TAKASAKI JIKIDO

AN INTRODUCTION TO BUDDHISM

Translated by Rolf W. Giebel
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Preface to the English Version

This book is based upon notes prepared by the author for general lectures on Buddhism which he has been giving to students at a number of universities in Tokyo since around 1960. The initial version of the present work first saw the light of day as part of a textbook for university students entitled *Bukkyō ippan* (Buddhism in General) which was compiled in concert with professors specializing in Chinese and Japanese Buddhism and published by the Department of Buddhist Studies at Komazawa University in Tokyo. Then, at a later date, the author was approached by the Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai (University of Tokyo Press) to write an introductory work on Buddhism for the edification of the general reading public. By permission of the Department of Buddhist Studies at Komazawa University, he accordingly extracted those sections of the above textbook which he had himself written ("Outline of Buddhism" and "Indian Buddhism"), to which he then made some additions and corrections and also appended a brief history of Buddhism covering not only India but also China and Japan. This was then published in 1983 under the title of *Bukkyō nyūmon* (An Introduction to Buddhism), of which the present work is an English translation.

The author's aim in writing this book was first and foremost to present to Japanese readers, familiar with traditional Japanese Buddhism which boasts of a history spanning more than one thousand three hundred years, a picture in concrete terms of the characteristics of Buddhism as established in India. In doing so, it was hoped to revive an interest in Bud-
dhism, which in the present age tends to be waning, and not only to consider in retrospect Japan's cultural traditions but also to offer some pointers for new developments of Buddhism in the future.

To this end, the author decided against adopting a format of presentation based for example directly upon the teachings of the founder Śākyamuni or one reflecting historical developments. Instead, he undertook to present a tentative reconstruction of the systematized body of Buddhist doctrine in the form it assumed once it had been firmly established several hundred years after the death of the historical Buddha, and it was his wish to consider Buddhism in all its ramifications within this framework. The frame of reference adopted here was first of all that provided by the Three Treasures of the Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha (the three factors which constitute Buddhism as a religion, namely, its founder, his teaching, and the religious community). Secondly, on the assumption that the corpus of Buddhist doctrine sets forth a teaching aspiring to the Buddhist goal of Nirvāṇa, the exposition of its doctrines was organized within the framework of the Four Noble Truths, consisting of the observation of suffering in human life, the inquiry into the causes of this suffering, the suppression of suffering through the removal of its causes, and cultivated practice for the realization of this goal. This latter framework is one which has been traditionally adopted in treatises such as the Abhidharma-kośa-bhāṣya.

The mode of presentation as outlined above inevitably resulted in an overall format resembling that of the Abhidharma-kośa-bhāṣya and other Abhidharma treatises. However, so far as the history of Japanese Buddhism is concerned, the teachings of the Mahāyāna scriptures occupy a position of special importance. Consequently, some discussion of Mahāyāna Bud-
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dhism also became necessary. The doctrines of Mahāyāna Buddhism were accordingly taken up for consideration within the bounds covered by each of the major doctrinal topics and were described in terms of developed forms of basic Buddhist doctrine. As a result it is to be feared that discussions of Mahāyāna Buddhism in the present work have remained somewhat lacking in overall unity, but it is hoped that the final chapter on the history of Buddhism will serve to compensate for this shortcoming to some extent.

Ever since having first conceived of the idea for the initial draft of this book, the author has consulted a large number of similar works by Japanese writers. Among these, he is especially indebted to Bukkyō hanron 仏教汎論 (Outline of Buddhism; Tokyo, 1947) by the late Dr. Ui Hakju 宇井伯壽 for the idea of organizing the work as a whole within the framework of the Three Treasures, although it should be mentioned that Dr. Ui's work differs completely in its conception from the present work in that its chapters are divided and arranged according to schools and sects.

At the same time, the author has also received inspiration from the writings of a number of foreign scholars so far as his basic grasp of Buddhist doctrine is concerned. Foremost among these is The Central Conception of Buddhism (London, 1923) by Th. Stcherbatsky. In addition, Buddhism: Its Essence and Development (Oxford, 1951) by E. Conze and the section on Buddhism in Philosophies of India (Princeton, 1951) by H. Zimmer have also proved to be illuminating in regard to certain concepts. The above are all works which were used by the author as textbooks at Komazawa University during the 1960's and have now become part of fond memories of younger days.

As was noted above, in accordance with the publisher's
demands, the original Japanese version of this work aimed at meeting the requirements of a book directed at the general reading public. Consequently, mention of technical terms in the original Sanskrit and Pāli was kept to an absolute minimum, all notes including citations of sources were done away with completely, and in the bibliography only general introductory works and Japanese translations of original texts were noted. But in spite of the care taken in facilitating the reader’s understanding, the Japanese edition would appear to have met with approval not so much as a book for the general reader but rather as a reference work or textbook for students at university, probably because of the inherent difficulties entailed in comprehending Buddhist doctrine and the unfamiliarity it holds for the modern Japanese.

It was thus indeed fortunate that the Board of Directors of the Tōhō Gakkai 東方學會 or Institute of Eastern Culture, one of the most distinguished institutions in Japan in the field of Oriental studies, should have seen fit to recognize this book as being of value and have decided to undertake the publication of an English translation in view of the fact that there would seem to have been few, if any, works to appear in European languages in recent years which provide the reader with an all-embracing conspectus of the whole spectrum of Buddhist thought and history. For this the author feels greatly honoured and is most grateful, in particular to Dr. Nagao Gadjin 長尾雅人 and Dr. Tamaki Kōshirō 王城康四郎. It was further decided to add citations of important sources and a bibliography of basic English reference works to this English version as well as to supplement technical terms in Sanskrit and Pāli. It was thus that this work came to be published in its present form.

The second point in which the author considers himself to
have been rather fortunate is that a most suitable translator was found to take on the task of rendering the original Japanese text into English. The translator, Mr. Rolf W. Giebel, has been studying for several years under the tutelage of the author at the Department of Indian Philosophy and Sanskrit Philology, Faculty of Letters, University of Tokyo, specializing in the field of late Indian Mahāyāna Buddhism, in particular the Sarvatathāgatatattvasamgraha, and is at present engaged in preparing a doctoral dissertation. The author wishes to take this opportunity to express his deep gratitude to the translator for the time and care expended in the preparation of this translation.

In addition, the author is also indebted to Mr. Sako Toshio, also a postgraduate student of the Department of Indian Philosophy and Sanskrit Philology at the University of Tokyo, for his assistance in the compilation of the bibliography. The list of general and other works on Buddhism in European languages which he prepared was so extensive that it proved to be quite a difficult task to decide which works to select; a compromise solution was found by restricting ourselves to only relatively recent works. The author wishes to thank him also for his cooperation.

Finally, mention must be made of Mr. Yanase Hiroshi, secretary-general of the Tōhō Gakkai, who first proposed publishing an English version of the Japanese original and who took charge with meticulous care of the complete process of publication from beginning to end, and also of all the other staff members of the Tōhō Gakkai, including the former secretary-general, Mr. Ishida Ichirō. The author tenders his sincere thanks to them all for their support and cooperation.

15 March 1987

TAKASAKI Jikido
A Note on Foreign Words

1. Since this book is intended for both the general and the specialist reader, it has been decided to use orthodox transliterations with diacritical marks for Sanskrit and Pāli terms throughout, rather than adopting simplified spellings in the text and adding a glossary with orthodox spellings. As long as the reader unfamiliar with Sanskrit or Pāli bears in mind (i) that vowels are pronounced for the most part as in French or Italian, (ii) that e and o are pronounced invariably long, (iii) that the vowel r is pronounced similarly to ri, (iv) that a macron (˘) placed over a vowel indicates lengthening of the vowel, (v) that an ā following a consonant is a sign of aspiration, (vi) that c is a palatal, pronounced as the English ch, and (vii) that both the palatal sibilant ś and the cerebral sibilant š may for practical purposes be pronounced like the English sh, it is hoped that he or she will not be caused any undue inconvenience on account of the retention of orthodox transliteration.

2. It has been attempted to give technical terms in both Sanskrit and Pāli (and Chinese) whenever applicable, with the Sanskrit generally preceding the Pāli form; one exception to this is the proper names occurring in the account of Śākyamuni’s life in chapter 1, where the Pāli form has been given precedence. In either case, only the latter form given has been identified as Pāli (P.) or Sanskrit (Skt.). The occurrence of only one such term may mean either that there exists no corresponding or relevant Pāli (or Sanskrit) term, or that the Pāli and Sanskrit are identical. This distinction will in many cases be clear from the context, but in cases of doubt reference should be made to the General Index. In some cases, however, it has not been deemed necessary to give both forms.

3. In the case of Chinese, the Wade-Giles system of romanization has been used throughout, and for Japanese the modified Hepburn system as found in Kenkyūsha’s New Japanese-English Dictionary
(4th ed., Tokyo 1974) has been adopted, while for Korean the McCune-Reischauer system has been used. The pronunciation of Chinese characters in Chinese and Japanese equivalents of technical terms and proper names has generally been omitted from the text; this will be found in the Character Index. The order of giving names follows the Chinese and Japanese practice, with the family name preceding the personal name.
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INTRODUCTION

What is Buddhism?

Buddhism is, literally speaking, the teaching of the Buddha, just as Christianity is the teaching of Christ and Muham-madanism (Islam) the teaching of Mohammad. “Buddha” (佛) here refers to the Buddha Śākyamuni (釋迦牟尼佛), the historical founder of Buddhism. Buddhism as the Buddha’s teaching represents the truth which Śākyamuni, having already himself realized, expounded to others so that they too might come to realize it, and this truth which he taught is referred to as the “Law” (dharma, P. dhamma, 法). Thus another common designation for Buddhism is the “Buddha’s Law” (佛法), or the truth expounded by the Buddha.

But why did Śākyamuni set about to teach what he had realized to others? Or, in other words, for what purpose did the Buddha’s teaching arise? It was out of the hope that those who heard the teaching might strive to practise in accordance with that teaching so that they too might achieve the same enlightenment as Śākyamuni himself had. Achieving that same enlightenment, they too would become Buddhas, or “awakened” beings. Thus, practically speaking, Buddhism is the teaching for the purpose of becoming a Buddha. Since the practice of spiritual cultivation is referred to as a “path,” Buddhism is also called the “Path to Buddhahood” or the “Buddhist Path” (佛道).

The word buddha was originally transliterated into Chinese as fu-t'u (浮圖), which was in turn pronounced *photo→*foto→hoto in ancient Japan, eventually becoming hotōke. The Chinese character fo (佛),
the character most commonly used in the meaning of “Buddha,” corresponds to *but, a corrupted form of buddha in which the final vowel had been dropped. Later, however, the form fo-t'o (佛陀), a transliteration of the more correct form, was also used.

As an Indic term corresponding to “Buddhism” in the sense of “the teaching of the Buddha” (佛敎), buddha-sāsana (P. buddha-sasana: instruction or teaching of the Buddha) may be mentioned.1 In present-day India, when Buddhism is discussed in contrast to, for example, Hinduism or the Jain religion, it is referred to as Bauddha or Bauddha-dharma. Bauddha is a derivative of buddha and means “concerning or belonging to the Buddha,” “Buddhist follower,” “Buddhist teaching,” etc.

The Chinese term fo-fa (佛法: Buddha’s Law) clearly corresponds to the Sanskrit buddha-dharma, but owing to the plurality of meanings inherent in the word dharma, as will be discussed later, it is difficult to give a single, all-embracing definition of this term. In Japan, it is this term (pronounced Buppō) and not the aforementioned Bukkyō (佛敎) which has been the traditional appellation for the Buddhist religion. Buddhist followers considered the authority of the “Buddha’s Law” to be absolute and on a higher plane than regal law or the secular authority of the state (王法: law of the king), although in actual practice, however, the “Buddha’s Law” and those who recognized its supremacy did have to bow to the authority of secular law.

The term rendered above as “Buddhist Path” (佛道) appears for example in the “Prayer for the Universal Dedication of Merit” (普回向文), common to many branches of Chinese and Japanese Buddhism, which runs as follows: “We pray that we may take this merit and spread it universally to all, so that we and sentient beings may all together accomplish the Buddhist Path” (願以此功德 普及於一切 我等與衆生 皆共成佛道). Jap. Negawaku wa kono budoku o motte amaneku issai ni oyoboshi, warera to shūjō to mina tomo ni butsudō o jōzen koto o. According to the Sanskrit version of the Lotus Sūtra (Saddharmapundarika-sūtra), from the Chinese translation (妙法蓮華經) of which the above prayer is taken, the original Sanskrit term corresponding to “Buddhist Path” here is agrā bodhi,2 meaning “supreme enlightenment” and thus referring to the unsurpassed and perfect enlightenment of the Buddha (anuttara-samyak-sambodhi, 無上正等覺). In other works the same Chinese rendering “Buddhist Path” (佛道) is found to correspond to such terms as “the path of the bodhisattva” (bodhisattva-mārga) and “the path to enlightenment” (bodhi-mārga, bodhi-patha), and hence it is difficult to identify it with any single Sanskrit term. In Japan, this same term (pro-
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nounced Butsudō) has been used traditionally in contrast to the name of the native religion, Shintō (神道: the way of the gods), although it would be more accurate to say that the name “Shintō” itself actually came into use only after knowledge of the rival religion Buddhism had entered Japan. In the Chinese context, the term was perhaps interpreted on the same level as “the path of the spirits” (鬼道) and “the path of the gods” (神道).

Buddha, Dharma, and Samgha: The Three Constituents of Buddhism

The above brief definition of Buddhism already hints of itself at the three constituent factors of Buddhism. The first is the Buddha, for if it had not been for the existence of the Buddha, then there would be no Buddhism. From a historical perspective, had the Buddha Śākyamuni not been born into this world, Buddhism as we know it today would not have arisen. Doctrinally speaking, Buddhism begins with the recognition of the appearance in history of the Buddha, in other words by accepting the fact that Śākyamuni attained enlightenment, perfected the path, and became an enlightened one.

But what if Śākyamuni, after having attained Buddhahood, had chosen not to speak of the content of his enlightenment to others? In that case, this knowledge would have remained locked up in his heart until the time of his death, when it would have disappeared forever without a trace. Then there would have been no possibility of Buddhism being established as a religion. Herein lies the historic importance of Śākyamuni’s revelation of the truth through his teaching. For us today, it is only through the heritage of his teaching, the Dharma, that we come to know of the truth or “Law” which he realized. Thus the truth that is expressed in the teaching, namely, the Dharma, represents the second of the three basic constituents of Buddhism.

Now, since the Buddhist Dharma presupposes the existence
of those who would listen to the teaching, so does the “Buddhist path” or the way leading to Buddhahood come into being only when there exist those who would tread it. The community of practitioners who listen to the teaching of the Buddha and cultivate the path leading to Buddhahood is called the samgha (僧伽, also abbreviated to 僧). This word originally signified the community of disciples assembled around the founder of the faith, Śākyamuni, but more broadly applied, it refers to the communities of followers in all regions and in all periods of Buddhist history. Without the existence of this religious community and the transmission of the Buddhist Dharma from one generation of disciples to the next, Buddhism would probably not have survived until the present day. The existence of the Saṃgha thus represents the element indispensable for the perpetuation of the religion, and so it is counted as the third constituent of Buddhism.

These three elements, namely, (1) the founder (Buddha), (2) the teaching (Dharma), and (3) the community (Saṃgha), are because of their essential importance to Buddhism known as the “Three Treasures” (tri-ratna, ratna-traya, P. ratana-tīya, 三寶).

The above three constituents correspond to the three conditions modern scholars of religion consider necessary for the establishment of founded religions: a founder, a doctrine (scriptures), and a religious community (church). In contrast, natural or ethnic religions have no known founder. Likewise, since membership of such religions is determined by birth, no particular rituals of initiation or conversion to the religious community are performed. The religious doctrine is also rather simple and lacks systematic organization. In the case of Japanese religion, the Shintō faith centred on shrines (Jinja Shintō, 神社神道) and typified by a variety of festivals in honour of the tutelary deities of local villages and communities is an example of a natural religion, whereas the Tenri faith (Tenri-kyō, 天理教) and other religions having organized religious congregations are founded religions. The three great world religions of Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam are all founded religions that grew out of the ethnic religions of
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Hinduism, Judaism, and the Arab indigenous faith, but which have at the same time transcended the bounds of ethnicity to achieve a more universal appeal, thus attaining the status of world religions. Founded religions are generally considered to possess the latent quality—namely, universality of their teachings—necessary for becoming world religions.

Taking Refuge in the Three Treasures

For a Buddhist, the Three Treasures represent the fundamental objects of faith. When converting to Buddhism, the first requirement is to accept the Three Treasures as one’s spiritual refuge (śārāṇa, P. saraṇa, 歸依處). This act of taking refuge in the Three Treasures is usually performed by reciting the following formula:

To the Buddha for refuge I go. (Buddham śāraṇam gacchāmi, 南無歸依佛)
To the Dharma for refuge I go. (Dharmam śāraṇam gacchāmi, 南無歸依法)
To the Saṅgha for refuge I go. (Saṅgham śāraṇam gacchāmi, 南無歸依僧)

Next, in explanation of why the Three Treasures are deemed worthy as a spiritual refuge, it is stated as follows: ³)

The Buddha is a refuge because he is supreme among all those with two feet.
The Dharma is a refuge because it is supreme among all things free of passion (i.e., all pure things).
The Saṅgha is a refuge because it is supreme among all communities.

Here, the phrase “supreme among all those with two feet”
(兩足尊) means supreme among those who walk on two feet, namely, mankind, and is an expression of respect for the founder Śākyamuni, the man who was become Buddha. The Saṃgha, on the other hand, is referred to as “supreme among all communities” (和合尊) because, with its keynote of equality and harmony, it sees itself as the most ideal of all human social groups. Finally, the reason that the Dharma is described as “supreme among all things free of passion” (離欲尊) is that the founder’s teaching is regarded as the true “Law,” expounded for the purpose of leading to the ideal state free of all desires and known as nirvāṇa: the original goal of the Saṃgha was for the teacher and his disciples to create a harmonious community on the basis provided by this Dharma. It is worthy of note that these three objects of spiritual refuge and support contain in essence nothing of a transcendental or absolute nature, but were rather models of human perfection with their central focus on man himself.

In Sri Lanka and other countries of the Southern tradition of Buddhism, the formula for taking refuge in the Three Treasures is regularly chanted three times in the Pāli language. The original Pāli, equivalent in meaning to the Sanskrit version cited above, is as follows: Buddham saraṇāṃ gacchāmi, Dhammaṃ saraṇāṃ gacchāmi, Saṃghaṃ saraṇāṃ gacchāmi.40

Conversion to Buddhism also involves the acceptance of a moral code of conduct. The corpus of monastic discipline (vinaya-pitaka, 律藏) which was transmitted by the Mūlasarvāstivāda school, brought from India to China and translated into Chinese by I-ching (義淨; 635–713), stipulates that at the ceremony of ordination, after recital of the above formula of refuge, the following is to be recited thrice:50

I take refuge in the Buddha, supreme among all two-legged creatures. (皈依佛兩足中尊)
I take refuge in the Dharma, supreme among all that is free of passion. (皈依法離欲中尊)
I take refuge in the Saṃgha, supreme among all communities.
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This is in turn followed by the next formula, also recited three times, indicating the completion of the act of taking refuge:

I have completed taking refuge in the Buddha. (歸依佛
I have completed taking refuge in the Dharma. (歸依法
I have completed taking refuge in the Sangha. (歸依僧

In addition to the above formulae for taking refuge in the Three Treasures, the following verses, widely used even today by Buddhists in Japan where they are referred to as *Sanki-ramon* (三歸禮: Formula for Paying Homage to the Three Refuges), may also be noted (the English translation follows the Japanese version):

I take refuge in the Buddha, praying that together with all sentient beings I shall deeply penetrate (in understanding) the treasury of scriptures (sūtra-piṭaka) and that my wisdom become like the ocean (in breadth and depth). (自歸依佛 當願衆生 體解大道 發無上意, Jap. *Mizukara hotoke ni kie shi-tatematsu; masa ni negawaku wa shujō to tomo ni, daidō o taige shite, mujō o okosan.*)

I take refuge in the Dharma, praying that together with all sentient beings I shall deeply penetrate (in understanding) the treasury of scriptures (sūtra-piṭaka) and that my wisdom become like the ocean (in breadth and depth). (自歸依法 當願衆生 深入經藏 智慧如海, Jap. *Mizukara hō ni kie shi-tatematsu; masa ni negawaku wa shujō to tomo ni, fukaku kyōzō ni irtite, chie umi no gotoku naran.*)

I take refuge in the Sangha, praying that together with all sentient beings I shall exercise control in the great assembly (of followers) and that all may be without obstruction. (自歸依僧 當願衆生 統理大衆 一切無礙, Jap. *Mizukara sō ni kie shi-tatematsu; masa ni negawaku wa shujō to tomo ni, daishō o tōri shite, issai mushi naran.*)

Here, the formula for taking refuge in the Three Treasures is accompanied by a vow for the salvation of all sentient beings, thus reflecting the altruistic standpoint of Mahāyāna Buddhism. (It should be mentioned that this formula is taken from the “Chapter on Pure Conduct” of the Chinese translation of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*, which belongs to the Mahāyāna tradition.)
The formula for taking refuge in the Three Treasures can be summarized simply as: "Homage to the Three Treasures" (nama ratna-trayāya, 南無三寶), a phrase which is often found at the beginning of Buddhist manuscripts. In Japanese, this same phrase (pronounced namu sanbō, sometimes abbreviated to namu san) has become an exclamation of surprise, annoyance, etc., not unlike the English expression, "Oh, my God!", but even this is not to be heard very often nowadays. Namu corresponds to the Chinese transliteration (南無) of the Sanskrit expression of greeting and respect, namas, which is frequently heard in India even today in the salutation Namaste ("I pay you my respects.").

The Absolute Nature of the Dharma

As will be now evident from the above, at the outset the Three Treasures of Buddhism referred to the founder Sākyamuni, his teaching, and his direct disciples. But with the demise of the founder, the meaning of each of the Three Treasures underwent changes. Firstly, the "Buddha" was no longer the living founder, but instead gradually assumed a mystical dimension in the memories of the disciples. The elucidation of the question "What is (or was) the Buddha?" became a matter of major concern to succeeding generations of followers, and in the course of these inquiries the various Buddhas which we know today made their appearance, coming to occupy a position as ultimate objects of faith and worship comparable to that of an absolute deity. The "Dharma" or teaching of Sākyamuni, on the other hand, was collected by his disciples and passed down to later generations in the form of scriptures called sūtras, but a great zeal in the ceaseless quest for truth found its expression in the compilation of new sūtras, as is evidenced particularly in Mahāyāna Buddhism, and in the development of advanced interpretations of doctrinal matters. In modern times, Buddhists express their taking of refuge in the Buddha
and the Dharma by enshrining an image of one of the many Buddhas as an object of worship and reciting the sūtras before the image. As for the “Samgha,” although it is customary to understand this term in the sense of the body of renunciant practitioners and professional religious instructors, as an object of veneration in which to take refuge it is normally represented by its idealized form of the bodhisattvas and saints (arhat), or even by the founders of the various sects.

For example, the formula “Homage to the Buddha Amida (=Amitābha/Amitāyus, the Buddha of Infinite Light or Life)” (南無阿彌陀佛, Jap. Namu Amida Butsu) may be regarded as a profession of taking refuge in the Buddha, the formula “Homage to the Lotus Sūtra” (南無妙法蓮華經, Jap. Namu Myōhōrenge-kyō) as a profession of taking refuge in the Dharma, and the formulae “Homage to the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara” (南無觀世音菩薩, Jap. Namu Kanzeon Bosatsu) and “Homage to the Great Master Universally Illuminating and Adámantine One” (南無大師遍照金剛, Jap. Namu Daishi Henjō-kongō) as professions of taking refuge in the Samgha (“Universally Illuminating and Adámantine One” in the latter being the initiatory name of Kūkai, the founder of the Shingon sect or Esoteric branch of Japanese Buddhism).

Thus the Three Treasures are equally regarded as objects of refuge and worship. But when the matter is considered in greater depth from a doctrinal standpoint, the Buddhist position asserts that the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Samgha ultimately resolve into one and the same value, this ultimate value being none other than the “Dharma.” The reasoning behind this is as follows: As long as the Dharma is looked upon as the teaching of the Buddha, then the basis of the system’s values lies rooted in the Buddha; but since the Buddha is by definition “one who has awakened to or realized the truth,” then “the truth which he realized” (adhistama-dharmā, 所證法)—Dharma in the sense of that
which is realized rather than that which is taught—is absolute, eternal, and unchanging, regardless of whether the Buddha should appear in this world or not. And, what is more, it is this “realized truth” which provides in fact the basis of the “taught truth” (deśana-dharma, 所說法), being known as the “Dharma-realm” (dharma-dhātu, 法界) or “thusness” (tathatā, 真如). Furthermore, the Saṃgha is a community of “persons whose purpose it is to realize this truth,” and so it follows that the Three Treasures are ultimately a single entity unified through the medium of the Dharma (a fact expressed in Buddhist parlance as “the Three Treasures as one entity” [一體三寶]). The anthropocentric leaning of early Buddhism owed its very viability to this premise of the absolute nature of a non-personal Dharma, and later Mahāyāna Buddhism is fundamentally the same in this respect. The latter, however, because of its emphasis of the Buddha’s actual realization of the truth, came to seek for an absolute being in the sense of one who has “become one with the Dharma” (tathāgata, 如來: literally, “thus-come” or “thus-gone”) and in whom the Buddha and the Dharma have become identical, eventually arriving at the concept of the Buddha’s “Dharma-body” (dharma-kāya, 法身). Subsequently, the Buddha was increasingly brought to the fore, with an attendant upsurge in the “religiousness” of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Summed up in a word, the distinguishing feature of Buddhism may be said to lie in its goal of union with the truth or a merging with the absolute. (When considered in comparison with other religions, this quality represents in Buddhism a characteristic which presents a striking contrast to monotheistic religions such as Christianity.)

Religious and philosophical systems holding as their goal union with the absolute are generally defined as varieties of mysticism. Christianity and Islam both have their mystic branches, but these can hardly be called mainstream. In contrast, the Hindu religion in In-
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dia, for example in its advocacy of the union of ātman (the individual) with Brahman (the absolute), features the ideal of merging with the absolute. In this respect, Buddhism may be regarded as being firmly rooted in this orthodox Indian tradition. In Japan the religious tradition has also been strongly coloured by an emphasis of the union of the divine and man, or rather by an essential non-differentiation between the two. The pioneering Japanese scholar of religion, Aneesaki Masaharu (紺崎正治; 1873–1949), termed this native tradition a “religion of the union of god and man,” contrasting it with “religions of the separation of god and man,” such as Christianity.

Mahāyāna and Hinayāna: The “Greater” and “Lesser” Vehicles

In answer to the query “What is Buddhism?” we have considered in the above the framework of Buddhism in the light of its basic components, namely, the Three Treasures of the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha. A more detailed discussion of the specific features of these three constituent factors will be taken up in the following chapters, but before doing so, there still remain some matters which must be dealt with in advance.

Firstly, although we have up to this point spoken of Buddhism in the singular as if it were a single, homogeneous system, in actual fact there is Japanese Buddhism and then there is also the Buddhism of Sri Lanka, of China, of Tibet, etc., each differing to a greater or lesser degree from the other traditions. Therefore, it becomes necessary for us to specify just which of these manifold forms of Buddhism will be dealt with in the present work.

The form of Buddhism most familiar to the Japanese is that known as Mahāyāna (大乗) Buddhism, or the Buddhism of the “Great Vehicle.” The Buddhism of Sri Lanka and most Southeast Asian countries, on the other hand, represents the form of Buddhism known as Theravāda (Skt. Sthaviravāda,
The Ancestor School: Doctrine of the Elders, which, historically speaking, belongs to the current of Buddhism labelled Hinayana (small, Lesser [or Inferior] Vehicle) by adherents of Mahayana Buddhism. For the Japanese (and also for Chinese, Tibetans, and Koreans) it is relatively easy, both intellectually and emotionally, to comprehend the why's and wherefores of Buddhism from the Mahayana standpoint.

However, as has been shown by modern scholars of Buddhist thought, the movement which produced what is now known as the Mahayana was a reform movement that made its appearance approximately five hundred years after the time of Sakyamuni and advocated teachings which were by no means the unaltered word of the historical Buddha. The Buddha's teaching (or Dharma) has been transmitted under the name of agama (阿含: literally, "transmission" or "tradition"), and while Buddhists of the Mahayana do not necessarily disregard these teachings, they nonetheless possess their own Mahayana sutras which they regard as authoritative, and these they value as the Buddha's own word, asserting that it is in these and nowhere else that the true intent of the Buddha's teaching is to be found. Historically speaking, however, these Mahayana scriptures clearly cannot be said to represent the direct teachings of the Buddha. In other words, the Mahayana was not taught by Sakyamuni.

While it is thus today a matter of common academic knowledge that Mahayana Buddhism is not the firsthand teaching of the Buddha, it must also be noted that even the body of transmitted teachings known as the agama does not by any means represent the unadulterated word of the Buddha. This fact too was first revealed by modern Buddhist scholarship, when it was discovered that there exist considerable differences in the contents of the selfsame agama as preserved in Chinese translations and in the corresponding Pali texts used in Sri Lanka and other countries of the
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Theravāda tradition. Not only that, but the Chinese translations of the āgama themselves consist of texts traditionally held to belong to various schools and the contents of these texts are sometimes found to be mutually conflicting in their views.

The reason for this phenomenon is to be found in the divisions that began to occur in the Buddhist community from about one hundred years after the passing of Śākyamuni, resulting in the formation of numerous schools, each possessing its own version of the transmitted teachings (āgama); these gradually came to incorporate interpretations and views peculiar to each school, thus giving rise to teachings which diverged considerably from the original word of the Buddha. The Mahāyāna movement represented a self-styled attempt to return to the original standpoint of the Buddha, asserting that the views upheld by these various schools impaired any understanding of the Buddha’s true intent.

The target of the Mahāyāna appellative “Inferior Vehicle” (Hinayāna) was none other than the above sectarian dogmatism. The meaning of the term Hinayāna will be explained in detail later, but let it suffice to say at this juncture that it was a reprobatory term directed at those practitioners whose cultivation of the path was performed in anticipation of personal enlightenment only, without any consideration for the plight of the laity. Mahāyāna Buddhism, on the other hand, represented a path leading to enlightenment to be trod by the many, both monk and layman alike. From the standpoint of the leaders of the movement (called bodhisattvas), the path of Mahāyāna practice was an altruistic one, or one of benefitting others, working for the enlightenment of others before seeking final enlightenment for oneself.

The dogma of the various schools was known as abhidharma (P. abhidhamma, transliterated as 阿毘達磨, 阿毘達磨), meaning study “with regard to” or “about” (abhi-) the
Dharma or teaching of the Buddha, in other words "the study of the Dharma" (in which sense it was translated into Chinese as "[study] about the Dharma" [對法]). In the course of research and speculation by the various schools into the teaching of the Buddha as preserved in the āgama, new and original interpretations were gradually incorporated into the body of transmitted teachings.

The body of Abhidharma doctrines available to us today is represented on the one hand by that of the Sarvāstivāda school, preserved primarily in Chinese translations, and on the other by Pāli scriptures transmitted by the Theravāda Buddhism of Sri Lanka. Of these two representative schools, it was the former which most frequently bore the brunt of the attacks of Mahāyāna Buddhism, although this latter was at the same time considerably influenced by the Sarvāstivādins. In order to gain an understanding of the tenets of the Sarvāstivāda school, it is convenient to refer to the representative compendium of the Abhidharma of this school, the Abhidharmakosā-bhāṣya (阿毘達磨) 俱舍論: Exposition of the Treasury of Abhidharma) by Vasubandhu (世親, 天親). In Japan, the Chinese version translated by Hsüan-tsang (玄奘) has been widely read and is still utilized as a compendium of Buddhist doctrines and an introduction to Buddhist thought. (Vasubandhu belongs to about the fifth century A.D. and eventually converted to Mahāyāna Buddhism on the recommendation of his elder brother Asaṅga [無著], composing the Viṃśatikā-vijñaptimātratāsiddhi [唯識二十論: Twenty Verses on the Establishment of Cognition-only]. Thus, although the Viṃśatikā and Abhidharmakosā differ in that the one represents Mahāyāna and the other Hinayāna, there are many points of similarity between the two in regard to matters of doctrine. In fact the school of cognition-only considered itself to represent the Abhidharma of Mahāyāna Buddhism.) Accordingly, when paying due at-
tention to the Buddhist traditions of Japan, it would appear to be most expedient for us to base our answer to the query “What is Buddhism?” upon the Abhidharma as it is expounded in the *Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya*.

Of course, at an academic level, one cannot suppress a desire to acquaint oneself with what the Buddha actually did teach and the manner in which he taught it. By extracting from the corpus of extant early Buddhist scriptures, even though already coloured by sectarian interpretations, the items and tenets to be found in common to them all and then systematically rearranging these, it should be possible to approach to a certain degree the authentic teaching of the Buddha. Some such attempts have in fact been made: Buddhism in its pristine form at the time of the Buddha (or prior to schismatic divisions) is designated as “Primitive Buddhism” or “Early Buddhism,” the very oldest stage being called “Earliest Buddhism” or “Fundamental Buddhism,” and these phases are accordingly distinguished from the later Hinayāna (or Schismatic) Buddhism and Mahāyāna Buddhism. But a historically retrospective inquiry such as this into the original form of Buddhism will not in itself be sufficient to provide us with a full picture of the whole spectrum of Buddhist thought in its entirety. In an introductory study such as the present work, the question of historical precision must be relegated to a secondary position; instead, it would seem preferable to base our presentation of Buddhist thought on that period of development when Buddhism had already established itself as an integrated system, and to further deal with aspects of Mahāyāna doctrine as developments thereof. In the discussions which follow we shall proceed along such lines, dividing the whole into chapters on the basis of synchronic and organizational considerations and examining the historical development of individual topics as the need may arise.
The Buddhist Canon (tri-piṭaka)

Historically speaking, the earliest Buddhist scriptures date from the time when, following the Buddha's death, his disciples assembled to convene a council at which the teachings taught by the Buddha and the various regulations laid down in regard to the monastic community were orally confirmed by recitation (such convocations for the compilation of the scriptures are known as “recitations” or “rehearsals” [saṅgīti, 衆譯]). At this First Council, the Buddha's teaching was called dharma and the monastic regulations vinaya, and these two divisions constituted the whole of the canonical corpus.

Later, with the passing of time, certain points of the Buddha's teaching or Dharma gradually became difficult to understand, and owing to the fact that the Buddha had expounded his teaching in various ways according to the circumstances and the capacities of his audience (this great diversity being figuratively referred to as the “84,000 kinds of teaching” [八萬四千法門]), differences in the manner of exposition had not been unusual, and there were even teachings which appeared to be mutually contradictory. This state of affairs resulted in the need to systematically rearrange the teachings and give them new interpretations. Thus was born the Abhidharma, which may be compared to Christian théologie, in particular Scholasticism. With the establishment of the Abhidharma, the Dharma came to be known as “sūtras” (sūtra, P. sutta; 經: literally, “thread,” [Ch.] in particular “warp”) in the sense that these provided the underlying thread at the basis of the teachings. The Abhidharma, on the other hand, was also called śāstra (P. sattha, 論: treatise) since it consisted of works of commentary and exposition. In this manner the “Three Baskets” (tri-piṭaka, P. ti-piṭaka, 三藏) or the Collections of the Sūtras (sūtra-piṭaka, P. sutta-piṭaka, 經
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The Chinese term san-tsang (三藏 = tri-piṭaka) when attached to the names of such famous monks as Kumārajiva (羅什三藏) and Hsüan-tsang (玄奘三藏) signifies a scholar-monk thoroughly versed in the whole corpus of Buddhist scriptures as represented by the tri-piṭaka, and was an honorific title conferred in China upon particularly illustrious scholar-monks who had engaged in the translation of Buddhist scriptures.

As was noted above, the terms dharma and sūtra originally referred to the scriptures directly expounded by the Buddha (buddha-vacana, 佛語: the word of the Buddha), being also figuratively described as the “teachings from the Golden Mouth” (金口說法, “Golden Mouth” [金口] being a term of respect for the Buddha’s mouth and also, by extension, for his teaching), and were designated as āgama. Āgama means literally “what has been transmitted,” and here signifies the sūtras as a concrete expression of the sacred tradition. Although the scriptures as preserved to this day are not a faithful record of the teachings as emitted by the “Golden Mouth,” they have nonetheless been believed to be so and have been transmitted as such down through the ages.

In the course of their transmission, the scriptures comprising the āgama were divided into groups, such as the Dirgha-āgama (長阿含: Long Tradition; corresponds to the Pāli Digha-nikāya), Madhyama-āgama (中阿含: Medium Tradition; corresponds to the Pāli Majjhima-nikāya), Saṃyukta-āgama (雜阿含: Kindred or [Ch.] Miscellaneous Tradition; corresponds to the Pāli Saṃyutta-nikāya), and Ekottarika-āgama (增壹阿含: “Increasing-by-One Tradition; corresponds to the Pāli Aṅguttara-nikāya), although there were minor
differences between the various Buddhist schools in India in regard to the manner of classifying the scriptures. Furthermore, according to the testimony of the scriptures themselves, there were also methods of classifying the scriptures according to the “ninefold teaching” (nava-aṅga-sāsana, P. nava-aṅga-sāsana, 九分教, 九部經) and “twelvefold teaching” (dvādaśa-aṅga-dharma-pravacana, 十二分教, 十二部經); but today examples of these divisions may be found in only certain portions of the canon, and it is not clear how these categories relate to the scriptural corpus as a whole.

The body of Buddhist scriptures known to us today, however, does not consist of the above Early Canon alone. The majority of sūtras recited daily by Buddhists in Japan, China, and other countries of the Mahāyāna tradition are so-called Mahāyāna sūtras. These Mahāyāna sūtras, starting with the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra (般若波羅蜜多經: Sūtra of the Perfection of Wisdom) and including the Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra (妙法蓮華經: 法華経: Sūtra of the White Lotus of the True Dharma; Lotus Sūtra), Smaller Sukhāvatīvyūha (阿彌陀經: Splendour of the Land of Bliss; Amida Sūtra), Avatamsaka-sūtra (大方廣佛華嚴經; Flower Adornment Sūtra) and Vimalakīrtinirdeśa-sūtra (維摩詰所詰經: Sūtra of Vimalakirti’s Teaching) of early Mahāyāna Buddhism, the Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra (大般涅槃経: Sūtra of the Great Decease), Śrīmālādevīsīṃhānāda-sūtra (勝鬘师子吼一乘大方便 方廣) 経: Sūtra of the Lion’s Roar of Queen Śrīmālā) and Lankāvatāra-sūtra (入楞伽経: Sūtra of the Entry into Laṅka) of the middle phase of Mahāyāna Buddhism, and the Mahāvairocanābhisambodhi-sūtra (大毘盧遮那成佛神變加持経, 大日經: Sūtra of the Realization of Mahāvairocana; Mahāvairocana Sūtra) and Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha-tantra (金剛頂 [一切如來真實攝大乘現證大教王] 経: Tantra of the Compendium of the Truth of All the Tathāgatas; Adamantine Pinnacle Sūtra) of late Mahāyāna Buddhism, are very large in number and diverse in regard to their contents and
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length. On the whole, it may be said that these sūtras gradually appeared in response to developments within Mahāyāna Buddhism, and historically speaking they are products of later ages with no direct link whatsoever with the teachings of the founder, Śākyamuni. In this sense the assertion that "Mahāyāna Buddhism is not the teaching of the Buddha" is quite correct. But the composers of the Mahāyāna sūtras were themselves firmly convinced that it was in these Mahāyāna sūtras that the true intent of the Buddha's teaching was to be found, and that their teachings were of greater profundity and consummation than those of the sūtras contained in the Early Canon. The individual Mahāyāna sūtras were further declared to have been expounded by the Buddha himself, but this claim should be regarded as a profession of the composers' conviction rather than as merely an attempt to lend an aura of authority to these scriptures. The Mahāyāna sūtras do in fact include doctrines representing different levels of development and are of immeasurable importance for the role they played in giving greater depth to Buddhist thought.

In order to justify their claim to be sūtras standing on a par with the Early Canon, Mahāyāna sūtras commence with the traditional introductory phrase, "Thus have I heard ..." (evaṃ mayā śrutam, 如是我聞). And even though the composers of these works gave full rein to their imaginative powers, knowing no bounds to the manner in which they magnified the scale of the time, place, audience, and other elements setting the scene, in principle these Mahāyāna sūtras are held to describe events which took place during the lifetime of the founder, Śākyamuni. In general, the formal definition of a Buddhist sūtra is that it is a work beginning with the phrase "Thus have I heard ..." and ending with the statement that the audience, "enraptured, all rejoiced in the word of the Lord," and so conversely any work which fulfills these formal conditions is recognized as a sūtra.
and included in the canon. It this manner, new sūtras continued to be produced until the final stages of Buddhism in India, and there also exist some sūtras which were composed in Central Asia and China. In China, these sūtras of Chinese origin have, when identified as such, been styled “spurious sūtras” (僞經, 疑經), and the number of sūtras recognized to be so has further increased in recent times as the result of academic research. But when one considers the matter in the light of the origins of the Mahāyāna sūtras, it ought to be quite acceptable to revere even these “spurious sūtras” as sūtras so long as their contents are consistent with Buddhist thought and are considered to be of value.

In China, the range of meaning of the term “sūtra” was further extended so that it came to denote the complete tri-piṭaka. In this case, “sūtra” becomes equivalent in meaning to “sacred scripture,” and the body of scriptures or canon is referred to collectively as the “Great Collection of Scriptures” (大藏經) or the “Complete Scriptures” (一切經). From the initial stages of the introduction of Buddhism to China, the various scriptures belonging to the tri-piṭaka were gradually translated into Chinese, with succeeding dynasties taking an increasing interest in the supervision of this activity. Criteria were established for the inclusion of translated scriptures into the officially recognized corpus, and catalogues were composed to record the works translated and their inclusion into this official corpus. The “Great Collection of Scriptures,” equivalent to the Chinese Buddhist Canon, represents the comprehensive collection of translated scriptures which have been officially recognized in this manner. Among the three divisions of this corpus, the Collection of Sūtras is divided into Hinayāna (or Āgama) sūtras and Mahāyāna sūtras, and the Collection of Abhidharma is similarly divided into Hinayāna treatises and Mahāyāna treatises, but in the case of the Collection of Precepts Mahāyāna Buddhism has no monastic precepts (vinaya) but only a moral code of a more general nature (śīla). The
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Collection of Precepts in the Chinese Canon is made up of five major compilations of monastic discipline, originally belonging to different schools: Caturvargika-vinaya (四分律: Four-Part Vinaya), Pañcavargika-vinaya (五分律: Five-Part Vinaya), Daśabhūnavāra-vinaya (十誡律: Ten-Chapter Vinaya), Mahāsāṃghika-vinaya (摩訶僧祗律), and Mulasarvāstivāda-vinaya (根本說一切有部毘奈耶). Since the Collection of Precepts represents the regulations governing the monastic community, it is only to be expected that each school had its own body of such regulations.

The Collection of Abhidharma in the Chinese Canon includes also commentarial works by Chinese authors. By pushing this way of thinking yet further, it should be permissible to include commentaries and treatises composed by Chinese and Japanese up until the present day. Especially in the case of Japan, works by the founders of each of the different sects are regarded by members of the respective sects as "sacred scriptures," and the usage of the term "sūtra" (Jap. [o-]kyō) is generally extended to cover these works as well. It was from such a standpoint that the editors of the Taishō Edition of the Chinese Buddhist Canon (大正新脩大藏經) published in Japan (1924–1934) included in this edition not only works of Chinese origin but also the sacred scriptures of the various Japanese sects, important commentaries on sūtras and treatises composed by Japanese monks, catalogues, biographical works, etc., producing a truly comprehensive corpus of Sino-Japanese Buddhist literature.

In the above outline of Buddhist scriptures we have based our discussion primarily on the Sino-Japanese Canon, with its long tradition and consisting of Chinese translations and original works by Chinese and Japanese. However, today the literary sources available to us are not limited to the Chinese Canon alone, and include the Pāli Canon used by Theravāda Buddhism and the corpus preserved in the Tibetan language: the former consists of a complete recension of the three divi-
sions of the *tri-piṭaka*, with treatises dating from later ages being classified as "extra-canonical" works, whereas the latter as a whole is divided into the "Buddha’s Teachings" (*bka’-gyur*) and "Treatises" (*bstan’-gyur*), with the main texts of the Collection of Precepts being incorporated in the former and commentaries thereon in the latter, and works by Tibetans being classified as "extra-canonical." In addition, many individual works, written in Sanskrit and other languages and covering all three divisions of the *tri-piṭaka*, have been preserved either *in toto* or in fragments, and these are still being discovered, edited, and published. The Tibetan Canon was further translated into Mongolian and Manchurian, and these recensions are also extant today.

Buddhist scriptures were originally recited from memory and, in accordance with the injunction of Śākyamuni himself, were taught in the regional dialects of India. These were then gradually committed to writing in the language of the region in which each of the Buddhist communities was located. The Pāli language too (defined as the "language of the sacred scriptures") has its origins in one of these regional vernaculars, and it is said to have been committed to writing in about the first century A.D. On the Indian mainland, scriptures recorded in local vernaculars were gradually transposed into Sanskrit; on account of certain vernacular forms which remained in these Sanskritized texts this variety of Sanskrit is referred to as "Buddhist Sanskrit" and distinguished from classical Sanskrit. Buddhist works dating from the Gupta dynasty and later were generally composed in Sanskrit. The Tibetan Canon consists mainly of translations from Sanskrit. Early Chinese translations, on the other hand, were probably made from texts written in North Indian vernaculars and languages of Central Asia; from the fifth century onwards these seem to have been gradually superseded by Sanskrit originals.
CHAPTER ONE

The Life of Śākyamuni

The Buddha Śākyamuni

The founder of Buddhism was Śākyamuni (P. Sakyamuni, 釋迦牟尼). His name Śākyamuni derives from the name of the tribe to which the historical Buddha belonged, the Śākyas, who occupied a part of the Himalayan foothills in northern India (present-day Nepal); the term muni, sometimes translated as "sage of silence," is a term of respect for a recluse devoted to ascetic practices and standing aloof from mundane affairs. Therefore, Śākyamuni means "Sage of the Śākya Clan."

Śākyamuni's personal name is said to have been Siddhārtha (P. Siddhattha, 悉達多), but it does not appear in the early literature. Among fellow ascetics he was known as Gautama (P. Gotama, 喬答摩, 瞿昙), a name said to derive from his family name. But it is unthinkable that his disciples should have called him by his name; instead they used the term of respect Bhagavat (婆伽梵, 世尊: Lord, Blessed One, [Ch.] World-honoured One). Śākyamuni was probably the name by which he was known to the general populace. Of course, it is probable that the use of the term Buddha alone (except in cases of direct address) also gradually spread. As has already been pointed out, buddha means "awakened or enlightened one," and theoretically speaking it is possible for all and everyone to become a Buddha. But in reference to a historical personage, the appellation Buddha is reserved for Śākyamuni alone, for it seems that the Buddhist community restricted
its usage to the founder from an early stage.

The use of the term Buddha Śākyamuni (釋迦牟尼佛) within the Buddhist community seems to date from a somewhat later period, when it became necessary to distinguish the historical Buddha from the Buddhas of the past, whose theoretical existence was postulated as a result of doctrinal interpretations of the concept “Buddha” (which will be discussed in chapter 2). The Buddhas of the past were given names, and even tombs or stūpas were erected in their memory. Still later, with the rise of Mahāyāna Buddhism, many more Buddhas, such as Amitābha and Akṣobhya, became objects of worship and Śākyamuni came to be regarded as the saviour of this world of suffering which we inhabit.

Thus it is evident that within a strictly Buddhist context the most correct appellation for the founder of Buddhism is Śākyamuni. Accordingly, we shall employ this name in the present work too in order to avoid confusion with the term Buddha when the latter refers to a Buddha as an object of worship or to the doctrinal concept of “Buddha,” although we shall not be averse to using the word Buddha in reference to Śākyamuni too, should the context require it.

It is sometimes suggested that since Śākyamuni became a Buddha only upon enlightenment, it is inappropriate to use the term Buddha when referring to the period prior to his enlightenment; and it is a fact that in early biographies he is referred to as a bodhisattva (P. bodhisatta, 菩薩) up until his enlightenment. But to avoid confusion we shall not employ the term bodhisattva in this sense in the following pages. The term Gotama Buddha is also frequently met with. This first appears in the Pāli Theragāthā (Verses of the Elders), but since it is not generally used in the Northern tradition, we shall avoid its use here too.
Biographies of the Buddha

During his lifetime, the founder Šākyamuni was revered by his disciples and lay followers as the head of the Buddhist community, but after his death divine attributes were soon ascribed to him and he was transformed into a transcendental being. As a result, accounts of his life were greatly embellished, and with the passing of time the proportion of mystical and supernatural elements gradually increased.

Accounts of Šākyamuni's life are commonly known as "biographies of the Buddha" (佛傳), and the earliest accounts are found recorded in the Vinaya-piṭaka in connection with the history of the community, in particular the events leading to the establishment of Buddhism and episodes relating to the formulation of the ordinances governing the community. As such their purpose is not to relate the story of Šākyamuni himself; rather, the prime object of interest is the chain of events leading to the birth of the community, beginning with the motive for Šākyamuni's renunciation of palace-life, passing on to his austerities, enlightenment and first sermon, and leading up to the acquisition of disciples and the birth of the community. The next important event as far as the community is concerned was Šākyamuni's death and the accompanying changes in the community. In this case too the principal object in view was no doubt to record the events and to give an account of the establishment of the Collection of Precepts.

But all these important events were of course centred upon the founder Šākyamuni, and with the upsurge of devotion for him the turning points of his life came to be regarded as "exploits": together with the places where they occurred, these "exploits" were committed to the memories of the faithful as "great events" (大事), the four most important being:
(1) His birth at Lumbini.
(2) His enlightenment under the bo tree at Buddhagaya.
(3) The first sermon in the Deer Park at Sarnath.
(4) His death at Kusinara.

In addition, further intervening events, such as his departure from the palace at Kapilavatthu, his ascetic practices and the conquest of Mara the Evil One, his hesitations about setting out to teach immediately after his enlightenment and Brahma’s entreaty, were taken up, and with a gradual accretion of supernatural elements numerous miracles also came to be related in connection with his life.

Later, Sakyamuni’s enlightenment came to be glorified as an event unimaginable for any ordinary human being, and so it was postulated that he had performed the prerequisite “causal practices” (因行) in former lives, thus resulting in the addition of many stories relating to his past lives. These are known as jātaka (本生: stories of past lives) and avadāna (P. apadāna, 譬喻: explanatory or allegorical tales).

