

# The Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems

*A Treatise Elucidating the Meaning of the  
Entire Range of Spiritual Approaches*



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## The Buddha

### I. THE TEACHER

#### A. The Hinayana Interpretation

According to the Hinayana interpretation, our Teacher gave rise to bodhi-chitta, or “the awakening mind,” in the presence of the buddha Mahashakyamuni three immensely long eons ago, with the following words recorded in *The Scriptural Transmission of Vinaya*:

O Sugata, whatever your form is like,  
whatever your retinue, life span, and realm,  
and whatever your noble and sublime marks of perfection,  
may I swiftly accomplish the same!

Thereafter, during those three immensely long eons, the Bodhisattva pursued spiritual development, serving fifty-five thousand buddhas during the first eon, sixty-six thousand during the second, and seventy-seven thousand during the third.<sup>1</sup> *The Foundation of Scriptural Transmission* states:

From the enlightened guide Rashtrapala  
to the buddha Vipashyin,  
I venerated a total  
of fifty-five thousand buddhas.  
During that time, I was not discouraged. [5a]  
From the buddha Sadhu  
to the sage Indradhvaja,  
I venerated a total  
of sixty-six thousand buddhas.  
During that time, I was not discouraged.

From the buddha Dipamkara  
to Ratnashikin,  
I venerated a total  
of seventy-seven thousand buddhas.  
During that time, I was not discouraged.

According to *The Treasury of Abhidharma*:

Vipashyin, Dipamkara, and Ratnashikin  
came at the close of the three immensely long eons.  
Preceding that succession,<sup>2</sup>  
the first was Shakyamuni.<sup>3</sup>

Finally, it is maintained that he awakened to buddhahood through a process entailing twelve deeds and, having passed into nirvana with no trace of his mind-body aggregates remaining, abides in the basic space of peace.<sup>4</sup>

Thus, the Buddha developed the positive qualities associated with the path of accumulation for three immensely long eons. Then, at Vajrasana, with attainment of the highest level of this path of accumulation as the basis, he traversed the rest of the five paths—those of linkage, seeing, meditation, and no more learning—in a single sitting.<sup>5</sup> This interpretation is consistent with the process undergone by a pratyekabuddha of keen acumen. The same source states:

The enlightenment of the Teacher and those who are like  
rhinoceroses  
is fully attained in a single, final state of meditative stability.<sup>6</sup>

Moreover, the following verse attests to the fact that in his final lifetime in conditioned existence, the Bodhisattva was an ordinary being:

Service to one's parents, sick people, those who give spiritual  
teachings,  
and bodhisattvas in their final rebirth—  
even though none of these are spiritually advanced—  
is said to be of inestimable value.<sup>7</sup> [5b]

## B. The Ordinary Mahayana and Vajrayana Interpretations

In the Mahayana tradition as well, some maintain—in keeping with the Hinayana interpretation—that the Bodhisattva first gave rise to bodhi-

chitta, then pursued spiritual development for three immensely long eons, and finally became a buddha in this human world through a process entailing twelve deeds. But they further hold that the Buddha simultaneously manifested enlightened embodiments elsewhere in the universe. Difficult to Renounce, benefiting beings. The sutra *The Complete Array of Qualities* states:

From the point that I first gave rise to the intention to attain unsurpassable enlightenment, I pursued spiritual development with great diligence for three immensely long eons. When the average span of human life was one hundred years, I saw that ordinary beings were blind and without a guide; I awakened to buddhahood in this human world and completely turned the inconceivable wheel of dharma.

Certain authors in the secret mantra approach agree for the most part with this interpretation, but more specifically maintain that while the Bodhisattva was practicing asceticism, although his body was seated by the banks of a river, his mind was in Akanishtha, being empowered with great rays of light.<sup>8</sup> By cultivating a profound state of nondual meditative absorption, he thus awakened to buddhahood. Immediately after this, he manifested at Vajrasana in the manner of one awakening to buddhahood. In *The Sphere of Freedom*, the venerable Buddhajñāna writes:

