the Absolute solely in terms of absence or lack of independent existence, advocates of *tathāgata-garbha* tended to see in all sentient beings an indestructible core of Buddhahood that is productive of both mundane and transcendental reality. By emphasizing an ontological basis for both everyday existence and enlightenment, Tathāgata-garbha thinkers were able to speak fruitfully of the ultimate identity of the two realms and therefore to assert not only the potential for enlightenment in every being but also the sense in which all things are fundamentally and originally enlightened. In Japan, this *hōngaku* ("original enlightenment") theory was transmitted and developed within the Tendai school, and became one of the dominant religious and philosophical motifs of Japanese Buddhism. Tathāgata-garbha thought shows, especially in its later phases, a relationship with Yogācāra thought founded principally on the integration of the notions of *tathāgata-garbha* and *ālaya-vijñāna*.

Tathāgata-garbha literature developed in three major phases. In the first phase, represented by the *Tathāgatagarbha Sūtra* and the *Śrimālādevi Sūtra*, no mention is made of *ālaya-vijñāna*. Texts of the second period, including the *Mahāyānasūtra-lankāra* and the *Fo-hsing lun*, mention both but fail to elaborate on their relationship. In the third period, the *ālaya-vijñāna* doctrine was incorporated into that of the *tathāgata-garbha* to produce a *tathāgata-garbha* theory of dependent origination. Such is the work of the *Lankāvātāra Sūtra* and the *Ta-sheng ch'i-hsin lun* (\**Mahāyāna śraddhopāda Śāstra*, attributed to Asvaghosa but according to some scholars, produced in Central Asia or China itself). Other major works treating this notion include the *Ramagorovinibhāga Śāstra* and the *Mahāyānāvata*, both perhaps the work of Sāramati, who is often credited as the systematizer of Tathāgata-garbha thought.

The *Ta-sheng ch'i-hsin lun* became particularly important in East Asia Buddhism, where it was widely read and commented upon, particularly in the Hua-yen tradition. This highly sophisticated and intricate text explores the nature of "original enlightenment" in its aspects as both "substance" (*tij*) and "function" (*fung*). By substance, the text refers to the underlying and unchanging enlightenment that is the nature of all sentient existence; by function it refers to the way in which this fundamental enlightenment is present in the world—the interplay between original enlightenment, nescience (*avidyā*), and the experience of enlightenment as replacing ignorance in the consciousness of the religious practitioner. The text thus demonstrates the reliance of nescience, the source of our false imputation of independent reality to phenomena, on fundamental mind itself. [See also Tathāgata-garbha.]

### THE LOGICIANS

Logical methods came to be emphasized in Buddhist thought as an outgrowth of the need to provide greater rigor for the epistemologies of the Mahāyāna tradition, particularly in defending their positions against proponents of non-Buddhist schools

such as the Nyāya. [See Nyāya.] Incipient forms of Buddhist logic can be identified in the *Samdhinirmocana Sūtra*, in Maitreya's *Yogacārabhūmi*, and Asaṅga's *Abhidharma-masamuccaya*. Vasubandhu is regarded as the progenitor of Buddhist logic, although the discipline was given its first full formulation by Dignāga. Vasubandhu's logical works include the *Vādaṇḍībhi*, the *Vādaṇḍī*, and the *Tarkaśāstra* (although the provenance of this last work is disputed).

Working from this beginning, Dignāga created a new Buddhist logic. The "old" logic of the Nyāya school employed a five-step syllogism: (1) proposition (*pratijñā*); (2) reason (*hetu*); (3) example (*drṣṭānta*); (4) application or recapitulation of the cause (*upanaya*); and (5) conclusion (*nigamana*). For example: (1) a word is impermanent; (2) it is impermanent because it is produced by causes; (3) a word is like a pot [for]; (4) a pot is produced by causes and is impermanent [just as words are]; (5) therefore, a word is impermanent. Another famous example is as follows: there is fire on the mountain for the mountain is smoking; wherever there is smoke there is fire, as is the case on a kitchen hearth; the mountain smokes, therefore, there is fire on the mountain. Dignāga omitted the fourth and fifth steps of this scheme, giving it a concision and simplicity comparable to the Aristotelian syllogism. He also set forth a theory of nine types of valid and invalid arguments. The fifth type corresponds to the fallacy of irrelevant conclusion, but Dignāga called it "inconclusive," on the basis of the Buddhist assumption of "neither being or non-being" as a logical mode different from "being" and "nonbeing." Dignāga's theories of knowledge appear in his *Pramāṇasamuccaya*, while his *Nyāyanukha* deals with the forms of argumentation. Also by Dignāga are the *Hetucakrantaṇaya* and the *Hetucakradamani*. Śāmkaravāmin's *Nyāyapravṛeskā*, a brief introduction to Dignāga's logic, was widely studied by East Asian students of Buddhist logic.

Dignāga's fusion of logic and epistemology was elaborated upon by Dharmakīrti (c. 600–650), whose major works include the *Nyāyabindu*, the *Pramāṇavārtika*, a treatise on Dignāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya* in which he admits two kinds of valid knowledge, direct perception and inference (Dharmakīrti also regarded the Buddha as a source of valid knowledge), and the *Pramāṇavārtika*, an epitome of the *Pramāṇavārtika*. According to Dharmakīrti, every being is transitory; what is assumed to be the continuous existence of an individual is nothing but a sequence of moments; the person is merely a construct of our imagination and discriminative thinking (*vikalpa*). Objects of inference are for Dharmakīrti universals, whereas objects of perception are individual, nothing but moments. [See the biography of *Dharmakīrti*.]

Later logicians include Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla (both eighth century), Śubhakara (c. 650–750), Dharmottara (c. 730–800), Pandita-Āśoka (ninth century), Jītarī (940–980), and Jīnaśribhadra (fl. 925). Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla adopted Dignāga's three-point syllogism, refuting the traditional five-point syllogism of the Nyāya school. Śāntarakṣita also defended Dharmakīrti's analysis of three characteristics of reason (*hetu*) against the attacks of Pārakesaři. Śubhakara, who was probably Dharmottara's teacher, composed the *Bāhyārthaśiddbhākīrṭa*, which attempted to prove the objective reality of external things, thus refuting Buddhist idealism (*vijñānavāda*). Major works of these later scholars include Dharmottara's *Apokarapekarana*, Pandita-Āśoka's *Aucyavārinītikarana* and *Sāmānyadūṣadilekṣasārītā*, Jīnaśribhadra's *Lankāvātarāvṛtti* and *Sātrālambikārāvṛtti*, and Jītarī's *Jātinirākṛti* (in which

he sets forth the controversy on universals between Buddhists and the Vaiśeśikas, the Mīmāṃsakas, and the Jains) and *Hetuattopadeśa*.

The eleventh-century scholar Jīnaśribhadra, a follower of the Dharmakīrti school at Vikramāśīla University, wrote twelve treatises on logic. Ratnakīrti, who flourished at about the same time, proved the existence of other minds from the standpoint of relative truth in his *Śāstṛasādhanadīśvara*, but denied it from the standpoint of highest truth in *Samānāntaradīśvara*. This latter work is particularly interesting because it unreservedly declares that solipsism is the final goal of idealism. Ratnakīrti's other works include *Apobhasiddhi*, two works entitled *Kṣanabhasingasiddhi*, and *Sbirasiddhībhāsana*. Ratnakāraśānti (fl. 1040), a scholar of the Nirakāra-vijñānavāda school, is the author of the *Anaryāpṛisamarthana*. Mokṣakārāgupta (c. 1050–1020) wrote an introductory work based on Dharmakīrti's *Nyāyabindu* entitled *Tarkabhaṣā*. Other noteworthy scholars of this period include Haribhadra (fl. 1120), author of the *Anekānūjajyapatačā*, and Ravigupta, who advocated the theory of monetary flux (*keṣajikāna*).

## Social and Political Thought

Expressions of political and social idealism are evident in a variety of Mahāyāna texts. Some appear in the form of letters from monks to kings. Mātrceta's *Mahārājatānakalekha*, Nāgārjuna's *Ratnāvali* and *Subhlekhā*, the *Wang-fa chēng-li lun* (T.D. no. 1615), attributed to Maitreya, and the thirteenth chapter of the *Saṃvaraṇaprabhāsa Sūtra* are among the important works that address rulers and proper rule. Other texts, such as the *Cittavisuddhibhāskararana* by Āryadeva and the *Vayrasūci*, advocate equality. The latter, a direct attack on the Brahmanic caste system, is attributed to Dharmakīrti by the Chinese.

Mahāyāna political and economic theories reflect the conditions in which they developed, when India consisted of many major and minor kingdoms. Some texts call upon subjects to overthrow kings who do not rule according to the ideals of *dharma*. Kings are directed to rule with clemency toward both men and other living things; they must also assure peace for their kingdoms (with military force, if necessary), increase national production, provide necessities in times of calamity, maintain social order, and promote education—all through their allegiance to and support of Buddhism. Āryadeva, on the other hand, asserted that the prestige and authority of kings is fictitious.

The spiritual leaders of Mahāyāna were monks who led otherworldly lives; they never engaged in the economic activities that they denounced. But some held that the worldly economic life was also of religious significance. Material charity was encouraged, and the abolition of poverty was espoused. However, certain vocations, such as cattle-raising, slave trading, and sales of liquor, were utterly condemned.

The problem of taxation also came under Mahāyāna scrutiny. Out of sympathy for the people, Mahāyānists called upon kings to minimize their exercise of the right to collect tribute and dispose of it at will. It was proposed that taxes be limited to one sixth of production, and it was argued that low taxes would stimulate production and fulfill this additional duty of the king. Kings were encouraged to distribute their treasures among their subjects to promote happiness, which would in turn increase the king's income. Thus, a rudimentary form of redistributive finance was proposed.

Advice was also offered on the use of force, the goal of which should be to protect the needy and to maintain tranquillity in the state. Although the guilty must be punished, clemency should be applied in the assignment of penalties. Capital and corporal punishments of all degrees were forbidden. If attacked, the king was obligated to protect his subjects and to repulse invaders. Hence, defensive war was recognized, but maintenance of pacifism was upheld as the ideal.

The king was also expected to be as virtuous in his private life as he was diligent in his administration of the state; sensual enjoyments and sexual dalliance were condemned. He was encouraged to choose advisors and subordinates wisely and to promote on the basis of merit. The state's goal should be to guide each subject to salvation. If the king administers the state according to divine law, he will bring benediction upon it and the state will flourish. Both he and his subjects will be happy, and his rebirth in heaven will be assured.

Above all, altruism was stressed, based on the virtue of compassion. A sense of human solidarity shaped Mahāyāna thought and governed its ethics: the refusal to give alms was regarded as the gravest of sins. Men were taught to help one another in the belief that no single man has the strength to sustain his own life, the highest sense of the idea of Buddhist solidarity.

[See also Buddhism, article on Buddhism in India; Soteriology, article on Buddhist Soteriology; and Buddhist Philosophy. For further discussion of the development of Mahāyāna literature, see Buddhist Literature, article on Survey of Texts.]

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## A History of Indian Buddhism

From Sakyamuni\* to Early Mahayana\*

### Terminology

THE FOUNDER OF BUDDHISM is called the “Buddha” by both the Buddhist and non-Buddhist religious traditions of India; his followers were sometimes referred to as Bauddhas by the adherents of other schools.<sup>1</sup> The term “Buddha” means “enlightened one.” Thus Buddhism might be called “the religion of enlightenment.” Although the term “Buddha” eventually was used to refer to the founder of Buddhism, it originally was a common noun often used by the Jainas. For example, according to the Jaina text the *Isibhāṣyāmī*, the forty-five sages (*rishi*) are “all *buddhas* who will not return to this world.”<sup>2</sup> The Jainas usually used the term “Jina” (spiritual victor) to refer to their de facto founder Mahāvīra. Consequently, their religion is known as Jainism. The term “Jina” is also found in Buddhist texts, especially in those from the Mahāyāna tradition. Another term used by both Jainas and Buddhists was “*arhat*” or “*arahant*” (worthy). This term was especially important in Jainism because followers of Jainism were known as *ārikāta*. In Buddhism it came to refer to those followers of the Buddha who had attained enlightenment, while the term “Buddha” was used to refer only to Śākyamuni Buddha. Because Śākyamuni’s followers often used the term “Buddha,” their religion took its name from that term. Jainism and Buddhism also shared many other terms such as *muni* (sage) and *bhagavat* (lord).<sup>3</sup>

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III

### Birth of the Buddha

The historical Buddha is often referred to as Śākyamuni (the sage of the Śākyā or Sakiya people). He was born into the Gautama (P. Gotama)

clan. According to traditional accounts, his personal name before he left home to live a religious life was Siddhārtha (P. Siddhārtha). The Śākyas were a small *kṣatriya* (warrior caste) tribe who lived on the border of India and Nepal; their capital was at Kapilavastu. The Śākyas were primarily engaged in rice farming. Although Śākyamuni was said to be from a *kṣatriya* family, the Śākyā tribe does not appear to have been divided into four castes. Consequently, no evidence exists to indicate whether Śākyamuni was of Aryan or Oriental racial stock. The government was an oligarchy with the leaders alternating as head (*rājan*) of the tribe. Although the Śākyā tribe governed itself, it was not completely independent since it was dominated by Kauśala to the south.

Modern scholars often refer to the historical Buddha as Gautama Buddha. Since Gautama is the clan name of the Buddha, the title may have significance when contrasted with Buddhas such as Kāśyapa and Maitreya, who were from different clans. However, since both Kāśyapa and Maitreya are only legendary figures, there are no historical Buddhas who come from any clan other than the Gautama clan. The epithet "Śākyamuni" (Sage of the Śākyas) refers to the historical Buddha in terms of a social group that was larger than the Gautama clan. Moreover, Śākyamuni is the title that has traditionally been used to refer to the historical Buddha.

The Buddha's father, Śuddhodana, was one of the leaders of the Śākyas. The Buddha's mother was named Māyā. Because she died seven days after the birth of the future Buddha, he was raised by her younger sister, Mahāprajāpati Gautami. Nanda was his younger half-brother.

As the time approached for Māyā to give birth to the future Buddha, she set out to return to her native village of Devadaha. She gave birth during the journey in a grove at Lumbini. One or two centuries later, when King Asoka was on a pilgrimage of the sites associated with the Buddha's life, he traveled to Lumbini and had a *stūpa* (memorial monument) and a pillar erected there. Approximately eight centuries later, the Chinese pilgrim Hsüan-tsang visited the site. The pillar was discovered in 1896 and the inscription on it deciphered, identifying a site in the modern village of Rurimndeī as the birthplace of the Buddha.

According to legend, when the Buddha was born a sage named Asita came down from the Himalayas. After looking at the physical features of the baby, he predicted: "This child has only two paths open to him. If he remains a householder, he will become king and unite the world as a universal ruler. If he leaves home (to become a religious mendicant), he will become a Buddha."

## Birthdate of the Buddha

A number of different theories have been advanced concerning the birthdate of the Buddha. The Buddha is said to have died at eighty years of age. Thus, most theories are based on determining the date of his death and then calculating backward to arrive at the date of his birth. One of the most widely accepted theories is based on the Sri Lankan historical chronicles, the *Dipavamsa* and the *Mahāvamsa*. On the basis of these sources, Wilhelm Geiger calculated that the Buddha died in 483 B.C.E., and consequently had been born in 563 B.C.E.<sup>5</sup> Hermann Jacobi, using the same method and sources, maintained that the Buddha died in 484 B.C.E.<sup>6</sup> The Japanese scholar Kanakura Enshō has arrived at the same date.<sup>7</sup> The "dotted record" transmitted along with the Chinese translation of the Theravāda commentary on the *Vinaya*, the *Saṃvatapāśādikā* (T 1462), also indicates a similar date. At the conclusion of each rainy season retreat after the Buddha's death, a dot was added to this text. This "dotted record" was cited by Fei Ch'ang-fang, who finished compiling a Buddhist bibliography and history, the *Li-tai san-pao chi*, in 597 C.E. Fei noted that 975 dots had been added to the text as of the year 489 C.E. An error by Fei changes the date to 490 C.E. The death of the Buddha would thus have occurred 975 years prior to 490 C.E., in 485 B.C.E., according to the dotted record.<sup>8</sup>

The above theories were based primarily on the Sri Lankan historical chronicles. Although some discrepancies are found in the theories, most modern scholars agree that the Buddha died within a few years of 480 B.C.E. Around the end of the nineteenth century, Max Müller argued that the Buddha had died in 477 B.C.E. and maintained that the Sri Lankan chronicles should be corrected to conform to evidence found in Brahmanical and Jaina works. However, many variant theories are found in the Hindu *Purāṇas* and Jaina texts. Müller unscientifically selected only those texts that approximated the material found in the Sri Lankan chronicles. Consequently, Müller's theory has few, if any, modern supporters.

The prominent modern Japanese scholar Ujii Hakuju (1882–1963) has criticized the above theories. Basing his argument on materials from the Northern tradition of Buddhism, Ujii argued that only 116 years had passed between the death of the Buddha and Asoka's accession to the throne. The Buddha's dates were thus 466–386 B.C.E.<sup>9</sup> Ujii noted that the Sri Lankan chronicles stated that 218 years had elapsed between the Buddha's death and Asoka's reign and that five kings had ruled during that period. However, 218 years was too long a period for only five kings to have ruled; Ujii thus rejected the date of the Buddha's death to have ruled.

based on the Sri Lankan tradition. Uī arrived at his revised date of 386 B.C.E. for the Buddha's death by taking 271 B.C.E. as the date of Aśoka's accession and then counting backward 116 years on the basis of evidence from the Northern tradition. More recently, Nakamura Hajime has accepted most of Uī's calculations but revised the date of Aśoka's accession to 268 B.C.E., thus arguing that the death of the Buddha occurred in 383 B.C.E.<sup>10</sup>

A difference of approximately one century remains between the position maintained by Uī and the positions held by most Western scholars (who have generally based their calculations on Sri Lankan sources). At present, it seems impossible to arrive at a convincing theory to explain the differences between the two positions. Initially, the Sri Lankan chronicles would seem to be the superior source because of their detailed lists of kings and the number of years each reigned. The sources of the Northern tradition seem weaker because they state only that more than one hundred years elapsed between the death of the Buddha and the accession of Aśoka, without listing the names of kings and the number of years they reigned. However, the Sri Lankan tradition lists only five kings as reigning for a period of more than two centuries. It also includes a lineage of five masters of the *vinaya* between the time of Śākyamuni and Aśoka: Upāli, Dāsaka, Sonaka, Siggava, and Moggaliputta Tissa. (The Northern tradition also maintains that five monks assumed important leadership roles in the order between the time of the Buddha and Aśoka: Mahākāśyapa, Ānanda, Madhyantika, Śāpakkavī, and Upagupta.)

According to the Sri Lankan chronicles, Buddhism had divided into a large number of schools by the time of Aśoka. However, little evidence indicating that so many divisions had already occurred is found in Aśoka's edicts, although edicts from Sāñci, Sarnath, and Kaushambi, all important Buddhist sites during Aśoka's reign, admonished the order against permitting schisms. Such edicts indicate that conflicts were arising in Buddhist orders in a number of areas. These disagreements probably occurred after the debate at the Second Buddhist Council over the ten points of monastic discipline. If the fragmentation of Buddhism into many schools had not advanced very far by the time of Aśoka, then Nakamura's dates of 463–383 B.C.E. for the Buddha would be appropriate; they fit in well with the subsequent history of the development of the Buddhist order (see chapter six). The adoption of Nakamura's dates in this history, however, should not be interpreted as a rejection of the Sri Lankan chronicles as sources. Rather, the problem of the Buddha's dates needs to be studied further, particularly in relation to the development of Jainism and Brahmanism.

### Renunciation of Lay Life

According to traditional accounts, Śākyamuni lived a life of luxury as a child. When he grew to be a young man, he married Yaśodhara; they had a son, Rāhula. Śākyamuni was deeply disturbed, however, by existential problems concerning the meaning of life. When he was twenty-nine years old (according to variant accounts, he was nineteen or thirty-one), he left his family to become a wandering mendicant.

Śākyamuni seems to have had a contemplative nature. Even before he left his family, he had once begun to meditate without any effort or preparation and had attained the First Trance as he was sitting under a tree watching his father, the king, plowing a nearby field as part of a religious ceremony. Śākyamuni is also said to have noticed the birds eating the worms turned up by the plowing and to have been profoundly moved by the way in which living creatures all harmed each other. He realized that although people may be repelled by seeing an old man, everyone ages. Although people do not want to suffer from illness or to come in contact with sick people, no one can escape illness. Although people fear death and do not wish to die, no one can escape death.

Śākyamuni's concern over the existential problems of life and death was dramatized in later biographies through descriptions of his encounters with four men while on four sightseeing journeys outside his father's palace. First he encountered an old man, then a sick man, and finally a dead man. Deeply disturbed, he returned home each time. On his fourth outing he saw a wandering mendicant and resolved to leave home and become a religious mendicant.

Śākyamuni left home against his parents' will. In the middle of the night, he mounted his favorite horse, Kapithaka, and with his charioteer, Chanda, left the palace secretly. According to the *Mahāparinibbāna sutta* (*DN*, vol. 2, p. 151), he "left home to seek the good (*kusala*)."

### Religious Austerities

Śākyamuni left home, shaved his head, put on robes, and set out for the country of Magadha to the south, the home of many groups of mendicants. At that time, the public road known as the Northern Route (Uttarāpatha) began at Śravasti, ran east past Kapilavastu, and then turned south to Kusinagara, Vaishālī, and the Ganges River. The road then crossed the Ganges, entered Magadha, and ended in Rājagrīha.

Śākyamuni probably traveled to the city of Rājagṛha on this road. According to traditional sources, King Bimbisāra saw Śākyamuni beginning one day and decided to invite him to become a minister in the government. Bimbisāra dispatched a retainer to persuade Śākyamuni to abandon his religious quest, but Śākyamuni refused.

Śākyamuni eventually began practicing religious austerities under the guidance of one of the most famous religious leaders of that time, Ārāḍa Kālāma (P. Ājāra Kālāma), a master of meditation. He taught Śākyamuni how to attain a State of Nothingness through meditation. Śākyamuni, however, was not satisfied with the results of the meditation and went to practice under a different teacher, Udraka Rāmaputra (P. Uddaka Rāmaputta), who had attained a trance state of Neither Perception nor Nonperception. This trance was more subtle than the State of Nothingness and was said to completely quiet the mind, perhaps by uniting it with some form of the Absolute. However, Śākyamuni realized that when he emerged from the trance, his mind was still buffeted by everyday problems. Thus simply quieting the mind through meditation was not equivalent to realizing the Absolute. Meditation was useful in disciplining the mind; but the Absolute also had a rational quality, which could be realized only through wisdom. And so Śākyamuni left Udraka Rāmaputra.

The Trance of Nothingness and the Trance of Neither Perception nor Nonperception are both included in the early Buddhist list of Four Formless Trances. Although some scholars have questioned whether these trances were actually contrived by Ārāḍa and Udraka, meditation (*dhyāna*) was certainly used to quiet the mind before the time of the Buddha. Relics from the Indus civilization indicate that the Indus people probably practiced meditation. Ārāḍa and Udraka were certainly practitioners of meditation. When the Buddha described the Threefold Teaching of morality, meditation, and wisdom, however, he placed wisdom above meditation. In this way he indicated his belief that meditation by itself would not allow a practitioner to discover the truth. Meditation was a necessary tool for training the mind, but only when it was combined with wisdom could the truth be realized.

Śākyamuni then sought the solitude of the forest to practice austerities. He chose a spot near the village at Uruvilvā-senāni on the Nairāñjanā River where he underwent disciplines such as constantly clenching his teeth and pressing his tongue against his palate. Only through a strong act of will could he overcome the pain such practices entailed. Once he entered a trance and stopped all breath from passing through his mouth and nose, but then is said to have begun breathing through

## Enlightenment

Although Śākyamuni had ceased his ascetic practices, his body was so emaciated that he thought it would be difficult to attain the bliss of even the First Trance. He finally decided to eat solid food to restore his strength. Milk and rice were offered by a young woman named Sujātā. After eating, Śākyamuni bathed in the Nairāñjanā River and drank some water. When the mendicants who had been accompanying him saw him abandoning his austerities, they said, "The *śramaṇa* Gautama has fallen into luxurious ways and abandoned his spiritual efforts" and left him.

With the renewed strength from the food, Śākyamuni built a seat under an *asvattha* tree, commenced meditating, and finally attained supreme enlightenment (*abhiññabodhi*), thereby becoming a Buddha (enlightened being). The *asvattha* tree, a type of fig tree, later became known as the *bodhi* (enlightenment)-tree. The site was called Buddhabayā; a stūpa was later erected there and it became a major pilgrimage site for Buddhists.

According to the Theravāda tradition, the Buddha attained enlightenment on the night of the full moon of the month of Vaisakhā (Vīsakhā), which falls in April or May of the Western calendar. In Japan, the eighth day of the twelfth month is said to be the day of the Buddha's enlightenment. According to traditional accounts, the Buddha left home when he was twenty-nine, attained enlightenment when he was thirty-five, taught others for forty-five years, and died at eighty. According to a variant tradition, however, he left home when he was nineteen, attained enlightenment at thirty, and preached for fifty years.

In traditional biographies, the Buddha's enlightenment is described as occurring after a battle with Māra, the god of death and desire. With enlightenment, the Buddha overcame his fear of death and cut off his desires. Hence the battle with Māra may represent some of the psychological conflicts that religious practitioners encounter. In later accounts, Māra is said to have actually appeared in front of the Buddha. Māra also appeared after the Buddha's enlightenment to tempt the Buddha and to indicate that even an enlightened being cannot escape desires such as those for food and sleep or pains such as illness and death. The Buddha, however, never succumbed to Māra's temptations.

Determining the exact content of the Buddha's enlightenment poses several major scholarly problems. The *Āgamas* include a number of statements concerning the Buddha's enlightenment. The Japanese scholar Ui Hakuju has compiled a list of fifteen explanations from early

sources.<sup>11</sup> Three of these are particularly noteworthy. According to these explanations, the Buddha attained enlightenment either by understanding the Four Noble Truths, realizing the twelve links of Dependent Origination, or mastering the Four Trances and attaining the Three Superhuman Powers. (These teachings are explained in chapter three.) The Four Noble Truths, however, are designed to be used in instructing others and do not seem to represent the content of the Buddha's enlightenment in its earliest form. Simpler versions of the theory of Dependent Origination can be found in early sources, indicating that the twelve-link version of the theory was formulated later. However, the twelve-link version of Dependent Origination may be a systematized explanation based on Śākyamuni's meditations when he realized enlightenment. The third theory, that the Buddha attained the Four Trances and Three Superhuman Powers when he attained enlightenment, was also a relatively late theory, according to Uī.

The last element of the Three Superhuman Powers, the knowledge that all one's dellements have been eradicated, is similar in many ways to the Four Noble Truths and the theory of Dependent Origination. According to another tradition, the Buddha understood the Dharma (Teaching) when he was enlightened. When he was sitting under a tree in meditation after his enlightenment, he is said to have thought, "It is ill to live without paying honor and obedience to a superior. But I do not see anyone in the world who has perfected morality, meditation, wisdom, emancipation, or the knowledge of emancipation more than I. Thus I will live by paying honor and obedience to the Dharma through which I am enlightened" (*SN*, vol. 1, p. 139). In this sense, both the Four Noble Truths and the doctrine of Dependent Origination are the Dharma. The Dharma that the Buddha realized through his enlightenment can be understood by examining the most basic elements of the Buddhist doctrines contained in the early scriptures.

Some modern scholars of Buddhism have emphasized in their interpretations of the Buddha's enlightenment the Buddha's origins as a member of the Gautama clan of the Śākyā tribe. Although the Buddha did come from a particular tribe, he had followers from a variety of states of central India. When he died and was cremated, eight of the countries of central India divided his ashes and erected stūpas. Thus Buddhism was at first a religion practiced by a limited group of people in a small area, but later it spread to all of India and to many other parts of Asia. In contrast, Jainism, which arose at the same time as Buddhism and had similar doctrines, never spread outside India. Hinduism, which was much stronger than Jainism, only spread to a few parts of South and Southeast Asia. It seems, then, that Buddhism had qualities

that enabled it to become a world religion and make it significant to more than just a limited number of tribes or peoples. Those qualities were already present in the Buddha's enlightenment. If that enlightenment had been a phenomenon that could be explained as a function of his membership in a certain tribe, then the transformation of Buddhism into a world religion would have required some major figure as a spokesman. But no such figure appears in the history of Buddhism. The religion founded by the Buddha included a teaching, the elimination of suffering, that transcended the concerns of any particular tribe.

Through meditation the Buddha realized the wisdom that accompanies enlightenment. Traditionally, he is said to have realized enlightenment through the cultivation of the Four Trances and the Threesold Studies. Enlightenment, however, is not equivalent to the Four Trances. Trance (*dhvāna*; Ch. *ching lu* 'quiet contemplation') is only one type of meditation. It was called a comfortable way to attain enlightenment because the practitioner sits in a full-lotus position with the body in a comfortable position. Severe austerities are not required. The practitioner concentrates his spiritual energy and enters the first trance and then gradually deepens it, going into the second, third, and fourth trances. Through this practice the mind is quieted. Other forms of meditation—*yoga*, for example—were also practiced in India. Through these practices the mind could be concentrated and focused until it had become quiet or thought had ceased. Advocates of the various schools of *yoga* claimed that a form of mystical wisdom could be realized through such practices. Buddhist *dhvāna* differed from yogic trance in that it was much more dynamic; it was a form of mental concentration that permitted the free activity of wisdom.

The definition of Buddhist enlightenment as "seeing things as they actually are" suggests the dynamic nature of Buddhist meditation. The mind was considered to have an innate wisdom. Because its basic nature involved thought, when the mind was quieted and focused and concentration strengthened, then a superior form of wisdom would naturally be manifested. Both Buddhist meditation and *yoga* were means of producing wisdom, but since they employed different methods of concentration, the resultant wisdom probably differed. The wisdom produced when enlightenment was realized through Buddhist meditation was described as "seeing the Dharma."

The Buddha progressed through more profound meditative states as he passed through the Four Trances. These were probably the natural result of his many years of training, a temperament that seems to have been suited to meditation from the time he was young, and the training he received from his early teachers Āraḍa and Udraka. The term *dhvāna*

has been used since the early *Upaniads* with the meaning of "meditation" (*Chāndogya Upanisad* 7.6.1), but the Four Trances should probably be regarded as a new meditation system developed by Buddhists. The Four Trances were a dynamic way of focusing the mind. The wisdom produced through them was not a mystical form of intuition. Rather, it allowed a person to see things as they actually are in a rational and free manner. With that wisdom, the practitioner could know truth and firmly adhere to that truth. When he could not be shaken or moved from that truth by fear, pain, or passions, he had realized enlightenment. Because the mind had been freed from the fetters of the defilements and passions, this state was called "emancipation" or "salvation" (*mokṣa, vimokṣa, vimukti*). The truth that he realized through his enlightenment was called *nirvāṇa* (*P.* *nibbāna*). Some scholars have explained salvation as referring to the freedom of the mind from afflictions and *nirvāṇa* as referring to peace.<sup>12</sup>

### The First Sermon

After the Buddha had attained enlightenment, he remained under the *bodhi*-tree and entered a deep state of meditative concentration (*saṃādhi*) that lasted for seven days. When he emerged from his meditation, he went and sat under another tree to contemplate the bliss that had resulted from his enlightenment. While he was sitting under this second tree, two merchants, *Trapusa* and *Bhalika*, saw the Buddha, offered him cakes sweetened with honey, and thus became the first lay Buddhists. The Buddha did not leave the tree for five weeks. During this time, he began to doubt whether he should teach the contents of his enlightenment to others. Because his teaching (Dharma) was subtle and profound, he feared that others would not understand it even if he preached it to them. The Buddha's doubts may also have arisen from his temporary difficulty in discovering a purpose in life once he had attained enlightenment, the highest goal for a religious man. The Buddha overcame his doubts by turning away from the self-centered quest for his own enlightenment, deciding instead to preach to others and help them toward salvation. The resolution of the Buddha's doubts is portrayed in a myth that relates that during the five weeks when the Buddha was quietly contemplating his enlightenment he began to feel hesitant about preaching. Only when the god Brahmā intervened and encouraged him to preach did the Buddha agree to do so.

Some modern scholars have argued that deep religious significance can be found in Śākyamuni Buddha's hesitation to preach.<sup>13</sup> But the

hesitation could have sprung from many sources. Someone who has himself accomplished a major undertaking can perhaps understand that nihilistic feelings may beset a person after success. Many of the Buddha's disciples probably experienced such feelings after they had realized enlightenment. The legends about Śākyamuni's hesitation to preach may have arisen because the Buddha was tempted simply to enter complete *nirvāṇa* after his enlightenment, thereby avoiding the difficulties that the propagation of his teaching would entail. Buddhists came to believe that some Buddhas in the past had decided, in fact, not to preach. Some modern scholars argue that the *pratyekabuddha* (*P.* *paccekabuddha*) originated from such stories. The *pratyekabuddha* was a *buddha* who had attained enlightenment but died (entered complete *nirvāṇa*) without ever deciding to preach to others. The *pratyekabuddha* was said by later Buddhists to have a separate vehicle (*yāna*) to enlightenment. Other modern scholars have argued that the concept of the *pratyekabuddha* did not arise from stories about Śākyamuni Buddha's hesitancy to preach but from the examples of sages (*ṛsi*) who lived and practiced alone.<sup>14</sup>

Once the Buddha decided to preach, he had to determine who his first audience would be. He eventually decided to preach to the five monks who had helped him when he was undergoing austerities because he thought they would be able to understand the truths he had discovered. He traveled west to the Deer Park (*Migadāva*) at Benares. Today the Deer Park is known as Sārnāth and is the site of ruins commemorating the Buddha's first sermon. Among the ruins is a pillar erected by King Asoka. On the capital of the pillar are some exquisitely carved lions and the wheel of the teaching (Dharmacakra).

The Buddha's preaching is called the "turning of the wheel of the teaching." When the Buddha preached his first sermon to the five monks at Benares, he told them to avoid the two extremes of asceticism or luxurious living; instead, they were to follow the Middle Way (*mā�्यमा-pratipad*). He also told them about the Four Noble Truths, which consisted of the truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the way to end suffering. The first of the five men to become enlightened through the Buddha's teaching was Ajñāta-kaunḍinya, who became Śākyamuni's first disciple. Later the other four attained enlightenment and also became disciples, thus establishing the Buddhist order (*sāṅgha*). The Buddha then explained that people had no eternal soul and were composed of the five aggregates, whereupon the five disciples realized the enlightenment of *arhats* (an *arhat* is defined as someone who had completely eliminated all defilements). Because the Buddha had eliminated all his defilements he was also called an *arhat*.

However, since the wisdom of the Buddha attained through enlightenment surpassed that of his disciples, the disciples were not called *buddhas*. The men who became monks were called mendicants (*bhikkus*) because they lived by begging their food while devoting themselves to religious practice.

### Growth of the Buddhist Order

The Buddha's first disciples were the five monks to whom he preached at Sārnāth. According to the earlier biographies of the Buddha, he next converted Yaśas, the son of a wealthy elder (*śreshtha*) of Benares. Yaśas' parents and wife became Buddhist laymen (*upāsaka*) and laywomen (*upāsikā*). Fifty-four of Yaśas' friends entered the order and were ordained as monks. All of them are said to have become *arhats*. The Buddha sent them out to spread his teachings, saying: "Go out and preach, monks, out of compassion for sentient beings, and out of concern for the world. Bring benefits, happiness, and caring to gods and men. No two of you should go to the same place. Preach the Dharma with reason and eloquence so that it will be good at the beginning, middle, and end" (*Vinaya*, vol. 1, p. 20). Out of compassion, the Buddha wished to convey to common people at least some of the truths he had realized.

The Buddha subsequently returned to Magadha, where he converted many people. The Buddha's victory over a noted religious teacher, Urvilvā Kāsiyapa, through a demonstration of superhuman powers, resulted in the conversion to Buddhism of Urvilvā Kāsiyapa, his two younger brothers, and their disciples. The Buddha's fame spread as a result of these and other conversions. When he led his retinue to Rājagṛha, King Śrenika Bimbisāra became a lay disciple and gave the Buddha a bamboo grove, which was used as quarters for monks. Bimbisāra thus became the first head of state to protect the order, and the bamboo grove became the base for the order's activities.

Two disciples of the skeptic Sañjayin, Mahāmaudgalyāyana and Śāriputra, became the Buddha's disciples. Śāriputra was converted when he heard one of the Buddha's first five monastic converts, Āśvajit, recite, "Of all things that arise from cause, the Tathāgatha has explained their causes and their cessations. Thus has the great *śramaṇa* taught" (*Vinaya*, vol. 1, p. 41). Śāriputra then persuaded Mahāmaudgalyāyana also to become the Buddha's disciple. The Buddha is said to have predicted that the two men would become leaders of the order; and, in fact, they played major roles in spreading the Buddha's teachings.

Around the same time, Mahākāsiyapa converted to Buddhism when he saw the Buddha near the Bahuputraka Caitya (*Mahānātha*, vol. 3, p. 50). He is said to have practiced religious austerities assiduously. After the Buddha's death, he assembled the order and supervised recitation of the Buddha's teachings at the First Council.

Among the Buddha's major female lay disciples was Viśākhā Mṛgarāmāṭṛ, a native of Śrāvasti and a generous donor to the order. Much later, the king of the city, Prasenajit, was converted to Buddhism by his wife, Mallikā.

The most important of the Buddha's lay disciples was Sudatta, a wealthy merchant from Śrāvasti known by the epithet Anāthapindada or "the giver of food to the unprotected" because of the many alms he gave to orphans. He first heard that "a Buddha had appeared" when he was on a business trip to Rājagṛha. Before the night was over, he had visited the Buddha at Śravasta. After Sudatta became the Buddha's disciple, he invited the Buddha to come to Śrāvasti. To provide Buddhist monks with residences, Sudatta purchased a park from Prince Jeta of Śrāvasti, had quarters for the monks built in it, and presented it to the order. This monastery was known as Jetavana. Its first buildings were erected in just three months, indicating that they were probably simple wood structures.

A number of years after his enlightenment, the Buddha returned to Kapilavastu to see his father, the king, and his foster mother, the queen. At that time he initiated his son Rāhula, who was still a child, as a novice (*śrāmaṇera*) and assigned Śāriputra to instruct Rāhula. The Buddha subsequently initiated many other young men including his cousins Devadatta and Ānanda, his half-brother Nanda, and a barber named Upali, who had served the Sākyā nobility. Upali eventually became an expert in monastic discipline and played an important role in the early Buddhist order.

During the forty-five years between the Buddha's enlightenment and death, he traveled and preached in central India, staying primarily in Magadha and Kausala. On a typical journey, the Buddha might have set out from Rājagṛha in the southeast and traveled north, passing through Nālandā and arriving in the small village of Pajapiputra (at the site of the modern city of Patna). The Buddha would then cross the Ganges River and go to Vaisālī on the north bank, entering the country of the Licchavis. He would continue north through Kuśinagara and then turn west to Kapilavastu and southwest to Śrāvasti. From there he might go south through Ālavi to Kauśambi, then east to Benares, and from there back to Rājagṛha.

Many of these sites became shrines or important Buddhist centers. One of the Buddha's favorite places to stop near Rājagṛha was

Gṛdhračūja Hill. He sometimes stayed at the Āmrāyatāpikā and Yaśīvana groves near Rājagṛha. The First Council was held in the Saptparṇaguhā, a cave near Rājagṛha. In Vaishālī, he would often stay at the large Mahāvāna lecture hall. In Kauśāmbī, the capital of Vatsa, King Udayana of Vatsa became an important patron of Buddhism after he was converted by his wife, Queen Śyāmāvatī. A small monastery in Kauśāmbī, the Ghositārāma, was given to the Buddhist order by a devout layman, Ghosita; after the Buddha's death it developed into a large monastery.