Thus, today we have at our disposal a great variety of accounts of the life of Sakyamuni, and it is no easy task to extract from this great diversity the true life story of the historical Buddha. But since our immediate aim is not a biographical study of Sakyamuni’s life, in the following pages we shall limit ourselves to a simple outline centred on the above four major events, with occasional reference to a number of the better known legends.

**Literary Sources on Sakyamuni’s Life:** Literary accounts dealing with Sakyamuni’s life (so-called biographical literature) correspond to two divisions of the Buddhist scriptures, jātaka and avadāna, both products of the mystification and glorification of legends relating to the founder. The former, jātaka, may be considered tales relating to Sakyamuni’s past lives, and have their origins in the conviction that his attainment of enlightenment could not have resulted from virtuous conduct and diligent effort after his birth in this world or from natural qualities alone, but rather that he must have performed myriad prac-
tices represented by the six perfections in the course of innumerable past lives, during which time he cultivated wisdom and accumulated merit, as a result of which he became the Buddha. The jātaka stories as transmitted in the Pāli Canon today number 547, but they are not necessarily interrelated. Rather, they represent allegories and legends current in ancient India which were adapted as stories of Śākyamuni's past lives, and they include stories also found for example in Aesop's Fables and tales which reached Japan at an early date.

In contrast to the jātaka, the accounts of Śākyamuni as found in the avadāna are grounded to a greater degree in Buddhist doctrine, although they too deal with his past lives. In this case, stories are told of Buddhas who had attained enlightenment in the distant past and bodhisattvas and other people who practised under their direction, and the law of cause-and-effect or retributive justice is made explicit by linking these persons of the past with the Śākyamuni of the present, his disciples, and other people associated with him. The principal literary sources of this genre are:


2. Abhinīśkramaṇa-sūtra (佛本行集經: Sūtra of the Renunciation; [Ch.] Collectanea of the Former Practices of the Buddha): a work preserved only in its Chinese translation and belonging to the Dharmaguptaka school (法藏部).


In addition the following purely literary work may also be mentioned:


One feature common to all these sources is the account of the prophecy of Śākyamuni's future enlightenment made to him by the Buddha Dipankara (燃燈佛, 定光如來) when he was practising under this Buddha as a Brahmin youth in one of his former lives, and this event is regarded as the starting point of his long path of religious practice. But it is probable that such stories of Buddhas of the past took root only at a time well after the death of Śākyamuni.
CHAPTER ONE

As was noted above, sources antedating these somewhat stereotyped accounts and thought to be closer to historical fact are to be found in the *Vinaya-piṭaka*; in addition, partial records are found as independent sūtras in the Early Canon. These latter include the *Ariyapariyesana-sutta* (羅摩經: Sūtra of the Noble Quest; [Ch.] Sūtra of Rammaka), an account of the events surrounding Śākyamuni’s enlightenment, the *Dhammacakkavattana* (轉法輪經: Sūtra of the Turning of the Wheel of the Law), which records the first sermon, and the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* (大般涅槃經: Sūtra of the Great Decease), dealing with his death.

_Birth and Renunciation_

According to legend, Śākyamuni was born as the son of Suddhodana (Skt. Śuddhodana, 淨飯王), king of the Śākya tribe, in the Lumbini Gardens on the outskirts of the town of Kapilavatthu (Skt. Kapilavastu). He lost his mother Māyā (摩耶) at an early age and was raised by his aunt and stepmother Mahāpajāpati (Skt. Mahāprajāpati, 大愛道). Perhaps because of the early loss of his mother, he was reflective by nature, with a penchant for contemplation, and seems to have been concerned about the problems of human life from an early age. Upon attaining manhood, he married the princess Yasodharā (Skt. Yaśodharā, 耶輸陀羅) from a neighbouring tribe, and a son Rāhula (羅睺羅) was born to them. But his overwhelmingly strong desire to solve the problems of life was such that he eventually left his wife and child, renounced his position as prince, and departed from the palace in secret. He is said to have been twenty-nine years of age at the time.

At that time it was customary for those in search of spiritual truth to abandon home and spend a life of peregrination and religious practice, visiting teachers and seeking out sages in the course of their wanderings. Such seekers of truth were known as “ascetics” (*ṣrāmaṇa*, P. _samāna_, 沙門: literally, “one who exerts himself”) or, since they lived on alms re-
received from others, as “mendicants” (*bhikṣu, P. *bhikkhu, 比丘).* Śākyamuni too became one of these mendicant ascetics and entered a life of spiritual cultivation.

*Legends Relating to Śākyamuni’s Birth:* According to legendary accounts of Śākyamuni’s life, prior to his birth in this world he was residing in the Tuṣita Heaven, whence he descended and entered Queen Māyā’s womb. Queen Māyā is said to have had a vision in a dream of a white elephant entering her womb, and it is also recorded that she gave birth to the infant prince from her right side. Another legend would have it that immediately after birth the infant took seven steps and proclaimed, “I alone am the honoured one in the heavens and on earth” (天上天下唯我獨尊). A seer named Asita, upon examining the child’s physiognomy, prophesied that the child would become either the ideal “wheel-turning king” (*cakra-vartin, P. *cakkavartin, 轉輪聖王*) or a Buddha. These and other legends have often been made the subject of painting and sculpture, through which they have become familiar to many down through the ages.

*The Great Renunciation:* The motive for Śākyamuni’s leaving home has been traditionally sought in the “excursions through the four gates” (四門出遊, 四門遊觀). According to legend, the prince went on four excursions outside the capital, passing through the east, south, west, and north gates in turn. On each of these excursions he encountered a different sight: an aging man, a sick person, a corpse, and lastly an ascetic monk. As a result of these encounters he was overcome by an overriding awareness of the transient nature of all things and began to yearn for the life of an ascetic. According to one tradition, the final impulse was provided by the sight of insects being killed under the plough and picked at by birds as a farmer tilled the fields, this impressing upon him the suffering inherent in life. These accounts of Śākyamuni’s motivation for leaving home have no doubt been influenced by the ideas of impermanence and suffering lying at the basis of Buddhist thought, but it is probably a psychological fact that he did leave home moved by an acute sensitivity to the impermanence of all phenomena.

*The Śākya Tribe:* The Śākya (P. Sakka, Sakya, Sākiya, 釋迦) tribe is generally held to have belonged to those peoples who were called *vrāgya* by the Aryans from the northwest because of their continued observance of traditional tribal codes, and they seem to have been a tribe containing Mongoloid blood, similar to peoples found in Nepal today, although de-
tails remain unclear. Together with the neighbouring Koliya tribe, they belonged to the cultural domain of the kingdom of Kosala and were later to lose their political independence as well. The system of government was monarchical, but unlike the kingdoms of Kosala and Magadha, where absolute regal authority was firmly established, a chief executive would be periodically elected from among the nobility to administer the affairs of state. According to Buddhist scriptures, there were in central India at the time of Śākyamuni sixteen major states, including the two great powers of Kosala and Magadha, all striving to maintain and extend their domains. This state of affairs gradually changed with the invasion and absorption of the smaller and weaker states by Kosala and Magadha, leading to the eventual unification of India by Magadha which gave birth to the Mauryan dynasty (late fourth century B.C.).

The Six Non-Buddhist Teachers: Politically speaking, India at the time of Śākyamuni was thus in a period of transition, tending from a state of division to one of unification, but culturally speaking a vast cultural sphere had already been developing along the middle reaches of the Ganges. Although this region was still a fringe area in the eyes of the Aryans based in northwestern India, a spirit of cultural innovation centred on the ruling warrior classes was burgeoning, and intellectually this was the most active period in India's history. An atmosphere of intellectual freedom, unfettered by the long-established currents of Brahminic thought, was born and many unorthodox free thinkers appeared. Śākyamuni too was one of them, but in Buddhism the names of six, including the founder of Jainism, are usually mentioned as representative of the non-Buddhist freethinkers and are referred to as the "six non-Buddhist (or heretical) teachers" (saṭṭāsthāṇaḥ, P. cha satthāro, 六師外道). They are:

1. Pūraṇa Kassapa (Skt. Pūraṇa Kāśyapa), who rejected the idea of moral causation.
2. Pakudha Kaccāyana (Skt. Kakuda Kātyāyana), who propounded a theory of seven elements (earth, water, fire, wind, suffering, pleasure, and life), explaining human existence in terms of the combination of these elements. He did not recognize any universal creator.
3. Makkhali Gosāla (Skt. Maskarin Gosāliputra), a fatalist, who looked upon human existence as a combination of twelve elements, the conformation of which is predetermined; hence all moral action was regarded by him as meaningless. His followers were later known as Ājīvikas (邪命外道) and came to constitute a religious group
of considerable strength.
(4) Ajita Kesakambalin (Skt. Ajita Kesakambalin), a materialist, who also propounded a theory of elemental combination, rejecting morality and future life, and asserting a form of hedonism for the present life.
(5) Sañjaya Belaṭṭhiputta (Skt. Sañjayin Vairaṭiputra), a sceptic, who maintained a theory of agnosticism in regard to all metaphysical speculation, asserting that any explanation or absolute cognition of the truth be impossible. His views later exerted considerable influence upon Buddhism and other currents of thought.
(6) Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta (Skt. Nirgrantha Jñātiputra), the founder of Jainism, also known as Mahāvīra (Great Hero), who, like Śākyamuni, is said to have been born into the ruling warrior class. He advocated the strict observance of the ethical principles of non-killing and non-possession, and maintained that liberation could be attained by keeping the mind and body pure through completely preventing karma from entering as a result of external defilement. This too had considerable influence upon Buddhism. Jainism continues to exist today as one of India’s major religions, with a community of monks and laymen boasting of strong solidarity, and is also influential economically (its followers include many merchants).

Austerities and Enlightenment

Śākyamuni visited in the land of Magadha two Brahmin practitioners of meditation renowned for their virtue, Āḷāra Kālāma (Skt. Ārāḍa Kālāma) and Uddaka Rāmaputta (Skt. Udraka Rāmaputra), and requested instruction from them, but not satisfied by what they taught him, he then devoted himself to the practice of fasting and other ascetic austerities which were to last for six years. His father King Suddhodana had in the meantime secretly dispatched five retainers to keep track of him, but they too eventually abandoned the secular life and took up ascetic training together with Śākyamuni, who continued his austerities in the vicinity of the village of Uruvelā (Skt. Uruvilvā). This was at the time a centre for ascetics, and the nearby woods were known as a “grove of austerities” (tapo-vana, 君行林).
Then, one day, feeling that his austerities were of no avail, Śākyamuni abandoned fasting and after having bathed in the waters of the Neraṅjarā (Skt. Nairāṅjanā) River (尼連禪河) flowing past the village, took some rice-gruel offered him by a village maiden in order to restore his physical strength. Seeing this, his five companions left him, criticizing him of moral degeneration. Śākyamuni, however, having recuperated both physically and mentally, spread some soft kuśa grass under a large pipal (pippala) tree not far from the town of Gayā and, sitting down, quietly entered a state of meditation.

Early one morning there occurred a sudden flash of inspiration in the depths of his mind, and immediately all his former anxieties vanished completely to be replaced by a sense of great joy which filled his heart. Śākyamuni sensed that the truth (Dharma) had been revealed to him and realized that he had himself awoken to this truth. Thus the “Enlightened One” or Buddha was born, and this event came to be known as the “enlightenment” (bodhi, 菩提), also referred to in Chinese as the “accomplishment of the way” (成道). Consequently the pipal tree was renamed the bo tree (bodhi [-druma, -vrksa], P. bodhi [-rukkha], 菩提樹) and the place where Śākyamuni attained enlightenment came to be called Buddhagayā (modern Bodhgayā). The inner struggles preceding his attainment of enlightenment are figuratively described in the legend of the conquest of Māra the Evil One.

What was the truth to which Śākyamuni awoke? This is a question incapable of elucidation by others, for it is a matter intimately related to Śākyamuni’s innermost experiences. But the content of his enlightenment as revealed in his teaching is said to have been the realization of the principle of “dependent co-arising” in regard to suffering and its causes.

Āḷāra Kalāma and Uddaka Rāmaputta: Historical details concerning these two figures are quite unknown, but according to one old text (Ariyapariyesana-sutta, contained in the Majjhima-nikāya) the
former taught the attainment of a meditative state in which nothing exists and the latter a state of neither perception nor non-perception. In the graded series of nine successive states of meditative attainment established in later times (see pp. 180–83), these two states are regarded as advanced states of meditation, being ranked as the third and fourth stages of the four meditative attainments of non-form. But above these is ranked the “attainment of cessation” (nīrodha-samāpatti, 殁盡定) and this latter is regarded as the supreme meditative state. The order in which these successive states of meditation have been graded was no doubt influenced by legendary considerations, the purpose of which was to show that the state attained by Śākyamuni was superior to that of the two sages. But there is probably no reason to doubt the tradition that Śākyamuni did visit these two sages for instruction in the early stages of his spiritual quest.

_Austerities and Meditation:_ Ascetic austerities belong to methods of spiritual cultivation generally known as _tapas_ (苦行) and had been practised from times of yore by Brāhmīns as a method of acquiring supernatural powers. _Tapas_ means literally “heat,” and it seems that the people of ancient India regarded heat as the fundamental creative force which gives birth to the whole of creation. Since it was held to be possible to acquire such heat-force through the practice of ascetic austerities, these too were termed _tapas_. The actual methods for practising austerities were varied, but generally they entailed disciplining the body and mind by making do with simple clothing and frugal means and enduring a life of solitude in places such as mountains, forests, and cemeteries. Fasting was one of the more extreme methods.

Compared with ascetic austerities, meditation was a less severe method of spiritual training, and this Śākyamuni adopted as a surer means of attaining enlightenment. This fact is reflected in the scriptural definition of meditation as “the middle way which avoids the two extremes of pleasure and self-torture.” Meditation (_dhyāna_, _p. jhāna_, 諦定) is more generally known as _yoga_ and implies mental equipoise or concentration. Within the Brahminical tradition it was a relatively new method of spiritual training, appearing all at once and then frequently in the Upaniṣads of the middle and later periods. But according to some, divine images representing practitioners of _yoga_ are to be found among the relics of the Indus civilization, and accordingly they seek the origins of _yoga_ in non-Aryan indigenous traditions. The two sages under whom Śākyamuni practised may have been Brahmin ascetics of a new type. But on the other hand, the major-
ity of śramaṇa, typified by the aforementioned six non-Buddhist teachers and said to have been anti-Brahmin, also practised austerities, and so it is difficult to distinguish the two currents by the criterion of methods of practice alone. It should not be necessary to add that yoga forms the basis of all methods of spiritual cultivation in present-day Hinduism.

The Conquest of Māra: The original meaning of māra (魔羅, 魔) is “death” or the “god of death.” In Buddhist doctrine, four types of māra are distinguished: the aggregates (skandha-māra, P. khandha-māra, 賦魔), mental defilements (klesa-māra, P. kilesa-māra, 煩惱魔), death (mṛtyu-māra, P. maccu-māra, 死魔), and the heavenly (or anthropomorphic) Evil One (devaputra-māra, P. devaputta-māra, 天魔). The first two, representing physical and mental functions, symbolize obstacles to enlightenment, and the last figures in the legend relating to Śākyamuni’s enlightenment: the demon Namuci is said to have tried for seven years to catch Śākyamuni off his guard, but without success; then the demon Pāpyas (P. Pāpimant, 波旬: literally, “Worse One”), a denizen of the Paranirmitavaśavartin Heaven, is said to have attempted to seduce Śākyamuni as he was sitting under the bo tree by causing heavenly maidens to appear and, when this failed, to have tried to attack him by force, also unsuccessfully. Seductions by Māra the Evil One continued until Śākyamuni’s death, this corresponding to mṛtyu-māra.

The Beginnings of Śākyamuni’s Teaching Ministry: His First Sermon

For a time after having become the Buddha, Śākyamuni experienced inner joy. At the same time, he was hesitant as to whether he should impart what he was experiencing to others or not. But at length he was awoken by a heavenly voice to his mission and the importance of spreading his teaching. First he set off to seek out his two former teachers in order to share his spiritual joy with them, but they had both already died. Next he recalled his five former companions, and hearing that they were in Benares (Bārāṇasi, Skt. Vārāṇaśī), he made his way there as quickly as possible. Legend attributes his decision to spread the teachings to the prompt-
ings of Brahmā, the supreme god of Hinduism.

Having arrived at Benares, Śākyamuni found the five ascetics in the nearby Deer Park (Migadāya, Skt. Mṛgadāva, 鹿野苑; present-day Sārnāth) and immediately approached them, declaring that he was a tathāgata (one who has attained the truth). At first they refused to believe him, but struck by the air of dignity surrounding him, they stood as if transfixed and waited for his next words. Śākyamuni explained the contents of his enlightenment in terms of the Four Noble Truths and described the Noble Eightfold Path as the method of practice leading to enlightenment, declaring it to be the “middle way” which avoided the extremes of pleasure and self-torture (see pp. 76–84). The five ascetics were won over by what Śākyamuni said and became his disciples of their own accord. This event is known as the First Sermon (初轉法輪), literally the first “turning of the wheel of the Law” (dharma-cakra-pravartana, P. dhamma-cakkapavattana, 轉法輪). The phrase “turning the wheel of the Law” is a figurative one, likening religious guidance to the manner in which a king conquers and rules the land by advancing his chariots.

The First Sermon has considerable significance for Buddhism. In the first place, as has already been noted in the Introduction, it resulted in the establishment of the Three Treasures, consisting of the Buddha, Dharma, and Samgha. Secondly, it is even more important in the way it defines the characteristics of a Buddha. If Śākyamuni had kept the contents of his enlightenment to himself, even though a Buddha, he would have been of no benefit to the world at large. Alleviating the suffering of others through his own enlightenment must be the primary goal of a Buddha. Enlightenment in itself is only self-benefitting, but through the act of teaching it benefits others as well. The Buddha becomes a being deserving of universal respect only upon assuming both of
these aspects. Accordingly a Buddha is defined as one who “is himself enlightened, enlightens others, and in whom action based upon enlightenment has been perfected” (自覺覺他 覺行窮滿). Furthermore, enlightenment, which is self-benefit-
ing, has its basis in the activation of knowledge, whereas the altruistic act of enlightening others springs from a heart of compassion, and so knowledge and compassion are regarded as the two basic qualities of a Buddha. Just as man stands upright upon his two feet, so does the Buddha have as his “two feet” knowledge and compassion.

The remainder of Śākyamuni’s life was almost entirely devoted to helping others and leading them to enlightenment.

Brahma’s Entreaty (Brahma-āyācana, 梵天勸請): The most ordered record of the events following Śākyamuni’s enlightenment is to be found in the Mahāvagga (大品) section of the Pāli Vinaya-piṭaka. According to this account, the first week he spent sitting under the bo tree; the second week under the Goatherds’ Banyan (ajapālanīgrodha), during which time he converted a Brahmin; the third week under the mukalinda tree, converting the serpent-king (nāga-rājan) Mucalinda; and the following week under the rāja-āyatana tree, during which period he received offerings from two traders (in the Vinaya-piṭaka it is declared that this event marked the establishment of the two refuges of the Buddha and Dharma). Then, considering the truth to which he had awoken, Śākyamuni mused that it was “profound, difficult to perceive, difficult to comprehend, serene, excellent, beyond the realms of thought, subtle, and knowable only to the wise.” But ordinary man is full of thoughts of attachment and unable to perceive the truth. Therefore, “even if I were to proclaim the truth (dhamma), if others do not understand me, it will be labour in vain. That is what troubles me.” Reflecting thus, he fell into silence. Then Brahmā, the lord of the world, divining the Buddha’s thoughts and thinking, “The world will surely come to an end, for the mind of the perfectly enlightened one inclines towards indifference,” appeared before the Buddha and besought of him with the following words that he might teach the truth:

“Open the gate to the deathless!
(Let them) hearken to the truth realized by the undefiled one!”

Brahmā’s entreaty cannot be accepted as historical fact, but it is no
doubt true that Śākyamuni did experience hesitation and doubts about undertaking to teach what he had realized. The role of suppliant could have been filled by anyone, but by assigning this role to Brahmā, the supreme god of the Hindu pantheon, the aim of later Buddhists is clearly revealed. It embodies their wish for public sanction to spread their teaching throughout the Indian world and, what is more, it also represents an emphasis of the position of the Buddha as one superior to Brahmā and deserving of worship in place of Brahmā. With the elevation in this manner of the Buddha to an absolute plane, there is also suggested through the mediation of Dharma a correspondence with the absolute principle of Brahman (see chap. 2).

_Self-Enlightenment without a Teacher_ (無師獨悟): According to the _Ariyapariyesana-sutta_, on his way to Benares Śākyamuni met an Ājivika by the name of Upaka, to whom he revealed his state of mind in the following verses:  

I am victorious over all, omniscient,  
And among all things untainted.  
I have abandoned all and through the extinction of craving am liberated.  
By having known for myself, upon whom shall I rely?  
For me there is no teacher, and one like me does not exist;  
In the world with its gods there is none to match me.  
Deserving of respect in this world I am, and the unsurpassed teacher am I.  
I alone am the perfectly enlightened one; I have become cool and attained tranquility.  
To turn the wheel of the Law I go to the city of Kāśi (=Benares),  
Beating the drum of immortality in a world that has become blind.

_The Five Disciples_: Śākyamuni’s first five disciples are said to have been Koṭṭṭāṭṭha (Skt. Kaṇḍāṇa), Assaji (Skt. Āśvajit), Bhaddiya (Skt. Bhadrika), Mahānāma (Skt. Mahānāman), and Vappa (Skt. Vāspa). Koṭṭṭāṭṭṭha, being the first to understand Śākyamuni’s teaching, was praised by him with the words, “You have indeed understood, Koṭṭṭāṭṭha!” and thenceforth he was known as “Koṭṭṭāṭṭṭha who understood” (Aṣṭāṭṭṭha-konḍāṇa, Skt. Ājñātā-kaṇḍāṇa, 阿若伽陀如). At length the other four also gained an understanding of Śākyamuni’s teaching and became saints (ārhat). Now, with the inclusion of Śākyamuni, “six saints had appeared.”
The Deer Park was also known as Isipatana (Skt. Rṣipatana, 仙人窟處: literally, "place where sages fall"). This appellation is said to derive from the fact that it was a place of assembly, similar to the agora of ancient Greece, where all manner of ascetics, sages, and seers would gather to debate and exchange views.

According to the Dhammacakkapavattana and other works, in his first sermon Śākyamuni is said to have expounded the Four Noble Truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path, and the Noble Eightfold Path as the contents of the truth of the path, declaring this to be the "middle way," avoiding the extremes of pleasure and self-torture. Even if this does represent a view formulated at a later date in response to the systematization of Buddhist thought, it is still of considerable importance as an indication of the basic framework of Buddhist teachings. Accordingly, in the present work we shall also base our discussion of the contents of the Dharma or teaching on the Four Noble Truths (see chap. 3).

Dissemination of the Teaching and the Growth of the Community

With the spread of Śākyamuni's reputation, more and more people were drawn to him, either becoming disciples or remaining lay followers who looked to the material needs of Śākyamuni and his disciples with offerings in kind as a token of their faith. There were also many instances of people attempting to put Śākyamuni to test by challenging him to an argument, only to find themselves eventually won over in spite of themselves. Then again there were those who would happen to be addressed by him in some chance encounter and, impressed by his teaching, become disciples, and there was even the case of a Brahmin from a land far to the south who, hearing of Śākyamuni, persuaded sixteen companions to accompany him on a journey to visit the teacher.

Following the establishment of the sangha with the ordination of the five former ascetics, the first proselyte was
Yasa (Skt. Yaśas), the son of a wealthy merchant in Benares. Yasa’s joining the community did much to enhance Śākyamuni’s reputation, and four of Yasa’s friends followed suit, soon to be followed by a further fifty acquaintances, and Yasa’s parents also became devoted lay followers. Śākyamuni then charged the sixty monks with the mission of spreading the teaching, bidding them to set out singly in their appointed task of guiding and instructing others.

The next important additions to the early community were the group conversions of the three Kassapa (Skt. Kāśyapa) brothers (三迦葉) in Uruvelā in Magadha, together with their one thousand followers, and the two hundred and fifty disciples of the sceptic Sañjaya, headed by Sāriputta (Skt. Śāriputra, 舍利弗) and Mahāmoggallāna (Skt. Mahāmaudgalyāyana, 大目犍連, 目連), at Rājagaha (Skt. Rājakṛṣṇa, 王舍城). In particular, the conversion of Sāriputta seems to have contributed greatly to firmly establishing the standing of the Buddhist community, and it was not long before Sāriputta and Mahāmoggallāna, of leader-status in their former positions, had become leading figures in the Buddhist community too.

Next, Śākyamuni visited his hometown, Kapilavatthu, where he instructed his father the king and other members of the Śākya tribe and had his son Rāhula ordained. Ānanda (阿難), Anuruddha (Skt. Aniruddha, 阿那律), and Devadatta (提婆達多), the latter who was later to turn against Śākyamuni, were also monks from the Śākya tribe. Then, acceding to the earnest supplications of his stepmother, Śākyamuni agreed for the first time to the ordination of women, thus leading to the establishment of a separate order of nuns (bhikṣunī, P. bhikkhunī, 比丘尼).

Śākyamuni granted entry to the community regardless of birth, and within the community no secular distinctions whatsoever were recognized, all members being treated equal-
ly. Apart from former members of the ruling warrior class (*kṣatriya*, 前族没利), such as those from the Śākya tribe, and Brahmins such as the three Kassapa brothers and Sāriputta, Mahāmoggallāna, and Mahākāśyapa (Skt. Mahākāśyapa, 大迦葉, 順訥迦葉), there were among Śākyamuni’s disciples also many from the merchant class (*vaiśya*, 吠舍) in Sāvatthī (Skt. Śrāvasti, 舍衛城) of Kosala and other large towns. But there were also gifted disciples of low birth, including Upāli (優波離), the son of the barber at the palace of the Śākyas, and somewhat unusual figures such as the brigand Āṅgulimāla, the unlettered Cūḷapanthaka (Skt. Cūḍapanthaka), and the courtesan Āṃrapāli (Skt. Āṃrapāli) of Vesāli (Skt. Vaiśāli, 毘舍離), Influential lay patrons included King Bimbisāra of Magadha, who donated the Bamboo Grove (Veḷuvana, Skt. Veṇuvana) Monastery (竹林精舍) at Rājagaha, and King Paśenadi (Skt. Prasenajit, 波斯匿) of Kosala, who was of the same age as Śākyamuni; nor should one overlook the names of Sudatta (須達), also known as Anāthapiṇḍika (Skt. Anā-thapiṇḍada, 給孤獨長者: He who gives food to the needy), who donated the Jeta Grove Monastery (祇園精舍), and Vi-sākhā Migārāmaṭar (Skt. Viśākhā Mṛgārāmaṭṛ), who donated a monastery named in her honour the “Hall of Migārāmaṭar” (Migārāmaṭar-pāsāda, Skt. Mṛgārāmaṭarḥ prāśaḍaḥ, 鹿母講堂).

The region in which Śākyamuni undertook his missionary activities covered the middle reaches of the Ganges, corresponding to that oval-shaped region centred on Rājagaha, the capital of Magadha, and Sāvatthī, the capital of Kosala, and extending to Kapilavatthu in the north and the kingdom of Vamsa (Skt. Vatsa), with its capital at Kosambi (Skt. Kauśambī), in the south. Other places where the community was active included Vesāli and Kāśi (Skt. Kāśi=Benares), but the most important centres were the Bamboo Grove Monastery at Rājagaha and the Jeta Grove Monastery at Sāvatthī. Śākyamuni would travel from one place to another accompanied
by a number of disciples and would spend the rainy season during the early summer months in retreat at one of the centres, during which time he would have his disciples devote themselves to meditation and other practices.

There are very few events which have been recorded in connection with any particular dates during the forty-five years spanning the period from Śākyamuni’s enlightenment at the age of thirty-five until his death at the age of eighty. But judging from the accounts preserved in sūtras and the Vinaya-piṭaka, it would appear that they were spent in a repeated cycle of travel and retreat. During this time, to meet the requirements of the growing monastic order, the body of precepts and ordinances for the guidance and administration of the community was gradually formulated, and regulations relating to ordination, life in the community, penalties for offences, and methods of practice were laid down in ever greater detail.

Sāriputta: Sāriputta was one of the leading disciples of the sceptic Sañjaya. One day he chanced to meet Assaji (one of the first five disciples) as the latter was begging for alms in Rājagaha. Greatly impressed by his unsoiled appearance and graceful deportment, Sāriputta asked him the name of his teacher and the gist of his teachings. Assaji replied that he was a disciple of the Buddha and continued,

“All things are born of causes, and of these the Tathāgata has proclaimed the cause,

And their extinction too: thus does the Great Ascetic speak.”

Upon hearing this verse, Sāriputta immediately attained the “Dharma-eye” or insight into the teaching, and eventually, together with Mahāmoggallāna, led the two hundred and fifty disciples of Sañjaya to the Bamboo Grove Monastery where they all became disciples of Śākyamuni. As a result of this event, Sañjaya is said to have “thrown up hot blood from his mouth.” The above verse is generally known as the “Verse of the Law of Dependent Co-arising” (緣起法頌) or the “Verse of the Dharma-body” (法身偈), and is valued as a succinct explanation of the principle of dependent co-arising, the basis of all Buddhist doctrine (see pp. 72–73).
Jeta Grove Monastery: The full name of the Jeta Grove Monastery is “Jeta Grove, the Garden of Anāthapiṇḍika” (Jetavana Anāthapiṇḍikā-ārāma, Skt. Jetavana Anāthapiṇḍadasya ārāmaḥ, 祇樹給孤獨園). It is said to have originally been a grove (vana) belonging to Prince Jeta (祇陀), son of the king of Kosala, which the wealthy merchant Sudatta (also known as Anāthapiṇḍika) bought and donated to the Buddhist community. The site of the monastery has been identified with present-day Sāheṭh Māheṭh. At the time of Śākyamuni it is unlikely that there were any substantial buildings apart from simple shelters to provide protection from the elements. But according to available records, summer retreats during the rainy season passed by Śākyamuni at Sāvatthi numbered more than twenty, far greater than the number of those spent at Rājagaha, so it was probably the most important Buddhist centre at the time.

Devadatta’s Rebellion: Devadatta was a cousin and disciple of Śākyamuni, but in Śākyamuni’s later years he turned against Śākyamuni and formed his own community. Because of this, Buddhist scriptures tend to give undue emphasis to his villainy—he is said to have committed one of the five deadly sins, deliberately causing the Buddha’s blood to flow—and record that he suffered long in hell. But the facts of the matter are that he was an even stricter disciplinarian than Śākyamuni, with whom he parted because of a difference in views, and his community is thought to have continued to exist for several centuries.

The 1,250 Monks: In Buddhist scriptures one frequently meets with the formulaic phrase, “The Lord was accompanied by a large assembly of 1,250 monks.” This figure of 1,250 represents the one thousand followers of the three Kassapa brothers and the two hundred and fifty followers of Sāriputta and Mahāmoggallāna, and indicates that these two groups formed the nucleus of the Buddhist community during Śākyamuni’s lifetime. The actual figures are of course uncertain, but according to the calculations of one scholar (Akanuma Chizen) the figure 1,160, consisting of 886 monks, 103 nuns, 128 laymen, and 43 laywomen, may be regarded as reliable.

The Great Decease

At the age of eighty, while spending the summer retreat
at a village near Vesāli, Śākyamuni realized that he was aging physically, and knowing that he did not have much longer to live, he set out for Kapilavatthu, probably wishing to pay a final visit to his hometown. But on the way food offered to him by one of the faithful caused a severe gastric upset and he eventually passed away at Kusinārā (Skt. Kuśinagari) in the presence of his attendant Ānanda and other followers. The majority of his disciples, including Mahākassapa who had assumed the position of leader of the community following Sāriputta’s death in the previous year, did not arrive in time to be present at Śākyamuni’s dying moments.

Śākyamuni’s death is referred to as parinirvāṇa (P. parinibbāna, 般涅槃). This term, meaning “complete Nirvāṇa,” implies that by discarding the physical body at death Śākyamuni completely entered the perfect and ideal state of peace and tranquillity, namely, nirvāṇa (P. nibbāna, 涅槃, 滅). Having already become a Buddha, he had of course suffered any further mental anguish while alive, but the limitations concomitant with human physical existence had remained. The moment he was freed through death of these human restrictions, he became a being of yet a higher plane of existence. In later years Śākyamuni’s disciples, loath to consider that he had succumbed to illness just like another ordinary human being and wishing to extol his greatness, were to conclude that he had “discarded his life of his own accord” (任意捨命) since he had “completed his task of guiding and teaching others” (化緣完了). Still later, it was further believed that the historical Buddha who had died at the age of eighty was but a manifestation of the eternal Buddha (see chap. 2).

Śākyamuni’s Last Journey: The Mahāparinibbāna-suttanta in Pāli is a faithful record of Śākyamuni’s last journey, tracing his footsteps from Rājagaha through Vesāli and on to Kuśinārā. The earliest version of this account is to be found in the Vinaya-piṭaka, where
it was included probably with the intention of providing a record of
the founder’s death, the most distressing of all events imaginable to
the Buddhist community. It concludes with the First Council at
Rājagaha. This account was later incorporated as an independent
work in the Early Canon as a record of Śākyamuni’s teachings
during his last journey, and as such has been preserved as the Yu-
hsing ching (遊行經: Peregrination Sūtra), the second sūtra of the
Chinese Dirgha-āgama, and the Mahāparinibbāna-suttanta, the fif-
teenth work of the Pāli Dīgha-nikāya.7 Śākyamuni’s teachings as
recorded in this latter work include:

1) The "seven conditions of non-decay" given in regard to the
town of Vesālī (see pp. 247–48).
2) The denial of the "teacher’s first" (ācariya-muṭṭhi, 師拳), or
close-fistedness in teaching.
3) Śākyamuni’s acknowledgement, in response to Māra’s words
enticing him to death and whispered to him while Ananda was
dozing, that his death was not far off.
4) The instruction that after his death his disciples should "be
a light (or island) unto themselves and make a light (or island)
of the Dharma."
5) His last words: "All is impermanent; be diligent in your
efforts!"

The lay follower who offered Śākyamuni his last meal was a smith
by the name of Cunda, one of the faithful who supported the monastic
community with their offerings (dāna-pati, 檀越, 檀主: lord of alms).
At Kusināra a wandering ascetic by the name of Subhadda (Skt.
Subhadra, 須跋陀羅) asked Śākyamuni for religious instruction and
became the last person to be converted and admitted to the community
by Śākyamuni himself. (In the Fo ch’ui pan-niṣṭh’-p’an liūeh-shuo
chiao-chieh ching [佛垂般泥槃說教誨經: Sūtra of the Summary
Instructions Given by the Buddha at the Great Decease] or I-chiao ching
[遺教經: Sūtra of the Last Teaching], another work dealing with Śākya-
umuni’s death preserved only in Chinese, it is stated that “at the
first turning of the Dharma-wheel he [the Buddha] converted Ājñāta-
kaundinīya and at the last sermon he converted Subhadra.”8)

Vesālī lay on the north bank of the Ganges, opposite the village
of Pāṭalī (which later as Pāṭaliputra became the capital of the Mauryan
empire and corresponds to modern Patna). It was the capital of the
tribal confederacy of Vajjī (Skt. Vṛjī). The organization and admin-
istration of the Buddhist community is said to have been modelled
upon the political organization of Vajjī (see chap. 9), and Vesālī is
said to have been the town most beloved by Śākyamuni. Such senti-
ments of fond recollection pervade the words spoken as he left looking back at the town for the last time, and this scene has been figuratively described as “the king of elephants turning his head” (象王回首).

Voluntary Death: The significance of Śākyamuni’s death is already reflected in the term parinirvāna (complete Nirvāṇa), but a further development in interpretation can be witnessed in the view that he “discarded his life of his own accord” (任意捨命). According to this interpretation, Śākyamuni’s allotted life span was one kalpa (an infinitely long period of time), and although some of this still remained, “he abandoned the remainder of the one kalpa and discarded his life.” Because Ānanda happened to be inadvertently asleep when Māra the Evil One appeared in order to reach an agreement with Śākyamuni on this matter, he was later severely criticized. Why should Śākyamuni have shortened his appointed life span? The reason is not given in the scriptures, but in later times Mahāyāna Buddhism was to consider this question with penetrating depth and reach the conclusion that his death was the apparent Nirvāṇa of the eternal Buddha, manifested as an expedient means for instructing sentient beings. Historical developments leading to this interpretation will be dealt with in the next chapter, but it may be mentioned here that sūtras dealing directly with this question include the Lotus Sūtra (“Chapter on the Tathāgata’s Life”) and the Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra. Although its setting is based upon the dying hours of Śākyamuni, Mahāyānic interpretations abound in the latter work. Śākyamuni is depicted as eloquently loquacious, and he instructs Cunda and the fictive bodhisattva Kāśyapa on matters such as Buddha-nature and the eternity of the Tathāgata.

Erection of Stūpas and the First Council

The death of Śākyamuni, who was both Buddha and head of the community, was a source of bitter grief to all. Followers belonging to the Śākyas and other tribes and regions requested to be granted portions of Śākyamuni’s remains so that they might enshrine and worship them. As a result the relics were divided into eight portions, and in all ten tumuli (stūpa, P. thāpa, 率都婆, 舍利塔) were erected to house these as well as the cinerary urn and the ashes. Now that
the Buddha was no longer with them, the faithful laity gathered around these stūpas, where they paid reverence to the Buddha and vowed to observe his teachings.

Śākyamuni’s disciples, on the other hand, who had entrusted the cremation ceremonies to the lay followers, decided, in accordance with Śākyamuni’s last injunctions to observe his teaching and apply themselves to the practice of the path, to collect the teachings and the regulations relating to the community given during Śākyamuni’s forty-five years of instruction. This was considered necessary in order to preserve the unity of the community now that the founder had passed away. Accordingly Mahākassapa summoned five hundred elders to Rājagaha, where Ānanda recited the sermons and Upāli the precepts and ordinances: the assembly of elders listened, checked, and gave their approval, and thus was born the first unified corpus of Dharma (teachings) and Vinaya (precepts). This was the First Council, and as a result Buddhism assumed the mould of a religious community devoted to the observance and practice of Śākyamuni’s teaching.

The Eightfold Division of the Relics: According to the Sanskrit text of the Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra, Śākyamuni’s relics were divided among (1) the Mallas of Kuśināgarī (the people who actually performed the cremation ceremony), (2) the Mallas of Pāpā, (3) the Bulakas of Cakalpā, (4) the Brahmins of Viṣṇu Island, (5) the Krauḍyas of the village of Rāma, (6) the Licchavis of Vaiśālī, (7) the Śākyas of Kapilavastu, and (8) the Brahmin Varṣākāra, the prime minister of Magadha (this last took his portion back to King Ajātaśatru [阿闍世王], who erected a stūpa at Rājagṛha). In addition, a Brahmin of the Dhūmra clan enshrined the cinerary urn at the village of Droṇa, and a Brahmin youth by the name of Pippalāyana received the remaining ashes. The relics were later further subdivided by King Aśoka [阿育王], who had 84,000 stūpas erected throughout the land.

In 1898 W. C. Peppé, a British resident officer, discovered a cinerary urn in an ancient burial mound near Kapilavatthu, with the inscription that the Śākyas had enshrined the Buddha Śākyamuni’s relics therein, thus demonstrating that the story of the division of
the relics was based on historical fact. At the same time the discovery of this urn conclusively disproved the assertion being made by some scholars that accounts of the Buddha were merely a myth related to the Sun God, and it was confirmed that he had been a historical personage.

*The First Council:* The term translated here as “council,” *saṃgīti* (結集, 衆誦), means literally “singing together” and in this case refers to recitation from memory. Śākyamuni’s teachings had probably already been adapted to a certain extent for mnemonic purposes (perhaps in verse form), and these adaptations were recited and endorsed at the First Council.

Although Mahākassapa was the chief disciple at the time, he did not become a second religious head of the community. It would appear therefore that the community was administered by a form of collective leadership. In the Ch’an sects of China and Japan it is related that on one occasion the Buddha, taking a flower in his hand, showed it to the assembly, but none understood the meaning of this gesture except for Mahākassapa, who indicated his understanding by smiling, whereupon he was recognized by the Buddha as his successor. Needless to say, this story, generally referred to as the episode of “Taking a Flower and Smiling” (拈華微笑), is a fiction of later times. The Buddha is also said to have yielded his seat to Mahākassapa; this implies that he recognized Mahākassapa as qualified to instruct the disciples in his place, and it is probable that Sāriputta and other leading disciples were also entrusted with this task.

*Chronology:* Śākyamuni is generally held to have lived in the period spanning the sixth and fifth centuries B.C., but there are also powerful arguments supporting some scholars’ claims for the fifth to fourth centuries B.C. The former reckoning is based principally on sources of the Southern tradition of Theravāda Buddhism, which founds its assertion on the view that King Aśoka acceded to the throne 218 years after Śākyamuni’s death, whereas the latter view is that of the Northern tradition, basing its claim on the Sarvāstivādin tradition that Aśoka’s accession took place 116 years after Śākyamuni’s death. The date of Aśoka’s accession can be placed with some certainty around 268 B.C. on the basis of the names of Greek kings mentioned in inscriptions left by Aśoka, and by going back approximately either two hundred or one hundred years from this date a difference of about one century results in Śākyamuni’s dates. In addition, the Buddhist calendar used today in the Theravāda coun-
tries of Southeast Asia takes the dates back a further one hundred years (the 2,500th anniversary of the Buddha’s death was commemorated in 1956 as Buddha Jayanti), and there are further differences in details of reckoning. Thus it is impossible to determine with any degree of certainty which of the two views is correct. But it would appear that the real reasons for the birth of these differing Northern and Southern traditions must be sought in the desire of the various schools to link their history with Aśoka; in doing so, the Sarvāstivādins sought to assert their antiquity by bringing the dates of their founder as close as possible to the time of Śākyamuni, whereas the Theravāda tradition wished to emphasize its connections with the central polity of Magadha.

In present-day Japan the Buddha’s birth, enlightenment, and death are celebrated on April 8, December 8, and February 8 respectively, but in Southern Buddhist countries all three events are celebrated on the same date: the day of the full moon in Vesākha (Skt. Vaiśākha), the second month of the Indian calendar (corresponding to April-May in the Gregorian calendar). These traditions are not of course based on fact, the latter being no doubt a reflection of the belief in the auspiciousness of the full moon, whereas the differences in the months and the assigning of the eighth day in the Northern tradition are thought to have arisen when the Indian calendar was converted to conform with the Chinese calendar.
CHAPTER TWO

The True Nature of the Buddha

As was noted in the section “The Great Decease” in the previous chapter, when the Buddha Śākyamuni died, the thoughts of veneration and devotion which filled the minds of his disciples were intermingled with thoughts of reflection on the question of what the Buddha had actually meant to them.

The process of deification began by restricting the number designations by which it was deemed permissible to refer to the Buddha and by adding further sacred epithets; the roots of his greatness were traced back to his accumulation of merit in former lives; and since his death at the age of eighty was conceived of as a merely expedient device, the existence of an eternal Buddha was postulated. These changes in the manner in which the Buddha Śākyamuni came to be regarded we shall here take up for discussion in a consideration of the “true nature of the Buddha.” Our discussion will concern the various questions relating to what is referred to in traditional terminology as the “Buddha’s body” (buddha-kāya, 佛身) and what might be termed “Buddhology” in the narrowest sense of the word, namely, a study of the nature of the person of the Buddha. It may be regarded as corresponding to “Christology” in Christian theology.

As regards the gradual deification of their respective founders, Christianity and Buddhism exhibit interesting parallels. But there is also a marked difference in that whereas the uniqueness or historicity of the appearance of Jesus Christ is emphasized in Christianity, the special
nature and historicity of the Buddha are played down in Buddhism; instead his essence is resolved into that of a universal absolute being, and at the same time the “Buddha-experience” is universalized as an experience accessible to all.

Designations of the Buddha

It would be reasonable to assume that Śākyamuni acknowledged himself to be an enlightened one and the teacher of his disciples. It is also said that he had his disciples call him “Tathāgata,” although this remains a matter open to question. But there is no reason to doubt that those who gathered around him thought of him as a Tathāgata, referred to him as the “Great Ascetic” (mahā-śramaṇa, P. mahā-samana), and addressed him as “Lord” (bhagavat, P. bhagavant), and that he was referred to by the public at large as “Śākyamuni.” Brahmins and others apart from his disciples referred to him as “Gotama” or “the ascetic Gotama” and addressed him as “Sir” (bho, mārisa). In verses dating from an early period he is also referred to by such names as “Śākyan” (sakka), “son of the Śākyas” (sakyaputta), “Great Sage” (mahiṣi), “Victor” (jina), and “Great Hero” (mahā-vira). The various appellations applied to him include many terms which were in general use at the time for referring to or addressing people of a religious vocation, and do not necessarily contain any element of deification. Even the term “Saint” (arhat, P. arahant), meaning literally “deserving” or “worthy,” has its origin in the belief prevalent at the time that a person possessing natural virtue and having consummated the path of spiritual cultivation have a right, ipso facto, to respect and offerings from others.

In the provisions of the Vinaya-piṭaka, on the other hand, it was laid down that the terms bho, mārisa, and Gotama were not to be used when addressing the Buddha; in their
place the vocative of bhagavant became the only authorized mode of direct address, and the term Buddha came to be employed only in reference to the founder Śākyamuni. In addition, as a result of his enlightenment having come to be regarded as having been of an absolute nature, the adverb "rightly" or "perfectly" (samyak, P. samma) was added to the appellative "Enlightened One" (sambuddha), giving the designation "Perfectly Enlightened One" (samyak-sambuddha); to this was further affixed the superlative "unsurpassed" (anuttara), resulting in the standard appellation "Unsurpassed and Perfectly Enlightened One" (anuttara-samyak-sambuddha, 無上正等覺, also transliterated as 阿耨多羅三藐三佛陀; his enlightenment is similarly referred to as the "unsurpassed perfect enlightenment" [anuttara-samyak-sambodhi, 阿耨多羅三藐三菩提]). The term tathāgata underwent various doctrinal interpretations, and further designations describing the distinctive qualities of the Buddha, such as "Omniscient One" (sarvajña, P. sabbañña, 一切智, also transliterated as 薩婆若), also appeared. Later, the principal among these various designations came to be collectively termed the "ten epithets of the Tathāgata" (如來十號).

The Ten Epithets of the Tathāgata: (1) tathāgata (如來): one who has realized the truth; (2) arhat (P. arahant, 應供); (3) samyak-sambuddha (P. sammā-sambuddha, 正遍知); (4) vidyā-carana-sampanna (P. vijjā-carana-sampanna, 明行足): one perfected in both knowledge or learning and conduct; (5) sugata (善逝): one who has attained happiness (in India Buddhists are frequently called saugata, which derives from sugata); (6) lokavid (P. lokavidū, 世間解): one fully acquainted with matters of the world; (7) anuttara (無上士): supreme being; (8) puruṣa-damya-sārathi (P. purisa-damma-sārathi, 調御丈夫): one who controls men to be tamed; (9) sastā deva-manusyānām (P. satthā deva-manussānam, 天人師): teacher or guide of gods and men; (10) buddho bhagavān (P. buddho bhagavā, 佛世尊): Buddha and Lord.2

Splitting the final buddho bhagavān into two results in a total of eleven epithets, but if the term "ten epithets of the Tathāgata" is to
be taken to mean ten alternative designations of the Tathāgata, then 
the epithets (2) through (10) will be found to number ten. The figure 
ten is in any case probably here intended as a round number, so 
there is perhaps no need to dwell overmuch on this minor incongru-
ity.

It is customary to place these epithets after the name of a particular 
Buddha, as for example in the "Introductory Chapter" of the *Lotus 
Sūtra,* where it is stated in connection with a Buddha of the past: 
“At that time there was a Buddha named Moon-Sun-Light (Candra-
sūryapradipa, 日月煥明), a Tathāgata, worthy (of offerings), perfectly 
enlightened, his knowledge and conduct perfected, gone to happiness, 
knowing the world, unsurpassed, controller of men to be tamed, teach-
er of gods and men, Buddha and Lord.” However, it is not unusual 
for only the first three epithets (*tathāgato 'rhan samyak-sambuddhah,* 
如來應正遍知, 如來應正等覺, also transliterated as 多陀伽陀羅
阿羅訶三藐三佛陀, etc.) to be given. Since the terms Buddha and Tathāgata 
are alternative titles, either may be used, with no difference in their 
referent: for example, the Buddha Śākyamuni (釋迦牟尼佛) is synony-
ous with the Tathāgata Śākyamuni (釋迦如來), and the Buddha Ami-
tābha (阿彌陀佛) with the Tathāgata Amitābha (阿彌陀如來).

The terms Buddha and Tathāgata will be dealt with in greater de-
tail in the following pages; accordingly, we shall restrict ourselves 
here to brief comments on *arhat* and *bhagavat,* two of the above 
ten epithets most frequently encountered.

*Arhat* or “saint” means literally “worthy of” or “befitting.” Con-
sequently, alongside the standard Chinese translation *yìng-kung* (應 
供), “worthy of offerings,” one also finds it rendered by the single 
character *yìng* (應), “befitting, suitable.” *Arhat* therefore refers to a 
morally irreproachable person worthy of receiving the respect of and 
offerings from others. This same term later came to signify the 
highest stage reached by a practitioner of the Vehicle of Listeners 
(*srāvaka-yāna*, 聲聞乘; see chap. 8), and in this context the Chi-
nese equivalent is usually the transliteration *a-lo-han* (阿羅漢, also 
abbreviated to *lo-han* [羅漢]).

The term *bhagavat* (世尊, also transliterated as 稱迦婆, 馳伽梵), here 
translated as “Lord,” is today generally interpreted as meaning one 
who “possesses (vat) fortune (*bhago*),” and is also rendered as “Bless-
ed One.” In Hinduism it is used as a term of veneration for divine 
entities, especially the god Viṣṇu. But in earlier times it seems to 
have been a term of respect for rulers or masters, and the Chinese 
translation “World-honoured One” (世尊) would appear to be close to 
this in its connotations.
Among the various designations of the Buddha mentioned above, the most important for elucidating the true nature of a Buddha are “Buddha” and “Tathāgata.”

It has already been pointed out in the foregoing pages on more than one occasion that *buddha* means “enlightened one,” deriving from the past participle of the verb “to awaken” (*vibudh*); it therefore means literally “awakened” and was also in general use as the opposite of “foolish” (*mādhya*) in the sense of “wise” or “intelligent.” The fact that even after it had come to be employed in the sense of “one who has realized the truth” and as a term signifying the founder of Buddhism, it still retained its universality of meaning as a general term relating to the experience of enlightenment demonstrates a notable characteristic of Buddhism as a religion. It was probably in part with the intention of distinguishing Śākyamuni’s experience from the more universal experience of enlightenment that Śākyamuni was described as the “unsurpassed and perfectly” enlightened one.