Although Shakyamuni  
pursued spiritual development for three immensely  
long eons,  
he had not realized the goal, so at Nairanjana  
he dwelled in the meditative absorption of “nothingness.”<sup>9</sup>  
At that time, the sugatas of the ten directions<sup>10</sup>  
brought an end to his mental patterns [6a]  
and thoroughly revealed to him the nondual state of  
profound lucidity,<sup>11</sup>  
totally pure like the expanse of the sky.  
At midnight, just like other victorious ones,  
he meditated on thatness, and at dawn  
in a single instant he realized truth.  
To guide ordinary beings,<sup>12</sup>  
he remained at Bodhimanda  
and conquered the great hordes of Mara.<sup>13</sup>  
To care for beings,  
he turned the wheel of dharma.<sup>14</sup>

Similarly, *Magical Display as the Guiding Principle* states:

For Siddhartha, the person practicing austerities,  
victorious ones of the ten directions gathered like clouds,  
and for his spiritual enrichment,  
in the evening and at dawn  
they bestowed the empowerment of the eclipse of sun and  
moon.<sup>15</sup>

With the source of this display having been shown to him,  
the Tathagata arrived at suchness.

The preceding are the ordinary interpretations of these approaches.

### C. The Extraordinary Mahayana and Vajrayana Interpretations

According to the extraordinary Mahayana interpretation, having first aroused bodhichitta and pursued spiritual development, the Bodhisattva awakened to buddhahood in the realm of Akanishtha Ghanavyuha.<sup>16</sup> Subsequently, he manifested in the manner of one awakening to buddhahood in an immaculate abode, and shortly thereafter he manifested in the manner of one awakening to buddhahood at Vajrasana.<sup>17</sup> In *The Journey to Sri Lanka*, we read the following:

The Buddha did not actually awaken to buddhahood  
in the realm of desire or in the realm of formlessness;  
you, who were free of desire and attachment, became a buddha  
in Akanishtha in the realm of form.<sup>18</sup>

. . . . .

In the delightful realm of Akanishtha Ghanavyuha, [6b]  
beyond the immaculate abodes, the completely awakened  
Buddha awakened to buddhahood.<sup>19</sup>

It was an emanation who awakened to buddhahood in this world.

Some authors in the secret mantra approach hold a similar view and maintain that, immediately after attaining buddhahood in Akanishtha,<sup>20</sup> the Buddha descended from the peak of Sumeru to Bodhimanda and there awakened to buddhahood at the foot of the bodhi tree. *The Summary of Suchness* states:

The transcendent and accomplished conqueror, having awakened  
to buddhahood, knew that he had become the embodiment of the

enlightened form, speech, and mind of all tathagatas. Soon after, he descended from the peak of Sumeru to Bodhimanda. To conform to the perceptions of ordinary people, having taken a seat of grass at the foot of the bodhi tree, . . .

Others, however, explain that it was after being empowered in Akanishtha by all buddhas that the Buddha awakened to buddhahood as Vajradhara in the Akanishtha realm of our world system.<sup>21</sup> He then immediately awakened to buddhahood as Shakyamuni at Vajrasana and so benefited beings. According to the tantra *The Empowerment of the Vajra Holder*:

The Bodhisattva, the great spiritual hero, the all-noble one, the holder of the vajra, was naturally empowered in the greater universe known as Basis Whose Center Is Adorned with a Flower. After that, within our universe, Difficult to Renounce, in the human worlds throughout the intermediate-sized universe of world systems that comprise four worlds each, the transcendent and accomplished conqueror, with the name Shakyamuni, having defeated Mara, awakened to a manifestly perfect state of enlightenment.<sup>22</sup> [7a]

#### D. The Interpretation of the Unsurpassable Approach

The foregoing ordinary and extraordinary interpretations were given in response to certain kinds of beings to be guided. However, the quintessential and definitive meaning, which is found in the unsurpassable approach, is as follows: Our Teacher awakened to buddhahood an inconceivable number of immensely long eons ago. Through the Tathagata's immeasurable and manifold display, ordinary beings were benefited in whatever way was necessary to guide them. The Teacher guided beings solely through emanations, such as those who manifested as though first giving rise to bodhichitta (so that beginners would not feel inadequate), those who attained higher and higher spiritual levels (so that bodhisattvas could attain those levels), and those who performed the twelve deeds. This is discussed in the following passage from the sutra *The Reunion of Father and Son*:

In the past, countless eons ago, in a realm composed of as many universes as there are grains of sand in the bed of the river Ganges, a tathagata known as Indraketu awakened to buddhahood,

benefited beings, and passed into nirvana. From that point until the present eon, this buddha manifested an inconceivable number of times in the manner of one awakening to buddhahood. This buddha continues to manifest as ordinary beings who first give rise to bodhicitta and then eventually awaken to buddhahood, and will continue to do so until samsara is emptied. . . .