During the Buddha's lifetime, the monasteries were built of wood. Passages in the *Vinaya* as well as archeological excavations of Pāṭaliputra have indicated that many of its oldest sections, even the palaces of kings, were constructed of wood, and the fences around the earliest stupas were also wooden. As timber became scarcer, however, stone was increasingly used. The Buddhist stupas and other monuments that have survived until the present day were constructed of stone.

After many of the young men of the Śākyas had become monks, the Buddha's foster mother and aunt, Mahāprajāpati Gautami, expressed her desire to become a nun. She went before the Buddha together with a number of young women to ask permission to become nuns, but the Buddha refused her request even after she had repeated it several times. Only after Ānanda interceded with the Buddha was the establishment of an order of nuns (*bhikkhunī*) reluctantly permitted. To govern the relations between monks and nuns and to prevent sexual activity, the Buddha established stringent restrictions concerning the interactions between them. In addition, nuns were required to observe "eight weighty rules" (*garudharmas*) that made them subordinate to the order of monks. Despite such restrictions on their activities, many able nuns were active during the lifetime of the Buddha. Kṣemā and Dharmadinnā were famous for their knowledge and frequently lectured to men. Upalavārṇā was skilled in the use of superhuman abilities, and Kṛṣṇagautami attained a remarkably profound level of enlightenment. The names of many other nuns are recorded in early Buddhist literature.

Details about many of the Buddha's lay disciples are known. Cittarāma was well versed in Buddhist doctrine, and Ugra of Vaiśālī and Mahānāma of the Śākyas were famed for their almsgiving.

The names of many of the Buddha's monastic disciples are known, as are details about them. The bandit Āṅgulimālā was taught by the Buddha and became his disciple. Kṣullapanthaka could not memorize even one verse of the Buddha's teaching, but he still attained a deep level of enlightenment through the Buddha's guidance. Pūrṇa Maitrāyaniputra

was an able preacher. Mahākātyāyana and Mahākausūṭhila were skilled at explaining the Dharma. Mahākātyāyana spread Buddhism to Avantī, south of central India. Pūrṇa was responsible for spreading Buddhism to Sunāparantaka on the west coast of India. According to a story that probably dates from the period after Buddhism had already spread to South India, a Brahman named Bāvari from the Deccan in South India sent sixteen of his disciples to central India to hear the Buddha's teachings ("Pārāyanavagga" chapter of the *Suttanipāta*). The sixteen disciples journeyed along the old trade route known as the Southern Road (Dakṣiṇāpatha) from Pratiṣṭhāna in the Deccan through Ujjayini in the country of Avanti, on to Viḍisā, Kauśāmbī, and Sākera, finally arriving in Śravasti. Because the Buddha was no longer in Śravasti, they continued traveling up the Northern Road (Uttarāpatha) to Rājagrha, where they met the Buddha and became his disciples. Among their number were Ajita and Tissa-Metteya, two men who later may have been somehow identified with Maitreya (P. Metteya), the future Buddha.

### Death of the Buddha

The Buddha's teachings continued to spread through central India. During this time, Buddhism competed with other religious groups in India. The most noteworthy of these were the Jainas and Ajivikas. Both Aśoka and his grandson Daśaratha donated caves in the Barabar Hills to the Ajivikas, indicating that the Ajivikas were still influential in central India during the centuries after the Buddha's death.

During the last years of the Buddha's life, Devadatta plotted to cause a schism in the Buddhist order. He joined forces with Ajātashatru, who had killed his father, King Bimbisāra of Magadha, in order to inherit the throne. Together they made plans that would bring them fame and power. Devadatta went to Śākyamuni to ask for permission to lead the Buddhist order, but Śākyamuni refused his request. Devadatta is then said to have attempted to kill the Buddha by releasing a mad elephant that tried to charge the Buddha. Later he pushed a rock off a mountain-top down toward the Buddha, a fragment of which cut the Buddha's foot. When these attempts to kill the Buddha failed, Devadatta attempted to cause a schism in the order by proposing five new rules that required greater austerities for monks. He thus tried to attract to his cause many of those who had only recently joined the order. However, two of the Buddha's leading disciples, Śāriputra and Mahāmaudgalyāyana, managed to thwart his plans. Among Devadatta's followers

were Kokālīka and Katamorakatiyaka. Ajātaśatru later repented the murder of his father, Bimbisāra, and became a follower of the Buddha. King Prasenajit of Kauśala died and was succeeded by his son Viñū-dabha. Because the Buddha's tribe, the Sākyas, had insulted Viñū-dabha earlier, one of the new king's first acts was to attack and destroy them. This occurred late in Śākyamuni's lifetime. Later, Kaufala was destroyed by Ajātaśatru, who then turned his attention toward the Vṛji people, who lived north of the Ganges.

Around that time, Śākyamuni was leaving Rājagrha on the last journey before his death. He crossed the Ganges and entered Vaiśālī, where he converted the courtesan Āmrapāli, who gave her gardens to the Buddhist order. While he was passing the rainy season retreat alone at Vaiśālī, the Buddha became very ill. According to later traditions, Māra appeared before him and urged him to die. The Buddha then predicted that he would die in three months.

Śākyamuni continued his journey, leaving Vaiśālī, passing through many villages, and eventually arriving at Pāvā. There he was fed by a blacksmith named Cunda and became violently ill with diarrhea and hemorrhaging. The food Śākyamuni had been served was called *sukaramaddava* in Pāli; modern scholars have identified it as either a soft type of pork or a variety of mushroom. The Buddha continued to travel despite his illness, arriving in Kuśinagara (Kusinārā), where he died (or entered *parinirvāṇa*) in a grove of *jåla* trees.

According to the *Mahāparinibbāna suttanta*, Śākyamuni left a number of instructions for the order before he died. For example, when he was asked about the future of the order, he answered, "What does the order expect of me? I have preached without distinguishing between esoteric and exoteric doctrines. In the teachings of the Buddha there is no such thing as the closed fist of a teacher hiding things from his disciples" (chap. 2, v. 32). He thus explained that the Buddha was not to be thought of as the head of the order; rather, the order was to be a cooperative community without a specified leader. After the Buddha's death, his teachings are said to have been passed from Mahākāśyapa to Ānanda, and then to Madhyāntika and so forth. Yet even this lineage refers only to the maintenance of the Buddha's teachings, not to the leadership of the order. The Buddha's attitude is expressed well in his words: "Be a lamp unto yourselves. Be refugees unto yourselves. Let the Dharma be your lamp. Let the Dharma be your refuge" (chap. 2, v. 35).

The Buddha instructed his followers who had become mendicants not to honor his remains (*śarīra*). Rather they were to strive after the highest good (P. *saddhattha*). He told them, "You should not think that your teach-

er's words have ceased and that you no longer have a teacher. Rather you should let the teachings (Dharma) and rules (*vinaya*) that I have set forth be your teacher after I have died" (chap. 6, v. 1). Shortly before his death he asked his assembled disciples three times "Have you any questions?" When they remained silent all three times, he told them, "All things must decay. Be diligent in striving for salvation" (chap. 6 vv. 5–10). Then he entered a trance and died (entered complete *nirvāṇa*).

After the Buddha's death, the Mallas of Kuśinagara took his body, honored it with flowers, scents, and music, and then cremated it. The remains were divided among eight of the peoples of central India, who took their shares and constructed *stūpas* for them. *Stūpas* were also built by individuals for the urn that had held the Buddha's remains and for the ashes from the cremation. In 1898 Peppe excavated an old *stūpa* at Piprahwā, a site connected with the Śākyas. In it he discovered an urn with an inscription written in characters that indicated it might have been composed at the time of King Asoka or earlier. According to the inscription, the urn contained the remains of Śākyamuni, which had been enshrined by the Śākyas. After the contents of the urn had been identified as Śākyamuni's remains, part of them were presented to Thailand. Thailand, in turn, divided its portion and sent part of the remains to Japan, where they were enshrined at the Nittaiji Temple in Nagoya. The urn is in the collection of the Calcutta Museum.

In 1958 an urn containing the remains from a cremation was found at the site of Vaiśālī. Although the urn had no inscription, it was similar to the one Peppe had discovered and identified as containing the Buddha's remains. The account in the *Mahāparinibbāna suttanta* of the division of the Buddha's relics into eight parts thus seems to be based on historical fact. These *stūpas* were the forerunners of other *stūpas* that were later erected throughout India and served as centers for Buddhist devotees.

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### CHAPTER 6

## *The Development of the Buddhist Order*

### **The Order after the Buddha's Death**

AT THE TIME of the Buddha's death, the Buddhist order had spread only within central India. The Buddha's birthplace, Lumbini, 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 (*cāitya*) soon flourished as pilgrimage centers (*DN*, vol. 2, p. 140). For early Buddhists, the term "central country" (*mādhyā-deśa*), found in many Buddhist texts, referred to central India.<sup>1</sup>

After the Buddha's death, missionaries spread Buddhism to the west and southwest. (The Vindhya Mountains blocked the spread of Buddhism to the south, and the east was tropical and undeveloped.) They were particularly successful in the southwest. Buddhism advanced more slowly in the west because this area was a stronghold of Brahmanism.

During the Buddha's lifetime, missionary activity is reported in the western part of India. One of the Buddha's ten chief disciples, Mahākātyāyana (P. Mahākaccāyana) was a native of Avanti (where Ujjayinī was the capital). Mahākātyāyana is said to have been especially adept at giving detailed explanations of the terse summaries of teachings that the Buddha's disciples had memorized. According to the *Āgamas*, Mahākātyāyana later returned to Avanti to preach. While he was in Avanti, Mahākātyāyana ordained Śrōṇakotikarna (P. Sonakutikanna), a native

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of Aparāntaka (P. *Aparānta*), which was on the west coast of India. When Śravakītāyana was about to go to visit the Buddha in Śravasti (P. Sāvatthī), Mahākātyāyana requested that he ask the Buddha for permission to make five exceptions to the observance of the precepts. One of these permitted monks living in remote areas, where it was difficult to assemble the required number of monks, to ordain new monks with an order of five monks instead of the usual ten.

According to *vinayas* of the Sthavira lineage, Śravakotikarpa was a disciple of Mahākātyāyana. However, *vinayas* of the Mahāsaṅghika lineage state that Śravakotikarpa was a disciple of Pūrṇa (P. *Punna*), a native of Śūrpāraka in Sunāparantaka. Śūrpāraka, also known as Sopāra, was a seaport on the west coast of India to the north of the modern city of Bombay. One of Aśoka's edicts was discovered in this area. After Pūrṇa realized enlightenment, he returned to preach in his own country, where he made many disciples. The *Jataka* in which he tells the Buddha about his determination to spread Buddhism is widely known (M/N, no. 145). Through his efforts, Buddhism was established in this area in western India. Stories about the many merchants who became Buddhists are found in the *Āgamas*. Many of these converts had come to central India for business purposes, professed their faith in Buddhism, and then returned to their homes to preach their new religion. Such figures as Pūrṇa and Mahākātyāyana are examples of this type of believer. A number of *sūtras* describe how Mahākātyāyana preached in Mathurā (near Delhi) and Avanti.

The verses in the prologue to the *Pāṭiyāna-vagga* (Chapter on the Road to the Beyond) of the *Suttanipāta* (Group of Discourses) relate the story of a Brahman named Bavari, who lived near the upper reaches of the Godāvāri River in the Deccan. When he heard about the Buddha, he sent sixteen disciples to listen to the Buddha's teaching. The disciples went from Pratiṣṭhāna (P. *Patitihāna*) on the Godāvāri River, along the Southern Route (Dakṣināpātha), passing through Ujjayinī, Vidiśā, Kauśambi, and Sāketa on their way to Śravasti. The sixteen disciples of the Brahman questioned the Buddha, whose reply is said to be preserved as the *Pāṭiyāna-vagga* of the *Suttanipāta*. Both this chapter and the *Ājīvaka-vagga* (Chapter of the Eight) of the *Suttanipāta* are written in a very old style of Pāli and are thus thought to belong to the oldest strata of the *Āgamas*. However, when these chapters are compared with the language used in Aśoka's edicts, it is impossible to determine which is earlier. Thus, although the *Pāṭiyāna-vagga* is written in an early style of Pāli, it cannot be proven that it was composed during the Buddha's lifetime. Moreover, the verses that comprise the prologue of the *Pāṭiyāna-vagga* were composed later than the verses that the Buddha is said to

have spoken in the *Pāṭiyāna-vagga* itself. Consequently, the prologue does not provide evidence that the Buddha's fame extended to the Decan during his lifetime.

Passages such as these prove that Buddhism spread along the Southern Route after the Buddha's death. The birthplace of King Aśoka's son Mahinda, who is credited with being the transmitter of Buddhism to Sri Lanka, is said to have been Ujjayinī. The texts of Sri Lankan Buddhism are written in Pāli, a language closely resembling that in one of Aśoka's edicts found at Gimār on the Kāthiawar Peninsula near Aparāntaka. Buddhism was obviously firmly established in this region by the time of King Aśoka.<sup>2</sup>

### The Political Situation

According to Sri Lankan sources, the Buddha died in the eighth year of the reign of King Ajātasatru (P. Ajātasatru), ruler of Magadha, who had succeeded to the throne after killing his father, King Bimbisāra. Ajātasatru conquered much of central India and increased the power of Magadha. His dynasty continued for several generations until the people overthrew it during the reign of King Nāgadāsaka. One of Nāgadāsaka's ministers, Susunāga, was crowned as the new king and sounded the Susunāga dynasty. During this period, Magadha conquered Avanti. However, after a short time, the Susunāga dynasty was replaced by the Nanda dynasty, which then amassed great military power and conquered a large territory, extending its borders beyond India. However, it declined after only twenty-two years. In 327 B.C.E. Alexander the Great led a large army into northwestern India and conquered it. Instead of pressing on, however, he led his army out of India and died in Babylon in 323 B.C.E. Thus central India was spared conquest by the Macedonians. In the aftermath of the disorder brought about by the Macedonian invasions, young Candragupta, with the aid of his prime minister Kauṭilya, assembled troops, toppled the Nanda dynasty, and founded the Mauryan dynasty. He destroyed Macedonian power in northwestern India, conquered much of the rest of India, and thus established a strong kingdom, which he ruled for twenty-four years. Candragupta was succeeded by his son Bindusāra, who ruled for twenty-eight years. Bindusāra's son, Aśoka, ascended the throne in 268 B.C.E.

According to the Sri Lankan chronicles, 218 years passed between the time of the Buddha's death and the year Aśoka became king. In contrast, sources in the Northern tradition state that the time between these

two events was only one hundred years. If the above account of the political situation in India is correct, one hundred years would seem to be too short for the time span between the Buddha's death and Asoka's succession. In the *A-yü-wang chuan* (*T 50:99c, Asokarajñādāna* \*), a work belonging to the Northern tradition of Buddhism, the names of twelve kings of Magadha are listed, beginning with Bimbisāra and concluding with Susīma, a contemporary of Asoka. The durations of their reigns, however, are not listed, making it difficult to determine whether the figure of 100 years or 218 years is more trustworthy. The many points in which the various accounts disagree prevent any of them from being considered an infallible source. Although the dates in the Sri Lankan chronicles would seem to be more trustworthy than those in other accounts, even the Sri Lankan histories present many difficult problems when they are used to reconstruct a history of the early Buddhist order. Consequently, the problem of determining what period elapsed between the Buddha and Asoka must remain unsolved for the present. The following account of the development of the Buddhist order relies upon both the Sri Lankan chronicles and the Northern sources.<sup>3</sup>

### The Second Council and the First Major Schism in the Order

After the Buddha's death, 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 (Madhūrā), 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 Krishna worship arose, it is a sacred place to Hindus. At one time, however, Buddhism flourished there, and it was a stronghold of the Sarvāstivādin School. According to scriptures, Mahākātyayana preached in Mathurā. No *jūtras* 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 death, at the time of the Second Council, Buddhism was still not strong in Mathurā. The Second Council was held because the monks of Vaiśālī were said to have adopted ten practices that violated the precepts. When a dispute arose over these practices, seven hundred monks assembled in Vaiśālī and determined that the monks of Vaiśālī were in error. Although deciding the status of the ten practices in question was the main reason for the

meeting, the *Dīparatna*, a Sri Lankan chronicle, refers to the meeting as the "Second Council" because the canon was chanted after the other business had been completed.<sup>4</sup> However, the "Chapter on the Council of the Seven Hundred" in the *Vinaya* states only that the meeting concerned the ten practices and does not consider it to be the Second Council.

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, traveling to another village to eat another meal the same day—violating the rule against overeating
4. Holding several fortnightly assemblies within the same boundaries (*simā*)—violated procedures requiring all monks within the *simā* to attend the same fortnightly assembly
5. Confirming an ecclesiastical act 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.<sup>5</sup> 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. In the following discussion, the story of the Second Council is summarized in accordance with the "Chapter on the Council of Seven Hundred" from the *Pāli Vinaya*.

Approximately one century after the Buddha's death, a monk named Yāsas (P. Yasa kākāñḍakaputta) 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 Vaisālī expelled him from the order. Yāśas then traveled west to seek assistance.

Yāśas appealed to monks from Avanti, Pāvā (Pāthayyakā), and areas along the Southern Route. Avanti 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 orders by this time. The monks of Pāvā were probably from the western part of Kauṭala. This area was to the far west of Śravasti, and included Sāṅkāśya and Kanyākubja. A little further to the west was Mathurā. Pāvā was the site of a very strong Buddhist order 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 Sañcavāsi, who lived on Mount Ahogaṇīga. Another important elder was Revata, who was from Soreyya, a town on the upper reaches of the Ganges River near Sānikāśya, the center of the area around Pāvā. Because Yāśas 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 order. The conservative position prevailed at the council, probably because 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 order.

The schism, often called the basic schism (Ch. *ken-pen fen-fieh*), resulted in the formation of two schools: the Mahāsaṅghika, whose monks refused to accept the conservative ruling of the committee of eight monks, and the Sthaviravāda (P. Theravāda), whose monks agreed with the conservative ruling. The name Mahāsaṅghika means

"great assembly" and suggests that many monks belonged to the liberal faction.

According to the *I-p'u-tsang-lun-tan* (T 2031, *Samayabhedoparacanacakra*; 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 the basic schism was five teachings 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 *vinaya* of various schools and other sources, the controversy over the ten points of practice occurred a century after the Buddha's death. 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 schisms in the order are recorded in Tibetan sources; however, both Northern and Southern (Pāli) sources are in agreement that a schism that resulted in the formation of the Mahāsaṅghika and Sthavira schools occurred one century after the Buddha's death. Since the *vinaya* of the Theravāda, Sarvāstivādin, Mahīśāsaka, and Dharmaguptaka schools all record that the controversy over the ten points of *vinaya* occurred one century after the Buddha's death, 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) *arhats* may be sexually templed, (2) *arhats* have a residue of ignorance, (3) *arhats* may have doubts, (4) *arhats* may attain enlightenment through the help 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 *arhats*. Mahādeva's five points of doctrine are included in the Sarvāstivādin School's *Samaya* (T 49, 15a, 18a, 20a) and *Mahāvibhāṣā* (T 27:511a-c), as well as the Theravāda work, the *Kathāvatthu* (bk. 2, parts 1-5). 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, scholars 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 Buddha's death. 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.

### Sāṇavāśī and Monastic Lineages

The chapters on the Second Council contained in the various *vinayas* are in agreement about the identities of the senior monks of the Buddhist order approximately a century after the Buddha's death. In the east Sarvakāmin was an important elder, and in the west Revata and Sambhūta Sāṇavāśī were influential. The roles of these three men are stressed in the Sri Lankan sources and are related to the accounts of a monk named Śāpakkavāśī in Northern sources.

In such Northern sources as the *Dīyāvadāna*, *A-yü-wang chuan* (T 2042, *Āstakarajñāvadāna*<sup>\*</sup>), *A-yü-wang ching* (T 2043, *Āstakarajñāvratra*), and *Kem-pen yu-pu liu tsu-shih* (T 1451, *Mūlasarvārṇivāda vinayakṣudrakāvastusī*), the following patriarchal lineage is given: Mahākāśyapa, Ānanda, Śāpakkavāśī, and Upagupta. The monk Madhyāntika must also be mentioned. Madhyāntika was a fellow student with Śāpakkavāśī under Ānanda; however, since Madhyāntika became a disciple of Ānanda just before Ānanda died, Madhyāntika should probably be considered a contemporary of Upagupta. Śāpakkavāśī, Madhyāntika, Upagupta, and others mentioned in these lineages are also discussed in Sri Lankan sources. In the following paragraphs, the roles of these men and the relation between the Northern and Sri Lankan accounts of them are analyzed.

Sambhūta Sāṇavāśī is mentioned in the chapter on the Second Council in the Pāli *Vinaya*. He was a disciple of Ānanda, as was Śāpakkavāśī, who is mentioned in Northern sources. Both lived about one century after the Buddha's death. According to the Pāli *Vinaya*, Sāṇavāśī lived on Mount Ahogaṅga. Śāpakkavāśī is said to have resided on Mount Urumunda in Mathurā (*Dīyāvadāna*, p. 349). Although the names of the two mountains were different, both mountains are said to have been reached by boat. (The name of Mount Ahogaṅga indicates that it was probably on the Ganges River.)

The name "Sāṇavāśī" does not appear in the following list of patriarchs found in Sri Lankan sources: Upali, Dāsaka, Sonaka, Siggava, and Moggaliputta Tissa. Āsoka's teacher Moggaliputta Tissa is said to have resided on Mount Ahoganga (*Semantapātisādikā*, p. 33). King Āsoka

sent a boat to the mountain to bring Moggaliputta back to the capital. In contrast, Northern sources state both that Śāpakkavāśī's disciple Upagupta was Āsoka's teacher and that Upagupta succeeded his teacher on Mount Urumunda. Moreover, according to Northern sources, Āsoka sent for Upagupta with a boat and the boat then returned to Pāṭaliputra. In conclusion, although the names of the two mountains are different, the accounts resemble each other in many ways. Śāpakkavāśī of Northern sources is not called "Sambhūta" as is Śāṇavāśī of the Sri Lankan tradition. Although Śāpakkavāśī and Sambhūta Sāṇavāśī cannot be proven to be identical, since they were both Ānanda's disciples and lived at the same time and in similar places, they probably were, in fact, the same person.

In Sri Lankan sources such as the *Dīyāvadāna*, *Mahāvamsa*, and the *Samanṭapātisādikā*, the following lineage of *vinaya* masters is recorded: Upali, Dāsaka, Sonaka, Siggava, and Moggaliputta Tissa. Since, according to Sri Lankan sources, Moggaliputta Tissa is said to have been Āsoka's teacher, five generations of teachers would have served between the death of the Buddha and the accession of Āsoka to the throne. In Northern sources, Āsoka's teacher is said to have been Upagupta; thus, according to Northern sources, four generations of teachers would have passed between the death of the Buddha and Āsoka. Sambhūta Sāṇavāśī does not appear in the lineage in the Northern sources because, as a disciple of Ananda, Sāṇavāśī belonged to a different lineage. In contrast, the Sri Lankan lineage of *vinaya* masters was based on the fact that Moggaliputta's preceptor was Siggava and Siggava's preceptor was Sonaka and so forth back to Upali. Consequently, there was no place in the Sri Lankan lineage to add Ānanda.

According to the lineages found in Northern sources, Upagupta's preceptor was Śāpakkavāśī, Śāpakkavāśī's preceptor was Ānanda, and Ānanda's preceptor was Mahākāśyapa. However, doubt exists about whether Ānanda's preceptor was Mahākāśyapa. According to the Pāli *Vinaya*, Ānanda's preceptor was named Belathasissa, indicating that Ānanda's preceptor probably was not Mahākāśyapa (*Vinaya*, vol. 4, p. 86). Why Mahākāśyapa was listed as Ānanda's preceptor must be considered further.

After the Buddha's death Mahākāśyapa was probably the Buddha's most powerful disciple. Mahākāśyapa presided over the First Council. Moreover, a number of stories in the *Āgamas* demonstrate the respect held for Mahākāśyapa. For example, in one story the Buddha shared his seat with Mahākāśyapa and then had him preach. In another story, the Buddha exchanged his tattered robes for Mahākāśyapa's large hempen robe (*sanghātī*). Since Śāriputra and Maugalyāyana had prede-

ceased the Buddha, Mahākāśyapa was recognized by everyone as the most influential figure in the Buddhist order after the Buddha's death. Consequently, later, when those in Ānanda's lineage traced their spiritual ancestry, they did not mention Ānanda's actual preceptor since he was almost completely unknown and did nothing to bolster Ānanda's authority. Instead, they devised a legend in which Mahākāśyapa bestowed the teaching on Ānanda.

One of the major objections to the tradition that Mahākāśyapa was Ānanda's preceptor is that many legends suggesting that serious discord existed between Mahākāśyapa and Ānanda are found in the *Āgamas* and *vinayas*. For example, according to the chapter on the First Council in the *Vinaya*, after the First Council, Mahākāśyapa described several serious errors made by Ānanda and urged Ānanda to confess them. Other stories concern criticisms that Ānanda's followers made against Mahākāśyapa when he was older. Mahākāśyapa was influential immediately after the Buddha's death, but later Ānanda's followers gained in strength until they became the stronger faction.

Ānanda had many strong connections with the orders in the west. In many episodes in the *Āgamas*, he is described as staying and preaching to people at the Ghositārāma in Kausāmbī, in the western part of central India.<sup>6</sup> Since Ānanda liked to proselytize in the west, he probably had many disciples there. When a committee of eight monks was chosen to investigate the points at issue at the Second Council, six of the eight were Ānanda's disciples. Because Ānanda had lived longer than most of the Buddha's other immediate disciples, his disciples were among the eldest members of the order approximately one century after the Buddha's death.

The above account agrees with other information about Ānanda's age. At the time of the Buddha's death, Ānanda served as his personal attendant, a position probably not held by an elderly monk. According to the *Tz-chih-lu-lan* (*T* 25:68a, *Mahāprajñāparamitopadeśa*) and the commentary on the *Theragāthā*, Ānanda was the Buddha's attendant for twenty-five years. If Ānanda had become the Buddha's attendant immediately after he was ordained, then he was probably forty-five years old at the Buddha's death and might well have lived for another thirty to forty years.

Ānanda's disciple Śāpakkavāsi was a native of Rājagrha according to Northern sources such as the *A-yü-wang chuan* (*T* 2043, *Asokarajastūtra?*). He introduced Buddhism to Mathurā in the west. Mount Urumunḍa, mentioned earlier, was in Mathurā, and Śāpakkavāsi's disciple Upagupta was a native of Mathurā (*A-yü-wang chuan*, *T* 50:114b, 117b). Thus by the time of Śāpakkavāsi, Buddhism was spreading to Mathurā.

According to Sri Lankan sources, most of the elders chosen to serve on the committee to decide the issues that arose at the time of the Second Council traced their lineages back to Upāli even while acknowledging that they were Ānanda's disciples. This discrepancy probably occurs because Mahinda, the monk who transmitted Buddhism to Sri Lanka, was in Upāli's lineage (Upāli, Dāsaka, Sonaka, Siggava, Moggaliputta, Mahinda). Mahinda's lineage was probably emphasized in Sri Lankan sources because Mahinda was one of the most important figures in Sri Lankan Buddhism. Lineages were a sacred issue for monks, and tracing a lineage back through a series of preceptors and disciples was an acknowledged way of proving the orthodoxy of a person's ordination. Consequently, monks would not have forgotten or fabricated the lineage of Mahinda and his preceptor. The fact that monks such as Sonaka and Siggava, who are included in the lineage between Upāli and Moggaliputta Tissa, do not appear as major figures in the history of the Buddhist order suggests that such lineages are probably authentic. The lineage should be understood as referring to the relationship between preceptor and disciples, not as indicating that figures such as Sonaka and Siggava were part of a lineage of monks who supervised the order.

According to Sri Lankan sources, there were five generations of viñayī masters between the death of the Buddha and the time of Asoka. According to Northern sources such as the *A-yü-wang chuan* (*T* 2042, *Asokarajāvoddāna?*), because Ānanda's disciple Śāpakkavāsi was long-lived, Asoka's teacher Upagupta was in the fourth generation after the Buddha. The lineage in the Northern sources from Ānanda to Śāpakkavāsi to Upagupta was based on the relationship of preceptor to disciple, reflecting the importance of ordinations, but the relationship between Mahākāśyapa and Ānanda was not one of preceptor to disciple. To explain this discrepancy, the lineage in Northern sources had to assume the format of being a transmission of the teaching rather than an ordination lineage. According to Northern sources, Asoka's teacher was Upagupta of Mount Urumunda; in Sri Lankan sources, Asoka's teacher was Moggaliputta Tissa of Mount Ahogaṅga. Although the two teachers resemble each other in certain ways, they cannot reasonably be identified as the same person. Questions concerning whether only one monk or both monks were Asoka's teachers remain unanswered at present.

Evidence from the lineages thus indicates that the Sri Lankan figure of 218 years for the period between the Buddha's death and Asoka's succession is simply too long. The figure of 116 years found in Northern sources is much more reasonable.

## Madhyāntika and the Dispatch of Missionaries

The Northern and Southern (Sri Lankan) traditions agree on a number of points concerning Madhyāntika. According to the Northern tradition, he was Ānanda's last disciple. Approximately a hundred years after the Buddha's death, he went to Kashmir, where he built a place to meditate and live. Stories about him describe how he converted some evil dragons (Nāgas) in Kashmir to Buddhism, spread Buddhism among the people, and taught the people how to grow tulips to make their living.

According to the Sri Lankan tradition, missionaries from the Buddhist order were sent to various lands during the reign of Aśoka at the recommendation of Moggaliputta Tissa. Eminent monks were dispatched to nine areas, with Majjhantika going to Kashmir and Gandhāra. Majjhantika took five monks with him to Kashmir and converted evil dragons there by using his superhuman powers and the people by teaching the *Āstiviparne-sutta*. Majjhantika is probably the same person as the Madhyāntika mentioned in the Northern sources. Since the Madhyāntika mentioned in the Northern sources was said to be the last disciple of Ānanda, he could have been a contemporary of Upagupta. And if Upagupta lived during Aśoka's reign, then the missionary activities of both men would have been assisted by Aśoka's support of Buddhism. Since Buddhism had spread to Mathurā during this time, then Madhyāntika might very well have taken it farther north to Kashmir.

According to Sri Lankan chronicles, at the same time Majjhantika was proselytizing in Kashmir, other eminent monks from the order in Magadha were spreading Buddhism to other parts of India. Each eminent monk was sent with a group of five monks, since five was the minimum number required to perform full ordinations. A list of these eminent monks, the areas in which they proselytized, and the *sutras* that they preached follows.

Mahādeva went to Mahisamandala and preached the *Devadīvarūta*  
Rakkhita went to Vanavasi and preached the *Anomallagīvarūta*

Dhammarakkhita went to Aparantaka and preached the *Aggikkendupānatūta*  
Mahādhammarakkhita went to Mahārattha and preached the *Mahārādatassatī-jālakā*  
Mahārakkhita went to Yonaloka and preached the *Kālakārāmasutanta*  
Majjhima went to Himavantapadesa and preached the *Dhammacakrapātanātūta*

Sonaka and Uttara went to Suvaṇṇabhūmi and preached the *Brahmajālātūta*  
Mahinda went to Lankādipa (Sri Lanka) and preached the *Culekhatthipādepmātūta* and other *sūtras*

Mahisamandala, where Mahādeva was sent, seems to be to the south of the Narmadā River, but it has also been identified with Mysore. According to the *Shan-chien-lü* (T 24:681c-82a), the Chinese translation of Buddhaghosa's *Samantapāsādikā*, Mahādeva and Majjhantika were teachers (ācārye) at Mahinda's full ordination. Episodes concerning two figures named Mahādeva are included in Sarvāstivādin sources. Mahādeva is said to be both a monk who caused the schism between the Sthavira and Mahāsaṅghika schools by preaching his "five points" and a Mahāsaṅghika monk who lived at Mount Caitika and caused the schism that led to the formation of the Caitika School (which is related to the Mahāsaṅghika School) by proclaiming the "five points." The former figure, the monk responsible for the basic schism, is probably a fictional character. The latter lived approximately two centuries after the Buddha's death at Mount Caitika, along the middle part of the Kṛṣṇa River in Āndhra. It is unclear whether this Mahādeva should be identified with the monk of the same name who was dispatched as a missionary by Moggaliputta Tissa.

The place called "Aparantaka" has been identified with a site on the west coast of India, an area previously opened to Buddhism by Pūrṇa. Mahāratha is near Bombay in Mahārāstra; Yonaloka was in the north in the area where a number of Greeks lived. Himavantapadesa was in the Himalayan region, and Suvaṇṇabhūmi was in eastern India near Burma.

Besides Majjhima, four other monks—Kassapagotta, Alakadeva, Dundubhissara, and Sahadeva—helped propagate Buddhism in the Himalayan area. Among the funerary urns found at the second *stūpa* at Sāñcī were one for "Kassapagotta" [sic], a teacher in the Himalayan area, and another for the sage "Majjhima" [sic]. These archaeological finds provide additional evidence concerning Majjhima's activities in Himalayan areas.

Mahinda equipped himself for his journey to Sri Lanka at the Vidiśā monastery (P. *Vediśagṛī*) near Sāñcī, bade farewell to his mother, and departed with five monks. From Vidiśā he probably traveled to the west coast of India, boarded a ship going south, rounded the tip of the Indian subcontinent, and landed in Sri Lanka. Because the dispatch of missionaries to various parts of India is proven in part by inscriptions, the

scriptural account of the missionaries may be regarded as essentially factual.

To summarize, Ānanda opened Kaufāmī to Buddhism. One hundred years after the Buddha's death, Buddhism had spread to Sākāsya, Kanyākubja, Avanti, and along the Southern Route. Buddhism was subsequently introduced to Mathurā by Śāṇakavāśī and Upagupta. Missionaries were then dispatched to Kashmir, southern India, and the Himalayan region. Stories concerning the territory exposed to Buddhism during the lifetimes of Śāṇakavāśī and Upagupta agree with the account of the dispatch of missionaries in the next period. Thus the missionaries were probably sent out between 100 and 150 years after the Buddha's death. If the Sri Lankan version of Buddhist history is followed in which 218 years elapsed between the Buddha's death and Asoka's succession, then there would be a hundred-year gap between Śāṇakavāśī and Moggaliputta during which the order would have been virtually moribund.

### The Third Council

As the above discussion indicates, a number of differences exist between the Northern and Southern accounts of the early Buddhist order. There are also important points of agreement between the different accounts. By the time of King Asoka, there had been four or five generations of leaders of the *sangha*, and the propagation of Buddhism in Kashmir had begun. In the south, Buddhism had spread to the Deccan plateau. According to the Sri Lankan tradition, during Asoka's reign missionaries were sent to various parts of India. However, a project of this magnitude probably could not have involved just one school of Nikāya (Hinayāna) Buddhism, the Theravāda. Moreover, according to the fifth chapter of the *Dīpavaṃsa*, a Sri Lankan chronicle, many schisms occurred during the second century after the Buddha's death. These schisms eventually led to the eighteen schools of Nikāya Buddhism. Thus according to the Sri Lankan account, the Caitika School of the Mahāsanghika lineage (founded by Mahadeva) would already have been established in Andhra by the time of Asoka's succession to the throne. The Dharmaguptaka and the Kāshyapiya schools would have already split away from the Sarvāstivādin School, and the Kashmīri Sarvāstivādin School would already have had a strong base. In addition, according to the Sri Lankan tradition, other schools had been established by Asoka's time, such as the Mahisāsakas, Dharmagupta-

kas, Sammatiyas, and Vatsiputriyas, and had probably spread beyond central India. Thus, according to Sri Lankan sources, by the time of Asoka, Buddhism had probably already spread throughout India and most of the schisms of Nikāya Buddhism had already occurred. It is doubtful whether missionaries would have been dispatched to these areas when Buddhism was already so firmly established in them. The accounts in the Sri Lankan chronicles of the schisms and the dispatch of the missionaries by Asoka are clearly difficult to reconcile with each other.

If both the schisms and the dispatch of missionaries are historical events, then the Northern tradition's account is more reasonable. According to this account, the missionaries were dispatched before the schisms of Nikāya Buddhism. (The Sri Lankan claim that many of the schisms occurred before Asoka's reign is discussed in chapter 8.) According to the Sri Lankan chronicles, bitter dissension was evident in the order during Asoka's time. However, such discord would probably have been resolved by a series of schisms that gave monks a choice of orders. A more natural order of events would place the dissension before the schisms. The Sri Lankan chronicles describe discord in the order at Pātaliputra during Asoka's reign, indicating that discord had broken out in the orders of central India. To resolve the situation, Moggaliputta Tissa was summoned from Mount Ahogaṅga. The edicts of Asoka from Kauśāmbī, Sāñcī, and Sārnāth strongly warned against schisms in the order, stating that monks who caused schisms were to be expelled and laicized. (The fact that the edicts were carved in stone suggests that the discord probably had been occurring for a long period.) The carved edicts warning against schisms were located at the strongholds of the western monks of Avanti and the Southern Route at the time of the Second Council, and thus reflect the situation in Indian Buddhism after the dispute over the "ten points" of *vimaya* had occurred.

According to the Sri Lankan tradition, Moggaliputta Tissa was invited to Pātaliputra, where he defrocked heretics and purified the order so that those remaining adhered to Vibhajjhavāda doctrine. Later he assembled one thousand monks and convened the Third Council. To specify orthodox doctrinal positions, he compiled the *Kathāvathu* (Points of Controversy). These events occurred in approximately the eighteenth year of Asoka's reign. However, if most of the schisms of Nikāya Buddhism had already occurred, as is stated in the Sri Lankan sources, it is unlikely that the various orders could have been purified and forced to conform to Vibhajjhavāda doctrine. Moggaliputta Tissa probably would not have been able to stop the arguments between the monks of

Kauśāmbī, Sāñcī, and Sārnāth. Moreover, if Moggaliputta Tissa 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.

Since the *Kathāvrattha* was compiled within the Theravāda order, some sort of council must have been convened. However, the council was held not during Aśoka's reign, but approximately a century after Aśoka. Since the doctrines of the various schools of Nikāya Buddhism are examined and criticized in the *Kathāvrattha*, this text must have been compiled after these schools arose, probably during the last half of the second century B.C.E. Thus if the "Third Council" is considered to be a historical event, it was a council held only within the Theravāda School during the latter part of the second century B.C.E.

### The Dates of the Buddha

The above discussion clearly demonstrates the difficulties of accepting the traditional Sri Lankan account of the early Buddhist order. Sri Lankan statements that the Buddha died 218 years before Aśoka's succession to the throne and that most of the schisms in the orders had occurred by Aśoka's time are difficult to reconcile with other aspects of Buddhist institutional history. Since both the Northern and Southern traditions agree that only four or five generations passed between the Buddha's death and the time of Ajoka, a figure of approximately one century for this period seems reasonable. Moreover, a survey of other primary source materials reveals that only the Sri Lankan tradition has maintained the longer period; the "218 years" figure does not appear in materials from India proper. Moreover, the absence of the figure of 218 years in India is not due to any lack of communication between Sri Lanka and India. A Sri Lankan king had the Mahābodhi-saṅghārāma built at Buddhagayā as a residence for Sri Lankan monks (*Tā-t'ung hsi-yü shi*, T 51:918b), and a Sri Lankan temple existed at Nāgarjunakonda (see chapter 14). Despite such ties, no mention of a figure of 218 years is made in Indian sources.

Sources from India proper generally state that Aśoka became king around one hundred years after the Buddha's *nirvāṇa*. Furthermore, the figure of 218 years is not the only one found in Sri Lanka. Fa-hsien was a Chinese Buddhist pilgrim who traveled to India and Sri Lanka and then returned to China in 416. He spent two years at the Abhayagiri monastery in Sri Lanka. In his travel diary, Fa-hsien noted that at the

time of his arrival in Sri Lanka, monks there claimed that 1,497 years had elapsed since the Buddha's *nirvāṇa* (T 51:865a). Calculations based on this figure indicate that the Buddha's *nirvāṇa* would have occurred sometime before 1000 B.C.E., a date not even close to one based on a period of 218 years between the Buddha's death and Aśoka's succession. The figure of 218 years was thus not even accepted by all Sri Lankan monks.