Thus, the primary meaning of the term *buddha* is quite clear and leaves no room for doubt. In contrast, the alternative *tathāgata* requires a little explanation. As was noted above, *tathāgata* is thought to have been one of the terms current at the time of Śākyamuni for referring to anyone who had consummated his spiritual training, and its original meaning was probably something to the effect of “one who has become thus (impeccable).”

But with the development of doctrinal theories, the term *tathāgata* came to assume an important meaning. “Thus” (*tathā, 如*) was interpreted as “thusness” (*tathatā, 如如*) and therefore signifies “truth,” in this case the truth realized by Śākyamuni (i.e., impermanence or dependent co-arising). In the previous chapter it was pointed out that the Buddha is
defined as "one who is himself enlightened, enlightens others, and in whom action based upon enlightenment has been perfected," that self-enlightenment has its basis in the activation of knowledge whereas the act of enlightening others springs from a heart of compassion, and that therefore the Buddha is one who stands on the "two feet" of knowledge and compassion. When the aspect of knowledge or self-enlightenment is considered in relation to the truth realized, the Buddha is regarded as "one who has arrived at thusness" or "one who has gone to thusness" (如去: thus-gone one). On the other hand, insofar as he appears in this world to save sentient beings and endeavours to enlighten others, he is held to be "one who has come from thusness" (如來: thus-come one).

In Chinese an attempt was made to express the two aspects of a Buddha's activity—self-enlightenment and salvation of others—by indicating his directional relationship to thusness in the rendering of the term tathāgata ("thus-gone one" and "thus-come one"), but this was a distinction already present in the original tathāgata. This double interpretation was rendered possible in part by the multiplicity of possible meanings inherent in Sanskrit compounds, and it was given further impetus by the Buddhist, and more generally Indian, view of the absolute which considered the Buddha or anyone who had realized the truth (Dharma) to have both become one with the truth (thusness=Dharma) and also embodied that same truth. But clarification of this point had to await developments in Mahāyāna theories on the nature of the Buddha. Let us first consider the process which led to those developments.

*The Meaning of tathāgata:* This Sanskrit compound may be resolved into either (1) tathā+gata or (2) tathā+āgata. The former means "thus-gone (one)" and the Tibetan translation of tathāgata (de-bshin gshegs-pa) follows this interpretation. The latter means "thus-come (one)" and it is the Chinese equivalent of this (如來) which became
the standard Chinese rendering. *Gata* in (1) also has the meaning of "known" or "understood." As far as can be judged from their respective renderings of *tathāgata*, it would appear that Tibetan Buddhism attached greater importance to enlightenment, whereas Chinese Buddhism gave prominence to the Buddha's compassion.

However, the Sanskrit word *āgata* has a number of additional meanings. In the first place, the verb *āvgam* (to come) from which it is derived signifies arrival at a certain point. Thus, by a change in viewpoint, it can signify either arrival from or arrival at ("arrived at thusness" or "arrived from thusness"). In the *Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa* (大智度論: Treatise on the Great Perfection of Wisdom) and other works the two aspects of the term *tathāgata* are explained on the basis of this ambiguity inherent in *āgata*. Another interpretation would have it that although thusness (*tathata*) is unchanging and free from the dichotomy of delusion and enlightenment, when it has been purified (*suddhim āgata*) it is then called *tathāgata* (*Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* [大乘庄严经论: The Adornment of Mahāyāna Sūtras]). There is also an instance of *āgata* being defined in the sense of a temporal transition from past to present, i.e., "having been successively transmitted from the past to the present"; this interpretation would have *tathāgata* mean "that which has been transmitted from the beginningless past," namely, Buddha-nature (*Ratnagotravibhāga* [寶性論: Analysis of the Jewel Mine; (Ch.) Treatise on the Jewel Nature]).

*The Former Lives of the Buddha*

We have already noted that in the biographical literature dealing with Śākyamuni the term *bodhisattva* is used to signify Śākyamuni before his enlightenment, and that this same term is further used to refer to him in the stories of his former lives. The original meaning of *bodhisattva* (菩提萨埵, 菩薩) was "one who is certain to attain enlightenment," and in anticipation of his eventual enlightenment it was employed as a designation of Śākyamuni prior to his enlightenment. Later, it assumed the more general meaning of any "sentient being (*sattva*) seeking enlightenment (*bodhi*)," namely, a seeker of truth prior to his actual enlightenment, and in
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Mahāyāna Buddhism it became the term of designation for the ideal figure of the religious practitioner (see chap. 8).

In the case of the historical Buddha, his spiritual cultivation leading up to enlightenment consisted of only six (or seven) years of austerities. But as a result of the process of deification which took place after his death, it was postulated that the duration of his spiritual cultivation went back to his former lives and that it had extended over the unimaginably long period of “three incalculable aeons,” during which time he is said to have performed myriad practices represented by the six perfections (see chap. 6). The details of his actual practice of these six perfections is described in the Jātaka literature. As a result of these efforts, he is said to have acquired the “eighteen special qualities of a Buddha” and “thirty-two distinguishing marks of a great person,” as well as the “three knowledges” and “six supernatural faculties.” In the course of his practices, the Bodhisattva is also recorded as having attended on and made offerings to successive Buddhas, and the names of these Buddhas of the past have also been transmitted.

*Three Incalculable Aeons* (tri-kalpa-asamkhya, 三阿僧祇劫): *asamkhya* (also *asamkhyā*, 阿僧祇) means literally “innumerable,” but it is also the name of the highest numerical unit ($10^{140}$). The *kalpa* (劫) is a unit of time, calculated in a variety of ways; in this case it signifies a “great aeon” (*mahā-kalpa*, 大劫), equivalent to one cycle in the duration of the universe (which consists of its genesis, continuance, and dissolution), and is said to correspond to several billion years. It is at any rate an exceedingly long period of time, and so the phrase “for three incalculable aeons” is equivalent in meaning to a span of time covering an infinite number of lives.

*The Characteristics of a Buddha*: A Buddha is said to be endowed with countless virtuous qualities and so is sometimes described as “possessing all virtues, greater in number than the sands of the Ganges.” The various epithets of the Buddha mentioned above hint at some of
these qualities, which may also, at the other end of the scale, be all subsumed under the two essentials of knowledge and compassion. But in Buddhist scriptures these manifold virtues came to be classified according to a number of stereotyped patterns.

The “eighteen special qualities of a Buddha” (astiḍāśa avenīkā buddha-dharmāh, P. aṭṭhārāsa buddha-dhammā, 十八不共佛法), already mentioned in the Early Canon, consist of the ten powers, four fearlessnesses, three fields of mindfulness, and great compassion, and became an established part of the doctrine in the Abhidharma literature.

d) Ten powers (daśā balānī, P. dasa balānī, 十力): (1) the power of distinguishing right from wrong; (2) the power of knowing the relationship between karma and its retribution; (3) the power of mastering the various types of meditation; (4) the power of knowing the differing capacities of sentient beings; (5) the power of knowing the desires and levels of understanding of sentient beings; (6) the power of knowing the nature of sentient beings; (7) the power of knowing the worlds in which sentient beings will be born in accordance with their karma; (8) the power of remembering past lives; (9) the power of foreseeing the future; and (10) the power of realizing when one’s mental defilements have been extinguished and one has become liberated.

b) Four fearlessnesses (catvāri vaiśāradyānī, P. cattāri vesāraj-jānī, 四無畏, 四無所畏): The four points in regard to which the Buddha has no fear in teaching: (1) declaring that he is fully cognizant of the world of phenomenal suffering; (2) declaring that he has eliminated all mental defilements, which are the cause of suffering; (3) teaching others about mental defilements, which must be eliminated; and (4) teaching others the path leading to the elimination of mental defilements.

c) Three fields of mindfulness (trīṇi smṛty-upasthānānī, P. tayo sati-paṭṭhānā, 三念住): The three situations in which the Buddha maintains correct awareness: (1) he maintains correct awareness without becoming especially elated even if sentient beings should have faith in him; (2) he maintains correct awareness without becoming especially depressed even if sentient beings should not have faith in him; (3) he maintains correct awareness regardless of whether sentient beings should trust in him or speak ill of him.

d) Great compassion (mahā-karunā, 大悲): Great compassion as a characteristic feature of the Buddha means that he is always ready to save sentient beings in affliction.
In Mahāyāna Buddhism a different set of “eighteen special qualities of a Buddha” was formulated. The Mahāyāna version of these is as follows: (1)~(3) faultlessness in body, speech, and mind; (4) non-partiality towards sentient beings; (5) mental equipoise born of meditation; (6) an all-encompassing mind which neglects nothing (—the above six qualities are born of morality and become the motive cause of non-abiding Nirvāṇa [apratīṣṭhita-nirvāṇa, 無住處涅槃]); (7)~(11) the total absence of any decline in the desire to save sentient beings, in energy, in mindfulness, in meditation, and in knowledge; (12) no regression after liberation (—the above six qualities are born of meditation; they are alternatively given as the non-decline of faith, desire, energy, wisdom, liberation, and knowledge-and-vision of liberation, and sometimes knowledge-and-vision of liberation is substituted for meditation); (13)~(15) the manifestation through wisdom of physical, verbal, and mental activities for the sake of sentient beings; and (16)~(18) unhindered omniscience in regard to the past, future, and present (—the above six qualities are born of wisdom; for details on the “three disciplines” of morality, meditation, and wisdom see chap. 6).

The manner of counting the “thirty-two distinguishing marks of a great person” (dvātriṃśan mahā-purusa-lakṣaṇāni, P. dvāttīṃsa maḥā-purisa-lakkhaṇāni, 三十二大人相) is not fixed, but important characteristics include an excrescence (uṣṇīṣa, 肉髻) on the crown of the head, a white tuft of hair (ūrṇā-keśa, 白髦) between the eye-brows, webbed fingers and toes, a pattern of a thousand-spoked wheel on the soles of the feet, concealed privities (koṣa-upagata-vasti-guhya, 馬陰藏相), uniformly full physical features, forty teeth, four white pointed teeth, and dextrorously curled hair. These features are accorded particular attention when carving images of the Buddha. In addition, “eighty minor characteristics” (aṣṭi-anuvyājana, P. asti-anuvyājana, 八十種好) are also mentioned as secondary distinguishing features, and together these two groups of distinguishing marks are known as the “major and minor distinguishing marks” (lakṣaṇa-anuvyājana, 相好) of a Buddha.

The “three knowledges” (tisro vīḍyā, P. tisso vījā, 三明) and “six supernatural faculties” (saḍ abhiññā, P. cha abhiññā, 六通) are as follows: (1) the faculty of knowing former lives (pūrva-nivāsa-anumānajñāna, P. pubbe-nivāsa-anussattajñāna, 宿命通); (2) “divine eyes” capable of foreseeing the future (divyā-cakṣus, P. dibba-cakkhu, 天眼通); (3) the faculty of recognizing present suffering and eliminating mental defilements, which are its cause (āsrava-kṣaya-jñāna, P. āsava-ikkhaya-jñāna, 湍盡通); (4) “divine ears” capable of hearing all sounds (divyā-śrotā, P. dibba-sota, 天耳通); (5) the faculty of being able to trans-
form oneself or objects at will (rddhi-vidhi-jñāna, P. iddhi-vidhānā, 神境通); and (6) the faculty of knowing others' thoughts (cetas-paryāya-jñāna, P. ceto-pariya-ñāna, 他心通). The first of these three faculties, equivalent in contents to the last three of the “ten powers,” represent the “three knowledges,” and scriptural references to them appear earlier than references to the “six supernatural faculties.”

**The Buddhas of the Three Ages**

The concept of “Buddhas of the past” (過去佛) appears quite early in Buddhist history. Inscriptions dating from the time of King Aśoka mention offerings to the Buddha Koṇāga-mana, and in early sources this Buddha is mentioned as the fifth Buddha; similarly, Śākyamuni is mentioned as the seventh Buddha to have appeared in this world.

*The Seven Buddhas of the Past* (過去七佛): (1) Vipaśyin (P. Vipassīn, 昆婆私佛), (2) Śikhin (P. Sikhin, 戢葉佛), (3) Viśvabhū (P. Ves-sabhū, 昆舍浮佛), (4) Krakucchanda (P. Kakusandha, 拘留孫佛), (5) Kanakamuni (P. Koṇāgamana, 拘那含牟尼佛), (6) Kāsyapa (P. Kas-sapa, 迦葉佛), and (7) Śākyamuni (P. Sakyamuni, 釋迦牟尼佛).

It is generally considered that the development of this concept of past Buddhas was at least partly influenced by the idea of the twenty-three “saviours” (tīrthaṅkara) or patriarchs said to have come before Mahāvira, the founder of Jainism. But as far as Buddhist doctrine is concerned, the theoretical basis for this idea is to be found in an allegory which would liken Śākyamuni and his achievement to a person who discovered an ancient city in the middle of a forest which had been there, although unknown to anyone, since time immemorial (cf. chap. 3). In other words, the absolute, identified with the Dharma, is represented by the ancient city, and just as Śākyamuni discovered it in the present age, so it is equally feasible that there were discoverers (i.e., Bud-
dhas) of the same truth in the past and it is also possible that further discoverers will appear in the future. (In this allegory the question of who initially constructed the city is disregarded.) In this manner it was acknowledged in theory that there had existed many Buddhas in the past and that many more would appear far into the future.

In the case of the Buddhas of the past, by going back yet farther into the past, fifteen and even twenty-five Buddhas, headed by Dipaṃkara, were enumerated and it was further claimed that many Buddhas of the same name also existed, resulting in an almost infinite number of Buddhas. According to legend, immediately prior to being born into this world Śākyamuni had been in the Tuṣita Heaven, and on the basis of this tradition it is believed that the bodhisattva destined to become the next Buddha following Śākyamuni is likewise at present residing in the Tuṣita Heaven. This “candidate” for Buddhahood was termed a bodhisattva “limited to (only) one (more) life” (eka-jāti-pratibaddha, 一生補處), meaning that he is bound to only one more life in transmigratory existence, after which he will be liberated and become a Buddha. The present “candidate” is Maitreya (弥勒) who, it is believed, will be born into this world 5,670 million years hence to become the next Buddha. This belief led to the growth of a cult centred on the future Buddha, and the faithful would pray to Maitreya so that they might be reborn in the Tuṣita Heaven or be reborn in this world at the time of Maitreya’s coming.

The names of the Buddhas of the past apart from those of the so-called “seven Buddhas of the past” noted above differ according to the various literary sources and the schools which transmitted them. Therefore, it is reasonably certain that the concept of the seven Buddhas of the past was already an established tradition prior to the division of the early Buddhist community into a number of schools. In addition, since the name of Dipaṃkara and his role as prophesier of Śākyamuni’s future enlightenment are to be found in the traditions
of the majority of schools, it would appear that this tradition relating to Dipamkara, closely connected with the story of Śākyamuni's life, also has a long history and that Dipamkara was generally believed to have been the first Buddha. There also exist "sūtras of Buddhas' names" (佛名經) which give the names of one thousand Buddhas for each of the three aeons of the past, present, and future: the Splendoured Aeon (壯嚴劫) of the past, the Auspicious Aeon (bhadrakalpa, 賢劫) of the present, and the Constellation Aeon (星宿劫) of the future.  

The Buddhas of the Ten Directions

As a parallel to the conception of countless Buddhas existing from the distant past far into the future, it came to be postulated that spatially too there existed an infinite number of world-systems, each with its respective Buddha. This concept is thought to have had its origins in a school belonging to the Mahāsāṃghika tradition, but it was in Mahāyāna Buddhism that this idea won great prominence, gaining in doctrinal importance at the same time.

One premise behind this way of thinking was the theoretical stipulation which allows for only one Buddha to exist in a certain world at one particular time; in other words, two Buddhas cannot exist simultaneously in the same world. Furthermore, the world corresponding to the sphere of Śākyamuni's teaching ministry was called the Sahā world, and whereas this was regarded as a "defiled land" (穢土) full of suffering, there arose a belief in the existence of countless worlds situated in the ten directions (four cardinal points, four intermediate directions, zenith, and nadir) beyond this Sahā world, "pure lands" (淨土) of happiness untouched by suffering and also referred to as "Buddha-lands" (buddha-kṣetra, 佛國土) since each has its respective Buddha. The belief in the existence of a heaven or paradise outside of this present world of ours is to be found in ancient Egypt and other regions through-
out the world and hence would appear to be a universal notion common to all of mankind; therefore, it may not be necessary to attribute the initial conception of this idea to any particular race. However, as regards the prominence gained by this way of thinking in Mahāyāna Buddhism, it is possible to suggest the influence of the role of “light” in the religion of ancient Persia.

But be that as it may, it became an established belief that there exist at present in the ten directions an innumerable number of Buddha-lands, each with its particular Buddha. Representative of these pure lands are Abhirati (妙喜), the world of the Buddha Akṣobhya (阿闍) in the east, and Sukhāvati (極樂), the world of the Buddha Amitābha (無量光) or Amitāyus (無量壽) in the west.

It was believed that the Buddhas of these Buddha-lands had each undergone a process similar to that of Śākyamuni, consisting of vow, practice, and enlightenment, as a result of which they had founded their respective pure lands. An example of this is Dharmākara (法藏), the bodhisattva who, having made a vow and performed various religious disciplines, became upon the consummation of his practice the Buddha Amitābha. The theoretical frame of reference characteristic of Mahāyāna sūtras permits the simultaneous existence of an infinitely great number of Buddhas in the past, present, and future, and the sūtras record predictions (vyākaraṇa, 授記) promising the future attainment of Buddhahood to countless bodhisattvas (and, for that matter, to a variety of sentient beings, including śrāvaka and various gods, provided they heed the Buddha’s teaching). In such predictions the name of the world or Buddha-land and the future name as Buddha of the being concerned are always specified. In Mahāyāna Buddhism these Buddhas are known collectively as the “Buddhas of the three ages and ten directions” (三世十方諸佛).

Since the Sahā world is a “defiled land” and therefore not
termed a "Buddha-land" (although there is of course to be found at the same time the idea, instanced by the Vimalakirtinirdesa-sūtra, that if the mind is pure, then this world is also immediately transformed into a pure land), Śākyamuni came to be considered a Buddha belonging to a category different from those Buddhas who, like Amitābha, had become Buddhas as a result of former practices. In this case, Śākyamuni is viewed as a "transformation-body," in contrast to the Buddhas of the pure lands, such as Amitābha, who are looked upon as "enjoyment-bodies": these concepts will be considered in the next section.

The Trichiliocosm or "Triple-thousand Great Thousand World": At the basis of the term "world" (loka-dhātu, 世界: literally, "world-sphere") as used in this context there lies the concept of the domain ruled over by the wheel-turning king, a sphere centred on Mt. Sumeru and extending over the four surrounding continents. The four continents (catur-dvīpa, 四大洲) are Pūrvavideha (勝身洲) in the east, Jambudvīpa (瞻部洲,閩浮提) in the south, (Apara)godāniya (牛貨洲,俱耶尼) in the west, and (Uttara)kuru (俱盧洲) in the north, and it was in Jambudvīpa that Śākyamuni was born, this being also regarded as the world of mankind in general. In Buddhist cosmology, however, it is held that there exist in addition hells located below and heavens located above this world centred on Mt. Sumeru, the heavens being regions attainable through the power of meditation and divided in accordance with the three realms of desire, form, and non-form (the four continents and the region extending down to the nethermost hells are included in the realm of desire); accordingly, the Buddhist conception of the "world" encompasses the ambit of these three realms, which also corresponds to the sphere of existence for those who, as yet unliberated, are still bound to the cycle of transmigratory existence (see diagram, p. 134).

Next, a single such world centred on Mt. Sumeru is termed a "small world," and one thousand of these "small worlds" constitute a "small one-thousand world" (sahasraś cūḍiko loka-dhātuḥ, 小千世界) or minor world-system; one thousand of these minor world-systems constitute a "medium double-thousand world" (dvo-sāhasro madhyamo loka-dhātuḥ, 中千世界) or medium world-system; and one thousand of these medium world-systems constitute a "triple-thousand great thousand world" (tri-sāhasra-mahā-sāhasra-loka-dhātu, 三千大千世界) or major world-
system. In other words, this major world-system or trichiliocosm consists of one billion \((1,000 \times 1,000 \times 1,000)\) “small worlds,” and in Buddhism this is sometimes conceived of as a single world-system.

Sahā World (sahā-loka-dhātu, 婆婆世界): The Chinese transliteration so-p’o (婆婆) for Sahā would appear to correspond to sabhā, meaning “assembly.” (This meaning is retained in modern Hindi, where for example the House of People, representing the lower house of parliament, is called lok-sabhā [people’s assembly] and the Council of States, representing the upper house, rāj-sabhā [rulers’ assembly].) But in the Buddhist context sahā is the usual form, and this is interpreted in the sense of “sufferance” or “endurance.” Accordingly, sahā (loka-dhātu) is also rendered as “land of sufferance” (忍土, 忍土), implying that it is a world full of tribulations which must be endured.

Material Body and Dharma-Body

When Śākyamuni’s death occasioned reflection among the disciples on the true nature of a Buddha, it had already been acknowledged that the Buddha was of a nature quite different from that of other beings in this world. The first thesis to be posited in this regard was that the Buddha’s true nature is the Dharma.

In the Early Canon it is stated that the Buddha “has the Dharma for a body” (dhamma-kāya). The Dharma is contrasted with Brahman, resulting in an analogy of the “Dharma” as the absolute ens to replace Brahman, and the “Buddha” as the personification of the Dharma to replace Brahṃā, the personification of Brahman. But the meaning of Dharma in this case is by no means clear. On the other hand, the Mahāparinibbāna-suttanta includes the following verses:

Morality, wisdom, meditation, and liberation are unsurpassed.

This Dharma was realized by the renowned Gotama. Knowing thus, the Buddha taught the Dharma to his
disciples.

The master of clear vision who extinguished suffering has passed away.

Here five qualities, consisting of the four factors of morality, meditation, wisdom, and liberation, and the knowledge of these four factors, are described as the qualifications of a Buddha. The final one, “knowledge,” is probably equivalent to what is later termed “knowledge-and-vision of liberation” (vimukti-jñāna-darśana, P. vimutti-ñāṇa-dassana, 解脫知見), and in Abhidharma doctrine these five factors are known collectively as the “five aggregates of the Dharma” (pañca dharma-skandhāḥ, P. pañca dhamma-kkhandhā, 五法蘊) or, in Chinese, as the “fivefold Dharma-body” (五分法身). “Dharma-body” here signifies an aggregation of Dharma, and the aggregation of Dharma consisting of the above five factors is considered to be ultimately equivalent to the corpus of the teachings. This means that after Śākyamuni’s death his proxy is to be sought in the teachings which he left to posterity (an interpretation found for example in the I-chiao ching quoted in the previous chapter):¹⁰ this is the second meaning of what might be termed the “Dharma-body.”

Thus it is apparent that in the Abhidharma of the various schools two interpretations of this concept “Dharma-body” had been established: (1) as a concept for explaining the nature of a Buddha, illustrated by such expressions as “the Buddha has the Dharma for a body,” and (2) as the “fivefold aggregation of the teachings” (i.e., the 84,000 kinds of teaching) representing the actual contents of (1).

Next, when discussing the nature of the historical Buddha who had died at the age of eighty, the question of whether the body of the deceased had been a material body (rūpa-kāya, 色身) or the Dharma-body (dharma-kāya, 法身)—and consequently a manifestation of this latter—also became a matter
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of debate. The Sarvāstivādins and related schools upheld the view that it had been a material body, but schools of the Mahāsāṃghika tradition are said to have asserted that it had been a manifestation of the Dharma-body. This latter way of thinking was later inherited by Mahāyāna theories on the nature of the Buddha. For example, the Diamond Sūtra (Vajracchedikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra, 金刚般若波罗蜜经) and other works contain verses to the following effect:

One must not see or listen to the Tathāgata by his material body;
The Tathāgata should be seen as one made of the Dharma.

In other works of the Prajñāpāramitā literature it is also repeatedly stated that the Tathāgata is “made of the Dharma” (dharma-kāya), but the idea of a “Dharma-body” does not yet seem to have been established as an independent concept at this stage.

However, when we come to Nāgārjuna, we find in the Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa, the commentary on the Larger Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra ascribed to him, that when discussing the Buddha’s body he distinguishes between the “Dharma-body” (法身) and the “physical body” (生身); the latter is the body born of human parents and refers here to the Buddha Śākyamuni. Hereafter the theory of two bodies, positing a Dharma-body and a material body, appears in a large number of Mahāyāna sūtras. Combining this theory of two bodies with the distinction made above between the Buddhas of the pure lands and the Buddha of the defiled world which we inhabit results in a theory of three bodies, but the actual formulation of this latter theory took place some time after Nāgārjuna, probably in the theorizing of the Yogācāra school.
As regards the concept of “Dharma-body” in this new context, although it has its origins in the view, noted above, that “the Buddha has the Dharma for a body,” according to the ideas which were formulated in Mahāyāna Buddhism, dharma here signifies the Dharma realized by the Buddha (adhigama-dharma, 所證法), equivalent to truth itself. In its capacity as the fountainhead of the Dharma taught by the Buddha (deśanā-dharma, 所說法), it is called the “Dharma-realm” (dharma-dhātu, 法界) or “Dharma-nature” (dharmatā, 法性). At the same time it is also conceived of as the source of all phenomena. This Dharma-realm is held to be spatially unbounded and temporally unchanging and eternal, and the Buddha too, regarded as being in his essence at one with this Dharma-realm, is also conceived of as an absolute being, infinite and immutable in both time and space: it was this aspect of the Buddha which was called the Dharma-body (or Dharma-body of the Tathāgata). At the same time, because of the very omnipresence of this Dharma-body, all sentient beings throughout the universe were also said to be identical in their essential nature with the Dharma-body. Developments in this theory are particularly marked in Tathāgatagarbha thought (see chap. 7), but they are already foreshadowed in the doctrines elaborated in the Avatamsaka-sūtra. In this work, the Buddha is conceived of as the Dharma-body pervading boundless space and is referred to by the name Vairocana (毘盧遮那). Vairocana does not himself preach through the medium of human speech; instead, he emits rays of light which enter the heads of bodhisattvas and come forth from their mouths as the teachings which constitute the sūtra itself. In Esoteric Buddhism, this Vairocana becomes Mahāvairocana (摩訶毘盧遮那, 大日如來), who is now believed to preach the Dharma as a function of the “secret of speech,” one of the Tathāgata’s “three secret activities” (三密行) of body, speech, and mind.
CHAPTER TWO

In the above interpretation, the Dharma-body is on the one hand identical with the Dharma-realm or Dharma-nature, equivalent to the “ultimate principle” (理) itself; but insofar as the Dharma-body represents a Buddha, the moment of “wisdom” (智) must also be considered. The function of this wisdom is demonstrated by the rays of light which illuminate all and everything, and these same rays are also compared to the function of sunlight which nurtures all things, thus symbolizing the Buddha’s compassion (Vairocana means “Universally Illuminating One” [遍照]). In other words, the essence of the Dharma-body as elucidated by Mahāyāna sūtras in general is that of a Buddha embodying both the “ultimate principle” and “wisdom” (the latter embracing knowledge and compassion).

The Theory of Three Bodies

In contradistinction to the above Dharma-body, those who have personally realized the Dharma, namely, the Tathāgatas (=those who have arrived at thusness), correspond to the Buddhas mentioned previously who have their individual pure lands. Theirs is known as the “enjoyment-body” (sambhoga-kāya, 受用身) since they enjoy the fruits of their enlightenment, although in Chinese this term was also rendered as “recompense-body” (報身, 應身), implying that they have now received the fruits of their past practices. In this respect, they are self-benefitting and theirs is the standpoint of “self-enjoyment” (自受用). However, since the very existence of a pure land presupposes the altruistic aim of receiving sentient beings there and having them enjoy the same enlightenment, these Buddhas are in this respect homogeneous (nītyānanda) with the Dharma-body (等流身: homogeneous body), and they are Buddhas who have appeared in other worlds for the weal
of sentient beings. In this sense, the enjoyment-body is a “body for causing others to enjoy the realization of the Dharma” or “other-enjoyment body” (他受用身). Although these Buddhas of the pure lands are endowed with material bodies, they cannot be seen by ordinary beings in this defiled world of ours, and are said to be visible to bodhisattvas only. Sākyamuni, on the other hand, not only possesses a material body for altruistic purposes but is also visible to ordinary beings: this is the “transformation-body” (nirmāṇa-kāya, 化身, 應身), expressly manifested by the Dharma-body for our sakes. This transformation-body is a Tathāgata in the sense that he is “one who has come from thusness.”

Thus was established the theory of the three bodies of the Buddha (with the Dharma-body sometimes also referred to as the “own-nature body” [svabhāva-kāya, 自性身]),¹³ and this became the basis of all further Mahāyāna speculation on the nature of the Buddha’s body. In later times this theory of three bodies underwent further developments: these include the theory of four bodies, which arose from the division of the enjoyment-body into the “self-enjoyment body” (自受用身) and “other-enjoyment body” (他受用身); another theory of four bodies which regards the Dharma-body as the fountainhead of the bodies of own-nature, enjoyment, and transformation; the theory, born from a sharp distinction drawn between ultimate principle and transcendent wisdom, which posits a “pure Dharmarealm” (viśuddhi-dharma-dhātu, 清淨法界) as absolute principle and either three or four bodies endowed with “four wisdoms” (catvāri jñānāni, 四智);¹⁴ and the theory of “five wisdoms” (pañca jñānāni, 五智) and “five Buddhas” (pañca buddhāḥ, 五佛), which derives from the conception of the pure Dharma-realm too as a fundamental wisdom and views the whole universe as permeated by Mahāvairocana.
CHAPTER THREE

Dharma: The Buddhist Conception of Truth

The Meanings of Dharma

Dharma, the second of the Three Treasures, means essentially something which holds or supports. This term is used in a wide range of meanings, signifying universal truth or religious norms (i.e., religion), social norms (laws, customs, institutions), norms of action (ethics, morals, duty), and so forth, and may be said to refer to what is generally regarded as good and right.

For example, what is known to us as “Hinduism” is called simply “Dharma” or sometimes “Hindu Dharma” (i.e., the Indian norm). In this case dharma may be taken in the sense of religion, although Hindu Dharma also implies a social norm. This social norm is that prescribed by the provisions of Manu’s Law-Book (Mānava-dharma-sāstra) and other similar codes (dharma-sāstra), the basis of which is said to lie in “laws relating to caste (varṇa) and the four stages of life (āśrama).” The laws relating to caste consist of rules pertaining to the various castes, and these represent for the caste-members the norm of action, namely, their duties (and rights). Alongside the laws concerning caste, the law-codes also teach morals of a more universal nature to be observed by Hindus (or, as far as Hindus are concerned, by mankind in general), such as abstinence from killing (ahimsa), compassion (dayā), and generosity (dāna). These two aspects of dharma together form the foundations of the Hindu view of life.
Dharma thus has many facets, but it is held to be an "eternal law" (sanātana-dharma), the roots of which are sought in the divine revelations which constitute the Vedic scriptures. It is also that which is "right," to be observed, and that which is "good," from the observance of which reward and welfare after death result.

The Buddhist usage of the term dharma may be considered basically the same in its connotations as that of Hinduism. From a Hindu point of view, Buddhism is Bauddha-dharma, the "Buddha's law" or the truth as revealed through the Buddha, and it is regarded as just one manifestation of Hindu Dharma, not necessarily conflicting with Hinduism. But as far as Buddhists are concerned, Hindu Dharma includes uncommendable institutions such as the caste-system and is characteristically Indian in its practical implications, whereas the Buddha's Dharma is a universally valid truth. In other words, Buddhists would contend that whereas Hindu Dharma, the dharma of the caste-system, is a secular dharma which concerns itself with worldly matters, the Buddha's Dharma stands above the secular world. (Herein lies the basis of the Buddhist teaching of the equality of castes, for it is the equality of a supramundane dharma. At the same time this also allowed Buddhism to spread beyond the confines of India and become a world religion.)

It has already been noted earlier that in Buddhism dharma signified both the truth realized by Śākyamuni and the contents of that truth as expounded by Śākyamuni. Dharma thus defined is described in the scriptures in the following manner:¹

The Dharma (1) is well proclaimed by the Lord, (2) is to be thoroughly considered (by the listener), (3) is not subject to time, (4) invites all to "come and see," (5) directs (to the ideal state of Nirvāṇa), and
(6) is to be realized by the wise for themselves.

The Dharma as expounded by Śākyamuni is also described as “good in the beginning, good in the middle, and good in the end, possessing contents and form, and perfect and pure.” These various definitions indicate that the realized truth is mirrored by the expounded teaching which in turn leads to enlightenment, thus clearly demonstrating the cyclic structure characterizing the relationship between enlightenment and the teaching. In this respect the above definitions inform us of the basic structure of Buddhism. However, the contents of this truth or teaching are as yet unelucidated.

As a prelusory indication of the contents of the Buddhist Dharma, the following verse may be cited:

All things are born of causes, and of these the Ta-thāgata has proclaimed the cause, And their extinction too: thus does the Great Ascetic speak.


As was noted in chapter 1, this is the verse said to have been heard by Sāriputta from Assaji, one of Śākyamuni’s first five disciples, whom Sāriputta happened to meet at a time when he was renowned among fellow ascetics as one of the leading disciples of the sceptic Sañjaya, and as a result of his encounter with Assaji he became a disciple of Śākyamuni, later to become one of the leading figures in the Buddhist community, known as the “general of the
Dharma” (dhamma-senāpati, 法將). Although the truth of this tradition cannot be vouched for, it may be safely assumed that the compilers of the scriptures and biographical literature discerned the basis of Buddhist doctrine in the above verse, and that therefore the primary meaning of the word dharma in the Buddhist context may also be sought in this same verse.

This verse is generally known as the “Verse of (the Law of) Dependent Co-arising” (Pratītyasamutpāda-gāthā, 緣起法頌), since it proclaims the principle of dependent co-arising (said to have been realized by Śākyamuni under the bo tree) which declares that all phenomena are born of various causes and conditions and that if those causes and conditions disappear the phenomena themselves will also disappear. Alternatively, this verse is also known as the “Verse of the Dharma-body” (法身偈), this latter name deriving from the fact that the principle of dependent co-arising was regarded as the basis of Śākyamuni’s teaching, and that it was further believed that this verse described in very succinct terms the contents of the enlightenment lying at the basis of the “Dharma-body” (the aggregation or corpus of the teaching) which was to be respected and venerated in place of Śākyamuni after his death.

At the same time, it should also be noted that the above verse illustrates a new usage of the term dharma, different from the meanings mentioned above. This is its use in the sense of “thing” or “phenomenon,” a usage peculiar to Buddhism and unknown to Hinduism.

According to the Atthasālinī,4) Buddhaghosa’s commentary on the Dhammasaṅgani, a Pāli exegetical work, dhamma in the Buddhist context has four meanings: (1) doctrine, (2) cause, (3) virtue, and (4) no-self-ness.

“Doctrine” (pariyatti) here means “that which should be learnt and attained,” and so it is equivalent to dharma,
embodying the basic structure of Buddhism as represented by enlightenment and the teaching. It encompasses the whole of Buddhism as a religion, and may be termed "the sacred."

Next, "cause" or "condition" (hetu) corresponds to the principle expounded in the above "Verse of the Dharma-body," and may thus be defined as the principle of dependent co-arising or the law of cause and effect. This is the truth proclaimed by Buddhism, and may therefore be termed "the true."

The third sense, "virtue" (guna), refers to what is of value, useful, or wholesome, and signifies the ethic norm. In the Buddhist context, this denotes correct actions, such as guiding others to enlightenment and Nirvana, and the various moral virtues to be cultivated through practice, although in actual fact these include many, such as abstinence from killing, compassion, and generosity, common to Hinduism too. (Any dharma which runs counter to the ethic norm is termed "non-dharma" [adharma, 非法], and this embraces all that is unwholesome, wrong, and conducive to unfavourable results.)

Thus guna means what is wholesome and of value, but at the same time it has a more general sense of "quality" or "attribute." An "attribute" is anything appurtenant to a substance, but at the same time it is also a distinctive feature such as through which the substance is revealed. It is that which gives the substance its particular quality, and in this sense it may be said to maintain or support the substance: it is in other words a dharma. As far as the general usage of the term dharma is concerned, this sense of "quality" or "attribute" is in fact closer to its primary meaning, and countless examples of this usage may be found in Buddhist texts too. In this case there is no question of good or evil, fair or foul. It was a further development linked to this meaning of "quality" which led to the use of dharma in the sense of "thing" or "phenomenon."
In Chinese commentaries, the traditional definition of dharma (法) is “that which maintains an own-nature and as a norm produces understanding of things” (任持自相轨生物解; cf. Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya: svalaśaṇa-dhāranād dharmāḥ). This is the meaning of dharma in the phrase sarva-dharmāḥ (all dharmas) to be discussed in the next chapter. In the above definition, “that which maintains an own-nature” means anything which possesses a particular quality, and, although not quite the same as a substance, anything having a specific quality, be it matter, psychological phenomena, or abstract concepts, is called a dharma. An example of a specific quality is heat in the case of fire: fire is by nature hot, never cold. This quality “heat” may also be termed the contents of the word or concept “fire,” for in Buddhism any concept which becomes an object of consciousness and is possessed of a specific content is called a dharma. In addition, Buddhism teaches that all such phenomena are conditioned in their origination (=dependent co-arising), are forever changing (=impermanence), and are void of any unchanging substance (=no-self). In this sense, “no-self-ness,” the fourth meaning of dhamma given in the Pāli commentary cited above, may be considered to correspond to this definition of dharma. But it should be noted that the original Pāli has nissatta-nijjñatā, literally “absence of substance and absence of life” or “absence of any sentient or living being,” which implies “no-selfness” and can therefore be taken to mean either the said “quality” or that same “principle” or “truth.” This last point will be taken up again later; here let it suffice to conclude that in Buddhism the word dharma is employed as a comprehensive term embracing the above multiplicity of meanings.

The various uses of the term dharma outlined above may be rephrased in modern terms as (1) teaching (doctrine, religion), (2) truth (the contents of enlightenment), (3) quality,
especially any good quality (virtue), and (4) ens (phenomena material and immaterial, physical and mental, and concepts, i.e., objects of consciousness in general). In addition, since these four facets all constitute the contents of the teaching, the scriptures which incorporate the teaching as their contents are also called dharma. This meaning may be seen in the use of dharma when it was said of the First Council following Śākyamuni’s death that the Elders “selected the Dharma and the Vinaya,” and it corresponds to what was later called the Collection of Sūtras. This could therefore be added as a fifth meaning of dharma, but in the traditional method of explanation (1) teaching is divided into (a) the sūtras as significant (abhidhāna, 能詮) and (b) the teaching as signifié (abhidheya, 所詮).

In our following discussion of the term dharma, we shall commence by considering the contents of (2) “dharma as truth,” that aspect of dharma which may be regarded as pivotal to its meaning.

The Basis of the Teaching: Dependent Co-arising and the Four Noble Truths

The basis of Buddhism lies in the belief and understanding as truth that Śākyamuni realized the Dharma (truth) and taught this Dharma which he had realized to his disciples, or, to put it in another way, that the Dharma as represented by the teaching is the verbal expression of Śākyamuni’s experience of enlightenment. In the biographical literature, it has become established practice to express the relationship between the truth which Śākyamuni realized and the teaching which he taught, as well as its contents, by explaining that Śākyamuni first contemplated the principle of dependent co-arising, thus realizing the Dharma, and then expounded
the teaching of the Four Noble Truths and Noble Eightfold Path in the First Sermon. Let us now consider this in a little more detail, tracing the train of events as recorded in the early literature.

The Pāli Vinaya-piṭaka describes the events which took place as Śākyamuni sat under the bo tree in the following manner:

At that time the Lord, after having attained enlightenment for the first time, sat cross-legged at the foot of the bo tree for seven days, enjoying the bliss of liberation. Then (at the end of these seven days) during the first watch of the night the Lord contemplated "dependent co-arising" in regular and reverse order:

"Conditioned by ignorance there are the formative forces; conditioned by the formative forces there is consciousness; conditioned by consciousness there is name-and-form; conditioned by name-and-form there are the six sense-fields; conditioned by the six sense-fields there is contact; conditioned by contact there is sensation; conditioned by sensation there is craving; conditioned by craving there is grasping; conditioned by grasping there is becoming; conditioned by becoming there is birth; conditioned by birth there arise old age and death, grief, sorrow, suffering, dejection, and perturbation. Such is the origination to this whole mass of suffering.

"But from the cessation of ignorance, which consists of the complete absence of passion, there is the cessation of the formative forces; from the cessation of the formative forces there is the cessation of consciousness; ... from the cessation of birth there cease old age and
death, grief, sorrow, suffering, dejection, and perturba-
tion. Such is the cessation of this whole mass of suf-
fering."

Then, knowing this, the Lord uttered on this occasion
the following impromptu verse:

“When the dharmas (dhamma) do indeed become
manifest to the ardent, meditating brahmin,
Then all his doubts disappear, for he has realized
the dharma with its cause.”

Then during the middle watch of the night the
Lord similarly contemplated “dependent co-arising”
in regular and reverse order, after which he uttered
the following impromptu verse:

“When the dharmas do indeed become manifest to
the ardent, meditating brahmin,
Then all his doubts disappear, for he has realized
the extinction of causes.”

Then during the last watch of the night the Lord
similarly contemplated “dependent co-arising” in regu-
lar and reverse order, after which he uttered the
following impromptu verse:

“When the dharmas do indeed become manifest to
the ardent, meditating brahmin,
Then he stands, scattering the hosts of Mara the
Evil One, like the sun which illuminates the
sky.”

The Vinaya-pitaka then gives the following account of the
First Sermon:83
And the Lord wandering from place to place, came to the Deer Park at Benares where the Five Monks were. . . . And then the Lord addressed the Five Monks as follows:

"There are, O Monks, two extremes which are to be avoided by him who has renounced the world. What are these two extremes? One is a life given to pleasures, indulging in pleasure and lust: this is degrading, lowly, vulgar, ignoble, and profitless. The other is a life given to self-torture: this is painful, ignoble, and profitless. Avoiding these two extremes, O Monks, the Tathāgata realized the Middle Way. . . .

"And which, O Monks, is this Middle Way? It is the Noble Eightfold Path, namely, right views, right speech, right conduct, right livelihood, right efforts, right mindfulness, and right concentration. This, O Monks, is the Middle Way, realized by the Tathāgata, which produces insight, produces knowledge, and leads to tranquillity, to special knowledge, to enlightenment, and to Nirvāṇa.

"This, O Monks, is the Noble Truth of Suffering: birth is suffering, old age is suffering, sickness is suffering, death is suffering, to be conjoined with what one dislikes is suffering, to be disjoined from what one likes is suffering, not to obtain what one desires is suffering; in short, the five aggregates of attachment involve suffering.

"This, O Monks, is the Noble Truth of the Origination of Suffering: it is that craving which leads to rebirth, is accompanied by joy and passion, and seeks its delight now here, now there; it is, namely, craving for pleasure, craving for becoming, and craving for non-becoming.

"This, O Monks, is the Noble Truth of the Cessa-
tion of Suffering: it is the cessation of this craving, completely free of every passion, and it is the renunciation of it, the abandoning of it, liberation from it, and non-attachment to it.

"This, O Monks, is the Noble Truth of the Path which leads to the cessation of suffering: it is the Noble Eightfold Path. . . .

"‘This is the Noble Truth of Suffering.’—thus, O Monks, of these dharmas which had formerly been unheard of did I obtain insight, did I obtain cognition, did I obtain knowledge, did I obtain wisdom, did I obtain light. ‘This Noble Truth of Suffering must indeed be thoroughly understood.’ . . . ‘This Noble Truth of Suffering has indeed been thoroughly understood.’—thus, O Monks, . . . did I obtain . . . light.

"‘This is the Noble Truth of the Origination of Suffering.’ . . . ‘This Noble Truth of the Origination of Suffering must be given up.’ . . . ‘This Noble Truth of the Origination of Suffering has been given up.’ . . .

"‘This is the Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering.’ . . . ‘This Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering must be realized.’ . . . ‘This Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering has been realized.’ . . .

"‘This is the Noble Truth of the Path leading to the cessation of suffering.’ . . . ‘This Noble Truth of the Path leading to the cessation of suffering must be cultivated.’ . . . ‘This Noble Truth of the Path leading to the cessation of suffering has been cultivated.’—thus, O Monks, of these dharmas which had formerly been unheard of did I obtain insight, . . . did I obtain light.

"As long, O Monks, as I did not thus possess with perfect purity the knowledge and insight into these Four Noble Truths, with their three modifications and twelve aspects, I did not claim that I had actually
realized unsurpassed perfect enlightenment. ... But once I thus possessed with perfect purity the knowledge and insight into these Four Noble Truths, with their three modifications and twelve aspects, I then acknowledged that I had actually realized unsurpassed perfect enlightenment in the world of gods, of Māra, of Brahmā, and in the world of ascetics and brahmans and of gods and men. And this knowledge and insight arose in my mind: 'The liberation of my mind is steadfast; this is my last birth; now there will be no further rebirth.'

The above account in the *Vinaya-piṭaka* was probably composed at a time after it had become an established tradition within the community that the truth realized by Śākyamuni had been the principle of dependent co-arising (consisting of twelve members) and that on the occasion of the First Sermon the teaching of the Noble Eightfold Path, which avoids the extremes of pleasure and self-torture, and of the Four Noble Truths, embracing the former, had been expounded. There is evidence that prior to this the truth realized by Śākyamuni had been described in a variety of ways. However, it is important to note that both the principle of "dependent co-arising" and the realization of the "Four Noble Truths" were considered to concern the one and same "Dharma." This pattern is basically the same as that found in accounts contained in Chinese translated Buddhist texts.

When considering the doctrine embodied in the Four Noble Truths (*catvāry ārya-satyāni, P. catāri ariya-saccāni*, 四聖諦), it will be noticed that Śākyamuni declared himself to have attained enlightenment only after he had realized the Four Noble Truths. This means that the Four Noble Truths of suffering, origination, cessation, and the path represent the very truth which he had realized. What is more, this fact
suggests that it is within the teaching of the Four Noble Truths that the principle of dependent co-arising is revealed in a more comprehensive manner. In later times, the formula of dependent co-arising consisting of twelve members was to become the standard formulation of the principle of dependent co-arising (see chap. 5). But in the *Vinaya-pitaka* it is not in fact stated that Śākyamuni became the Buddha after having realized this principle; to the contrary, it says that it was after having become the Buddha that he contemplated the twelfeifold chain of dependent co-arising. If this be the case, it would imply that, as in the case of the Four Noble Truths, the formula of dependent co-arising too represented simply one mode of expression for the truth which he had realized, the only difference between the two in the account of the *Vinaya-pitaka* being that whereas the Four Noble Truths took the form of oral teachings, the formula of dependent co-arising consisting of twelve members remained the object of his private meditations.

But even more important to note is the fact that there exist earlier formulations of the twelfeifold chain of dependent co-arising in which the starting point is not ignorance but the suffering of old age and death. An example of this is the following passage (here summarized) found in the Pāli *Sāṃyutta-nikāya* and the Chinese *Sāṃyukta-āgama*:

> "When, O Monks, I was still a bodhisattva, I reflected thus: ‘Man is truly in trouble, repeating birth, old age, decay, and death, and yet he does not know any way of escape. Why, then, are there old age and death? Conditioned by birth there are old age and death. Why, then, is there birth? Conditioned by becoming there is birth. . . . Why, then, are there formative forces? Conditioned by ignorance there are formative forces.’"
THE BUDDHIST CONCEPTION OF TRUTH

Here Śākyamuni starts from suffering, then proceeds retrograde in search of the causes of its origination, and eventually arrives at ignorance. This parallels the formulation of the Four Noble Truths which starts with the Noble Truth of Suffering (duḥkha-satya, P. dukkha-sacca, 苦[聖] 諦) and moves on to the cause of the origination of suffering, namely, the Noble Truth of the Origination of Suffering (duḥkha-samudaya-satya, P. dukkha-samudaya-sacca, 苦集[聖] 諦). It is here that the initial patterns of Śākyamuni’s train of thought may be found revealed.

As a matter of fact, there are to be found dating from prior to the final formulation of the formula of dependent co-arising consisting of twelve members a five-member formula beginning with the suffering of old age and death and ending with craving, a ten- or nine-member formula ending with the interdependently related consciousness and name-and-form, as well as an even simpler version in which the cause of suffering is sought in craving alone, as is also the case in the explanation of the Noble Truth of the Origination of Suffering, and the cause of suffering is pursued in other ways too. The two truths of suffering and origination may be regarded as a schema which embraces these various formulations of the principle of dependent co-arising. The twelfe-fold chain of dependent co-arising represents merely one pattern among these diverse formulations.

In the same manner; the observation that “from the cessation of ignorance there is the cessation of formative forces; ... there cease the suffering of old age and death” is incorporated by the addition of the third of the Four Noble Truths, the Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering (duḥkha-nirodha-satya, P. dukkha-nirodha-sacca, 苦滅[聖] 諦). Furthermore, the Four Noble Truths contain one factor which is absent from the twelfe-fold chain of dependent co-arising: under the name of the Noble Truth of the Path (mārga-satya,
P. magga-sacca, 道 [道] 諦), they teach the means whereby
the cessation of suffering may be achieved. This is the
“middle way” (madhyamā pratīpad, P. majjhima pratīpadā,
中道) which avoids the two extremes of pleasure and self-
torture, and in concrete terms it consists of the Noble Eight-
fold Path (ārya-aṣṭāṅga-mārga, P. ariya-aṭṭhaṅgika-magga,
八聖道, 八正道). Through the promulgation of this method
of practice Buddhism became the “Buddhist path,” the path
leading to enlightenment. Knowledge of suffering, knowledge
of the cause of suffering, and the abandonment of this cause,
in other words the cessation of suffering, are realized through
practice of the path. The realization of the cessation of
suffering is the goal (the Buddha Śākyamuni had already
attained this goal), and to this end it is necessary to cultivate
the path or the practical means which lead there. The purpose
of Śākyamuni’s teaching was to teach this to his disciples
and encourage them to translate it into practice.

Thus it is evident that all that is taught in Buddhism is
contained in its entirety within the Four Noble Truths and
that, taken as a whole, the Four Noble Truths describe the
principle of dependent co-arising. In other words, the Dharma
or truth realized by Śākyamuni was that suffering is condi-
tioned in its origination, and because of this intrinsic impor-
tance of the Four Noble Truths they had to be taught at
the First Sermon.

The Four Noble Truths provide the basic framework of
the Dharma, and it may be said that by defining their con-
tents in terms of the principle of dependent co-arising the
basis of dharma in the Buddhist context, namely, the Bud-
dhist teaching, was established.