O great spiritual hero of skillful means,  
in order to bring ordinary beings to complete spiritual  
maturity,  
you revealed yourself as a buddha,  
a true victorious one, to billions. [7b]  
Even now you, O guide,  
will reveal yourself as many buddhas.

Moreover, the sutra *The White Lotus* states:

O children of spiritual heritage, many hundreds of thousands of millions of billions of eons ago, I awakened to the state of a manifestly perfect buddha.

There are teachings of the unsurpassable approach of the supreme secret that accord with this interpretation. They say that, with enlightenment taking place in the context of primordial being, there is a state of evenness in immutable basic space that eludes measurement in terms of eons. Without straying from that state of dharmakaya, countless sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya manifestations have appeared to all beings in whatever ways are necessary to guide them, and they will continue to manifest everywhere for as long as the universe exists. According to the tantra *The Array of the Precious Wish-Fulfilling Secret*:

The buddha who awakened prior to all,  
the supremely secret, victorious holder of the vajra,  
revealed a manifold display in an inconceivable number of realms.  
Throughout a succession of immensely long eons,  
benefit was ensured in myriad ways—  
through countless peaceful and wrathful modes,  
even in such forms as hunters and prostitutes.  
Moreover, now in this fortunate eon,  
a thousand enlightened guides will manifest  
who similarly adopt myriad modes,  
benefiting countless beings.

While not wavering from the basic space of dharmakaya, within the context of the lucid manifestation of sambhogakaya, an inconceivable miraculous display spontaneously shines forth in the environments of the six classes of beings to benefit them. [8a] The glorious tantra *The Heart Essence of Secrets: The Ascertainment of Suchness* (a synopsis of the teachings found in the cycle *The Supreme Web of Magical Display*) states:

The phrase “through supreme compassion, blessings are granted” is a reference to the six sages, spiritual beings who are emanations of awareness. They emanate from the vajras of the enlightened form, speech, and mind of the Tathagata. As they emanate, owing to the influence of beings’ karma, a great sage—a transcendent and accomplished conqueror—appears in every world system in the six directions—zenith and nadir—as well as other dimensions, in every one of the vast three-thousand-fold universes throughout the boundlessness of the ten directions.<sup>23</sup> These sages benefit the five kinds of ordinary beings by guiding them in four ways.<sup>24</sup>

The four ways of guiding are as follows: guiding through the enormous merit of enlightened form, whereby the twelve deeds are carried out; guiding through the collections of teachings—enlightened speech—which provide a variety of spiritual approaches; guiding through sublime states of perception, whereby enlightened mind entails knowledge of beings’ levels of acumen; and guiding through inconceivable qualities and activities of enlightenment, manifesting various miraculous displays, emanating light rays, and so forth.

*The Highest Continuum* describes how the twelve deeds are carried out:

It is the nature of the nirmanakaya that, in various ways,  
it comes into being through manifest forms of rebirth,  
while not straying from dharmakaya.  
Descending from Tushita,  
entering a womb, taking birth,  
being trained in all the arts and martial skills,  
enjoying the company of a retinue of queens,  
resolving to gain release from samsara, practicing austerities,  
going to Bodhimanda, [8b]  
defeating the legions of Mara, awakening to perfect  
enlightenment,



turning the wheel of dharma,  
 and passing into nirvana: all those who demonstrate these  
 deeds<sup>25</sup>  
 do so within the total range of impure realms  
 for as long as there is conditioned existence.<sup>26</sup>

## II. THE TEACHINGS

After having thus awakened to buddhahood, the Buddha turned the wheel of dharma in the following ways.