A survey of other primary source materials from India reveals that in most cases Aśoka's reign is dated one hundred years or slightly more after the Buddha's *nirvāṇa*. Among the texts with a figure of one hundred years are the *Ta chuan-jen lun ching* (T 4:309c, *Kalpaṇāmaṇḍitikā*), *Seng-ch'ieh lo-ch'a se-ch'i ching* (T 4:145a), *Hsien yu ching* (T 4:368c, *Dama-mūkanidānatātra*), *Ts'a pi-yü ching* (T 4:503b), *Chung-ching chuan ts'a-p'i-yü* (T 4:541c), *Tia a-han ching* (T 2:162a, *Samyuktiśāma*), *Diyoṣadāta* (P. 368; Vaidya ed., p. 232), *A-yü-wang chuan* (T 50:99c, *Asokarajāvadāna*)\*, *A-yü-wang ching* (T 50:132a, *Aśokarajāvrattha?*), *Ta-chih-su-lun* (T 25:70a, *Mahāprajñāparamitopadeśa*), and the *Fan-pi-shih kang-ts'a-lun* (T 25:39a). In Hsüan-tsang's travel diary (T 51:911a), the period is one hundred years long, and in I-ching's travel diary (T 54:205c) it is only somewhat longer, thus indicating that the figure of approximately one hundred years was accepted in India at the time of their travels.

In the Tibetan translation of the *Samapathedaparacanacakra* (Peking no. 5639), Aśoka's succession is said to have occurred one hundred years after the Buddha's *nirvāṇa*, while in Hsüan-tsang's Chinese translation (T 49:15a) the period is said to be more than one hundred years. Paramārtha's Chinese translation, the *Pu chih-i-lun*, and another Chinese translation, the *Shih-pa-p'u-lun*, both have a figure of 116 years (T 49:18a, 20a); however, in the Yuan and Ming dynasty editions of Paramārtha's translation, the figure is changed to 160 years. According to the *Ta-feng-teng wu-hsiang ching* (T 12:1097c; *Mahameghavattra?*), 120 years elapsed between the Buddha's *nirvāṇa* and Aśoka's succession. In the *Mo-ho mo-yeh ching* (T 12:1013c, *Mahāmāyāvīra?*), the period is stated to be less than 200 years. According to Bhavya's *Sde-pa ts'a-das-par bved-pa-dan-nam-par bhad-de* (*Nikāyabhedabhāṣṭange-yuktikyāna*, Peking no. 5640), a Theravāda tradition dated the first major schism between the Sthaviras and Mahāsaṅghikas as occurring 160 years after the Buddha's *nirvāṇa*, during Aśoka's reign.

Some scholars have relied heavily on Bhavya's figure of 160 years after the Buddha's death for the first schism. On the basis of the figure of 160 years, which occurs in the Yüan and Ming dynasty editions of the *Pu chih-i-lun*, they have argued that the figures of 116 years or "slightly more than one hundred years" found in other translations should be

amended to 160 years. However, the Sung dynasty and the Korean editions of the *Pu chih-i-lan*, both older than either the Yüan or the Ming dynasty editions of the text, have figures of 116 years. Since the evidence for the figure of 160 years is comparatively late and since no other materials with a figure of 160 years have been found, the figures of 116 years or "slightly more than one hundred years" must be accepted as more trustworthy. Moreover, Bhavya presents the figure of 160 years as only one of a number of theories. Finally, the 160-year figure must still be reconciled with the Theravāda figure of 218 years. Thus, the evidence for the figure of 160 years is highly questionable.

On the basis of the development of the Buddhist order and Buddhist historical materials, then, a figure of about one hundred years has been shown to be the most reasonable figure for the period between the death of the Buddha and the succession of Asoka to the throne. However, an investigation of the reigns of the kings of Magadha indicates that 116 years is too short, and thus many scholars favor a period of 218 years or advocate a compromise figure of 160 years. However, the three figures cannot all be adopted at the same time. For the purpose of discussing the history of the Buddhist order, since the 218-year figure presents many problems, the 116-year figure will be followed in this account.

In summary, after the death of the Buddha, the Buddhist order spread to the west and southwest. The Buddha's long-lived disciple Ananda was influential during this period. Later, Ānanda's disciple Śāṇakavāśī was preeminent in the western order; however, Buddhism had still not spread as far as Mathurā at this time. Still later, Sarvakkāmin (P. Sabbakāmin) was preeminent in the eastern order while Revata was influential in the west. At this time, the controversy over the ten points of *vinaya* arose, and the elders met in Vaisālī to deliberate over the disputes and resolve them. Many monks did not submit to the council's decision, however, and the dispute later became a cause for the schism that resulted in the Sthavira and Mahāsanghika schools. Thus, approximately one hundred years after the Buddha's death, there were already frequent disputes in the Buddhist orders in the various parts of India.

During Śāṇakavāsi's later years, Buddhism spread to Mathurā. A little more than one century after the Buddha's death, Asoka came to the throne. Śāṇakavāsi had already died, and Upagupta and Moggaliputta were the preeminent monks in the order. When Asoka converted to Buddhism, he invited the two teachers to his capital at Pāṭaliputra. According to Northern sources, at Upagupta's urging, Asoka traveled to Buddhist pilgrimage sites with Upagupta and erected stupas at various places. Asoka's pilgrimages are mentioned, in fact, in his inscriptions.

riots. According to Sri Lankan sources, Moggaliputta put an end to the disputes among the monks in Pātaliputra and advocated the dispatch of missionaries to various lands. Majjhantika was sent to bring the teachings of Buddhism to Kashmir, Majjhima and Kassapagotta to the Himalayan region, and Mahādeva to southern India. Buddhism thus spread to all of India with Aśoka's conversion and assistance. During Aśoka's reign, the disputes within the order became more evident, but still not severe enough to cause a schism. Only after Aśoka's death did the actual schism of the order into the Schavira and Mahāsaṅghika schools occur, probably in part because of the decline of the Mauryan empire. Thus serious disputes arose within the early Buddhist order's ranks before Aśoka's reign, but the order did not actually split into schools until after Aśoka's death. The spread of Buddhism to all of India meant that regional differences were added to doctrinal differences with the result that further schisms occurred rapidly during the century after Aśoka's death.

# *The Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism Its Fundamentals and History*

## *Introduction*

### *Section One: The Translations*

#### **Dudjom Rinpoche, Jikdrel Yeshe Dorje**

Translated and edited by  
Gyurme Dorje and Matthew Kapstein

[10.6-12.3] It is my pleasure to relate briefly here, in pure and clear language, how the precious doctrine of the vehicle of indestructible reality – the unsurpassed, most secret nucleus of the entire teaching of our Teacher, the Sugata – originated and developed in the world at large and especially in the Land of Snows. So at the outset I must explain how, generally speaking, the precious teaching of the Conqueror came into the world.

The world systems of the universe, which are like vessels, supports created by the oceanic extent of the buddhas' compassion and the deeds of sentient beings, are spread throughout the infinite reaches of space. Therein, the place enjoyed by the buddha-body of perfect rapture, Vairocana the Great Glacial Lake, is the Buddha-field whose Foundation and Centre are Adorned with Flowers. Within each pore of the conqueror [Vairocana] residing there, there appear oceanic systems, numerous as grains of dust. Upon the lotuses which float in the perfumed oceans in the palms of his hands, there are twenty-five world systems situated one above the other. And here, in the thirteenth among them, the world of Patient Endurance,<sup>376</sup> there is a great trichiliocosm consisting of one billion worlds, each with four continents.

Of the four continents, each one of which has two subcontinents, the one to the south is Jambudvipa, the Rose-Apple Continent, so called owing to the presence of the Jambu or rose-apple tree.<sup>377</sup> Its central country is Magadha, where there is the self-originated Indestructible Seat, Vajrasana. Here one thousand supreme emanational bodies will come forth one after the other, as if forming a rosary, attain buddhahood and turn the wheel of the doctrine. Thus, they make of this Auspicious Aeon<sup>378</sup> an illuminated world. At the present time, the light of the precious teaching of the Fourth Guide<sup>379</sup> spreads throughout the world.

How this came to pass may be considered in four parts: (1) the coming of our Teacher, the Buddha; (2) the collection of his transmitted



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precepts by councils; (3) the line of patriarchs of the teaching; and (4) the preservation of the teaching and the expansion of the greater vehicle (*Mahāyāna*).

## 1 *The Coming of Buddha, Teacher of the Doctrine*

[12.4-13.3] Concerning this topic, the different philosophical systems hold many conflicting opinions, for they were conceived in accord with the varied intellectual capacities of those who required instruction.

### THE OPINION OF THE ADHERENTS OF THE LESSER VEHICLE

Among these, the pious attendants of the Vaibhāṣika school<sup>380</sup> maintained that after developing a supremely enlightened attitude our Teacher gathered, for three “countless” aeons,<sup>381</sup> the provisions [of merit and pristine cognition] such as may be gathered on the path of provisions.<sup>382</sup> Then, as prince Siddhārtha, an ordinary individual who, in this his final birth, was still bound [to things mundane], he attained, on the basis of [his prior completion of] the greater path of provisions, the connecting path and the paths of insight, meditation, and no-more-learning during a single sitting at Vajrasana, and thus he realised buddhahood. So it says in the *Treasury of the Abhidharma* (Ch.6, v.24ab):

In the last stage of meditation

The buddha and the self-centred buddha (*pratyekabuddha*)

Obtain total enlightenment seated in one position.<sup>383</sup>

Thus, they claim that the buddhahood of the Teacher is like [the enlightenment of] the self-centred buddha, who is sharp-witted and enjoys solitude. Though they consider the Bodhisattva in his last birth to have been an ordinary individual, they refer to his previous births as having been “in accord with liberation”,<sup>384</sup> and they say [*Treasury of the Abhidharma*, Ch.4, v.118]:

Though they are not sublime,  
Parents, invalids, teachers of religion,  
And the Bodhisattva in his last rebirth  
Are said to be worthy beyond measure.

Moreover, the master Āryadeva [in the *Lamp which Subsumes Conduct*, *Caryāmelāpaka-pradipa*, T 1803] says:

[13.3-16.2] According to the usual opinion of the greater vehicle, however, after developing an enlightened attitude and gathering the provisions for three “countless” aeons, the holy Śvetaketu, a son of the gods and a bodhisattva of the tenth level<sup>385</sup> who was bound to take birth once more, was born as the prince Siddhārtha. He was a bodhisattva of the tenth level in his final birth, and he attained buddhahood in this world. In the *Sūtra of the Array of Attributes* (*Aryamājñatitibuddhakṣetra-guṇaparyuktasūtra*, T 59) it says:

From the time I first developed the unsurpassed enlightened attitude I gathered the provisions with great effort for a period of three “countless” aeons. Then, gazing upon the blind, unguided creatures of this age when life endures for one hundred years, I attained buddhahood here in Jambudvīpa, and turned the inconceivable wheel of the doctrine...

While some works concerning the way of secret mantra are in general agreement with this description, they maintain, in particular, that when Siddhārtha dwelt on the bank of the Nairātījanā River absorbed in fixed contemplation, he was roused and summoned by the tathāgatas. Leaving his conventional body behind, the body of his pristine cognition journeyed to the Akanisṭha heaven,<sup>386</sup> where he received empowerment from all the tathāgatas. Thus, he attained buddhahood by means of the five awakenings, and only afterwards did he demonstrate the attainment of enlightenment at Vairocana. Just so, the master Buddhajñānapāda [in the *Point of Liberation*] says:

Though Śākyamuni gathered merit for three countless aeons,  
He still did not realise this truth.  
At Nairātījanā, then, he became absorbed  
In the contemplation of nothing at all,<sup>387</sup>  
When the sugatas of the ten directions  
Obstructed his impulsive desire,  
And bestowed the profound, clear, non-dual teaching<sup>388</sup>  
That is perfectly pure like the sky.

At midnight he meditated on just what is,  
As have all the previous conquerors,  
And at dawn’s first light he gained perfect realisation.  
Then, in order to teach living beings,  
He dwelt at the Point of Enlightenment,<sup>389</sup>  
And vanquished the great host of Māra.  
To take sentient beings into his fold  
He then turned the wheel of the doctrine.

Awakening is twofold:  
It is held to be outer and inner.

Āryadeva thus maintains that the outer awakening is the attainment of buddhahood by way of desirelessness, and the inner awakening is the attainment of the body of coalescence, which comes about when the body of reality, which is inner radiance, is made manifest by means of the four kinds of desire.

According to the special view of the greater vehicle, however, after attaining buddhahood in the Akanisṭha-Ghanavyūha realm the buddhas reveal the attainment of buddhahood in the Pure Abode<sup>390</sup> and at Vajrasana, successively. In the *Sūtra of the Banisters Army* it says:

When the perfect buddhas attain enlightenment,  
They do not perform the buddhas’ deeds  
In the realm of desire until they have attained  
Buddhahood in the supreme realm of Akanisṭha.  
But having journeyed to the Ghanavyūha realm,  
The buddhas create ten million emanations;  
And always absorbed in yoga they delight  
With each one of those emanations,  
Just as the moon shines on all lands.  
Thus, within their domains they come forth to teach  
Each one in accord with his or her needs.

And the *Sūtra of the Descent to Lanka* (Ch. 10, vv.38ab; 39cd) says:

Abandoning even the Pure Abode,  
The perfect Buddha attained buddhahood  
In the pleasant Akanisṭha-Ghanavyūha realm,  
And an emanation attained buddhahood here.

In short, all who are said to attain buddhahood in the realms of desire and form do so only to show the way to those who require instruction.

#### THE SPECIAL POSITION OF THE NYINGMA TRADITION

[16.3-18.2] Here, [our tradition favours] the unsurpassed teaching that is the essence of definitive meaning, according to which our Teacher realised enlightenment because, in the original expanse, or ground, pristine cognition that is intuitively aware has been free throughout beginningless time. In the radiant realm of reality [the Buddha] abides in that state in which the bodies [of buddhahood] and pristine cognition are free from both conjunction and disjunction,<sup>391</sup> his intention being of the

same savour as that of all the buddhas of the three times. Without departing from this the Tathāgata appears, for the sake of sentient beings, as the inconceivable play of the emanational body. Thus, he trains those who require instruction as befits them individually, through infinite enlightened activity which establishes them in the three degrees of enlightenment. It says in the *Tantra of the Array of Wish-granting Gems* (*yid-bzhi rin-po-che bka'od-pa'i gnyud*):

The Buddha who preceded all,  
Vajradhara, Conqueror, Most Secret,  
Frolics in worlds beyond concept.  
At all times, without number, before and after,  
He benefits the world in various ways,  
In uncountable peaceful and wrathful forms,  
As a hunter, a whore, or some other.  
Now in this Auspicious Aeon  
He will become the Thousand Guides;  
And thus will he in various ways  
Benefit countless beings.

Also, it says in the *Root Tantra of the Secret Nucleus* (Ch.3, vv.1-2):

The Six Sages Embodying Awareness,<sup>392</sup> who are said to be the “blessing of great spirituality”, issue forth from the indestructible body, speech and mind of the tathāgatas. After issuing forth, each one of these great sages, transcendent lords, acts on behalf of the five classes of beings, by means of the four kinds of instructions, in each of the infinite great trichiliocosms in the ten directions of the six worlds, those of the lateral [cardinal points], zenith and nadir, which [exist] owing to the force of the [world-forming] deeds [of those beings].

This is not only said in the tantra texts of the secret mantra, but the profounder sūtras are in agreement. The *Lotus Sūtra* (Ch.15, v.1) says:

Ten billion aeons, an inconceivable number,  
And even that does not measure those past  
Since I attained supreme enlightenment.  
Thus, I am always teaching the doctrine.

And the *Sūtra of the Meeting of Father and Son* says:

Great warrior, learned in skillful means,  
You have been the Conqueror in one billion aeons  
In order to mature sentient beings,  
And though you have revealed yourself thus as the Buddha,  
Even today, my Guide,  
You reveal yourself as manifold buddhas.

## THE BODY OF EMANATION

[18.2-20.2] Analysing the body of emanation, which responds to the natures of those requiring instruction, the *Ornament of the Sūtras of the Greater Vehicle* (Ch.9, vv.63-4) says:

The countless emanations of the buddhas  
Are held to be the body of emanation.  
They have perfectly accomplished both goals<sup>393</sup>  
And abide in every form,  
Constantly demonstrating artistry and birth,  
Great enlightenment and also nirvāṇa,  
The buddhas’ body of emanation  
Is the great means to liberation.

Thus, appearing in various guises, in the animate and inanimate worlds, [the forms of the body of emanation] are countless. None the less, if they must be summarised, three are said to be foremost, namely, those of artistry, of birth, and of supreme emanation.<sup>394</sup> Concerning the way in which the deeds of the great and supreme bodies of emanation are performed, the *Root Tantra of the Magical Net* (*sgyu-'phrul ntsa-gyud*) says that they benefit beings by four kinds of instruction:

They instruct by means of the great merits of the body,  
which reveals the activities from conception until the  
attainment of nirvāṇa.

They instruct by means of knowledge conveyed in speech,  
which reveals the limitless mass of the doctrine.

They instruct by means of direct perception of mind; for  
they benefit the world by intuiting directly all that is intelligible  
by means of the six supernormal cognitive powers.

They instruct by means of inconceivable miraculous abilities,  
the enlightened attributes and activities which reveal  
inconceivable emanations of body, speech, and mind, as  
befits each and every one who requires instruction.

Among those deeds which “instruct by means of the great merits of the body” it is impossible to enumerate exactly, or otherwise to qualify, the deeds of the Teacher’s emanational body. It is a topic beyond conception. In the sūtras of the greater vehicle, too, all manner of quantities are mentioned which contradict one another and do not lend themselves to summarisation, but here we are primarily concerned with the twelve deeds which the Buddha performed here in Jambudvīpa. Regarding this, the *Treatise on the Supreme Continuum of the Greater Vehicle* (Ch.2, vv.53cd-56) says:

Not departing from the body of reality,  
Through the diverse nature of his emanations

He reveals these deeds to impure realms  
For the duration of the world's existence:  
He is actually born [among the gods],  
And he descends from the Tuṣita realm,  
Enters the womb and takes birth,  
Becomes proficient in the arts,  
Enjoys the company of his consorts,  
Renounces the world, practices asceticism,  
Reaches the Point of Enlightenment,  
Vanquishes Māra's host, attains  
Perfect enlightenment, [and turns] the wheel of the  
doctrine.  
He then demonstrates [final] nirvāṇa.

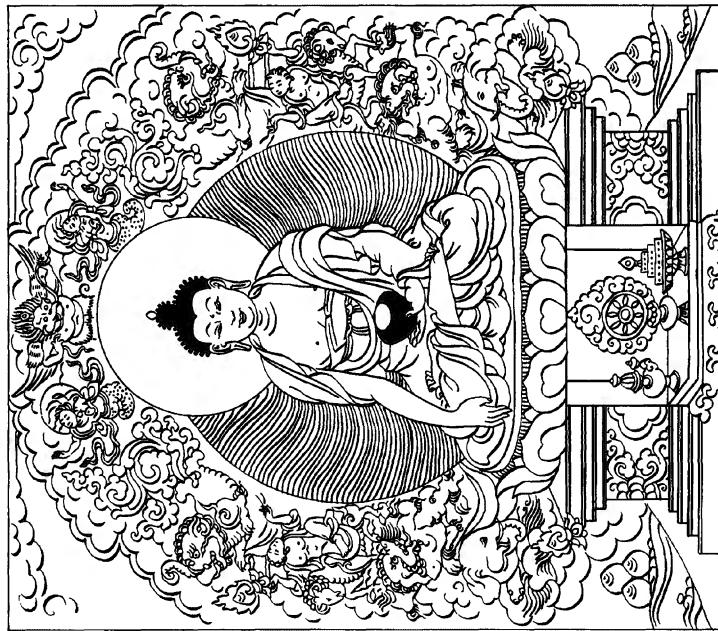
THE LIFE OF ŚĀKYAMUNI<sup>395</sup>

[20.2-40.6] Our teacher appeared in the beautiful, divine Tuṣita heaven as the son of the gods, the holy Śvetaketu. He taught the doctrine to the gods and dwelt among them. Once, the courtyard [of the heavenly palace] spontaneously resounded with the music of verses inspiring him to fulfil the prophecies of Dipamkara Buddha. The holy Śvetaketu then sat on the finest throne in the exalted mansion of the doctrine and, in order to demonstrate the act of taking birth in Jambudvīpa, made five special considerations of continent, family, father, mother, and time. Then he consoled the gods, saying, “Having been born from the womb of Māyādevī in Jambudvīpa, I will reveal the profound nectar [of the doctrine]. I will overcome eighteen sophists and establish many beings in liberation.”

Then, in the form of a young, ash-gray elephant, as described in the Veda of the Brahmans, the Bodhisattva entered the womb of his mother Māyādevī while she was observing a purificatory fast (*posadhbhā*).<sup>396</sup> He transformed the womb into a celestial palace, beautiful to behold, free from the propensities of mundane existence, fit to be enjoyed by the sons of the conquerors, and there he taught the doctrine of the purification of the birthplace to many hundreds of billions of gods and men. He spent ten full months there to illustrate the certain succession of the ten [bodhisattva] levels.

When the time came for the Lumbini Grove to receive the merit of the world, his body, enlightened in twenty ways and lustrous as a polished golden doorbolt, emerged painlessly from his mother's right side. Then, as a son of the royal family is anointed, or as an indication that he had awakened to the family of enlightenment and was identical to all the buddhas, such as Aksobhyavajra, a host of deities appeared in the sky and they bathed him eagerly, all at once.<sup>397</sup> Celestial deities

lauded him with songs of praise, and Brahmā and Indra made him comfortable with the robes they offered.



Śākyamuni

As soon as he was born, the Bodhisattva took seven steps in each of the four directions, in order to show that he was about to embark upon the path of the four immeasurables. It is said that lotus blossoms offered by the gods sprung from his footprints and shone brilliantly. At the same time, the flowers in the Lumbini Grove bloomed spontaneously. In addition, five hundred Śākyā princes, including Nanda, were born, as well as eight hundred maidens, including Yaśodhārā, five hundred servants, including Chandaka, and five hundred excellent riding horses, including Karṇṭhaka. The whole earth trembled and a brilliant light shone everywhere. Four minor kings boasted that these were signs heralding the birth of their own sons.

Furthermore, the Bodhi Tree appeared in the centre of the continent, along with five hundred gardens and five hundred treasures, so that all of King Śuddhodana's desires were fulfilled. Therefore he named his son Sarvārthaśiddha, “All Aims Accomplished”.<sup>398</sup> The oracles predicted that he would become a universal monarch conquering the four quarters if he were to remain a householder, but that if he were to

renounce the life of a householder in favour of homelessness, he would become a buddha. His mother passed away seven days after he was born. The Bodhisattva was then entrusted to thirty-two nurses, including Mahāprajāpati, who raised him in infancy.

Afterwards he lived in the palace, during which time he studied and completely mastered many arts; for instance, writing and mathematics under [the tutelage of] Sarvanitra, Kṛṇivarmān and others, and elephant-riding under Mātulasulabha. His father then ordered three Śākyā families, including that of Dāṇḍapāṇī, to give their daughters to be his consorts. But they said, "Lord! girls of our families belong only to skilled athletes." His father was ashamed, but the prince said, "In the three world realms no one dares compete with me in archery or in the arts!"

With this assertion of his ability he rang the bell to announce a contest of skills with the fierce and impetuous Śākyā youths, all of whom departed for the outskirts of the city. Then Devadatta, in a very jealous mood, killed an elephant which had been brought from Vaiśālī as an offering to the prince, with a single powerful blow of his palm. Nanda threw the elephant forcibly outside the gates. To match the strength of both, the Bodhisattva, without leaving his chariot, seized the elephant's tail with his big toe and hurled it over seven walls into the countryside. For this the gods in admiration praised him.

The contestants then competed to pierce seven palm trees, seven iron walls and seven cauldrons, one after the other, with a single arrow. Devadatta pierced three, Nanda pierced five, but the prince's arrow pierced them all. On the spot where his arrow alighted a fountain of water sprang forth, which possessed the eight qualities [of pure water] and was called the "Arrow-born Well". Similarly, in skilful contests of youthful prowess, elephant-riding, swimming like swans on the wide river, and in all the sixty-four crafts, no athlete could compete with the Bodhisattva.

The master among world-knowers sometimes trains people by following convention. Thus, in order to abandon the misdeeds which result from sensual dependence he married sixty thousand worthy ladies, namely, Gopā, Yāsodharā and Mrgajā – who were free from the five defects of womankind and possessed the eight virtues – together with their respective retinues of twenty thousand. With them he enjoyed the sensual pleasures as if they were illusory. But even such enjoyment introduced him to perfect renunciation. His turn from mundane existence to the doctrine began when the sound of cymbals awakened the power of his former prayers. For consolation he went all around the city with Chandaka as his charioteer. On seeing the four omens of birth, old age, sickness and death his heart felt utterly distressed, and he said [Buddhacarita, Ch.4, v.86]:

Old age, sickness, and death –  
If those three did not exist,

I would delight in the sense objects,  
Which are exceedingly pleasurable.

Thus, having been disgusted by the reality of suffering, by which the most excellent succumb to impermanence; and accompanied by the suffering of change, embraced by the all-pervading conditions of mundane existence, and pursued by the suffering of pain itself, he vowed to renounce the world.<sup>399</sup>

At that time King Śuddhodana's retinue feared that the prince might become a monk. Therefore, they had the outskirts of the city vigilantly patrolled by the watchmen and gatekeepers, so that he could not go anywhere. On the final night he bowed to his father and, guided by his solemn vow, removed the obstacle posed by the [previous] lack of parental consent. Riding upon Kanṭhaka the prince galloped through the sky with the assistance of the four guardian kings. Then, near the Sacred Stūpa<sup>400</sup> he cut off his hair and thus shed the evidence that he was not a monk. He then exchanged his linen dress for the saffron robe.

In Vaiśālī and Rājagṛha, under Arāḍakālāma and Udraka, two sophists who were celebrated for their instructions, he studied the contemplations of nothing at all and of the pinnacle of existence,<sup>401</sup> and he attained states as high as those of his masters. But knowing that those contemplations and practices were not the path to liberation from the evils of mundane existence, he persevered in ascetic contemplation for six years with five noble companions on the banks of the wide Nairāṭjanā River. During each of the first two years he ate a single grain of rice. During each of the next two years he drank a single drop of water. And during the last two years he took nothing whatsoever.

Then the gods called to him in verse. The conquerors of the ten directions and their spiritual sons aroused him from the lower path and urged him to the Point of Enlightenment. Then, to remove his exhaustion, he enjoyed a little solid food, at which his five companions went off to Vārāṇasī in disillusionment.

He himself then set off for Vajrasana in Magadha. On the way a brahman girl, Sujātā, served him with the honeyed cream of five hundred cows. Instantly his body became lustrous as a polished golden doorbolt, and he made Sujātā's merit inexhaustible. While on the road he received a handful of grass, as soft as a peacock's throat, from the grass-cutter Svāstika, and with it he proceeded towards the Indestructible Seat. At the Bodhi Tree in the centre of Vajrasana, self-originated through the blessing of all the buddhas, he spread out the grass mat and, sitting upon it with his legs crossed, made this vow [Sutra of Extensive Play, Ch.19, v.57]:

Let this body of mine dry up.  
Let this heap of skin and bones decay.

I will not move from this position,  
Til the enlightenment, hard to gain,  
After so many aeons, be attained!

Then in the evening twilight he composed himself in the contemplation which defeats Māra's host. He churned all the domains of Māra, and enveloped them with formidable rays of light. The evil Māra, appearing in the guise of a hunter, approached him and said, "Devadatta has seized power in Kapilavastu. He has destroyed the royal palace and the Śākyas have surrendered. Why do you sit here?"

"To become a realised buddha," he answered.

"But the perfect realisation of buddhahood is the result of immeasurable provisions [of merit and pristine cognition], and you have only lived the happy, joyful life of a prince."

The Bodhisattva replied, "By just one ephemeral offering you became lord of the realm of desire.<sup>402</sup> As I have completed the two provisions during limitless aeons, how can I not become a buddha?"

The lord of passion raised two fingers and reproached him, saying [*Sūtra of Extensive Play*, Ch.21, v.87]:

You bear witness to the ephemeral offering I made here,  
But you have no witness yourself.  
Without a witness you have already lost,  
Whatever it is you say!

Then the Bodhisattva struck the earth with his hand, which had been formed by a hundred meritorious acts, and said [*Sūtra of Extensive Play*, Ch.21, v.88]:

This earth bears witness to all beings;  
She is just and impartial to animate and inanimate alike.  
This earth is my witness, I do not lie.  
O Earth, come, be my witness here!

As soon as he had spoken, Sthāvarā, the goddess of the earth, raised her pure golden figure from the ground, and, taking in her hand a single particle, said, "I can count the whole earth [in fractions like this], but I cannot estimate the number of heads and limbs sacrificed by this worthy son. Thus, the time has come for him to become a perfectly realised buddha." With these words she became invisible, and the evil Māra weakened and departed for his own domain, in utter disgrace.

When he arrived there Māra mustered his army, one thousand trillion strong, striking fear and terror into those who lack the supreme understanding that [all appearances] are illusory, and he prepared for battle. But a military machine cannot crush one who has conquered the real enemy, the emotional defilements, and who perceives with a sky-like

mind the insubstantiality [of all things]. Thus, without even a thought of anger or arrogance, the Bodhisattva remained absorbed in the contemplation of great loving kindness,<sup>403</sup> and, indeed, the swords and missiles hurled by Māra fell as a shower of flowers, and the harsh noises and battle-cries became songs of praise. In this way, the poisonous tree of desire was felled. The flowers of the Five-arrowed One wilted. The rocky mountain of pride crumbled. Martial spirit collapsed. The crocodile banner was lowered, and the chariot of Smara beat a hasty retreat.<sup>404</sup> Thus, the deceitful one and his army were scattered in utter confusion.

Māra then made his seven daughters attempt to seduce the Bodhisattva with the deceits of lust, having transformed them into seven beauties. They tried to ensnare him in the noose of a seductress' thirty-two wiles, with Pundarīka's coquetry, Menaka's dangling necklace, Subhūṣaṇa's tightly-bound girdle, Kēśamīśra's tinkling bracelets, and so forth.<sup>405</sup> But they stood not a chance of moving even the tips of the Bodhisattva's hair. When he transformed them into seven old women they repented and implored his forgiveness, whereupon he restored them to their original appearances.

Then the time of his awakening arrived. At midnight he became absorbed in the contemplation of the fourth meditative concentration.<sup>406</sup> At dawn, when the drum of victory was about to be beaten, he developed the supernormal cognitive powers of clairvoyance and of the exhaustion of corruption, and fully realised the four truths. As he became a perfectly realised buddha, the whole earth trembled and all the psychophysical bases which were to be purified of the subject-object dichotomy awakened to the pristine cognition free from duality, in the impeccable mansion of the body of reality, which is the "middle way"<sup>407</sup> and inner radiance. In this world there was a lunar eclipse. Rāhula and Ananda were also born.

Seven weeks after he had attained buddhahood in this way the merchants Trapaṇa and Bhallika offered him honey. The great kings of the four directions offered him begging bowls made of everything from precious gems to stone. But he rejected [the precious ones] as being unfit implements for a renunciate and accepted only the worst. Then he gave his benediction [to these patrons]. To indicate that the profound nectar [he had realised] was beyond the grasp of sophists, he said [*Sūtra of Extensive Play*, Ch.25, v.1]:

I have found a nectar-like doctrine,  
Profound, calm, simple, radiant and uncompounded.  
If I teach it no one will understand;  
I will remain right here in the forest, in silence.

Thus, he created a reason for the special merit of encouraging the turning of the wheel of the doctrine.

When Brahmā remembered the Tathāgata's former aspirations he approached him, and offered encouragement in verse [Ch.25, v.9d and v.11ab]:

O Sun among teachers! Why remain indifferent today?  
I pray that you bear the great drum of the genuine doctrine,  
And blow well on the true doctrine's conch...  
Scattering sandalwood powder he went off to his own domain to summon Indra. Afterwards, he and Indra together presented a precious gem to the Buddha and prayed [Ch.25, v.17]:

Like the full moon released by Rāhu,<sup>408</sup>  
Your mind is liberated, O Sage.  
Arise, O victor in battle,  
And with the light of discriminating awareness  
Dispel the darkness of the world.

But the Buddha denied this request. Once again Brahmā considered that there would be great merit if he were to repeat the request. He offered a golden wheel with a thousand spokes, and reminded the Tathāgata in verse that he had previously learned the nature of defilement through contact with the impure religion of Magadha. <sup>409</sup> Thereupon the Buddha accepted the wheel and said [Ch.25, v.34]:

Brahmā, I will open the portal of nectar-like instruction  
For those who live in Magadha,  
Who are attentive, faithful, and discriminating,  
Non-violent, and constantly attentive to the doctrine.

As soon as the Tathāgata had spoken, the word that he had agreed to turn the wheel of the doctrine was heard as far away as Akanīṣṭha. At that, the gods assembled, each with his or her own offering.

The Tathāgata considered that the first vessel for the profound nectar-like instruction should be easy to train, easy to purify, and endowed with unobstructed intelligence. He knew that Arāḍa and Udraka were [such vessels], but they had passed away. Then, remembering his former aspirations, the Tathāgata regarded his five noble companions and set out for Vārāṇasi. The five had rebuked him and agreed not to take, saying, "The ascetic Gautama is lax. He has eaten much and has abandoned renunciation."

While the Tathāgata was on the way, a brahman named Upajīvaka carelessly and rashly said to him, "Gautama, who granted you the vow of celibacy?"

The Tathāgata replied [Ch.26, v.1]:

I have no preceptor.  
I am without equal.

Alone, I have become a perfect buddha,  
Whose [passions have] cooled,  
Whose corruptions are exhausted.<sup>410</sup>

After three such exchanges he continued on his way to Vārāṇasi. When he arrived there, the agreement of the five companions spontaneously vanished, like the constellations by day. They said, "Long-living Gautama,<sup>411</sup> your senses are clear, and your complexion is pure. Is this a manifest sign that you have realised pristine cognition?" As they regarded him still as an equal, he dispelled their ignorance, saying, "Do not call the Tathāgata 'long-living', or misfortune will surely follow for a long time. I have obtained a nectar-like doctrine. I have attained buddhahood. I have come to know everything!"

A thousand jewel thrones then appeared there. The Tathāgata bowed reverently before the thrones of the Three Buddhas of the Past, and radiantly sat down upon the fourth throne, whereupon the other thrones vanished. On behalf of the five noble companions and eighty thousand gods he turned the wheel of the doctrine of the middle way which abandons both extremes, and which concerns the four truths, repeating them three times and in twelve ways.<sup>412</sup> Then he fully ordained the five noble companions as monks, so that there arose the great monastic community, a marchless canopy over the world. All those assembled perceived the truth.

[The first wheel of the doctrine<sup>413</sup> emphasises] the Vinayapitaka [Transmissions of the Vinaya, 'duḥ-ha'ī-sde-shod, T 1-7], which, beginning with those sections which teach mainly the training of superior moral discipline, includes, among other topics, the Vinaya of the Vinayapitaka, which establishes and defines the transgressions and natural offences; the sūtras of the Vinayapitaka, which describe the sequence of yogic practice involving contemplation and purity of conduct; and the Abhidharma of the Vinayapitaka, which provides extensive analysis of the aforementioned topics.

Then on Vulture Peak,<sup>414</sup> which is a perfect location, the Tathāgata turned the wheel of the doctrine which concerns signlessness, the intermediate transmitted precepts, on behalf of the four ordinary assemblies – namely, those of the five thousand arhats such as Śāriputra and Maṇḍagāyāna, the five hundred nuns including Prajāpatī, the host of laymen and laywomen including Anāthapindada and the laywoman Viśākhā, and a multitude of gods, nāgas, and gandharvas. In addition, he turned this [wheel] on behalf of a special assembly – a multitude of bodhisattvas who had attained the great levels, including Bhadrapiṭā, Ratnasambhava, and Jālādatta. This wheel of the doctrine emphasises the Sūtrapitaka, which teaches mainly the training of superior mind and includes the Vinaya of the Sūtrapitaka, which sets forth the bodhisattva's vows; the sūtras of the Sūtrapitaka, which describe profound and vast contemplations;

and the Abhidharma of the Sūtrapiṭaka, which contains analyses of the levels, paths, retentions, and contemplations.

Then in the sundry abodes of gods and nāgas, for the sake of innumerable monks, nuns, gods, nāgas and bodhisattvas, the Tathāgata turned the wheel of the doctrine of definitive meaning, which is the wheel of the final transmitted precepts. This doctrinal wheel emphasises the Abhidharma-piṭaka, which mainly teaches the training of superior discriminative awareness and includes the Vinaya of the Abhidharma-piṭaka, which concerns how to subdue the conflicting emotions easily, with little hardship; the sūtras of the Abhidharma-piṭaka, which show how to penetrate the nature of reality; and the Abhidharma of the Abhidharma-piṭaka, which contains analyses of the components, psychophysical bases, activity fields, sense organs, consciousness, and the nucleus of the tathāgata (*tathāgatagarbha*), which is naturally pure.

Concerning this, it says in the *Sūtra of the Array of Attributes*:

Totally unspoken by me,  
The doctrine has spread among sentient beings.  
To all those who seek a gradual path

It appears in just that way.  
For those who penetrate it instantaneously,

The varied doctrine appears in full.  
This is the greatness of speech

That fulfils every aspiration to the heart's content.

It is a special feature of that buddha-speech, which transcends the particulars of sound and word, that, depending on one's capacity, the three doctrinal wheels may be heard simultaneously or gradually by those beings whose fortune it is to penetrate them so. It is never possible for ordinary persons to imagine the extent of approaches to the doctrine, or the number of vehicles, the means of training, or the time sequences, associated with the Buddha's immeasurable activity.

So it was through the boundless ocean of the doctrine, which includes the three vehicles, that some were established in the teaching of the path and result;<sup>415</sup> some were secured in the happiness of gods and men; and others, too, were delivered and protected from great fears of a mundane sort.<sup>416</sup> In short, through the infinite play of enlightened activity, his great miraculous abilities and so on, the Tathāgata planted the seed of liberation and omniscience, like a catalyst in an alchemical transmutation, in all sentient beings who saw, heard, touched, or thought of him. Moreover, he made his actual disciples, even the gandharva Pramoda and the homeless mendicant Subhadra, enter into the precincts bounded by skilful means and great compassion. Then, considering his final act, he went to Kusinagara.<sup>417</sup>

Concerning that final act: The Tathāgata's body, pleasant to behold, was free from such common attributes as the tendency to shout, laugh, or yawn. Once, when Prajāpati heard a sneeze emerge from his glorious throat, she prayed, "May the Buddha live for three countless aeons!" Her prayer, reverberating through space, was heard as far away as Akanītha, and the gods also echoed it. The Buddha said to Prajāpati, "You have done no good. Instead of praying for the duration of the doctrine, you have obstructed the spiritual practice of many lazy people!" So, as an act of penance, Prajāpati passed into nirvāna along with five hundred female arhats.

At about that time the Tathāgata's two supreme disciples, Śāriputra and Maugdalyāyana went to visit the hells. Teachers and preceptors of extremist doctrines,<sup>418</sup> who were reaping the fruits of their misdeeds, sent a verbal message through them to their followers, saying that they had erred in their philosophy. Śāriputra was the first to repeat the message, but the followers ignored him, showing no hostility. After that Maugdalyāyana said, "Your teachers sent this message to you because they have come to suffer in the Avīci hell."<sup>419</sup>

"This message insults not only ourselves", they said, "but also our teachers and preceptors. Crush him!"