As an example of the Four Noble Truths serving as a model for
the exposition of doctrine, mention may be made of the organiza-
tion of the Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya. This work consists of nine chap-
ters, the organization of which (to the exclusion of the final “Chapter
on the Individual" [Pudgala-nirdeśa] which, dealing with a specific topic, although of course related to the basic thesis of no-self, is of a supplementary nature) may be diagrammatically represented in the following manner (figures refer to chapter numbers):

Contamination
(3) "Chapter on the Universe" (Loka-nirdeśa) [suffering] Noble Truth of Suffering
(4) "Chapter on Karma" (Karma-nirdeśa) [karma] Noble Truth of Origination
(5) "Chapter on Latent Propensities" (Anuṣaya-nirdeśa) [defilement]

Purity
(6) "Chapter on the Noble Being" (Āryapudgala-nirdeśa) [result of practice] Noble Truth of Cessation
(7) "Chapter on Knowledge" (Jñāna-nirdeśa) [practice and result (Buddha)]
(8) "Chapter on Meditation" (Samāpatti-nirdeśa) [practice] Noble Truth of the Path

Dharma
(1) "Chapter on the Realms" (Dhātu-nirdeśa) sarva-dharmāh
(2) "Chapter on the Sense-organs" (Indriya- sarva-dharmāh

* Chapters 1 and 2 constitute a general introduction to the concept dharma.

Śākyamuni's Philosophical Position: The Ten or Fourteen Unanswerables

On the subject of Śākyamuni's position or attitude in regard to certain problematic issues, mention is often made of his refusal to reply to questions of a metaphysical content, as is evidenced by the "fourteen unanswerables" (caturdāśa avyākṛta-vastūni, 十四無記, 十四捨置記; "unanswerable" [avyākṛta, 無記] may be more literally rendered as "unanswered" or "unexplained"). The fourteen "unanswerable" issues usually listed are as follows:
(A) Whether the universe is (1) eternal, (2) non-eternal, (3) both eternal and non-eternal, or (4) neither eternal nor non-eternal.

(B) Whether the universe is (5) finite, (6) infinite, (7) both finite and infinite, or (8) neither finite nor infinite.

(C) Whether the body and soul are (9) one or (10) separate.

(D) Whether after death the Tathāgata (11) exists, (12) does not exist, (13) both exists and does not exist, or (14) neither exists nor does not exist.

The "ten unanswerables" (十難無記) are similar to the above, with the exclusion of the third and fourth items of (A) and (B). There are also instances when the subject of (A) and (B) is given as "the universe and the self."

The issues here regarded as unanswerable, questions such as those relating to the origins of the universe and life after death, are all subjects transcending the sphere of everyday experience, and Šākyamuni refused to answer them because they have nothing whatsoever to contribute to the solution of the basic problems of human existence. This attitude is illustrated by the well-known "Parable of the Poisoned Arrow," recorded in the Early Canon as counsel given to Māluśkyāputta.\(^{10}\)

Māluśkyāputta, one of Šākyamuni's disciples, feeling dissatisfied on account of Šākyamuni's repeated refusal to reply to the type of questions noted above, complained that if he were not given the answers to these questions, he would be unable to continue with his practice. In reply, Šākyamuni admonished him with the following parable:

"Suppose that a man were struck by a poisoned arrow. A physician was immediately called, but sup-
pose that the wounded man were to object, saying, 'Before you pull out the arrow, I want to know who shot it. Was he tall or short? Was he dark or fair? Was the bow he used a crossbow? Was the bow-string made of fibre or of sinew? Are the feathers of the arrow those of a hawk or a vulture? I want to know about all these matters before you treat me.' The man would surely die before being apprised of all this information. The first priority in such a situation would be to remove the poisoned arrow and administer first aid.

"In the same manner, Māluṅkyāputta, no matter what one's views on questions such as whether the universe be finite or infinite, they do not alter the fact that the human condition is characterized by birth, old age, sickness and death and by grief, sorrow, suffering, dejection, and perturbation. I teach only how to overcome these in this very life and nothing else. I have not replied to such questions because replying to them is not the aim of religious practice and because the answers do not lead to renunciation, freedom from desire, cessation, tranquillity, wisdom, enlightenment, and Nirvāṇa."

The goal towards which Śākyamuni's teaching was directed was the conquest of the afflictions from which man actually suffers, and to that end he taught the need to grasp the reality of suffering (knowledge of the truth of suffering), the need to discern and abandon its cause (abandonment of the cause of suffering), and in order to bring about the goal of Nirvāṇa in which suffering has ceased (realization of the cessation of suffering), the need to cultivate the proper path (cultivation of the path leading to the cessation of suffering). This was the full scope of Śākyamuni's teaching, and he did
not consider it his duty to answer any questions dealing with matters outside of these bounds.

As was illustrated by the parable of the poisoned arrow, Śākyamuni’s attitude is compared to that of a physician who administers first-aid treatment. Just as a physician diagnoses the symptoms, ascertains their causes, and administers medication to remove the causes and restore the patient to health, so may Śākyamuni be described as a physician of the human psyche. Accordingly he is often referred to as the “great physician” (mahā-vāidyā, 大醫) or “[great] king of physicians” ([mahā]-vāidyā-rāja, [大] 醫王), and there was later to appear a Buddha, “Master of Medicine” (Bhaiṣajyaguru, 藥師), who symbolizes this function.

*The Four Answers*: Śākyamuni did not of course refuse to answer all of his disciples’ questions. His manner of answering is usually divided into four categories, known as the “four answers” (*catvāri vyākarāṇāni*, 四記答, 四答):

1. **Conclusive answer** (*ekāṃṣa-vyākarāṇa*, 一向記): a definite answer, in either the affirmative or the negative, as for example if asked, “Are all living beings mortal?” the reply would be, “All without exception are mortal.”
2. **Differential answer** (*vibhajya-vyākarāṇa*, 分別記): an answer dependent upon the attendant circumstances, as for example if asked, “Do all the dead transmigrate?” the reply would be, “Those with mental defilements transmigrate, but those without mental defilements are not reborn.”
3. **Interrogatory answer** (*paripṛchchā-vyākarāṇa*, 反問記): an answer given in accordance with the question, as for example if asked, “Is man superior?” the counter-question, “Compared with what?” would be posed, and if answered, “Compared with the gods,” the reply would be, “No,” but if answered, “Compared with beasts,” the reply would be, “Yes.”
4. **Answer to be left standing, i.e., avoided** (*stūpanīya-vyākarāṇa*, 拒置記): a refusal to answer either way to questions such as the “fourteen unanswerables.”
"Dharma-seals": The Watchwords of Buddhism

If Śākyamuni's philosophical position, and consequently also the goal of Buddhism, may be characterized in the above terms, it follows that the nature of the truth (Dharma) taught by Buddhism will also be readily surmised. A concrete expression of the truth as taught by Buddhism is to be found in the so-called three or four "Dharma-seals" (三法印, 四法印). "Dharma-seal" (法印) signifies a distinguishing mark, or even slogan, of the teaching. (In Indian treatises the term "summary of the Dharma" [dharma-uddāna] is used.)

The Dharma-seals take the form of propositions demonstrating the Buddhist point of view; the four propositions which constitute the Four Dharma-seals are as follows:

1. All formative forces are impermanent (sarva-samskāra anityāḥ, 諸行無常).
2. All constituent elements are without self (sarva-dharma anatmānaḥ, 諸法無我).
3. All formative forces are suffering (sarva-samskāra duḥkhaḥ, 一切行苦, 一切皆苦).
4. Nirvāṇa is tranquillity (śāntam nirvāṇam, 涅槃寂靜).

It is important to bear in mind that these propositions are not expressions of merely philosophical judgements, although when considered together, it will be noticed that they range from statements close to purely philosophical judgements to statements bordering on expressions of experiential and subjective judgement. Let us now consider them one by one in the above order.

The Four Dharma-seals are usually given in the order "all formative forces are impermanent," "all formative forces are suffering," "all constituent elements are without self," and "Nirvāṇa is tranquillity." In the Southern tradition, the last of these is omitted, and the remaining three propositions are known as the "three distinctive marks (of conditioned elements)" (ti-lakkhaṇa). Throughout this book,
however, we have reversed the traditional order of the second and third propositions owing to considerations of exposition.

(1) *All Formative Forces Are Impermanent*

Of the above four propositions, this first one might be termed as the one with which we are most familiar. This is because the condition of impermanence is recognized through personal experience in the vicissitudes of human life and in the unremitting process of change evidenced by all phenomena, as has been so finely expressed in the opening lines of *The Tale of the Heike* (平家物語), a Japanese classic dating from the thirteenth century.

The peels of the bell at Jeta Grove Monastery resound with the dictum that all formative forces are impermanent, and the faded flowers of the two sal trees (overhanging the Buddha’s deathbed) bear witness to the truth that all who flourish are destined to decay.

But it would be seldom that one pauses to consider the meaning of the phrase “all formative forces.” On the other hand, it requires little imagination to understand why the experience of the death of someone close has awoken so many people in the past to the ephemerality of worldly things, as a result of which they entered a religious life. In the case of Śākyamuni too it would appear that the death of his mother provided the motivation for his eventual renunciation of secular life. The tradition of the four excursions would at any rate suggest such an interpretation.

But although impermanence may be a fact known from experience, it is not necessarily always actually viewed as such. First and foremost there is the question of one’s own impending death. Even though we know that man is mortal,
for the most part we do not really believe that we too will die. As a result, when death actually does approach, we are seized with fear. In this way death becomes a source of suffering. Suffering exists where that which is impermanent is not recognized as being impermanent: this is the truth of the human condition which Buddhism takes upon itself to expound.

(2) *All Constituent Elements Are Without Self*

It is often stated that the Buddhist “slogan” as it were is “no-self” (*anātman*, *P. anattan*, 無我). This term is held to express a prominent characteristic of Buddhism in contrast to, for example, the traditional schools of Indian philosophy which ever since the Upaniṣads have propounded doctrines which presuppose the existence of a “self” (*ātman*, 我) as the subjective agency of transmigration and liberation. In its basic meaning, *ātman* refers to what we usually think of as “I” or the ego. Nothing in the world would seem to be more self-evident than the existence of this “I.” Of course, when it comes to a philosophical elucidation of its true nature, there are many controversial questions involved, and it has long been an important issue in the West too, as is evidenced not least by Descartes and his famous maxim. In particular, society in modern Europe has been moulded with the implicit belief in the existence of such a “self.”

Thus, when considered in the light of both actual experience and general tendencies in philosophical thought, the denial of the self is rather difficult to comprehend. But then, on the other hand, we also use expressions which may be said to reflect this idea of “no-self,” even in everyday speech. For example, we say “to rise above self” and “to lose oneself in . . .” or “to be lost in . . .” in the sense of self-effacement or self-oblivion; and in certain sectors of society there is a tradition of selfless service for society,
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sacrificing one’s personal interest to the public good, an attitude which would appear to run directly counter to the modern emphasis of the “self.” When considered from the Buddhist standpoint, the understanding of “no-self” as illustrated by these examples would be incorrect insofar as it would tend to consider Buddhism as conflicting with the modern conception of the self, but it contains an element of truth in that it regards “no-self” not as a mere philosophical contention but as a matter to be probed on a practical level.

The prototype of the Buddhist doctrine of no-self is to be found in the statement that “the five aggregates are without self.” For example, Śākyamuni’s early teaching to his first five disciples as recorded in the Vinaya-piṭaka includes the following passage:12)

“‘Form (i.e., the body),’ O Monks, is not the self. If this form, O Monks, were the self, it would not be subject to disease, and you would be able to say about form, ‘Let my form be thus (e.g., healthy), let my form be not thus (e.g., aging or dying).’ But since, O Monks, form is not the self, it is subject to disease and you are not able to say about form, ‘Let my form be thus, let my form be not thus.’

“‘Perception’ (sensations of pain and pleasure) is not the self.... ‘Conception’ (ideation) is not the self.... ‘Volition’ is not the self.... ‘Consciousness’ is not the self....”

In this manner it is demonstrated that neither the body nor any of the four representative mental functions can be called the “self” and nor is there anything deserving of the name “self” apart from them either. Consequently it is concluded that what we believe to be the “self” is in fact not
the self.

In this case, it is assumed that the concept "self" implies something over which one has complete control and which is not subject to change (e.g., sickness). This view is reflected in the definition of "self" found in the Chinese Buddhist tradition, namely, "‘self’ (我) means that which is ‘eternal, one, and lord’ (常一主宰)." It is also not unusual for the six sense-organs (eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind) to be given in illustration instead of the five aggregates, but in either case the examples adduced represent the elements believed to constitute the self, each being referred to as a dharma or "constituent element." This means that the original import of the proposition that "all constituent elements are without self" was that none of the elements constituting what we believe to be the self is in fact the self, and that therefore nowhere does there exist any "self" at all.

Here too it is the aim of Buddhism to show that suffering arises from the belief that there exists a self when in fact there exists nothing deserving of that name. Belief in the self is called "self-attachment" (atma-graha, 我執). It was in this "self-attachment" that Śākyamuni discovered the root cause of all evil. This self-attachment is held to give rise to possessiveness and thoughts of "mine," and the anguish experienced when the desire to possess oneself is not fulfilled is the "suffering of not obtaining what one desires." At the same time, just as the "self" was defined as an eternally perduring entity, so is the condition of no-self equivalent to impermanence. Since impermanence entails becoming and decay, the phenomena of birth, old age, sickness and death are all proof of no-self.

But it must not be thought that Buddhism totally denies any role to the individual. This fact is succinctly illustrated by the following words included in Śākyamuni’s last teach-
(3) All Formative Forces Are Suffering

“Suffering” (duḥkha, P, dukkha, 苦) or pain may be considered a particular sensation. The sensation of suffering is opposed to that of “happiness” (sukha, 楽). And being sensations, both suffering and happiness are relative: life has its moments of suffering and those of happiness, and happiness is called the seed of suffering, suffering the seed of happiness. Unlike in the case of impermanence, not everything can be declared to be suffering (or, for that matter, happiness). Hence we tend to feel some resistance to the assertion that all is suffering. In particular, human society has been geared to progress with happiness as its goal, and in some countries there would seem to be scarcely any seeds of suffering at all. But in Buddhism all things that are impermanent and without self are regarded as potential causes of suffering. Both the tetrad of the Four Noble Truths and the concatenation of dependent co-arising begin with the recognition of suffering as the given reality.

But whence comes this suffering? Śākyamuni was unrelenting in his pursuit of the cause of suffering, and what he finally came up against was desire or attachment (the root of which is self-attachment), which he called “craving,” and going back yet further he arrived at “ignorance.” Ignorance here means ignorance of the truth. In other words, ignorance of the fact that all is impermanent and without self is the
ultimate cause of suffering.
Thus, whereas the propositions that “all formative forces are impermanent” and “all constituent elements are without self” describe the true nature of all phenomena and therefore do not permit of amendment, the fact of suffering is true only as regards our present situation, but it cannot be allowed to stand as it is. It must be brought to cessation. In this respect the proposition that “all formative forces are suffering” differs from the two previous propositions. And consequently a state of “happiness” without suffering, on a plane different from that of the pain and pleasure of the human condition, is posited as an ideal state of being. This is the import of the proposition that “Nirvāṇa is tranquillity.”

(4) Nirvāṇa Is Tranquillity

Let us consider the following poem, traditionally ascribed to Kūkai, the founder of the Japanese Shingon sect:

The flowers, however fragrant they may be, are doomed to scatter:
Who in this world can hope to live forever?
Crossing today the remotest mountain pass of conditioned existence,
I see no more evanescent dreams, nor am I any longer subject to intoxication.

This poem is said to be based upon the following verse appearing in Buddhist scriptures:¹⁶

(All) formative forces are impermanent and are characterized by arising and decay;
Rising, they dissolve, and their cessation is happiness.
(aniṣṭā vata saṃkhārā uppāda-vaya-dhammino)
Although it is not explicitly stated here that the impermanence of all formative forces must be realized, the general import is that by knowing that they are subject to arising and decay, arising and decay may be transcended (not literally brought to cessation; for further discussion of this point, see chap. 6). This results in the cessation of suffering and the realization of Nirvāṇa, which is described as a state of “tranquillity” and “happiness.” It is the attainment of this “tranquillity” that is the goal of Buddhism.

From the above comments it will be evident that the Four Dharma-seals encompass in their purview the totality of Buddhism in all its ramifications, as did the Four Noble Truths. But the Four Dharma-seals would appear to lack any reference to “dependent co-arising.” Let us close this discussion with a consideration of the connection between the above four propositions and the concept of dependent co-arising.

Samskāra and Dharma: The Dependentely Co-arisen

Up until now we have used the terms “formative forces” and “constituent elements” with almost no words of explanation. Traditional interpretation of the doctrine states that the grammatical subjects of the first three Dharma-seals—“all formative forces” and “all constituent elements”—have the same referent. A consideration of the qualification “all” will be taken up in a separate chapter (chap. 4); here we
shall discuss the meaning of the terms "formative forces" and "constituent elements."

The term here tentatively translated as "formative force" (it has also been variously rendered as force, formation, karma-formation, confection, etc.) is probably the most difficult of all Buddhist terms to understand. The original saṃskāra (P. saṃkhāra, 行) is a derivative of a compound made up of the prefix saṃ-, meaning "together" or "completely," and the verbal root ṭ/kṛ, "to make" or "to do" (literally, it thus tallies with "confection"). Here we shall provisionally define it as "the function of collecting together and creating." Saṃskāra is also listed as one of the five aggregates (mentioned above), and in this case we translated it as "volition," for it is defined in this context as that function of the mind which acts upon something other than itself in an attempt to produce some sort of result. In this sense "volition" too is a variety of formative force. In a wider sense, saṃskāra is any creative force, and by an extension in meaning it may also signify anything endowed with such a creative capacity, namely, anything capable of producing a result or functioning as a cause.

In the traditional schools of Indian philosophy, a creator such as Brahman is held to be the ultimate cause, and such a creator is regarded as eternal and unchanging. But Buddhism denies the existence of any such entity. (The import of the concept "no-self" is thus extended in its philosophical implications to mean that there exists nothing whatsoever which is eternal and unchanging.) Yet Buddhism does not assert that phenomena arise without any cause whatsoever. In place of an eternal, unchanging creator, Buddhism posits "dependent co-arising." This may be illustrated by the following dialogue between Śākyamuni and an adherent of a non-Buddhist school. 17)
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"Is suffering created by the god Maheśvarā? Is suffering created by oneself? Is suffering created by another? Does suffering arise without cause?"

To this Śākyamuni is recorded as having replied,

"Suffering is dependently co-arisen."

In this state of being "dependently co-arisen," the cause which produces suffering is equivalent to samskāra, as is also its function. What does this samskāra signify in more concrete terms? In the context of the Four Noble Truths, it corresponds to the "origination (samudaya) of suffering," samudaya (the function of collecting and producing) being a synonym of samskāra. In the twelvefold chain of dependent co-arising, for example in the statement that "conditioned by ignorance there are the formative forces" (avijjā-paccaya sāmkhārā), ignorance is the cause or condition (paccaya), in other words the formative force which produces the second member of the causal nexus.

However, it will be noticed that the second member of the twelvefold chain of dependent co-arising is also samskāra (in the plural). In this case, samskāra is interpreted as the three categories of physical, verbal, and mental action or as the three varieties of meritorious, demeritorious, and immovable action (on these terms, see p. 140). The categories of action may be glossed in general terms as karman, equivalent to samskāra or any formative force or function. In the case of meritorious and demeritorious actions, "action" (karman) signifies not only the act itself but also the potential force capable of effecting a result, inasmuch as they represent actions which lead to "merit" or happiness (rebirth in the realms of the gods, etc.) or bring "demerit" or unhappiness (descent to hell, etc.). This is in fact the meaning of the
much-used term "karma" (karman). The term samskāra thus encompasses the meaning of karma, but in the context of the formula of dependent co-arising it is important to note that on the one hand samskāra is regarded as a result created of ignorance and on the other hand it is held to be the agency which produces the next member "consciousness." In other words, the creative agency or causal function is simultaneously endowed with the characteristics of a result. This leads to a theory which refuses to recognize anything as being solely a cause or solely a result. (Since no cause is posited for ignorance, ignorance may appear to be an absolute cause. But this is not the case, for ignorance simply denotes the opposite or absence of knowledge. Being therefore a transmutable state, it cannot be an absolute cause, such as is for example Brahman. On the other hand, suffering is always described as a result, but in actuality it may be brought to cessation. Thus the two poles of the chain of dependent co-arising both admit of the possibility of change.)

In this manner, it is the tacit understanding of Buddhism that what is cause is also result, and the possible relationships between the two are held to be unlimited. And where the cause, as in this present context, is called samskāra, the result is called samskṛta (P. samkhata, 有為), or "(conditionally) produced," this being the past participle of the same verb from which samskāra is derived. (In the above example, "ignorance" represents samskāra in relation to "formative forces" and "formative forces" are samskṛta in relation to "ignorance"; in the case of "formative forces" and "consciousness," the former are samskāra and the latter is samskṛta.) Anything which has been thus conditionally produced is called a "(conditionally) produced element" (samskṛta-dharma, 有為法, which we shall henceforth render as "conditioned element"). A "conditioned element" is therefore anything which has been conditionally born or is dependently
co-arisen. This corresponds to the “constituent elements” in the proposition that “all constituent elements are without self.” Therefore the terms “formative forces” and “constituent elements” are synonymous with “all” conditioned elements and these are held to be impermanent, without self, and (conducive to) suffering.

In later interpretations found in the Abhidharma, the term “all constituent elements” (in the proposition “all constituent elements are without self” [sarva-dharmā anātmānak]) is held to include “unconditioned elements” (see chap. 4). This view is perhaps justifiable if it is supposed to mean that the unconditioned elements (e.g., Nirvāṇa) are “not the self,” but it would be unreasonable to take anātmānak here in the sense of “without self,” thus placing the unconditioned elements on the same level as the “formative forces.” But in traditional exegesis there remains considerable vagueness in regard to this point.

Dharmatā: The Principle of Dependent Co-arising

It will now be evident that the relationship between “formative forces” (samskāra) and the “conditionally produced” (samskṛta) is equivalent to that denoted by the term “dependent co-arising.” In Sanskrit, these two aspects are reflected in the dyad consisting of the noun pratitya-samutpāda (P. paṭicca-samuppāda), “dependent co-arising” or “causing dependent co-arising,” and the past participle pratitya-samuttpanna (P. paṭicca-samuppanna), “dependently co-arisen” (both translated in Chinese by the same 緣起 or 緣生). Returning to the instance of ignorance and the formative forces, ignorance is “that which causes dependent co-arising” and the formative forces are “that which has dependently co-arisen.” It is here assumed that anything which arises in dependence on another may be brought to dissolution by some other condition, for all that is born must die. There-
fore, all that is impermanent, without self, and conducive to suffering is subject to becoming and decay and is “dependently co-arisen” (pratītya-samutpāna). On the other hand, pratītya-samutpāda, signifying the “causing of dependent co-arising” or causal genesis, and thus corresponding to saṃskāra in the sense of “cause,” may also refer to the very principle of dependent co-arising itself.

Although not included in the description of the twelfeifold chain of dependent co-arising previously quoted from the Pali Vinaya-piṭaka, in the corresponding Chinese version and in the Sanskrit Catuspariṣat-sūtra (Sūtra of the Four Assemblies) the explanation of each of the twelve members of the chain of dependent co-arising is preceded by the following formula:18)

When there is this, there is that; this arising, that arises.
When there is not this, there is not that; this dissolving, that dissolves.

(imasmin sati idaṁ hoti imass’ uppādā idaṁ uppaṭjati /
imasmin asati idaṁ na hoti imassa nirodhā idaṁ niruṣjhati // [P.]
asmin satidam bhavaty asyotpādād idam uppadyate /
asminm asatidam na bhavaty asya nirodhād idam nirudhyate // [Skt.]

此有故彼有 此起故彼起 此無故彼無 此滅故彼滅)

This formula is held to represent the law of dependent co-arising. Furthermore, in certain sūtras of the Early Canon, the principle of dependent co-arising (paṭicca-samuppāda) is contrasted with dependently co-arisen phenomena (paṭicca-samuppāna dhammā), and the former is described in the following terms:19)
“Regardless of whether the Tathāgatas should appear or not, this fundament (dhātu) is fixed. It is established as a norm. It is determined as a norm. It is, namely ‘dependence upon this.’”

“Dependence upon this” (idampratyayata, P. idappaccayatā, 緣性) means in effect the concatenation of dependent relationships beginning with the dependence of formative forces upon ignorance and leading up to the dependence of old age, death and suffering, etc., upon birth. Here we may discern the very basis of the doctrine of dependent co-arising, and it will be evident that it is intrinsically linked with the concepts of saṃskāra and saṃskṛta or, conversely, that the propositions that “all formative forces are impermanent” and “all constituent elements are without self” are nothing other than expressions of the principle of dependent co-arising.

On the subject of the law of dependent co-arising it is also stated that dependent co-arising is “the rule for all phenomena” (dharmāṇāṃ dharmatā). The term here translated by “rule” (dharmatā, P. dhammatā, 法性) means by itself “Dharma-nature” or the essential nature of dharma, and signifies that quality held in common by all dependently co-arisen phenomena, namely, dependent co-arising. In other words, Dharma as truth or the ultimate principle is referred to as “Dharma-nature.” (In this connection it may be said that dharma signifies those phenomena characterized by a common dharmatā. Therefore, this latter term probably came into use only after dharma had come to mean anything endowed with a particular quality.)

Thus “Dharma-nature” represents the principle of dependent co-arising. But in the context of Buddhist doctrinal theory, “impermanence” (anityatā) and “selflessness” (nairatmya<niratman=anatman) are also equally “Dharma-nature.” And in Mahāyāna Buddhism this same principle of dependent co-
arising or the condition of no-self was renamed "emptiness" (śūnyatā, 空性). "Emptiness" is expressed by the proposition that "all is empty" (sarvam śūnyam, 一切皆空) and is held to signify the absence of any own-nature in all constituent elements. "Own-nature" (svabhāva, 自性) here means any autonomous entity which preserves a uniform quality and is independent of other, and corresponds to the ātman postulated by non-Buddhists. Therefore no-self is equivalent to the absence of own-nature, and both describe the state of dependent co-arising. At the same time, the conclusion that there is no own-nature also throws into relief the standpoint of Mahāyāna Buddhism as an antithesis to the Sarvāstivādin doctrine that "each dharma has a distinctive quality (own-nature)," but with this question we shall deal in greater detail in the next chapter.

"Dharma-nature" is also variously referred to as the "Dharma-realm," "thusness," "limit of existence" and "truth."

The term "Dharma-realm" (dharma-dhātu, 法界) is explained as the "ground of phenomena" (dharmānām dhātu) or the "true nature of phenomena" (dharmānām dharma). The phrase "ground of phenomena" implies that the truth realized by Śākyamuni was the principle of dependent co-arising and that this constitutes the basis of his Dharma; it is accordingly also referred to as "the cause (for the emergence) of the noble Dharma" (ārya-dharma-hetu, 聖法因), dhātu also meaning "cause." The "true nature of phenomena" is the same as Dharma-nature, dhātu being in this case synonymous with "true nature" or "own-nature" (on the meaning of dhātu too see chap. 4).

As was explained in the previous chapter in connection with the term tathāgata, "thusness" (tathātā, 真如) means the true state of things, namely, dependent co-arising. It is also alternatively expressed as "non-falsehood" (amithyātva,
CHAPTER THREE

The term "limit of existence" (bhūta-koti, 實際) may be interpreted as the ultimate state of being or an absolute state.

"Truth" (tattva, 真實) is literally "thatness" and may be regarded as virtually synonymous with "thusness." It is used for example in the expression "to see the truth," and he who has seen the truth becomes a Buddha. There is also the phrase "distinctive mark of the truth" (tattvasya lakṣaṇam), held to be synonymous with dharma, but in Chinese Buddhist texts it is translated as "the true aspect of phenomena" (諸法實相).

The Conception of Truth in Mahāyāna Buddhism

With the above terms Mahāyāna Buddhism expresses what it regards as being of ultimate value. Basing its viewpoint on the proposition that "all is empty," it denies the existence of any substantive reality whatsoever. But as for this truth itself, it considers it to be of absolute value, a sort of religious reality. This is a characteristic peculiar to Mahāyāna Buddhism, not to be found in so-called Hinayāna Buddhism. In addition, this conception of a religious reality also includes the Buddha, who has realized this truth, in his capacity as the "Dharma-body," in that he has become one with the truth, and through the identification of this "Dharma-body" with the "Dharma-realm" the Buddha comes to be endowed with the characteristics of absoluteness and an ultimate reality. Furthermore, since (as is explained in the next chapter) the term dharma-dhātu, in the sense of "the element/s dharma," may signify the total ensemble of all objects of consciousness, "Dharma-realm" implies, when
considered from the standpoint of the Buddha, absoluteness in the sense that the Buddha is nothing less than the whole universe (as for example in the description of the Buddha Vairocana in the *Avatamsaka-sutra*) and, when considered from the part of Dharma, that all phenomena, as manifestations of the truth, are endowed with a quality of real being (as typified by the conception of the Dharma-realm in the Chinese Hua-yen school). But it must be remembered that the latter viewpoint applies only to all phenomena—the universe, the world, and sentient beings—as seen through the eyes of the Buddha, and does not on any account imply an affirmation of reality as apprehended by us.

**Supreme Truth and Conventional Truth**

A second characteristic feature of the conception of truth in Mahāyāna Buddhism is that two levels are posited in the expression of truth. In considering this development, one must go back to the statement in the Early Canon that Dharma is “to be personally realized” (*pratyātma-vedantya*, P. *paccattam veditabbo*, 自内證). The experience of enlightenment cannot be conveyed to others; it transcends all verbal expression (言詮不及，言語道斷). The Dharma in its representation as the teaching is a verbal expression of the inner experience of enlightenment, but inasmuch as it is an attempt to articulate the ineffable, it is already an expediential means and of a provisional nature (i.e., *prajñapti*, 假，施設: a conventional designation or means of communication). In other words, Dharma as expressed verbally is of only secondary importance. Consequently, enlightenment itself was called the “supreme truth” (*paramārtha-satya*, 第一義諦，勝義諦，真諦) and the teaching “verbal truth” (*vyavahāra-satya*, 言説諦). Since language exists for the purpose
of general communication, the latter was also termed "conventional truth" (samvrti-satya, 世俗諦, 世諦). Later samvrti was interpreted as "that which obscures the truth" (<sam vr: to cover up, conceal), and consequently conventional truth was regarded as something opposed to ultimate truth. A further interpretation which later appeared would distinguish within a particular teaching between the true elements and the expediental elements, calling the former the "supreme truth" and the latter the "conventional truth." The term "supreme truth" is in addition considered a synonym of thusness, the Dharma-realm, and similar terms.
CHAPTER FOUR

Sarva-dharmāh: The Constituent Elements of Existence

The Classification of the Constituent Elements of Existence in the Early Canon: The Five Aggregates, Twelve Sense-Fields, and Eighteen Realms

In the previous chapter it was explained that the terms "formative forces" (samskāra) and "constituent elements" (dharma) in the propositions "all formative forces are impermanent," "all constituent elements are without self," and "all formative forces are suffering" all refer to the conditioned constituent elements of existence which have arisen through dependent co-arising. The term "constituent elements of existence" here corresponds to our fourth definition of the term dharma, i.e., entity or phenomenon, and according to the definition given in the Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya it is anything which "possesses an own-nature," in other words an entity (or phenomenon) having a particular quality. However, although one may speak of "all phenomena," what is actually included among the constituent elements of existence is subject to the restrictions of the conventional formulations of Buddhist doctrine. The arrangement and classification of the contents of the various doctrines is the task of Abhidharma (the study of dharma), according to which the constituent elements of existence (sarva-dharmāh, 一切法) have been classified into "five aggregates," "twelve sense-fields," and "eighteen realms."
The well-known *Heart Sūtra* (*Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra*, 般若波羅蜜多心經) opens with the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara perceiving that “the five aggregates are empty in their own-nature.” This proposition may be considered the basic thesis of the *Heart Sūtra*, and it is further explained as follows:

Form is emptiness, and the very emptiness is form; emptiness does not differ from form, and form does not differ from emptiness; whatever is form, that is emptiness, and whatever is emptiness, that is form. The same is true of perception, conception, volition, and consciousness.

The five categories of elements mentioned here—form (*rūpa*, 色), perception (*vedanā*, 受), conception (*saṃjñā*, 想), volition (*saṃskāra*, 行), and consciousness (*vijñāna*, 識)—comprise the five aggregates. The *Heart Sūtra* continues, stating that

in emptiness there is no form, nor perception, nor conception, nor volition, nor consciousness; no eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, or mind; no form, sound, smell, taste, tangible object, or mind-object; no realm of the eyes and so forth, up to and including no realm of mind-consciousness; there is no ignorance, no extinction of ignorance, and so forth, up to and including no old age and death, no extinction of old age and death; there is no suffering, no origination, no cessation, no path; there is no knowledge and no attainment.

We are here confronted with a succession of negations, yet these terms which are being negated are all in fact what constitute the elements of existence. The *Heart Sūtra*’s negation of these as being “empty” is an interpretation de-
riving from its Mahāyānist standpoint, to which we shall return later. The elements which have here been negated may be classified in the following manner:

(A) Five aggregates: form, perception, conception, volition, consciousness.

(B) Twelve sense-fields: eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, mind (= six internal sense-fields \([saḍ \ adhyātmika-āyatānāni, 六內處]\).
   form, sound, smell, taste, tangible object, mind-object (= six external sense-fields \([saḍ \ bāhya-āyatānāni, 六外處]\).

(C) Eighteen realms: realm of the eyes ... realm of the mind (=six sense-organs \([saḍ \ indri-yāṇi, 六根]\).
   realm of form ... realm of mind-objects (= six sense-objects \([saḍ \ viśayāḥ, 六境]\).
   realm of eye-consciousness, realm of ear-consciousness, realm of nose-consciousness, realm of tongue-consciousness, realm of body-consciousness, realm of mind-consciousness (= six consciousnesses \([saḍ \ vijñānāni, 六識]\).

(D) Twelvefold chain of dependent co-arising:
   ignorance ... old age and death;
   extinction of ignorance ... extinction of old age and death.

(E) Four Noble Truths: suffering, origination, cessation, path.

(F) Knowledge (jñāna) and attainment (prāpti).
Of the above six divisions, (D) and (E), as the basis of Buddhist doctrine, hold a different import and so will not be considered here (the Four Noble Truths have already been described, and the twelfe-fold chain of dependent co-arising will be discussed in the next chapter); likewise (F), referring to the wisdom of prajñā and the attained fruit of enlightenment or Nirvāṇa, will also be disregarded here since it concerns actual practice. That leaves (A), (B) and (C), and it is these three divisions which are generally known as the three typologies of the constituent elements of existence. Since each of these three typologies or methods of classification is said to describe “all the constituent elements of existence,” it follows that the five aggregates, twelve sense-fields and eighteen realms are coextensive in their spheres of meaning. The relationship between these three typological schemata may be illustrated by the following table. (The names of the various elements given here all represent important Buddhist terms, but in order to simplify our explanation of them, we shall adopt the device of extended notes to deal with them as succinctly as possible.)

(Five Aggregates)  (Twelve Sense-Fields)  (Eighteen Realms)
form
- eyes, ears, nose,
- tongue, body
- form, sound, smell,
- taste, tangible objects
perception
conception
volition
- mind-objects
- realm of mind-objects
consciousness
- mind
- realm of the mind
- realm of eye-consciousness...
- realm of mind-consciousness

The Five Aggregates: The “five aggregates” (pañca skandhā, P. pañca khandhā, 五蘊) originally signified the congeries (skandha, P. khandha, 蓮: heap) of the five elements which constitute individual existence. Of these five, “form” (rūpa, 色) represents the physical body and denotes the body as endowed with sense-organs such as the eyes,
ears and nose. In contrast to “form,” the remaining four elements are functions of the mind: “perception” (vedānā, 受) refers to sensation or the function of feeling (consisting of three varieties: painful, pleasant, and neutral); “conception” (saṃjñā, P. saññā, 領) refers to the function of ideation (i.e., creating mental images, mental conceptions, and ideas); “volition” (saṃskāra, P. saṃkhāra, 行) refers to the will or impulsive desires (i.e., predisposition or assuming a specific mental stance); and “consciousness” (vijñāna, P. viññāna, 識) refers to the cognitive function or judgement (discernment).

Since these five aggregates are thus regarded as representing the body and mind in toto, the mental functions not covered by the latter four functions must be considered to be included within the function of “volition.” In other words, “volition” is understood as mental functions in general. “Consciousness,” on the other hand, is not simply the cognitive function; it comes to be understood as the mind itself, i.e., the centre of subjectivity of which perception, conception and volition are functions.

Furthermore, the five aggregates come to be regarded not only as referring to the constituent elements of individual existence but also as embracing all phenomena. This means that “form” comes to signify matter in general, while various functions and powers (e.g., life-force [jīvita-indriya, 命根]) as well as abstract concepts (e.g., concept [nāman, 名], proposition [pada, 句], and syllable or letter [vyañjana, 文]) which are unrelated to the mind are all subsumed under the term “volition.” In order to distinguish between these and the five aggregates which constitute the elements of individual existence, the latter are called the “five aggregates of attachment” (pañca upādāna-skandhāh, P. pañc upādāna-kkhandhā, 五取鍾), i.e., the five aggregates as fuel (upādāna: fuel; attachment) for the concept of “self,” in the sense that one first takes hold of these elements and with them as fuel conceives of individual existence (“self”), after which one becomes attached to the “self” thus conceived, and this eventually gives rise to transmigratory existence.

The order of the five aggregates is fixed and may be explained in the following manner: first there is the physical body, and the mind functions with this as its support (āśraya, 所依); mental phenomena are then interpreted as a psychological process in which one first perceives an external object, conceives a mental image corresponding to what has been perceived, acts towards the object in accordance with that image, and finally takes cognizance of it by taking it in one’s hands and examining it carefully. In passing,
it should be pointed out that there are three directions in which one may act in relation to an object, and these correspond to the three sensations of pleasure, pain, and neutrality. For example, if one sees something pleasant or beautiful, one visualizes it in the mind, imagining all manner of pleasurable scenes, and eventually approaches it with the firm intention of taking possession of it. But if, on the other hand, the object is felt to be unpleasant or potentially painful, one strives to avoid it. Finally, there may also be the case such as when one sees what appears to be a snake and, frightened, is about to flee; but upon approaching it one discovers that it was in fact a rope.

"Perception" and "volition" may be further distinguished in that the former is passive and the latter active; and "conception" and "consciousness" are also of contrasting nature since the former (saṃjñā) means to know "collectively" (saṃ-) whereas the latter (viññāna) means to know "discriminatively" (vi-).

*The Twelve Sense-Fields:* The term "sense-field" (āyatana, 處: sphere, locus, place) in the term "twelve sense-fields" (dvādaśa āyatana, P. dvādasā āyatana, 十二處, 十二入) refers to the "doors" (āya-dvāra, 生門) of perception, i.e., those places through which perception occurs. For example, the faculty of vision arises through the eyes (cakṣus, P. cakkhu, 眼). By the same token, it is the ears (śrūta, P. sotā, 耳) which hear, the nose (ghṛāṇa, P. ghāṇa, 鼻) which smells, the tongue (jihvā, P. jīvha, 舌) which tastes, and the body (kāya, 身) (strictly speaking, the skin covering the body) which gives rise to the sense of touch. The above sense-organs are collectively known as the "five sense-organs" (pañca āṇḍiyāṇi, P. paṁc' āṇḍiyāṇi, 五根). Similarly, the act of cognition is considered to arise through the sense-organ of the mind (manas, P. mano, 意), and these six organs of perception are known as the "six sense-fields" (saḍ āyatana, P. cha āyatana, 六處) or "six sense-organs" (saḍ āṇḍiyāṇi, P. cha āṇḍiyāṇi, 六根). The "six sense-objects" (saḍ viśayāḥ, P. cha visayā, 六境) in the external world corresponding to these six sense-organs are form (rūpa, 色: colour and shape), sound (śabda, P. sadda, 聲), smell (gandha, 香), taste (rasa, 味), tangible objects (sprāṣṭāvyha, P. phoṭṭhabba, 觸), and mind-objects (dharma, P. dhamma, 法), and since they are also considered to be conditions necessary for perception to take place, these six sense-objects and the previous six sense-organs are collectively referred to as the twelve sense-fields.

In this case, the term dharma should in theory embrace all
material and immaterial objects, as well as all abstract concepts, which may become objects of the mind; but in the above typological schema it refers in fact to what is excluded from the sense-objects classified as form, sound, smell, taste, and tangible and from the six sense-organs. This method of designation is the same as that applied in the case of the five aggregates when these are regarded as equivalent to sarva-dharmāḥ, for everything which could not be classified as either form, perception, conception, or consciousness was subsumed under the term saṁskāra or "volition." Although all phenomena may be regarded as dharma, those which have specific functions or characteristics are given specific names, and everything else is included under the general term dharma. This parallels the case of saṁskāra, for all the five aggregates are aspects of saṁskāra in its broad sense of "formative force," since sarva-saṁskāraḥ is synonymous with sarva-dharmāḥ. However, it should be noted that among the mind-objects regarded as dharma there are included some which are not changing and impermanent (e.g., space; see below).

A comparison of the five aggregates and the twelve sense-fields reveals that the five varieties of external sense-objects (form, sound, smell, taste, and tangible objects; pañca viṣayāḥ, P. pañca viṣayā, 五境) and the five physical sense-organs (eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and body) are all subsumed under the aggregate of "form"; the sense-organ of the mind corresponds to the aggregate of "consciousness"; and the sense-object dharma embraces the three aggregates of "perception," "conception," and "volition."

*The Eighteen Realms:* The eighteen realms (aṣṭādaśa dhātavah, P. aṭṭhārasa dhātuyo, 十八界) consist of the above twelve sense-fields, with their contrast between internal/external and sense-organ/sense-object, together with the six consciousnesses (eye-, ear-, nose-, tongue-, body-, and mind-consciousness; saḍ viṭṭhānāṇī, P. cha viṭṭhānāṇī, 六識). The original meaning of the term dhātu (界), here rendered as "realm," is "a place where something is laid" or "foundation," and in the present context it means constituent element, sphere, or type. Things which are placed within a particular sphere have some quality in common, and this common quality is both the element which renders them of one type and the source of their common nature. In this sense, dhātu corresponds to the elements which constitute matter. Sometimes it also signifies "mine" or "ore," in the sense that these are the "source" (ākara) of metal and precious stones.

The principle lying behind this classification into eighteen realms
is a theory of knowledge based upon the concept of cooperative interaction between the sense-organs, sense-objects, and consciousness (trīka-saṅgama, 三事和合). According to this theory, knowledge of an object requires an object of cognition, a sense-organ capable of establishing cognition, and the actual function of cognition. For example, form is perceived through the eyes, and the function of discerning that form is called “eye-consciousness.” The same applies in the case of “ear-consciousness” and the other varieties of consciousness.

In the case of the initial five sense-organs, sense-objects, and consciousnesses, the three factors of sense-organ, sense-object, and consciousness are clearly distinguishable; however, are the sense-organ of the mind and mind-consciousness not in fact identical? The sense-organ of the mind and the six consciousnesses are known collectively as the “seven mental realms” (sāpta cittaṁ, sāpta citta-dhātavah, P. satta citti, 七心界) and constitute in fact one single “mind,” corresponding to the aggregate of “consciousness” among the five aggregates; they have been distinguished only for convenience’ sake in their functional aspect. (In order to explain this theoretically, it was postulated in the Abhidhamakośa-bhāṣya and other works that since the functions of the mind operate only momentarily, a rapid succession of functions takes place, so that for example one moment the eye-consciousness functions, only to be replaced the following moment by the ear-consciousness. This means that when one is watching television, for example, one does not watch the screen and listen to the sound simultaneously, but rather alternately. This results in the perception of consecutive images and sounds, just as when watching a film. In addition, it might be mentioned that, according to this explanation, the realm of mind among the eighteen realms [i.e., the sense-organ of the mind, not the realm of mind-consciousness] is held to be the consciousness of one moment prior to the present moment, having already disappeared into the past.)

The Sarvāstivādin Classification of the Constituent Elements of Existence: The Five Categories and Seventy-five Elements

The above threefold typology represents the traditional classification of the constituent elements of existence, and may
be traced back to Śākyamuni’s own teachings as recorded in the Early Canon. The system established in the doctrines of the Abhidharma, on the other hand, classifies the elements into “five categories” (五位). The explanation of this system of classification traditionally followed in China and Japan is that based upon the Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya and deriving from the doctrines of the Sarvāstivāda school. The five categories, also known as the “five dharmas” (五法), are as follows:

(1) Material elements (rūpa, 色): material existence, i.e., the five sense-organs (eyes, etc.), the five sense-objects (form, sound, etc.), and “non-manifest form” (avijñapti-rūpa, 無表色), all subsumed under the aggregate of “form” among the five aggregates.

(2) Mind (citta, 心): the mind itself, referred to in accordance with its functions as citta (心), manas (意), and vijñāna (識). It corresponds to the aggregate of “consciousness” among the five aggregates, to the sense-field of the mind among the twelve sense-fields, and to the “seven mental realms” among the eighteen realms.

(3) Mental attributes (caitīta, caitasika, 心所法): literally “relating or belonging to the mind,” and signifying mental functions; also known as “factors associated with the mind” (citta-samprayuktasamskāra, 心相應行). Among the five aggregates, they correspond to the aggregates of “perception,” “conception,” and those aspects of “volition” related to the mind; among the twelve sense-fields and eighteen realms they are included in the sense-field or realm of mind-objects.

(4) Factors not associated with the mind (citta-viprayuktasamskāra, 心不相應行法): functions, forces, conceptual entities, etc., unrelated to the mind. They correspond to those aspects of “volition” not covered by (3) mental attributes.
(5) Unconditioned elements (asamskṛta-dharma, 無為法): those elements which are eternal and unchanging, as opposed to (1) through (4), which are "conditioned elements" (sam-skṛta-dharma, 有為法). They include "space" and Nirvāṇa (the Truth of Cessation, etc.) and, as concepts, are included in the sense-field or realm of mind-objects.

To each of these five categories are attributed a number of elements, and according to the Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya these number eleven for (1) the material elements (enumerated above), one for (2) the mind (citta = manas = vijñāna), forty-six for (3) the mental attributes, fourteen for (4) the elements not associated with the mind, and three for (5) the unconditioned elements, making a total of seventy-five: these together constitute the so-called "five categories and seventy-five elements" (五位七十五法).

*Matter, Mind, and Function*: There are several distinctive features which mark the above system of classifying the constituent elements of existence, the first being perhaps that, in respect to the five aggregates, the meaning of the aggregate of "volition" was clarified. A comparison of the five categories and the five aggregates reveals that in the case of the former the elements have been divided into the three main groups of rūpa (matter in general), citta (mind), and saṃskāra (functions or forces). In this context, saṃskāra assumes the meaning of "attribute" or "function" as opposed to substance, and, depending upon its relationship with citta, is further subdivided into (3) and (4). Although there is a difference between the latter two in that (3) mental attributes have been set apart owing to their importance relating directly to the question of delusion and enlightenment, whereas (4) elements not associated with the mind have been postulated simply to meet the demands of theory, this has resulted in a theoretical consistency and systematic organization which were wanting in the Early Canon. Since this question is related to the Sarvāstivāda theory of the elements upon which the Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya bases its theories, we shall return to deal with this matter more fully further below.

The second feature characterizing this classification of the ele-
ments is that, as a result of “mind” and “matter” being distinguished from samskāra, there was an increasing tendency to conceive of them as substantial entities. For example, the aggregate of “consciousness” among the five aggregates was originally a function of the mind standing on a par with “perception,” etc. However, owing in part to the influence of the general mode of thinking prevalent in ancient India and to the influence of the philosophy of the Upaniṣads, it would appear that a view considering “consciousness” to be not only the centre of mental functions but also the unifying principle of the individual and the nucleus of transmigratory existence had been gaining ground. The physical body consisting of the four elements (earth, water, fire, and wind) decomposes at death, but if there exists no faculty providing a link with the next life, it becomes impossible to justify the idea of transmigration. The concept of transmigration is easily explained in the case of Hinduism since this function is assigned to the entity ṛtman (self), but for Buddhism, with its denial of any such “self,” it becomes extremely difficult to explain. This problem was later taken up again by Mahāyāna Buddhism, but already in the Early Canon there seem to have been various interpretations, and it would appear that these resulted in consciousness (vijñāna=citta, manas) being regarded as an independent substratum in which the various mental functions are integrated. But that this substratum is on no account an eternal and unchanging entity like the ṛtman of Hinduism is indicated by the fact that both “matter” and “mind” are classified as “conditioned elements.” This question of the “mind” will also be taken up in greater detail in a later chapter (chap. 7).

The third distinguishing feature of the above classification is that, alongside the above “conditioned elements,” “unconditioned elements” have been added to the system of elements. Although the term “unconditioned element” was created as a contrary concept to “conditioned element,” it is not a relative concept concerning being or non-being, but refers rather to that which transcends being and non-being, that which belongs to a world totally different from the plane of being and non-being. Since the world of being and non-being is a world of becoming and decay, an impermanent world of change, the “unconditioned” refers to a world of no change or to that which is eternal. And since the proposition that “all formative forces are impermanent” denies the existence of any such entity among the phenomena of this world, the “unconditioned” must refer to that which transcends this impermanent world of becoming and decay, namely, to Nirvāṇa or the world of enlightenment. It
is termed “unconditioned” in the sense that it has not been created through conditions.

Assuming that the “unconditioned” thus signifies the ideal state of enlightenment or Nirvāṇa experientially attained, there remains the question of why this too should be included among the “elements.” The reason is probably that this ideal state shares features in common with that aspect of dharma meaning “truth” or the eternal and unchanging principle. If that be the case, it is possible to distinguish the “conditioned elements” as the various dharmas in the sense of phenomena from the “unconditioned elements” as dharma in the sense of truth. The various dharmas in the sense of phenomena are “dependently co-arisen dharmas,” whereas dharma in the sense of truth refers to the principle of “dependent co-arising” itself. In Buddhist thinking, there is of course no principle of dependent co-arising existing independently of that which has dependently co-arisen, but it is possible to distinguish the two conceptually. And since dependent co-arising may be regarded as an attribute common to all dependently co-arisen phenomena, it is referred to as “the true nature of all elements” (dharma-nām dharma-tā), in the sense that dependent co-arising, the unending cycle of becoming and decay, is the rule for all phenomena. The “unconditioned” refers to this fundamental principle (dharma-tā) (see chap. 3).

But in the Sarvāstivādin understanding of the term dharma, this “unconditioned” was also regarded as one mode of being of the elements, resulting in the category “unconditioned elements.” And on the basis of this ontological viewpoint, “space” (ākāśa; 虚空) was also looked upon as an unconditioned element. “Space” here means the spatial expanse in which all matter arises and disappears. Yet space itself undergoes no change: it is the locus where, or the foundation (dhātu) upon which, the changes of becoming and decay take place. It was as the result of such theorizing that space was included among the unconditioned elements, and in a similar manner the demands of theory gave rise to the third unconditioned element.