### A. The Hinayana Interpretation

According to the shravaka schools, the Buddha did not teach for a period of seven weeks after his enlightenment. Then, in response to supplications by Brahma and Indra, he journeyed to Varanasi, where he taught the four truths. His audience, made up of “the five noble ones” as well as eighty thousand gods, perceived the truth.<sup>27</sup> From that point until his eightieth year, the Buddha presented his teachings in three stages. These schools maintain that he taught in response to specific situations, giving a distinct teaching in each place according to the capacities of those to be guided. *The Scriptural Transmission of Vinaya* states:

On the banks of the Varata River, he gave to the nagas a great outpouring of teachings concerning the ten kinds of positive actions. . . . The descendants of Vasishtha, together with their five hundred attendants, simultaneously gained unclouded vision free of distortions through the teachings on unsurpassable enlightenment.<sup>28</sup>

Regarding the Buddha’s passing into nirvana at the age of eighty, *The Great Treasury of Detailed Explanations* explains:

In each of the following locations, the Sage,  
 the sublime person, spent one year:  
 the sacred site where he turned the wheel of dharma,<sup>29</sup> Vaishali,  
 Makkola, the abode of the gods,  
 Shishumara, Kaushambhi,  
 Atavaka, Chaityargira,  
 the bamboo grove of Venuvana, Vairata,  
 and the city of Kapilavastu. [9a]  
 He spent two years at the sacred site of Blazing Cave,

four in the medicinal groves of Bhaishajyavana,  
 and five in the city of Rajagriha.  
 He spent six years practicing austerities,  
 twenty-three in Shravasti,  
 and twenty-nine at the palace.  
 Thus, the Victorious One was eighty  
 when he, the holy and sublime sage, passed into nirvana.<sup>30</sup>

Some shravaka authors maintain that he prolonged his life for two months, as we read in *The Commentary on "The Hundred Thousand Stanzas"*:

Having vanquished Mara, the lord of death, he prolonged his life  
 for two months.<sup>31</sup>

## B. The Ordinary Mahayana Interpretation

According to the well-known interpretation of the ordinary Mahayana, in the excellent place of Varanasi, on excellent occasions, the excellent teacher Shakyamuni spoke to an excellent retinue made up of the five noble ones and eighty thousand gods, teaching the excellent dharma—the first cycle of the Buddha's words, the various teachings pertaining to the four truths; this he did between the ages of thirty-six and forty-two. He began by teaching principally the training in discipline, what came to be known as the compilation of Vinaya. The ethical codes of Vinaya contain extensive overviews that classify actions according to their nature or their relation to formal precepts. The discourses of Vinaya concern the stages of meditative absorption and the celibate way of life undertaken in yogic practice. The further teachings of Vinaya give extensive, detailed explanations and analyses of these topics.

Then, at the excellent place of Vulture Peak, [9b] the excellent teacher Shakyamuni spoke to several excellent retinues. Among the four relatively ordinary retinues were about five thousand arhats, including Shariputra and Maudgalyayana;<sup>32</sup> about five hundred nuns, including Shakyamuni's stepmother, Prajapati; and groups of laypeople, including the householder Anathapindaka and the laywoman Sagama. As well, there were enormous numbers of gods, nagas, demigods, and gandharvas. The extraordinary retinue was made up of an enormous number of bodhisattvas—including Bhadrapala, Ratnasambhava, and Jaladatta—who had truly attained great levels of realization. On excellent occasions, he taught these reti-

nues the excellent dharma—the intermediate cycle of the Buddha’s words, the various teachings pertaining to the characterization of phenomena as nonexistent; this he did between the ages of forty-three and seventy-two. He taught principally the training in mind, what came to be known as the compilation of Sutra. The ethical codes of Sutra classify the precepts of the bodhisattva vow. The discourses of Sutra discuss meditative absorption in profound and extensive ways. The further teachings of Sutra analyze related topics—spiritual levels and paths, powers of recall, and meditative absorption—in great detail.

Then, in excellent places—not any one place—such as the human world and the abodes of gods and nagas, on excellent occasions, the excellent teacher Shakyamuni spoke to an excellent retinue of innumerable monks, nuns, gods, nagas, bodhisattvas, and others, [10a] teaching the excellent dharma—the final cycle of the Buddha’s words, the various teachings pertaining to definitive truth; this he did between the ages of seventy-three and eighty-two. He taught principally the training in sublime knowing, what came to be known as the compilation of Abhidharma. The ethical codes of Abhidharma have to do with taming the afflictive states in ways that are easy to implement and involve little hardship.<sup>33</sup> The discourses of Abhidharma discuss the vast range of techniques for engaging in the experience of suchness. The further teachings of Abhidharma analyze in great detail the mind-body aggregates, the fields of experience, the components of perception, the controlling factors, consciousness, and tathagatagarbha (the innately, totally pure “buddha nature”) and discuss related topics.<sup>34</sup> As the sutra *The Seven Hundred Stanzas* states:

The Sage taught the collections of the dharma thoroughly  
to benefit beings.