Śāriputra

When Mahākāśyapa arrived there from the nāga realm he prayed before the Buddha's remains, and the funeral pyre ignited by itself. The relics became fragmented and were suitably divided into eight parts, which came to form the cores of eight stupas.<sup>421</sup>

Finally, it says in the *Great Treasury of Detailed Exposition*:

The Sage, supreme being,  
Lived for one year each  
At [Vārāṇasi], the site of the wheel of the doctrine,  
And at Vaiśālī, Makkolam, and the god realms,  
Śiśumāra Hill, and Kauśāmbī,  
Ājāvi, Caityagiri,  
Venupura, as well as Sāketa,  
And the city of Kapilavastu.  
He passed twenty-three years in Śravasti,  
Four years in Bhaisajiyavana,  
Two years in the Jvālinī Cave,  
And five years in Rājagrha.  
He had spent six years practising austerity  
And twenty-nine years in the palace.  
So it was that the Conqueror,  
The supreme and holy Sage,  
Passed into nirvāṇa at the age of eighty.



*Maudgalyāyana*

So they beat Maudgalyāyana's body until it was as a broken reed. Śāriputra wrapped him in the fold of his robe and carried him into the city of Viṣṭaraju. Knowing that Maudgalyāyana would not live, Śāriputra went on to glorious Nālanda, thinking, "I cannot bear even the news of a friend's death. How, then, the sight?" Thus, he entered nirvāṇa early in the morning along with eighty thousand arhats. That same evening Maudgalyāyana passed into nirvāṇa along with seventy thousand arhats. And so, like fires which have run out of fuel, did many other arhats enter nirvāṇa.

The Buddha then entrusted the teaching along with the four [monastic] assemblies to the elder Mahākāśyapa. Removing his upper garment, he said, "Behold, O monks, the body of the Tathāgata! It is as difficult to see a tathāgata as it is to see an *udumbara* blossom.<sup>420</sup> Be silent, O monks! Just as this body is subject to destruction, so too is all that is compounded."

In this way he encouraged lazy disciples to enter the doctrine with the motive for renunciation. Then, next to a pair of sal trees, his intention turned to final nirvāṇa.

## 2 The Collecting of Transmitted Precepts by Councils

### THE SECOND COUNCIL

[42.3-42.6] When one hundred and ten years had passed after the first compilation of the scriptures, the monks in Vaiśālī were indulging in the following ten transgressions [Minor Transmissions]:

Permitting: [exclamations of “*alas!*”]; celebrating [the arhats]; The *deliberate practice* [of agriculture]; [sipping “medicine” from] a *pān* [of ale]; [the misuse of the sacred stored] *salt*; [Eating while on] the *road*; [desecration of offerings with] *two fingers*; stirring [curd and milk together as an afternoon beverage]; [a new] *mat* [without an old patch]; And [begging for] *gold* [or silver]. These are held to be the ten transgressions.<sup>423</sup>

[40.6-41.2] There are both ordinary and special explanations of the compilation of the true doctrines, the teachings delivered by the Teacher. According to the ordinary vehicle three successive councils were convened.<sup>422</sup>

### THE FIRST COUNCIL

[41.2-42.3] Shortly before the Teacher’s own nirvāna, when Śāriputra with eighty thousand other arhats, and Maugdalyāyana with seventy thousand arhats, passed into nirvāna, and again when the Transcendent Lord himself entered nirvāna along with eighty million arhats, the gods cried out, saying, “All the powerful monks have passed into nirvāna and the true doctrine has become like the smoke from a dead fire. The monks do not proclaim even the Tripitaka.”

In response to this derision a council of five hundred arhats was convened in the Banyan Cave at Rājagrha, during the summer monsoon retreat the year after the Buddha’s nirvāna, under the patronage of King Ajātaśatru. During this council Upali compiled the Vinayapitaka, Ānanda the Sūtrapiṭaka, and Mahākāsyapa the entire Abhidharma-pitaka. As far away as Akanṭha the gods perceived this and exclaimed, “The gods will flourish! The antigods will decline! The teaching of the Buddha will endure for a long period of time!” Likewise, it says in the Minor Transmissions:

During the summer which followed  
the Teacher’s nirvāna,  
In a secret cave in Rājagrha,  
Ajātaśatru provided sustenance  
For a council of five hundred arhats,  
And the Tripitaka was compiled.

### THE THIRD COUNCIL

[43.6-45.6] Starting from the time of King Virasena, the grandson of King Dharmasoka, and son of Vigatasoka, the monks Mahādeva, Bhadra, the elder Nāga and Sthiramati, all of whom had come under the influence of Māra, appeared in succession. They proclaimed five basic points:

[Arhats may] answer others, remain unknowing,  
Harbour doubts and inquire discursively;  
And they may support themselves.  
This is the Teacher’s teaching.

In this way, they taught a false doctrine, which caused dispute among the members of the *sangha*, during the latter part of King Virasena’s life, throughout the lives of Nanda and Mahāpadma, and during the early part of the life of Kanīṣka; that is, during the reigns of four kings.<sup>424</sup>

Since the Teacher had not allowed the Vinaya to be written down, differences arose over a long period of time in the recitation of the *Pratimokṣa Sūtra* (T 2), owing to which there was a division into eighteen schools.<sup>425</sup> It happened in this way: Because the elder Nāga spread the dispute, the Mahāsaṅghikas, Sthaviras, and Sammitiyas split off from the Mūlasarvastivāda tradition; and these then became the four basic schools. Later, Sthiramati spread the dispute widely and the four sects gradually divided into eighteen. It is said that the Mūlasarvastivāda

had seven branches; the Mahāsaṅghika, five; and the other two, three each. Afterwards, when the controversy had somewhat subsided, and the schools existed independently, the third council was held under the patronage of King Kaniska. At that council, it was proven that all eighteen schools were pure, on the basis of this passage drawn from the *Sublime Sūtra of the Teaching Given in a Dream (Āryasāṃḍanī-desaśatra, T 48)*:

The perfectly realised Buddha Kāśyapa said to King Kṛki,<sup>426</sup>  
 “Your majesty, the dream in which you saw eighteen men  
 pulling on a sheet of cloth means that the teaching of  
 Śākyamuni will become divided into eighteen schools. But  
 the cloth itself, which is liberation, will remain undamaged.”

At that same council the Vinayapitaka was written down. They also wrote down those texts from the Sūtrapitaka and Abhidharma-pitaka which had not been set down before, and corrected those which had been recorded previously. This was the purpose of the third council. As this account is not given in the *Minor Transmissions*, there are many different opinions. The Kashmiri schools maintained that the council was convened in Kashmir in the Karnikāvana Temple by the noble Pārśva and five hundred arhats, Vasumitra and four hundred supremely venerable monks, and five hundred bodhisattvas. And it is said that most of the Central Indian scholars claimed that five hundred arhats and five thousand supremely venerable monks assembled in the Kuvana Temple of Jalandhara Monastery. At present, the account best known in Tibet states that about four hundred years after the Teacher’s nirvāṇa five hundred arhats and five hundred, or sixteen thousand, bodhisattvas assembled and held a council. And the *Flame of Dialectics* (*Tarkārivalū, T 3856*) says: “When two hundred years had passed from the Teacher’s nirvāṇa, the elder Vāsiṣṭha compiled the doctrine.”<sup>427</sup>

The period of four hundred years [mentioned above] agrees with this if each solstice is counted as one year. But, after comparing this chronology with the succession of kings, it seems to me that the period of two hundred years may be too short.<sup>428</sup> It appears, therefore, that this must be further examined. Moreover, many different places are claimed as the venue of the council, for example, Śrāvastī, Kusumakūṭārāma in Jalandhara, and Kuvana Monastery in Kashmir.

In the *Sūtra of Inconceivable Secrets*, Vajrapāni is called the compiler of the teachings of the Thousand Buddhas, and an ancient annotation<sup>430</sup> says that one million sons of the Conqueror assembled on Vimālasvabhāva Mountain, which lies to the south of Rājagṛha. There Maitreya compiled the Vinayapitaka, Mañjuśrī the Sūtrapitaka, and Vajrapāni the Abhidharma-pitaka. It also says in the pitaka of the greater vehicle that the sections dealing with the profound view were compiled by Mañjuśrī, and the sections on the extensive conduct by Maitreya.<sup>431</sup>

THE COUNCILS OF THE GREATER VEHICLE<sup>429</sup>

[45.6-46.4] As for the special councils of the greater vehicle, it says in the *Flame of Dialectics*:

The greater vehicle was taught by the Buddha, since the original compilers were Samantabhadra, Mañjuśrī, Guhyapati, Maitreya, etc.

teaching to me before he passed into nirvāna. When I have passed into nirvāna, you must protect the teaching. You, in turn, should entrust it to Śāṇavasīka.”

Then Kāśyapa worshipped the stūpas which held the remains and tooth-relics of the Buddha. He climbed Mount Kukkuṭapāda in the south, and spread out his grass mat in the centre of an open area. Wearing the robe of the Transcendent Lord, which had come from a trash heap, he consecrated his body so that it would not decompose



#### MAHĀKĀSYAPA

[46.4-49.5] The Teacher appointed Mahākāśyapa to be his successor, indicating this by allowing him to be the one to fold the master's seat. Also, the teaching was entrusted to the great and exalted Sixteen Elders. Kāśyapa was born as the son of the brahman Nyagrodhaketu, in the brahman village of Nyagrodhikā in Magadha, in answer to a prayer addressed to the divinity of the Nyagrodha [Banyan] Tree. For this reason he was named Nyagrodhaka [Banyan-born], though his family name was Kāśyapa. He married a beautiful maid with a golden complexion, who was named Kapilabhadri. But they regarded each other only as brother and sister; not even for a moment did the thought of lust arise. When his parents died, Kāśyapa abandoned his possessions, which included nine hundred and ninety-nine bracelets, sixty million pieces of gold, and eighty golden granaries, as if they were mere grass. For himself he kept only two robes of Benares linen. He sent Kapilabhadri to the Nirgrantha [Jains],<sup>433</sup> while he went to the Teacher, who was residing near the Bahuputraka Caiya shortly after attaining buddhahood. As soon as they met, he recognised his teacher, and three times made this request: “You, Lord, are my teacher! And I am the pious attendant of the Transcendent Lord!” The Lord responded thrice, saying, “Indeed, I am your teacher; and you are my pious attendant!” At this, he was fully ordained, and eventually he came to be revered as the supreme observer of the ascetic virtues.<sup>434</sup> He took the Teacher's robe, which had come from a trash heap, and offered to the Teacher his Benares linen. This happened about the same time as the Teacher descended from the realm of the gods, and many gods had arrived in Jambudvipa to receive his nectar-like instruction.<sup>435</sup>

Kāśyapa compiled the transmitted precepts well and protected the teaching. For over forty years he advanced the teaching by establishing many disciples in liberation. Then he thought of entering nirvāna and said to Ānanda, “You should know that the Teacher entrusted the

until Maitreya's attainment of buddhahood. And, with a display of many miracles, he passed into nirvāna. The gods then worshipped him and closed up the mountain; but they opened it when King Ajātaśatru came to see the remains.

On that occasion Ajātaśatru dreamed that the royal family on his mother's side had passed away forever. When he awoke he heard that Kāśyapa had entered nirvāna, whereupon he set out for Mount Kukkuṭapāda, together with Ānanda. A yakṣa opened up the mountain. The king bowed to worship the body and prepared for a cremation but Ānanda said, “It is consecrated to remain until the teaching period of Maitreya. In Maitreya's first assembly he will come here with nine

### 3 *The Patriarchs of the Teaching*<sup>432</sup>

hundred and ninety million pious attendants and, holding Kāśyapa's body in his hand<sup>436</sup> and showing it [to all], he will say, 'This was the supreme observer of the ascetic virtues among Śākyamuni's pious attendants, and the robe he wears was that of the Teacher. There is no one here who maintains the ascetic virtues of a mendicant as he did.' Then Kāśyapa's body will display great miracles and dissolve entirely into space, and Maireya's attendants will undertake the ascetic virtues and become arhats. Therefore, you cannot cremate this body.'

In accordance with this advice, the king turned away and the mountain was resealed. On its peak, he erected a stūpa dedicated to the remains.

#### ANANDA

[49.5-51.2] Ānanda was the son of the Teacher's paternal uncle, Amṛtodana. He and Rāhula were both born at the time of the Teacher's attainment of buddhahood. In his sixth year, when the master met with his own son [Rāhula], Ānanda was entrusted to Kāśyapa, who possessed

the ten powers, and he received gradual ordination according to the current rite.<sup>437</sup> He became the Teacher's personal servant and was revered as supreme for his retention of what he had heard. He protected the teaching for more than forty years, and then said to Śāṇavāsika, "The Teacher entrusted the teaching to Kāśyapa and he, in turn, entrusted it to me. When I too have passed away you must protect the teaching."

Ānanda predicted that Nāṭa and Bhanṭa, the sons of a merchant, would build a monastery on Urumunḍa Mountain, in the region of Mahurā, and that they would become its patrons. He directed Upagupta, the son of the incense-seller Gupta, to be ordained there and entrusted with the teaching. When King Ajātaśatru heard the news he came with his army [in order to take leave of Ānanda]. The people of Vaisālī, who had been apprised of this by a deity, accompanied the army to meet him. When Ānanda reached the middle of the River Ganges, a ṛṣi with a retinue of five hundred requested ordination from him. Ānanda materialised an island in the middle of the Ganges and gave the ordination there. The ṛṣi immediately became an arhat, and so became known as arhat Madhyāhnika (Midday), or Madhyāñṭika (Midway).

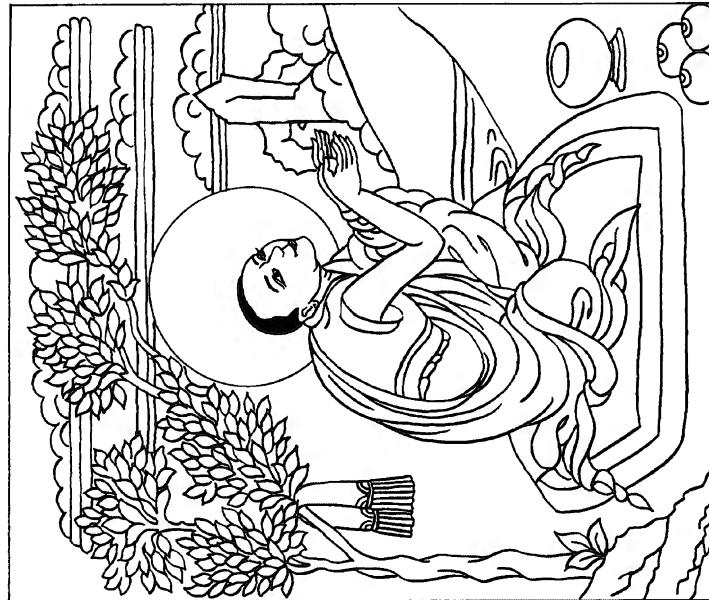
Madhyāhnika requested permission to enter nirvāṇa before his preceptor, Ānanda, who answered, "The Teacher has predicted that you will spread the teaching in Kashmir; so do just that!" When he had promised to do so Ānanda displayed many miracles and passed away. Half of his reliques were taken by Ajātaśatru, the other half by the people of Vaisālī, and they erected stūpas at Vaisālī and at Pātaliputra.

#### ŚĀṆAVĀSIKA

[51.2-52.1] Śāṇavāsika was an arhat who was learned in the Tripitaka. His patron was the religious king Aśoka. Concerning that king, the Root Tantra of Mañjuśrī (*Mañjuśrīmūlatantra*, T 543) predicted that he was to appear one hundred years after the Teacher's nirvāṇa, to live for one hundred and fifty years, and to worship stūpas for eighty-seven years.

Assisted by a yakṣa called Rathā, the king fulfilled the Teacher's prophecy by extracting relics from seven stūpas which held the Buddha's remains, and then by building eight hundred and forty billion stūpas of seven precious stones in all parts of Jambudvīpa.<sup>438</sup> The arhats praised his achievements saying:

King Aśoka who lives in Pātaliputra  
Has vastly increased the seven stūpas.  
Mightily, too, he has adorned this earth  
With manifest objects of prayer.



*Ananda*



Śāṇavāsika

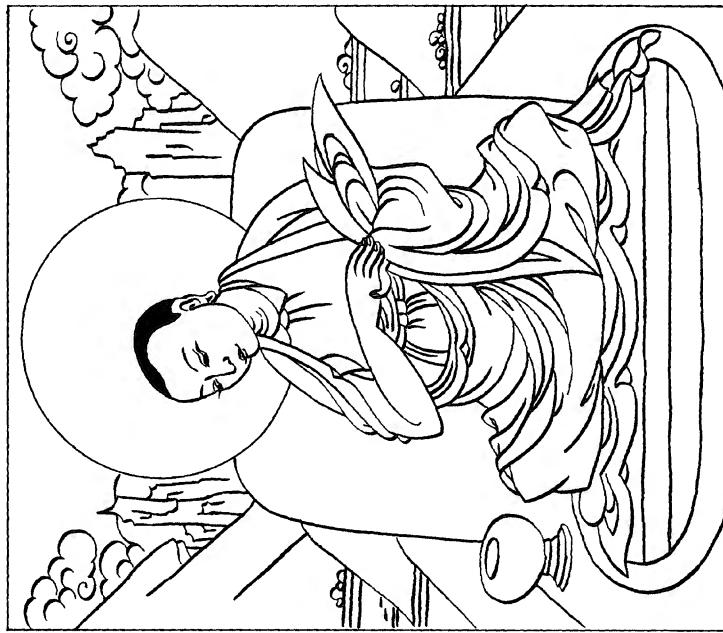
After consecrating those stupas and entrusting the teaching to Upagupta, Śāṇavāsika passed into nirvāṇa.

## UPAGUPTA

[52.1-52.6] In the *Minor Transmissions* the Teacher had predicted:

One hundred years after my nirvāṇa Upagupta, a son of the incense-seller Gupta, will be ordained as a monk. He will become a buddha who is without the marks of one,<sup>439</sup> and he will perform the deeds of a buddha.

Upagupta received ordination from Yāśah and became an arhat learned in the Tripitaka. Once, while he was teaching the doctrine to a congregation, the evil Māra distracted his audience by displaying magical transformations and so prevented them from achieving the goal. Thereupon, Upagupta transformed three corpses into flower garlands and bound them round Māra's head. When Māra produced an evil thought, they appeared as corpses and exuded a foul stench; but when he produced a wholesome thought, they appeared to be flowers. It is said



Upagupta

that owing to this crown, which no one could cast off, Māra was subdued by Upagupta and promised to avoid evil thoughts thereafter.

So many became arhats through Upagupta's seven instructions that a cave, eighteen cubits long and twelve cubits wide, was completely filled with four-inch sticks, one for each of them. Since the Teacher's nirvāṇa there had been no larger gathering of arhats than this. Upagupta himself entered nirvāṇa after entrusting the teaching to Dhītika.

## DHĪTIKA, KRṢNA, SUDĀRŚANA, MADHYĀHNICA AND THE SIXTEEN ELDERS

[52.6-55.1] The sublime Dhītika was also an arhat learned in the Tripitaka. After entrusting the teaching to the sublime Krṣṇa of Pāṭaliputra (*dmar-bu-can*) in Magadha, he passed into nirvāṇa. Krṣṇa, too, was an arhat learned in the Tripitaka. After protecting the teaching completely he entrusted it to Sudarśana and entered final nirvāṇa. Some include Madhyāhnika among the patriarchs as well, but in our opinion there were only seven patriarchs before Nāgarjuna.<sup>440</sup>

In particular, the great Sixteen Elders, who resided with five hundred arhats and others in various lands throughout the four continents and in the Trayatrimśa heaven,<sup>441</sup> protected the precious teaching; and in so doing they visited China during the reigns of T'ang T'ai-tsung, Qubilai Qan, and the emperor Yung-lo. Some say that they could be seen by all, but others maintain that the common folk could not see them, their bodies being rainbow-like.<sup>442</sup>

whereupon the nāgas said in amazement, "What is your command?" "I have come to this land to fulfil a prophecy of the Teacher. Please give this land to me."

"We will offer up the land covered by your sitting position. How many followers do you have?"

"Five hundred arhats."

"If even one of them is missing we will take back the land."

To this the elder replied, "Those depending on alms are supported in a place where there is sponsorship. Therefore householders must also be settled here."

Madhyāñika had a sorcerer construct a magical city there, and he consecrated it to be both perfectly glorious and imperishable. He settled numerous people there and, having brought saffron from Gandhamādana Mountain, consecrated it so that saffron would grow there for the duration of the teaching. The place with its many towns became the delightful country that is renowned today as Kashmir.<sup>443</sup>



*Madhyāñika*

So it was that the teaching was propagated throughout sixteen great cities of Jambudvipa during the Teacher's lifetime. None the less, because there were not yet cities in Kashmir, the Teacher had predicted that Madhyāñika would establish the teaching in Kashmir one hundred years after his nirvāṇa, for it was a most restful place and one suited to meditation. Accordingly, nearly twenty years after Ānanda had passed into nirvāṇa, the arhat Madhyāñika went to Kashmir, knowing that the time had come to fulfil the prophecy. In one cross-legged posture he covered nine valleys, which converged in a lake. The nāgas were furious. They caused an earthquake and a terrible rain storm, but they could not move even a corner of his robe. He transformed the shower of arrows and missiles which they hurled at him into flowers,

## 4 *The Preservation of the Teaching and Spread of the Greater Vehicle*

[55.1-60.4] After the Teacher's nirvāna a limitless number of great pious attendants, individuals who were like the Buddha himself, came forth to protect the teaching. Such were the host of arhats like Utara and Yasah, the venerable monks like Kāsyapa, and the great brahmans like King Sujaya and Kalyāṇa. They were masters who served the teaching, who were illustrious for their learning, dignity and excellence, and who had attained the qualities of realisation. None the less, in the opinion of the pious attendants of the Saṃpratika school,<sup>444</sup> the first to compose [authoritative] treatises must have been the arhats who composed the *Great Treasury of Detailed Exposition*. But, according to the greater vehicle, the first to do so were Maitreyanātha and the master Nagārjuna, since other commentators rely on treatises which follow their expositions of the path.<sup>445</sup>

According to the Teacher's own predictions, the three authors of fundamental texts were: Nāgārjuna, the Second Buddha, who was the disciple of the great brahman Saraha, and who set in motion the profound way of philosophical vision; the sublime Asaṅga, who was the disciple of the venerable Maitreya, and who spread throughout Jambudvīpa the extensive tradition of conduct; and the master Dignāga, who had been taken into the following of Mañjuśrī and thus attained accomplishments which overcame all opposing forces, and who revealed the way of the knowledge [through logical analysis] of what is implicit in actuality.

Their three commentators were: the master Āryadeva, disciple of Nāgārjuna, who was born miraculously from a lotus; Asaṅga's younger brother, the master Vasubandhu, who committed to memory nine million and nine hundred thousand verses and thus crossed the ocean of learning; and Dignāga's [indirect] disciple, the glorious Dharmakīrti, who instantly broke the resolution of non-Buddhists, having followed in the footsteps of [Dignāga's pupil] the disputant Iśvarasena.

The masters and their disciples mentioned above are collectively known as the "six adorments of Jambudvīpa". Usually Nāgārjuna and

Asaṅga are esteemed as the "two supreme ones", and the six adorments are made up of the remaining four, with the addition of the masters Gunaprabha and Sākyaprabha.<sup>446</sup> Śāntideva, the great son of the conquerors who was the subject of seven wonderful episodes, and Candra-gomin, who was learned in the sciences and their branches and achieved the accomplishments, are hailed as the "two marvellous masters". And there were innumerable other masters who attained full command of the meaning of the Buddha's scriptures, and who mainly elucidated the teaching of the Transcendental Perfections.

In general, as soon as the transmitted precepts of the dialectical vehicle, which deals with causes, had been compiled, the texts of the greater vehicle, which could not have been apportioned [their place in the Tripitaka], were introduced by devout men, gods, and spirits to their own domains. Those preserved in the human world were propagated gradually. Some of those preserved in the non-human worlds were introduced to the human world and propagated by holy persons.

Concerning the greater vehicle in particular: It transpired that shortly after the time of King Mahāpadma, Candra-rakṣita became the king of Odīviṣa. It is said that the sublime Mañjuśrī entered his house in the guise of a monk, taught some doctrines of the greater vehicle, and left behind a book. Adherents of the sūtra tradition believe that it was the *Transcendental Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in Eight Thousand Lines*, but followers of the mantra tradition believe it to have been the *Summation of the Real*. Regardless of which one it was, it is said that this was the first appearance of the greater vehicle in the human world after the Teacher's nirvāna. This must be held to have occurred before the third council. Therefore, the position universally adhered to by most contemporary scholars, namely, that all the transmitted precepts were committed to writing during the third council must be erroneous, for it is contradicted by this report.<sup>447</sup>

As for the tantrapiṭaka of the secret mantra: A discrepancy developed in the accounts of the ancient and new traditions [of Tibet], due to the changes that had taken place in India between the period when the doctrine was yet undiminished and the subsequent period of varied growth and decline. The opinion of our Ancient Translation School of the secret mantra texts will be explained below in detail.<sup>448</sup> In the opinion of the new tradition of secret mantra, the Teacher himself taught the tantras to Indrabhūti, the king of Odḍiyāna. It is also held that Vajrapāṇi entrusted them to him. In any case, whoever it was, the king had the tantras written down, and he taught them to the people. All the inhabitants of the land, even mere insects, became accomplished and vanished in the rainbow body. Then the land of Oḍḍiyāna became a desolate land, which the nāgas transformed into a lake. The Lord of Secrets [Vajrapāṇi] revealed the tantras to them and brought them to

maturity. As a result they gradually changed into men, and, living in a village by the shore of the lake, they persevered in practice and became accomplished. When their sons and daughters became dākas and dākinis, the land became renowned as “Oḍḍiyāna, the Land of the Dākinis”.

Eventually the lake dried up and a self-created temple of Heruka appeared. In its stores, the volumes of the tantras were preserved. Subsequently, most of the tantras were taken from it by accomplished masters: the *Guhyasamāja* by King Vasukaipa; the *Hṛṣejīra* by Nāgarjuna; the *Mahāmāya* and *Bhairava* tantras (T 468 & 470) by Kukkuripā; and so forth.

Similarly, there are many slightly different legends, for instance, that of Celuka and others obtaining the *Kālacakra Tantra* from the land of Shambhala, or from other lands, and propagating it. However it may have been, innumerable accomplished masters appeared: the glorious Saraha and the eighty-four accomplished masters,<sup>449</sup> Buddhajñānapāda and the twelve masters who were renowned at Vikramasīla; the six panditas of the gates; and the elder and younger Kālacakrapāda. They secured innumerable fortunate beings in spiritual maturity and liberation, primarily by means of the secret mantra teachings of the greater vehicle.<sup>450</sup>

Thus it is not possible to describe here, in a few words, the numberless liberated careers of those who sustained the Conqueror’s precious teaching, its transmission and its realisation, in India. Relying on the illumination of [other] well-known histories and elegant tales, may the lotus of reverence and enthusiasm [toward the doctrine] fully blossom!

This completes the general explanation of the origins of the Conqueror’s precious teaching in the world, the first part of this book, *Thunder from the Great Conquering Battle-Drum of Devendra*, which is a history of the precious teaching of the vehicle of indestructible reality according to the Ancient Translation School.

## 1 The Three Promulgations of the Doctrinal Wheel

[66b.4-68b.1] At the outset, the doctrinal wheel of the causal vehicle was promulgated in three successive stages by [Śākyamuni], the supreme emanational buddha-body and sage. The first commenced with the four truths, the second concerned the absence of attributes, and the third the excellent analysis [of reality].

### THE FIRST PROMULGATION

The first is as follows: After discerning the utterly impure realms of sentient beings, the Teacher who promulgated the first turning of the doctrinal wheel intended to encourage these beings by the disturbing topics of impermanence, impurity, suffering, selflessness, ugliness, and so forth, and then cause them to forsake the attitude which actually clings to samsara. For in this way they would achieve appropriate insight into ultimate truth and adhere to the path of the greater vehicle.

At the Deer Park of Rājaparāna in the district of Vārāṇasi, he repeated the four [truths] of suffering, its origin, the path and cessation [of samsāra] three times to an assembly consisting of his five noble companions.

The modes of the doctrine revealed in this context include the *Four Transmissions of the Piṭaka* of the pious attendants and self-centred buddhas who belong to the lesser vehicle.

### THE SECOND PROMULGATION

Concerning the second: The Tathāgata’s perseverance was not interrupted merely by that first promulgation of the doctrinal wheel. Subsequently, the Teacher promulgated the intermediate turning of the doctrinal wheel, intending that the realisation of the ultimate truth, which is referred to by synonyms in order to bring about the partial

cessation of conceptual elaboration, should become the actual foundation for the path of the greater vehicle. In this way egotism would be averted once beings had comprehended the buddha nature through the extensive topics of emptiness, signlessness, and aspirationlessness in relation to all things.

In places such as Vulture Peak near Rājagrha and chiefly to the communities of bodhisattvas, he revealed the Bodhisarvapitaka of the greater vehicle, which extensively teach the ineffable, unthinkable, inexpressible reality of just what is, whereby all things from form to omniscience are totally divorced from substantial existence.

The long versions [of these pīṭaka] are the *Billion Lines on the Transcendental Perfection of Discriminative Awareness* (\**Satakoṭiprajñā-pāramitā*) and the *Transcendental Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in One Hundred Thousand Lines*. The intermediate versions include the *Transcendental Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in Twenty-five Thousand Lines*, and the short versions include the *Transcendental Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in Eight Thousand Lines*; however, one should know there are an inconceivable number in addition to these.

### THE THIRD PROMULGATION

Concerning the third: The Tathāgata's perseverance was not interrupted merely by that second promulgation of the doctrinal wheel. Subsequently the Teacher promulgated the final turning of the doctrinal wheel, directing his intention towards the nucleus of the path of the greater vehicle, and actually revealed the ultimate truth for which there is no synonym. This he did after opposing all bases for the views concerning being and non-being and the like by causing sentient beings to penetrate the objective range of the Buddha through the topics of that irreversible promulgation<sup>153</sup> and through topics concerning the utter purity of the three spheres [of subject, object and their interaction]. In places such as Mount Malaya, the Point of Enlightenment<sup>154</sup> and Vaiśālī, at indeterminate times and to the host of great bodhisattvas who required the essential training, he excellently analysed all things from form to omniscience in accord with the three essential natures of the imaginary (*parikalpi*), the dependent (*paratatra*) and the absolute (*parinispanna*);<sup>155</sup> and having established the nature of the ground, path and result, he extensively revealed the abiding reality of the nucleus of the tathāgata.

Included in this promulgation are the *Billion Verses of the Great Collection of the Most Extensive Sūtras according to the Greater Vehicle* (\**Mahāvaiḍūḍyāmaḥāvīṇasūtrānāmakaśamgraha*), the *Great Boundless-ness of the Buddhas*, the *Sūtra of the Descent to Lankā*, the *Sūtra of the Boundless Array* (*Ghanavīhāsasūtra*, T 110), the *Great Sūtra of Final*

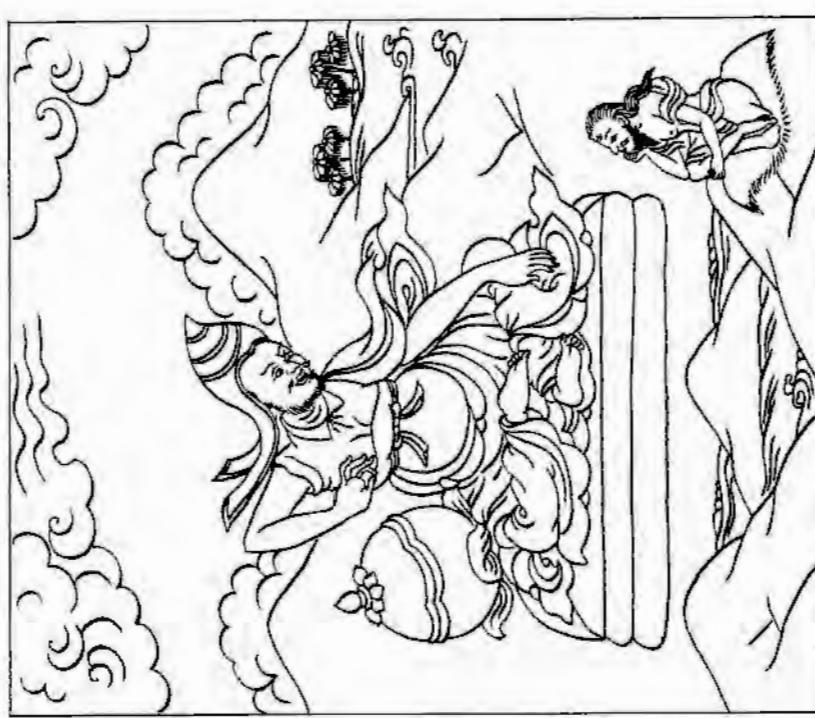
*Nirvāṇa and the Sūtra which Decisively Reveals the Intention (Sandhinirmocanasūtra*, T 106).

The Vaibhāṣika hold that the doctrinal wheels in which these transmissions were given comprise exclusively the path of insight. The Saūraṇtika hold that the three paths of insight, meditation and no-more-learning are comprised in the doctrinal wheels, while followers of the greater vehicle claim all five paths to be contained in the doctrinal wheels.

This causal vehicle, when classified according to its philosophical systems, has two divisions, namely, the lesser vehicle of the pious attendants and self-centred buddhas, and the greater vehicle of the bodhisattvas. The former also includes both the Vaibhāṣika and the Saūraṇtika.

## 2 The Lesser Vehicle

apprehend. Therefore, there is held to be no intrinsic awareness but only mind and mental events, which are both aware of external objects. The fourth basic category is that of the disjunct conditions including the meditative absorptions and including nouns, words, and syllables, which are held to exist substantially throughout the three times. For example, a vase exists during the past time of the vase, yet it also exists during the future and the present times. It is held that any action, even when completed, has inexhaustible substantiality.



VAIĀHĀSIKA

[68b.1-69a.6] The Vaibhāṣika, among the pious attendants, hold all that is knowable to be comprised in five categories. These are, namely, the basic category of apparent forms, the dominant mind, the concomitant mental events, the relational conditions and the uncompounded entities.

Of these five basic categories the first is as follows. Apparent forms are characterised as relatively true with reference to things, the idea of which can be lost when their gross material substance composed of indivisible atomic particles is destroyed, or when analysed by the intellect. They are characterised as ultimately true when the idea which apprehends them cannot be lost upon their destruction or analysis. As it is said in the *Treasury of the Abhidharma* (Ch.6, v.4):

Whatever, on its destruction or intellectual analysis,  
Ceases to convey an idea, like a vase or water,  
Is relatively existent; all else is ultimately real.

The Vaibhāṣika hold that the relative truth, while not existing in an ultimate sense, is veridically existent; for they admit that all substances are exclusively veridical.

The second basic category, [that of the dominant mind], refers to the consciousnesses of the five senses, along with the mental faculty, which perceive external objects.

The third refers to all the fifty-one mental events, such as feeling and perception, which, together with the dominant consciousness, apprehend objects. When the sense organs regard their objects, [mind and mental events] are held to have the same reference, the same scrutiny, and to occur at the same time with the same sensory basis, and the same substance. In this way, the comprehension of objects by consciousness and the comprehension of the specific qualities of objects by mental events arise simultaneously with the objects which they

Vasubandhu

Fifth, the uncomponed entities are three in number – space, cessation [of corruption] due to individual scrutiny, and the cessation [of the future arising of any object] independent of individual scrutiny. It is held that, together with the truth of the path and its concomitants and the consciousness of the mental faculty with its concomitants, these are free from corruption, whereas all the remaining entities [mentioned above] are corrupt.

## SAUTRĀNTIKA

[69a, 6-70a, 3] Most of the Sautrāntika tenets are identical to those of the Vaibhāṣīka, the distinctions between them being that, while accepting, for example, the imperceptible forms which maintain [a behavioural pattern resulting from] an attitude of renunciation<sup>156</sup> – which are held by the Vaibhāṣīka to be form – the Sautrāntika hold they are merely given the name form because they originate from form, and they deny that the three times have substantial existence. The sense organs are held to have consciousness as their possessor and the sense objects, too, are held to be the referential condition by which a sensum is transmitted to perception. The basic categories of mind and mental events, which are the consciousnesses of the five senses and their concomitant mental events, refer to objects such as form, yet external objects such as form and sound are not actually perceived, a sensum being transmitted in the manner of the reflection on a mirror. Accordingly, the sensum of an object such as form transmitted prior to the present moment is covertly transmitted so that the sensum corresponding to the object such as form arises at the present moment. After that moment, when the present transmitter of the sensum is transmitted in the subsequent moment, an external sensum is perceived to arise, and is then referred to as an object. The subject-object dichotomy thus becomes a subjective process and is called the comprehension of objects. As it is said in the *Ascertainment of Valid Cognition* (Ch.1):

An object is said to be experienced  
When its resemblance is experienced.

The Sautrāntika maintain that, while appearances are essentially consciousness, they are deceptive because the sensa which are transmitted are not externally existing [objects]. However the intrinsic awareness which clearly experiences all perceptual objects is not erroneous. They deny that relational conditions have substance apart from being mere functions of form, mind and mental events, and they profess that the three uncompounded entities are insubstantial like the son of a barren woman.

## PIOUS ATTENDANTS

[70a, 3-70a, 6] Now, those who definitely adhere to these patterns of the pious attendants observe in their conduct all the appropriate eight *pratimokṣa* vows. And by meditating on the four moments as they each apply to the four truths, beginning with impermanence,<sup>157</sup> the individual is realised to be divorced from [the concept] of a substantially existing independent self.

As a result of this experience, the two kinds of obscuration, [that is, those of the three poisons with their seeds and of ignorance apart from conflicting emotions], are destroyed on the culmination of the five paths through the vajra-like contemplation (*vajrapramasamādhī*)<sup>158</sup> on the path of meditation. Obscuration is abandoned in such a way that it ceases to be acquired. Then, the result of an arhat with or without residual [impurity] is actualised.

## SELF-CENTRED BUDDHAS

[70a, 6-70b, 6] The self-centred buddhas, on the other hand, in addition to [the moments] beginning with impermanence as they apply to the four truths, meditate on the twelve modes of dependent origination. While their progression on the path is generally identical to that of the pious attendants, [the difference between them is that] the pious attendants hold self with respect to the individual subject to be abandoned but the indivisible atomic matter of objects to continue in ultimate reality. The self-centred buddhas, however, hold all these objects to be fallacious and non-existent in ultimate reality apart from mere mental phenomena. And they are partially identical to the Mind Only (*Cittamātra*)<sup>159</sup> position in their opinion that the internal subjective consciousness genuinely does exist. As it is said in the *Ornament of Emergent Realisation* (Ch. 2, v.8):

Since they renounce the idea of objects  
And since they do not renounce the subject,  
One must know the path genuinely subsumed therein  
Is that of a rhinoceros-like<sup>160</sup> recipient.

Having meditated in this way on selflessness as far as the great path of provisions, every attainment from the feeling of warmth on the path of connection to the path of no-more-learning is actualised in a single sitting.

Thus, the two vehicles of the pious attendants and the self-centred buddhas are differentiated according to the degree of [their adherents'] acumen, and yet there is no great difference in their pattern of thought and realisation, for which reason they possess the same piṭaka.

components which arouse corrupt states, in accordance with the quotation beginning:

All things originate interdependently.  
They are compounded by the conditions of ignorance.

And continuing down to:

Thus only this great mass of suffering has arisen.

The latter includes the buddha-bodies, pristine cognitions and fields of the utterly pure conquerors. The former are so called because they depend on extraneous conditions of deeds and propensities, and the latter because they originate from the condition of obscurationless power.

Then, the essential nature of the absolute is classified into both the unchanging and the incontrovertible. The former consists of the nucleus of inner radiance, the unchanging natural expression of the expanse of reality, or the truth which is the abiding nature. As the *Sūtra of the Bounteous Array* says:

This nucleus is well defined  
As the ground-of-all.