Nirvāṇa, already mentioned above, is also referred to as “cessation” (nirodha; 無殺), as in the cessation of suffering or the cessation of mental defilements, and since this cessation takes place as the result of spiritual cultivation and with the aid of wisdom, it is called “cessation through deliberate choice” (pratisamkhyā-nirodha; 擇滅), namely, cessation deliberately chosen through the exercise of knowledge. According to Sarvāstivādin theory, each of the individual
elements existing through the three ages of past, present and future loses its potential for manifestation through the exercise of knowledge or “deliberate choice”; as a result it becomes “unconditioned” (in other words, it can no longer produce any result and is therefore no longer subject to becoming and decay), and this was understood as Nirvāṇa. (Therefore, complete Nirvāṇa such as that of the Buddha was held to be the result of having annihilated all the elements one by one.) This is a state of total nothingness in which nothing whatsoever exists. As will be seen later, Mahāyāna Buddhism was directly opposed to this way of thinking.

In contrast to this “cessation through deliberate choice,” it was postulated that there must also exist elements which are forever unable to manifest as phenomena because they lack the natural conditions necessary for appearing in this world, and such a state of being was called “cessation not through deliberate choice” (apratiṣamkhyā-nirrodha, 非增滅). It is beyond our powers of conception to visualize such a situation in concrete terms, but it is at least theoretically conceivable, and that being the case, it was probably felt necessary to add it to the list of elements. Generally speaking, although the theories of the Sarvāstivādins and the doctrines of the Abhidhammakosa-bhāṣya did have their origins in the sphere of spiritual cultivation, practice and experience, there was a strong tendency to give priority to theoretical consistency. That is why this school of thought became transformed into an abstruse and complex body of speculative doctrine.

The Defiled and the Undefiled: However, the inclusion of the unconditioned elements in the classification of the constituent elements of existence did make it possible to incorporate all four of the Four Noble Truths into this system. Along with the distinction between “conditioned” and “unconditioned,” there was another classification of the elements which had been current in Buddhism from an even earlier date: that based on the “defiled” (sāsrava, P. sāsava, 有漏: literally, “having outflows”) and “undefiled” (anāsrava, P. anāsava, 無漏: literally, “without outflows”). Āsrava (P. āsava, 漏) or “outflow” here means mental defilements, and so sāsrava refers to a state of mind accompanied by such mental defilements. Anāsrava, on the other hand, describes a state of mind free of contamination from such defilements: striving towards enlightenment and mental states conducive to enlightenment are all considered to be “undefiled,” as are of course enlightenment itself and Nirvāṇa too. When the Four Noble Truths are considered in the light of this distinc-
tion between "defilement" and "non-defilement," the truths of suffering and origination are regarded as "defiled," whereas the truths of cessation and the path are held to be "undefiled." In other words, the two truths characterized by "contamination" (sāṃkheṣaṇa, 雜染) are "defiled" and the two truths characterized by "purity" (vyāvādāna, 清淨) are "undefiled." All the elements of existence may be likewise classified as either "defiled" or "undefiled." (It may be thought that the categories of "defilement" and "non-defilement" would not be applicable to form or matter. But according to Buddhist theory the physical body is "defiled" since it is the source of mental defilements, although the Buddha’s body is sometimes held to be "undefiled." Knowledge is also differentiated, so that knowledge relating to mundane matters is "defiled knowledge," whereas supramundane knowledge directed towards enlightenment is "undefiled knowledge."