In stages, at various places and times,  
the Buddha imparted his teachings in melodious tones.

### C. The Extraordinary Mahayana Interpretation

According to the extraordinary interpretation, in terms of the intelligence of those to be guided, for those whose karma allowed them to comprehend the teachings gradually, it seemed that the Buddha taught in three successive cycles. For those whose intelligence enabled them to comprehend everything all at once, he seemed to teach, in its entirety and on a

single occasion, everything that needed to be taught. According to the sutra *The Majestic Array of Qualities*:

Without saying anything at all, [10b]  
 I manifest to beings in infinite and pervasive ways.<sup>35</sup>  
 When there are those who sincerely wish to comprehend in a  
 gradual way,  
 that is what occurs for all of them.  
 For those who comprehend all at once,  
 the varieties of spiritual teachings manifest in their entirety.  
 Such is the great quality of enlightened speech—  
 to fulfill beings' hopes just as they wish.

Some masters hold exclusively that the three cycles were taught all at once, while others maintain that they were taught in stages. Both points of view amount to nothing more than ignorance of the significance underlying the distinction between the ordinary and extraordinary interpretations, which is based on the acumen of individual beings.

Like a precious wish-fulfilling gem, then, the Teacher ensured benefit for beings exactly according to their interests. This benefit came about because, by his blessings, individual beings heard him, his speech marked by sixty melodious qualities, as if he were speaking in their respective languages. Nevertheless, these words and sounds actually had no autonomous existence. Their manifestation was similar to that of an echo and arose because of the coming together of three things: the interests of those to be guided, the Buddha's blessings, and the occasions on which these two factors coincided. *The Highest Continuum* explains:

The sound of an echo  
 occurs within someone's consciousness;  
 it is nonconceptual and unfabricated.  
 Similarly, the enlightened speech of the Tathagata  
 occurs within someone's consciousness,  
 but it is not located externally or internally.<sup>36</sup>

Referring to the same theme, *The Amassing of the Rare and Sublime* states:

O Shantimati, from the night that I awakened to manifestly perfect buddhahood to the night that I pass into nirvana, [111a] I will not have spoken even a single syllable of spiritual teachings.

Some ignorant people say that this means he did not teach in the ultimate sense, only in the relative sense. But they seem to be confused about what is actually so—that enlightened speech, which is beyond words and letters, seems to be expressed in words and letters that conform to the perceptions of beings.

Therefore, regarding these cycles of the Buddha's words, which manifested in the perceptions of those to be guided, let us put aside the question of whether he taught in a single or in numerous locations. When those to be guided differ in three ways—in terms of bias, character, and interest—what each of them hears the Tathagata speak will be a different teaching, and all of these teachings will occur simultaneously. In *The Majestic State of Meditative Absorption*, we read the following:

Benefactor of the world, a single instance of your enlightened  
speech  
arises as sounds that accord with different interests.  
Each one thinks, "This is what the Victorious One taught me."  
That is why you smile.

Moreover, the sutra *Prophetic Enlightened Intent* states:

In a single instance of vajra speech—  
nonconceptual, unchanging, and delightful—  
there are many different interpretations  
based on the mentalities of those to be guided.

Because it seemed to some that the Buddha spoke these three cycles of teachings in succession at different times, there exists such a classification. As *The Intermediate-Length "Mother"* indicates:

How marvelous that in the human world there occurred the second turning of the wheel of dharma!

According to *The Perfection of Sublime Knowing in Seven Hundred Stanzas*:

Restating his teaching three times, [11b] he turned the wheel of dharma in twelve ways.<sup>37</sup>

There are also cases in which what the single Teacher spoke on a single occasion in a single place was perceived as different teachings by the individuals to be guided. The sutra *The Array of Treasure Urns* states:

On that occasion, some bodhisattvas heard a variety of teachings about supreme compassion, while others heard a variety of teachings about the characterization of phenomena as nonexistent.

As we find in *The Definitive Commentary on Enlightened Intent*:

. . . for while different teachings were spoken, they were not explained in separate places on separate occasions.

You may wonder, “Doesn’t the preceding citation disprove the claim that the Buddha ever spoke in stages?” However, the intended meaning of the foregoing passages is that a single theme of the teachings is subject to different analyses and that no other location or occasion is involved; but this does not imply that he did not speak on other topics in other places and at other times.