Concerning the latter, when the end of the uncorrupted path has been reached, it is explained that this same nucleus is incontrovertibly actualised because the conflicting emotions which cover the genuine, resultant ground-of-all are entirely purified.

This philosophical system of Mind Only (*Cittamātra*) is classified into both those who hold sensa to be veridical (*Sākāravāda*) and those holding sensa to be false (*Nirākāravāda*). The former profess that, to the consciousness of the eye which apprehends the colour blue, the blue exists as blue, just as it appears. The latter are slightly superior to the former in holding that everything such as the appearance of blueness has no substantiality of either object or intellect, and that nothing material exists apart from consciousness, through which the propensities of ignorance are exaggerated and appearances then vitiated or enhanced by the ignorance of the intellect.

When further classified, [those holding sensa to be veridical] are differentiated according to the categories of objects and consciousness, so that there are those claiming perception has an equal number of objective and subjective factors, those claiming there is a diversity of sensa but not of consciousness, and those claiming that [sensa and consciousness] resemble the two halves of one egg.<sup>162</sup> Those holding sensa to be false, too, are divided between the maculate and the immaculate since they hold that the essence of mind is either vitiated or not by the stains of ignorant propensities. Among those claiming perception entails an equal number of objective and subjective factors, there are

### 3 *The Greater Vehicle*

[71a.1-72b.3] The Vījñānavādin merely confirms that objects are not perceived and indeed that substance is covert in accordance with the Saurāntika refutation which, on analysis, did not find the temporal parts of consciousness and the spatial parts of atoms postulated by the Vaibhāsika. For this reason the *Sūtra of the King of Contemplation* (*Samādhīrajasūtra*, T 127) says:<sup>161</sup>

O sons of the Conqueror, this threefold realm is only  
mind.

This philosophical school is therefore called the Vījñānavāda [proponents of consciousness] because it maintains all things to be merely the apitational aspect of mind.

The Vījñānavādin also admits, in conformity with the transmission of the final turning of the doctrinal wheel, that all things are definitively ordered according to three [essential natures] of reality, namely, the imaginary, the dependent and the absolute.

Among these, the essential category of the imaginary is classified into the nominal imaginary and the imaginary of delimited characteristics. The former, since it indicates the conventional, includes the essential features of, or the particular names and symbols applied to, all things, which are exaggerated by the intellect despite being non-existent in reality. The latter is exemplified by the two [postulated] selves [of individuals and phenomena]. The essential nature of the dependent is also divided into both impure dependence and pure dependence. The former includes everything subsumed by the five basic

adherents of the eight aggregates of consciousness, and adherents of the six aggregates of consciousness. And among those claiming there is diversity of *sensa* but not of consciousness, there are some who hold to the six aggregates of consciousness and others who hold to a single consciousness. Such classifications become limitless.

While this school is somewhat superior to the vehicles of the pious attendants and the self-centred buddhas, it does not correctly understand the nature of the absolute category which is the ultimate truth. This is because, although both those holding *sensa* to be veridical and those holding *sensa* to be false realise that the *sensa* of external objects are not true, they do admit the intrinsic awareness which is naturally radiant, non-dual perception to exist absolutely as the ultimate truth.<sup>163</sup>

#### MADHYAMAKA

Secondly, the Mādhyamikas are divided into both adherents of the coarse, Outer Mādhyamaka which claims there is no substantial existence, and the subtle, inner Great Mādhyamaka of the definitive meaning. The former includes both the Svātantrika-Mādhyamaka and the Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamaka systems.

#### Outer Mādhyamaka

##### *Svātantrika-Mādhyamaka*

[72b.4-73b.4] The philosophical systems of the Vaibhāṣika, Saṃvārnikā and Mind Only (*Cittamatra*) fall into the extreme of clinging to substantial existence, and so do not depart from conceptual elaboration, which is subjectively oriented. However, the Svātantrika system occupies the centre (*mādhyama*) because therein all things are held to be of the nature of the middle way which does not fall into either of the two extremes. Moreover, the tenet that all things exist in the perceptual aspect of the bewildered intellect of relative appearance, but are ultimately non-existent in the awareness of the unbewildered intellect is claimed by the Svātantrika-Mādhyamika.

When these [two truths] are classified, there is held to be both a correct relative (*tathātva*) in which appearances are causally effective, and an erroneous relative (*mithyātva*) in which appearances are not causally effective. On the ultimate level, too, there is held to be an ultimate truth which is referred to by synonyms (*paryayaparamārtha*) in order to cut through a single aspect of conceptual elaboration, such as the view that a shoot is not self-produced, and an ultimate truth without synonyms (*aparyayaparamārtha*) which cuts through conceptual elaboration of the four extremes,

beginning with the view that a shoot is produced neither from itself, nor from another source and so on. Their characteristic nature is that the relative [truth] does not resist scrutiny inasmuch as it can be refuted by the scrutinising intellect, and the ultimate truth does resist scrutiny inasmuch as it cannot be refuted by the intellect.



Nāgārjuna

Accordingly, in order to realise that the relative or phenomenal appearances which cannot be denied are not [inherently] existent, one is made to perceive that they do not exist as veridical substances. The substances of external objects and of consciousness are held to be empty and only a pristine cognition undifferentiated into any of the exaggeration and depreciation of [views concerning] being and non-being is admitted. So it is that the *Short Commentary* (*Sphuṭartha*, T 3793) begins:

By the pristine cognition which is individual, intrinsic awareness...

The refutation of that which is to be refuted [i.e. the inherent existence of relative appearances] is also proven by reason and logical axioms, such as the Vajra Fragments (*rdo-rje'i gsangs-ma*) which scrutinises causes; the Refutation of Production from Entities or Non-Entities (*yod-med shye'-gsag*) which scrutinises results; the Refutation of the Four

Limits of Production (*ma-habi skye'-geg*) which scrutinises [both causes and results]; the Supreme Relativity (*riem'-brel chen-po*), arranged in syllogisms of implicitly affirmative negation (*ma-yin dgag*); and the Absence of the Singular and the Multiple (*geig-dang du-bra*) arranged in syllogisms of explicit negation (*med-dgag*).<sup>164</sup>

As a result, illusion and so forth, which are the objects of proof [in this system], are not proven by means of implicitly affirmative negation which delimits their scope,<sup>165</sup> but they are adduced by means of explicit negation which excludes<sup>166</sup> through mere negation [the possibility of] genuine substantial existence. In this way, a hypothetically conceived unborn nature is claimed by the Svacittanika-Madhyamika to be a characteristic of ultimate truth, unelaborate as the sky.

In addition, by proving that which does not ultimately exist to be relatively existent, this system continues the flaws of the eternalist-nihilist dichotomy. Their understanding of mere explicit negation, a hypothetically conceived freedom from conceptual elaboration, abides not in the definitive meaning, and even the intellectual reasoning which refutes conceptual elaboration does not transcend the details of conceptual elaboration.

#### *Prasangika-Madhyamaka*

[73b.5-77a.4.] Secondly, the Prasangika-Madhyamika demarcate the two truths by distinguishing between the bewildered intellect and the unbewildered intellect. The dichotomy between subjective consciousness and objective data never appears within the range of the meditative absorptions of sublime bodhisattvas and the all-knowing pristine cognition of the buddhas, just as dreams are not perceived when one is not asleep. As the master Nagarjuna says:

Just as, for example, on falling asleep,  
A man sees by the power of dreams  
His son, wife, mansion and lands,  
But sees them not upon awakening,  
So it is that when those who know relative  
appearance

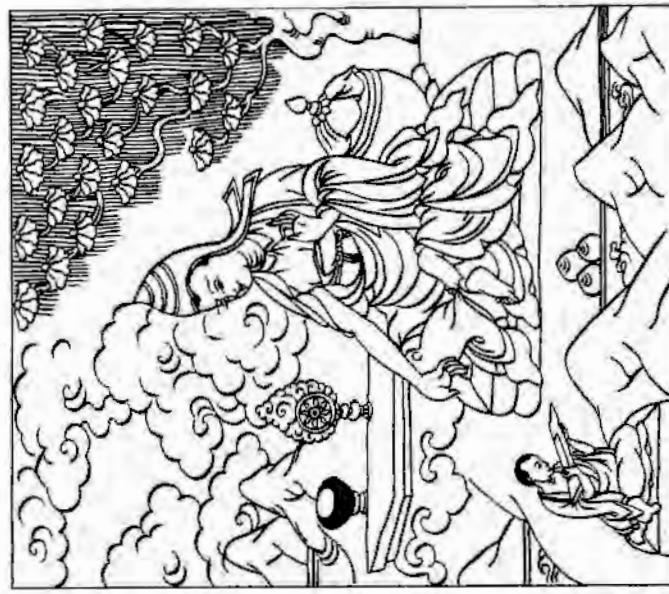
Open the eyes of intelligence,  
Part from the sleep of unknowing,  
And wake up, they no longer perceive it.

The subjective entry into pristine cognition is also called quiescence, and when all the conceptual elaborations of mind and mental events have been interrupted and obstructed, that which abides in the cessation of supreme quiescence, the expanse of reality free from all thoughts and expressions, is called the reality of unbewildered intelligence. As Candrakirti has explained [in his *Introduction to the Madhyamaka*, Ch.11, v.13]:

Thus, because reality is uncreated,  
Intellects too are uncreated.

Therefore the reality known within the contents  
of these [intellects]

Is known conventionally, in the manner,  
For example, of the mind  
Which correctly cognises its object  
On the emergence of objective sense.



*Aryadeva*

And also [Ch. 11, v.16]:

When the dry brushwood of all that is knowable is  
burnt,

The peace which results is the body of reality  
of the conquerors.

At that time there is neither creation nor cessation,  
For the cessation of mind has been actualised by that  
body.

So it is that this state is called the realisation of ultimate truth, and the object of this [realisation] is the fundamental abiding nature, the naturally pure expanse of reality.

When genuine scholars have accordingly  
Destroyed all the propensities of ignorance  
By the sun of knowledge, without exception,  
The objective mind and mental events are not seen.

However, the bewildered intellect of false perception vitiates [this reality] through its propensities of common ignorance. In the manner of a person with a certain eye disease clinging to the truth of darkness and the vision of combed-out hairs, the sensa of the bewildered subject-object dichotomy which appear as the various realms of the six classes of beings along with their experiences of happiness and sorrow, high and low, and the different sensa which appear to sublime beings during the aftermath of meditation, that is, the world and its contents as they are generally known, are both assigned to the two aspects of relative appearance, according to whether they are the sensa of impaired or unimpaired faculties. As the *Introduction to Madhyamaka* (Ch.6, v.24) says:

There are two kinds of false perception,  
One endowed with clear sense faculties,  
The other with impaired faculties.  
The perception of the impaired faculties  
Is deemed wrong observation by those of excellent  
faculties.

By virtue of this, all the things of samsāra, along with mind, the mental events and their objective sensations, are relative appearances. This also applies to the attainment of the [bodhisattva] levels associated with the impure forms<sup>167</sup> which are within the unimpeded range of mind and mental events and to other such apparitions among the six aggregates of consciousness. In short, all that is renounced or undertaken is amassed on the side of relative appearance and established as bewilderment. Relative appearances are also divided into the erroneous relative which appears to those of impaired faculties, and the correct relative which appears as the object of unimpaired faculties. The former includes the perception of two moons and dreams which are reputed to be untrue even when they appear within the range of mundane perception. The latter includes the perception of one moon which is reputed to be true when it appears within the range of mundane perception.

Now, that which diversely appears to the bewildered intellect, ostensibly true under the circumstances of the bewildered intellect which clings to duality, is never referred to in the meditative equipoise of sublime beings or in a buddha whose bewilderment has ceased and to whom bewildering appearances never appear, just as the vision of combed-out hairs experienced by one of impaired eyesight never appears to one of good eyesight. Accordingly it is said in the above [*Introduction to the Madhyamaka*, Ch.6, v.29]:

Having investigated any erroneous objects  
Such as the vision of hairs in blindness,  
One should know the [relative truth] also to include  
Anything seen by anyone of pure vision.

In this way, the ultimate truth is characterised as the essence free from all conceptual elaborations of the subject-object dichotomy, in which all the stains of the mind and its mental events are quiescent in the expanse of reality, and which is not extraneously perceived because it is not discursive thought, or words, phrases and other such particular existents. Ultimate truth is also characterised as the abiding nature of reality which is beyond thought, free from all conceptual elaborations, and untouched by philosophical systems. As explained in the *Root Stanzas on the Madhyamaka entitled Discriminative Awareness* (cf. Ch.25, v.24):

It is characterised as quiescent  
Without being extraneously perceived,  
Une labored by conceptual elaborations,  
And not different from non-conceptualisation.

To sum up: The expane that is characterised as the profound, calm mind of the subtlest of buddhas free from all obscurations, the all-knowing pristine cognition which realises that [expansive], the essence of the pristine cognition of sublime bodhisattvas' meditative equipoise, and the sensations of higher insight which appear during the aftermath [of meditation] are all the ultimate truth.

Although the Prāsaṅgika also appraise things to have no independent existence through the five logical axioms, they do not, in the manner of the Svātantrika, alternately prove relative appearances to be false having once refuted them, or prove freedom from conceptual elaboration having once refuted conceptual elaboration with respect to ultimate reality and so forth. Rather, this unbewildered intention of the Prāsaṅgika dialectic escorts the inexpressible, inconceivable abiding reality, in which no things are differentiated according to theories of being, non-being, both being and non-being or neither being nor non-being. It has refuted all the philosophical systems which have been upheld. Accordingly, the *Refutation of Disputed Topics* (v.29) says:

If I were to possess some proposition,  
I would at that time be at fault.  
Since I am without propositions,  
I am entirely without fault.

And in the *Four Hundred Verses* (*Carukitaka*, T 3846, Ch.16, v.25):

One who adheres to no standpoint,  
Of being, non-being, both being and non-being,  
Or neither being nor non-being,  
Over a very long period cannot be censured.

And also in the *Jesus Lamp of the Madhyamaka* (*Madhyamakaravat-prakpa*, T 3854):

Substances which are postulated

Do not even subtly exist.

Since they have been uncreated from the beginning,  
They are as the son of a barren woman.

If it is objected that [in the Prasangika view] the very definitive structure of the two truths would become non-existent, it is the case that in the abiding nature of reality all dualistic doctrines such as the two truths are transcended. The Prasangika do label the apparitional world according to its mere exaggerated status, but they do not adhere to it in the manner of those philosophical systems which cling to it as [inherently] true. As it is said in the *Introduction to the Madhyamaka* (Ch.6 v.18ab):

Just as you hold substances to have dependent existence,  
I have not admitted even relative existence.

And in the *Sutra of the King of Contemplation*:

As for the unwritten doctrines [of emptiness],  
Those which are heard and revealed  
Are indeed heard and revealed  
After the unchanging [reality] has been exaggerated.

Therefore, when the provision of pristine cognition has been accumulated through meditation which coalesces meditative equipoise in reality, or discriminative awareness, and the great compassion of skilful means, and when the provision of merit has been accumulated by perceiving all things as an apparition during the aftermath of meditation, finally the buddha-body of reality and the two bodies of form are obtained. As it is said in the *Jesus Garland* (*Ratnakoti*, T 4158, Ch.3, v.12):

This body of form of the buddhas  
Originated from the provision of merit.  
The body of reality, to be brief,  
Springs from the provision of kingly pristine cognition.

Thus the Madhyamaka of the ground refers to the two truths, the Madhyamaka of the path to the provisions, and the Madhyamaka of the result to the coalescence of the two buddha-bodies.

#### *Great Madhyamaka*

[71a.4-84a.4] Secondly, concerning the subtle, inner Great Madhyamaka of definitive meaning, it is stated in the *Jesus Lamp of the Madhyamaka* by the master Bhavya (*skal-idan*):

The Madhyamaka of the Praesangika and the Svatantrika is the coarse, Outer Madhyamaka. It should indeed be expressed by those who profess well-informed intelligence during debates with [extremist] Outiders, during the composition of great treatises, and while establishing texts which concern supreme reasoning. However, when the subtle, inner Madhyamaka is experientially cultivated, one should meditate on the nature of Yogacara-Madhyamaka. <sup>169</sup>



Asanga

In this way, two *Madhyamaka* are spoken of, one outer and coarse, the other inner and subtle.

Concerning the latter, the regent Ajita [Maitreya] has extensively analysed the meaningful intention of the topics of vast significance which revealed all things in terms of the three essential natures. This he did by means of discourses connected with the irreversible intention of the final turning of the doctrinal wheel and with the utter purity of the three spheres [of subject, object and their interaction].

Whereas in the aforementioned tradition of Mind Only, the dependent nature is the ground of emptiness and is explained to be the absolute, empty of imaginary objects of refutation, here it is the absolute reality (*chos-myid yongs-grub*) that is claimed to be empty of imaginary objects of refutation. Accordingly, the components, psychophysical bases and activity fields, which are dependently conceived, are said to be a ground which is empty of the imaginary self and its properties; and the ground which is empty of that dependent ground of emptiness is absolute reality. This ground of emptiness never comes into existence because it is empty of the phenomena of *samsāra*, which are characterised as suddenly arisen and which are divided according to essential stains and substantial faults. However this ground is not empty of the amassed enlightened attributes of *nirvāṇa* which spontaneously abide from the beginning.

Accordingly, it is said in the *Supreme Continuum of the Greater Vehicle* (Ch.1, v.155):

- The seed which is empty of suddenly arisen phenomena
- Endowed with divisive characteristics
- Is not empty of the unsurpassed reality
- Endowed with indivisible characteristics

And in the *Commentary [on the Supreme Continuum of the Greater Vehicle, Mahāyānottaratantrāśāstra-yākyā, T 4025, p.76]:*

If one asks what is revealed by this passage, the reason for there being no basis of all-conflicting emotions requiring to be clarified in this naturally pure seed of the *tathāgata* is that it is naturally free from suddenly arisen stains. [It contains nothing at all which can be established as a basis for purification, for its nature is reality, pure of divisive phenomena. So it is that the nucleus of the *tathāgata* is empty of divisions which may be removed and of the entire nest of conflicting emotions, but it is not empty of the inconceivable attributes of the buddhas which outnumber all the sands of the River Ganges and are non-divisive and inalienable.

Now it is also said that the imaginary implies that attributes are without

substantial existence, the dependent that creation is without substantial existence and the absolute that ultimate reality is without substantial existence. The first two of these [indicate] that the conceptual aspects of the subject-object dichotomy, which are suddenly arising fictions, are empty of their own essence, and the latter refers to emptiness as the naturally expressed, fundamental essence itself which has no substantiality. Since this [ultimate reality] is naturally pure, it abides, through its function of emptiness, as the enlightened attributes of the buddha-body of reality, and through its apparitional function as the ground on which the buddha-bodies, fields, celestial mansions and so forth arise. Through its function of awareness, it is spontaneously present from the beginning, free from causes and free from results, because it is the supporting ground of the ten powers, the four fearlessnesses and the like. This natural expression of the buddhas, which is called the nucleus of the *sugata*, does not abide as the seed of creation, destruction, transformation, change, increase or decrease, cause or condition, and so forth, and it is ever uncovered, without being an object of metaphor, thought or expression. It is said in the *Play of Mātijīśvara* (*Mātijīśvarikṛtiśāmāhātyānaśāra, T 96*):

Sister, although suddenly arising conflicting emotions do emerge in relation to the natural inner radiance, the natural inner radiance cannot be defiled by those suddenly arisen all-conflicting emotions.

And the regent Ajita has said [in the *Supreme Continuum of the Greater Vehicle, Ch.1, v.5*]:

- Uncompounded and spontaneously present,
- Unrealised through external conditions,
- Endowed with knowledge, love and power
- Is the buddhahood possessing the two benefits.

If one were otherwise to apprehend all things as being exclusively empty of their own essence, in the manner of the proponents of intrinsic emptiness (*rang-stong-pa*), then it is said that according to the same extreme [argument] the buddha-body of reality would also be empty of itself. The buddha-bodies, pristine cognitions, fields and so forth would be non-existent, the accumulation of the provisions and purification of obscurations, which depend upon these, would also be non-existent, and indeed the teachings through which the causal and resultant vehicles reveal all the means of purifying stains, whatever their basis or path, would be diminished. The ground of purification being non-existent, there would be no need to effect purification. Being empty of pristine cognition, there would be no work on behalf of others and no [enlightened] understanding. There being nothing existent, even with respect to the relative appearances of the impure dependent

nature, there would also be no enlightened attributes to transform these impurities into the pure dependent nature. There would be no self to become the ground of bondage and liberation, and there would be no doctrine to be realised by each one individually. Many such faults would persist and by nature give rise to the source of unbearable views. This can be known from quotations such as the following from the *Sūtra of the Dialogue with Kāśyapa from the Sublime Pagoda of Precious Jewels* (Āryaratnakūṭakāśyaparatiṣṭasūtra, T 87):

O Kāśyapa, whoever, referring to emptiness, relies upon emptiness deviates from this discourse of mine; theirs is said to be a great deviation. O Kāśyapa, it is better to abide in a view [which clings to] individual existence to the extent of Mount Sumeru, than with manifest egotism to adopt a view to emptiness. If you ask why, O Kāśyapa, I have explained that although that which arises from all views is emptiness, Kāśyapa, that which exclusively regards emptiness is untenable.

If one were, on the other hand, to object that this would not be emptiness, it is not the case, as the *Sublime Sūtra of the Descent to Lankā* says:

If you ask what is the emptiness which is the ultimate reality of all things, the great pristine cognition of the sublime beings, it is as follows. The attainment of the pristine cognition of the sublime beings, which is one's own intrinsic awareness, is empty of the propensities of all views and faults. This is called the emptiness which is the ultimate reality of all things, the great pristine cognition of sublime beings.

This ultimate reality that is empty of extraneous entities (*gzhan-stong*), is similarly found in sūtras belonging to the intermediate promulgation of the doctrinal wheel. It is said in the *Transcendental Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in Twenty-five Thousand Lines*:

In this context, if you ask what is the emptiness of other substances, it applies whether the tathāgatas have appeared or not. As the abiding nature of reality, as reality itself, the expanse of reality, the faultlessness of reality, the nature of just what is, the unmistakable nature of just what is, and as the genuine goal, unalterable nature of just what is, and as the genuine goal, it abides as just what is. Therefore, this reality, which is empty of extraneous entities, is called the emptiness of other substances. Subhūti, this is the greater vehicle of the bodhisattvas, great spiritual warriors.

And it is extensively mentioned in the *Supreme Continuum of the Greater Vehicle*, as cited above in the passage (Ch.1, v.155) which begins:

The seed which is empty of suddenly arisen phenomena  
Endowed with divisive characteristics...

The nature of this expanse in the minds of sentient beings is like a treasure of precious gems within the earth, uncovered by stains in respect of its own essence, and yet it simultaneously assumes the suddenly arisen forms of samsāra, in the manner, for example, of water and ice. It says in the *Sūtra of the King of Contemplation*:

Pure, clear and inwardly radiant,  
Undisturbed and uncompounded  
Is the nucleus of the sugata.

It is the reality that abides from the beginning.

And in the master Nāgārjuna's *Eulogy to the Expanse of Reality* (v.23):

The water that lies within the earth  
Remains immaculately pure.  
The pristine cognition within conflicting emotions, too,  
Remains similarly immaculate.

Such quotations maintain that the status of the nucleus [of the tathāgata] according to the definitive meaning is inconceivable.

This nucleus of the tathāgata, with respect to its own essence, is the same throughout samsāra and nirvāna, without good or evil. As it is said in the *Ornament of the Sūtras of the Greater Vehicle*, Ch.9, v.37:

The nature of just what is, in all things, is undifferentiated.

When purified, it is the nature of the tathāgata.  
Therefore all living beings possess that nucleus.

Such extensive quotations have an intention directed towards the absolute nature, which is unchanging reality. Therefore the *Supreme Continuum of the Greater Vehicle* (Ch.1, v.51) says:

Subsequently just as it was before  
Is the unchanging reality.

When beings are circumstantially classified in relation to the stains which suddenly arise, they fall into three categories. As it is explained in the *Supreme Continuum of the Greater Vehicle* (Ch.1, v.47):

According to their respective order of being impure,  
Purifying that which is impure and being utterly pure,  
They are called sentient beings, bodhisattvas and tathāgatas.

And in the *Commentary [on the Supreme Continuum of the Greater Vehicle]*, p.40]:

Therefore, those in the circumstance of being impure are called sentient beings, those in the circumstance of purifying that which is impure are called bodhisattvas and those in the circumstance of being utterly pure are called tathāgatas.

Similarly, everything appears according to distinctions such as the three vehicles, to differentiations based upon hierarchical classifications such as the ten levels and the five paths, and likewise to ethical hierarchies such as good and evil sentient beings, pious attendants and self-centred buddhas, and sublime bodhisattvas and buddhas. However, the natural inner radiance, which is the expanse of reality and the ultimate truth, pervades everything without [distinctions between] good and evil or decrease and increase, just as, for example, vases appear to be distinguished according to their quality, there being clay vases, wooden vases, vases of precious gems and so on, while the space within these vases is identical in that it is without qualities. Accordingly, the *Supreme Continuum of the Greater Vehicle* (Ch.1, vv.49-50) says:

Just as space is omnipresent,  
Having a thoughtless nature,  
So the natural expression of mind,  
The immaculate expanse, is all-pervasive.  
Its general characteristic pervades the limits  
Of negative and positive attributes,  
In the manner of the space  
Within inferior, mediocre and superior material forms.

If one then asks what exactly the three circumstances just mentioned are, beings are separated between samsāra and nirvāna according to the distinction of whether they are liberated or not liberated from the stains that obscure the nucleus. As the same text says:

One covered by the net of conflicting emotions  
Is truly called a sentient being.  
On becoming free from conflicting emotions  
One is called a buddha.

Regarding this threefold circumstance, ordinary persons who are obscured by the great darkness of obscuration have nothing but a portion of enlightened attributes. By contrast, the arhats among the pious attendants and self-centred buddhas are more sublime than them in enlightened attributes since they have gradually reduced the stains covering the nucleus by the greater or lesser potency of the antidotes which have power to remove them. Then, the bodhisattvas appear to be even more sublime, having attained the levels, and surpassed those

who have not renounced all aspects of ignorance. Beyond that, the buddhas free from all obscurations appear yet more sublime.

Therefore, this ultimate truth which is the expanse [of reality] is not qualitatively perceived according to its abiding nature by the three lower kinds of sublime being, namely, the pious attendants, self-centred buddhas and bodhisattvas. It is not manifestly perceived by one who abides on the paths of provision and connection except as a mere volition of the scrutinising intellect. Again, although it is partially perceived on the paths of insight and meditation, the expanse cannot be perfectly perceived through these paths, apart from a mere proportion of its enlightened attributes, just as a small child does not perceive the all-encompassing sun apart from the mere glimpse of its rays through an aperture.

As has previously been cited [from the *Supreme Continuum of the Greater Vehicle*, Ch.2, v.68]:

Because it is not an object of speech,  
Is subsumed by ultimate reality,  
Is not within reason's domain,  
Is beyond exemplification,

Is unsurpassed and is subsumed neither by existence  
nor quiescence,  
The objective range of the Conqueror is inconceivable  
Even to sublime beings.

It is on the buddha level that the natural expression [of reality] is directly and perfectly perceived. As explained in the *Commentary on the Supreme Continuum of the Greater Vehicle* (p.77):

Just as the sun in the sky appears  
Through an aperture in the clouds,  
In this situation you are not fully perceived  
Even by sublime beings endowed with pure eyes of  
Intelligence; for their intelligence is partial.  
However, Transcendent Lord, you who are the pure  
body of reality,  
Pervading the spacious expanse of limitless knowledge  
Are totally perceived by those whose intelligence is  
limitless.

Would it then be, one might object, that sentient beings become buddhas who have accumulated the two provisions and renounced the two obscurations by means of this naturally radiant expanse, which is effortlessly present in the nature of sentient beings? That is not so, because there are two kinds of renunciation, one that is naturally pure and the other that becomes free from the suddenly arisen stains. The former is the reality which, in respect of its own essence, abides without

changing in the fundamental nature of great primordial purity. It is said in the *Sūtra of the Abortion of Pristine Cognition's Appearance which Penetrates the Scope of All Buddhas* (*Sarvabuddhaśāntayavatāra-jñānālokaṇḍakārastūra*, T 100):

Maṇjuśrī, since the mind is naturally radiant, it is naturally undefiled by all-conflicting emotions, and is only [provisionally] defiled by all the subsidiary conflicting emotions which suddenly arise. That which is naturally radiant is the very absence of all-conflicting emotions. For one who is without all-conflicting emotions, there is no antidote through which all-conflicting emotions should be renounced.

And in the *Transcendental Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in Twenty-five Thousand Lines*:

"Kausīka, what do you think of this? Are sentient beings created or do they expire?" He replied, "Venerable Subhūti, that is not the case. If you ask why, it is because sentient beings are pure from the beginning."

And also in the same text:

Since form is naturally radiant, it is pure without all-conflicting emotions. Since feeling, perception, habitual tendencies and consciousness are naturally radiant, they are pure without all-conflicting emotions. Since all manifestations up to omniscience are naturally radiant, they are pure and without all-conflicting emotions.

According to such extensive quotations, natural renunciation is that which transcends the phenomena of consciousness and is a genuine liberation from all obscurations. It is complete from the beginning in ultimate truth because absolute reality is naturally pure.

The second kind of renunciation is the removal of the suddenly arising obscurations by an appropriate antidote. Although, as previously explained, the unactualised enlightened attributes which exist in the ground unrefined by the path are present in the situation of sentient beings, no defect is thereby introduced to this philosophical system because it is not claimed that sentient beings are buddhas free from all obscurations.

In the same way, there are also two kinds of realisation, namely, the naturally present pristine cognition realised through the intrinsic awareness of primordial reality, and the dependently produced pristine cognition realised through the power of meditating on the path. The former is characterised as supramundane, being the naturally present pristine cognition or discernment through individual intuitive awareness which

realises the ultimate reality. Thus [the *Liturgy of the Names of Maṇjuśrī*, v.155ab] says:

It is awareness of itself, awareness of others,  
And awareness of all.

It is the all-knowing sacred total awareness.

The two fundamental kinds of renunciation and realisation are complete in their own essence, which is the abiding nature of ultimate reality. As the venerable Maitreya [in the *Supreme Continuum of the Greater Vehicle*, Ch.1, v.154]<sup>170</sup> says:

Therein there is nothing to be clarified  
And nothing to be minutely established.  
Genuinely regarding that genuine reality,  
Genuinely perceiving it, one will be free.

The second kind of realisation is that pattern of realisation which is expanded by the power of meditating on the path. It is called the absolute which is incontrovertible because enlightened attributes of obscurationless power are actualised once the two provisions of pristine cognition have been accumulated through meditative equipoise and merit during the aftermath. As the *Ornament of the Sūtras of the Greater Vehicle* (Ch.9, v.22abd) says:

Though there is no distinction  
Between the former and the latter,  
It is the nature of just what is,  
Untainted by all obscurations,  
That is held to be the buddha.

aspects of consciousness is revealed in the ultimate truth. Accordingly, it is said in the *Sublime Sūtra of the Descent to Loka*:

One who has become without mind, intellect, the consciousness of the intellect, conceptualising thoughts and perception, will become receptive to the uncreated doctrine. O Mahānati, since the doctrine which is apparitionless and divorced from conceptualising thoughts is revealed, this ultimate reality is without order or orderly intervals.



Maṇoja

And also [Ch.3, vv.40-1]:

Having renounced the mind and intellect,  
Consciousness, perception and thoughts,  
The pious attendants who have obtained the  
conceptualising doctrine  
Become the sons of the Conqueror.  
Through the distinctions of [Buddha]-field  
and [Bodhisattva's] receptiveness,  
[They gain] the virtuous pristine cognition of the Tathāgata.

#### 4 The Superiority of Great Madhyamaka to Mind Only

[84a.4-92a.6] This system, according to which the relative is empty of its own essence and the ultimate empty of other entities, is variously revealed in both the intermediate and final promulgations. However, in particular, the presence of profound, radiant and non-dual pristine cognition, the nucleus of the sugata, as the ground of emptiness is extensively taught in the piṭaka of the final transmitted precepts, and in those which speak of all things as merely apparitional aspects of mind. Derived from these [precepts], certain masters of the past have been obliged to admit that the mind is ultimately real and thereby originated the school of the Vijñānavāda [proponents of consciousness], which is one of those known at the present day as the four philosophical systems. While not reaching the genuine intention, that mind described as the mind of which all things are merely apparitional aspects partakes of two circumstances, one under which its intention is directed to the consciousness of the ground-of-all, and the other under which its intention is directed to the absolute reality (*chos-yiṇid yong-grub*).

When the former is intended, it is said not to be the ultimate truth because it is impermanent, the bewildered subject and object being relative appearances. For example, the *Sūtra of the Adornment of Pristine Cognition*, *Appearance which Penetrates the Scope of All Buddhas* says:

Śāradvatīputra, that which is called mind includes the consciousness of mind and intellect, the mental body, the faculty of the intellect and the base of the intellect. This is what is called the mind. If you ask how emptiness relates with it, Śāradvatīputra, the mind is empty of the mind. In it there is no actor. If there were some actor, then its actions would be experienced as such by others. The mind is not manifestly conditioned even by the mind.

Though it is taught that all things are merely apparitional aspects of mind, there is no occasion so to speak in connection with the ultimate truth, for the pristine cognition transcending mind, intellect and all

There are, in addition, proponents of the Mind Only philosophical system who hold that consciousness is not transcended in the ultimate truth. But this is simply a subjective perception of samsāra, unable to sublimate the world. The ultimate truth is characterised as the uncorrupted expanse, and as the obscurationless pristine cognition which realises it, namely, the supramundane, individual, intuitive awareness of the sublime beings.

The distinction between these two [views] has been extensively taught in passages such as the following from that [same] sūtra of the greater vehicle [*Descent to Lankā*, p.64]:

In this context, Mahāmati, pristine cognition is of three kinds: mundane, supramundane and most supramundane..

Of these, that which having been created is destroyed is consciousness; and that which is neither created nor destroyed is pristine cognition. Moreover, Mahāmati, that which falls into the dichotomy of being symbolic or non-symbolic, that which falls into the dichotomy of being and non-being, and that which is created from causes of diverse character, is consciousness; whereas that which is characterised as utterly transcending the dichotomy of symbolic and non-symbolic is pristine cognition. And yet again Mahāmati, that which is characterised as accumulating them is consciousness, and that which is characterised as diminishing them is pristine cognition.

Now these three kinds [of pristine cognition respectively] generate the realisation of individual and general characteristics, the realisation of that which is created and destroyed and the realisation of that which is neither created nor ceases. The mundane pristine cognition is that of the extremists who manifestly cling to theses of being or non-being and of all ordinary childish persons. The supramundane pristine cognition is that of all pious attendants and self-centred buddhas who openly cling to thoughts which fall into individual and general characteristics. The most supramundane pristine cognition is the analytical insight of the buddhas and bodhisattvas into apparitionless reality. It is seen to be without creation or cessation, for they comprehend the selfless level of the Tathāgata who is free from theses concerning being and non-being.

Furthermore, Mahāmati, that which is characterised as unattached is pristine cognition, and that which is characteristically attached to various objects is consciousness. And again, Mahāmati, that which is characterised as being produced from the triple combination [of subject, object and

their interaction]<sup>171</sup> is consciousness and that characterised as the essential nature which is not so produced is pristine cognition. Then again, Mahāmati, that which is characterised as not to be attained is pristine cognition, since each one's own sublime pristine cognition does not emerge as a perceptual object of realisation, [but is present] in the manner of the moon's reflection in water. On this it must be said [Ch.3, vv.38-9]:

*The mind accrues deeds and so forth,  
But pristine cognition breaks them down;  
By discriminative awareness, too, the apparitionless  
Reality and powers are well obtained.  
It is the mind which objectifies.*

And similarly it is said in the *Sublime Sūtra of Clouds of Precious Jewels* (*Anyaranameghasūtra*, T 231):

This doctrine genuinely transcends all written and spoken words. It genuinely transcends the entire range of expressions. It genuinely transcends all verbalisation. It is free from all conceptual elaboration and free from all that is accepted or rejected. It is free from all opening and closing, and free from all sophistry. It is not to be analysed and is not within the range of sophistry. It genuinely transcends the range of sophistry. It is non-symbolic, free from symbolism and genuinely transcends the range of symbolism. It genuinely transcends the range of the childish. It genuinely transcends the range of all demons, and genuinely transcends the range of all conflicting emotions. It genuinely transcends the range of consciousness. It does, however, lie within the range of the indeterminate, dynamic, quiescent and sublime pristine cognition. The individual, intrinsic awareness of these attributes is a topic which is taintless, uncovered, pure, bountiful, supreme, sacred, perfect, permanent, firm, enduring and imperishable. Whether the tathāgatas have appeared or not, this expanse of reality is exclusively present.

The inconceivability of the ultimate, sublime pristine cognition, extensively revealed by such quotations, does not lie within the path [followed] by the proponents of the Mind Only system. It is admitted that this naturally radiant, intuitive awareness, the perception free from the subject-object dichotomy, is itself the true basis of buddhahood, and it is held that the subject is dependently real. It is therefore difficult for anyone holding consciousness to exist substantially in ultimate reality to understand literally the selflessness of phenomena. In the same vein the *Sūtra of the Descent to Lankā* (Ch.10, vv.359 and 358) also says:

Being mind only, it is apparitionless.  
Being apparitionless, it is uncreated.  
These middle paths

Have been explained by myself, and others too.  
Realising that there is only mind,  
External substances are clarified.  
By reversing the pattern of conceptualising thought,  
That path becomes the middle one.

So it is that this intention of the final transmitted precepts, abiding in the Great Madhyamaka of definitive meaning, is clearly revealed in the commentaries of great bodhisattvas,<sup>172</sup> and in the compositions of the two promulgators who were masters of the greater vehicle [Nāgārjuna and Asaṅga] along with their followers. Although certain masters may well have developed other systems and tenets elsewhere out of necessity, it is difficult to estimate whether they are ordinary or sublime beings. There may well be occasion to speak in the manner [of these masters], owing to various basic intentions once one has reached the level of the sublime ones, but childish persons like ourselves should understand the importance of not accumulating evil deeds which renounce the doctrine, having clung to a single extreme [view].

If this system [of Great Madhyamaka] were also to be described as Mind Only because the three essential natures are taught therein, then the three essential natures are extensively revealed, too, in the intermediate transmitted precepts such as the *Intermediate Mother*:

Maitreya, regard any imaginary form as not substantially existent. One might regard any conceptualised form as substantially existent because thoughts exist substantially, but do not confer independent status upon it. Then you should regard the very form of reality as being disclosed by ultimate reality, for it is neither substantially existent nor not substantially existent.

And again in the *Epitome of the Transcendental Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in Eight Thousand Lines* (*Asṭasāhasrikāpīṇḍīrtha*, T 3809, vv.27-9):

The transcendental perfection of discriminative awareness  
Genuinely depends on three teachings:  
The imaginary, dependent and absolute alone.  
By negative expressions and the like  
All that is imaginary is refuted.  
By apparition and other such similes  
The dependent is correctly revealed.  
Through the fourfold purification<sup>173</sup>  
The absolute is well known.

Other than the transcendental perfection  
Of discriminative awareness,  
The buddhas have no teaching.

Similarly, in the master Nāgāmitra's *Introduction to the Three Bodies* (*Kṣayarayavatāramukha*, T 3890), the three essential natures are also summarised as the causal basis for the attainment of the three buddha-bodies, and in the *Commentary [on the Introduction to the Three Bodies, Kṣayarayavṛtti*, T 3891] composed by the proponent of the Great Madhyamaka, Jñānacandra, the same point is explained. Despite all the definitive structures of the three essential natures which have been set forth in all such texts of Great Madhyamaka, those who propound that they belong not to the Madhyamaka tradition but just to that of Mind Only have not even seen these relevant texts. As the *Sūtra of the Descent to Lankā* (Ch.10, vv.256-7) says:

One who relies on Mind Only,  
Does not discern external objects.  
Relying on the apparitionless,  
Mind Only should be transcended.  
Relying on the genuine object of reference,  
The apparitionless should be transcended.  
A yogin who abides in the apparitionless  
Does not perceive the greater vehicle.