On the other hand, when considered in relation to the distinction between the "conditioned" and "unconditioned," in the case of the two "undefiled" truths only the truth of cessation is unconditioned, whereas the truth of the path is held to be conditioned since even good deeds and wholesome mental states leading towards enlightenment are subject to the law of becoming and decay. It goes without saying that the two "defiled" truths are of course conditioned. These relationships may be shown diagrammatically in the following manner:

```
| All Elements | Defiled       | Suffering    | Conditioned |
|--------------|---------------|--------------|
|              | Origination   |              |             |
|              | Cessation     |              | Unconditioned|
|              | Path          |              |             |
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The Sarvāstivādīn Theory of the Elements: The Elements Exist Eternally

The Sarvāstivādīn classification of the elements was made complete with a theory peculiar to this school of thought. It was asserted that the various elements, classified into a number of categories as described above, really exist as elements throughout the three ages of past, present and future (三世實有法體恒有). This situation may be compared to an endless bundle of strings: if this bundle is cut crosswise, the same pat-
tern will always appear, no matter where the cut is made. But when considered in relation to ourselves, this bundle of strings does not stand in its entirety in a continuous relationship to us. The Sanskrit term for "age" in the phrase "three ages (of past, present and future)" (try-ādhvan, 三世) means literally "path" (ādhvan, 世路): we stand facing the endless bundle of strings and advance along it. The part of this long bundle actually appearing before us at a given moment represents the elements of the "present," behind which (i.e., in front of us) countless elements of the "future" stand arrayed in anticipation of their appearance in the "present"; and in the next moment, following the present one, the elements which appeared before us pass beyond us and become elements of the "past." However, to become an element of the "past" does not mean that the element ceases to exist, but rather that it merely disappears from our field of vision by taking up a position behind us. (If we imagine our own position as fixed, the bundle of elements may be conceived of as an endless stream approaching us from in front and passing on behind us.)

However, in a given moment it is only certain elements from among the bundle of countless elements arranged side by side with which we come in contact. This all depends upon various conditions, and it is held that only those particular elements with which we come in contact actually appear in the "present" and disappear the next moment to become elements of the "past." Therefore, one must not imagine that the whole bundle of elements appears all at once in the present and then disappears into the past; rather, each moment only certain elements appear in the present, whereupon they immediately disappear into the past. Thus all the remaining elements should perhaps be regarded as elements of the future. Be that as it may, the terms "past," "present" and "future" refer only to the relationship existing between the elements and ourselves; the elements themselves are said
to exist eternally.

According to the above theory, then, impermanence refers to the fact that the appearance of the elements in the present is only momentary and without any duration. Therefore, the qualification “impermanent” is inapplicable as long as an element remains without any opportunity of appearing in the present. (This was the reason for the postulation of the element of “cessation not through deliberate choice,” mentioned above, and for its being regarded as unconditioned.) Likewise, dependent co-arising comes to refer to the relationship existing between elements whereby a particular element comes into contact with another element through certain conditions and as a result appears in the present. These patterns of relationship are classified into “six causes” (sadā āhetavāḥ, 六因), “four conditions” (caturaḥ pratyayāḥ, 四緣), and “five results” (pañca phalāni, 五果).

The Six Causes, Four Conditions, and Five Results: The relationships between these three categories may be shown by the following diagram:

(Six Causes) (Five Results) (Four Condition
General Cause Dominant Result Dominant
Coexistent Result Cooperative Condition
Condition
Homogeneous Cognate Condition
Concomitant Causal Condition
Pervasive Cause Result
Maturative Cause Matured Result
Disjunct Result

Condition
Supportive
Immediate
Causal
Cause
THE CONSTITUENT ELEMENTS OF EXISTENCE

For the sake of convenience, we shall change the order of the above in our following explanation. First, dependent co-arising or causal relationships may in general be differentiated according to whether they involve sequential or simultaneous relationships.

A sequential relationship is what is normally understood as a causal relationship, namely, one in which the cause precedes the result. In the above table, those items which represent such a relationship are the following three causes and two results:

- Homogeneous Cause — Cognate Result
- Pervasive Cause — Matured Result
- Maturative Cause — Maturated Result

The relationship between a homogeneous cause (*sabhāga-hetu*, 同類因) and a pervasive cause (*sarvatraga-hetu*, 遍行因) on the one hand and a cognate result (*niṣyanda-phala*, 等流果) on the other is one of homogeneity between cause and effect, whereas that between a maturative cause (*vipāka-hetu*, 異熟因) and a matured result (*vipāka-phala*, 異熟果) is one of heterogeneity. *Niṣyanda-phala* (“cognate” result) means literally a result which has “flowed forth” (*niṣyanda*) from the cause, and a “homogeneous” (*sabhāga*) cause is one which is homogeneous with the result. For example, in the case of a wholesome mental function such as “faith” (*śraddhā*, 信) giving rise in the following moment to a similarly wholesome mental function such as “energy” (*vīrya*, 精進), the two are said to be homogeneous in regard to their quality of goodness. Included within this homogeneous causal relationship are certain mental defilements of particular intensity which exert influence upon all the mental functions so long as a person remains in a state of spiritual delusion, and these are accordingly called “pervasive” (*sarvatraga*) causes. (This latter may thus be regarded as a particular variety of homogeneous cause.)

The two members of a heterogeneous causal relationship (*vipāka-hetu*-*vipāka-phala*), on the other hand, derive their name from the theory that the pleasant result produced by a good deed is morally neither good nor evil but neutral (*vipāka* may be translated literally as “different maturation”). This relationship is one concerning the relationship between karma and its retribution, and long-term causal relationships in transmigratory existence such as those postulated between this life and the next life (or subsequent lives). Therefore, the result does not always follow immediately upon the cause. This
means, for example, that the result of a wicked deed performed now may appear only in the next life as rebirth in hell. In this sense, the heterogeneous causal relationship represents in effect a theory of karma, and it is also referred to as a law of moral causation.

Next, simultaneous causal relationships concern the reciprocal relationships existing between two elements. “Coexistent” in the term coexistent cause (sahabhā-hetu, 具有因) refers to simultaneous arising, and in such a case two elements are said to be coexistent causes in regard to each other. This means that if one of the two elements is regarded as the cause, the other becomes the result, and such a result is called a cooperative result (purusā-kāra-phala, 士用果). Purusā-kāra means literally “manly deed” or “manliness,” and implies a strong power of attraction; thus it here refers to the force inherent in the cause. Purusā-kāra-phala therefore means “the result of a manly deed,” and so describes what has arisen as a result of being attracted by something else.

A special variety of such simultaneous causal relationships is that existing between a concomitant cause (samprayukta-hetu, 相應因) and a cooperative result. This is the relationship obtaining between mental functions and the mind, in that the mind is always accompanied by one or more mental functions and, conversely, the operation of a mental function implies the existence of the mind. The word samprayukta is used here in the same meaning as in the term citta-samprayukta-samskāra (factors associated with the mind), namely, in the sense of “associated with” or “accompanying.”

The relationships between the above five types of causes and three types of results occur because the cause is powerful enough to produce a result, and so these specific relationships between the two are established. A cause with the potential for bringing about a result is known as a causal condition (hetu-pratyaya, 因緣), namely, a condition or by-cause (pratyaya, 緣) equivalent to a cause (hetu, 因). (Pratyaya is in this case synonymous with what is generally referred to as hetu or “cause.”)

In contrast to the above, the causal relationship between a general cause (kāraṇa-hetu, 能作因) and a dominant result (adhipati-phala, 增上果) is a more passive one, in that when A does not hinder the occurrence of a certain result B, A is known as a general cause and the result B as a dominant result. Literally, adhipati (“dominant”) means “controlling” or “dominating,” but here it refers merely to the existence of some sort of relationship between A and B. Everything existing in this world is both the
dominant result of everything else existing at the same moment, in that its existence is not hindered by what exists apart from it, and also a general cause of everything else. Likewise, the relationship between an element existing in the previous moment and one existing in the present moment is also that of a general cause and a dominant result (although in this case the relationship is not reciprocal).

This relationship existing between a general cause and a dominant result is said to include the special instances of the relationships posited between a supportive condition (ālambana-pratyaya, 所緣緣) and a dominant result and between an immediate condition (samanantarā-pratyaya, 等無間緣) and a dominant result.

Ālambana (所緣) here means a “support” of cognition, and it is linked to the theory that cognition occurs whenever there exists an object. (In other words, whenever the mind is functioning, there is always an object.) In this case, the object is looked upon as the cause of cognition, and although the cause and the result exist contemporaneously, the relationship between the two is not held to be the same as that existing between a coexistent cause and a cooperative result. The cause is therefore looked upon as a general cause, but since the object is not just a passive cause, simply not hindering the occurrence of cognition, it is also known as a “powerful” (samartha, 有力) general cause.

Similarly, an immediate condition is also a “powerful general cause,” and it refers to the mind of the immediately preceding (samanantarā) moment (namely, the mind [manas] which has disappeared into the past) when considered in relationship to the mind of the present moment. Our mind is disappearing and reappearing unceasingly from one moment to the next; however, since the relationship between past and present in regard to good and evil is indeterminate, it is held that this relationship cannot be the same as that existing between a homogeneous cause and a cognate result, and it is therefore included here. All general causes apart from these two “powerful general causes” are referred to simply as dominant conditions (adhipati-pratyaya, 增上緣). (In relation to a particular element A, all elements apart from A may become a dominant condition of A in that they do not hinder the occurrence of the element A.)

The above relationships between the six causes and four conditions on the one hand and the four results on the other are all said to involve conditioned elements. Since Nirvāṇa (or “cessation through deliberate choice”) is a result which occurs when all rela-
tionships with conditioned elements have been severed, Nirvāṇa is referred to as the disjunct result (visamyo-yoga-phala, 離繁果). Visamyo-yoga generally means disconnection with, or freedom from, the fetters of mental defilements, but in this case it is interpreted as freedom from all connections (or relationships) with conditioned elements. It may thus be understood as a result, but its cause is not to be found among conditioned elements. (Since the unconditioned elements are free of causal relationships, the term “result” is probably one of convenience. In the traditional explanation of the Four Noble Truths, it is stated that the truth of the path is the cause and the truth of cessation the result. But the word “cause” in this case refers to means, and it does not correspond to any of the six causes; “cessation” here refers to the inability of a cause to produce any further results, and it is therefore a result in only the passive sense of the word.)

The Mahāyānist Conception of the Elements: All is Empty

As a classification of causal relationships, the above scheme of six causes, four conditions and five results established by the Sarvāstivādins was taken over by Mahāyāna Buddhism as it stood, as was also the classification of the elements. However, Mahāyāna Buddhism had doubts about the Sarvāstivādin theory concerning the nature of the elements, and perceiving that this theory had deviated considerably from what Śākyamuni had actually taught, attempted to rectify it. This was the teaching epitomized in the Heart Sūtra quoted at the beginning of this chapter, stating that “the five aggregates are empty in their own-nature.” In contrast to the Sarvāstivādin doctrine that “the elements exist,” the Mahāyāna way of thinking asserted that “the elements are empty,” and advocates of this concept of “emptiness” believed that they could thereby give a correct explanation of dependent co-arising according with Śākyamuni’s own teaching.

In viewing the “self” as a causally conditioned congeries of the elements constituting the five aggregates, the “self”
thus being merely a provisional label, the Sarvāstivādin interpretation of “no-self” conformed with Śākyamuni’s teaching; however, their assertion of the real existence of the elements conflicted with the thesis that “all constituent elements are without self,” since they viewed the elements as independent entities each with a specific quality (svabhāva, 自性: literally, “own-nature”), just like the “self” of non-Buddhist schools. Accordingly, Mahāyāna Buddhism asserted that the elements too must be without any own-nature (svabhāva-sānyā, 自性空: void of own-nature), claiming that this be the correct interpretation of the dependent co-arising of the elements. This is the meaning of the statement in the Heart Sūtra that “the five aggregates are empty in their own-nature,” and Nāgārjuna and his successors (the Mādhyamika school) elaborated on this theory, formulating the doctrine of emptiness. But then another question was raised: although the elements may be empty by nature, why is it that they do in fact appear to exist? As a solution to this problem, the doctrine of “cognition-only” was formulated by the Yogācāra school. Although availing themselves of the same schema of elements as that postulated by the Sarvāstivādins, the Yogācāra school deprived the elements of their existency, recognizing only their functional aspect in relation to the cognizing subject. (Therefore, this school asserts that “the elements exist only conceptually.”) The relationship of the elements to the cognizing subject in turn raised the question of the significance the elements hold for us, and this was answered through an elucidation of the basic structure of cognition (vijñapti-mātratā, 唯識: cognition-only). This had in fact been the original purport of the Buddha’s classification of the elements into the five aggregates, twelve sense-fields, and eighteen realms.
CHAPTER FIVE

Transmigration, Karma, and Mental Defilements

In our explanation of the Four Noble Truths, we pointed out that the truths of suffering and origination describe the causal relationships pertaining to the mode of existence of the ordinary man, this mode of existence being in turn defined in terms of delusion, contamination, and transmigration. In this chapter we shall delve a little more deeply into what Buddhist doctrine has to say about the structure of these causal relationships. This may be termed the Buddhist outlook on life or world view, for it is concerned with the question of how Buddhism looks upon the reality in which man finds himself and, furthermore, on the basis of its viewpoint methods of spiritual cultivation are suggested in order to meet this reality and eventually overcome it.¹

Transmigratory Existence: The Three Realms and Six Paths

As a concept lying at the basis of the Buddhist views of life and of the world, the idea of transmigration (samsāra, 轮廻) is of fundamental importance. It refers to the endless cycle of birth and death, during which one is not necessarily always reborn as a human being, but may instead change into an animal or be reborn in hell. Of course, there will also be those fortunate enough to be reborn in the heavens, but even this state does not last forever, for the heavenly realms too are but one station in the cycle of transmigratory existence.
This concept of transmigration was not the invention of Buddhism. It was a world view already well established in Indian society at the time when Buddhism first came into being. From early times the people of India had cherished a strong desire for immortality (amṛta, 不死) or eternal life after death, and this they sought in the heavens or the world of the gods conceived of as a realm of light. But as a result of the Brahmans’ gaining control over even the gods through the powers of their incantations, Brahman, the embodiment of this thaumaturgical power, came to be ranked as supreme and the gods lost their position as absolute beings. Thus, at the time of Śākyamuni, the people of India no longer looked upon the realm of the gods in the heavens as an unconditional boon or eternal happiness. They had come to believe that there were limits to even the pleasures of the heavenly realms, the reason for this finiteness being sought in the termination of karmic reward. They recognized a causal relationship between the present life and the next, or, more generally speaking, between one life and the following, the determining factor of which was held to be one’s actions in the present life. The actions which determine the next life, as well as the potential force and functions of these actions, were termed “karma” (karman, 業), and this too is thought to be a concept which had found general acceptance by the time Buddhism appeared.

Absolute happiness was no longer envisaged as rebirth among the gods; instead, it was sought in escape from transmigration, from the cycle of birth and death, and from its suffering, and this was called “liberation” (mokṣa, 解脫). Liberation from the cycle of birth and death was in fact equivalent to the acquisition of immortality. The Brahmans understood this to mean the union of the individual self (atman), which represented the subjective centre of transmigratory existence, and Brahman, the ultimate fountainhead
of the universe. At the time of Śākyamuni there was much speculation current on the nature of “liberation,” and it was a subject of heated discussion. Śākyamuni too had left home in search of a solution to this question, and as a result he attained enlightenment.

Thus it is evident that the term transmigration is closely linked to the concepts of karma, human suffering, and liberation from this suffering. However, as has already been pointed out, although Śākyamuni’s standpoint did presuppose such a world view, he was concerned not so much with discussing the structure of transmigratory existence or explaining what happens after death, but rather with considering the causes of present suffering and how to overcome them. Therefore, it was originally not one of the aims of Buddhism to propound a systematic structural model of transmigratory existence. But, in spite of this, with the systematic formulation of its doctrines the structure of transmigratory existence was also elucidated in a similarly systematic manner. There is of course no reason whatsoever for us today to be bound by the details of this systematization, just as long as it is not forgotten that the Buddhist world view does presuppose the concept of transmigratory existence.

In modern Hindi the Sanskrit term for transmigration (samsāra) is used in the meaning of “world.” This suggests that the cycle of birth and death is encompassed by the spatial and temporal limits of the world.

It might be pointed out here that in Japan it would appear that transmigration is not believed in literally. According to Indian Buddhism, following a certain period after death (forty-nine days; this interval is called “intermediate existence” [antarā-bhava, 中間]), one must invariably undergo rebirth somewhere. Therefore, it is inconceivable that, for example, the souls of the dead should watch over the living from the grave, or that they should return to the homes of the living once a year, as they are believed to in Japan. The concept of transmigration is of course not totally rejected, but whereas literary works such as the Nihon ryōiki (日本靈異記: Record
of Miraculous Stories in Japan), dating from the early Heian period when Buddhism was still in its early stages of development in Japan, contain many tales dealing with transmigration, the concept gradually seems to have undergone changes of interpretation under the influence of indigenous ideas.

(1) **The Six Paths**

The structure of transmigratory existence as expounded by Buddhism may be summed up in terms of the “three realms” and “six paths.” Of these two, the latter concept is more concrete and has enjoyed greater popularity, and so it will be dealt with here first. The “six paths (or destinations)” (ṣaḍ gatayāḥ, P. cha gatiyo, 六道, 六趣) are as follows:

- Gods (*deva*, 天上: the realms of the gods)
- Men (*manusya*, P. *manussa*, 人間)
- Demigods (*asura*, 阿修羅: evil spirits hostile to the gods)
- Animals (*tiryagyoni*, P. *tiracchāna*, 畜生: literally, “recumbent being”)
- Hungry spirits (*preta*, P. *peta*, 餓鬼: originally the souls of the dead)
- Hell (*naraka*, 地獄)

Originally, not six paths but only five paths (*pañca gatayāḥ*, P. *pañca gatiyo*), with the exclusion of the demigods, were enumerated. The latter three paths (of animals, hungry spirits, and hell) are called the “three evil paths” (*trayo dur-gatayāḥ*, P. *tisso duggatiyo*, 三惡道), and those reborn in these realms are said to lack both the opportunity and capacity to listen to the Buddha’s teaching. In contrast, the term “good path” (*sugati*, 善道) usually refers to the two realms of the gods and men.

*Demigods*: Two contrasting evaluations of the demigods may be
found in Buddhist scriptures. On the one hand, they are included among the eight kinds of beings said to protect the Buddhist teachings (gods [deva, 天], dragons [nāga, 龍], demons [yakṣa, P. yakkha, 夜叉], celestial musicians [gandharva, P. gandhabba, 乾闥婆], demigods [asura, 阿修羅], mythological birds [garuḍa, 迦樓羅], gods of song [kinnara, P. kinnara, 禪那羅], and mythological snakes [mahoraga, 犀麈羅伽]), and they are endowed with magical powers and listen to and comprehend the Buddha’s teachings. But then, on the other hand, they are also said to be continually at war with the gods, and so the term asura is also interpreted as “non-god” (a-sura [sura=deva], 非天). This is why the realm of the demigods is considered to be a world of strife.

Among the Indo-Aryan peoples, the asura was originally a divine being standing on a par with the gods (deva) and in Zoroastrianism, the religion of ancient Persia, was known as Ahura Mazda, a beneficent god, in contrast to daeva, who represented the wicked gods. The decline in the status of the asura probably dates from the traditions of the Indo-Aryans after they separated from the Iranians, and it is also possible that projections of the tribes conquered by the Aryans have been superimposed upon this later conception of the asura.

*Hungry Spirits:* The original meaning of preta is “deceased,” and it also signifies the spirits of the dead or of ancestors. The deceased being themselves incapable of taking meals, they starve if they do not receive offerings from their descendants. Since this results in the infliction of ill fortune upon the living, the descendants are required to perform obilatory services. (This concept still lives on today in modern Japan in the “service for making offerings to the hungry spirits”, [施餓鬼會] and has elements in common with the Japanese conception of the soul.)

*Hell:* This is said to be located somewhere underground, over against the realm of the gods which is posited in the heavens. Those who descend to hell become the denizens of hell. Descriptions of hell in later Buddhist scriptures become extremely detailed, but this is because such descriptions were utilized as a means to drive home the full import of the moral teachings of karmic retribution. Hell was frequently contrasted with paradise, probably because it represents the nadir of suffering.

*Gods:* That the realm of the gods should have been regarded as
a world superior to that of men derives from the ancient traditions of India and should require no further explanation. But it is to be noted that various Vedic gods were embraced within the Buddhist conception of the gods under the name of the Thirty-three (Gods) (Trāyastriṃśa, P. Tāvatīṃsa, 切利天), the chief of whom is Indra (P. Inda, 帝釋天). (Indra’s full name is Šakra devaṇāṃ indraḥ [P. Sakko devānam indo, 天帝釋, transliterated as 鐘提桓因]. “Šakra, chief of the gods,” Šakra being his personal name; but he is generally referred to simply as Indra [transliterated as 四陀羅].) He is attended by the Four Great Kings (Cāturmahārājika, P. Cātummahārājika, 四天王) of the four quarters and it is his duty to protect the Buddha and his teachings and to ensure that the Buddhist teachings are preserved for posterity. Brahmā (梵天), the god who is said to have persuaded Śākyamuni to set about spreading his teachings, is ranked somewhat higher than Indra: this is probably a reflection of the fact that the influence of Brahmā, who had come to the fore as the new supreme deity, was at the time greater than that of Indra, a god with his origins going back to Vedic times. Maheśvara (P. Mahīṣa, 大自在天, transliterated as 摩麗首羅) corresponds to Śiva, the chief god of Hinduism. Yama (阎魔), the ruler of hell, appears under the name of Yāma (夜摩天) and is placed alongside the heavens of Tūṣita (P. Tusita, 兜率天), etc., between the Heaven of the Thirty-three and Brahmā. In this manner, the gods of the Vedas and Hinduism were gradually added to the Buddhist pantheon in response to the changing needs of the times, and each was known as a deva (天). Spatially, these heavenly realms were envisioned as being located far up on high in the firmament and were believed to be inhabited by the retainers of the various gods.

(2) The Three Realms

It was thus natural that the six paths should be arranged vertically, with hell at one pole, lying at unfathomable depths, and the heavens at the other, raised to unimaginable heights. It was held that the realms of man and those above could be reached only as the result of religious practices and in accordance with one’s spiritual powers, and this gave birth to the concept of the “three realms” (trayo dhātavaḥ, tri-dhātu, P. tiso dhātuyo, 三界).
The origins of this concept of three realms may be traced back to the Vedas, where the gods were also arranged along a vertical axis consisting of the three spheres of heaven.

Mt. Sumeru and the Surrounding World

1. Antarikṣa devāḥ
2. Bhūmyā devāḥ
3. Bhumi
4. Saptāhāṃśa
5. Saptā śāntah
6. Lavagodáka
7. Cakrāvīśa-parvata

(For the Sanskrit and Chinese equivalents of terms other than those given here, reference should be made to the text.)
(svar), sky or atmosphere (bhuvas), and earth (bhār). Buddhism borrowed this scheme, with the addition of the idea of spiritual heights attainable through the powers of meditation. The stages of meditation will be dealt with later in connection with the subject of spiritual practices (chap. 6); here we may simply note that the aim of these practices is the elimination of desire, the cause of suffering, and that consequently three levels of existence were posited: the “realm of desire” (kāma-dhātu, 欲界), in which the effects of meditation do not yet appear, namely, the world of everyday consciousness accompanied by desires; the “realm of form” (rūpa-dhātu, 色界), in which desires have been eliminated through meditation but where the physical body still remains; and the “realm of non-form” (arūpya-dhātu, P. arūpa-dhātu, 無色界), where there exists only the spirit freed from the shackles of the physical body. The realms of the gods were then disposed throughout these three realms.

In general, the realms of the gods too belong to the realm of desire and are known as the “six heavens of the realm of desire” (saṭ kāma-avacara devā, P. cha kāma-avacara-devā, 六欲天). They are, starting from the bottom, the heavens of (1) the Four Great Kings (Cāturmāhārājika), (2) the Thirty-three (Trāyastriṃśa), (3) Yāma, (4) Tuṣita, (5) Nirmāṇarati (P. Nimmāṇarati, 化樂天: Enjoyment of Magical Creations), and (6) Paranirmitaśāvattī (P. Paranirmitavaśavattī, 他化自在天: Controlling Others’ Magical Creations). The highest point on earth is Mt. Sumeru (須彌山), symbolizing the Himalayas, around which the sun, moon, and other heavenly bodies revolve. The abodes of the Four Great Kings are also said to be located on the slopes of Mt. Sumeru, and Indra, lord of the Heaven of the Thirty-three, has his palace on the summit of Mt. Sumeru. Pāpiyas, the king of demons who attempted to prevent Śākyamuni’s attainment of enlightenment and who caused the date of Śākyamuni’s death to be advanced, is said to reside in the Paranirmitaśāvattī Heaven. The Tuṣita Heaven is the realm from where Śākyamuni is said to have descended into the womb of Queen Māyā, and at present the bodhisattva Maitreya is said to be residing there in preparation for his future appearance.
as the next Buddha.

Above the six heavens of the realm of desire are located the heavens of the realm of form. These number eighteen, ranging from the heaven of the first stage of meditation, corresponding to the world of Brahmā, up to the highest of the heavens of the realm of form, known as Akanisṭha (P. Akanisṭha, 色究竟天). The heavens of the realm of non-form are four in number, corresponding to meditative stages, and this results in a total of twenty-eight heavens. However, the worlds of the gods may be considered as embracing only the heavens of the realm of desire.

Thus the three realms represent different levels of spiritual depth, and although they may be attained through meditation, once one leaves a particular meditative state and returns to a state of ordinary consciousness, one must in theory be back in the realm of desire. However, as a result of these meditative states becoming confused with the world after death, it was considered that in some cases entry into the worlds of the gods of the realm of form would prove an obstacle to liberation. In other words, according to the Buddhist scale of values, the three realms all fall within the confines of the world of transmigratory existence.

(3) Transmigratory Existence

Existence within this world of transmigratory existence is called simply “existence” (*bhava*, 有), and so the three realms are also known as the “three existences” (*tri-bhava*, P. *ti-bhava*, 三有). Similarly, the highest of the heavens of the realm of non-form, the station of neither perception nor non-perception (*naiya-saṃjñā-nāsaṃjñā-āyatanā*; see p. 183), is also called the “(heaven of the) summit of existence” (*bhava-agra*, P. *bhava-agga*, 有頂天) since it is located at the pinnacle of transmigratory existence. (The Akanisṭha Heaven, the highest of the heavens of the realm of form, is also sometimes referred to as the “summit of existence,” in the sense that it is the highest world for those possessing a physical body.)

In traditional Buddhist doctrine, “existence” (*bhava*) rather than “transmigration” (*samsāra*) is the term more commonly used to refer to transmigratory existence. This term “exist-
ence” is an important concept, appearing for example in the expression “twelve members of existence” (*dvādaśa bhava-aṅgā-ni*, 十二有支), referring to the twelvefold chain of dependent co-arising, and also in discussions of mental defilements and karma. (It should not be confused with bhāva, “being” as opposed to “non-being”.) But, on the other hand, in consequence of its being linked to the world view centred on Mt. Sumeru, “existence” is also conceived of spatially. As far as Buddhist doctrine is concerned, it should be sufficient to regard “existence,” namely, transmigratory existence, as the world of delusion, a mode of existence diametrically opposed to that of enlightenment or Nirvāṇa. As is emphasized in the advanced doctrines of Mahāyāna Buddhism, “through delusion there is the citadel of the three realms, and through enlightenment (the worlds in) the ten directions are empty” (迷故三界城, 悟故十方空), since the three realms are nothing but a deluded image created by the mind. (“Everything pertaining to the three realms is mind-only; it is merely the creation of the one mind.”—Avatamsaka-sūtra) The same idea is also expressed in Mahāyāna sūtras as “*samsāra* is no different from Nirvāṇa” (*samsāra eva nirvāṇam*, 生死即涅槃).

*Karma*

The agency which brings about the “existence” of these three realms is considered to be karma (*karma, P. kamma*, 業). Karma is in turn caused by mental defilements, and this results in the causal series: defilement→karma→suffering (惑業苦). When considered in the light of the Four Noble Truths, mental defilements correspond to craving (*trṣnā*) or ignorance (*avidyā*) as the source of suffering, and so karma may be interpreted as the agency linking the truths of suffer-
ing and the origination of suffering.

As we mentioned earlier, the concept of karma had already gained general currency in India prior to the emergence of Buddhism. Once adopted by Buddhism, new interpretations were added, and it became an important doctrinal concept. Śākyamuni himself is sometimes referred to as an “advocate of (the theory of) karma” (karma-vādin, P. kamma-vādin, 業論者).3) This is because he placed greater importance on actions performed during the present life, namely, the accumulation of good karma, than on a person’s birth as the force instrumental in determining the fruits to be enjoyed in future lives. Generally speaking, an “advocate of the theory of karma” may be defined as a person who believes in a law of moral causality determined by actions.

The word “karma” (karman) is a derivative of the root √kr, meaning “to make” or “to perform,” to which has been added the suffix -man, expressive of action. It thus signifies any sort of creative act or force. In this respect it is a concept analogous to the term samskāra, and in Buddhist literature the two are frequently used interchangeably. But whereas samskāra can refer to all dependently co-arisen phenomena, there is no such usage in the case of the term karma, which usually, in the context of transmigration, refers to the force which brings about transmigratory existence. Karma also naturally signifies action in general, on the premise that every action has an aftereffect which in turn gives rise to some sort of result.

As a typology of action, Buddhist scriptures mention three varieties of action: physical, verbal, and mental. Verbal action (vāk-karman, P. vac̐-kamma, 口業) refers to speech or verbal expression, and mental action (manas-karman, P. mano-kamma, 意業) signifies the operations of the mind or mental functions in general, although strictly speaking it may be not quite accurate to speak of these two activities as “ac-
tions.” Physical action (kāya-karman, P. kāya-kamma, 身業), on the other hand, refers to action in the narrow sense of the term, namely, actions performed by means of the body and limbs. This theory of action, when linked to the classification of actions into good or wholesome deeds (kuśala-karman, P. kusala-kamma, 善業) and evil or unwholesome deeds (pāpa-karman, P. pāpa-kamma, 惡業), also has a bearing on the question of moral discipline. For example, the taking of life and theft are regarded as evil or unwholesome (akuśala, P. akusala, 不善) physical actions, whereas mendacity is an evil or unwholesome verbal action. (Good or wholesome actions are the countermeasure or antidote to such evil actions, as is exemplified by the “path of the ten good actions”; see chap. 6.) Among the three types of action, Buddhism places greatest emphasis on mental actions, and so it may perhaps be regarded as a theory of motivation (not result). In some Buddhist schools of thought, mental action is referred to as “latent” or “non-manifest” action (avijñāpti, P. aviññatti, 無表業), providing the basis for “manifest” action (vijñāpti, P. viññatti, 表業) represented by physical and verbal actions. But in other schools, both “manifest” and “non-manifest” actions are held to be subsumed under mental action. Be that as it may, it is considered that the thoughts we think are of fundamental importance and exert an enormous influence, and that it is therefore the transformation of the mind that is of prime importance for the attainment of enlightenment. Buddhism makes no pretense to being a theory of physical education or a branch of physiology or physics, and so deals with the classification of physical actions in only a very general manner. Or to be more precise, it is concerned only in whether an action is good or wholesome (kuśala), evil or unwholesome (akuśala), or morally indeterminate (avyākṛta, P. avyākata, 無記).
The good or evil nature of one's actions naturally also bears an influence upon one's destiny after death, and when considered from this standpoint, actions are divided into meritorious actions (puṇya, P. puñña, 福業), demeritorious actions (apuṇya, P. apuñña, 非福業), and immovable actions (āniṇḍya, P. ānejja, 不動業). Meritorious actions result in an agreeable (priya, iṣṭa, P. piya, iṭṭha, 可愛) reward in the realm of desire, demeritorious actions result in a disagreeable (apriya, anīṣṭa, P. apiya, anīṭṭha, 非愛) reward in the realm of desire, and immovable actions lead to rebirth in the two realms of form and non-form. However, the meritoriousness or demeritoriousness of the reward or retribution is distinct from the question of good and evil. An action itself may be either good or evil, but the result is held to be always morally indeterminate. (This is why the result is referred to as vipāka or "different maturation"; see p. 123.)

The power of actions to give birth to causal relationships not only leads to transmigration throughout the three realms, but is also considered to function along the path of religious practice leading to the cessation of suffering. But since in this latter case the actions are different in nature from normal actions, actions which lead to existence in the three realms are called "defiled actions" (sāsrava-karman, 有漏業), namely, actions accompanied by or based upon mental defilements, in contrast to actions born of the path of religious practice, which are called "undefiled actions" (anāsrava-karman, 無漏業). Furthermore, the activities of the Buddhas performed for the salvation of sentient beings are called "Buddha-deeds" (buddha-kārya, 佛事), but these do not result in any karmic retribution. In the case of bodhisattvas, the same activities are designated as "undefiled actions."

The question of karma in its relation to transmigration involves the problem of who or what it is that, burdened
down by karma, actually transmigrates. Since Buddhism denied the existence of any individual entity surviving the death of the physical body, this question became an aporia for Buddhism. As a solution, the concept of the store-consciousness (ālaya-vijñāna), propounded by the Yogācāra school of Mahāyāna Buddhism, was born; but this will be discussed in a later chapter (chap. 7).

Mental Defilements

The term mental defilements (Jap. bonnō, 煩惱) has become firmly imbedded in the everyday life of the Japanese. For example, on New Year’s Eve, when it is customary to ring out the old year with the tolling of the temple bells, the bells are struck 108 times, and this is said to be done in order to drive out the 108 mental defilements. Similarly, it is claimed that the 108 beads of a rosary also represent the 108 mental defilements, and these one checks off one by one when counting one’s beads. But when it comes to the question of what these 108 mental defilements actually consist of, the matter becomes rather complicated and difficult to explain, for the figure 108 is merely the result of theoretical demands which it is not particularly meaningful to be acquainted with anyway. However, as the majority of us know from experience, mental defilements are deeply imbued in our minds, are very tenacious, and cannot be easily removed. It is in these mental defilements that Buddhism seeks the source of all evil, evil in this case being equivalent in the final analysis to transmigration or the suffering inherent in the repeated cycle of birth and death.

The Sanskrit term for mental defilements, kleśa (P. kilesa), derives from the root ḫliś, meaning “to soil,” and so kleśa means anything which soils. Accordingly in Chinese it was
translated as “stain” (染), “filth” (汚), “defilement” (染汚), or even “delusion” (惑), as well as the more common “affliction” (煩悩). In terms of the classification of the elements discussed in the previous chapter, the mental defilements are a variety of mental functions (or elements associated with the mind) and are thought of as clinging to the mind and soiling it.

There will be a chance later to deal more fully with how the mind is conceived of in Buddhism; at this stage it will be sufficient to note the following points.

Śākyamuni’s teaching as recorded in the Early Canon contains the following instruction:

“When the mind is soiled, O Monks, sentient beings are soiled; when the mind is purified, sentient beings are (also) purified.”

(Citta-saṃkilesā bhikkhave sattā saṃkilissanti, citta-vodānā sattā visujjhanti.)

This means that delusion and enlightenment are both dependent upon one’s state of mind. We may also note that in the antithesis presented by this teaching the nature of the two truths of suffering and origination and of cessation and the path are expressed by the first and second parts respectively. In other words, when the mind is soiled by mental defilements, the source of suffering, then one experiences suffering; but when the mind has been purified and is free of mental defilements, one attains the extinction of mental defilements and consequently the state of Nirvāṇa, liberated from the suffering associated with birth and death. In this case, that which soils the mind is called “contamination” (saṃklesa, P. saṃkilesa, 雜染), signifying the entire process encompassing mental defilements, karma, and the resulting suffering as a whole, and this is contrasted with
the process of "purification" (vyavadāna, P. vodāna, 清淨) which leads to the cessation of suffering through the practice of the path.

Thus, although the mind is not soiled by mental defilements alone, the mental functions lying at the root of the whole process of "contamination" are specifically referred to as mental defilements. When considered in relation to karma, these mental defilements may be regarded as the mental functions which condition actions such as are revealed through the body and speech. In other words, the thoughts we think end up being reflected in our conduct and speech. In view of the fact that Buddhism always places prime importance upon the mind as lying at the source of all actions, the standpoint of Buddhism may be characterized as a theory of motivation.

These latent functions lying at the source of all actions are themselves sometimes referred to as "karma"; alternatively they are also called saṃskāra in the sense of "formative force." Mental defilements may thus be regarded as both mental actions or mental karma and latent mental forces.

But let us imagine that there stands before us an angry person. Not only is his anger expressed through his physical actions, such as assuming a fearsome countenance and shaking his clenched fists, and his verbal action of showering abuse upon us; it is also to be found in his present mental state of being actually angry. This means that although the workings of the mind may not themselves be visible, they are by no means not only the cause of the present anger but also constitute a part of the very anger itself. Thus it is possible to distinguish between mental functions belonging to the present moment and mental functions belonging to the past which are the cause of those of the present. When considered in this light, mental defile-
ments may be divided into those active in the present and those lying latent. The former are called mental defilements of “possession” (paryutthāna, paryavasthāna, P. pariyutṭhāna, 遠緣), indicating that they are presently active, in contrast to the latter which are known as “latent (or dormant) propensities” (anuśaya, P. anusaya, 隨眠), meaning that although they may now be dormant and inactive, they have not completely disappeared and, depending upon the circumstances, are ever ready to be reactivated. This distinction was born of a strong realization of just how difficult it is to eliminate mental defilements, and owing to practical considerations relating to actual religious practice greater emphasis was placed upon latent propensities than on momentarily active mental defilements. Consequently there also arose the view that it is in the former that the essence of mental defilements is to be found. The chapter-title Anuśaya-nirdeśa (Chapter on Latent Propensities) in the Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya reflects this point of view, and here mental defilements are equated with latent propensities, the term anuśaya being interpreted as that which “increases (anuśerate)” (suffering). Actively manifest mental defilements are in this case regarded as a subsidiary variety of mental defilements.

It is now time to consider what actually are looked upon as mental defilements. The most basic ones, frequently mentioned in Buddhist texts, are the “three poisons” (tri-duṣṭa, 三毒) or “three roots of evil” (trīṇy akusala-mūlāni, P. tīṇi akusala-mūlāni, 三不善根), consisting of passion, hatred, and bewilderment.

“Passion” (rāga, 貪) is greed or attachment, and may be regarded as referring to desires in general. At the opposite pole to “passion” lies “hatred” (dveṣa, P. dosa, 譴), signifying aversion, hostility, or abhorrence, and also referred to as “resistance” (pratigha, P. patigha, 敵). Previously, when discussing the varieties of suffering, we noted the suffering
of being disjoined or separated from what one likes and the suffering of being conjoined with what one dislikes; the above two mental defilements correspond precisely to these two diametrically opposed varieties of suffering. When we see something pleasant, for example someone attractive of the opposite sex, we feel drawn and wish to speak to or be with him or her. This urge culminates in the desire to possess the object of our attraction, and this is "passion." When this desire is fulfilled we may be overcome with joy, but if we should have to part with the object of our joy, we become afflicted by suffering (the suffering of being separated from what one likes). Even if one should enjoy a period of happiness, if in the end one must undergo the suffering of separation in accordance with the law that those who meet must eventually part, happiness or pleasure becomes a source of suffering, and this ultimately means that a mind possessed of passion itself leads to suffering. Apart from the abandonment of all thoughts of attachment, there is no end to suffering. This is the point most often stressed by Buddhism.

The opposite of passion is the feeling born towards something unpleasant. Upon seeing something offensive, we involuntarily turn away or try to avoid it. The more we dislike a person, the more we tend to meet up with him or her and the more likely our paths are to cross. This is the suffering of being conjoined with what one dislikes. But if our thoughts of hostility and feelings of antipathy disappear, our suffering too will cease. This is why hatred or aversion is counted as one of the basic mental defilements.

The above two mental defilements—passion and hatred—may be defined as emotional defilements, demonstrating the two typical directions in which emotions operate. By contrast, "bewilderment" (moha, 症) may be described as an intellectual defilement, meaning literally mental befoggedness or
ignorance (*avidyā*, *avijjā*, 無明) in regard to truth. Owing to ignorance of the truth that all things are impermanent, we imagine that our beloved ones will forever remain by our side, this in turn giving rise to thoughts of covetousness and attachment. But once we comprehend the truth of impermanence, the mind is freed of desires and attains peace. This is “equanimity” or “indifference” (*upekṣā*, *upekkhā*, 捨), the cessation of suffering. Therefore, ignorance of truth may be said to lie at the root of the two emotional defilements. This is analogous to the ordering of the twelvefold chain of dependent co-arising where, as will be seen below, ignorance is placed at the head of the causal nexus.

As examples of defects of an intellectual nature, there are the various mistaken notions which occur as a result of ignorance, and these too are counted among the mental defilements under the name of “(wrong) views” (*drṣṭi*, *diṭṭhi*, 見). In accordance with their contents, these mistaken views are classified into: (1) “the view of (the existence of) a real body” (*sakāya-dṛṣṭi*, *sakkāya-diṭṭhi*, 有身見), namely, the belief in a truly existent self; (2) “the view of holding extreme (views)” (*anta-grāha-dṛṣṭi*, *anta-ggāhika-diṭṭhi*, 邊見), namely, thinking in terms of the extremes of, for example, permanence and impermanence, pleasure and pain, and difference and identity; (3) “false views” (*mithyā-dṛṣṭi*, *miccha-diṭṭhi*, 邪見), for example the mistaken views of denying the consequent results of good and evil deeds, or of refusing to recognize the worth of the Three Treasures; (4) “attachment to (wrong) views” (*dṛṣṭi-parāmarṣa*, *diṭṭhi-parāmāsā*, 見取), namely, the belief that only one’s own views are correct; and (5) “attachment to rules and vows” (*śīla-vrata-parāmarṣa*, *śīla-bbata-parāmāsā*, 戒禁取), namely, the observance of non-Buddhist precepts and practices. However, since these five views (*pañca-dṛṣṭi*, *pañca-diṭṭhiyo*, 五見) boil down to a matter of intellectual understanding,
it is held that once it is realized that they are mistaken views, they may be rectified relatively easily. (*darsana-prahātavaya/-heya, P. dassanena pahātabba, 見所斷: to be abandoned through insight), in contrast to the “three poisons” of passion, hatred, and bewilderment, which can be eliminated only through extensive spiritual cultivation (*bhāvanā-prahātavaya/-heya, P. bhāvanāya pahātabba, 修所斷: to be abandoned through cultivation).

In addition to the “three poisons,” “doubt” and “pride” are also counted as mental defilements thought to be more resistant than the above “(wrong) views.” “Doubt” (*vicikitsā, P. vicikicchā, 疑) is said to refer to doubts entertained about karma and karmic retribution, the Three Treasures, and so forth, and does not signify misgivings of a more general nature. This too is a purely intellectual defilement. “Pride” (*māna, 慢), on the other hand, is an emotional defilement, referring to self-conceit, or thinking highly of oneself and looking down upon others. One form of this is “self-pride” (*asmi-māna, 我慢: literally, “pride that ‘I am’”), indicating pride stemming from a belief in the existence of the self, and it is identical with the “view of the self” (*atma-drṣṭi, P. atta-diṭṭhi, 我見). Further aspects of pride are also listed in Buddhist texts, such as “haughtiness” (*abhimāna, P. adhimāna, 增上慢) and “pride in inferiority” (*āna-māna, 卑下慢), thinking oneself only slightly inferior to someone far superior to oneself. (In doctrinal treatises, three, seven, and nine varieties of “pride” are listed, but we need not go into details here.) Mention may also be made of “arrogance” (*mada, 愚), which closely resembles “pride.”

The 108 Mental Defilements: The varieties of mental defilements described above may be resumed as (1) passion, (2) hatred, (3) pride, (4) bewilderment (or ignorance), (5) (wrong) views, and (6) doubt. These six mental defilements are known as the “six latent propensities” (*saḍ anuṣayāḥ, 六隨眠) or “six basic mental defilements” (*
CHAPTER FIVE

Mental Defilements in the Early Canon: The above is based on the doctrines found established in the Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya and other Abhidharma works, but in the Early Canon itself one does not find any such systematic treatment of the mental defilements. There, the principal classifications of mental defilements to be found are as follows:

(1) Three fetters (trīṇi saṃyojanāni, P. tiṇi saṃyojanāni, 三結): belief in (the existence of) the self, doubt, and attachment to (non-Buddhist) rules and vows.
(2) Seven fetters (saptā saṃyojanāni, P. satta saṃyojanāni, 七結), the differing enumerations of which may be summed up as: sensual passion, hatred, (wrong) views, doubt, pride, passion for existence, and ignorance. These correspond to the abovementioned "six latent propensities," with the difference that "passion" has been divided into "sensual passion" (kāma-rāga, 欲貪), referring to passion appertaining to the realm of desire, and "passion for existence" (bhava-rāga, 有貪), referring to passion in the two realms of form and non-form.
(3) Five fetters of the upper regions (pañca ārdhva-bhāgīya-saṃyojanāni, P. pañca uddham-bhāgīyāni saṃyojanāni, 五上分結) and five fetters of the lower regions (pañca avara-bhāgīya-saṃyojanāni, P. pañca oram-bhāgīyāni saṃyojanāni, 五下分結): sensual desire (kāma-chanda, 欲貪), malevolence (vyāpāda, 脅憤), belief in (the existence of) the self, doubt, and attachment to (non-Buddhist) rules and vows, which are eliminated at the stage
of the “non-returner,” are called the “five fetters of the lower regions,” while passion for form (rūpa-rāga, 色貪), passion for non-form (arūpa-rāga, 無色貪), restlessness (auddhatya, P. uddhacca, 掉舉), pride, and ignorance, which are eliminated at the stage of the “saint,” are called the “five fetters of the upper regions.”

(4) Four yokes (catvāra yogā, P. cattāro yogā, 四綱), or four outflows (catvāra āsravā, P. cattāro āsavā, 四漏), or four torrents (catvāra oghā, P. cattāro oghā, 四暴流), or four bonds (catvāro granthāh, P. cattāro ganthā, 四聚): desire (=sensual passion), existence (=passion for existence), (wrong) views, and ignorance.

(5) Five hindrances (paśca nīvaranāni, 五蓋): sensual desire, malevolence, torpor and drowsiness (styāna-middha, P. thīna-middha, 摂眠), restlessness and remorse (auddhatya-kaukṛtya, P. uddhacca-kukkucca, 掉悔), and doubt. (Drowsiness and remorse were looked upon as the results of torpor and restlessness respectively, and so were coupled with the latter.)

The terms “fetter” (samyojana; what binds the mind), “yoke” (yoga; what ties down the mind), “outflow” (āsrava; what flows out from the mind), “torrent” (oghā; what impels a person into the stream of transmigration in the manner of a rushing torrent), “bond” (granthā; what fastens the mind), and “hindrance” (nīvarana; what suppresses the mind) are all regarded as synonyms for “mental defilement.” These synonyms give an indication of the connotations which the term “mental defilement” has in Buddhism. The last of the above terms, nīvarana, is related to āvarana (障礙), meaning “obstruction,” and is also cognate with nivṛta (impeded) in the phrases “impeded and indeterminate” (nivṛta-avyākṛta, 有覆無記) and “unimpeded and indeterminate” (anivṛta-avyākṛta, 無覆無記), referring to a morally indeterminate state of mind (avyākṛta-citta, 無記心) neither wholesome nor unwholesome when considered in the light of the presence or absence of mental defilements.

**The Twelvefold Chain of Dependent Co-arising**

What we have described above is usually considered as a causal concatenation in the order: defilement→karma→suffering (transmigration). A more detailed schematization of this three-phase causal relationship when applied to the reality of the human condition is to be found in the “twelvefold
chain of dependent co-arising” (dvādaśa-pratitya-samutpāda, 十二緣起, 十二因緣), namely, the formula of “dependent co-arising” (pratitya-samutpāda, P. paṭicca-samuppāda, 綠起) consisting of “twelve members” (dvādaśa-aṅga, P. dvādasā-aṅga, 十二支), starting from ignorance and ending with old age and death. The twelve members of this series are also called “members of existence” (bhava-aṅga, 有支) in the sense that they constitute subdivisions or “nodes” in the course of transmigratory existence. The names of each of these members were mentioned in a scriptural quotation when we earlier touched upon the formula of dependent co-arising (p. 77). However, we purposely refrained from giving any explanation of their meaning or of their interrelationship. This was because it is probable that the completion of the formula of the twelvefold chain of dependent co-arising was closely linked to the theoretical scheme of “defilement → karma → suffering.”

Historically speaking, the way of thinking which gave birth to the formula of the twelvefold chain of dependent co-arising was, similarly to the pattern “suffering ← cause of suffering” in the Four Noble Truths, one which, regarding the present as a result, goes back in time to consider the causes retrospectively. Therefore, it would appear that a formula of dependent co-arising consisting of five members—suffering (old age and death, grief, sorrow, suffering, dejection, and perturbation) ← birth ← existence ← attachment ← craving—lies at its base. This was gradually supplemented and, passing through the stages of nine- and ten-member formulations which posited the interdependent relationship between consciousness and name-and-form as the ultimate cause, was finally fixed at twelve members by placing “(karmic) formative forces ← ignorance” at the very beginning. Each of the links in this chain represents an important “node” in the formula of dependent co-arising, and in our following examination of this formula we shall take this fact into account,
dividing the twelve members into a number of groups.

When considering the twelfold chain of dependent co-arising, there has been a marked tendency, even in the Early Canon, to concentrate on merely clarifying the meaning of each of the twelve members, to the total neglect of the question of the nature of the causal relationships existing between one member and the next. But, being a formulation of dependent co-arising, it would be reasonable to expect that the key to its significance lies in the relationships between the individual members. Furthermore, although all subsumed under the single term "dependent co-arising," the twelve members are by no means connected by a single train of logic. In our division of the twelve members, we have paid particular attention to this fact.

A. (1) Ignorance → (2) Formative Forces → (3) Consciousness
These three members may be regarded as a typical exemplification of the three-phase process of "defilement → karma → suffering." In the present instance, "consciousness" (vijñāna, P. viññāna, 識) represents activities related to one's present existence. Consciousness is here equivalent to mind and signifies the subjective centre of cognition. Even in the Early Canon consciousness was regarded as the function most central to human existence, being held to commence functioning immediately upon birth. Later, the notion arose that consciousness begins to function not simply after birth but from the time of conception. This was known as the "mind (or consciousness) of rebirth" (pratisamādhī-citta, P. paṭisamādhī-citta/viññāna, 結生心, 結生識)."

Going back even further in time, the factors which determined the characteristics of this consciousness were sought in the physical, verbal, and mental actions of the past (i.e., the second member "formative forces" [saṃskāra, P. saṃkhāra, 行], equivalent to karma), and then fundamental "ignorance" (avidyā, P. avijjā, 無明) was finally posited as the cause of this karmic activity.

This being the case, and if ignorance too be included among
the mental defilements and be itself a variety of karmic formative force, it would be natural to expect that the question of how it arose also be brought to issue. But Buddhist scriptures have nothing whatsoever to say on this matter. What is more, transmigration is said to have no beginning. In other words, the reasons for our nescience in regard to truth and our envelopment in ignorance are not only beyond the bounds of human understanding, but also remained a question unanswered (avyākṛta) by even the Buddha himself. Buddhism begins by considering the fact that from some time in the immemorial past we have become thus veiled in ignorance. The reason that such a stance be both necessary and sufficient for its purposes is that if ignorance is eradicated or if that ignorance is transformed into knowledge, the extinction of suffering is realized and the aim of Buddhism is accomplished. (Expressed in other terms, this means that since all the causal relationships based upon the twelve members of dependent co-arising disappear upon enlightenment, ignorance may also be regarded as the basis of the dependent co-arising of "formative forces → conditioned elements," this dependent co-arising being in fact the fundamental motive cause of transmigration. In this sense, ignorance is not the cause of the formative forces alone.) The aim of Buddhism is on no account to probe the origins of the world or to explain the process of creation.

\[
\begin{array}{c|c|c}
\text{(cause)} & \text{(result)} & \text{extinction of} \\
\text{formative forces} \rightarrow \text{conditioned elements} & \text{conditioned elements} & \text{knowledge}
\end{array}
\]

B. (3) Consciousness → (4) Name-and-Form → (5) Six Sense-Fields → (6) Contact

These four members differ from A in that they simply represent the conditions necessary for the functioning of cognition.
Their relationship is one of simultaneous interdependence.

The term "name-and-form" (nāma-rūpa, 名色) originally signified a concept and its corresponding referent. But in Buddhist scriptures it was interpreted to mean spirit and matter or mind and body. Of the five aggregates, the aggregate of form corresponds to "form" and signifies matter or the physical body, whereas the four aggregates of perception, conception, volition, and consciousness, all denoting mental phenomena, are held to correspond to "name." This "name" and "form" become the object of "consciousness" because, as a result of the cognitive and discerning functions of consciousness, the relationship between an object and its name is established— for example, "this is water" or "that is a tree." Thus "name-and-form" refers to the six sense-objects (form, sound, smell, taste, tangible objects, and mind-objects) as objects of consciousness.

According to the Indian way of thinking, when something is cognized, an object is necessary as a "support" (ālambana, P. ārammaṇa, 所緣) of cognition for cognition to take place. In this sense, "consciousness" is dependent upon "name-and-form." For this reason it was stated in the ten- and nine-member formulae of dependent co-arising that consciousness and name-and-form are mutually conditioning, and this relationship was likened to a bundle of reeds which is able to stand upright only because the individual reeds lean against and support each other. It would appear that in the ten-(or nine-) member formula of dependent co-arising it was considered that since the causal relationship existing between consciousness and name-and-form is thus a cyclic one, it was not necessary to go back any further.

But in one text of the 'Early Canon it is stated that "through the cooperative interaction between the sense-organ, sense-object, and consciousness there is contact," after which it continues, "conditioned by contact there is sensation;
conditioned by sensation there is craving.” Since name-and-form corresponds to “sense-objects” and consciousness is “consciousness,” it here becomes necessary to add the “six sense-fields” (saññā-āyatana, P. saññā-āyatana, 六入: eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind) as the “sense-organs.” The difference between the nine- and ten-member formulae of dependent co-arising lies in the treatment of these six sense-fields. It is probable that the nine-member formula, in which they are absent, was the earlier of the two, and that the six sense-fields were later incorporated as an additional member in order to conform with the notion of the cooperative interaction of sense-organ, sense-object, and consciousness. Therefore, even though it is stated that “conditioned by name-and-form there are the six sense-fields,” theoretically speaking, the relationship between these members together with consciousness must be one of simultaneous interdependence. Furthermore, in regard to the following member “contact” (sparśa, P. phassa, 触), the original implication is that the mind’s contact with an object is conditional upon the cooperative interaction of the sense-organs, sense-objects, and consciousness, and that if any one of these three conditions should be lacking, contact cannot occur. Therefore, theoretically contact too must arise simultaneously with the preceding three members, although they are not interdependently related. The relationship between these four members may be shown diagrammatically in the following manner:

![Diagram](attachment:image.png)
However, the traditional interpretation (referred to by modern scholars as an "embryological" interpretation) differs somewhat from the above. Instead, "consciousness" is interpreted as the abovementioned "consciousness of rebirth," or the state of being at the moment of conception; the stage three weeks later, when the embryo is said to possess a physical body and mental faculties but to be still without sense-organs, is regarded as the stage of "name-and-form"; the stage reached when it has become endowed with sense-organs is the stage of the "six sense-fields"; and the time of birth when contact with the outer world takes place is held to correspond to the stage of "contact."

Since the four members of B describe the structure of cognition, they cannot in themselves be considered either morally good or evil (for even Śākyamuni must have been acting through contact based on the interaction of the sense-organs, sense-objects, and consciousness when he was instructing his disciples). In other words, it is in theory possible to conceive of both defiled and undefiled instances of these four members. But in the case of the twelve-member formula of dependent co-arising they are held to be grounded in the foregoing ignorance and hence end up bringing about the ensuing "delusion" of the following members.

However, when considered in the context of the Buddhist view of truth, it must be pointed out that there is a tendency to consider the very act of dichotomization into subject and object to be itself "(false) discrimination" (vikalpa) and hence an obstacle to enlightenment, impairing a correct view of reality. Therefore, it can also be said that the fundamental cause of suffering (or transmigration) was discovered in the interdependent relationship existing between consciousness and name-and-form. This question was dealt with in greatest depth in the doctrine of cognition-only which developed later in Mahāyāna Buddhism, and a theoretical solution to the problem was reached (see chap. 7).
C. (6) Contact → (7) Sensation → (8) Craving

“Sensation” (or “perception”; _vedanā_, 聽) here refers to the faculty of feeling, and in Buddhist scriptures it is customary to divide sensation into three varieties: pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral. This means that when one makes contact with an object, any one of these three sensations will occur. This causal chain parallels the relationship between agreeable and disagreeable objects which was discussed above in relation to mental defilements. The basic implication of these three members is that if one comes in contact with something agreeable, a pleasant sensation of happiness or pleasure occurs, and as a result there arises attachment towards that object. In the opposite instance, if one comes in contact with something disagreeable, an unpleasant sensation of distaste or displeasure occurs, as a result of which one feels abhorence or dislike towards that object. “Hatred” may in this case be regarded as being included in (8) “craving” (_trṣṇā_, P. _tanha_, 愛) in the sense of negative attachment or desire.

According to the traditional interpretation, it is held that the faculty of sensation comes to function fully at about the age of three, and that at the time of puberty craving arises and gradually grows in intensity.

D. (8) Craving → (9) Attachment → (10) Existence

The positing of craving as the cause of suffering is the oldest form of the formula of dependent co-arising, and even in later Buddhism desire is ever looked upon as the root of all evil. Therefore; in D it is possible to recognize the three-phase process of “defilement→karma→suffering,” since “existence” (_bhava_, 有) is equivalent to transmigratory existence. This being so, “attachment” (_upādāna_, 取) will correspond to karma, for although “attachment” is of course one of the mental defilements, it may be regarded as referring here to attachment actively operating on the basis of “craving.” This
form of "attachment" is traditionally held to refer to the "four attachments" (catvāry upādānāni, P. cattāri upādānāni, 四取) to desire (kāma), (wrong) views (dṛṣṭi), (non-Buddhist) rules and vows (śīla-vrata), and the concept of self (ātma-vāda, P. atta-vāda, 我語). As was explained above in our discussion of the mental defilement of "(wrong) views," the attachments to wrong views and non-Buddhist rules and vows represent false views from the Buddhist point of view; attachment to the concept of self here means literally attachment to the word "self" and so, being equivalent to the belief in a truly existent self, is according to Buddhism the most abominable of the wrong views. In contrast to these three, the attachment to desire refers to actively manifest attachment in general. In other words, if the wrong views may be regarded as intellectual defilements, then the attachment to desire is an emotional defilement. At the same time, it goes without saying that this latter is manifested through actual physical, verbal, and mental actions.

If the result of such "craving" and "attachment" is "existence," namely, transmigratory existence, then it is only to be expected that this "existence" be regarded as future life. Such an interpretation did in fact eventually result in the whole of the concatenation of the twelve members of dependent co-arising being viewed as a process spanning the past, present and future.

In regard to the relationship between "attachment" and "existence," there is one other important point to be noted. This is that when describing Nirvāṇa, the counter-concept to transmigratory existence, the scriptures sometimes use the expression "having entered Nirvāṇa without clinging" (an-upādaya parinirūta, P. anupādaya nibbuta, 無取涅槃). Upādāna may mean both the action of taking or clinging (its direct meaning as "attachment," the ninth member of the twelve-member formula of dependent co-arising) and anything which
is taken, or fuel, or material cause. For example, in the case of the concept of “self,” the fuel for this concept is provided by the five aggregates which constitute our being, and so these five aggregates as the elements of individual existence are also called the “five aggregates of attachment” (pañca upādāna-skandhāḥ). Upon the dissolution of these five aggregates at death, Śākyamuni is regarded as having entered complete Nirvāṇa. His death is therefore called the “great and perfect decease” (mahā-parinirvāṇa, P. maha-parinibbāna, 大般涅槃), and it is this which was referred to above in the expression “having entered Nirvāṇa without clinging,” namely, without the fuel (of the five aggregates). (This expression is held to be synonymous with “Nirvāṇa without any remaining substratum”; see p. 166). Thus it is possible to extract the basic patterns “attachment → existence” and “non-attachment → Nirvāṇa” as corresponding to suffering and the cessation of suffering respectively. In this case, attachment is frequently likened to firewood, and this accords with the usage of the term upādāna in the sense of fuel in general. Without fuel a fire will not burn, and once the fuel is exhausted the fire dies out; likewise, if the objects of attachment cease to appear as further fuel for attachment, the flames of craving cannot blaze and Nirvāṇa, comparable to the state of a fire which has gone out, is attained. In this case, the fuel for attachment is said to be the “five aggregates of attachment” and it is in this sense equivalent to name-and-form as the object of consciousness. Thus the process “craving → attachment → existence” may be compared to that of “consciousness → name-and-form → ... suffering,” which means that the relationship between craving and attachment will be one of interdependence, as in the case of consciousness and name-and-form. (This becomes clearer if trṣṇā is viewed as the act of clinging and upādāna as the object of that clinging.)
E. (10) Existence→(11) Birth→(12) Old Age and Death (grief, sorrow, suffering, dejection, and perturbation)

"Existence" here means transmigratory existence, which is the repeated cycle of "birth" (jāti, 生) and "old age and death" (jarā-maraṇa, 老死). Therefore, "existence" may be regarded as the foundation upon which the whole process of birth, old age and death evolves (see the diagram below). The phenomena of birth, old age and death may be inevitable; but if it should be the case that in the course of this impermanent mode of being we experience various sufferings such as grief (soka, P. soka, 懺), sorrow (parideva, 悲), suffering (duḥkha, P. dikkha, 苦), dejection (daurmanasya, P. domanassa, 舍) and perturbation (upāyāsa, 懺), it can be said that through old age and death grief and so forth arise, for even though birth, old age and death may perdure, once ignorance disappears, the great "aggregate (or mass) of suffering" (duḥkha-skandha, P. dikkha-kkhandha, 苦蘊) consisting of grief and so forth will also disappear. However, according to traditional understanding, birth, old age and death are equivalent to transmigratory existence, and entry into Nirvāṇa is regarded as entry into a world free of birth, old age and death, since transmigration and suffering are synonymous.

\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
\text{aggregate of} & \text{(grief, sorrow, suffering,} \\
\text{suffering} & \text{dejection, perturbation...)} \\
\text{birth} & \rightarrow \text{(old age} & \rightarrow \text{death)} \\
\text{existence} & \\
\end{array}
\]

Furthermore, in the traditional explanation, a remarkable interpretation is given at this point. Not only is the whole process of birth, old age and death regarded as referring to future existence (this is understandable), but "existence" is interpreted as "karmic existence" (karma-bhava, P. kamma-bhava, 業有) which causes future birth. In this case, craving
and attachment are held to correspond to “defilement,” existence to “karma,” and birth, old age and death to future “suffering,” thus repeating the series “defilement → karma → suffering.”

When the twelvefold chain of dependent co-arising is discussed in the Early Canon, it is never held to represent a causal nexus spanning the three ages of the past, present and future. However, in Abhidharma Buddhism, where it became axiomatic to regard one cycle of transmigration as consisting of the three phases of defilement, karma, and suffering, the twelvefold chain of dependent co-arising was regarded as representing a twofold causal relationship, with members (1) and (2) representing the past cause, members (3) to (10) the present result and cause of the future, and (11) and (12) the future result, and embryological stages of development were further posited in regard to the members relating to the present as well. This substantialistic way of thinking is especially characteristic of Sarvāstivādin thought, but it was eventually completely undermined by Mahāyāna Buddhism, although the doctrine of cognition-only, in contrast to the foregoing radically negative views of the school of emptiness represented by Nāgārjuna, reinstated the formula of the twelvefold chain of dependent co-arising while remaining in its basic premises firmly rooted in a theory of emptiness similar to that of Nāgārjuna. What is more, on the basis of the formula of dependent co-arising, the school of cognition-only posited the existence of a fundamental consciousness called the “store-consciousness” (ālaya-vijñāna) to which all the causes of transmigration were structurally traced. (This question will be dealt with later; see chap. 7.)

The original purpose of the formula of the twelvefold chain of dependent co-arising was not to explain the circumstances attendant upon the state of transmigration. Much less can the theory of a twofold causality spanning the three ages of the past, present and future be said to represent a correct
interpretation of Śākyamuni’s teaching. The prime concern of Śākyamuni had been to identify the root cause of the suffering experienced in the actual course of human life and, by eradicating the cause, to eliminate suffering. In other words, the formula of dependent co-arising must be considered above all within the framework of the teaching of the Four Noble Truths. This should be evident from the passage describing the twelvelfold chain of dependent co-arising quoted from the Early Canon in chapter 3. This means that, in conjunction with the observation of the process of how, starting with ignorance, the various phenomena represented by the members of the formula of dependent co-arising gradually arise through a process of mutual conditioning, eventually resulting in the suffering of birth, old age and death, it is also required that we observe how if ignorance disappears, (karmic) formative forces and so forth also disappear, thus gradually eliminating the members of the formula until finally the extinction of birth, old age and death is reached. These two directions are described respectively as the regular (anuloma) and reverse (pratiloma, P. paṭiloma) observation (順観, 逆観) of dependent co-arising, or the dependent co-arising of evolution (pravṛtti, 流轉) and devolution (nivṛtti, 遷滅). When the twelvelfold chain of dependent co-arising is observed in both of these directions, the law of causality relating to our mode of being is clearly revealed to us. And when it is realized that the cause of suffering derives from our ignorance of this law of causality, suffering no longer exists and neither does transmigration, for ignorance has disappeared.