### III. THE BUDDHA’S NIRVANA

Then, at age eighty-two, the Buddha saw that he could no longer ensure benefit by continuing to manifest physically, so it became his intention to demonstrate his passing into nirvana. The sutra *The Exalted Passing into Complete Nirvana* states:

At this time, when the life span is one hundred years,  
it is only fitting that I pass into nirvana at eighty.  
But for your sake, O brahmin,  
I will endeavor to prolong my life for an additional two.<sup>38</sup>

The ordinary scriptural sources state that he lived for eighty years, whereas the extraordinary sources state that he lived to be eighty-two.<sup>39</sup> [12a] Although different methods of calculation are involved, these sources are considered to be in fundamental agreement. An excellent explanation is given by the master Bhavadeva, who states that if one counts the actual years, there were eighty, whereas if one counts from the Buddha’s birth (disregarding the ten months he spent in the womb) and adds up the intercalary months, one arrives at a total of eighty-two. That is, by separately counting the intercalary month that was traditionally added every three years, at the end of eighty years one obtains a total of twenty-four months (or two years) extra, thus giving the total of eighty-two; there are also the two months by which the Buddha deliberately extended his life. Alternatively, there are twenty days that can be counted as the

equivalent of two extra years; both the “year” of his birth and “year” of his passing into nirvana are counted as full years, though each is only ten days long.<sup>40</sup>

In any event, he passed into nirvana while lying between two shala trees in the town of Kushinagara, the region in which the Malla, a clan of powerful athletes, arose. His funeral pyre spontaneously burst into flames, and his sacred remains were divided into eight portions. One of these was given to the Malla clan of Kushinagara, one to the Malla clan of the region of Papa, one to the Mahabuluga clan of the warrior class in the region of Avakalpana, one to the brahmins of Vishnudvipa, one to the Shakya clan of Kapilavastu, and one to the Licchavi clan of Vaishali. One was worshiped by the Bheda clan of the brahmin class of Magadha. The vase that held the Buddha’s remains was given to the brahmins Drona and Sama.<sup>41</sup> The ashes from his funeral pyre were taken by the Pippala clan of the brahmin class. The clans all went their separate ways with their portions, which they enshrined in great stupas.

Of his canine teeth, [12b] the fourth was taken to the naga domain by the nagas of the city of Ravana.<sup>42</sup> The third was worshiped by the king of the rakshasa demons of Kalinga. The second was given to Ajatashatru, the king of Magadha, as his share; this, together with the relics that multiplied from it, was enshrined in a stupa ornamented with designs of lotus garlands. These relics were later brought with honor to Tibet and are said to reside at present in the White Stupa at Samyé. The first tooth was brought with honor by Indra to the Trayastrimsha abode.<sup>43</sup>

All of this is referred to in *The Scriptural Transmission of Vinaya*:

Of the eight portions of the Seer’s remains, including the canine teeth,

seven were worshiped by people in the human world.<sup>44</sup>

Of that sublime being’s four canine teeth,

one was worshiped in the Trayastrimsha abode,

a second in the lovely city of Rajagriha,

a third in the country of the king of Kalinga,

while the fourth canine tooth of this sublime being

was worshiped by the naga king in the city of Ravana.

King Ashoka, dwelling in Pataliputra,

spread the contents of the seven stupas far and wide.

By the power of this act, the earth, the foundation of our prosperity,

was clearly adorned with the tangible signs of the king's aspirations.

In this way, the Seer's remains were highly honored by gods, nagas, human sovereigns, kinnaras, and yaksha lords as they worshiped and venerated them.

Thus, the portions of the remains, including the four teeth, were kept as objects of worship in the different domains. [13a] In particular, in keeping with his aspirations in previous lives and his miraculous abilities, the Buddhist king Ashoka, the son of King Patala, took the seven portions left in our human world and, on the Indian subcontinent and in surrounding regions, erected as many stupas as there are grains in two handfuls of sand. There were said to be ten million such stupas, or chaityas. This is what *The Fortunate Eon* means by "the Buddha's remains will continue to increase."



From *The Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems: A Treatise Elucidating the Meaning of the Entire Range of Spiritual Approaches*, this is the first chapter, a classification of the histories concerning the Teacher.