Accordingly, after Mind Only has been provisionally taught and then genuinely transcended, the apparitionless Madhyamaka is taught; and when that too has been transcended, the apparitional Madhyamaka is revealed. If that is not reached, it is said that the profound meaning of the greater vehicle is not perceived. It is, in general, erroneous to describe everything expressed by the word *mind* as the Mind Only doctrine; for there are occasions when the abiding nature free from all extremes, [known] inclusively as the nature of just what is, the genuine goal, the natural nirvāṇa, the expanse of reality, the mind of inner radiance, and the intellect of Samantabhadra, is indicated by the word *mind*. The *Long Mother* says:

Subhūti, that mind is not the mind.  
The nature of that mind is inner radiance.

One should not therefore mistake that which is spoken of as mind-as-such, the inner radiance transcending the mind of samsara and its mental events, for the Mind Only system which does not transcend consciousness. The latter is characterised in the *Sūtra of the Descent to Lankā* (Ch.3, v.32 and Ch.10, v.486) as follows:

Connected with propensities of conceptualising thought,  
The diversity which arises from the mind

And appears externally to mankind,  
Is the mundane Mind Only [view].

There is indeed a distinction between the mundane and the supramundane Mind Only which is identical in meaning to the distinction between consciousness and pristine cognition, as previously explained. Similarly, those terms revealed in the most profound [sūtras] of the greater vehicle which are synonyms of mind should be likewise known. It would indeed be a grave error to equate the tenets of mundane Mind Only with the Great Sage's buddha-body of reality and the mass of its inseparable enlightened attributes, exceeding all the sands of the River Ganges, which are inclusively known as the uncorrupted expanse, the inconceivable expanse, ultimate virtue, unchanging and firm reality, truth in the ultimate abiding nature of reality, the primordially liberated buddha-body, freedom from all conceptual elaborations of the four extremes, and renunciation of the two concepts of selfhood. These are spontaneously present, utterly transcending the phenomena of consciousness.

In general, those whose intelligence is authoritative, without falling into prejudice, do not differentiate between the two modes of empiress [*rang-stong* and *gzhan-stong*] when abiding in the Madhyamaka [view], which is the summit of the four philosophical systems dependent on different traditions of promulgation which have been precisely enumerated. This is clearly understood through the respective treatises of the two great masters, Nāgājuna and Asaṅga, whom the Conqueror had prophetically declared would comment on the intention of the definitive meaning; and in conformity with them, it has been similarly explained by the all-knowing dialectician Rāmākaraśānti, the venerable Bhāryya, the Guru of Suvarṇadvīpa,<sup>174</sup> the lord Atīsa and others. Even the master Haribhadra gives confirmation of it because, when explaining the intention of the *Ornament of Emergent Realisation* [in his *Mirror Commentary*, T 3791], he resolves that this non-dual pristine cognition alone is the genuinely existing essence. He then asserts this resolution to be made through the sequence of [discriminative awareness] produced by reflection, or through the yoga produced by the meditation of a yogin on the third level.<sup>175</sup> And he additionally confirms this by explaining the recognition of just what is to be pristine cognition, and by explaining, in his commentary on the essential buddha-body, that the remaining three buddha-bodies, through which it abides, are reality.

In this way, the empiress directly revealed through the intermediate promulgation is claimed to have the definitive meaning of outright explicit negation in order that it might cut through the egotism that is co-emergent with intellect in corporeal beings; as well as through the view of self, which is newly postulated by the philosophical systems of the eternalistic extremists; and through the subjective, conceptual elabora-

tions of those of our own [Buddhist] philosophical systems which proponents of substantial existence.<sup>176</sup> Since [this intermediate promulgation] reaches that one meditates on emptiness when meditating on nothing at all, and realises just what is when nothing at all is perceived, that [reality] and its significance are indeed perceived. The view of this [promulgation] is therefore in the range of understanding or proper realisation of selflessness.

It is difficult to destroy attachment to superficial characteristics (*mishan-'dzin*).<sup>177</sup> However, in order for the discriminative awareness born of study and thought to refute it, the Prāśāṅgika and Svātantrika reasoning which cuts through conceptual elaboration is sharp. But when the experiences of meditation are established, it is this tradition of the Great Madhyamaka, as taught in the third promulgation, which is supremely profound and vast. This naturally present pristine cognition, the ultimate truth of the naturally pure expanse, is the original abiding nature of all things, and it is the pristine cognition to be experienced by individual intuitive awareness. As it is said in Rahula's *Praise of the Mother* [Jum 'la bṣod-pa, T 1127, attributed to Nāgājuna]:

Homage to the Mother of the conquerors of the three times,  
Who is the ineffable, unthinkable, inexpressible  
Transcendental perfection of discriminative awareness,  
Essential nature uncreated and unceasing as the sky,  
Within range of the individual intuitive awareness  
That is pristine cognition.

And [in the *Sūtra of Extensive Play*, Ch.25, v.1]:

I have found a nectar-like doctrine  
Profound, calm, unelaborate, radiant and uncompounded.

By such quotations, the inconceivable pristine cognition has been illustrated, and through the vision of its nature the ultimate truth is perceived. It is wrong to refer to the mere emptiness, which is nothing at all, as the ultimate truth.

Thus, absolute reality is the pristine cognition of the non-dual nature of just what is. It is indicated by the words buddha-body of reality or essential buddha-body which genuinely transcends the phenomena of consciousness. Yet, also comprised within this doctrine, which is misrepresented as the philosophical system known as the Mind Only, are: the definitive order of the three continua as taught in the way of secret mantra;<sup>178</sup> the definitive order of the ground, path and result of purification and so forth which are adhered to by followers of the greater vehicle in both its causal and resultant aspects, and which include [the terminology] of deities, mantras, embodiments of indestructible reality, supreme bliss, empiress endowed with all supreme aspects, the im-

perishable seminal point which is the fundamental support of body, speech and mind; and also the uncommon definitive order of the ground, path and result.

One should know that the intention of the final promulgation, even though not within the path upheld by the proponents of intrinsic emptiness (*rang-stong-pa*), is without contradiction by examining, one by one, the commentaries of the great lords of the tenth level and the teachings belonging to the tantrapitaka of the way of secret mantra.

Therefore, while the intention of the final transmitted precepts is not the same as that of the mundane Mind Only system in any of its forms, the purposes of the lower phases of the vehicle are gradually gathered within the higher, so that [Mind Only and the like] are not contradictory apart from their vindication of an extreme position. Indeed, one must truly comprehend that the great distinction of the higher over the lower phases is a feature of the precious teaching of the sublime Sugata. Otherwise, after one had been given teaching on suffering, selflessness, impurity and impermanence according to the first promulgation and everything had been established as emptiness according to the intermediate transmitted precepts, if one were then to grasp literally the meaningful intention revealed according to the final transmitted precepts concerning bliss, purity, permanence and true self,<sup>179</sup> without knowing how to accept them with an attitude confident in the four kinds of reliance, one would engage in conceptualising thoughts which would confuse those who require training and wrongly scrutinise the teaching.

With an intention directed toward this, the *Commentary on the Supreme Continuum of the Greater Vehicle* (p.74) says accordingly:

To sum up, there are four kinds of individuals who do not possess the eye which perceives the nucleus of the tathāgata. If you ask who these four are, they are as follows: ordinary persons, pious attendants, self-centred buddhas and bodhisattvas who have newly entered the vehicle. As it has been said,<sup>180</sup> “O Transcendent Lord, this nucleus of the tathāgata is not within the range of those who fall into views concerning worldly existence, who openly delight in deception and whose minds waver towards emptiness.”

This same point can also be proven thoroughly from all the transmitted precepts and treatises, but here one will suffice.

## 5 *The Provisional and Definitive Meaning of the Transmitted Precepts*

[92a.6-95b.6] When these teachings are allocated between the provisional meaning (*drang-don*) and the definitive meaning (*nges-don*), the three successive promulgations of the doctrinal wheel have the same common purpose, that is, to purify the stains covering the single nucleus of the tathāgata. They differ only in the greatness of their means which respectively purify the gross, subtle and very subtle stains that suddenly arise to obscure it. Thus, by teachings such as impermanence, the first promulgation arouses the mind from samsāra and causes it to approach nirvāna. In the second, the three approaches to liberation become an antidote to attachment to superficial characteristics, which include the mundane view of self; and the third intends that the extensive way of the sugatas be comprehended through the topics of that irreversible promulgation. This is extensively mentioned in passages such as the following from the *Sūtra of the Dialogue with King Dhāraṇīśvara* (*Dhāraṇīśvaraparipracchāsutra*, T 147):

Son of the enlightened family, it is in the same way as, for example, a skilled jeweller, who knows well how gems are refined, takes an impure stone from a species of precious gemstones and, after wetting it in dirty salt water, has it cleaned with goats' hair, and similarly after then wetting it in a beverage has it cleaned with a woollen cloth, and afterwards, in the very same way, wets it in a herbal solution and has it cleaned with fine clean linen; when it is well refined, the stainless gem is said to be “a great gemstone of the species beryl”. Likewise, when a sentient being has first been induced to enter the Vinaya by the disturbing topics such as suffering and impermanence, and has then been made to realise the way of the tathāgatas by means of the three approaches to liberation, he subsequently is made to enter the objective range of the tathāgatas by the topics of the irreversible promulgation. To enter in this

way and realise reality is to become an unsurpassed object of offering.

Thus, the three successive [promulgations] of transmitted precepts are classified into those of Provisional meaning and those of definitive meaning. It says in the *Sūtra which Decisively Reveals the Intention (Sandhiśūtrācārastra, T 106)*:

The first promulgation of the doctrinal wheel by the Transcendent Lord, through which the four sublime truths were taught to those who enter the vehicle of the pious attendants, is unsurpassed, circumstantial, of provisional meaning and continues to be a basis for debate. Then, beginning with the Transcendent Lord's teaching that things have no essence, the second promulgation of the doctrinal wheel which teaches emptiness to those who correctly enter the greater vehicle is unsurpassed, circumstantial, of provisional meaning and continues to be a basis for debate. And then, beginning with the Transcendent Lord's teaching that things have no essence, the third promulgation of the wheel of the exceedingly wondrous and amazing doctrine, which is well distinguished, was revealed to those correctly entering the entire vehicle. That promulgation of the doctrinal wheel is unsurpassed, not circumstantial, of definitive meaning and does not become a basis for debate.

The allocation of provisional and definitive meaning is determined in ways such as these.

The intermediate promulgation has accordingly been allocated provisional meaning because in this turning of the doctrinal wheel the enlightened attributes of ultimate reality, such as the powers of the sugatas, are mostly revealed to be empty of their own essence (*rāga-stong*), though they are not actually empty of their own essence, and because it does not teach that these attributes are well distinguished and without inherent contradiction. For such reasons it is said to be unsurpassed and so on. Definitive meaning, on the other hand, is allocated to the third promulgation because [therein] things of relative appearance are empty of their own essence and the ultimate reality is empty of extraneous entities, so that the nature of these [attributes] is qualitatively well distinguished and then revealed.

If there are those who say that definitive meaning is contained in the intermediate promulgation because it teaches the transcendental perfection of discriminative awareness, but that the final promulgation has an intention of provisional meaning because it teaches the contrary, then they have not made an accurate examination. The attributes, such as uncreated and unceasing original quiescence, which are terms relating

to the transcendental perfection of discriminative awareness, are most extensively revealed in the final promulgation and very profoundly revealed in the vehicle of indestructible reality.

However, there is no distinction in the essence of the transcendental perfection of discriminative awareness, which is said to be distinguished as surpassed or unsurpassed depending on whether it is unclearly, clearly or very clearly revealed; for all the limitless [attributes] which are revealed by names such as the nucleus of the sugata, the expanse of reality, the mind of inner radiance, the naturally pure enlightened family, the genuine goal and the emptiness which is the essential nature devoid of substantiality, are identical in the naturally present, non-dual pristine cognition. This same [pristine cognition] is the transcendental perfection of discriminative awareness. Therefore the master Dignāga [in his *Epitome of the Transcendental Perfection of Discriminative Awareness*, v.1] has said:

Being the transcendental perfection of  
Discriminative awareness,  
This non-dual pristine cognition is the Tathāgata.

Since it possesses the meaning  
Which is to be accomplished,  
This term applies to the central texts and path.<sup>181</sup>

The final transmitted precepts are conclusively proven to be the definitive meaning by all [scriptural] transmissions and [logical] reasoning. The Conqueror himself made the classification of provisional and definitive meaning, and moreover, in his own words said:

A monk who is called Asaṅga  
Learned in the meaning of these treatises,  
Will differentiate in many categories  
The sutras of provisional and definitive meaning.

The final [transmitted precepts] were accordingly allocated conclusive definitive meaning by this sublime [Asaṅga], whom the Conqueror had prophetically declared would differentiate the provisional and definitive meanings.

There are, on the other hand, no authoritative passages declaring the intermediate [transmitted precepts] to have definitive meaning and the final [transmitted precepts] provisional meaning. Indeed, even if the proponents of the Vīñānavāda could have composed these final transmitted precepts as such, they would have mistaken the correct sequence revealed by the above simile of the refinement of gemstones and by other similes which refer to the medical treatment of ill-health and the study of letters.<sup>182</sup> There would be no need even for the definitive order made by the Conqueror himself and the sublime [Asaṅga], and there would be limitless other such faults. In addition, after first teaching

the provisional meaning and intermediately the definitive meaning to those who require training, the provisional meaning would then be repeated, so that one would be obliged to consider just what is the Buddha's intention *vñ&-ð-vis* the teaching. It should be known that by proceeding in this way, there would be all kinds of unbearable evils, such as allocating the conclusive definitive meaning to philosophical systems which propound substantial existence, slandering the buddhas and great bodhisattvas as holders of a relative teaching, and abandoning this doctrine of the nucleus.

Furthermore, since the three vehicles have reference to the definitive meaning gathered in the final promulgation, the definitive meaning is conclusively proven. This is extensively mentioned in passages such as the following from the *Sûra of the Irreversible Wheel (Avavarracakra-sûra, T 240):*

Then, in reverence to the Transcendent Lord, the great bodhisattva Madhurâringhośa arose from his louts posture and asked, "Transcendent Lord, what is the dimension of this world system of Patient Endurance?"

He replied, "Son of the enlightened family, in the western direction of this world system there is a world system which outnumbers the sands of the River Ganges."

Then he asked, "Transcendent Lord, in that world system which Transcendent Lord teaches the doctrine?"

"He is called the Tathâgata Śâkyamuni."

"What manner of doctrine does he teach?"  
"He begins from the three vehicles."

"What are the three vehicles?"

"He reveals the doctrine beginning with the three vehicles, which are the vehicle of the pious attendants, the vehicle of the self-centred buddhas and the greater vehicle."

"Do these conform to the doctrine revealed by the Transcendent Lord Buddha?"

"Son of the enlightened family, the doctrines revealed by the [different] Transcendent Lord Buddhas do conform."

"Just in what respect do the doctrines revealed by the Transcendent Lord Buddhas conform?"

And he replied, "The doctrines revealed by the Transcendent Lord Buddhas conform to the irreversible promulgation."

## 6 *The Enlightened or Buddha Family*

[95b.6-106b.4] When this buddha family of the unsurpassed greater vehicle is classified, the *Supreme Continuum of the Greater Vehicle* (Ch.1, v.149) says:

One should know this enlightened family to be twofold:

One similar to treasure and the other to a fruit tree.

The [first] is that which naturally abides from the beginning,

And the [second] is supreme through having been genuinely nurtured.

So there is both an enlightened family which naturally abides and an enlightened family which is nurtured. Concerning the former, the *Sûtra of Final Nirvâna* says:

Son of the enlightened family, the reality of the mind which is natural, inner radiance, and naturally without essence is not differentiated by the naturally pure mind as it appears, decorated with the enlightened attributes of blazing major and minor marks, but it is differentiated by its nature of appearance and emptiness.<sup>183</sup>

Therefore, when this enlightened family is classified, it is threefold owing to its function of being the ground in which the culminating three buddha-bodies of the result arise. It consists of [firstly] the enlightened family in which reality naturally abides, which resembles an image made of precious gems in that it is the spontaneously present causal basis or ground separating (*bral-r̥gn*) the essential buddha-body (*sâdhârvikâkâya*) or the uncorrupted expanse [from obscuration]; [secondly] the enlightened family in which the apparition of this reality naturally abides, which resembles a universal emperor in that it is the causal basis separating the buddha-body of perfect rapture from obscuration; and [thirdly] its appariotional reflection, which resembles a golden image in that it is the causal basis separating the emanational

# INTRODUCTION TO THE BUDDHIST TANTRIC SYSTEMS

*Homage to the guides!*

I bow to the feet of the most excellent guide (*guru*),  
Who, possessed of the eye of vastest knowledge,  
Envisions all states of the far reaching knowable,  
Who holds the ocean of the copious well expressed teachings.  
His Ganges River of well expressed teachings  
Has poured down upon the land of candidates;  
With the tip of the hair which is my intellect,  
I shall pick up water drops and write to cure forgetfulness.

Translated From

MIKHAS GRUB RJE'S

*Rgyud sde spyihi nam par gzag pa rgyas par brjod*

With Original Text and Annotation

## I. HOW THE TEACHER BHAGAVAT BECAME ABHISAMBUDDHA

Among the fundamentals of the different schools of the upper and lower vehicles (*mahāyāna* and *hinayāna*) are the fundamentals of the method by which the Teacher Bhagavat became a Manifest Complete Buddha (Abhisambuddha).

### A. POSITION OF THE ŚRĀVAKAS

According to the schools of both divisions of the Śrāvakas,<sup>1</sup> our Teacher produced the Thought of Enlightenment (*bodhicittotpādika*) in the presence of the great former Tathāgata Sākyamuni,<sup>2</sup> and at that time entered the path of equipment,<sup>3</sup> thus starting to collect the equipment (*sambhāra*) of three incalculable aeons (*asamkhyeya-kalpa*).

Then, when the Tathāgata Ratnāśikhin appeared in the world, he had

<sup>1</sup>All these paths are discussed by E. Obermiller, "The Doctrine of Prajñā-pāramitā as exposed in the Abhisamayālankāra of Maitreya", *Acta Orientalia*, XI (1932), pp. 14, f.

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completed the first incalculable aeon. When the Tathāgata Dipatikara appeared in the world, he had completed the second. When the Tathāgata Vipasyin appeared in the world, he had completed the third.

Then, it is maintained, for one hundred aeons (*kalpa*) he collected the equipment that was the cause of his thirty-two characteristics (*lakṣaṇa*) and eighty minor marks (*anyuvajana*)<sup>4</sup> and finally was born as Prince Siddhārtha, son of King Śuddhodana.

Vipasyin, Dipatikara, and Ratnāśikhin

[Each] appeared at the end of [one of]  
the three incalculable aeons;

The first [Tathāgata he honored] was Śākyamuni.<sup>5</sup>

It is maintained that between the time when he had finished collecting equipment for three incalculable aeons and the time of subduing Māra at dusk,<sup>6</sup> he was characterized as a traveller with the equipment of a Bodhisattva who is an ordinary person (*prthag-jana*).

At the age of thirty-five, in the dusk of the fifteenth day of Vaisākha,<sup>7</sup> when the moon was full, he subdued Māra. Midnight was the time of equipoise (*samāpatti*), and he [then] made manifest the path of training, the path of vision, and the path of intense contemplation. At the very first appearance of dawn, he made manifest the path beyond training and became manifestly completely enlightened (*abhisambuddha*).

Then, after forty-nine days, he set in motion the Wheel of the Law at Vārāṇasi (the modern Benares). That is the Wheel of the Law of the Four (Noble) Truths. They do not maintain that he set in motion any other Wheel of the Law. Nor do they maintain the promulgation of the Great Vehicle (*mahāyāna*).

Then, they maintain, when he entered Nirvāṇa at the age of eighty, his knowledge (*vidyā*) was cut off, just as a lamp is extinguished.

They do not maintain the fundamental of ten stages (*dasa-bhūmi*)<sup>8</sup> in the phase of the path. Nor do they maintain the body of complete enjoyment (*sambhogā-kāya*) in the phase of the fruit [of the path]. Nor,

Vaisākha: the *sukla-pakṣa* may have constituted the second half of the lunar month; the *kṛṣṇa-pakṣa*, or decreasing phases, the first half.

<sup>4</sup> For the ten stages, see Dayal, *The Bodhisattva Doctrine*, Chap. VI. The list of the *Datābhūmikar-sutra* (ed. by J. Rander) is as follows: (1) The Joyful (pramuditā), (2) The Pure (vimalā), (3) The Luminous (prabhākari), (4) The Radiant (arcīsmati), (5) The Hard to Conquer (studrjavā), (6) The Turned-Towards (abhimukhi), (7) The Far-Reaching (dirangamā), (8) The Immovable (acāla), (9) The Good Mind (sādhumati), (10) The Doctrine-Cloud (dharma-meghā). As will be shown soon by Mīkha's grub's discussion of the Pāramitā school, a basic division of these stages is into the first seven and the last three. While on the last three, the Bodhisattva is sometimes called "non-regressing" (*avavartika*).

furthermore, do they maintain the designation "best appariitional body" (\**parama-nirmāṇa-kāya*) for either the Dharma-kāya or the formal body (*rūpa-kāya*).

The Vaibhāṣika maintains that because Prince Siddhārtha's body is the body of an ordinary person, it is the truth of suffering (*duḥkha-saṃya*) cast by means of action (*karma*) and corruption (*klesa*); and that even at the time of his becoming a Buddha, the truth of suffering was unaltered in the continuum of that body. For this reason, it maintains that the formal body is not the Buddha. The Saṃvatānika say that [argument] is refuted by the fact that [in such a case] there is no immediate retribution (*āmanaryā*) for making the Tathāgata's body bleed with an evil intention.

#### B. POSITION OF THE MAHĀYĀNA

In the Mahāyāna, there are the Pāramitā [school] and the Mantra [school].

##### 1. TEACHING OF THE PĀRAMITĀ SCHOOL

He completed the first incalculable aeon while on the path of equipment and the path of training. He completed the second one between the first and seventh stages. He completed the third incalculable aeon while on the three stages, the eighth, ninth, and tenth.

At the time of the last existence (*carama-bhavika*), the Buddhas of all the ten directions in the Akanistha heaven [called] Ghanavyūha ('a dense array') conferred on him the initiation (*abhiṣeka*) of great light. The final knowledge at the completion of the tenth stage is called "knowledge at end of stream" (*rgyun mithāhi ye śes*) as well as "adaman-time *samādhi*" (*vajropana-samādhi*). When the second instant (*ksama*) [of realization] arose in his stream of consciousness (*samitāna*), he obtained both the Dharma-kāya and the Saṃbhoga-kāya, thus being a Manifest Complete Buddha.

The Saṃbhoga-kāya has five certainties:

a. *Certainty of place*. It does not proceed to any place outside the Akanistha heaven.

b. *Certainty of doctrine*. It proclaims only the Mahāyāna doctrine (*dharma*), not the Hinayāna doctrine.

c. *Certainty of form*. It does not appear in any shape other than that of a body adorned with the (32) characteristics and (80) minor marks.

d. *Certainty of retinue*. Its retinue includes only Bodhisattvas of the tenth stage, not ordinary persons and the like.

e. *Certainty of time.* As long as the cycle of life (*samsāra*) is not depleted [of suffering beings], it does not demonstrate the method of passing over into Nirvāṇa.

Where is that Akanīṣṭha heaven located? The last outpost of abodes of the gods is the Akanīṣṭha heaven, an abode of the pure gods (*suddhā-vāśi*). Beyond it is the Akanīṣṭha heaven that is the Buddha field called Ghanayyūha. The *sūtra* says:<sup>9</sup>

Rejecting the pure abodes, he is rightly and completely awakened in the ecstatic abode of Akanīṣṭha;  
And, being a full Buddha there, his single apparition (*nirmita*) becomes a Buddha here.

The Sambhogakāya takes residence in Akanīṣṭha, and the Nirmāṇakāya demonstrates the method of the twelve acts in the world of men. In the Buddha field (*buddhakṣetra*) of Śākyamuni, which is the world-systems of tribulation (*sahā-loka-dhātu*), there are 100 myriads of world-systems of four continents, hence 100 myriads of Indian continent (*jambudvīpa*), in which the method of the twelve acts of the victor Śākyamuni is simultaneously demonstrated 100 myriads of times. Thus, the descent from the place of Tuṣita is demonstrated 100 myriads of times simultaneously. Likewise, there are 100 myriads of father King Śuddhodana and 100 myriads of beautiful mother Queen Māyā, and the method of rebirth of their son Prince Siddhārtha is demonstrated simultaneously 100 myriads of times. Likewise the ways of making sport as a youth, enjoyment of the harem women, departure from home, arduous discipline, passage to the vicinity of the tree of illumination, subduing of Māra, the state of being Manifestly Completely Enlightened, setting in motion of the Wheel of the Law, and the passing into Nirvāṇa, are simultaneously demonstrated 100 myriads of times.<sup>10</sup>

In this field the method of passing into Nirvāṇa is demonstrated 100 myriads of times; and in other fields, somewhere there is rebirth, somewhere the attaining of Buddhahood, somewhere the setting in motion

of the Wheel, and so on, the methods being demonstrated simultaneously 100 myriads of times. And they are demonstrated as long as the cycle of life is not depleted [of suffering beings].

Furthermore, along the same lines, it is said in the *Mahāyānottaratantra* (Toh. 4024):<sup>11</sup>

The Knower of the World with great compassion  
Surveys the whole world;

And without stirring from his Dharma-kāya,  
With his Nirmāṇa, by means of diverse forms,

Displays in the unclean fields,

For the duration of the world's existence,  
Origination in illustrious lives:

- (1) The descent from Tuṣita; (2) Entrance into the womb;
- (3) Rebirth; (4) Skill in worldly arts;
- (5) Enjoyment of the harem women; (6) Departure from home;
- (7) Arduous discipline; (8) Passage to the precincts of Illumination;
- (9) Defeat of the Māra host; (10) Complete Illumination;
- (11) The Wheel of the Law; (12) Departure into Nirvāṇa.

## 2. TEACHING OF THE MANTRA SCHOOL<sup>12</sup>

There is no discrepancy between the teaching of both the Kriyā and Caryā [Tantras] and that of the Pāramitā school concerning the method of becoming a Buddha.

### a. *Teaching of the Yoga school*

In the schools of the Yoga and Anuttara [Tantras], the former sets it forth in two works, the fundamental tantra *Tattvasaṃgraha* (Toh. 479), and the explanatory tantra *Vajrasékhara* (Toh. 480). They have primary commentaries by three men who are famed in India as being learned in Yoga, namely, Śākyamitra, Buddhaguhya, and Ānandagarbha.<sup>13</sup>

*sthavira Ānanda*; Devendra Śatākratu (i.e. Indra), the *sthavira Devadatta*; Mahāvairocana became Samyaksam Buddhā Śrījña Śākyamuni" (... rnal hbyor chen pohi rgyud sgron gsal du drañs pa las / hdi ita ste / hjan dpal ni / rgyal po chen po zas gtsai mar gyur to / hijig rten dban phiyug ni / lha mo / chen mo seyu hphrul du gyur to / dpal lha mo ni / grags hdzin no / rdo rje sems dpah ni / sgra gean zin to / srib pa thams cad sel ba ni / sa-rihi-buho / kun tu bzañ po ni / gnas brtan kun dgāñ bor gyur to / lhañi oban po bryga byin ni / gnas brtan lha sbiyin no / nnam par snan mdzad chen po ni / yan dag par rdzogs pahi sans rgyas dpal rgyal ba sākya thub par gyur to / zéz gsuris so).

to the translation of their works into Tibetan (in the second period of translation of Buddhist texts). Buddhaguhya belongs to the middle eighth century, A. D. This is shown by his letter (Toh. 4194) dispatched to the Tibetan King Khri sroñ Idehu bisan, whose reign began 755 A.D. Buddhaguhya was a contemporary of Padmasaṅbhava and Śāntarakṣita, and furthermore worked together with the Tibetan translators. His fundamental commentary on the *Tattvasaṃgraha* is the *Tantrarthāvādā* (Toh. 2501). This is relatively brief and is greatly expanded in the *Vyākhyāna* (Toh. 2502) by Padmavajrā, who may well have been a personal disciple of Buddhaguhya.

## (1) POSITION OF THE ŚĀKYAMITRA AND BUDDHAGUHYA

The school of the first two maintains that our teacher the Bhagavat had the characteristics of a Bodhisattva of the tenth stage from the time he was born as a son to King Śuddhodana until the time of practising austeries at the bank of the Nairājanā River.

After spending six years there in practising austeries, he was equised in what is called “the great [part] of the great Fourth Meditation” (*dhyāna*), the “unstirring *samādhi*” (*ānījyo-nāma-samādhi*), and the “Space-filling *samādhi*” (*āśpharanatka-samādhi*).

At that time, the Buddhas of all the ten directions assembled, aroused him from that *samādhi* by snapping their fingers, and said to him, “You cannot become a Manifest Complete Buddha by this *samādhi* alone.” “Then how shall I proceed”, he implored them. They guided him to the Akanīṣṭha heaven. Moreover, while his maturation body (*vipūka-kāya*) stayed on the bank of the same Nairājanā River, the mental body (*manomaya-kāya*)<sup>14</sup> of the Bodhisattva Sarvārthaśiddha proceeded to the Akanīṣṭha heaven.

After the Buddhas of the ten directions had given him garment initiation (*yastra-abhiṣeka*) and diadem initiation (*mukuta-abhiṣeka*), they bade him enter the intense contemplation in sequence of the five Abhisambodhi [*infrā*]. After completing the five Abhisambodhi, he became a Manifest Complete Buddha as Mahāvairocana, the Sambhoga-kāya.

Having become a Buddha, he performed the four kinds of marvel (*prārahārya*).<sup>15</sup> He proceeded to the summit of Mt. Sumeru and pronounced the Yoga Tantras. Thereupon, he proceeded to the world of men and re-entered his maturation body on the bank of the Nairājanā. Then he arose, defeated Māra, and taught the methods of Manifest Complete Buddhahood, and so forth. So they claim.

## (2) POSITION OF ĀNANDAGARBHA

After collecting the equipment for three incalculable aeons, at the time when he was a Bodhisattva of the tenth stage in his last life, he became equipoised in the Akanīṣṭha heaven in the “Space-filling *samādhi*”.

At that time, the Buddhas of all the ten direction assembled, aroused him from that *samādhi* by snapping their fingers, and said to him, “You cannot become a Manifest Complete Buddha by this *samādhi* alone.” “Then how shall I do it?” he implored them. All the Buddhas of the ten directions conferred upon him the initiation of the diadem and bade

him enter the intense contemplation in sequence of the five Abhisambodhi. Upon completing them, he became a Buddha as Mahāvairocana, the Sambhoga-kāya.

Having become a Buddha, he performed the four kinds of marvel. He proceeded to the summit of Mt. Sumeru and pronounced the Yoga Tantras. Thereupon, he was born in the world of men as the son of King Śuddhodana, and displayed the method of the twelve acts. So his school maintains.

## (3) THE FIVE ABHISAMBUDDHI

There are five Abhisambodhi brought about by dint of the magical exploits (*yikuryāṇa*) of the teacher who appeared first, and there are the five Abhisambodhi brought about by dint of the (laid-down) procedure (*anuṣṭhāna*)<sup>16</sup> for the candidates (*vimeya*) who enter later.

*The first Abhisambodhi*

Thus, all the Buddhas of the ten directions, after conferring upon the Bodhisattva Sarvārthaśiddha the initiation of the diadem, bade him contemplate intensely the meaning of the *mantra*, “*cittaprativedham karoni*” (“I perform thought penetration”). Having done so, in equipoise (*samāpatti*) he comprehended directly the intrinsic purity (*svabhāvivisuddhi*) of the sixteen kinds of voidness (*śūnyatā*)<sup>17</sup> of his own supreme state of thought (*citta-dharmatā*). In a subsequent attainment upon emerging from that [equipoise], he saw directly the intrinsic purity of his own supreme state of thought in the shape of a moon disk in his own heart. Thereby he attained the “mirror-like knowledge” (*adarśa-jñāna*)<sup>18</sup> which is the essence of Akṣobhya. The name of this Abhisambodhi is Revelation-Enlightenment resulting from Discrimination (*pratyavetkṣaṇā*).

In addition, there is the procedure for the candidates who enter later. Muttering, “*citta-pratividhāḥ karoni*”, they contemplate intensely the intrinsic purity of the sixteen kinds of voidness of their own supreme

<sup>14</sup> Lwa-ba-pa in his *Cakrasambararamḍalavidhi* (Tsh. 1444), mentions in a passage beginning Derge Tg., Rgyud, Wa, 265b-3: “Through the transmutation (*parāṛitī*) of the ‘store consciousness’ basis (*ālayavijñāna-āśraya*), there is the ‘mirror-like knowledge’ (*adarśa-jñāna*)” (kun gzí rnam par ses pa gnas gyur nas me löt ltu buhi ye ses so).

state of thought under the symbols of the sixteen vowels,<sup>19</sup> and the transformation of the latter into the shape of a moon disk in their own hearts.

#### *The second Abhisambodhi*

Thereupon, the Buddhas of the ten directions bade Sarvārthaśiddha contemplate intensely the meaning of the *mantra*, “*Om̄ bodhicittam u(v)pādayāmī*” (“Om̄, I generate the thought of enlightenment”). Having done so, in equipoise he comprehended directly the freedom from adventitious defilement in the voidness of his own supreme state of thought. In a subsequent attainment he saw directly that freedom from adventitious defilement in the voidness of his own supreme state of thought in the form of a completely-full moon disk in his own heart. Thereby he attained the “equality knowledge” (*samatā-jñāna*) which is the essence of Rainasam̄bhava. The name of this Abhisambodhi is “Revelation Enlightenment resulting from the resolve of highest enlightenment (*paramabodhicittotpāda*)”.

In addition, there is the procedure for the candidates who enter later. Muttering, “*Om̄ bodhicittam u(t)pn̄dayāmī*”, they contemplate intensely the freedom from adventitious defilement in the voidness of their own supreme state of thought under the symbols of the consonants,<sup>20</sup> and the transformation of the latter into the shape of a completely-full moon disk in their own hearts.

#### *The third Abhisambodhi*

Thereupon, all the Buddhas bade him contemplate intensely the meaning of the *mantra*, “*tis̄ha vajra*” (“Stand up, O thunderbolt!”). Having done so, he saw directly that Samantabhadra<sup>21</sup> of the former thought of enlightenment under the shape of an upright five-pronged white thunderbolt in his own heart. Thereby he attained the “discriminative knowledge” (*pratyavetyāna-jñāna*) which is the essence of Amitābha. The name of this Abhisambodhi is “Revelation-Enlightenment resulting from the firm thunderbolt (*dh̄ha-vajra*)”.

In addition, there is the procedure for the candidates who enter later. Muttering, “*tis̄ha vajra*”, they contemplate intensely a five-pronged, white thunderbolt in their own hearts.

At this point the meaning of the expression “first thunderbolt” (*ādi-vajra*) should be explained. “First” means “original” (T. *thog ma*); and the meaning of “original” is that a previously awakened-not-expanded

one (\**buddha-cvibuddha*) becomes newly awakened-expanded (\**buddha-vibuddha*). Thus, the five-pronged, white thunderbolt, seen in one's own heart at the time of contemplating intensely the five Abhisambodhi in sequence, is called “first thunderbolt” (*ādi-vajra*). Why are there exactly five prongs? At the time one becomes a complete Buddha each Abhisambodhi is contemplated intensely in the sequence of the five Abhisambodhi. Thus each of the five knowledges is manifested directly, and the five prongs symbolize them.

#### *The fourth Abhisambodhi*

Thereupon, all the Buddhas of the ten directions bestowed upon the Bodhisattva Sarvārthaśiddha the initiation of the name (*nāma-abhiṣeka*). Having removed the name Sarvārthaśiddha, they gave in exchange the name Bodhisattva Vajradhātu. Then they bade him contemplate intensely the meaning of the *mantra*, “*vajratmaka 'ham'*” (“I consist of thunderbolt”). When he had done so, all the elements of the thunderbolts of body, of speech, and of mind (*kāya-vajra-dhātu*, *vāg-vajra-dhātu*, and *citta-vajra-dhātu*) of all the Tathāgatas of the ten directions entered in direct view into the five-pronged, white thunderbolt of his own heart; and he saw directly that very thunderbolt as made of the finest atoms of the thunderbolts of all the Tathāgatas. Thereby he attained the “knowledge of the procedure of duty” (*kṛtyānumūlhanā-jñāna*), which is the essence of Amoghśiddhi. The name of this Abhisambodhi is “Revelation-Enlightenment resulting from thunderbolt composition” (*vajratmaka*).

In addition, there is the procedure for the candidates who enter later. Muttering, “*vajratmaka 'ham'*” they contemplate intensely that beams of light emanate in all the ten directions from that five-pronged, white thunderbolt in their own hearts, with the result that the elements of the thunderbolts of body, of speech, and of mind of all the Tathāgatas enter the five-pronged, white thunderbolt of their own hearts.

#### *The fifth Abhisambodhi*

Thereupon, all the Buddhas of the ten directions bade the Bodhisattva Vajradhātu contemplate intensely the meaning of the *mantra*, “*Om̄ yathā sarvātīthāgātā tathā 'ham'*” (“Om̄, like all the ‘Thus-come’, so am I”). When he had done so, because of the transformation of the thunderbolt and moon in his own heart, Mahāvairocana, the Sam̄bhogakāya, came

into direct view, adorned with the thirty-two characteristics and the eighty minor marks. [Bo. Vajradhātu] became a Manifest Complete Buddha. Thereby he attained the “Dharma-realm knowledge” (*dharma-dhātu-jñāna*) which is the essence of Vairocana.<sup>22</sup> The name of this Abhisambodhi is “Revelation-Enlightenment resulting from equality with all the Tathāgatas (*sarvatahagata-samadā*)”.

In addition, there is the procedure for the candidates who enter later. Muttering, “*Om yathā sarvatahagatās tathā ‘ham’*”, they contemplate intensely the transformation into the body of Mahāvairocana of the thunderbolt and the moon in their own hearts.

After becoming a full Buddha, he performed the four kinds of marvel. His Sambhogakāya remained in the Akanistha heaven. By means of the Nirmanakaya he performed various acts. For example, with the single apparition (*nirmita*) of a four-faced Vairocana, he proceeded to the summit of Mt. Sumera and recited the fundamental Yoga Tantra, *Tatvasamgraha* (Toh. 479). Then he appeared in the world of men and displayed the methods of defeating Māra, the Manifest Complete Buddhahood, and so forth.

### b. Teaching of the Anuttara school

The method by which the Teacher Bhagavat became a Buddha, according to the Anuttara school, is not discussed in such Tantras as the *Kālacakra* (Toh. 362), *Hevajra* (Toh. 417-418), and the *Śamvara* (Toh. 368). The explanation according to the cycle of *Samāja* (Toh. 442 and 443) is given by both the Ārya school and the Jñānapāda school. The explanation in the *Caryāneśapakṣapradipa* (Toh. 1803) by Āryadeva is followed by the Ārya school; and that found in the larger of the two *Mañjuśri-mukhā-gama*, the larger (Toh. 1853) and the smaller (Toh. 1854), is followed by the Jñānapāda school. There is no divergences between the two schools.