Transmigration is often said to be without beginning and without end. This is certainly so as long as ignorance remains. But once ignorance has been transformed into knowledge, Nirvāṇa is realized. In this sense, transmigration is with end and, what is more, must be brought to an end.
This fact is reflected in the Pāli Canon and early translations contained in the Chinese Canon, where it is stated simply that "the beginning of transmigration is not known." The terminating of transmigration is both an injunction and the goal. How, then, is it possible to transform ignorance into knowledge and to reverse the direction of the course of transmigration so that it points towards devolution? For this, the practice of a long spiritual path is required. This represents the contents of the fourth of the Four Noble Truths, the Noble Truth of the Path, and with this we shall concern ourselves in the next chapter.
CHAPTER SIX

The Path to Enlightenment

Nirvāṇa and Enlightenment

It was earlier explained that the third of the Four Noble Truths, the truth of cessation, meant the cessation of suffering or the cessation of the origination of suffering, and that it was identical with Nirvāṇa. This term nirvāṇa (P. nibbāna, 涅槃) refers to that state of peace which accompanies tranquillity, as was reflected in the statements that “Nirvāṇa is tranquillity” and “cessation is happiness.” That this state is the ultimate goal or ideal state after which Buddhism aspires was the import of the third Noble Truth, the truth of the cessation of suffering. The Buddha Śākyamuni was in fact one who had attained such a state.

However, the appellation “Buddha” itself is not a term which directly denotes this state. Nirvāṇa may be said to be alluded to by the epithets such as tathāgata (thus-come/-gone one) and sugata (one who has reached happiness), implying the attainment of the ideal state, but even these are not directly related to the term nirvāṇa itself. The one exception is jīna (victor) which, meaning here one who has overcome suffering, exhibits an affinity in its connotations with the cessation of suffering or Nirvāṇa. All the other appellations of the Buddha either indicate, as in the term buddha (awakened one) itself, a state of intellectual perfection or, as with puruṣa-damya-sārathi (one who controls men
to be tamed) and śāstā deva-manusyanām (teacher of gods and men), hint at his role as spiritual guide or saviour. In other words, the aspects of wisdom and compassion are emphasized at the expense of allusion to the state of Nirvāṇa, which would appear to have been pushed into the background.

This state of affairs derives from the fact that Buddhism would seek its point of origin in the very fact of the Buddha’s enlightenment, as is indeed reflected in the designation “Buddhism” itself. The experience of enlightenment or bodhi (菩提) represents nothing other than the “Buddha’s essence” (buddhatva, 佛體) and is that which makes a Buddha what he is. It is therefore only to be expected that the attainment of enlightenment should have been regarded as the supreme goal of the Buddhist path of spiritual cultivation.

This being so, what then is the relationship between this enlightenment and Nirvāṇa, the latter which is defined as the cessation of suffering? When considered in the context of the life of Śākyamuni, bodhi corresponds to his attainment of enlightenment and nirvāṇa to his death. This would give the impression that Śākyamuni did not experience Nirvāṇa while alive. The identification of Nirvāṇa with Śākyamuni’s death is probably related to the fact that the word nirvāṇa signified death in the sense of the extinction of the flame of life. But on the other hand, the terms used to denote the ideal state also included the word “immortality” (amṛta, P. amata, 不死), and this was employed as a synonym of Nirvāṇa. On the occasion of his enlightenment, Śākyamuni declared that he had realized that he had overcome suffering, had been liberated from defilement, and would undergo no further rebirth, and he also stated that, although possessed of a physical body characterized by birth, old age, sickness and death, through having awoken to the misfortune attendant thereon, he had obtained Nirvāṇa, the unsurpassed state of peace free from old age, sickness and death. This state is.
known as “Nirvāṇa in the visible world (=present life)”
(dṛśta-dharma-nirvāṇa, P. diṭṭha-dhamma-nibbāna, 现法涅槃).
If this be the case, it would suggest then that Śākyamuni’s
initial goal had not been enlightenment but the state of
immortality or Nirvāṇa. Contemporary ascetics and other
religious practitioners were seeking liberation from the cycle
of transmigratory existence and were all groping for methods
to that end. Through proper observation, knowledge, and
realization of the truth of the human condition, transient and
without self, and by producing within himself a state of
mind free of any attachment to life, Śākyamuni succeeded in
achieving that goal. It was probably because Śākyamuni’s
distinctive characteristic was to be found in this method which
he had discovered that he came to be known in particular
by the name of “Buddha” in order to distinguish him from
other religious leaders. This being so, enlightenment must
be regarded as having been a means in relation to the attain-
ment of Nirvāṇa. But as the distinguishing feature of
Buddhism came to be sought in enlightenment, this latter
would have come to be considered the ultimate goal. In
particular, the emphasis placed on enlightenment would appear
to be due in large part to the universalization of enlighten-
ment in Mahāyāna Buddhism.

But it should be pointed out that the importance attached
to the fact of enlightenment, the act of knowing, is not a
characteristic over which Buddhism holds a monopoly. Already
in the Upaniṣads there is to be found a change in the tradi-
tional belief that by paying reverence to the gods one would
gain their blessings and betake oneself to the world of im-
mortality; instead it is taught that by knowing that Brahman,
the absolute being of cosmic proportions, and the individual
self (atman) are in essence one the individual self is united
with Brahman, entering “Brahman’s realm” (brahma-loka),
and it is asserted that this be equivalent to liberation and
the attainment of the world of immortality. In this case too, although the act of knowing is a means, it is virtually synonymous with the goal, since *knowing* is equivalent to *becoming* immortal. It would appear that as enlightenment came to be regarded as the goal in Buddhism, Buddhism too gradually drew closer to this Upaniṣadic way of thinking, eventually completely assimilating it (although with a difference of direction in the act of knowing: “no-self” as opposed to “self”).

Be that as it may, within the Buddhist schema *bodhi* became a term, alongside *nirvāṇa*, denoting the one and the same goal or ideal state to be attained. But on the other hand, “enlightenment” did preserve, under the guise of such terms as “knowledge” (*jñāna*, 智), “wisdom” (*prajñā*, 慧), and “the perfection of wisdom” (*prajñā-pāramitā*, 般若波羅蜜), its position as a means or, in terms of the Four Noble Truths, the characteristics associated with the Noble Truth of the Path. This may be restated by saying that it is the act of knowing which activates the causal relationship existing between the truths of the path and of cessation, just as ignorance is the cause of suffering, and this represents the basic pattern of Buddhist doctrine.

As an example of a terminological distinction made to distinguish *bodhi* and *nirvāṇa*, mention may be made of the fact that Śākyamuni’s death, called the “great and perfect decease” (*mahā-parinirvāṇa*), was further described as “Nirvāṇa without any remaining substratum” (*anupādi-śeṣa-nirvāṇa*, P. *anupādi-sesa-nibbāna*, 無餘涅槃), “substratum” (*upādi*) here signifying the physical support provided by the body, and this was contrasted with the prior “Nirvāṇa with remaining substratum” (*sapadhi-śeṣa-nirvāṇa*, P. *sa-upādi-sesa-nibbāna*, 有餘涅槃), referring to Śākyamuni’s state of being from after his enlightenment up until his death. Nirvāṇa was also held to be attainable by Śākyamuni’s disciples, and this quality was called the “single taste” (*eka-rasa*, 一味) or “equal taste” (*sama-rasa*, 等味) of liberation; the attainment of enlightenment, on the other hand, was considered to be restricted to the Buddha alone, and so it was also called “unsurpassed perfect en-
lightenment." Then again, Nirvāṇa is also equated with the elimination or abandonment of mental defilements and enlightenment with the acquisition of knowledge, and these two aspects of abandonment and knowledge are sometimes regarded as the two qualities which characterize a Buddha.

*Synonyms of bodhi and nirvāṇa:* Synonyms of *bodhi* or "enlightenment" include *sāksat-karana/-kriyā* (P. sacchi-kirīyā, 證, 現證: realization; literally, "the act of putting before the eyes"), *abhisaṃbodhi* (現等覺: complete enlightenment), *samābodhi* (正覺: perfect enlightenment), and *anuttara-samyak-sambodhi* (無上正等覺, also transliterated as 阿耨多羅三藐三菩提: unsurpassed perfect enlightenment). In Chinese, *bodhi*, usually transliterated as "p’u-ti" (菩提), is also translated as "awakening" (覺), "enlightenment" (悟), or "path" (道).

*Nirvāṇa* means literally "extinction" (滅), and synonyms include *nirūpa* (suppression, cessation), *nivṛtti* (P. vivaṭṭana, 遏滅: cessation), and *nirvṛti* (P. nibbuti, 滅絕: extinction, destruction of defilements). Further descriptive terms referring to Nirvāṇa include "destruction of defilements" (*ārava-kṣaya, P. āsava-khaya, 消盡), "freedom from passion" (virāga, 遠欲), "dissociation (from the fetters of mental defilements)" (*visamyoja, 離繫), "tranquillity" (*sāti, P. santi, 安靜), "coolness" (*śīti-bhāva, P. sīti-bhāva, 清涼), "auspiciousness" (*śiva, P. siva, 吉祥), "ease" (*kṣema, P. khema, 安靜), "immortality" (*amṛta, P. amata, 不死), "fearlessness" (*abhaya, 無畏), "permanent" (*nītya, P. nicca, 常住), "steadfast" (*ādhura, P. dhūva, 堅固), and "happiness" (*sukha, 安樂). Terms such as "place of immortality" (*amṛta-pada, P. amata-pada, 不死處), "foundation of calm" (*upasama-adhiśṭhāna, P. upasama-adhiśṭhāna, 慶靜處), "further shore" (*pāra, 彼岸), "unconditioned (state)" (*asaṃskṛta, P. asamkhata, 無為), "realm of no-defilement" (*anāsrava-dhātu, 無漏界), "freedom from (transmigratory) existence" (*vibhava, 離有), and "cessation through deliberate choice" (*pratisamkhya-niruddha, P. paṭiṣamkhā-nirodha, 擇滅) must also be mentioned. Then again there are also terms such as "difficult to see" (*āurdṛṣṭa, P. duddasa, 難見), "invisible" (*anidārśana, 無見), and "marvellous" (*advahita, P. abhutta, 希有) which suggest the difficulty of its attainment, and there is no end to similar terms to be found in Buddhist texts.

Lastly, "liberation" (解脫) is rendered by *mokṣa* (P. mokkha), *mukti* (P. mutti), *vimokṣa* (P. vimokkha), or *vimukti* (P. vimutti), all similar in meaning.
CHAPTER SIX

The Mahāyānist Conception of Nirvāṇa

Śākyamuni’s death was considered by his disciples to be the supremely ideal state, namely, “Nirvāṇa without any remaining substratum,” and it was not long before physical death came to be viewed as an essential condition for Nirvāṇa. This view was expressed as “reducing the body to ashes and annihilating the cognitive faculty” [灰身滅智]. Mahāyāna Buddhism, on the other hand, rather than seeking the world of Nirvāṇa or the “further shore” on other planes, advocated that through a transformation of the mind this very world of cyclic existence could become Nirvāṇa (“samsāra is no different from Nirvāṇa” [生死即涅槃], “mental defilements are no different from enlightenment” [煩惱即菩提]). In this view may be perceived an emphasis of the Buddha’s compassion directed towards the salvation of sentient beings. As will be explained later (chap. 8), the bodhisattva, the ideal being in Mahāyāna Buddhism, undertakes to perform acts of compassion on behalf of the Buddha, abiding in this world without leaving for the “further shore” of Nirvāṇa and devoting himself to the salvation of others for as long as there should still remain any sentient being to be saved. This mode of being of the bodhisattva is called “non-abiding Nirvāṇa” (apratiṣṭhita-nirvāṇa, 無住處涅槃), and it is described as a state in which on account of wisdom the bodhisattva does not abide in cyclic existence and on account of compassion he does not abide in Nirvāṇa.

The idea of becoming one with the truth has already been discussed in connection with the essential nature of the Buddha (chap. 2). This way of thinking gave birth to a view which identified enlightenment, the realized truth (Dharma), with the enlightened one (Buddha), and it was in this identification that the ultimate and absolute value was
sought. As a result, “enlightenment” and “Nirvāṇa” came to be regarded as synonyms of “the unconditioned,” “thusness,” “Dharma-realm,” “supreme truth,” “dependent co-arising” and “emptiness,” as well as of “Buddha,” “Tathāgata” and “Dharma-body.” Although theoretically none of these refers to a truly ontological entity, in the Mahāyāna scale of values their common referent came to be regarded as a real entity and was expressed as such in positive terms (for example in the Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra as “the Tathāgata is eternal and unchanging” [如來常住無有變易] and as the “four perfections” [四波羅蜜] of “permanence, bliss, self, and purity” [常樂我淨]. “Knowledge” as a means of attaining enlightenment, being considered an indispensable quality of enlightenment, was also identified with the “Buddha” and “enlightenment,” and there also arose a school of thought in which even the potential for enlightenment lying latent in unenlightened beings was referred to in anticipation of their future enlightenment as the “Tathāgata’s embryo (or matrix)” (tathāgata-garbha, 如來藏) or “Buddha-nature” (buddha-dhātu, 佛性) and regarded as coessential with thusness or the Dharma-body (see chap. 7). In this latter case, enlightenment and non-enlightenment were distinguished by such terms as “untainted thusness” (nirmāla tathāta, 無垢真如) and “tainted thusness” (samālā tathāta, 有垢真如), or “purity freed of taint” (vimāla-suddhi, 離垢清淨) and “innate purity” (prakṛti-pariśuddhi, 本性清淨). Similarly, the tathāgata-garbha was defined as the “Dharma-body in a state of defilement” (在纏位法身). Such monistically inclined speculation may be considered a general characteristic of Mahāyāna Buddhism, but it was particularly through the medium of the Hua-yen (Kegon) and Ch’an (Zen) schools that this way of thinking has become deeply rooted in Japan. But if as a result of such speculations it should be asserted that there be no difference between enlightenment and
non-enlightenment, thus rejecting any need for a path to enlightenment, this will result in a deviation from the true path of Buddhism. Indian Buddhism differs from the Buddhism of China and Japan in that it attaches great importance to the methodical practice of this path. This point too will be taken up in the following chapter.

*The Path to Enlightenment*

The fourth of the Four Noble Truths, the Noble Truth of the Path, corresponds in concrete terms to the Noble Eightfold Path, and it was characterized as the "middle way" which avoids the two extremes of pleasure and self-torture (see chap. 3).

It should not be necessary to explain that "path" (*mārga*) here signifies the course leading to the goal as well as the act of treading (*pratīpad*) that course. In the explanation of the Four Noble Truths it was stated that the path "must be cultivated." But in the case of ordinary beings such as ourselves treading this path requires effort. The original Sanskrit for "cultivation" in this sense is *bhāvanā*, meaning literally "causing to be." It refers to any form of training or exercise the aim of which is to discipline a person towards a particular goal, and this training must be repeatedly performed (*abhyāsa*, 串習) until it is fully mastered and becomes a habit.

Where does the path begin? In the case of Śākyamuni it began with his resolution to leave home and renounce the world. This was the same in the case of his disciples too insofar as they also left home to begin their training and made the decision to do so of their own accord, although in their case this was preceded by their initial encounter with Śākyamuni and his teaching (見佛聞法: seeing the Buddha
and hearing the Dharma). Their decision to renounce the world and undertake religious training may be said to have been born as a result of the trust they placed in Śākyamuni's personality and the faith they had in the truth of his words. According to the community regulations which were to be later established, the taking of refuge in the Three Treasures and a vow to observe the prescribed articles of the monastic code came to be regarded as an expression of the postulant's resolve and were considered requisite for admittance to the community. Observance of the precepts (śīla, 戒) meant the adoption of an appropriate life style, and this was regarded as a prerequisite to subsequent cultivated practice. In the case of Mahāyāna Buddhism, the goal of one's practice was clearly defined at the outset, and the "generation of the thought of enlightenment" (bodhicitta-utpāda, 發菩提心, 發心) was made the precondition for everything that was to follow. In addition, the motivation behind this generation of the thought of enlightenment was also clearly articulated in terms of a vow for the salvation of sentient beings. These features were all modelled upon the vows and protracted practices undertaken by Śākyamuni in his former lives, the idea being to re-experience these through emulation.

The cultivation of the path extends over a long period of time. If one aims at the attainment of the same enlightenment as that attained by Śākyamuni, practice spanning three incalculable aeons is required. Unrelenting efforts over a protracted span of time are what characterize the Buddhist path of cultivation. During this time the practitioner must listen to the teachings over and over again, repeatedly reflect upon them, and endeavour to master them through his practice.

The basis of the Buddhist methods of cultivated practice is meditation (dhyāna), which corresponds to what is known more generally in India as yoga. This feature too has its
origins in the method of practice adopted by Śākyamuni on the occasion of his own enlightenment. The middle way which avoids the two extremes of pleasure and self-torture referred in fact to the practice of meditation. It means neither giving oneself to worldly pleasures nor mortifying the body and coercing the mind, but rather devoting oneself to the stabilization and concentration of the mind and striving towards realization of the truth. And with the eventual realization of the truth there is experienced complete peace of mind and the cessation of suffering becomes a reality.

The above is a very brief outline of the course covered by the Buddhist path of spiritual cultivation. In Buddhist scriptures a great variety of practices, their stages, and their results are to be found expounded in truly elaborate detail. But they are all described for the most part along the lines sketched out above. Since we cannot afford to discuss all these methods of practice here, we shall take up for consideration only the more important ones, beginning with the Noble Eightfold Path.

The Noble Eightfold Path

The term "Noble Eightfold Path" (ārya-aṣṭāṅga-mārga, P. ariya-atṭhaṅgika-magga, 八聖道, 八正道) means a path embracing eight items which is to be walked by "noble" holy ones. "Noble" (ārya, P. ariya) may be regarded here as an honorific term referring to the members of the community consisting of Śākyamuni and his disciples (see chap. 8). The eight items comprising the path have already been mentioned in the passage from the Vinaya-piṭaka quoted in chapter 3; according to the commentarial literature, their contents are as follows:
(1) Right views (samyag-drṣṭi, P. sammā-diṭṭhi, 正見): contemplation of the Four Noble Truths.
(2) Right intentions (samyak-saṃkalpa, P. sammā-saṃkappa, 正思惟): desiring renunciation and being free of malice, hatred, and greed.
(3) Right speech (samyag-vāc, P. sammā-vācā, 正語): avoidance of mendacity, slander, harsh speech, and frivolous talk.
(4) Right conduct (samyak-karmānta, P. sammā-kammānta, 正業): avoidance of killing, theft, and unchastity.
(6) Right efforts (samyag-vyāyāma, P. sammā-vāyāma, 正精進): striving to abandon evil already arisen and to prevent the inception of such evil as has not yet arisen, and striving to produce future good and to increase such good as has already arisen (=“four right exertions”; see p. 187).
(7) Right mindfulness (samyak-smṛti, P. sammā-sati, 正念): contemplation of the body as impure, of the perceptions as unsatisfactory, of the mind as transient, and of all phenomena as without self (=“four fields of mindfulness”; see p. 187), whereby the “four errors” (catvāro viparyāśaḥ, P. cattāro vipariyēśa, 四顛倒) that the body be pure, life pleasurable, the mind unchanging, and the self existent are eliminated.
(8) Right concentration (samyak-samādhi, P. sammā-samādhi, 正定): the four initial stages of meditation (see pp. 182–83).

The order of arrangement of the above eight items may be accounted for in the following manner: first one comprehends the teaching of the Four Noble Truths (1), then one maintains correct mental, verbal and physical conduct (2)〜(4), and leading a well-regulated life (5) and always endeavouring to prevent evil and generate good (6), one directly observes and reflects upon the truth of the human
condition (7) and strives towards mental equipoise (8). Items (2) to (5) may be described as a correct life style, and this is enjoined upon the practitioner in the still more concrete form of "precepts." Items (6) to (8), on the other hand, correspond to the actual Buddhist methods of practice (the four right exertions, the four fields of mindfulness, and the four meditations), and may be summed up in the single term "meditation," for the various methods of contemplation are mastered during meditation. At the same time, since the contents of contemplation must conform with right views, the faculty of wisdom is necessary throughout. In Buddhism it is regarded as ideal for meditation and wisdom to function together in a state of balanced harmony (止觀雙運: the dual functioning of calm and insight; 定慧均等: the balance of concentration and wisdom).

According to the division of the stages in spiritual cultivation established in later times, the realization of the Four Noble Truths is regarded as the first stage in becoming a holy one, and this stage is called the "path of insight"; the subsequent stages are referred to as the "path of cultivation." When this division is applied to the Noble Eightfold Path, right intentions through to right concentration correspond to the path of cultivation, and their contents may be summed up as the three disciplines of morality, meditation, and wisdom. In this sense the Noble Eightfold Path is a path not for the ordinary person but for the already experienced practitioner. On the terms "path of insight" and "path of cultivation," see chapter 8.

The Three Disciplines: Morality, Meditation, and Wisdom

From the above it will be evident that the Noble Eightfold Path may be reduced to the observation of moral conduct, the practice of meditation, and the acquisition of wisdom. These three factors constitute the "three disciplines" (tisraḥ
śīkṣāḥ, P. tisso sikkhā, 三學) of morality, meditation, and wisdom. The term rendered here as "discipline," śīkṣā (P. sikkhā, 學), means literally "learning," but unlike the word "study" in the modern sense, it is equivalent in meaning to religious discipline or cultivation. The three disciplines are also frequently adopted as a schematic framework for the entire path of cultivated practice (an example being the Visuddhimagga [Path of Purification] by Buddhaghosa, an introduction to Theravāda Buddhism occupying a position similar to that of the Abhidharmakosa-bhasya in the Northern tradition, in which the discussion of religious cultivation is organized on the basis of the division into the three disciplines of morality, meditation, and wisdom). Accordingly we too shall now consider the subject of spiritual cultivation in a little more detail on the basis of this division into three disciplines.

(1) Morality (śīla)
As has already been noted, śīla (P. sila, 戒) denotes any habitual action or habits of conduct. These habits of conduct may be evaluated in either a positive or negative light, and unwholesome habits or a bad disposition are called duḥśīla (P. dussīla, 惡戒) or dauḥśīlya (P. dussīlya). But in the present context śīla refers of course to good habits (suśīla, P. susīla, 善戒) and denotes the various norms of action. What is more, these norms are not heteronomous norms imposed by others but must be acquired and observed of one's own accord. When renouncing the world to become a monk, or when taking refuge in the Three Treasures to become a lay follower, one resolves to observe a moral code of conduct whereby one abstains from evil and devotes oneself to the prosecution of good. In this sense morality is equivalent to a vow and is a matter of the mind. But the vow is manifested through actual deed, in other words through physical, verbal and mental activity.
In Buddhism, the code of morality considered to be most basic is that embodied in the “five precepts” (pañca-śīla, P. pañca-śīla, 五戒), consisting of abstention from the taking of life, from taking what is not given to one, from unchastity, from mendacity, and from the imbibing of intoxicants. In the case of ordained monks, these are known as the “five bases of discipline” (pañca śikṣā-padaṇī, P. pañca sikkhā-padaṇī, 五學處). Of these five precepts, abstention from mendacity relates to verbal activity and the other four to physical activity, but it must be assumed that the mind is always active in the background. For example, the injunction against the consumption of intoxicants is held to be not so much a prohibition of drinking itself, but rather to stem from a consideration of the intoxication and loss of self-control which result therefrom. Abstention from unchastity means maintaining a state of celibacy through “pure conduct” (brahma-cārya, P. brahma-cariya, 梵行), since marriage stimulates a person’s passions and turns his mind in a direction counter to that of Nirvāṇa. In the case of the laity, this precept is interpreted as a prohibition of adultery and becomes a matter of ethics (although it does of course also imply control of unbounded desires). The injunction against unchastity itself is a matter over and beyond ethics. On the other hand, the first two precepts may be said to represent universal norms of moral conduct, although in the case of the abstention from the taking of life, the infliction of injury not only on fellow humans but also on all animals is forbidden, probably owing in part to the influence of the concept of transmigration.

The above five precepts are said to have their origin in Jainism. The prohibition of the taking of life also exerted influence upon Brahminic thought, as a result of which the traditional sacrificial ceremonies were replaced by offerings of flowers and incense, and the extent of this influence was such that “non-killing” (ahimsā) has become a distinctive feature
of not only Hinduism but all Indian thought up until the present day. It might be added that in Jainism the fifth precept is non-possession, not abstention from the imbibing of intoxicants. Consequently, Jain ascetics are forbidden the possession not only of any material wealth but even of clothing, and therefore they view nakedness as their ideal. As regards clothing, Buddhism prescribes the use of three robes by monks and also sanctions the possession of a minimum of personal effects necessary in daily life. This attitude is rooted in the maxim of "desiring little and knowing contentment" (少欲知足).

The purpose of observing a code of moral conduct is the purification of the body and mind, thus facilitating religious practice. To this end there exist the very detailed regulations for the ordained, 250 for monks and 348 for nuns (these figures vary slightly according to the different traditions). But in the case of lay followers, taking refuge in the Three Treasures and observing the five precepts (together termed the "four varieties of indestructible faith" [catvāro 'vetya-prasādah, P. cattāro avecca-ppasāda, 四不壞淨]) are deemed quite sufficient, with the proviso that a determined and unswerving faith be maintained. As regards lay religious practice apart from the observance of the precepts, mention is made of "giving" (dāna, 布施: offerings to the Buddha and material gifts of food, etc., to the community), which is said to result in rebirth among the gods after death.

Mahāyāna Buddhism started as a lay movement. Consequently it placed giving and morality at the head of its moral code, as may be seen for example in the "six perfections" to be discussed below. The basis of its moral code is the "ten ways of good action" (dāsa kuśala-karma-pathāḥ, P. dasa kusala-kamma-pathā, 十善業道), also known simply as the "ten good (deeds)" (dāsa kuṣalāni, P. dasa kusalāni, 十善). They consist of (1) abstention from the taking of life,
(2) abstention from theft (literally, "from taking what is not given"), (3) abstention from adultery, (4) abstention from mendacity, (5) abstention from slander, (6) abstention from harsh speech, (7) abstention from frivolous talk, (8) abstention from covetousness, (9) abstention from malice, and (10) abstention from erroneous views. Of these, (1) to (3) relate to physical activity, (4) to (7) to verbal activity, and (8) to (10) to mental activity, and they may be regarded as corresponding for the most part to the right conduct, right speech, and right intentions of the Noble Eightfold Path. These ten ways of good action are held to represent the moral virtues of the ruler who would set an example to his subjects, but in effect they consist of the negation of ten unwholesome deeds to be guarded against (for example, (8) to (10) represent the negation of the three poisons of passion, hatred, and bewilderment) and are equivalent to precepts. In Mahāyāna Buddhism they are in fact known as the "ten precepts" (daśa-śīla, 十戒), and it is held that their observance is not to stop simply at the prevention of evil and the prosecution of good at a personal level, but that it should also incorporate the active pursuit of altruistic activities for the welfare of others (as, for example, in the perfection of morality as described in the "Chapter of the Ten Stages" of the Avatamsaka-sūtra). These were later reduced under the name of the "three (pure) precepts" (tri-vidhāni śīlāni, 三聚淨戒) to (1) morality as the avoidance of evil (saṃvara-śīla, 攝律儀戒), (2) morality as the accumulation of good (kuśala-dharma-samgrāhaka-śīla, 攝善法戒), and (3) morality as the rendering of service to sentient beings (śattva-artha-kriyā-śīla, 攝眾生戒) (cf. Bodhisattvabhūmi [菩薩地: Stage of the Bodhisattva] in the Yogācārabhūmi [瑜伽師地論: Stages of the Yoga-Practitioner]). Practice may be said to have been here embraced within the moral code.
THE PATH TO ENLIGHTENMENT

The Mahāyāna precepts prevalent in Japan have as their basis the three refuges, three pure precepts, ten major precepts (similar to the above ten precepts), and forty-eight minor precepts as elucidated in the Mahāyāna Brahmajāla-sūtra (梵網經; Sūtra of Brahmā’s Net; regarded by scholars as a spurious sūtra composed in China).

(2) **Meditation (samādhi)**

Samādhi (定, 等持, also transliterated as 三昧, 三摩地) signifies a state of mental concentration and equipoise. Similar terms include samāpatti (等至, also transliterated as 三摩鉢底: attainment) and samāhita (等引, also transliterated as 三摩呪他: composed), and as a term descriptive of this state there is “one-pointedness of mind” (citta-ekāgratā, P. citta-sā ekaggatā, 心一境性). Since the mental functions come to a halt in this state, it is also called “calm” (śamatha, P. samatha, 止, also transliterated as 舍摩他), and since meditation (dhyāna, P. jhāna, 禪) is the principal means for attaining this state, in Chinese the two terms dhyāna (禪) and samādhi (定) are frequently combined to form the compound ch’ān-ting (禪定). Chinese ch’ān (Jap. zen) is a transliteration of dhyāna (based on a form of the word close to the Pāli jhāna in which the final vowel had been dropped) and is translated as “quiet reflection” (靜慮). The contents of this reflection are the various tenets of Buddhism, and this aspect of meditation is also called “insight” (vipaśyāna, P. vipassanā, 觀, also transliterated as 昆鉢舍那). As will be explained below, insight is a function of wisdom, but since it is attained in a meditative state (dhyāna) or in a state concomitant with mental equipoise (samādhi or śamatha), vipaśyāna and śamatha are frequently mentioned as a pair. Ch’ān is also described as the cultivation of a “balance of concentration and wisdom” (定慧均等).

Both dhyāna and samādhi are to be found included in the “eight limbs” of traditional yoga. Yoga also means to harness the mind to a single point, and this term is some-
times used in Buddhism too. (For example, the school of thought which propounded the doctrine of “cognition-only” in Mahāyāna Buddhism is called Yogācāra, meaning literally “practitioner of yoga.” These “practitioners of yoga” [yogācāra, P. yoga-ācariya, 瑜伽師], also referred to as “meditators” [dhyānin, dhyāyin, P. jhāyin, 禪師], represented those within the community who devoted themselves to meditative practices, as opposed to the theoreticians or “preachers of the teaching” [dharma-bhāṇaka, P. dhamma-bhāṇaka, 法師].) To sum up, dhyāna, samādhi and yoga may all be considered to cover roughly the same range of meanings, although in Buddhism samādhi is used as the representative term: to this are added dhyāna, samāpatti, samāhiṭṭa, citta-ekāgrata, śamatha and dṛṣṭa-dharma-sukha-vihāra, which together constitute the “seven terms for meditation” (禪定七名). The last of these terms, dṛṣṭa-dharma-sukha-vihāra (P. diṭṭha-dhamma-sukha-vihāra, 現法禪住), means literally “abode of happiness in the visible world” and refers to that state of well-being attained as a result of mental equipoise. (At the risk of some inconsistency, we refer to both samādhi and dhyāna as “meditation,” unless the context should require a distinction to be made, in which case samādhi is rendered as “concentration.”).

Meditation must be practised in a regulated sequence of stages so that one gradually ascends to higher levels and attains an ever greater degree of mental equipoise. This gradation of stages is organized into “nine successive states of (meditative) attainment” (nava anupūrva-vihāra-samāpattayaḥ, P. nava anupūrna-vihāra-samāpattiyo, 九次第定) and the results gained thereby are graded throughout the three realms. The initial four stages are called the “four meditations” (cātuvāri dhyānāni, P. cattāri jhānāni, 四禪), held to correspond to the contents of “right concentration” in the Noble Eightfold Path, and it was this series of meditations that
Śākyamuni is said to have performed on the occasion of his enlightenment. The next four stages are the “four (meditative) attainments of non-form” (catur-ārūpya-samāpatti, P. catasso āruppa-samāpattiyo, 四無色定), and the final stage is the “attainment of cessation” (nirodha-samāpatti, 滅盡定). In this final “attainment of cessation” all functions of the mind come to a complete halt. But even this highest stage of meditation is not the same as enlightenment or Nirvāṇa. Meditation means in effect the control of the mind in everyday life. In Buddhist texts, the states of the mind are divided into those of a “composed mind” (samāhita-citta, 定心) and those of a “distracted mind” (vīksipta-citta, P. vikṣīhita-citta, 散心), the latter corresponding to our normal state of mind. With proficiency in meditation, it becomes possible to move with ease from a “distracted” state to a “composed” state and then back to a “distracted” state. When entering a meditative state, Śākyamuni would traverse the graded series of meditations, and then after having come out of meditation he would instruct his disciples. His disciples too received similar training.

As was noted above, the various devices undertaken during meditation are referred to as vipaśyanā or “insight,” but there is a great diversity in their contents. For example, in the Southern tradition the objects of meditation are called “karma-subjects” (kamma-ṭṭhāna, 業處) and number up to forty. In the Abhidhammakośa-bhāṣya and other works, on the other hand, the “mindfulness of offensive things” (aśubhāsmṛti, 不淨觀), “mindfulness of friendliness” (maitri-smṛti, 慈悲觀；＝the “four infinitudes” of friendliness, compassion, joy, and equanimity), “mindfulness of dependent co-arising” (idampratyayata-pratityasamutpāda-smṛti, 緣起觀, 因緣觀), “mindfulness of the division of the realms” (ādhātu-prabheda-smṛti, 界差別觀；discriminating the component elements of the body), and “mindfulness of breathing” (ānāpāna-smṛti,
數息觀，出入息觀) came to be known collectively as the “five contemplations for arresting (the afflictions of) the mind” (五停心觀). 5) Mahāyāna Buddhism gave birth to an even greater number of original forms of meditation, each of which was termed a samādhi (e.g., śūraṃgama-samādhi, 首楞嚴三昧: concentration of the heroic march). “Recollection of the Buddha” (buddha-anusmṛti, 念佛), which is today in Japan generally equated with the recitation of Amitābha’s name as performed in the Pure Land sects, was also originally one among the various forms of meditation (included in the ten “recollections” [anusmṛti, P. anussati, 随念] and forty “karma-subjects”). One method for “recollecting the Buddha” described in Mahāyāna scriptures was the meditation in which the Buddha Amitābha is visualized as appearing before the practitioner (pratyutpanna-buddha-sāṃmukha-avasthita-samādhi, 現在佛悉在前立定, also transliterated in abbreviated form as 殷舟三昧: meditation in which the Buddhas of the present stand before one). Zen and the Pure Land sects are generally imagined to be totally conflicting denominations, but originally “recollection of the Buddha” too was but one of the many forms of meditation.

*The Nine Successive States of Attainment:* As was noted above, the so-called four meditations, four attainments of non-form, and the attainment of cessation are known collectively as the “nine successive states of (meditative) attainment.” According to the scriptures, the contents of the first four meditations are as follows:

1. First meditation (prathama-dhyāna, P. pathama-jhāna, 初禪): the practitioner is detached from passion and other unwholesome states of mind, but “reflection” (vitarka, P. vitakka, 尋) and “investigation” (vicāra, 伺) remain, and in place of passion and other unwholesome states of mind “rapture” (prīti, P. pīti, 喜) and “happiness” (sukha, 楽) are present.
2. Second meditation (dvītiya-dhyāna, P. dutiya-jhāna, 第二禪): both reflection and investigation cease to function, and the inner heart becomes serene and the mind concentrated; in the absence of
reflection and investigation, rapture and happiness remain, born of mental equipoise.

(3) Third meditation (triya-dhyāna, P. tatiya-jhāna, 第三禪): with rapture abandoned, the practitioner abides in a mental state of “equanimity” (upekkhā, P. uppekkhā, 禪), mindful and attentive, and with the body he experiences the happiness of which it is said, “happy lives he who is equanimical and mindful.”

(4) Fourth meditation (caturtha-dhyāna, P. catuttha-jhāna, 第四禪): having already abandoned happiness and suffering and annihilated elation and dejection, the practitioner is free of both suffering and happiness and in a state in which mindfulness has been purified through equanimity. At this stage mental equipoise and the faculty of wisdom are said to be in a state of balance, thus making possible the attainment of enlightenment.

The four attainments of non-form are: (1) “station of unlimited space” (ākāśa-ānanta-āyatana, P. ākāsa-ānānta-āyatana, 空無邊處), in which one contemplates the infinitude of space; (2) “station of unlimited consciousness” (viññāna-ānanta-āyatana, P. viññāna-ānānta-āyatana, 識無邊處), in which one observes that the functions of the mind are as unbounded as is space; (3) “station of nothing whatsoever” (ākāśicchara-āyatana, P. ākāśicchāra-āyatana, 無所有處), in which one perceives no object whatsoever; and (4) “station of neither perception nor non-perception” (naiva-saṁjñā-nāsaṁjñā-āyatana, P. neva-saṁjñā-nectaṁjñā-āyatana, 非想非非想處), in which one contemplates neither that there is nor that there is not any thought observing thus.

The four meditations are free of passion and similar unwholesome states of mind but are accompanied by a sense of physical wellbeing, and are accordingly called “concentrations in (the realm of) form” (rūpa-avacara-samādhi, 色界定). The subsequent four attainments of the realm of non-form derive their name from the fact that the mind now functions freely, unfettered by the shackles of the body. With the final “attainment of cessation” the functions of the mind too are said to come to a complete halt. However, in Mahāyāna Buddhism it is held that even at this level the subconscious continues to function, and as long as the subconscious is functioning entry to Nirvāṇa is not deemed possible. On the other hand, it is also considered that concentration of the mind be possible even at a level not completely free of desire, and this is called “concentration in (the realm of) desire” (kāma-dhyāna, kāma-avacara-samādhi, 欲界定). As has already been pointed out in the section on trans-
migration (p. 135), the concept of the three realms has its origins in a division made to accord with the various stages of meditation.

(3) Wisdom (prajñā)

Prajñā (P. paññā, 慧, also transliterated as 般若 [from a form similar to the Pāli paññā]), meaning “wisdom,” is etymologically related to jñāna “knowledge” and may be considered to be of similar meaning, although in Buddhist doctrine the two are also sometimes distinguished. Both of these terms are used in the everyday sense of “knowledge” or “intelligence,” and sometimes they are also synonymous with “perception” (buddhi). But in the present context prajñā refers to the wisdom leading to enlightenment, or knowledge as a means towards the cessation of suffering, namely, Nirvāṇa. First one listens to the Buddha’s teaching, which one then accepts, reflects upon repeatedly until a correct understanding of it is gained, practises in accordance with it, deepening one’s understanding at the same time, and finally attains enlightenment. Thus “wisdom” functions from the outset of one’s practice right up until the attainment of enlightenment in accordance with the various intermediary stages, and this whole process constitutes the contents of the “discipline of wisdom.” Three varieties are distinguished in this wisdom leading up to enlightenment: “wisdom consisting of listening” (śrūta-mayī prajñā, P. suta-maya paññā, 聞慧), “wisdom consisting of thinking (cintā-mayī prajñā, P. cintā-maya paññā, 思慧), and “wisdom consisting of cultivation” (bhāvanā-mayī prajñā, P. bhāvanā-maya paññā, 修慧). The various subjects which are given as the contents of meditation may be said to correspond to this final “wisdom consisting of cultivation.” The realization of the Four Noble Truths, the observation of the twelve-fold chain of dependent co-arising, as well as the contemplation of emptiness and cognition-only in Mahāyāna Buddhism, represent on the one hand teachings and doctrines, and must
therefore be initially listened to and committed to memory; but since it is through the practice of meditation that they are fully mastered, they may also become the object of “wisdom consisting of cultivation.”

Generally speaking, “knowledge” signifies both the act of knowing and the contents of what is known, and the same may be said in the case of Buddhism too. The act of knowing has many aspects, including sensory perception, analytical cognition (judgement, discrimination), and intuitive knowledge. When wisdom is equated with the act of investigating the teaching (dharma-pravicaya, 柵法), it is close in meaning to theoretical or analytical understanding and corresponds to so-called “discriminative knowledge” (savikalpa-jñāna, 有分別智). In this case the Four Noble Truths, dependent co-arising, and axioms such as impermanence and no-self represent the contents of what is known. But when these same truths have been mastered through cultivated practice, discriminative thoughts such as “these are the Four Noble Truths” or “this is the twelfe-fold chain of dependent co-arising” disappear. This may be described as a state in which the act of knowing and that of being known are no longer distinguished, and this is called “non-discriminative knowledge” (nirvikalpa-jñāna, 無分別智). This is none other than the wisdom of enlightenment, existing on a plane transcending the world of everyday cognition, and represents “thusness” itself.

But even the Buddha, when he expounds the teaching to his disciples and others, abides in the normal world of discrimination. In other words, subjectivity or the function of knowing (jñāna, 能知) and objectivity or the known object (jñeya, 所知) are distinguished. But even so the Buddha is free of the doubts, delusions, ambiguity and imprecision such as mark the ordinary person, and of course he has no attachment towards the objects of cognition. Accordingly, since
this discriminative wisdom of the Buddha is attained after enlightenment on the basis of non-discriminative knowledge, it is called "knowledge obtained afterwards" (सत्त-प्रस्थ-लाब्धा-ज्ञान, 後得智); and since it is considered indispensable for the Buddha's salvational activities, it is also called "worldly knowledge obtained afterwards" (सत्त-प्रस्थ-लाब्धा-लाउकिका-ज्ञान, 後得世間智) and receives particular emphasis in Mahāyāna Buddhism.

As one aspect of the discriminative knowledge obtained by the Buddha, it has been customary to make mention of supernatural faculties, such as "divine eyes" which foresee the future and the ability to know former lives, although it is to be understood that these faculties are utilized only for the welfare of others. Among these supernatural faculties is included the faculty of destroying defilements, generally referred to as the "knowledge of the destruction of defilements" (आस्रव-क्षय-ज्ञान, 滅盡通, 滅盡智). Since the destruction of defilements is equivalent to liberation, this faculty represents awareness of one's own liberation and is synonymous with the "knowledge-and-vision of liberation" (विमुक्ति-ज्ञान-दार्शन, 解脫知見). Thus Śākyamuni is said to have become liberated through the three disciplines of morality, meditation, and wisdom and to be endowed with the knowledge-and-vision of liberation. Since these five stages—morality, meditation, wisdom, liberation, and the knowledge-and-vision of liberation—also represent the complete compass of Buddhist practice, and since the totality of the Buddhist teachings is embodied therein, they are called the "five aggregates of the Dharma" (पञ्च धर्म-संधार, 五法）。At the same time, the Buddha represents the Dharma-body in that he is coessential with this fivefold aggregation of the Dharma (see p. 65).

The Thirty-seven Factors of Enlightenment: The Early Canon mentions a variety of methods of practice other than those discussed above. These are all known as "factors of enlightenment" (बोधि-पक्ष, P. bodhi-pakkhiya, 菩提分, 道品) or "limbs of enlightenment" (बोध्य-आङ्ग, P. bōjjaṅga, 覺支), and they were later organized into a scheme of thirty-seven items, known collectively as the "thirty-seven factors of enlightenment" (साप्तत्रिंशध बोधि-पक्षिका धर्म, P. sattatiṃsa bodhi-pakkhiyā dhammā, 三十七菩提分法).
(1) The four fields of mindfulness (catvāri smṛty-upasthānāni, P. cattāro sati-paññā, 四念處): (i) the body as the field of mindfulness (kāya-smṛty-upasthāna, 身念處), in which the body is viewed as impure; (ii) perception as the field of mindfulness (vedanā-smṛty-upasthāna, 受念處), in which perceptions are viewed as unsatisfactory; (iii) the mind as the field of mindfulness (citta-smṛty-upasthāna, 心念處), in which the mind is viewed as impermanent; and (iv) phenomena as the field of mindfulness (dharma-smṛty-upasthāna, 法念處), whereby all phenomena are viewed as being without self. As a result, the four erroneous conceptions of purity, happiness, permanence, and self, which are the source of attachment, are successively eliminated. These four fields of mindfulness correspond to “right mindfulness” in the Noble Eightfold Path.

(2) The four right exertions (catvāri samyak-prahānāni, P. cattāro samma-ppadhānā, 四正勤, 四正斷): striving (i) to abandon evil already arisen and (ii) to prevent the inception of such evil as has not yet arisen, and striving (iii) to produce future good and (iv) to increase such good as has already arisen. These correspond to “right efforts” in the Noble Eightfold Path.

(3) The four bases of supernatural power (catvāra rajñi-pādā, P. cattāro iddhi-pādā, 四神足, 四如意足): the four conditions necessary for gaining proficiency in meditation, namely, (i) “desire” (chanda, 欲), (ii) “energy” (vīrya, P. vīrya, 動), (iii) a composed “mind” (citta, 心), and (iv) “examination” (mīmāṃsā, P. vimāṇsā, 視) based on correct knowledge, all directed towards the mastery of meditation.

(4) The five faculties (pañca indriyāni, P. pañc' indriyāni, 五根) and (5) the five powers (pañca balāni, 五力): the five faculties and the five powers exercised by these faculties, indispensable for the attainment of enlightenment, namely, (i) “faith” (śraddhā, P. saddhā, 信), (ii) “energy” (vīrya), (iii) “mindfulness” (smṛti, P. sati, 念), (iv) “concentration” (samādhi), and (v) “wisdom” (prajñā). These five factors encompass all the stages of practice. Faith will be discussed below, but it means in concrete terms taking refuge in the Three Treasures and believing the law of cause and effect.

(6) The seven limbs of enlightenment (sapta bodhya-aṅgāni, P. satta bojjhāṅgā, 七覺支): the seven stages in the functioning of wisdom, namely, (i) “mindfulness” (smṛti), by which the teaching is committed to memory; (ii) “investigation of the teaching” (dharma-pravicaya, P. dhamma-vicaya, 探法), whereby the teach-
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ing committed to memory is comprehended; (iii) "energy" (vīrya), whereby one strives towards mastery of the teaching; (iv) "rapture" (pīti, P. piti, 喜), which arises in the mind as a result of the efforts made; (v) "serenity" (praśādhi, P. passaddhi, 輕安), a state of mental and physical repose resulting from rapture, (vi) "concentration" (samādhi), resulting from mental and physical repose; and (vii) "equanimity" (upekkṣā, P. upakkha, 懇), which transcends happiness and suffering, elation and dejection.

(7) The Noble Eightfold Path (as above).

Faith and Practice

Faith in the Buddhist context means first and foremost taking refuge in the Three Treasures, but it may be further reduced to trust in the Buddha's words. This further implies faith in the Buddha, but in the early stages of Buddhism this would not appear to have been stressed as a particularly important virtue. It was mentioned only as the first of the "five faculties" and "five powers," and was regarded as the starting point of practice. This being so, faith may be considered not so much a form of practice itself, but rather a state of receptive readiness requisite for actual practice, and it is said to consist of three stages, namely, opening the mind up to listen to the teaching (abhisampratya[現]忍許: complete reliance), as a result of which the mind becomes clear and calm (citta-prasāda, 心澄淨: purity of mind), and arousing the aspiration to attain enlightenment (abhilāsa, 欲: desire).

When thus considered as a precondition of practice, faith becomes in effect something different from practice itself. This is evident also in the fact that in the case of lay followers all that was required of them was the "four varieties of indestructible faith," consisting of taking refuge in the Three Treasures and observance of the five precepts, without any additional forms of practice being demanded of them.

In other words, renunciant practitioners were required to fulfill the conditions of both faith and practice, moving on
to practice from the precondition of faith and aiming at the attainment of liberation, enlightenment, and Nirvāṇa, whereas for the lay followers there was faith only and no practice, and therefore no hope of attaining liberation and Nirvāṇa. Instead, it was taught that if they gave alms and observed the precepts, they would be rewarded with rebirth among the gods after death (dānakathā, sīlakathā, sagga-kathā: the teaching of giving, the teaching of morality, and the teaching of heaven). This implies that the paths of faith and practice are essentially different.

On the other hand, there also existed the view that paths differ in accordance with the capacity and predisposition of the individual practitioners, of whom two types, “those who proceed according to faith” (śraddhā-anusārin, P. saddhāanusārin, 隨信行) and “those who proceed according to the teaching” (dharma-anusārin, P. dhamma-anusārin, 隨法行), were distinguished. The former refers to those who listen to the teaching and believe in it implicitly, the latter to those who make it the object of careful examination. Accordingly, this distinction may be described as a contrast between those inclined towards faith and those inclined towards theory, or between faith and knowledge. Then there is also the contrast between meditation and wisdom, and this results in three paths leading to liberation: liberation through faith (śraddhāvimukti, P. saddhā-vimutti, 信解脫), liberation through the mind (ceto-vimukti, P. ceto-vimutti, 心解脫; i.e., liberation through meditation), and liberation through wisdom (prajñāvimukti, P. paññā-vimutti, 慧解脫). In this case, liberation through the mind may be considered to refer to the liberation attained by those who incline towards practice (in the narrow sense of the word). But the most recommended form of liberation is that of one “liberated in both ways” (ubhayato-bhāga-vimukta, P. ubhato-bhāga-vimutta, 俱分解脫), namely, one who has mastered both meditation and wisdom.
Thus it would appear that faith itself is not given any particular prominence.

This attitude towards faith is due to the fact that Buddhism was initially aimed primarily at renunciant practitioners and that the practices in particular which it taught were considered to be only for the renunciants. By way of contrast, Mahāyāna Buddhism generally tends to emphasize faith. (For example, in the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* it is stated that “faith is the source of the path and the mother of merit” [信為道元功德母],\(^6\) and the *Mahāprajñāpāramitopadesa* proclaims that “the great ocean of the Buddhist teaching is entered through faith” [佛法大海信能入].\(^7\)) This tendency would seem to derive from the fact that Mahāyāna Buddhism originally arose as a movement among the laity and was expounded so as to fulfill the demands of this laity. *Mahāyāna* means “Great Vehicle,” and it opened up the Buddha’s experience of enlightenment to all people, instructing them all, regardless of whether they be members of the laity or of the monastic community, to arouse the aspiration to attain the unsurpassed perfect enlightenment identical with that of the Buddha (viz., generation of the thought of enlightenment) and to devote themselves to their practice always with that goal in mind. In other words, Mahāyāna Buddhism demands that one become a “bodhisattva,” similar to Śākyamuni prior to his own enlightenment. What is more, this is held to accord with the wishes of the Buddhas, these wishes being in turn based upon their vows and representing a manifestation of their compassion. Such a sentiment of absolute trust in the compassion of the Buddha constitutes the prototype of faith in Mahāyāna Buddhism and represents an expression of absolute and almost unconditional surrender, similar to “devotion” (*bhakti*) in Hinduism. Whereas the basis of faith in Early Buddhism and the Abhidharma is said to lie in a belief in the words of the Buddha and a trust in his teaching, in the case
of Mahāyāna Buddhism faith is rooted in an absolute trust in the personality of the Buddha. A prominent example of this type of faith is provided by the Pure Land scriptures, such as the *Smaller Sukhāvattvavāyuḥa*, and the Buddha Amitābha who appears in these scriptures has won the faith of many people up until the present day as a representative of the Buddha become the object of such faith. But faith in the Buddha was expounded in all the early Mahāyāna sūtras to a greater or lesser degree. Yet although the Buddha is thus elevated to absolute heights, at the same time Mahāyāna Buddhism is also characterized by a wish to emulate the Buddha, to tread the same path, and to attain the same spiritual heights, even if it means calling on his assistance (*adhiṣṭhāna*, 加持). In doing so, not only are all former practices directed towards this goal (*parināmanā*, 回向, 延向: transfer-ence), but, as in the case of the Buddha himself, the merit accruing from these practices is also to be committed to the salvation of other sentient beings. This implies in other words the practice of altruistic activities for the welfare of others. It was for such reasons that the teachings of the Early Canon and Abhidharma, centred on the requirements of the renunciant practitioner, were denounced as the “Inferior Vehicle” (Hinayāna) since it was considered that they aspired only to the practitioner’s personal liberation and attainment of sainthood.

*Practices for the Welfare of Others*

Even though disparaged as the “Inferior Vehicle,” the teachings of the Early Canon and Abhidharma were not completely devoid of references to altruistic practices for the welfare of others. Representative of such practices are the “four infinitudes” and the “four means of conversion.”
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The “four infinitudes” (catvāry apramāṇāni, P. catasso appamahiṇāyo, 四無量 [心]) consist of friendliness or benevolence (maitrī, P. mettā, 慈), compassion (karuṇā, 悲), sympathetic joy (muditā, 喜), and equanimity (upekṣā, P. upekkhā, 捨). “Friendliness” means providing others with comfort, “compassion” means eliminating the suffering of others, “sympathetic joy” means rejoicing in the happiness of others, and “equanimity” refers to a collected state of mind beyond elation and dejection, suffering and happiness. These altruistic states of mind must be cultivated through meditation, and they are said to result not only in “infinite” benefits for sentient beings but also in rebirth in the world of Brahmā for the practitioner himself (consequently these four infinitudes are also known as the “four Brahmic [or excellent] abodes” [catvāro brahma-vihārāḥ, P. cattāro brahma-vihārā, 四梵住]).

The “four means of conversion” (catvāri samgraha-vastūni, P. cattāri saṃgaha-vatthūni, 四攝事) represent four meritorious activities for the conversion and salvation of sentient beings. They consist of the following four items:

1. Giving (dāna, 布施): dealing with others in a friendly manner and being liberal in the bestowal of gifts such as material goods and the teaching.
2. Kindly speech (priya-vādītā, P. piya-vācā, 愛語): always taking care to address people with a pleasant countenance and gentle words.
4. Cooperation (samāna-arthatā, P. samāna-attatā, 同事): making no distinction between self and others, and cooperating with others as if of one mind and one body.

However, it is in Mahāyāna Buddhism that such altruistic
activities for the welfare of others are expounded with particular emphasis.

The Practices of the Bodhisattva: The Six Perfections

It was the "six perfections" (सत्त प्रारमिताः, 六波羅蜜) on which Mahāyāna Buddhism, with its guiding principle of promoting the welfare of others, based its teaching.

Pāramitā (波羅蜜) means literally any supreme (पराम) state, and it refers here to the perfected state of the various virtues. Representative of the six perfections is the perfection of wisdom (प्रज्ञा-परामिता, 般若波羅蜜), signifying enlightenment or the wisdom which functions upon the attainment of unsurpassed perfect enlightenment, and designated as the "perfection of wisdom" in order to distinguish it from other forms of wisdom. (The Mahāyāna body of scriptures entitled the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra [般若波羅蜜經: Sūtra of the Perfection of Wisdom] is, as the name suggests, a corpus of texts expounding the wisdom which results in the enlightenment of a Buddha, and it holds that by means of this wisdom mastery of the Mahāyāna doctrine of emptiness be possible.) The term pāramitā was attached to the other virtues of the Buddha too since the virtues of giving and so forth as practised by the Buddha, who has already mastered the perfection of wisdom, are also considered to be in a state of perfection. Giving, morality, forbearance, energy, meditation, and wisdom are given as the six perfections because it is considered that the myriad practices performed for the sake of the salvation of sentient beings by Śākyamuni in his former lives when he was still a bodhisattva could be subsumed into these six practices.

However, these "perfections," representing as they do the practices requisite for the attainment of the enlightenment of
a Buddha, further took on the meaning of “perfect practices” whereby it is possible to attain enlightenment or the ideal state. And on the assumption that this meaning be reflected in the word pāramitā itself, there arose the etymological interpretation which gave birth to the Chinese translations of the term such as “arrival at the further shore” (到彼岸) and “crossing” (度). According to this interpretation, pāramitā is a derivative of para, meaning “other” or “far,” and the term as a whole is analysed to mean “gone (ita) to the further shore (pāram).” This is little more than an example of so-called folk-etymology, but doctrinally speaking it is of deep significance, for it suggests that through the power of these virtues it is possible to escape from this world, cross the sea of transmigratory existence, and arrive at the further shore of the ideal state of being. What is more, this action of crossing is not for one’s own sake (i.e., the practitioner himself does not cross over) but is directed at having other sentient beings cross over, and it even came to be asserted that the bodhisattva be one who towards that end fulfills a role similar to that of a boatman who steers a ferry across a river.

The first of the six perfections is giving. This reflects the traditional pattern of practice whereby the lay follower was ensured rebirth among the gods through the virtues of giving and morality. In addition, the observation of the precepts on the basis of which one energetically devotes oneself to practice and eventually attains mastery of meditation and wisdom represents the pattern of the path of cultivation for the renunciant practitioner. Therefore, it is probable that the arrangement of the six perfections, as in the case of the three disciplines, was considered to reflect a gradation of stages, starting from the elementary and leading up to the ultimate.

“Giving” (dāna, 布施) may be regarded as equivalent to any activity for the welfare of others: in the case of the
laity it corresponds to gifts of material goods (*āmiśa-śāna*, 財施), whereas in the case of the renunciant monk the gift of teaching (*dharma-śāna*, 法施) is emphasized, and this latter is also demanded of the bodhisattva in his role as leader of the laity. In addition, the bodhisattva is also required to bestow “fearlessness” (*abhaya*, 無畏) upon sentient beings. (In the “Chapter of the Universal Gate” of the *Lotus Sūtra* the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara is described as “he who bestows fearlessness” [*abhaya-śāna*, 施無畏者].)⑨

“Morality” (*śīla*, 持戒), the second of the six perfections, has as its basis the three refuges and the ten precepts traditionally enjoined upon the laity, but it is also considered to incorporate under the name of the “three pure precepts” morality in the sense of rendering service to sentient beings, representing as it were a vow to undertake altruistic activities for the welfare of others.

The third perfection, “forbearance” (*kṣānti*, 忍辱), represents a spirit of patience or endurance and implies perseverance in the face of adversity. A typical example of the virtue of forbearance is provided by the monk Kṣāntivādin (忍辱仙人) who figures as the protagonist in one of the tales relating to Śākyamuni’s former lives. As a result of the capricious orders of a cruel king, Kṣāntivādin lost his hands and feet and eventually his life, but his forbearance throughout his ordeals is said to have provided the condition for his future enlightenment. The doctrinal interpretation of *kṣānti* would have it to mean the acknowledgement and acceptance of the Buddhist teachings as truth, and in particular the “acceptance of the non-arising of phenomena” (*anuttātikadharma-kṣānti*, 無生法忍) is regarded as that form of the perfection of forbearance demanded of bodhisattvas.

The next perfection, “energy” (*vīrya*, 精進), represents effort and exertion in the sense of actively pursuing good and terminating evil. In actual practice it corresponds to an at-
titude of unflagging effort in regard to all the other five perfections.

The fifth perfection, "meditation" (dhyāna, 謝定), is also strongly coloured by the characteristics of Mahāyāna Buddhism, and its fundament is the "three gates to liberation" (trīṇī vimokṣa-mukhāni, 三解脫門), consisting of "emptiness" (śūnyatā, 空), "signlessness" (anīmitta, 無相), and "purposelessness" (apraṇihita, 無願). These are three forms of meditation in which all phenomena are observed to be empty, without any distinguishing characteristics, and not to be made the objects of desire, and these three meditations are regarded as the gates to liberation.

On the basis of the above five perfections, the sixth perfection of "wisdom" (prajñā, 般若) is cultivated. The five foregoing perfections and this perfection of wisdom are referred to respectively as the "stock of merit" (punya-saṃbhāra, 福資糧) and the "stock of knowledge" (jñāna-saṃbhāra, 智資糧), and they are held to be the two kinds of stock necessary for the attainment of enlightenment or which nourish it as it were. As was noted above, the perfection of wisdom represents enlightenment in the Mahāyānist context, and since union with the truth or "thusness" is attained thereby, it encompasses all the doctrines expounded by Mahāyāna Buddhism. These in turn may, in the words of the Heart Sūtra, be all summed up in the observation that "the five aggregates are empty in their own-nature."

Insofar as the above six perfections are undertaken by the bodhisattva so that other sentient beings may obtain them too, the six perfections are altruistic activities for the welfare of others. But since they have as their aim the eventual enlightenment of the practitioner himself, they in themselves lead to the perfection of self-benefit. However, it would be reasonable to assume that in the case of a Buddha there exist also after enlightenment altruistic activities undertaken for
the weal of other beings. Once one has arrived at the further shore with the assistance of the bodhisattvas, one’s enlightenment should immediately manifest itself in the form of altruistic activities for the welfare of others, and this applies to each and every sentient being. It was on the basis of the view that this point should receive emphasis that in the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra* the contents of the perfection of wisdom were further elaborated and the following four items appended after the perfection of wisdom, resulting in a total of “ten perfections” (*daśa pāramitāḥ*, 十波羅蜜).

(7) “Means” (*upāya*, 方便): expedient means for the salvation of others, grounded in compassion.

(8) “Vow” (*pranidhāna*, 願): the vow to save sentient beings.

(9) “Strength” (*bala*, ㄆ): the capacity to accomplish the salvation of other sentient beings, represented by the “ten powers” of the Buddha.

(10) “Knowledge” (*jñāna*, 智): the knowledge lying at the basis of the above powers, fully cognizant of all matters relating to the world and sentient beings.

Whereas the sixth perfection of wisdom corresponds to fundamental non-discriminative knowledge, this last perfection of knowledge is equated with the knowledge of worldly matters obtained after enlightenment. According to the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra* (“Chapter of the Ten Stages”), as the bodhisattva progresses in his practice, he perfects each of these ten perfections in ten successive stages (*daśa-bhūmi*, 十地; see pp. 234–36). It might also be noted that the Theravāda school has its own tradition of ten perfections, the contents of which differ from the above Mahāyāna version.
CHAPTER SEVEN

Mind: The Agency of Practice

No-self and Subjective Agency

The ideas on practice as outlined in the previous chapter represent the core and the essence of Buddhism, all of which has been summed up in the "Admonitory Verse of the Seven Buddhas (of the Past)" (七佛通誨偈) as follows: ¹)

Refraining from what is evil, undertaking what is good, And keeping one's mind pure: this is the teaching of the Buddhas.

(sabba-pañca' akaraṇām kusalass' upasampadā /
 sacitta-pariyodapanām etam bhūdāna sāsanām // [P.]
 sarva-pāpasīkaraṇām kuśalasyopasampadā /
 svacitta-pariyavadānam etad buddhānuśāsanam // [Skt.]
諸惡莫作 衆善奉行 自淨其意 是諸佛教)

Here, as has already been explained, it is taught that observing a moral code of conduct, one should refrain from evil deeds, perform good, and purify the mind through the cultivation of meditation and wisdom. Since the purification of the mind eventually leads to the cessation of suffering, the very act of purifying the mind may in itself be considered the aim of the cultivation of the Buddhist path. But when it is stated that one is to "keep one's mind pure," who or what actually is that "one" whose mind is to be kept pure
and what is the "mind" that is to be purified?

It should not be necessary to point out that when considered at an ordinary, commonsense level, the "one" (or "self") here referred to is the "self" as the subjective agency of cultivated practice or the individual practitioner. This corresponds to the usage of the word "self" and its synonyms as evidenced for example when Śākyamuni said that he had "realized (the Dharma) by himself through (personal) experience" (sayam abhiññāya sacchikavā, 自知作證) without any teacher, and in the injunction that the Dharma is "to be personally realized" (pratyātma-vedaniya, P. paccattam veditabbo, 自內證). It also represents the self to be relied upon, alluded to in Śākyamuni's final teachings before he died, when he said, "Be a refuge unto yourselves and make a refuge of the Dharma (taught by the Buddha)." These examples are important in that they demonstrate that in the sphere of actual practice Buddhism attaches considerable importance to the subjective element in the individual practitioner.

On the other hand, however, Buddhism also propounds the thesis of "no-self." As has already been explained, "no-self" means that what we imagine to be the self is in fact without any substantial reality whatsoever. It was also noted that the cause of suffering lies in the fact that although there is in fact no "self," we believe it to exist and become attached to it. Theoretically speaking, this thesis of no-self and the above emphasis of subjective agency are clearly contradictory.

But when we say that we believe the "self" to exist and become attached to it, even though it does not exist, what or who is it that actually does believe this and become attached to it? It is none other than oneself, the same self as the subjective agency which is pursuing practices directed towards enlightenment. From the standpoint of the thesis of no-self, both the thought that "I believe" and the thought
that "I have become enlightened" are probably mistaken. Upon the attainment of enlightenment such habits of thinking must be renounced and most probably will be renounced. But the self which does the renouncing remains and an enlightened Buddha is at hand. Then again, even if enlightenment be defined as the union of the self with the Dharma, a total merging into the Dharma, there still remains the self which has become one with the Dharma (this self is referred to as "Buddha" or "Tathāgata"). No matter how far one may pursue this question via the medium of language, it is unlikely that any conclusive answers will ever be found.

This theoretical weakness inherent in the thesis of no-self also becomes apparent in discussions of karma and transmigration. If it is asserted that there is no "self," what is it then that, burdened down by karma, takes rebirth in another life? (As is illustrated in the maxim that "one receives oneself [the retribution for] one's own deeds" [自業自得], it is explicitly taught that one reaps the fruits of one's own actions.) This proved to be the most vexing problem to be encountered when it was attempted to explain in a consistent manner the Buddhist doctrinal framework on a theoretical level.

Mind (citta, manas, and viññāna)

An answer to this problem in somewhat general terms was found in the identification of the entity regarded as the self with the "mind." For example, in a passage already quoted earlier (p. 142) it was stated that

"When the mind is soiled, O Monks, sentient beings are soiled; when the mind is purified, sentient beings are (also) purified."
The phrase "keeping one's mind pure" cited above has something in common with this notion. In this case too there is of course the question of what is meant by "sentient beings," but putting this matter aside for the time being, it may be said that Buddhism has, on the assumption that both delusion and enlightenment be dependent upon the mind, always made the mode of being of the mind a subject of prime concern. Even though the self or sentient beings may not be truly existent entities, there is no gainsaying the presence of the mind which may be immersed in delusion or become enlightened. It is the mind which constitutes the subjective agency of practice: to purify the mind means that the mind becomes purified, and the purification of the mind is equivalent to the purification of oneself. In other words, "mind" in the phrase "keeping one's mind pure" is not so much the object of the act of purification but rather the subjective agency of practice standing in apposition with the understood subject "one(-self)." And this mind is synonymous with the term "sentient being." The Buddhist emphasis of the mind is also evident in the fact that within the classification of human activities into physical, verbal and mental categories, mental actions are held to lie at the root of physical and verbal actions. (Giving a slight twist to the famous words of Descartes, one might say, "I think, therefore thought [=mind] is.")

But even the concept of "mind" is at variance with the thesis of no-self. As was explained in an earlier chapter (chap. 3), in order to clarify the idea of "no-self," it had been stated that neither "form," "perception," "conception," "volition" nor "consciousness" constitutes the self. It is only owing to various conditions that these five aggregates happen to come together and form the individual entity which we call our present "self." Of the five aggregates, "form" referred to the physical body and the various bodily organs,
and the other four aggregates corresponded to the mind and its functions. In other words, what we call the “mind” is here reduced to the mental functions and mental phenomena denoted by the terms perception, conception, volition and consciousness, all of which are impermanent and none of which is able to act freely and of its own accord. This means that there does not after all exist any substantive entity “mind” in independence of the various mental functions.

However, it is a fact that normally we say that there is a “mind,” and even in Buddhism this is usually the case. (For example, whereas plants and stones are termed “inanimate [or non-sentient] beings” [無情; literally, “without feelings, i.e., mind”], animals are “animate [or sentient] beings” [有情; literally, “having feelings, i.e., mind”].) What is more, although included among the mental functions, “consciousness,” the last of the five aggregates, came to be attributed especially important functions, with the other three mental functions relegated to a subordinate position. In other words, consciousness (vijñāna, 識) was identified with “mind” (citta, 心). In addition, another term for mind, manas (意), which we have until now not distinguished from citta and which originally signified one of the sense-organs (although not material), standing on a par with the eyes, ears, nose, etc., was now also identified with citta on the premise that there exist nothing going by the name of “mind” apart from this faculty of manas. Thus it was gradually confirmed on a doctrinal level that citta, manas and vijñāna all be identical, and it came to be considered that what was referred to in the scriptures by these terms corresponded to the subjective agency of practice: not only was it that which, accompanied by the various mental defilements, gave rise to karma by the retributive results of which it was then encumbered, but it was also that which, once having listened to the teaching, observed its instructions, and gradually abandoned defilements
and developed wholesome mental functions and the faculty of wisdom, would eventually be liberated from karma and transmigration and attain Nirvāṇa. A manifestation of this viewpoint is to be found in the positing of “mind” (citta) as one of the “five categories” in the Sarvāstivādin classification of the constituent elements of existence (see p. 115). The aggregates of perception, conception and volition (or formative forces) were defined as mental attributes belonging to the aggregate of “consciousness,” now termed “mind,” and always functioning together with it, just like retainers in attendance upon their lord. (In Chinese, the category of “mind” was termed “mind-king” [心王].) According to the definitions of the Abhidharma, “meditation/concentration” and “wisdom/knowledge” too were nothing other than such attributes of the mind. When the mind is in a state of equipoise and the faculty of wisdom has reached the limits of intensity, enlightenment is experienced in the mind and one knows that one has been liberated.

When stated in such terms, it may sound as if the mind continues to exist indefinitely. But even though the mind may be regarded as the subjective agency of practice, in the doctrines of the Abhidharma, with “no-self” as their basic thesis, it was not at all possible to recognize any such perduring entity. Just like the other conditioned elements, the mind too is produced as the result of various conditions and is constantly repeating a cycle of becoming and decay. However, we are born into this world (taking the form of “consciousness” at the moment of conception) as the result of the accumulation of particular forms of karma. Repeating a constant cycle of becoming and decay (ksaṇa-bhaṅga,刹那滅: momentaneous destruction), we continue to exist in this world as the one and the same individual for a certain duration of time (until the power of our karma is exhausted, or until the power of our new karma generated after birth has fulfilled