Both the Pāramitā vehicle and all four Tantra divisions of the Mantra vehicle set forth two possibilities for the Bodhisattva dwelling on the tenth stage, namely, he is “bound to one more birth” (*ekajātpratibaddha*) or is “in his last existence” (*carama-bharika*). It is certain that “the Bodhisattva of the tenth stage who is bound to one more birth” means a tenth-stage Bodhisattva who has decided to become a full Buddha in his next life, and that “the one in the last existence” means a tenth-stage Bodhisattva who has decided to become a full Buddha in that life. The Teacher Bhagavat Śākyamuni, taking recourse to the Pāramitā

vehicle collected the equipment for three incalculable aeons, then became equipoised in the Space-filling *saṃādhi* as a Bodhisattva of the tenth stage in the last existence. At that time, the Buddhas of all the ten directions assembled, aroused him from that *saṃādhi* by snapping their fingers, and said to him, “You cannot become a Manifest Complete Buddha by this *saṃādhi* alone.” “Then, how shall I do it?” he implored them. Thereupon all the Buddhas of the ten directions summoned the daughter of the gods Tilottama<sup>23</sup> and bestowed concretely the third initiation, the Insight-Knowledge Initiation (*prajñā-jñāna-abhisēka*). After that they revealed the steps of Abhisambodhi<sup>24</sup> and bade him contemplate them. At midnight he successively dissolved the three voids [into one another],<sup>25</sup> and the universal void (*sarvāśūnya*), which is the Clear Light of the [Absolute] Object (\**arthā-prabhāsvara*), came into direct view. He emerged from that [Clear Light] in the pure illusory body,<sup>26</sup> and all the Buddhas bestowed upon him the fourth initiation and bade him perform the acts [of a Buddha]. As a consequence, at the initial appearance of dawn, he shed, by means of the adamantine *saṃādhi* (*vijropama-saṃādhi*), the subtlest obscurations of the knowable (*jñeyā-varana*). Thus he attained the rank of Vajradhara, the union beyond learning (*asākṣa-yuganādha*), and became a Manifest Complete Buddha.

<sup>22</sup> “the procedure for the candidates who enter later”. On f. 365a-6, he quotes the *Vārapañjīrā* (Toh. 419) for the terminology of dividing up the “steps of production” into a *yoga* of six parts (*saṅkāra-yoga*); and his subsequent quotations and commentary show that the six parts are done by way of the six progenitors (*kula*), as follows: (1) Vairocana – generation of the palace, (2) Vajrasambhava – initiation, (3) Akṣobhya – initiation, (4) Amoghasiddhi – offerings, (5) Ratnasambhava – praises, (6) Amitābha – enjoyment of the ambrosia. In this classification, the five *abhisambodhis* pertain to No. 2, attraction of the residents. They are required to cause the “knowledge being(s)” (*jñāna-sattra*) to enter the mediator. In Tsōn-kha-pa’s discussion of the five *abhisambodhis*, beginning *Shages rim*, f. 379b-7, it is brought out that the moon of the second *abhisambodhi* differs from that of the first one in being red. This red moon is also called the “second moon”.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Alex Wayman, “Notes on the Sanskrit term *jñāna*”, *JAS*, Vol. 75, No. 4 (Oct.-Dec., 1955), p. 263; n. 40 for the dissolution of the voids into one another. But at that point the terminology is presented by *citta* being drawn into *caitta*, and the latter being drawn into *avijñā*. For the same process, using the terminology of the voids, see *ibid.*, pp. 259-60, where it is shown that void (*śūnya*) is a synonym of *citta*, further void (*atisūnya*) a synonym of *caitta*, and great void (*mahāśūnya*) a synonym of *avijñā*.

<sup>24</sup> Tsōn-kha-pa shows in the *Shages rim* (410b-2, 3, 4) by quotation from the *Muktīlīkā* (Toh. 1859) of Buddhajñāna and commentary that the body developed by the “steps of production” is the *mantra-body* (*śūng kyi sku*), while the one developed by the “steps of completion” is the knowledge-body (*ye śes sku*). The latter body, in turn, is of two kinds, (also) knowledge-body (*ye śes sku*) and pure-body (*nam par dag paḥi sku*). Of these last two, the knowledge-body is the impure illusory body; and the pure-body is that knowledge-body purified in the Clear Light.

It has been said, "That account [regarding the Teacher Bhagavat] mentions only an exceptional case of the rite because it confers the higher initiations without [previously] conferring the initiation of the flask, and because there is contemplation of the steps of completion (*nispama-krama*) without [previous] contemplation of the steps of production (*utpatti-krama*); but does not mention the other [requirements]."<sup>27</sup>

Thereupon, Mahāvajradhara, the Sambhoga-kāya, took abode in the Akaniṣṭha heaven, and his Nirmāṇa-kāya displayed the method of the twelve acts in the world of men. He was born the son of King Śuddhodana, and for six years practised severe asceticism on the bank of the River Nairāṭjanā. Apart from one Jujube fruit, one sesame seed, one grain of rice, he partook of no solid food. He equipoised himself in the space-filling *samādhi*. At that time all the Buddhas of the ten directions assembled and by the sound of snapping fingers aroused him from that *samādhi*. "You will not be able to vanquish Māra by those ascetic practices and mortified body; this *samādhi* alone will not suffice for you to eliminate the subtlest obscurations of the knowable." Thereupon, he partook of some substantial food and proceeded to the Bodhi-tree. All the Buddhas summoned the daughter of the gods Tilottamā and revealed the method of concrete initiation into the third, the Insight-Knowledge Initiation. Thereupon, they revealed the (five) steps of Revelation-Enlightenment and bade him enter their intense contemplation. When he had done so, at midnight they taught the method by which the universal void, which is the Clear Light of the [Absolute] Object, came into direct view after the successive dissolution of the three voids [into one another]. He emerged from that [Clear Light] in his pure illusory body, and all the Buddhas bestowed upon him the fourth initiation and bade him perform the acts [of a Buddha]. At the first appearance of dawn, by the means of the adamantine *saṃādhi*, he eliminated the subtlest obscurations of the knowable and attained the union beyond learning (*asaiksa-yuganaddha*). Thus he showed the method of Manifest Complete Buddhahood.

To be sure, it is sufficient to show only the method of [achieving] Buddhahood. Why is there any necessity to show the methods of [the higher] initiations, such as the third and the fourth? The point is that although one may be able to reach the tenth stage solely along the Pāramitā path, to become finally a complete Buddha, it is certainly necessary for one to enter the incomparable (*anuttara*) Mantra path. Otherwise it is impossible to become a complete Buddha.

## CHAPTER TWO

### II. THE METHOD OF SETTING THE WHEEL OF THE LAW INTO MOTION

It is divided into two sections: A, the method of setting the wheel of the law of the *Pāramitā-yāna* into motion; B, the method of setting the wheel of the law of the *Mantra-yāna* into motion.

#### A. THE METHOD OF SETTING THE WHEEL OF THE LAW OF THE PĀRAMITĀ-YĀNA INTO MOTION

After the Bhagavat had exhibited the method of [attaining] Manifest Complete Buddhahood at the Bodhi-tree, he did not set the wheel of the law into motion for seven times seven days. Then from Rājagrha in Magadha in the middle country (*Madhyadesa*) he proceeded north to Vārāṇasi across the Ganges to the Deer Park Rśipatana. Why is the place called Rśipatana? Formerly when the time approached for the Buddha Kāśyapa to appear in the world, there lived on that hill five hundred Pratyekabuddhas. They learned from a message given them by the devas that the Buddha was to manifest himself. By their magical power they soared up to the sky and equipoised themselves in the element of fire (*tejo-dhātu*). The fire that issued from their own bodies burned their material bodies, and the ashes fell to the earth. It was said, "The Rśis have fallen", and for this reason the place is called Rśipatana (the falling of the Rśis). But why is it called the Deer Park (Mṛgadāva)? Once Brahmādatta, King of Vārāṇasi, issued an order prohibiting the killing of the deer living on this hill. As a result, many deer, from other places as well, flocked there, gaining security. Therefore, it was called "Deer Park".

At that place were staying the five great peregrinators (*parivrajaka*) known as "the happy band of five" (*pāñcaka-bhadravargiya*), *āñśmat* Ājñātakauṇḍinya, *āyusmat* Aśvajit, Vāspa, Mahānāma, and Bhadrika.

When they saw the Bhagavat approaching from afar, they made this agreement (*kriyābandham akāśuh*, LV 407,18): “Because Āyusmat Gautama is coming hither, after having broken off his meditation and become slack and well fed, we should neither speak to him, nor be friendly with him, nor even go to meet him. When he sits down on this spare seat, let him sit down [i.e. without paying him any attention].” And they spread a spare seat.

Now, when the Bhagavat arrived, they could not bear his radiance (*tejas*), and all bowed to him. Some washed his feet; others spread a seat, and they said, “Āyusmat Gautama, did you travel well? Be welcome!” Then the Bhagavat seated himself on the prepared seat. When “the happy band of five” saw that the Bhagavat’s face was clearer than before, they said, “Āyusmat Gautama, your senses are so clear, and your complexion is so pure; have you realized something special in the perception of Divine Knowledge?”

The Bhagavat spoke: “O sons of the (Buddhist) family (*kulaputra*), do not call a ‘Tathāgata’ ‘āyusmat’ (long living), for that will cause you long-enduring suffering. I am a Tathāgata, a Manifest Complete Buddha (*abhisamṛtbuddha*). I have comprehended perfectly the spontaneously generated knowledge (\**aupapāduka-jiññāna*). I am omniscient, not dependent upon another instructor (*ācārya*).” He had hardly uttered these words when the hair and beards of “the happy band of five” fell out; their bodies were attired with the three yellow-red garments (*trikāṣṭapācīvara*) [of the monk]; in their hands they held the begging bowls (*pātra*). They appeared as though ordained for a hundred years (*varṣaśatopasampama*, LV 409,19) and their hair and beards as though shaven clean for seven days.

Instantaneously, a thousand thrones, formed motion on this very site. Instantaneously, a thousand thrones, formed of four kinds of jewels, appeared on that site.<sup>2</sup>

### *The First Wheel*

Then the Bhagavat circumambulated the first three thrones and seated himself on the fourth throne. For “the happy band of five” and the uncountable retinue of gods, he set into motion the first wheel of the law, the Wheel of the Four Truths. He said,

O Bhiksus, suffering (*duḥkha*) is a Noble Truth (*ārya-satya*), and is to be recognized (*parijñeya*).

The source [of suffering] (*samudaya*) is a Noble Truth, and is to be removed (*prahyaya*).

The cessation [of the source] (*nirodha*) is a Noble Truth, and is to be realized directly (*sākṣātkaresha*).

The path [leading to that realization] (*mārga*) is a Noble Truth, and is to be contemplated intensely (*bhāvayea*). The path of vision (*darsana-mārga*) arose in the stream of consciousness (*sañcitta*) of Ajñatakaundinya. The gods repeatedly expressed joy and praise (*udāna*), while a shower of flowers fell knee-deep, and the earth trembled in six different ways.

The sūtras which come from the setting into motion of the Wheel of the Law of the Four Truths are as follows: the basic one is the *Dharma-cakra-sūtra* (Toh. 337). The following sūtras, because their subject matter is consistent with that basic sūtra, also are classified as sūtras of the First Wheel: the *Vinayavastu* (Toh. 1, in 4 vols.), the *sūtra Saddharma-śāstaka* (Toh. 287), the *sūtra Lalitavistara* (Toh. 95), the *Karma-śāstaka* (Toh. 340) of the sūtra class, the *Avaśānasātaka* (Toh. 343) of the sūtra class, and others.

### 1. THE PROMULGATIONS

Thereupon, Brahmā, Indra, and the innumerable sons of the gods (*devaputra*) offered him a golden wheel with a thousand spokes, praying him to set the wheel of the law into motion. The Teacher accepted it. In the first watch of the night he trod about. In the middle watch of the night he rested. In the final watch of dawn he arose, and when he reflected concerning the site on which the Buddhas of the past had set into motion the wheel of the law, he knew that in former times it was set into dgal [sic.: for *dgah*] / pags paḥi mdog ni dkar ba la sogs pa lus kyi mdañis star las gnas gyur pa ḥbyun ba du ma žig gsüns te.

### *The Intermediate Wheel*

Thereafter the Bhagavat, while sojourning on the mountain Grdhraukūta, set into motion the Wheel of the Law concerning lack of characteristics [of all the *dharmas*], which was the Intermediate Promulgation, to his assembled retinue — “the happy band of five” and other bhiksus numbering five thousand, thrones of Śrāvakas, and innumerable Bodhisattva candidates for the high goal (*uttadeso-vineyo*).

The basic *sūtras* of the Intermediate Promulgation are as follows: the most expanded of the *Prajñā-pāramitā* works, the *Śatasāhasrikā* (Toh. 8); the medium expanded, the *Pañcavimśatisāhasrikā* (Toh. 9); the medium medium, the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* (Toh. 10); the condensed medium medium; the *Daśasāhasrikā* (Toh. 11); the condensed expanded, the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* (Toh. 12); and the condensed condensed, the *Sañcaya-gāthā* (Toh. 13). The greater bulk of *sūtras* (*T. phal chen la sogs pa*), because their subject matter is consistent with those basic *sūtras*, also are classified as *sūtras* of the Intermediate Promulgation, e.g. the *Samādhīrāja-sūtra* (Toh. 127), the *Vajracchedikā* (Toh. 16), the *Buddhāvatamsaka* (Toh. 44), the *Lankāvatāra* (Toh. 107), and the *Mahāratnakūṭa* (Toh. 45).

It is customary to regard seventeen of the *Prajñā-pāramitā* *sūtras* as "mothers and sons". Thus, the six works starting with the *Śatasāhasrikā*, down to the *Sañcayagāthā*, are "mothers" because they teach the complete subject matter of the eight *abhisamaya*.<sup>3</sup> Eleven works are set down as "sons" because they do not teach the complete *abhisamaya*; these are: the *Suvikrāntavikrami-paripṛchā* (Toh. 14), the *Saptaśatikā* (Toh. 24), the *Pañcasatikā-prajñāpāramitā* (Toh. 15), the *Naya-sapañcaśatikā* (Toh. 17), the *Prajñāpāramitā-pañcasatikā* (Toh. 18), the *Vajracchedikā* (Toh. 16), the *Prajñā-hṛdaya* (Toh. 21), the *Kauśika* (Toh. 19), the *Suhūḍuparipṛchā-sūtra* (Toh. 70), the *Svalpāśaraprajñāpāramitā* (Toh. 22), and the *Ekaśarimātā* (Toh. 23).

Some substitute the *Pañcavimśati-prajñāpāramitā-mukha* (Toh. 20) for the *Subāhu-paripṛchā-sūtra*. Our own school has not decided on seventeen "mother and son" works among the *Prajñāpāramitā* *sūtras*, because there are many more than those [to be considered].

Some classify the *Samādhīrāja-sūtra*, the *Buddhāvatamsaka*, and the *Lankāvatāra* under the Last Promulgation, but this is not valid. In general, when a *Mahāyāna sūtra* teaches that all entities (*sarvabhāvāḥ*) are void in the sense of real production (\**tātrika-siddhyā śūnya*), it belongs to the Intermediate Promulgation. Moreover, when a *sūtra* teaches the ultimate oneness of the vehicles, it also belongs there. On the other hand, when a *sūtra* teaches that, of the three characteristics (*lakṣana*), (1) the imaginary one (*parikalpita*) is not really produced, (2) the dependency one (*paratantra*) and (3) the absolute one (*parinippanna*) are really produced, it belongs among the *sūtras* of the Last Promulgation. Moreover, when a *Mahāyāna sūtra* teaches that the vehicles are ultimately three, it also belongs there. But the three *sūtras*, the *Samādhīrāja*, etc., show only that all entities do not really exist and that the vehicles are ultimately one.

#### *The Tathāgata-garbha sūtras*

Furthermore, the ten *sūtras*, *Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra* (Toh. 258), *Dhāraṇīvararājaparipṛchā* (alias for the *Tathāgatamahākarunānirdeśa-sūtra*, Toh. 147), *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* (Toh. 120), *Arya-angulimaliya-sūtra* (Toh. 213), the *Jhānālokālaṃkāra-sūtra* (Toh. 100), the *Śri-mātā-devi-simhanāda-sūtra* (Toh. 92), *Anūnāvāpūrṇatvanirdeśa-parivarta*,<sup>4</sup> *Mahābhērihāraka-sūtra* (Toh. 222), *Avikalpapravesa-dhāraṇi* (Toh. 142), and *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* (Toh. 106), are claimed by the Jo-mo-nañ-pa school to be the ten [Tathāgata-] Garbha *sūtras* which, they maintain, are in the Last Wheel Promulgation and which, they maintain, have final meaning (*nītartha*). They maintain that those *sūtras* teach by way of the nine meanings of nine examples<sup>5</sup> that the Embryo of the Tathāgata (*tathāgatagarbha*) means the same as the Intrinsic-nature Body (*svabhāvākāya*) of a Complete Buddha, that it is really produced, permanent, steadfast, eternal, adorned with unconditioned (*asamkrta*) characteristics and minor marks, and that it has been in the stream of consciousness of all sentient beings since beginningless "cycles of life", but was covered by corruptions (*klesa*) which have had the appearance of a self; and they maintain that the First and Intermediate Wheels are of provisional meaning (*neyartha*).

#### *The Last Wheel*

The Last Promulgation, the Wheel of the Law which has a perfect and intensive analysis, was pronounced in such places as Viśālī to the innumerable Bodhisattvas rightly stationed in any of the vehicles of candidates for the high goal.

The *Samdhinirmocana* (Toh. 106) of the *sūtra* class is the basic *sūtra* of the Last Wheel. *Sūtras* that are consistent with its subject matter are classified as *sūtras* of the Last Wheel. Also, some characterize the *sūtras* of the Last Wheel as the "Wheel of Absolute Certainty" (\**paramārtha-vimścycā-cakra*).

yathā bhaven mṛtsu ca ratnabimbam /  
āgantukaklesamālavreśu  
sattveṣu tadvat sthitā esa dhātuḥ //

Bu-ston rin-po-che took the position that those ten *sūtras* are *sūtras* of the Last Promulgation. While he was influenced to teach concerning those *sūtras* [the interpretation] maintained by the Jo-nān-pa, he took them as having provisional meaning; and while he took the Svabhāvākāya and the Tathāgata-Garbha as having the same meaning, he held it not to be in the stream of consciousness of a sentient being; and he held that only the Intermediate Promulgation has final meaning.

It is not valid to maintain that there is consistency of subject matter in those ten *sūtras*. All of the chapter "Asked by Ārya Avalokiteśvara" of the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* is devoted to teaching that ultimately the vehicles are three; all of the chapter "Asked by the Bodhisattva Parāmṛthasamūngata" teaches that *paratantra* and *parinirpanna* are really produced; all of the chapter "Asked by Maitreya-nātha" treats the store consciousness (*ālaya-vijñāna*) as different in essence from the mind-based perception (*mano-vijñāna*). But all the other nine *sūtras* teach that all the natures have no reality and that the vehicles are ultimately one, because they teach on the assumption that there is no store consciousness. Moreover, according to the Jo-nān-pa's own school, *paratantra* is equivalent to a hare's horn (*śāśa-visṭha*) [i.e. an impossibility] and the vehicles are ultimately one. But if we take the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* to be of final meaning (*nītārtha*) [as the Jo-nān-pa maintains], the contradiction is made obvious by their own school [which disagrees with a *sūtra* they say has 'final meaning'].

According to our own school,

- if there were no Embryo of the Tathāgata in the stream of consciousness of a sentient being, there would be no cause (*hetu*) of becoming "fully expanded" (*vibudhha*) in the stream of consciousness of a sentient being, and hence there would be no possibility that a sentient being could become "awakened" (*buddha*) and "expanded" (*vibudhha*);
- if Embryo of the Tathāgata meant the same as Intrinsic-nature Body (*svabhāvākāya*) and were in the stream of consciousness of all sentient beings, all sentient beings would be "fully expanded"; and since what is "fully expanded" does not again become "awakened, but not expanded", there would be no possibility that a sentient being could become "awakened" (*buddha*) and "expanded". Therefore our school does not admit either one of those two theories.

Well then, what is the situation? The *Mahāyānottaratantra* (Toh. 4024) speaks of Embryo of the Tathāgata (*tathāgata-garbhā*) and Element of the Tathāgata (*tathāgata-dhātu*) as identical.<sup>6</sup> The commentary (Toh. 4025) says, "The meaning of 'element' here is the meaning of

'cause'."<sup>7</sup> Therefore, the Embryo of the Tathāgata is a *cause* of the Tathāgata. On the other hand, not in every case is a cause of Buddhahood to be called Embryo of the Tathāgata.

Well then, what is the situation? The *citta* is void of real production, but in that voidness the supreme state of thought (*citta-dharmaṭā*) is called "intrinsically pure" (*svabhāvayisūdhi*).

Furthermore,

- that supreme state of thought, intrinsically pure, when in conditions not free from adventitious defilements, is the Embryo of the Tathāgata or Species intrinsically abiding;
- that supreme state of thought, intrinsically pure, when in conditions completely free from adventitious defilements, is the Intrinsic-nature Body, also called "ultimate of the truth of cessation", "ultimate fruit of freedom [from fetters]", "the supreme state possessed of two purities", or "Dharma-kāya possessed of two purities". "Adventitious defilements" means the two obscurations (*āvaraṇa*) of corruption (*klesa*) and of the knowable (*jñeyā*).

Thus, it must be that the Intrinsic-nature Body (*svabhāvākāya*) is not the Embryo of the Tathāgata, because if there is freedom from adventitious defilement, it must be that there is no lack of (such) freedom. Moreover, in our school, the terms "unconditioned" (*avas̄kṛta*), "non-concrete" (*abhyāva*), and "permanent, steadfast, eternal" pertain to [both] Embryo of the Tathāgata and Intrinsic-nature Body; but not the term "real production" (T. *bden par grub pa*).

Of the three wheels, the first is the Hinayāna collection (*pitaka*); the other two, the Mahāyāna collection. Furthermore, the first wheel teaches the Śrāvaka doctrine; the intermediate one teaches the Mādhyamika doctrine; the last one teaches the Cittamātra doctrine. Consequently, the intermediate wheel has final meaning and the other two have provisional meaning.

## 2. ASSEMBLING THE PROMULGATIONS

All the promulgations of the Buddha are comprised by the twelve groupings of the Sacred Word (*pravacana*). The preceptor Śānti-pā states them in his *Āśṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitāpāñjikāśārottamā-nāma* (Toh. 3803):

Aphorisms (*sūtra*), [the preceding in] Mingled Prose and Verse (*gēya*), Prophecies (*vyākaraṇa*), Verses (*gāthā*), Joyous

Impersonal Utterances (*udāna*), Instructive Personal Discourses (*nidāna*), Parables (*avadāna*), Legends (*itiyittaka*), The Bodhisattva Lives of the Buddha (*jātaka*), Grand Scripture (*vaiḍūrya*), the Marvelous (*cabbhutadharma*), and Explanation (*upadeśā*), are the twelve groupings of the Sacred Word.

If, among those, the Instructive Personal Discourses, Parables, Legends, and Bodhisattva Lives of the Buddha be subsumed under one category, then there are nine groupings of the Sacred Word.

Moreover, the Buddha's Sacred Word and Promulgations being identical, the Sacred Word may be divided into three classes: 1. Promulgation expressed with his own mouth; 2. Promulgation through blessing (*adīshñāna*); 3. Promulgation by authorization (*anujñā*).

a. (Promulgation expressed with his own mouth) — for example, the *Aryasāñcaya* (Toh. 13).

b. (Promulgation through blessing) — this is further divided into three:

a. Promulgation through blessing of Body — for example, the *Dasa-bhūmikasūtra* (a chapter of the *Avataṃsaka*, which is Toh. 44);

b. Promulgation through blessing of Speech — for example, the *Ajātaśatrukaṇḍyavimodana-sūtra* (Toh. 216);

c. Promulgation through blessing of Mind — this is further divided into three:

(1). Promulgation through blessing of Mind Samādhi — for example, the *Prajñāhṛdaya* (Toh. 21);

(2). Promulgation through blessing of Mind Compassion — for example, the individual *mantras* expressed by *yakṣas*, *devas*, *nāgas*, etc., which are blessed by the compassion of the Buddha into *mantras* that originate superior fruit;

(3). Promulgation through blessing of Mind Truth-Force — for example, the words of the Doctrine (*dharma*), which proceed from mountains, trees, walls, and so forth, through the force of having been uttered by the Bhagavat mentally with the power of truth (*satya-bala*).

3. Promulgation by authorization — for example, the Bhagavat said in the *Dharmasangīti-sūtra* (Toh. 238): "Mendicants, my Sacred Words (*pravacana*) must be introduced with the phrase, Thus I have heard on a certain occasion" (*evam mayā śrutiṁ ekasmin samaye*), and so on; and, "At intervals [appropriate] connecting phrases should be inserted."

Therefore, after the Bhagavat had displayed the method of passing into Nirvāṇa, the Śrāvakas introduced the Sacred Word (*pravacana*) with "Thus I have heard on a certain occasion" and so on, and at intervals inserted connecting phrases.

Furthermore, all the Sacred Word of the Buddha is gathered into three collections. The one that teaches chiefly the Instruction in Higher Morality (*adhibhūta*) is the *Vinaya-piṭaka*. The one that teaches chiefly the Instruction in Higher Meditation (*adhisamādhi*) is the *Sūtra-piṭaka*. The one that teaches chiefly the Instruction in Higher Insight (*adhiprajñā*) is the *Abhidharma-piṭaka*. The Instruction in Higher Meditation is identical with calming (*śamatha*) as taught by the Buddha; and the Instruction in Higher Insight is identical with higher vision (*vipasyāna*).

Moreover, the first five of the twelve groupings of the Sacred Word are the *Sūtra-piṭaka* of the Lower Vehicle (*hinayāna*). The next four are the *Vinaya-piṭaka*; and it is the *Vinaya-piṭaka* of both Vehicles. The last three are the *Sūtra-piṭaka* of the Great Vehicle (*mahāyāna*). Within them, the passages scattered at random which teach the individual and universal characteristics of natures (*dharma-svalaksña* and *dharma-sāmānyalaksña*) constitute the *Abhidharma-piṭaka*. According to the *Abhidharmaśamuccaya* (Toh. 4049), the section [of the Sacred Word] that teaches the Explanation (*upadeśa*) is the *Abhidharma-piṭaka*, and in it is the *Abhidharma-piṭaka* of both Vehicles.

Again, it has been proclaimed that all the Sacred Word of the Buddha is incorporated in the *dharma-skandha* of the 84,000 *dharmas*, which are antidotes for the 84,000 corruptions (*klesa*) as follows: 21,000 practices in which passion (*rāga*) predominates in the stream of consciousness of the candidates; a like number of practices in which hatred (*dvesa*) predominates; the same number for delusion (*moha*); and 21,000 of practising the three [poisons] in equal proportion.

In regard to its size, some Śrāvakas maintain that of the seven sections of the Abhidharma, alone the treatise (*sāstra*) called *Dharmaskandha* is the size of a single *dharma-skandha*, that in it are one thousand *ślokas*. Other Śrāvakas maintain that each section of Sacred Word that fully explains a department of meaning, such as "aggregates" (*skandha*) and "sensory bases" (*āyatana*), is a *dharma-skandha*. Some Mahāyāvāṇis assert that one *dharma-skandha* is the amount that can be written with all the ink one strong elephant can carry on his back.

Our own school follows Vasubandhu, who maintains that one *dharma-skandha* is tantamount to that portion of the Sacred Word which suffices to counteract one of the 84,000 corruptions.

After the Bhagavat's entrance into Nirvāṇa, there were three steps in the compiling of his Promulgations. When the Bhagavat had finished setting the wheel of the law into motion, he entrusted it to Mahākāśyapa. Then,

in the city of Kuśinagara, in the evening of the fifteenth day of the last month of Spring when the moon was full in the asterism Viśākhā,<sup>8</sup> he demonstrated the method of passing into Nirvāṇa.

a. *The first council*

During the summer season of the same year, with the sponsorship of King Ajātaśatru, the five hundred Arhats whom Kāśyapa had made Elders (*sthavira*) in the Saṅgha, took a promise to observe a summer session (*vassa*) in the cave “She who holds bliss” (T. *bde can ma*) of the city Rājagrha.

At that time the five hundred Arhats piled up their waist robes (*sampādī*) for a seat; the noble Ānanda ascended it, joined the palms of his hands in the direction of Śrāvasti, and with his face wet with tears spoke in a melodious voice, “Thus have I heard on a certain occasion”, and so on. Thereby, the *Sūtra-piṭaka* was compiled. The meaning of this is that he recited every single word of the *Sūtra-piṭaka* from memory, without any additions or omissions. Having finished, he descended from the seat and took his (own) place. Then the noble Upāli compiled the *Vinaya-piṭaka*, and after him the noble Mahākāśyapa compiled in the same way the *Abhidharma-piṭaka*.

Thereupon, the noble Mahākāśyapa reflected, “I have already performed the requirements of the teaching in some degree; now I intend to enter Nirvāṇa.” He entrusted the teaching to Ānanda with the words, “You, in turn, must entrust the teaching to Śāṇavāsa.” Then he went to bow to the eight *stūpas* of the Bhagavat; and as in each country of the *nāgas* and *devas* there was a tooth of the Tathāgata, he went to those places to bow. Upon returning, he went to report to King Ajātaśatru, who happened to be sleeping. Therefore he said to the courtiers, “Tell the King I came here to report that I am about to enter Nirvāṇa.” Then he went south to the Chicken-foot Mountain (*kukkuṭapāda*); and having entered [the valley] between the group of three mountains, he displayed various magical metamorphoses. Seated with folded legs on a seat of grass, he held up the waist robe patched with rags from rubbish heaps, which the Bhagavat had allowed him. Blessing his corpse so that it would not decompose, nor even its complexion deteriorate until the time when the Victor Maitreya shall appear in the world to teach the Law, he passed into Nirvāṇa. Thereupon, the Yaksas merged the three mountains.

Then Śāṇavāsa, having obtained jewels from the ocean, returned and said, “Where is the Bhagavat? He will be my teacher for five years.” “Passed into Nirvāṇa”, he heard and fainted. Regaining consciousness, he inquired after Śāriputra, Maugdalyāyana, and Mahākāśyapa, and when he learned that they too had entered Nirvāṇa, he fainted again. When he recovered, he asked, “Who now remains?” and was told, “Ānanda remains.” So he invited Ānanda and his followers, and they taught him for five years. Thereupon, Ānanda made Śāṇavāsa a monk and ordained him. He applied himself and became expert in the three collections (*tripitaka*), and attained Arhatship.

After the noble Ānanda had performed on a large scale the duties of [spreading] the teaching, he heard a *bhikṣu* reciting the stanza,

He who lives a hundred years

Is certainly like a water fowl in water.

And so he said, “That is not what the Bhagavat has taught, but rather, He who lives a hundred years

Certainly is born and dies.”

The *bhikṣu* thereupon went to see his own master to report what Ānanda had said. The master, unwilling to admit to the *bhikṣu* his own error, said, “Ānanda has grown old and speaks with a deteriorated memory.” When the *bhikṣu* repeated that to Ānanda, the latter, despairing, thought, “Now that the teaching of the Buddha has come to this, I should enter Nirvāṇa.” Thereupon, he entrusted the teaching to Śāṇavāsa with the words, “You, in turn, must entrust the teaching to Upagupta, the boy who sells incense at Mathurā. Concerning him, the Tathāgata made a prophecy that, having become a Buddha without the (32) characteristics (*lakṣaṇa*), he will perform the duties of a Buddha.” He then went to report to King Ajātaśatru, but it happened that the King was sleeping. So he told the courtiers, “Report to the King that I came here.” And he proceeded with his retinue to the bank of the Ganges.

Meanwhile the King dreamed that the handle of his parasol had broken. When he awoke, he spoke about his dream, and the courtiers reported that the noble Ānanda had come to announce his imminent departure into Nirvāṇa. The King fainted. When he recovered consciousness, he mounted an elephant and hurried to the bank of the Ganges.

At that time having been apprised by a *deva*, the Licchāvis of the city of Vaisālī, carrying many offering supplies, assembled on the bank of the Ganges. Also, a Rishi and his retinue of 500 came there all together to ask Ānanda to make them monks and ordain them. Ānanda ‘mate-

rialized" (T. *sprul*) an island in the middle of the Ganges river; and when the sun reached the zenith, they became monks, were given ordination, and immediately afterwards attained Arhatship. They were called the "Noon Arhats", or the "Men of the middle of the river". Then the Rṣi reflected, "I should enter *Nirvāṇa* before my superior (*upādhyāya*)."  
He asked Ānanda, who replied, "Do not say that. The Tathāgata has prophesied that Kashmīr, being a place fit for meditation, will be where the Arhat Madhyāntika ('Zenith of the Sun') will establish the teaching of the Buddha. That being the case, go there and establish the teaching of the Buddha." He then propagated the teaching far and wide in Kashmīr.

Then Ānanda entered *Nirvāṇa* and his relics were divided into two portions and *stūpas* erected at both Rājagrīha and Vaiśālī. Śāṇavāsa performed far and wide the duties of the Buddha's teaching, received Upagupta into the order, ordained him, and entrusted the teaching to him. The noble Upagupta performed the duties of the teaching in a miraculous way. Each of his disciples became an Arhat; [they were so numerous that] a cave of fifty fathoms was completely filled by each of them throwing into it a five-finger breadth of toothpicks. Then he entrusted the doctrine to Dhītika, who in turn entrusted it to Kāla, who in turn entrusted it to Mahāsudarśana. It is said,

The powerful one of the *manis* made the [teaching].

well expressed (*subhāsita*);

And Kāśyapa, Ānanda, Śāṇavāsa, Upagupta,  
Dhītika, Kāla, and Mahāsudarśana,

Are the seven hierarchs of the teaching.

#### b. *The second council*

One hundred and ten years after the *Nirvāṇa* of the Bhagavat, the *bhikṣus* of Vaiśālī were committing the ten transgressions, thereby amassing goods. At that place lived an Arhat by the name of Sarvakāmin who, having experienced the eight releases (*asṭau vimokṣāḥ*), abided with few desires.

An Arhat named Yaśas, together with five hundred followers, arrived at Vaiśālī from the town of \*Dhanika. When he saw that the monks of Vaiśālī had built up great holdings, he wondered how it was done and learned that the monks committed the ten transgressions. The Arhat presented himself to Sarvakāmin, saluted him, and asked, "Noble one,

is it right to do the thing called '*alala*?'?" The other Arhat asked, "What is that?" "It is claimed that after doing a wrong deed, all exclaim '*alala*!' and assume their deed has been confessed." [Sarvakāmin] said, "That is improper." "What kind of a transgression is it?" "It is an evil action" (*duskr̥itam*). "Where was that decreed?" "In Śrāvasti" "For whom was it decreed?" "For the group of six." "May then these things, if practised by the *bhikṣus* of Vaiśālī, be tolerated or not?" "They may not." "What then should be done?" "They should be expelled!" Accordingly, it was decided that the *bhikṣus* of Vaiśālī who advocated the ten transgressions should be expelled.

Thereupon, the noble Sarvakāmin said, "As the *bhikṣus* of Vaiśālī have to be expelled, go and find those who are on your side." The Arhat Yaśas, using his magical power (*rddhi*), then went to Pātaliputra and various other places and informed the Arhats that the *bhikṣus* of Vaiśālī were practising the ten transgressions. He exhorted them, "When I strike the gong (*gandi*), you must come from every quarter." Returning to Vaiśālī, he shut the temple door and struck the gong. Thereupon, all but one of the seven hundred *bhikṣu* Arhats who had been made "superiors" by the noble Ānanda assembled there. In Pātaliputra, the Arhat named Kubjita did not hear the gong because he was in the [france known as] cessation equipoise (*nirodhā-samāpatti*).

Then the Arhat Yaśas made salutation to the Saṃgha and spoke of the ten transgressions. He asked if the [outcry of] *alala* was proper; the reply was, "It is not proper." He asked if some *bhikṣus* who were practising in that manner should be tolerated; the reply was, "They should not be tolerated." When he asked, "What should be done about it, then?" the reply was, "They should be expelled." In that way, having asked every *bhikṣu* individually, after all of the ten transgressions were set forth, their minds were unanimous.

At that time the Arhat Kubjita emerged from his cessation equipoise, and a *deva* said to him, "You are the one 'superior' missing from the seven hundred Arhats, less one, who are assembled at Vaiśālī." By his magical power he arrived at the gate of Vaiśālī and knocked. Yaśas asked, "Who is it?" Thereupon, he replied,

There are *bhikṣus* dwelling in Pātaliputra

Who are very learned and adhere to the Vinaya;  
One of them has arrived and stands at the gate;

He is called 'tamer of the senses'.

Then it was said, "As others also have tamed the senses, who are you?" He replied, "I am Kubjita." Hearing that, they opened the gate for him.

Afterward, the religious observances were performed, the gate was opened, the gong was struck, and the *bhikṣus* of Vaiśālī were admitted. The ten transgressions were rejected; the *bhikṣus* of Vaiśālī were expelled, and the seven hundred Arhats celebrated an auspicious Poṣadha. The devas, with expressions of joy and praise, said, "The unrighteous side has been defeated; the righteous side has been victorious."

That is called the second council, sponsored by the King of the Law (*dharma-rāja*) Aśoka.

### c. The third council and division into sects

It is described in the *Tarkavāla* (Toh. 3856) by Bhavya, in the *Samayabhedoparacanacakra* (Toh. 4140) by Vinitadeva, and in the *Śrāmaneravarṣigrāpicchā* (Toh. 4132) by Padmasambhava.<sup>9</sup>

According to the teachings of one school, one hundred and thirty-seven years after the Nirvāna of the Buddha, in the city of Pātaliputra Māra, the Evil One, transformed himself into the aspect of an Arhat named Bhadra,<sup>10</sup> thereby taking on a form inconsistent with himself. By all kinds of magical tricks he split and perverted the views of the Sangha so that the resulting quarrel lasted for sixty years without reconciliation. Then a *bhikṣu* by the name of Vāṭiputra assembled the Sangha, reconciled the dispute, and allayed it in the direction of the Law (*dharma*). This is called the third council, sponsored by the Kings Nanda and Mahāpadma.

According to another school, one hundred and sixty years after the Nirvāna of the Teacher, four elders of the Samgha in the city called Kusumapura (= Pātaliputra) recited the Scripture in four different languages, Sanskrit, Apabhramṣa, Prakrit, and Paśācika. Consequently, the disciples took on disparate views, and thus there arose a division into four basic sects. Those, in turn, by reason of individual sub-divisions, gave rise to the division into eighteen sects. Each of them contended that it alone had the teachings of the Buddha, and that the other seventeen did not. Once King Kr̥ka obtained a prophetic *sītra* in a dream; it read that a piece of white cloth could not be torn to pieces by eighteen men. When he asked the Buddha Kāśyapa for an interpretation of the dream, the Buddha said, "That dream forbodes neither good nor bad for Your Majesty. It presages that, although the teaching of [the future Budhā]

Śākyamuni be divided into eighteen, deliverance is like that indestructible piece of cloth." This meant that all eighteen schools had been included by the Buddha in his doctrine. This is called the third council, sponsored by King Aśoka.

The four basic divisions were (1) Mūlasarvāstivādin, (2) Mahāsaṅghika, (3) Sammatiya, and (4) Sthavira. Their distinguishing characteristics were as follows:

(1) The first one recited in Sanskrit. Their line of "superiors" began with the son Rāhula, who, born in the Kṣatriya caste, was foremost among those of pure morality, and was singled out by a prophecy. Their waist robe had from 25 to 29 fringes, and its edge symbols were the blue lotus (*upala*), the red lotus (*padma*), the jewel (*rāma*), and the tree leaf.

(2) The second recited in Apabhramṣa. Their line of "superiors" began with Mahākāśyapa, who, born in the Brahmin caste, was foremost among those possessing the ascetic virtues (*dhūta-guṇa*, 12 or 13 in number), and was singled out by a prophecy. Their waist robe had from 23 to 27 fringes, and its edge symbol was the conch-shell.

(3) The third recited in Paśācika. Their line of "superiors" began with Upāli, who was born in the Śūdra caste, was foremost among those adhering to the Vinaya, and was singled out by a prophecy. Their waist robe had from 21 to 25 fringes, and its edge symbol was the Sorsika flower.

(4) The fourth recited in Prakrit. Their line of "superiors" began with Katyāyana, who, born in the Vaiśya caste, was foremost among those who converted the border countries (*prāyantajanapada*). Their waist robe was the same as that of the Sammatiya, and its edge symbol was the wheel (*cakra*).

### d. A note concerning the Mahāyāna Scriptures

Some contend<sup>11</sup> that the collection of the Mahāyāna Scriptures took place after the Nirvāna of the Buddha on the mountain called Vimalasvabhāva, which is south of Rājagṛha. There, where one million Bodhisattvas were assembled, the noble Mañjuśrī, Maitreya, and Vajrapāni collected the *Abhidharma*, *Vinaya*, and *Sūtra-piṭaka* of the Mahāyāna, respectively.

That [theory] is not tenable, for the following reasons: Now, there are 40 introductory syllables at the beginning of the fundamental *tantra*, the *Guhyasamāja* (Toh. 442), from *Evaṁ mayā ś्रutam ekasmin samaye down through vajra-yosid-bhagesu vijahāra*.<sup>12</sup> The Bhagavat Vajradhara has explained each syllable with a verse (*gāthā*), set forth in the explana-

<sup>9</sup>on the basis of a passage in the *Tarkavāla* of Bhāvaviveka. Whether the name Bhadra was actually the original Sanskrit is another question.

tory *tantras* *Vajramāla* (Toh. 445), *Sandhiyākārana* (Toh. 444), and so forth.<sup>13</sup> [The contention] is in contradiction with all these explanations which set forth that there is no difference between the stream of consciousness of the retinue and of the Teacher of the *tantra*.<sup>14</sup> According to the *Pradipodyolana* (Toh. 1785), it is in contradiction with the explanation by Vajradhara about the symbolic meaning (*bṛda*) of the two syllables *E* and *Vam*.<sup>15</sup> (Finally), it is not set forth in any pure (scriptural) source whatsoever.

### 3. COMMENTARIES ON THE PROMULGATIONS

There are two kinds of treatises (*śāstra*): *genuine* and *ostensible* treatises. The *Yogāčārabhūmi* says:

Meaningless, erroneous, and meaningful;

Perverse, hard-hearted, and eliminative of suffering;  
Devoted to worldly learning, devoted to polemics, and  
devoted to accomplishment;

Of these treatises, we reject six and adhere to three.

In those nine, all “outer” and “inner” treatises are included. The meaningless, erroneous, perverse, hard-hearted, devoted-to-worldly-learning, and devoted-to-polemics treatises are the six “outer” treatises and “ostensible” treatises. The meaningful, eliminative-of-suffering, and devoted-to-accomplishment treatises are the three *genuine* treatises and “inner” treatises. Illustrative of the first four, in the given order, are the treatise “Musing on the tooth of the raven”, the treatises of the heretics (*tīrthika*), the Vedic treatises of the heretics, and the treatises of the Nirgranthas. And the treatises that are devoted to worldly learning and devoted to polemics are also “outer” treatises.

Of the sciences there are five: Logic (*hetu-vidyā*), Grammar (*śabda-vidyā*), Medicine (*cikitsā-vidyā*), Arts (*śilpa-karmashāna-vidyā*), and Inner Science (*adhyātma-vidyā*). The treatises (*śāstra*) teaching them are also fivefold.

#### a. The four outer sciences

##### Logic

Among the treatises on logical science are the *tarka* treatises belonging to Outer Science (i.e. non-Buddhist) and those belonging to Inner Science (i.e. Buddhist).

The former are the teachings of the outsiders — for example, the *Tarka* treatise written by the Rṣi Gautama (T. read: *glañc skyes*), and the *Tarka* treatise expounding the eight meanings of words, written by the Brahmin Akṣapāda.

The latter are, for example, the “group of seven works” (*sde bdun*) together with the *sūtra*. The *pramāṇa-śūtra* is the *Samucaya* (Toh. 4203) in six chapters, written by Śri Dīnāṅga. The seven logical treatises by Dharmakirti are the primary commentary on that work. The three chief treatises are comparable to a trunk (i.e. main part of body). The extensive one is the *Pramāṇavārtika* (Toh. 4210); the intermediate one is the *Pramāṇaviniśaya* (Toh. 4211); the abbreviated one is the *Nyāya-bindu* (Toh. 4212). The first has four chapters; the second, three; while the third is not divided into chapters. The remaining four treatises are comparable to limbs: *Herubindu* (Toh. 4213), *Vādānyāya* (Toh. 4218), *Sambandhaparikṣā* (Toh. 4214), *Saṃplāñcātarasiddhi* (Toh. 4219).

##### Grammar

In heaven an omniscient god named Jñānadēva composed a great *sūtra* on grammar.<sup>16</sup> It was widely disseminated among the gods but never known among men, and it disappeared. Later on, Śatakratu (i.e. Indra) composed a grammar called *Indrayākārana* and taught it to the Rṣi Brhaspati, enjoining him to teach it to the other gods. Rṣi Brhaspati is renowned as the guide (*guru*) of the gods and as a grammarians. When he became proud, Indra filled a flask with water from the great ocean, took one drop from it with the tip of a Kuśa [blade of] grass, and said, “Grammar resembles the water in the ocean. I know as much as there is water in this flask, while you know no more than the drop on this tip of Kuśa grass.” Brhaspati understood and forsook teaching. Then

*ba gsal ba* is an alternate translation of *ālokābhāsa*, usually translated by T. *smāni ba mched pa*. The two verses posit the two elements, with correspondences in this system, namely: (a) *prajñā* – *āloka* – *cittā* – *śūnya*; (b) *upāya* – *ālokābhāsa* – *caitta* – *atīśāya*. See Chapter I, above, note 25. The *Vajramāla* (263b-3, ff.) gives various explanations of E-Vam, of which this is the first: “Evan has two syllables. E is explained as voidness; likewise Vam is compassion; and the ‘drop’ (*bindu*) arises from the union of those two. That is the marvellously originated *yoga*. E-Vam is the Buddha and, in short, the seal of the doctrine (*dharma-mudrā*)” (E-Bam zes bya ba yi ge gnis / E ni ston pa nīd du bṣad / de bzin Bam ni thugs rje dān / thiig le gnis sbor ba las byun / de ni rnal hbyor rmad mchog byuñ / E-Bam gnis ni sans regas dān / m dor bs dus chos kyi phyag rgyaho). Mikhas grub rje apparently means by “no difference in the stream of consciousness” the compassion or means which is Vam. He reverts to the subject of E-Vam at the end of his present work.

Indra said, "Teach what you know!" He replied, "On auspicious days,<sup>17</sup> I shall not teach; on other days I shall." Therefore he related the four auspicious days:

The eighth day destroys the teacher;  
The fourteenth destroys the pupil;

The dark of the moon destroys [grammatical] science;

The first day destroys everything.

This means, then, that one guards against the four auspicious days that destroy in the increasing and decreasing phases of the moon.<sup>18</sup> Up to present times, it has been customary for grammarians to observe this. In later times there appeared in the country of men a Brahmin named Pāṇini. He showed the lines of his hand to a palmist and asked whether he would be able to understand grammar. The answer was "No." Thereupon, he asked the palmist how the lines of the hand should run if one is able to understand grammar. He took a sharp knife and incised them, but still his studying brought no understanding. It is maintained by the "outer" school, he then evoked the great god Maheśvara and asked for the magical power (*siddhi*) of skill in grammar. Maheśvara said, "A, I, U", and immediately therewith he became skilled in grammar. According to the "inner" (i.e. Buddhist) [school], he evoked Ārya-Lokeśvara and became skilled immediately, thus conforming to the prophecy in the *Mañjuśrī-mūla-tantra* (Toh. 543), "the grammarian Pāṇini...." He composed the *Pāṇiniya-vyākaraṇa* in 2000 slokas. On it, a Nāgarāja (i.e. Śeṣa = Patañjali) composed the commentary called *Mahābhāṣya*, in 100,000 slokas.

Furthermore, a king by the name of Udayana was once bathing with his queen when he sprayed water on her. The queen said in Sanskrit, "Don't splash me" (*modakair sīcā*). The king, who did not know this speech, understood her as saying in the vulgar language, "Give me some sesame pastry." Thereupon, he sent a maid servant for the pastry. The queen felt that she would rather die than live with a king who was as stupid as an ox and she threatened suicide. When the king became aware of her intention, he said, "Don't do that! What have I done wrong?" The queen told him the reason, and the king tried to dissuade her, promising that he, too, would study grammar. The queen's uncle, named Śaravarman, said to the queen, "Don't do that! I will evoke the six-faced youth (Kārttikeya), and having become skilled in grammar, I shall teach the king. When he was evoked, the god, keeping his body hidden behind a curtain, explained the *sūtra* on grammar which he had composed. After fifteen chapters had been completed, the Brahmin

Śaravarman, being satisfied with his knowledge, said, "Kālāpa, I know it." Thereupon, when Śaravarman saw from behind the curtain the tail feathers of the peacock on which Kārttākeya had mounted and was riding away, he said, "Kālāpa, please forgive [me]!" Therefore, that grammar is called *Kālapasūtra*. [Śaravarman] applied to the eyes of the peacock feathers the word "*kulāpa*", meaning "collection of parts". With the remainder of the grammar composed by the Brahmin Śaravarman and the Brahmin Vāraruči, the whole came to twenty four chapters with four hundred slokas (Toh. 4282). It has a commentary by Durgasimha (Toh. 4283) and the *Śiṣyāḥitā* (Toh. 4286) [by Ugrabhuṭi]. Furthermore, the *ācārya* Candragomin, taking recourse to the *Mahābhāṣya* composed by the Nāgarāja, prepared the *Candrayākaraṇa* (Toh. 4269) in thirty-two chapters with seven hundred slokas. His uncle Dharmadāsa wrote a commentary on it in 6,000 slokas. On this, in turn, the *ācārya* Ratnamati wrote a sub-commentary in 12,000 slokas. This sub-commentary was expanded by the *ācārya* Pūrṇacandra into 36,000 slokas.

Of those works, only the two basic commentaries (i.e. the ones by Durgasimha and by Candragomin) were translated into Tibetan. Useful to Tibetans is the work by Pandita Smṛti, the *Vacanamukhyāyudhopama* (Toh. 4295), which explains the sets of names (*nāma-kāya*), of phrases (*pada-kāya*), and of letters (*vyanjana-kāya*).

All those works belong to the treatises of Outer Science.

#### *Appendages to grammar*

To the grammatical treatises are appended the treatises of poetry, which are of four types, Poetics (*kāya*), Prosody (*chandas*), Lexicography (*abhidhāna*), and Drama (*nāya*). The word "diags" [in *sūtan dhags* = *kāyya*] is the obsolete equivalent to "tha sād" ("expression"). Among those works are the manuals explaining the characteristics of poetry, as well as the poetry composed in conformity with them. The former are discussions of poetry, not poetry; the latter are the reverse. The former are treatises of Outer Science, while among the latter there are treatises of both Outer Science and Inner Science. Characteristic examples are, respectively, the *Kāyādarśa* (Toh. 4301) [a manual on poetry] and the *Avaddinakalpalatā* (Toh. 4155) [a poetical work].

The subject matter of manuals on poetry falls under three headings, the body (*kāya*), the embellishments (*alankāra*), and the faults (*dosa*). The body (*kāya*) consists of pure verse (*padya*), pure prose (*gādja*), or a mixture of the two (*mīśra*); and whichever of those three is used, the

body also has sentiments (*rasa*), chosen from the ten sentiments, appropriate to the occasion. As to the sentiments (*rasa*), there is a difference between the Gauḍa style of East India and the Vaidarbhā style of Southern India. As to the embellishments (*alankāra*), there are thirty-five of meaning (*aritha*), thirty-two of sound (*sabda*), and sixteen of riddles (*prahelikā*). As to the faults (*doṣa*), there are ten.

The author of the *Kāvyañārāśa* (Toh. 4301), called Pañḍita Daṇḍin, is an "outsider" (i.e. non-Buddhist). Then, who is the Sarasvatī to whom the invocation is made? She is claimed by the "outsiders" to be the wife of a Brahmin named Sgra-pa or Tambara, who lived on the shore of the ocean; but according to the "insiders", she was a metamorphosis of the great tooth of Ārya Lokesvara. Moreover, both parties held her to be the goddess of speech.

The *Avadānakalpalatā* (Toh. 4155) contains 108 chapters, of which the first 107 are by king Kṣemendra and the last is by his son Somendra. Textbooks on Prosody by Pingala and by Jayadeva were not translated into Tibetan. The *Chandoratnākara* (Toh. 4303 and 4304) composed by Ratnākarasānti, "the omniscient one of the age of strife" (*kaliyuga*), was translated into Tibetan. It teaches the poet the rules of the heavy and light syllables, required for versification, and the division of letters into male, female, and neuter, required for grammar.

Concerning the treatises on Lexicography, there is a translation of the *Amarakosā* (Toh. 4299), written by Amarasimha. The words are arranged by such categories as *svarga* (heaven), *pātāla* (the underworld), and *bhūmi* (our world).

Concerning the treatises on Drama, there are translations of the *Lokānandanāṭaka* (Toh. 4153) by Candragomin and the *Nāgānanda-nāma-nāṭaka* (Toh. 4154) by the great poet Śri Harṣadeva.

#### Medicine

Concerning the treatises of Medicine, there is the *Aṣṭāṅga* (Toh. 4310) on therapeutic investigation by the *ācārya* Śūra.<sup>19</sup>

Body (*kāya*), [diseases of] infants (*bālā*), demonic possession (*graha*), upper members (*urdhvāṅga*), [Wounds due to] sharp points (*śalya*) [and to] teeth (*dantstrā*), old age (*jarā*), and vigor (*yṛṣa*). — Are called the eight objects (*aṣṭāṅga*)

On which rests therapy.

Thus the eight objects are described. It has a large commentary by the Kashmirian Candrañandana (Toh. 4312, 3 vols.). Also translated was the *Yogaśākā* (Toh. 4306) by Ārya-Nāgājuna; it shows which food generates which illness. All these are treatises of Outer Science.

#### Arts

The treatises on the arts are those that teach the measurements of images (or icons), and so forth. The one composed by Ārya Sāriputra (presumably Toh. 4315, no author mentioned), and others, were translated. Among these are also works that belong to Inner Science.

#### b. Inner Science

The treatises on Inner Science are those which show the means of vanquishing the obscurations of corruption and of the knowable that are on the inner thought. They are divided into the treatises which are commentaries on the First Promulgation, the Wheel of the Law of the Four Truths; the treatises which are commentaries on the Intermediate Promulgation, the Wheel of the Law concerning lack of characteristics; and the treatises which are commentaries on the Last Promulgation, the Wheel of the Law concerning perfect and intensive analysis.

#### (1) COMMENTARIES ON THE FIRST WHEEL OF THE LAW

Here are the treatises that discuss principally the Doctrinal Part (*darśanabhaga*) expressed in the First Promulgation, and the treatises that show principally the Practical Part (*caryā-bhaga*) expressed in that Promulgation.

#### (a) The Doctrinal Part

This includes the "Seven Sections of the *Abhidharma*", the condensation of their meaning in the *Mahāvibhāṣā*, and the condensation of the latter's meaning in the basic *Abhidharma-kōśa* and its self-commentary. Furthermore, the Vaibhāsikas maintain that the "Seven Sections of the *Abhidharma*" have all been written by Arhats, just as said:

The *Dharmaskandha* (Aggregate of the Law) is by Sāriputra;  
The *Prajñaptisāstra* (Treatise of Classification) is by  
Maṇḍgalavāya;  
The *Vijñānakāya* (Set of Perceptions) is by Devaśarman;

<sup>19</sup>*Sātpaṇīśākāka of Mātreṭa* (Cambridge, 1951), p. 8, summarizes the later material by Tarāñātha, who gives a string of names, including Śūra.

The *Jñānaprasthāna* (Entrance into Knowledge) is by Kātyāyaniputra; The *Dhārukāya* (Set of Elements) is by Pūrṇa; The *Prakaranaपादा* (Organized Presentation) is by Vasumitra; The *Saṅgītiparyaya* (Well-sung Terminology) is by Mahākauṣṭhila.

Also, they maintain that the *Mahāvibhāṣā* was compiled collectively by many Arhats and laymen. In contrast, the Sautrāntikas maintain that all the [texts] were composed by learned laymen. Of the “Seven Sections of the *Abhidharma*”, only a portion of the *Prajñāpti*, namely the *Loka-prajñāpti* (Toh. 4086, and presumably also the *Kāraṇa*°, Toh. 4087) and the *Karmaprajñāpti* (Toh. 4088), has been translated into Tibetan. The *Mahāvibhāṣā*, said to contain 100,000 ślokas, has not been translated into Tibetan.

The basic stanzas (*kārikā*) of the *Abhidharma-kośa* (Toh. 4089) expound the tenets (*siddhānta*) of the Kashmirian Vaihbhāṣikas; and the self-commentary (the *bhāṣya*, Toh. 4090) also teaches extensively the tenets of the Sautrāntikas. Translated into Tibetan were the commentary (Toh. 4091) composed by the Kashmirian Saṃghabhadra, who was the *ācārya* of the *ācārya* Vasubandhu himself; the commentary (Toh. 4092, sometimes called the *vyākhyā*) by Prince Yaśomitra; and the commentary (Toh. 4093) by Pūrvavardhana.

Moreover, many textual passages of the seven works of logic [by Dharmakīrti], together with the *sūtra* [by Dīnāga], expound the tenets of the Sautrāntikas.

#### (b) The Practical Part<sup>20</sup>

All the following were translated into Tibetan: the *Vinayavibhāṣā* (Toh. 4114), the *Śrāmanerakārikā* (Toh. 4126), and so forth, composed by the *ācārya* Vinitadeva; the *Praimokṣasūtratīkā* (Toh. 4106) in 50 sections (*bam po*),<sup>21</sup> and so forth, [including?] a *Bhiksunipratimokṣasūtra* commentary in 8 sections and a *Bhiksunipratimokṣasūtra* commentary in 2 sections, a total of 10 sections, by the *ācārya* Dge legs bṣes gñen; the basic *Vinayasūtra* (Toh. 4117), which expounds 17 *pada*, together with the two *vibhāṣā* [i.e. the *bhiksuvibhāṣā* and the *bhiksunivibhāṣā*], in 9 sections, the *Ekottarakarmaśāṭaka* (Toh. 4118) in 12 sections,<sup>22</sup> and the *Vinayasūtravṛtti-svayākhyāna* (Toh. 4119), by the *ācārya* Gunaprabha; the *Vinayasūtrāṇikā* (Toh. 4120) in 70 sections, by Dharmamitra;

the *Vinaya-puṣpanālā-nāma* (Toh. 4123, also called *Vinayakārikā*), showing only the two *vibhāṣā* (see above), in 6 sections, by the Arhat Visākhadeva; the *Śrāmanerakārikā* (Toh. 4124) in 300 stanzas (*kārikā*), and the self-commentary, the *Vṛtti Prabhāvai* (Toh. 4125) by the *ācārya* Sākyaprabha.

In general, a doctrine, by upholding or not upholding the four Seals (*mudrā*) which define a Promulgation (*bkar bzags kyi phyag rgya bzī*) is judged as upholding or not upholding the Buddhist doctrine. Of the eighteen Śravaka schools, the Mahāsammata (or Sammatiya), the Vātsiputriya, the Uttariya, the Dharmaguptika, and the Bhadrayāniya, are judged not to have had the Buddhist doctrine because they held to the unspeakable *padgala-dīma*; nevertheless, they are judged as Buddhist because of having held to the Refuge, morality, and so forth. The four Seals which define a Promulgation are as follows:

1. The *samskāras* are all impermanent (*anitya*).
2. Everything with flux (*sāśrava*) is suffering (*duḥkha*).
3. All natures (*sarvadharmāḥ*) are devoid of self.
4. *Nirvāṇa* is tranquil and solitary.

The remaining schools belong either to the Vaibhāṣikas or to the Sautrāntikas. Moreover, all the eighteen schools say that the Mahāyāna is not a Promulgation [of the Buddha].

The *ācārya* Gunaprabha is considered by some to be a disciple of Ārya Upagupta; and by others, a disciple of the Arhat Candramanī. According to our school, however, he is one of the four disciples of the *ācārya* Vasubandhu who were more learned than their master. Thus, Sthiramati in the *Abhidharma*, Dīnāga in Logic, Ārya Vimuktasena in the *Prajñāpāramitā* texts, and Gunaprabha in the *Vinaya*, were all more learned than their master [in their specialized fields]. Gunaprabha was born in a Brahminical family in Mathurā. He knew by heart the eighteen schools of the Hundred Thousand [i.e., immeasurable teaching of the Buddha].

#### (2) COMMENTARIES ON THE INTERMEDIATE WHEEL OF THE LAW

As to the primary commentaries on the Intermediate Promulgation, there are the celebrated three catalogs, called *Hphain-thani-ma*, *Hchii-bu-ma*, and *Idan-dkar-ma* (Toh. 4364), with their numerous supplements.<sup>23</sup> Since many listings did not distinguish the varieties of tenets bya ba gsun / *Rgyun rnam* involves a misprint. The quotation is surely from Mkhlasgrub rje's *Rgyud sde spyi rnam*, and, in fact, the sentence we are now annotating.

(*siddhānta*), our exposition may be slightly inconsistent with those catalogues]. Among the works are the treatises which comment chiefly on the Doctrinal Part, those which comment chiefly on the Practical Part, and, finally, those which comment on both parts in equal proportion.

#### (a) The Doctrinal Part

There are the “six sets of Mādhyamika reasons” (*yuktī*) (*dbu ma rigs tshegs drug*) composed by Ārya Nāgārjuna, and the later works written in conformity with them. There is no disagreement that the following constitute five of them: *Prajñā-nāma-mūlamadhyamaka* (Toh. 3824); *Yuktisāthikā* (Toh. 3825); *Vaidalya* (Toh. 3826); *Sūnyatāsapti* (Foh. 3827); *Vigrahayyāvartani* (Toh. 3828). The older generation of scholars maintained the sixth to be the *Vyavahāra-siddhi*. Our own Lamas say that if there were a single one among the “six sets of reasons” by the title *Vyavahāra-siddhi*, the disciples of the Ārya, who quote all his texts as authoritative sources, would have quoted this one, too. But there is not a single instance of such a quotation. Also, because all the “sets of reasons” have been enumerated in the course of the *Prasannapadā* (Toh. 3860), but not the *Vyavahāra-siddhi*, one therefore knows that there is no such text. Hence the Bla ma rje<sup>24</sup> assumes “five sets of reasons”, while the omniscient Tsōn-kha-pa assumes six, including the *Ratnāvalī* (Toh. 4158).

Among them, the three treatises, *Prajñā-mūla*, *Yuktisāthikā*, and *Ratnāvalī* form the full-grown body, while the other three treatises are comparable to the limbs branching out from the *Prajñā-mūla*. The *Prajñā-mūla*, by way of a great number of diverse enumerations of reasons, shows extensively that all entities are void in the sense of real production; it does not show the part of the means (i.e. the practical part). The four others expound only voidness (*sūnyata*). The *Ratnāvalī* establishes extensively, with reasons, the selflessness of personality (*pudgalanairātmya*) and the selflessness of natures (*dharma-nairātmya*); moreover, it has the part of the means, which expounds completely the general outline of the steps of the path for the three [religious orders of] persons.

The *Prajñā-mūla* had eight Indian commentaries, those by Devāśrama, Gunaśrī, Gunāśrī, and Sthiramati; and the four following, which were translated into Tibetan: (1) the *Buddhapālita-vritti* (Toh. 3842) by Buddhapālita, in 7 sections (*bam po*); (2) the *Prasannapadā* (Toh. 3860) by Candrakīrti; (3) the *Prajñā-pradīpa* (Toh. 3853) by Bhāvaviveka, whose

work is explained (Toh. 3859) by Avalokitavratā, following the commentary composed by Devāśrama, the *Dkar po man par ḥchar ba*; (4) the *Akutobhaya* (Toh. 3829). This *Akutobhaya* is maintained by the older catalogs, and by many persons following them, to have been composed by Nāgārjuna; but that is certainly not so, because there is not a single instance of its being quoted in the works of his disciples, and while commenting on the twenty-seventh chapter [of the *Prajñā-mūla*] it says, quoting the *Cauhāsatāka* (Toh. 3846), “Āryadeva also says.” The *Yuktisāthikā* has a commentary (Toh. 3864) by Candrakīrti, while the three works, *Sūnyatasapti*, *Vigrahayyāvartani*, and *Vaidalya* have self-commentaries (Toh. 3831, 3832, and 3830).

Āryadeva wrote the *Cauhāsatāka* (Toh. 3846) in sixteen chapters. The first eight chapters set forth the steps of the path for the lowest and middling orders of persons and teach the later steps of training of the great Bodhisattvas. From the ninth chapter on, the two kinds of selflessness (*nairātmya*) are defined in detail, with reasons. Ācārya Candrakīrti wrote the *Madhyamakāvatāra* (Toh. 3861) and a self-commentary (Toh. 3862), which expound the two selflessnesses of natures and of personality, and also expound the part of the means (the practical part). Both the basic text and commentary were translated by Nag-tsho; and both were also translated by Pa-tshab. It is claimed that Gtsaṅ-nag-pa set the words in short verse lines and that whatever there be of felicitous expression is the translation of Nag-tsho.

Ācārya Bhāvaviveka wrote the *Madhyamakahrdaya* (Toh. 3855) and its self-commentary, the *Tarkajāvā* (Toh. 3856). On his *Prajñā-pradīpa* (Toh. 3853), the ācārya Avalokitavratā wrote a commentary known as the *Avalokitavratā* (Toh. 3859, 3 vols.). Furthermore, in eighty sections, Bhāvaviveka explained in greatest detail the doctrinal positions of the “outsiders”, those of the eighteen Śāvaka schools, and so forth; but his extensive treatise on the doctrinal positions of the “outsiders” was not translated into Tibetan.

Āryadeva was born in a miraculous way from an excrescence of a flower in the garden of a King of Singala [usually Ceylon]. Because he looked like a *devaputra*, he was adopted by the King. All the other disciples of Nāgārjuna considered him an authority equal to the Master himself. Buddhapālita held the rank of Vidyādhara (“wisdom holder”). Bhāvaviveka (also called Bhavya) had made a vow in that life to accomplish the diamond seat (*vajrasāna*); and in his next life, having become the ācārya *Vajraghantapa*, he obtained the highest [of siddhis]. Although some of the Mādhyamikas of Tibet assert that Candrakīrti was

not a personal disciple of Nāgārjuna, the Lamas of the [Guhya-] Samāja maintain that he was a personal disciple of Nāgārjuna; and there is considerable confirmation from Scripture (*āgama*) and Higher Cognition (*adīgama*). The followers of Marpa say that he (Candrakīrti) obtained highest *siddhi* in that same life. There are many biographies which show that he lived for four hundred years, and so forth; the one based on the narration of *guru* Vajrāsana was translated by Pa-tshab lotsāva (translator).

Ācārya Jñānagarbha wrote the *Satyadvaya* (Toh. 3881) and a self-commentary (Toh. 3882). Ācārya Śāntarakṣita wrote the *Madhyamakā-lankāra* (Toh. 3884) and a self-commentary (Toh. 3885). It is claimed that ācārya Kamalasīla wrote a sub-commentary to the latter (self-commentary), but this is false. Ācārya Kamalasīla wrote the *Madhyamakāloka* (Toh. 3887) in 9 sections. These texts are called “the three Eastern works of the Svātantrika”.

Ācārya Śāntarakṣita lived a thousand years minus one. He was [first] invited to Tibet by the Dharmarāja Sron-bisan-sgam-po. During the reign of Khri Sron-Ide-btsan, he was invited [again] together with ācārya Padmasambhava. They subjugated the non-human obnoxious spirits, ordained the “seven selected ones” (*sad-mi mi bdun*), and showed their compassion by spreading the teaching of the Buddha far and wide.

Three ācāryas who were disciples of ācārya Śāntarakṣita wrote these Svātantrika works: Ārya Vimuktasena wrote the *Nī-khri snā-ba* (Toh. 3787, the *Pañcavimśatisāhasrikāprajñāpāramitopadesāstṛabhisamayā-lankārvitti*). Haribhadra wrote the great commentary on the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* (Toh. 3791, the *āloka*), the commentary on the *Pañcarimśatisāhasrikā* (Toh. 3790) in eight chapters, the *Abhisamayālankāra Sphuṭārthā* (Toh. 3793), and the *Pañjika* (Toh. 3792) on the *Sañcaya*, his *Rīgas par sla ba* (the easy to comprehend). Buddhajñānapāda also wrote a *Pañjika* (Toh. 3798) on the *Sañcaya*.

Those works of ācārya Bhāvaviveka are texts of the Mādhyamika-Svātantrika. Buddhaghālita, ācārya Candrakīrti, and ācārya Śāntideva are Mādhyamika-Prāsangika, while the ācāryas Bhāvaviveka, Śrigupta, Jñānagarbha, the teacher Śāntarakṣita and his disciple Kamalaśīla are Mādhyamika-Svātantrikas.

What is the difference between the Mādhyamika-Prāsangika and the Mādhyamika-Svātantrika with regard to their concept of the absolute (*paramārtha*)? The Svātantrikas maintain that there is no distinction between “absolute production” and “real production”, not even in conventional terms (*vyavahāra*), and that holding such a distinction

amounts to *ātma-graha* (adherence to the view of self). They mean that being “produced by fundamental ground” (\**prakṛti-siddha*), “produced by individual characteristic” (\**svaṅkṣaṇa-siddha*), and “produced by intrinsic nature” (\**svabhāva-siddha*) is not distinguishable,<sup>25</sup> that those are conventional terms, and that all entities are produced in conventional terms likewise. The Prāsangikas maintain that in such a case, they [i.e., the entities] are not [produced] even in conventional terms; and to hold that way [as do the Svātantrikas] is *ātma-graha*.

The Svātantrikas may, in turn, be divided into two [subschools]. The ācāryas Bhāvaviveka and Jñānagarbha, with others, maintain that form (*rūpa*), sound (*śabda*), and so forth, have an entity (*ariha*) apart from thought (*citta*), an external entity: they posit unconscious substance (*jadā-svabhāva*). In contrast, ācārya Śāntarakṣita and his followers maintain that form, sound, and so forth, have no entity apart from thought, that there is no external entity, and that a substratum of unconscious substance is not demonstrable. But the assertion by the stupid that all natures (*sarvadharmāḥ*) are our own thought (*citta*) bears no resemblance to the Svātantrika position.

The Prāsangikas, who also maintain an external entity, resemble Bhāvaviveka on this point. The doctrine (*darsana*) of all [four] sections of the *tantras* is Prāsangika.

#### (b) The Practical Part

The treatises which comment chiefly on practice are the *Bodhicittotpādavivki* (Toh. 3966) by ārya Nāgārjuna, the *Trīkarāṇasaptati* (Toh. 3971) by Candrakīrti, and so forth.

#### (c) Both Doctrinal and Practical Parts

The treatises which give equal space to doctrine and practice are the *Sūtrasamuccaya* (Toh. 3934) by Nāgārjuna, and the *Śikṣāsamuccaya* (Toh. 3939, the *karikā*, and Toh. 3940) and the *Bodhisattvacyāvātarā* (Toh. 3871) by Śāntideva.

Compositions by Nāgārjuna have been mentioned previously. Among his other works translated into Tibetan are the following: the *Dharma-dhāurstava* (Toh. 1118), *Lokāñītastava* (Toh. 1120), \**Nirvikalpastava* (? Toh. 1119, *Nirupamastava*), *Cittavajrastava* (Toh. 1121), and so forth, in the “Collection of Eulogies” (*stava-kāya*); the *Suhṛllekha* (Toh. 4182), and so forth, among the “Letters” (*lekha*); his works on “Medical Sci-

ence” (*cikitsā-vidyā*) [i.e., Toh. 4306-4308]; his treatise on making gold (necessarily Toh. 4314, *Rasayanaśiroddhṛti*, no author listed), and so forth, among the “Arts” (*śilpa-karmasthāna-vidyā*); the *Prajñāśataka* (Toh. 4328), the *Jantuposaṇabindu* (Toh. 4330), and so forth, among the treatises of “common prudent conduct” (*sādhāraṇa-nīti-sāstra*). The ascription of the *Madhyamaka-pañca-skandha* (Toh. 3866) to the authorship of Candrakīrti is a spurious one.<sup>26</sup>

The treatises of the *mantra* category [i.e., the *tantras*] will be discussed further on.

### (3) COMMENTARIES ON THE LAST WHEEL OF THE LAW

In regard to the basic commentaries on the Last Promulgation, there are three groups of treatises — ‘those showing chiefly doctrine; those showing chiefly practice;’ and those showing doctrine and practice in equal measure.

Ranging over those categories are the famed twenty treatises of the Law (*chos sde ūśu*) by Maitreya and associated commentaries. Maitreya-nātha composed the two *ālaṅkāra*, viz. the *Sūtrālamkāra* (Toh. 4020) and the *Abhisamayālāmkāra* (Toh. 3786); the two *vibhaṅga*, viz. the *Madhyāntavibhaṅga* (Toh. 4021) and the *Dharmadharmaśāvibhaṅga* (Toh. 4022); and the *Uttaratantra* (Toh. 4024); they constitute the “five Maitreya expositions” (*byams chos lta*). Āryāsaṅga composed the *Bhūmi-yas tu* (Toh. 4035-4037), the *Vastusamgrahāni* (Toh. 4039-4040), the *Paryāyasamgrahāni* (Toh. 4041), the *Vivarṇasamgrahāni* (Toh. 4042), and the *Vinīscayasyamgrahāni* (Toh. 4038); they constitute the “five *bhūmi* divisions” (*sa sde lta*), a total of 126 sections. The *Bhūmi-yas tu* (*sahi dhos gzi*) comprises the *Bahubhūmika* (*sa mai pos*) (Toh. 4035, entered in Toh. catalog as *Yogācaryā-bhūmi*), the *Śrāvakabhūmi* (Toh. 4036), and the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* (Toh. 4037), in their *bhūmi* sequence [seventeen *bhūmis* in all]. He also composed the two collections, the collection common to the vehicles, the *Abhidharmaśāmuccaya* (Toh. 4049), and the uncommon collection of the Great Vehicle (*mahāyāna*), the *Mahāyānasamgraha* (Toh. 4048). *Ācārya*<sup>27</sup> Vasubandhu wrote the three commentaries (Toh. 4026, 4027, and 4028, respectively) on the *Sūtrālamkāra*, the *Madhyāntavibhaṅga*, and the *Dharmadharmaśāvibhaṅga*; the *Yākhyāyukti* (Toh. 4061), the *Karmasiddhiprakarana* (Toh. 4062), the *Paścasandhaphrakarana* (Toh. 4059), the *Vimśatikā* (Toh. 4056), and the *Trinśikā* (Toh. 4055); they constitute the “eight *prakaraṇa* divisions” (*prakaraṇa sde brigyat*). Some (scholars) do not include his commen-

tary on the *Dharmadharmaśāvibhaṅga*, but include instead his *Pratiṣṭhāsamutpādaśūtra* commentary (Toh. 3995, the *Pratiṣṭhāsamutpādaśūtravibhaṅgaśāvya*). Our own school is not definite in regard to the eight, because there are other writings of Vasubandhu [to be considered as candidates for inclusion], such as the *Pratiṣṭhāsamutpādaśūtra* commentary (Toh. 3995), the *Sālistambaka-sūtra* commentary (Toh. 3986),<sup>27</sup> the commentary (Toh. 3993) on the *Daśabhūmika* of the Sūtras, the *Mahāyānasangraha* commentary (Toh. 4050), the three *Anusmṛti* commentaries (Toh. 3981, 3982, 3983).<sup>28</sup>

We claim that the commentary (Toh. 3808) on the three *Prajñāpāramitā* sūtras, known as *Gnod hjoms*, is by Dampṣṭrasena, and that the commentary on the *Nīkhī*,<sup>29</sup> which is in Tibet, is by Khlri sron lde btsan. Hence, neither of them is by Vasubandhu.

Of those [twenty texts], the two *vibhaṅga* and the *Sūtrālamkāra* among the “five Maitreya expositions” are examples of commentaries on the third and last Promulgation; they show the “Thought Only” (*citta-mātra*) doctrine. The *Sūtrālamkāra* expounds doctrine and practice in equal measure; the two *vibhaṅga* expound chiefly doctrine. There is no disagreement in regard to those.

According to the older [Tibetan] scholars, the *Uttaratantra* is a commentary on the Intermediate Promulgation and teaches the Svātantrika position. The Jo-na-nā-pa škola, however, maintains that it is a commentary on the Last Promulgation, presenting their own views; and the Bla-ma-rje maintains that it is a commentary on the Last Promulgation and teaches the “Thought Only” (*citta-mātra*) doctrine. Bu-ston rin-po-che holds that it is a commentary on the Last Promulgation and teaches either Mādhyamika or “Thought Only”. In our own school, the Rje rin-po-che (i.e. Tsöni-kha-pa) states that it is a *sūtra* consistent with the category of the Intermediate Promulgation and explains chiefly the *Tathāgata-garbhā-sūtra* (Toh. 258), the *Dhāraṇīvara-rāja-pariprcchā* (alias for the *Tathāgata-mahākaruṇā-nirdesā-sūtra*, Toh. 147), the *Jhānalokālamkāra-sūtra* (Toh. 100), the *Ārya-āigulimālīya-sūtra* (Toh. 213), the *Śrī-mālādevi-siṃhanāda-sūtra* (Toh. 92), and so forth. Tsöni-kha-pa maintains that its purport is Prāsaṅgika and that the commentary (Toh. 4025) by Āryāsaṅga is also Prāsaṅgika, notwithstanding the opinion expressed in the tenets of the Jo-na-nā-pa.

As to the *Abhisamayālāmkāra*, in India the *ācāryas* Vasubandhu, Dinnāga, Śānti-pa, and so on, explained it as “Thought Only”. Ārya Vimuktasena, Bhadanta Vimuktasena, Haribhadra, Buddhajñānapāda, Abhaya, and so forth, explained it as Svātantrika; and Atīsa explained

it as Prāsaṅgika. All the early and most the latter-day great Tibetan translators declare it to be a commentary on the Intermediate Promulgation, written from the standpoint of Svātantrika. The Jo-nañ-pa say that it is a commentary on the Last Promulgation, and that it teaches the great Madhyamaka, thus casting aspersions on the commentaries by Ārya-Hari [bhadra] on the *Prajñāpāramitā*. The Bla-ma-rje maintains that it teaches “Thought Only”. Our school maintains, by the position of Tsōn-Kha-pa, that the *Abhisamayālamkāra* is Svātantrika, but is Prāsaṅgika in its ultimate purport (*dgois mathar thug*), that it chiefly shows both doctrine and intense contemplation (*bhāvanā*), and that it is a commentary on the Intermediate Promulgation.

The parts [of the twenty texts] which set forth the views of the “five *bhūmi* divisions”, show “Thought Only”, and constitute commentary on the Last Promulgation. The *tatva* chapter of the *Bodhisattva-bhūmi* teaches doctrine, while the remaining chapters teach practice. Apart from that one chapter, all the others, which set forth the practice, constitute a commentary on the general purport of the *Mahāyāna sūtra* section.

The two collections (i.e. the *Abhidhammasaṃuccaya* and the *Mahāyānasaṃgraha* by Āryaśaṅga) are commentaries on the Last Promulgation. They are treatises which chiefly teach doctrine; they teach “Thought Only”.

The “eight *prakarana* divisions” (by Vasubandhu) are commentaries on the Last Promulgation and teach “Thought Only”. The *Āśṭasāhasrikā-piṇḍārtha* (alias for *Prajñāpāramitāsaṃgrahakārikā*, Toh. 3809, by Dīnnāga) and the commentary called *Gnādhijoms* (i.e. Toh. 3808, by Dāmṣṭrasena) on the three *Prajñāpāramitā sūtras* teach the Mādhyamika by the passages cited from the *Prajñāpāramitā sūtras*; nevertheless their purport is to explain those texts from the “Thought Only” standpoint.