certain conditions) and eventually die. What is normally regarded as an individual entity existing from birth until death is called in Abhidharma doctrine “the continuance of mind” (citta-santāna, 心相續). In other words, what is generally referred to as the “self” is held to be nothing but the continuance under certain conditions of the constantly changing mind (or stream of consciousness). Among these conditions, particular importance is attached to those such as “life-force” (jīvita-indriya, 命根) and “warmth” (uṣṇata, 熱). These hold together the body composed of the four elements (earth, water, fire and wind) and are regarded as the foundation upon which the mind functions. This way of thinking may be somewhat easier to comprehend if compared with the knowledge provided by modern physiology, which recognizes the continued existence of an identical individual even though the cells of the body are subject to constant metabolism.

Although the concept of the “continuance of mind” was in principle faithfully adopted by Mahāyāna Buddhism, it was further elaborated and a more detailed theory was developed. This was the doctrine of “cognition-only” of the Yogācāra school.

*Momentaneous Decay and the Continuance of Mind*: “Momentaneous destruction” (kṣanabhaṅga) means the denial of any continued existence for even a single moment (kṣaṇa), and in the philosophy of the Abhidharma “impermanence” was explained on the basis of this theory. At the same time, the constantly decaying elements were considered to invariably exert some sort of influence upon the following moment, and this was held to be “karma.” It was, in other words, a latent force: a residual force (vāsanā, 習氣) insofar as it remains after having perished, and a formative force (sāṅskāra, 行) insofar as it gives rise to the following mode of activity. In the case of the mind, the mind of the immediately preceding moment is held to constitute the condition for generating the mind of the following moment (it represents an “immediate condition”; see p. 125). In this serial relationship, the mind of the immediately preceding moment was called manas (corresponding to the “realm of mind”
in the classification into eighteen realms), and the mind of the present moment was called vijñāna (corresponding to the “six consciousnesses” of the eighteen realms, any one of which is considered to be functioning as the mind at a particular moment). This vijñāna then becomes manas in relation to the vijñāna of the following moment, providing the support for the latter’s arising. Thus the continuance of mind is said to be effected.

*Mind-only and Cognition-only*

When discussing in an earlier chapter the twelvefold chain of dependent co-arising, it was noted that the third member, “consciousness,” played a particularly important role in the causal concatenation. This “consciousness” is in fact identical with our present subject of discussion, “mind,” and in the fully developed doctrines of the Abhidharma it was held to correspond to what is generated in the initial moment of conception in the case of rebirth into this world. This consciousness, destined to become the core of individual existence, was defined as an entity burdened down with the ignorance and formative forces of former lives and embodying the attachment and desires which would eventually become the cause for bringing about subsequent rebirth.

The first written work to declare that consciousness plays a pivotal role in the twelvefold chain of dependent co-arising was the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*. This was in the “Chapter of the Ten Stages,” which describes the distinguishing features of the stages attained by the bodhisattva in accordance with his progress in spiritual cultivation (see chap. 8): in the exposition of the sixth stage (“stage of confrontation”), where the functioning of the perfection of wisdom (which leads directly to enlightenment) is explained, it is emphatically declared that all twelve members of the chain of dependent co-arising have the mind as their source and that therefore
“everything pertaining to the three realms is mind-only”
\(citta-mātram idam yad idam traidehatukam, 三界唯心\).\(^2\)

Confronted with the doctrines of the Abhidharma, the composer (or composers) of the \(Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra\) intuitively realized that in spite of the fact that the analytic nature of this body of doctrine had managed to construct a theoretical system as close-knit as feasibly possible, or rather on account of this very fact, it had lost sight of what might be called the spirit of Śākyamuni, something incapable of being expressed in words. And so in order to demolish the fictitiousness of this theoretical system, the \(Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra\) declared that “all things are empty.” Within “all things” the mind was of course also included. Therefore, while standing on a common ground with the Abhidharma which had asserted that the mind too be dependently co-arisen (and therefore repeating a constant cycle of becoming and decay from one moment to the next, and consequently without self), it did not recognize any particular features in the functions of the mind to distinguish it from the other elements. In other words, since in the \(Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra\) everything was considered from the standpoint of “supreme truth” or the ultimate, it did not admit of any distinctions between the elements. Of course, in the \(Heart Sūtra\) for example, even though all particularity is denied by the statement that “form is emptiness,” this is immediately followed by the counter-statement that “emptiness in form,” thus acknowledging from a different standpoint (that of conventional truth, the world of language, or the conceptual) the world of individuality (form, perception, conception, volition, and consciousness) rooted in emptiness. But even so no mention is made of any functional distinction between the mind and the other elements or between subject and object.

It was those of the Yogācāra school who, with their thesis of “cognition-only” \(vijñapti-mātratā, 唯識\), turned their
attention to the functional opposition existing between mind and object, subjectivity and objectivity, and began to formulate a new theory. This school of thought inherited the doctrine of “emptiness” propounded by Nāgārjuna, who had concentrated on elucidating the standpoint of the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra, and his successors, i.e., the Mādhyamika school, but at the same time it carried their thought another step forward and further developed it. The scriptural authority sought by this school for its new theories was the “Chapter of the Ten Stages” in the Avatamsaka-sūtra and the teaching that everything pertaining to the three realms be mind-only. The doctrine of cognition-only was in fact a direct successor to the doctrine of mind-only in the Avatamsaka-sūtra.

However, in the Avatamsaka-sūtra the identification in the doctrines of the Abhidharma of vijñāna, citta and manas with the one and the same “mind” had been accepted without any modification. But in the case of the doctrine of cognition-only it was held that a number of functional aspects could be differentiated in this single “mind,” and these functionally different aspects were termed citta, manas and vijñāna. What we refer to as the “mind” may first of all be divided into that aspect of it functioning in the present moment, that of the past, and that of the future. Strictly speaking, the aspects of the future and the past represent those aspects of which the appearance in the present will occur in the future or has already been concluded at some point in the past. As had already been elucidated by the theories of the Abhidharma, our existence is nothing other than a stream of consciousness (“the continuance of mind”) extending from the past into the future, in which elements of the future are continuously appearing in the present and disappearing into the past. But this stream of consciousness contains another latent stream which does not appear on the surface, and this too exerts influence on the stream of consciousness appearing on the
surface. If this were not the case, it would be impossible to explain the workings of karma. The karma-creating faculty was sought in the functions of the "mind," and likening the mind to a storehouse of latent formative forces (bija, 種子: seeds; = saṃskāra=karma), it was called the "store-consciousness" (ālaya-vijñāna, 藏識, also transliterated as 阿黎耶識, 阿賴耶識).

The mind which is functioning in the present leaves behind an impression. This impression influences the mind of the following moment, but at the same time part of this impression may be stored as it is in the mind and manifest itself after a certain period of time. These impressions include not only those of the mind itself but also impressions of the objects of the mind's activity. The impressions of both subject and object are impressed upon the store-consciousness and determine the characteristics and workings of the mind thereafter. When considered in regard to its aspect as impression, this function is called "perfuming (or infusing) of habit" (熏習) and the impression itself "habitual energy" (習氣; both these terms represent Chinese renderings of the Sanskrit vāsanā, which is usually derived from the verb "to perfume" [vāsayati] and used in the sense of residual mental impressions which are compared to the scent which lingers on indefinitely in clothing after it has been perfumed with incense). Since this same impression determines the ensuing state of mind, it is in this sense also called a "seed" (bija, 種子; needless to say, this appellation derives from the fact that insofar as the impression produces a result, it resembles the seeds of plants which, falling to the ground, later put forth shoots). It was held that the stream of consciousness's condition of being burdened down by past karma could be explained by such a mechanism. Consequently, the store-consciousness constitutes the stream of consciousness of individual beings; each of whom is burdened with past
karma, and the mode of being which this store-consciousness assumes varies from one individual to another.

We look upon this constantly changing stream of consciousness as the ego. In other words, we mistake the store-consciousness for the “self” (ātman). This act of misunderstanding represents nothing other than the subjective aspect of consciousness. But functionally it clearly differs from the store-consciousness. Accordingly, this function was called manas (意), which here refers to self-consciousness. In a certain sense, self-consciousness may be considered the basis of individual existence. But according to Buddhist theory, since this manas recognizes a “self” in the stream of consciousness which is in fact without any such self, its functioning runs counter to the desired direction. Why? Because self-consciousness becomes the basis for the consciousness of self-possession and considers everything from a self-centred viewpoint, giving rise to attachment. In Buddhism, this characteristic is denoted by the terms “self-attachment” (ātmatrāha, ahamkāra, 我執) and “self-possessiveness” (mamakāra, 我所執). This then causes karma, producing the resultant suffering, and brings about transmigration. So long as there remains self-consciousness, there is no hope of suffering coming to an end. In this sense manas is referred to as the “defiled mind” (kliṣṭa-manas, 染污意).

Thus our “mind” is endowed with a subconscious store-consciousness (=citta) and a faculty which mistakes this store-consciousness for the “self” and consequently produces self-attachment (=manas), and it is with this as a basis that we go about the cognition of objects (=vijñāna). As was the case in the doctrines of the Abhidharma, this function of cognizing objects is performed by any one of the six consciousnesses of the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind. These cognitive functions represent the faculty of so-called subjectivity, but the six aspects of subjectivity are distinguished
only in accordance with the nature of the objects of cognition, and when they have disappeared into the past, the six consciousnesses are all known simply as “mind” (manas). In other words, the distinction between the six varieties of consciousness concerns only the present. In addition, depending upon the nature of the “mental attributes” which function simultaneously with consciousness, the six varieties of consciousness may be characterized as wholesome, unwholesome, or neutral. And insofar as the “store-consciousness” and “defiled manas” continue to function in the background, both the wholesome and unwholesome states of consciousness constitute a force which perpetuates “transmigratory existence.” To sum up, the mind with its vertical structure composed of the store-consciousness, manas and the six consciousnesses is held to be the basic cause of transmigratory existence. This became the final solution to the problem of what transmigrates and how, even if there be no ātman.

It is of the nature of consciousness or cognitive subjectivity to grasp or perceive objects. In other words, “consciousness” (vijñāna) refers to the state of being cognizant of something. Accordingly, the faculty of consciousness is called “grasper (or perceiver)” (grāhaka, 能取) and the object “the grasped (or perceived)” (grāhyā, 所取). The latter includes our body, actions, all conscious mental activity, all other individual entities, the ambient world, and even the words and meaning of the scriptures—in other words, everything which becomes the contents of our consciousness. We believe what is thus “grasped” to be actually existing as an object. But careful consideration of the matter will tell us that it exists only as an object of our cognition or as an object known by consciousness, and that this is not the existent itself. Generally speaking, it may be said that what we do not cognize, or what is outside the sphere of our interest, is as good as non-existent. Consequently, each of us is arbitrarily creating his or her own
world, in which he or she lives. In this sense the world which we confront is a world which has been fabricated by the mind and is not reality itself. Taking note of this point, the doctrine of cognition-only declares that our world exists as “cognition” (vijñapti, 識) or representation (i.e., mental contents) only. Thus “cognition” in the phrase “cognition-only” means in fact “that which is known through cognition,” namely, representation as the contents of knowledge.

We imagine that this world of representations really exists and nourish thoughts of attachment for it: all this can only be described as the result of the workings of the “mind.” The doctrine of cognition-only begins by regarding the very structure of our cognition as representing in this sense an erroneous view and calls it “false discrimination” (abhūtā-parikalpa, 魘妄分別; “false discrimination” is defined as the mind and mental attributes associated with the three realms [i.e., transmigratory existence]). And the world which is seen and cognized by this false discrimination, and in which the perceived and the perceiver stand opposed to each other, is called “discriminated nature” (parikalpa-svabhāva, 頒計所執性) in the sense that it is an arbitrarily conceived world. (In Chinese, it is rendered as “discriminated and grasped nature” because we are attached to this arbitrarily conceived world, which as a result gives rise to suffering.) On the other hand, the false discrimination itself which causes the perceived and the perceiver to appear as representations is called “dependent nature” (paratantra-svabhāva, 依他起性) since it is dependently co-arisen and produced through the power of past ignorance and karma. (Paratantra means literally “dependent upon another” and alludes to the fact, already explained above, that the consciousness of the present moment has arisen as the result of the impressions of moments extending back into the infinite past; it also implies that the store-consciousness does not exist as an immutable entity.)
This means that the world of subject/object opposition, the world governed by the concepts of self and things possessed by self (atman and dharma), evolves on the basis of the "other-dependent" store-consciousness and that this world represents our reality, the world of delusion and transmigratory existence.

As long as this world of delusion is not done away with, enlightenment can of course not be obtained nor Nirvana reached. But enlightenment also represents a function of the "mind." There does not exist any "mind" that might become the agency of enlightenment apart from the store-consciousness which is functioning as false discrimination and manifesting the world of subject and object. So long as the store-consciousness continues to operate as the store-consciousness, there is no enlightenment; but when it assumes another state, enlightenment is experienced and Nirvana realized. This occurs when the store-consciousness no longer functions as false discrimination nor manifests the contraposing of subject and object. Since it is the task of consciousness to manifest this contraposing of subject and object, it can only be described as a point in time when consciousness ceases to be consciousness. This state is said to be one in which subject and object are "not two" (advaya, 無二) or in which consciousness becomes one with thusness. But when considered in regard to the functions of consciousness (i.e., in respect to the mode of being of the mind as subjective agency), it is described as a state in which non-discriminative knowledge functions and "consciousness is transformed and knowledge obtained" (轉識得智). This represents the assumption of "another state" (anyatha-bhava, 異) mentioned above, and it is known as the "transformation (or revolution) of the support" (asraya-parivrtti, asraya-pararvrtti, 轉依). And since this state is attained after the teaching expounded in the scriptures has been comprehended and practice based thereon has been
cultivated, it is known as “consummate nature” (pariniss-panna-svabhāva, 圓成實性). It is in this state that one “sees the truth” for the first time. The mind which “sees” in this case can no longer be termed the store-consciousness, for it has become the knowledge attendant upon enlightenment, identical with that of the Buddha.

The above three modes of being—“discriminated nature,” “dependent nature” and “consummate nature” (known collectively as the “three natures” [tri-svabhāva, 三性])—transmute one into the other in accordance with the manner in which the mind functions, and by no means do they constitute three separate worlds. This represents an interpretation of the passage quoted earlier from the Early Canon, which declared that “if the mind be soiled, sentient beings be soiled, and if the mind be purified, sentient beings be purified,” and it also demonstrates the basic line of thought of the Yogācāra school which would comprehend enlightenment in the context of a transformation of the way in which one sees things, namely, a transformation of the mind.

It was stated above that in a state of enlightenment non-discriminative knowledge functions, having become one with thusness, and does not perceive any object. But this does not mean that the Buddha does not see anything; to the contrary, he is fully cognizant of sentient beings, takes thought for them, and engages in unlimited efforts for their salvation. In this case there does exist a distinction between perceiver and perceived, and there is to be found the structure of cognition based upon the contrast between subject and object. In the doctrine of cognition-only, the manner in which the Buddha’s mind functions is termed “pure worldly knowledge obtained after (non-discriminative knowledge)” (tat-prṣṭha-labdha-suddha-laukika-jñāna, 後得清淨世智) or simply “knowledge obtained afterwards” ([tat-]prṣṭha-labdha-jñāna, 後得智). This mind of the Buddha functions in accordance with a
dichotomization into perceiver and perceived, yet does not see any perceiver or perceived. In other words, unlike the store-consciousness, the mind of the Buddha is said not to create causal relationships and not to construct any world of delusion. Not creating causal relationships means that it is not conditioned or impermanent and constantly repeating a cycle of becoming and decay; it is in other words unconditioned. "Knowledge obtained afterwards" represents nothing other than the spontaneous activity of the Buddha as the unconditioned (i.e., Dharma-body).

It was in the above manner that the world of delusion and the world of enlightenment were conceived of according to the doctrine of cognition-only in the context of a transformation of the mind, which was elucidated in theoretical terms. But in order to make such a transformation of the mind possible, the "practice of yoga" (yoga-ācāra, 瑜伽行) or the cultivation of meditation is required. The basis of this yoga-practice is the "contemplation of cognition-only" (唯識觀). The contemplation of cognition-only is a form of practice by means of which the above theory is not only listened to and comprehended intellectually but also actually experienced. On the basis of the experience that the various images which are called to mind during times of meditation do not really exist in the outer world (just as the images of dreams do not really exist in the outer world), the practitioner is first made to understand that the objects with which we come in contact in everyday life through the organs of sight, hearing and the like do also not really exist in the manner in which they appear to (that is, in the way in which they are perceived), for they are all constructions of the mind; then, when there no longer exists any object and no object is seen, the practitioner realizes that the mind which was observing the object does also not exist and so he enters a state in which there exists neither mind nor object (境識俱泯: the extinction
of both [sense-]object and consciousness). This is called "entering cognition-only" (入唯識). In order to master this contemplation of cognition-only, the practitioner is in addition also required to undergo training in all Buddhist forms of cultivated practice, and in accordance with his progress he is said to ascend successive stages until he eventually attains the stage of a Buddha (see chap. 8). However, the foundation of this process may be considered to lie in the consummation of the contemplation of cognition-only. It is because of this distinguishing feature that this school of thought was called Yogācāra (瑜伽行派: practice [or practitioner] of yoga) and its adherents viññāna-vādin (唯識論者: advocate of consciousness[-only]).

The theories of the doctrine of cognition-only may be described as the acme of the theoretical systems produced by Indian Mahāyāna Buddhism. In the final analysis, the import of its theories is that whereas the appearance of reality ("thusness") is unchanging, delusion and enlightenment arise in dependence upon the manner in which we perceive reality, and that consequently upon enlightenment objects are viewed in their true aspect. This parallels the gist of the Heart Sūtra: although it posits a world of enlightenment in which form is viewed as being empty in contrast to the world of delusion in which form is not viewed as such, the proposition "form is empty" is immediately restated as "emptiness is form." In the case of the Ch‘an (Zen) sects, this is expressed even more succinctly: "willows are green and flowers are red" (柳綠花紅).

The Innately Pure Mind and the Embryo of the Tathāgata

The mind as defined by the doctrine of cognition-only, namely, the store-consciousness, was conceived of with the mode of
being of the mind peculiar to the deluded, ordinary person as its basis. In contrast to this, there also exists the view that however deluded the mind may be, it is essentially pure and identical with the mind of the Buddha. For example, the mind which seeks enlightenment and is oriented towards enlightenment, alluded to in terms such as “thought (or mind) of enlightenment” (bodhi-citta, 菩提心) and “generation of the thought (or mind) of enlightenment” (bodhicitta-utpāda, 發菩提心), cannot properly be said to be defiled, and it was to the functions of the mind which render possible efforts in the direction of enlightenment that this way of thinking turned its attention. Mind in this context was called the “innately pure (or radiant) mind” (prakṛti-pariśuddha/prabhāsvara-citta, 自性清淨心).

Among Śākyamuni’s disciples there was one by the name of the Younger Panthaka (Cūlapanthaka). Whereas his elder brother, known as the Greater Panthaka (Mahāpanthaka), was preeminent in wisdom among Śākyamuni’s disciples, the Younger Panthaka was a dullard, unable to memorize a single verse of the teaching. As a result, he seems to have been constantly tormented by his fellow disciples. Taking pity on him, Śākyamuni told him that there was no need to memorize the teaching; instead he instructed him to take a piece of cloth in his hand and observe how even if it is soiled by dirt and dust, it becomes clean upon being washed. Panthaka did as directed and devoted himself to meditation, contemplating the piece of cloth in his hand, and is said to have eventually attained enlightenment.

Just like the piece of cloth in the above episode, the mind too is by nature immaculately white and radiant; it just happens by chance to be soiled by the stains of mental defilements: such is the import of the term “innately pure mind.” “Innately pure (or radiant)” (prakṛti-pariśuddha/prabhāsvara, P. pakati-parisuddha/pabhassara, 自性清淨, 本性清淨)
means that the mind is by nature pure, and thus it would seem to bear some resemblance to the theory that human nature is fundamentally good.

When the term "mind" is used in the context of the doctrine of cognition-only, it refers in its narrow sense to only the store-consciousness, but in a more general sense "mind" not only denotes the various modes of mental functioning as represented by manas and the six consciousnesses of the eyes, etc., but also embraces all the various mental attributes which appear concomitant with the mind. In the way of thinking we are now discussing, however, the mind and the mental defilements and so forth which represent the functions or attributes of the mind are divorced from each other, and the latter are defined as temporary visitors from without or "ad-ventitious defilements" (āgantuka-kleśa, 客塵煩惱). Although they are said to come from without, this does not mean that mental defilements actually exist somewhere; they are from the first non-existent, but when the mind is not conversant with reason and is ignorant of the truth, they make their appearance, attach themselves to the mind, and defile it. This represents the condition of the ordinary person. Mental defilements are also sometimes likened to clouds such as obstruct the light of the moon.  When the clouds have passed by, the moon once again shines just as brightly as before. Enlightenment too is just like the moon which has resumed its refulgence after the passing of the clouds. Furthermore, although the moon-light may appear to have been intercepted by the clouds which veiled it, in actual fact the light of the moon continues to shine without any change whatsoever either before or after. In the same manner the mind of sentient beings is also always radiant, regardless of whether they be deluded or enlightened: the mind itself is never soiled.

This teaching is to be found expounded in the Early Canon in the following manner:
“O Monks, this mind is radiant, but it is soiled by adventitious defilements. The ordinary person who has not yet heard (the teaching of the Buddha) does not understand this as it really is. Therefore I say that for him there is no cultivation of the mind.

“O Monks, this mind is radiant, and it is free of adventitious defilements. The noble disciple who has heard (the teaching) understands this as it really is. Therefore I say that for him there is cultivation of the mind.”

Here too it is declared that the one and same unchanging pure mind varies in its modes of being depending upon the presence or absence of knowledge of this fact gained through practice, and consequently a change in the mind wrought by cultivation and training is demanded. But unlike in the case of the doctrine of cognition-only, this change is conceived of not as a transformation of the mind itself but as a change in the state of the mind, for the mind itself is immutable.

This same idea is also expressed by the analogy of gold: gold which lies mixed together with other ore reveals its brilliance when it has been dug out and refined, yet there is no change in the gold itself. Here mental defilements are likened to hindrances (the “five hindrances”; see p. 149) which obscure the mind, whereas the mind itself is considered to be something immutable which, like gold, “has its natural colour” (jāta-rūpa, 生色; a synonym of gold). 6)

Thus it would appear that in the teachings of the Early Canon it was not unusual to regard the mind as being by nature bright and radiant. But this concept did not arouse any great interest in the Buddhism of the Abhidharma, and it was with the emergence of Mahāyāna Buddhism that it suddenly moved into the limelight. Among the many interpretations which appeared, that of the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra
held that the term "innately pure" or "pure by nature" meant being devoid of any own-nature and was therefore equivalent to "empty." This comes close to the idea, discussed above in relation to the doctrine of cognition-only, that both delusion and enlightenment are dependent upon the mind. This idea and the concept of the innately pure mind are of course not necessarily contradictory, and a synthesis of the two is possible, but as has already been explained in the previous section, in the case of the Prajñāparamitā-sūtra no attempt was made to delve any further into the question of mind as such.

In contrast to the school of cognition-only, which developed its doctrines on the basis of the idea that both delusion and enlightenment are dependent upon the mind, there appeared another current of thought which formulated a new doctrine with the concept of the innately pure mind as its starting point. Historically speaking, this latter current probably predates the doctrine of cognition-only. It discovered the motive force of enlightenment in the forever unchanging aspect of the innately pure mind and in its identity with the mind of the Buddha, and calling this aspect "Buddha-nature" (buddha-dhātu, 佛性) in the sense that it represents the cause of Buddhahood, it also asserted that all sentient beings be endowed with Buddha-nature (一切衆生悉有佛性: all sentient beings possess Buddha-nature). This current of thought is now generally known as "Tathāgatagarbha thought." Garbha may mean either "matrix" or "embryo," and so tathāgata-garbha (如來藏: matrix/embryo of the Tathāgata) suggests that a Tathāgata dwells within the womb (garbha) of each sentient being; this Tathāgata within the womb is as it were the "embryo (garbha) of the Tathāgata." At the same time, it is only natural that this "embryo of the Tathāgata" should develop into a Tathāgata, thus implying the coessentiality of the Tathāgata and sentient beings and an
unchanging essence common to both. On the other hand, it is equally true that even though coessential in nature, as long as the embryo remains an embryo, it will never become a Buddha or Tathāgata: this hints at the importance of the moment of change, namely spiritual cultivation, manifested in growth and development. Furthermore, the condition of being within a womb also represents both ignorance, in that the embryo lies hidden and invisible, and the state of the ordinary person who, just like unworked gold mixed with the dregs of other metals, is entangled by the obstacles of mental defilements. The term “embryo of the Tathāgata” may also be further interpreted as suggesting either that the Tathāgata represents a parent and sentient beings the children, or that sentient beings are all embraced within the womb represented by the Tathāgata. These manifold meanings are all contained within the term tathāgata-garbha and at the same time they also constitute the contents of Tathāgatagarbha thought. (Since the term “Buddha-nature” can at best express only the sense of coessentiality with the Buddha, or the basis or cause for becoming a Buddha, it is customary to characterize this current of thought by the term tathāgata-garbha, which is richer in its connotations.)

In the above context, the innately pure mind no longer refers to merely the mind; instead it has been sublimated to something which constitutes a fundament common to the Buddha and all sentient beings. Insofar as it is immutable, it differs from the store-consciousness which is dependently co-arisen, conditioned, and constantly repeating the cycle of becoming and decay, and it is held to represent unconditionedness itself. The unconditioned is also called “thusness” and is equated with the Dharma-realm in the latter’s capacity as both the source of the Dharma (=enlightenment) and the basis of the dharmas (=Dharma-nature). The Buddha or Tathāgata is referred to as the Dharma-body since he has become com-
pletely one with the unconditioned or the Dharma-realm; conversely, the tathāgata-garbha may be referred to as the Dharma-body still in a state of defilement (在纒位法身). Furthermore, since the Dharma-realm in the sense of the spatial extent of the Dharma is endowed with cosmic universality, the Dharma-body of the Buddha is also considered to permeate all sentient beings just like empty space which pervades the universe. In more concrete terms, this means that the functioning of the wisdom of the Tathāgata in his status of the omniscient one extends to all sentient beings. However, theoretical formulations would make this the ground for the assertion that the Tathāgata, or rather his essence, dwells within all sentient beings. (It should be noted that the conceptional structure displayed by this theory is exactly the same as the theory of the union of Brahman and the individual propounded by the Upaniṣads and Vedānta philosophy.) On the other hand, taking note of the change in condition reflected in the fact that, although coessential, sentient beings are soiled whereas the Buddha is unsoiled, sentient beings or the tathāgata-garbha are sometimes also referred to as “tainted thusness” (samalā tathātā, 有垢真如) and the Buddha or bodhi as “untainted thusness” (nirmalā tathātā, 無垢真如).

This total identification of the innately pure mind with the absolute represented by the unconditioned, thusness, the Dharma-realm, and the Dharma-body was paralleled by an ever increasing diminution in the attention given to mental defilements. This tendency culminates in the assertion that since mental defilements are in essence non-existent, sentient beings are from the first already enlightened (本覺: innate enlightenment; originally used in contrast to 始覺: actual enlightenment).10) In some instances this view may result in a minimization of the importance of the process of purification through spiritual cultivation. At the same time, it also renders it impossible to explain why mental defilements
are nevertheless in actual fact so multitudinous and so difficult to eliminate. It would appear that one reason for the birth of the doctrine of the store-consciousness was in fact to provide a solution to this vexing problem.

Thus, although the innately pure mind or \textit{tathāgata-garbha} and the store-consciousness, representing the obverse and reverse of the one and the same mind, are antipodean in their nature and stand opposed to each other just like the two sides of a shield, they are on no account divorceable one from the other, and so it is not surprising that a current of thought identifying the two should have appeared. Such a view, found already in the \textit{Lañkāvatāra-sūtra}, was brought to its culmination in the \textit{Mahāyānasraddhotpāda-śāstra} (大乘起信論: Treatise on the Awakening of Faith in the Mahāyāna).\textsuperscript{11} In this latter work, which gives greater emphasis to the \textit{tathāgata-garbha}, that aspect of the mind represented by the \textit{tathāgata-garbha} is called “mind in terms of thusness” (心真如) and that represented by the store-consciousness “mind in terms of becoming and decay” (心生滅).\textsuperscript{12} But even so the mechanism whereby the essentially non-existent mental defilements make their appearance upon the \textit{tathāgata-garbha} cannot be said to have been explained very satisfactorily. In the case of the doctrine of cognition-only, on the other hand, the thesis of the \textit{tathāgata-garbha} was adopted together with the interpretation of thusness and the Dharma-realm, and the \textit{tathāgata-garbha} was identified with the “consummate nature.” But greater importance came to be attached to its role as a neutral locus acting as basis for the transformation from delusion to enlightenment, and the implications of its role as the motive force of enlightenment gradually faded into the background. Although the doctrine of cognition-only demonstrated even greater profundity than Tathāgatagarbha thought in the sphere of religious practice in that it sought enlightenment in the transformation or self-negation of the store-conscious-
ness, the source of delusion, it would not appear to have been sufficiently successful in explaining the mechanism whereby such a transformation takes place. (Stated in technical terms, undefiled seeds, by nature incompatible with the store-consciousness, are said to be born in the store-consciousness as a result of the residual influence of having listened to the Dharma and, attaching themselves to the store-consciousness, to gradually suppress it and bring it to extinction.) In the final analysis, these two schools of thought may be said to complement each other in clarifying the ideal state of the subjective agency of practice in the course of its journey towards the goal of Buddhism, namely, enlightenment.

_Enlightenment and Salvation_

There is one point worthy of note in regard to Tathāgata-garbha thought, namely, that the fact that each and every sentient being represents a _tathāgata-garbha_ or that “all sentient beings possess Buddha-nature” is beyond the comprehension of not only ordinary people but even those who have completed the path of cultivation in the Hinayāna, is only just understood in its very rudiments by the bodhisattvas of the Mahāyāna, and is known _in toto_ by only the Buddha or Tathāgata—this receives repeated emphasis. The manner in which Tathāgatagarbha thought is expounded in the sūtras is characterized by the frequent use of similes, and this school of thought is far easier to comprehend than for example the doctrine of cognition-only. But at the same time there is also the danger that our arbitrary interpretations may easily result in misunderstanding. For example, when it is said that sentient beings “possess Buddha-nature,” we are liable to conceive of Buddha-nature or the _tathāgata-garbha_ as something having substantial existence. (This same danger exists in the
case of the store-consciousness too, and the sūtras state that
since the store-consciousness was frequently mistaken for the
"self," it was not expounded to Hinayāna practitioners either.)

What is one to do then? The reply given is that ordinary
people and those of the two Hinayāna vehicles should "simply
believe in the teaching of the Tathāgata." The assertion
that sentient beings are coessential with the Buddha can be
made only by the Buddha himself, and it is held to represent
a manifestation of the Buddha's compassion. (The Avas-
tamsaka-sūtra contains the famous analogy of "a single particle
of dust containing the whole trichiliocosm" [微塵含千], ac-
cording to which the Tathāgata, observing how the Tathāgata's
wisdom completely permeates all sentient beings, exclaims,
"Marvellous indeed, marvellous indeed! They are endowed
with signs of virtue and do not differ from myself!")

As was explained in the previous chapter, this faith re-
resents as it were the portal of entry to Buddhism. In the
traditional context it was considered that enlightenment was
not possible through faith alone, but rather that progress was
made in practice on the basis of the strength of one's faith.
However, when the power or the compassion of the Tathāgata
underlying this faith is emphasized, a teaching advocating
absolute faith in the Tathāgata gradually takes shape. This
vocal advocacy of the absolute nature of the Tathāgata and
the necessity of taking refuge therein is also a prominent
characteristic of Tathāgatagarbha thought. In this sense Ta-
thāgatagarbha thought may be said to represent an orthodox
branch of Mahāyāna Buddhism, related to the Pure Land
faith of the Sukhāvatīvyūha and inheriting the concept of
"one vehicle" (see chap. 8) from the Lotus Sūtra. Upon its
introduction to China, it became the basis of Buddhism there
too, and further increased its influence in the Buddhism of
Japan.

In the case of India, however, this form of Buddhism in
which faith was absolutized does not necessarily appear to have constituted the mainstream of Buddhism. This was because the initial form of Buddhism as taught by Śākyamuni demanded first and foremost cultivated practice such as would lead to enlightenment or the cessation of suffering, and it was this goal on which the renunciant practitioners set their sights. The main current of Indian Buddhism has always been a Buddhism of cultivated practice, centred on the renunciant practitioner. In its initial stages Mahāyāna Buddhism provided a doorway not so much for the renunciants but rather for the laity, and consequently it attached prime importance to faith rather than to practice, and to salvation through the compassion of the Buddha rather than to enlightenment. Universal salvation is impossible but for the Buddhas’ compassion (embodied in their vows) and the altruistic activities for the welfare of others undertaken by their proxies, the bodhisattvas. In this respect, Mahāyāna Buddhism represents a Buddhism grounded in faith. But as the importance of cultivated practice as an element in the ideal figure of the bodhisattva destined to be the leader of this Mahāyāna Buddhism was eventually recognized, the characteristics of a religion of the renunciant Êlite gradually came to the fore once again. A typical manifestation of this tendency is provided by the doctrine of cognition-only of the Yogācāra school which revived, adopted, and reinterpreted the doctrines of the Abhidharma. As is suggested by its name, this school represented a Buddhism of practice. Even the Mādhyamika school, although lacking any original system of spiritual cultivation, still required rigorous practice for the mastery of its “middle way” and insight into “emptiness.” But this specialization of Mahāyāna Buddhism would appear to have inevitably given birth to the need and the demand to compensate in another form for this neglect of the laicism and the religion of faith extolling the Buddha which had been the original
goal of Mahāyāna Buddhism. It was so-called Esoteric or Tantric Buddhism which subsequently appeared to meet these needs. Esoteric Buddhism represents a religion thoroughly grounded in the standpoint of the Buddha, reducing all phenomena to the "three mysteries" (body, speech and mind) of the Tathāgata, and at its roots it shows evidence of connections with Tathāgatagarbha thought, although it is not perhaps proper to characterize it simply as a religion of salvation or faith.
CHAPTER EIGHT

The Ideal Practitioner

The Concept "Man"

The literature of the Southern tradition of Buddhism includes a treatise entitled *Puggala-*paññatti (人設論: Description of Man). It deals with passages referring to "man" (*puggala*) in the Early Canon, systematically arranging and classifying them into ten categories, ranging from "one individual" to "ten individuals." The title *Description of Man* derives from the fact that although Buddhist doctrine advocates the thesis of "no-self," on a commonsense level its teaching presupposes the existence of "man." For example, on the subject of the Buddha it is said, "There is one person born into this world, ... the manifestation of great light, of great radiance ..." And, as is only natural, Śākyamuni's practising disciples are also treated as individual personalities. Thus, although man is really without any self and exists only as a provisional congeries of the five aggregates (五蘊假和合), he is tentatively termed "man" and dealt with for convenience' sake as if he were an independently existing being: such are the implications of the term *paññatti* (施設, 假: description, [conventional] designation) in the title of this work. It was for this reason that the collection of the references to "man" in the Buddhist scriptures was called *Puggala-*paññatti.

That being the case, under what heads then may the concept "man" be classified? For example, there is the group-
ing into male and female (in the case of renunciant practitioners, monk and nun, and in the case of the laity, layman and laywoman), and that into Indians and foreigners. However, the method of classification to which greatest importance is attached in Buddhist scriptures is that which reflects progress in spiritual cultivation (for example, whether the practitioner is enlightened or not enlightened), and the distinction which is considered to be most basic among such categories of classification is that between the “ordinary man” and the “holy man.”

Ordinary Man and Holy Man

In Japanese, the Buddhist term for “ordinary man” (bonbu, bonpu, 凡夫) has become a part of everyday language. But, as may be inferred from the qualification “endowed with mental defilements” with which it is frequently accompanied, the “ordinary man” is not rated very highly in the Buddhist context. The original Indian term to which it corresponds is bāla (幼童, 愚者), meaning “child” or “fool,” or prthagjana (P. puthujjana, 異生), meaning literally “having various births.” In Chinese the two are regularly combined as “ordinary man having various births” (凡夫異生).

When they first entered the order, Sākyamuni’s disciples were also “ordinary” people, but upon their eventual enlightenment after a period of spiritual cultivation they became “holy (or noble) men”. (ārya, P. ariya, 聖人). Needless to say, this term ārya is identical with the ethnic name Aryan with which the Indo-Aryans took such pride in referring to themselves and which was used to distinguish them from the Dravidians and other peoples “having various births.” This same term became the appellation of the advanced disciples of Sākyamuni, used to distinguish them from ordinary people
“having various births.” It is quite probable that at the
time of Śākyamuni the term ārya was not so much an
ethnic or racial term as a cultural concept, referring to those
who had absorbed the Aryan cultural heritage. Among the
orthodox schools of thought, the members of the Brahmin
class no doubt prided themselves as representing the élite
among the Aryans. This same appellation was used in Bud-
dhism to refer to disciples advanced in their spiritual cultiva-
tion.

(1) The Four Approaches and Four Fruits
The disciples described as ārya were ranked in eight stages
known as the “four approaches” (catvāraḥ pratiṇāmaḥ, P.
cattāro paṭīpanṇā, 四向) and “four fruits” (catvāri phalāni,
P. cattāro phalā, 四果), with the saint who had completely
extinguished all mental defilements and who was worthy of
receiving offerings (arhat, P. arahant, 應供, also transliterated
as 阿羅漢) attributed the highest rank.39 These stages, which
were no doubt established at a time considerably after
Śākyamuni’s death, are as follows.

The first is that of “one who has entered the stream”
(srotā-āpanna, P. sota-āpanna, 預流, also transliterated as 須
陀洹), referring to those who have entered for the first time
the current of the river of Śākyamuni’s teaching, namely,
those for whom it is now certain that as practitioners they
will comprehend Śākyamuni’s teaching, observe it, and con-
tinue to practise it. They are said to obtain the “pure
Dharma-eye.” The next two stages, that of “one who returns
once” (sakrd-āgāmin, P. sakad-āgāmin, 一來, also transliterated
as 斯陀含) and that of “one who does not return” (anāgāmin,
不還, also transliterated as 阿那含), refer respectively to those
who, before attaining enlightenment and entering Nirvāṇa,
will be born once more into this world and those who will
never again be reborn. The final stage is that of the “saint,”
already noted above.

These four stages are called the “four fruits” and are each considered to be preceded by a preliminary stage called an “approach (or approacher)” (pratipanna, P. paṭipanna, 前). Thus there is for example the “approach of (realization of the fruit of) entry to the stream” (srotā-āpatti-pratipanna, P. sota-āpatti-phala-sacchikiriyāya paṭipanna, 預流向) and the “fruit of entry to the stream” (srotā-āpatti-phala, P. sota-āpatti-phala, 預流果). This results in a total of “four approaches and four fruits” associated with “eight categories of men” (aṣṭa [puruṣa-]pudgalāḥ, P. aṭṭha [purisa-]puggalā, 八輩) or “four pairs and eight categories of men” (cattāri purisa-yugāni aṭṭha purisa-puggalā, 四雙八輩). They alone are designated as ārya or “holy.” The initial stage of “entry to the stream,” in which one “obtains the pure Dharma-eye,” is called the “path of insight” (darśana-mārga, 見道) in that it represents the stage in which one sees the truth. It is said to consist of fifteen mental moments corresponding to the “approach of entry to the stream” and a sixteenth moment of the “fruit of entry to the stream,” and so it is something close to intuition, being accomplished in an extremely short period of time. In contrast, the subsequent stages are referred to as the “path of cultivation” (bhāvanā-mārga, 修道) and require training through repeated practice extending over a long period of time. And when the practitioner eventually attains the “stage of the saint” after protracted cultivation and study, he realizes that

“destroyed is (re-)birth, established is a chaste life, done is what had to be done, (and) after this present life there is no further (life).” (khīṇā jāti vusitam brahma-cariyaṃ katam karaniyam nāparaṃ itthattāya, 我生已盡 梵行已立 所作已辨 不受後有)

This describes the state of the “saint,” and since there
remains nothing more for him to learn, he is also called a “non-learner” (aśāikṣa, P. asekha, 無學). In contrast, those belonging to the preceding seven stages are called holy “learners” (ṣaikṣa, P. sekha, 有學) since they still have something to learn. During Śākyamuni’s lifetime, 499 of his disciples are said to have become saints. However, his attendant Ānanda, although first and foremost in the hearing of Śākyamuni’s sermons, was still young and afflicted by passions and had not yet reached the stage of the saint. But he attained enlightenment shortly after Śākyamuni’s death, and as a result there are said to have been a total of five hundred saints. This is said to be the origin of the so-called “Five Hundred Saints” (五百羅漢) which became an object of veneration in China and Japan. (Figures of “Sixteen Saints” [十六羅漢] are sometimes found enshrined in temples belonging to the Zen and other sects; this appellation and custom are thought to have their origins in Central Asia.)

(2) Entry to the Stage of the Holy One
It was stated above that the path of insight is accomplished through intuition spanning sixteen mental moments. However, this represents the fruit of a long period of preliminary cultivation, repeatedly listening to the teaching, practising it, and mastering it through meditation. The effects of this protracted cultivation may be considered to bring about enlightenment in a sudden flash of intuition. The contents of this “enlightenment” are said to consist of the realization of the Four Noble Truths.

It was no doubt the experience of a sudden conversion as it were following the long period of spiritual cultivation which preceded the attainment of the stage of the “holy one” that was expressed as the joy of having “obtained the Dharma-eye.” The practitioner was now transformed from an “ordinary person” into a “holy person,” and this turning
point is also expressed as “transcending the lineage of ordinary
man and entering the lineage of the holy one.” This would
no doubt originally have meant much the same as “entering
the stream.” Then again, it is also termed “entry into a
fixed course” (niyama-avakrānti, P. niyāma-avakkanti, 正
性離生) or entry into the “category of those fixed in right-
ness” (samyaktva-niyata-rāsi, P. sammatta-niyata-rāsi, 正定
聚).

In the scheme of stages which was later established by the
Southern tradition, a person at this point of transformation,
poised on the border between the ordinary man and the holy
man, yet belonging to neither category, was called a “man
of lineage” (gotrabhū, 種姓人; this use of gotra is an applied
usage of its meaning of “family name,” such as Kāśyapa,
among the Brahmins). When considered from the vantage
of the ordinary man, this same “man of lineage” becomes
the “state foremost in the world” (laukika-agrā/-agryā]-
dharma, 世第一法), which is the term used by the Sarvāstivādins.

(3) The Four Wholesome Roots
The above “state foremost in the world” corresponds to the
highest of four stages known as the “four wholesome roots”
catvāri kuśala-mūlāni, 四善根). In the Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya
one finds that the process of cultivation preceding the stage
of the holy one is divided into numerous stages, each of which
is strictly defined. Starting with renunciation of the world
and the observance of a way of life characterized by the
possession of only “three robes and one bowl” and “desiring
little and knowing contentment” (=morality), the practitioner
is required to practise various forms of meditation such as
the contemplation of offensive objects (=meditation) and to
contemplate the Four Noble Truths (=wisdom). Those still
at the level of the ordinary man but who have reached a
certain level in their practice are also called the “righteous” (sat-puruṣa, 賢人), and in Chinese this term is sometimes combined with the “holy” (ārya-pudgala, 聖人), giving the collective term “the righteous and the holy” (賢聖).

There is no doubt that these various stages were initially distinguished and named in accordance with the practitioner’s progress in spiritual cultivation, but owing to their meticulous subdivisions, a detailed description of them would rather give the impression that they represent little more than a formal classification. Accordingly, we shall refrain from dealing with them here in any greater detail. It might, however, be mentioned that, as was noted in chapter 6 (p. 189), there also exists a typology reflecting the propensities of the individual practitioner, distinguishing between “those who proceed according to the teaching” and “those who proceed according to faith.”

_The Stages of the Bodhisattva_

Although the above represents the schema of stages which was systematized with the establishment of the doctrines of the Abhidharma, it is based upon what had been the accepted ideas on the subject of the renunciant practitioner ever since the time of Śākyamuni. The highest stage was that of the “saint,” and it was held that even though the disciples of Śākyamuni might become saints, they could never become Buddhas.

In contrast to this way of thinking, Mahāyāna Buddhism made the attainment by all people of the same unsurpassed perfect enlightenment as that of the Buddha its ultimate goal, and every practitioner who had generated the thought of enlightenment was designated as a “bodhisattva” (菩薩), the appellation of Śākyamuni prior to his enlightenment.
What then did the practice of the bodhisattva actually entail, and what stages did he or she pass through? In the *Mahāvastu*, a version of Śākyamuni’s biography transmitted by the Lokottaravāda school of northern India, the stages through which the bodhisattva passes are given as ten in number, culminating in the “stage of consecration” (*abhiṣeka-bhūmi*, 洗頂位). This scheme of ten stages represents the process of spiritual cultivation undergone by the bodhisattva Śākyamuni’s antecedents prior to his becoming a Buddha. The term *abhiṣeka* originally refers to the coronation of a king when, upon his accession to the throne, he is ceremoniously anointed on the head with water, but here it is figuratively used to describe Śākyamuni’s attainment of enlightenment, whereby he became a “king of the Dharma” (*dharma-rāja*, 法王).

Next, in the case of Mahāyāna Buddhism itself, the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* for example posits four stages, beginning with the “initial resolution” (*prathama-citta-upāda*, 初發心), passing on to practice (designation uncertain; corresponds to the later “preparing the ground” [*bhūmi-parikarman*, 治地] or “novice” [*ādi-karmika*, 新學]), eventually entering the “stage of non-regression” (*avini-vartaniya-bhūmi*, 不退轉位), and finally attaining the state of one “limited to (only) one (more) birth” (*eka-jāti-pratibaddha*, 一生補處), namely, one who dwells in the Tūṣita Heaven as crown prince of the Dharma in preparation for his enlightenment in the next life.

In the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*, on the other hand, a scheme of ten stages (corresponding to the later “ten abodes”) based on the ten stages of the *Mahāvastu* noted above, whilst also incorporating the thought of the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*, is propounded. In this case, the practitioner is said to pass through successive stages starting with “initial resolution” and “preparing the ground” up to a seventh stage of “non-regression” (*avaivartika-bhūmi*, 不退轉地, also transliterated as 阿
THE IDEAL PRACTITIONER

and then, ascending the stages of "one who has become a youth" (kumāra-bhūta, 童真) and "crown prince of the Dharma" (dharma-yawarājya, 法王子), to eventually reach the "stage of consecration." The "stage of non-regression" refers to that stage, reached after practice extending over a long period of time has been completely mastered, when the practitioner is no longer liable to fall back to a lower stage. This scheme of ten stages later yielded to another new scheme, also of ten stages. This was the ten stages of the Daśabhūmika-sūtra (十地經: Sūtra of the Ten Stages; corresponds to the “Chapter of the Ten Stages” in the Avatāraṇsaka-sūtra).

This new scheme of ten stages begins with the "stage of joy" (pramuditā bhūmi, 歡喜地) and ends with the "stage of the Dharma-cloud" (dharma-meghā bhūmi, 法雲地), and in each stage a particular variety of practice is prescribed, the six perfections in the first six stages and the remaining four perfections in the subsequent four stages, making a total of ten modes of practice. In the initial "stage of joy," the bodhisattva’s starting point is the "generation of the thought of enlightenment," but he also makes a vow to save sentient beings. As a result, he is said to be born into the "family of the Tathāgata" (tathāgata-kula, 如來家). This is generally interpreted as meaning the "stage of entry to the holy lineage" (聖人入位) or "fixedness in rightness" (samyaktva-niyāma, 正性決定). For example, in the sixth "stage of confrontation" (abhimukhi bhūmi, 現前地) the cultivation of the perfection of wisdom is expounded and, as was earlier explained, the principle that "everything pertaining to the three realms is mind-only" is mastered through contemplation grounded in this perfection of wisdom. The name of the seventh stage, "stage of far-going" (dūrāngama bhūmi, 遠行地), implies that the bodhisattva, as a result of having attained this stage, succeeds in going far further than the
disciples of Śākyamuni ever did, and it hints at the astounding progress made in spiritual growth at this stage. Once the bodhisattva attains the eighth “stage of immovability” (acalā bhūmi, 不動地) and beyond, he is said to expound the teaching on behalf of the Buddha for the salvation of sentient beings and to be endowed with the ability to guide them. The bodhisattvas of the eighth stage and above are frequently called “bodhisattvas of (great) power” (vaśitā-prāpta bodhisattvāḥ, 大力菩薩).

This scheme of ten stages was combined with the older scheme of ten stages (i.e., ten abodes) and the other gradated series of “ten practices” and “ten dedications,” and these are given together in the Avatāmsaka-sūtra as the “forty-two stages.” In the Mahāyāna Brahmajāla-sūtra “ten stages of faith” were further posited, resulting in fifty-two stages, and the addition of the stage of the Buddha eventually gave a total of fifty-three stages (i.e., ten stages of faith [十信], ten abodes [十住], ten practices [十行], ten dedications [十迴向], ten stages [十位], the stage of enlightenment (almost) equal (to that of a Buddha) [等覺], the stage of wondrous enlightenment [妙覺], and the stage of the Buddha [佛]). In this scheme, the ten stages beginning with the stage of joy are regarded as corresponding to the level of the holy one and those stages prior to this as corresponding to the level of the ordinary person.

The course of the bodhisattva thus covers many different stages, and the path leading from his initial resolution up to his attainment of unsurpassed perfect enlightenment when he becomes a Buddha is an extremely long one. In the doctrines of the Abhidharma it had been postulated that Śākyamuni had as a bodhisattva been repeatedly reborn over a span of three incalculable aeons up until his eventual enlightenment, and this idea was carried over by Mahāyāna Buddhism too.

But at the same time one also finds in the Avatāmsaka-
śūtra the statement that “at the time of initial resolution one immediately attains perfect enlightenment” (初發心時便成正覺). Here particular importance is attached to the initial resolution or generation of the thought of enlightenment, and emphasis is given to the fact that this immediately results in birth in the “family of the Tathāgata” and leads to enlightenment.

On the other hand, because of his resolute vow to save all sentient beings, the bodhisattva is also said to be one who, prior to becoming himself a Buddha, endeavours to have all other sentient beings cross over to the “further shore.” Actually it is this third characteristic of the bodhisattva which receives the greatest emphasis in the sūtras of Mahāyāna Buddhism, and in order to illustrate this ideal the bodhisattva is likened to a ferryman. On a theoretical level, the bodhisattva is said “on account of wisdom not to abide in transmigratory existence and on account of compassion not to abide in Nirvāṇa,” and since he abides in neither transmigratory existence nor Nirvāṇa, the bodhisattva’s mode of being is described as “non-abiding Nirvāṇa” (apratiṣṭhita-nirvāṇa, 無住處涅槃). This represents the ideal of the bodhisattva who lives for the sake of others.

However, the word “bodhisattva” is also likely to bring to mind the “great bodhisattvas” (mahā-bodhisattva, 大菩薩) such as Mañjuśrī, Samantabhadra, Avalokiteśvara, Mahāsthāmaprāpta, Maitreya, and Kṣitigarbha. We cannot afford to describe in any great detail here the origins, history and characteristics of each of these bodhisattvas; instead brief comments on each will have to suffice.

Maitreya (弥勒：Benevolent one) is a bodhisattva who, “bound to one more life,” is believed to be at present residing in the Tuṣita Heaven in anticipation of his final rebirth into this Sahā world 5,670 million years in the future. Following Śākyamuni’s death, the Dharma is said to continue to
perdure for a certain period, but eventually a "Buddha-less" time will come. As a result of such a belief there arose a messianic cult centred on Maitreya, the followers of which, setting their hopes for happiness on the future advent of Maitreya, prayed that they might be reborn in this world at the time of Maitreya's reappearance.

Mañjuśrī (文殊, 文殊師利 : Sweet glory) is said to be foremost in wisdom, playing an important role in the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra, so much so in fact that it has even been said that "the followers of Mañjuśrī composed the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra" (Tominaga Nakamoto, 富永仲基; 1715–46). Mañjuśrī is said to dwell on Mt. Ch'ing-liang (淸涼山), and in China Mt. Wu-t'ai (五臺山) is regarded as sacred to him. Against Mañjuśrī's wisdom, the bodhisattva revered as the paragon of practice is Samantabhadra (普賢: Universally good). He is referred to as a bodhisattva of "another world" (他土), for according to the Avatamsaka-sūtra as soon as he had heard of Śākyamuni's enlightenment he immediately hastened to where Śākyamuni was in order to hear his teaching. Samantabhadra probably represents a new image of the bodhisattva which was created contemporaneously with the composition of the Avatamsaka-sūtra. The mode of practice which he symbolizes is called "the practice of Samantabhadra" (samantabhadra-caryā, 普賢行), and it is regarded as the model of Mahāyāna spiritual cultivation. The Gāṇḍavyūha (入法界品; the final chapter of the Avatamsaka-sūtra) records the story of the spiritual pilgrimage of the youth Sudhana (善財童子), in the course of which, following Mañjuśrī's recommendation, he visits one after another fifty-three spiritual guides and performs at the same time the "practice of Samantabhadra," finally arriving at the place where Samantabhadra resides. The plot of the Avatamsaka-sūtra is so conceived that the teaching of universal salvation is propounded on behalf of the Buddha by the two bodhisattvas Mañjuśrī and
Samantabhadra.

The bodhisattva most familiar as an object of popular faith is probably Avalokiteśvara (觀自在, 觀世音: Lord who looks down [in compassion]). The residence of this bodhisattva is said to be situated in the south on Mt. Potalaka (補陀落山), and it is conceivable that there exist connections with Hindu deities. Among Mahāyāna sūtras, the salvational activities of this bodhisattva through the medium of thirty-three different manifestations as described in the “Chapter of the Universal Gate” of the Lotus Sūtra are particularly famous. In scriptures related to the Pure Land faith he also appears together with Mahāsthāmaprāpta (大勢至: He who has won great strength) as an attendant of Amitābha, but originally he was the object of a cult independent of that of Amitābha.

The bodhisattva Kṣitigarbha (地蔵: Earth repository) appears latest in history, and he is not found mentioned in the earlier Mahāyāna sūtras. He is said to give those sentient beings on their way to hell their last chance of escape from their fate, and he demonstrates the great compassion of the bodhisattva who would betake himself even to hell in order to do his utmost for the sake of sentient beings. A distinctive feature of Kṣitigarbha is that he assumes the appearance of a monk, thus distinguishing him from other bodhisattvas who are adorned with bejewelled crowns and similar ornaments. But according to the results of research Mañjuśrī was also a renunciant bodhisattva, thus representing the ideal figure of the Mahāyānist religious leader.

Apart from the above bodhisattvas, a great many more bodhisattvas with varied names and each personifying specific ideals of doctrine and practice are to be found active in Mahāyāna sūtras, but they are too numerous to list here. However, not all bodhisattvas have attained perfection in their particular practice. In the first place, anyone who would
generate the thought of enlightenment becomes ipso facto a bodhisattva, but he is at that stage still a bodhisattva on the same level as that of an ordinary person. The number of such bodhisattvas is countless; in fact all sentient beings are potential bodhisattvas and it is even their duty to become bodhisattvas. This may be said to represent the ideal of Mahāyāna Buddhism. It was given vocal emphasis in the Lotus Sūtra and eventually became one of the reasons for the emergence of Tathāgatagarbha thought. This was the teaching of the so-called “one vehicle.”

“One Vehicle” and “Three Vehicles”

In the Lotus Sūtra it is stated that the true teaching is represented by only a single path whereby all sentient beings eventually attain Buddhahood, and that there exists apart from this one path no other second or third path (“There is but one vehicle, and there exists no second nor a third.” —“Chapter on Expedient Means”). The second and third paths alluded to here are held to refer to the “vehicle of the listener” (śrāvaka-yāna, 聲聞乘), the path of the disciple, and the “vehicle of the self-enlightened one” (pratyekabuddha-yāna, 獨覺乘, 緣覺乘), the path for becoming a pratyekabuddha or self-enlightened one. Alternatively, as is illustrated by the parable of the burning house and the three carts (火宅三車之喻), it is taught that the teaching of the “single Buddha-vehicle” (eka-buddha-yāna, 一佛乘) represents the truth which is to replace the former teaching of the “three vehicles” (tri-yāna, 三乘) of the listener, the self-enlightened one, and the bodhisattva. According to this parable, a fire broke out in the house of a wealthy man; the latter, wishing to rescue his children who, unaware of the fire, are absorbed in their games inside, calls to them to
hurry outside to see three carts which are standing there, one drawn by a sheep, one by a deer, and one by an ox; the children rush outside, only to find waiting for them a single magnificent cart drawn by a great white ox. (In this parable, the burning house represents the three realms.)

The word for "vehicle" (yāna) in the term "three vehicles," identical to that of the "Great Vehicle" Mahāyāna, refers to the vehicle which leads sentient beings to the ultimate goal, and originally it described figuratively Śākyamuni's own teaching. The advocates of the Mahāyāna, believing their teaching to resemble something like a large bus which could transport a great number of people at one time to the "further shore," referred derogatively to the traditional way of teaching, according to which, as with a scooter, each had to travel individually to the world of enlightenment, as the Hinayāna or "Inferior Vehicle." In addition to the "vehicle of the listener," mentioned already in an earlier chapter, this Hinayāna was made to include a "vehicle of the self-enlightened one" who did not rely upon the teaching. As is suggested by the alternative Chinese rendering for pratyekabuddha, namely, "one enlightened through causation" (緣覺), doctrinally speaking the enlightenment of the self-enlightened one was thought to be due, as in the case of Śākyamuni, to his realization of the principle of dependent co-arising. In fact, the self-enlightened pratyekabuddha represents Śākyamuni as he appeared immediately after his enlightenment (said to have been attained alone and without any teacher) and prior to the First Sermon at Benares. The "listener" (śrāvaka, 聲聞) seeks only to become himself a saint, giving no thought to the salvation of others (namely, the laity), and the self-enlightened one too treads only his own path. Accordingly these two modes of being, both considered to represent the pursuit of personal welfare only, were referred to collectively as the Hinayāna or known alternatively as the "two vehicles."
In contrast to these two vehicles, there was one other course available, the path leading from the state of the bodhisattva to Buddhahood. It had been recognized by the traditional Buddhism of the monasteries too that, in addition to the example provided by the bodhisattva Śākyamuni, there existed those who had attained in the past, or who would attain in the future, enlightenment by proceeding along that same path. Furthermore, it was also considered not only that these three vehicles had different goals but that those who travelled by them also differed. Those who trod the path of the disciple or listener would become at best a saint but could on no account become a Buddha. The same applied in the case of the self-enlightened one, who could become nothing other than a self-enlightened one. This is the doctrine of the so-called “three vehicles.” In Mahāyāna Buddhism the path leading from the bodhisattva to the Buddha was widened to embrace sentient beings in general as well. But in some sūtras the adherents of the traditional Hinayāna were regarded as different and were often not included. In other words, the doctrine of the three vehicles is to be found in both the Hinayāna and the Mahāyāna.

In reaction to this trend, it was the Lotus Sūtra which proclaimed that under the aegis of the Buddha’s great compassion the goal was to be the attainment of enlightenment by all alike, listener, self-enlightened one and bodhisattva, and emphasized for the first time that all could attain Buddhahood. It is claimed that in the eyes of the Buddha all sentient beings are his children, that is, “children of the Buddha” (buddha-putra, 佛子). According to the Lotus Sūtra, Śāriputra (舍利弗), Mahākāśyapa (大迦葉) and other disciples, hearing this, shed tears of joy when they realized for the first time that they too could attain Buddhahood. In this manner, the “one vehicle” was considered to be the ideal of the
“Great Vehicle” Mahāyāna and to represent the true wishes of the Buddha. However, in accordance with the differing capacities of sentient beings, it may in some cases be on the contrary harmful to expound this directly or it may not be understood, and so it was explained that the Buddha had taught the paths of the two vehicles or the distinction between the three vehicles as “expedient means” (upāya, 方便).

Since the advocacy of the one vehicle thus anticipates as a precondition the compassionate activity of the Buddha, this teaching represents a Buddhism based upon faith in the Buddha. Developments in this doctrine of the one vehicle led, as has already been discussed, to the development of Tathāgatagarbha thought, which recognizes in all sentient beings a potentiality for attaining Buddhahood. Stated in terms of the potential or capacity possessed by sentient beings, it was said that they are endowed with the “Buddha’s lineage” (buddha-gotra, 佛種姓) or that they belong to the “Buddha’s family” (buddha-kula, 佛家). In the doctrine of the three vehicles, on the other hand, it was considered that sentient beings belonging to each of the paths are endowed congenitally with differing capacities, and a lineage for each of the three vehicles was postulated. This resembles the state of affairs in Indian society, where it was held that one’s caste was determined by heredity. In this sense it must be said that the teaching of the one vehicle and the teachings of Tathāgatagarbha thought according to which all sentient beings are endowed with the “Buddha’s lineage” (Buddha-nature) accord well with Śākyamuni’s teaching of the equality of the four castes, according to which upon entering the order there is no distinction between Brahmins, those of the ruling warrior caste and other classes: all are children of the Buddhā and should use the name “ascetic belonging to the son of the Śākyas” (śramaṇa-sākya-putrīya, P. sāmaṇa sakya-puttiya, 沙門釋子).

CHAPTER EIGHT

But when one examines the history of Indian Buddhism, it will be found that the doctrine of the three vehicles was also rather deep-rooted. In this case it was not so much a question of congenital lineage, but derived rather from an assertion of the difficulties which religious practice entails and an emphasis of its importance. When one squarely faces the realities of the human condition, it is not difficult to perceive just how difficult it is to eliminate attachment, extinguish suffering, attain enlightenment, and become a Buddha, and just how remote sentient beings actually are from the state of a Buddha. Those who considered practice such as would overcome these difficulties to be the true Buddhist path discovered in the doctrine of the three vehicles the true teaching. Representative of this way of thinking was the Yogācāra school which propounded the doctrine of cognition-only. In addition to the three “lineages” of the three vehicles, it also postulated the existence of some whose lineage, prior to their becoming fixed in the course of one of the three vehicles (i.e., before entering “the stage of lineage” [gotrabhūmi, 種姓地]), was still undetermined, and calling this the “undetermined lineage” (aniyata-gotra, 不定種姓), it considered the course taken by this group of sentient beings to be determined in accordance with the results of their practice. These beings may be described as those whose lineage is not determined congenitally but is acquired. In addition, it was also held that there exist sentient beings for whom it is absolutely impossible to ever attain either Nirvāṇa or enlightenment, beings who are described as being “without lineage” (agotra, 無姓, 無姓). These included first and foremost pleasure-seekers and indulgers of desire who are indifferent to the Buddhist teaching, and they were called ictantika (一闡提). But even more than with those who blindly seek to fulfill their desires, issue was made in particular with those who deliberately speak ill of Buddhism. This tendency
may be traced back to the Lotus Sūtra which, while advocating on the one hand the “one vehicle,” severely censured all calumniators of the Lotus Sūtra and called for the denunciation of false doctrines. But at the same time many sūtras, considering that even such perpetrators of evil would through the Buddha’s compassion in time convert to Buddhism, held their eventual attainment of Buddhahood to be also possible. On the other hand, there also appeared the view that since on account of the powers of his vow stemming from great compassion the bodhisattva never enters Nirvāṇa, it was the bodhisattva who represented the true icchantika (“icchantika of great compassion” [大悲闡提]).

The bodhisattva Kṣitigarbha already mentioned above may be regarded as an embodiment of this ideal image of the bodhisattva.

In closing, it might be added that in Japan the Hossō sect, which teaches the doctrine of cognition-only, is regarded not as a true form of the Mahāyāna but as the “provisional Mahāyāna” (權大乘) since it adheres to this doctrine of the three vehicles and asserts that there are some sentient beings who do not attain Buddhahood. Consequently it is looked upon as an inferior teaching by the Tendai and other sects which advocate the doctrine of the one vehicle based on the Lotus Sūtra.
CHAPTER NINE

The Precepts and the Organization of the Community

The Meaning of Saṃgha

Saṃgha (僧伽) is the word used in Buddhism as the regular term for referring to its community or order, but the origins of this term go back to before the emergence of Buddhism itself. As is well-known, at the time of Śākyamuni there existed in India a large number of religionaries going under the name of śramaṇa, who travelled about the land preaching, attracted disciples, and formed religious groups. These men of religion were sometimes described as “having a saṃgha” (saṃghin) or “having a gaṇa” (gaṇin), and this fact demonstrates conversely that such religious groups were called saṃgha or gaṇa.

Originally, both saṃgha and gaṇa meant simply “group.” However, the groups which were actually known by these terms included, apart from the religious groups noted above, economic organizations such as craft guilds and bodies politic following a republican form of government. Features common to these groups included the fact that they represented communities composed of people who had gathered together for a common purpose, that their members stood on an equal footing with each other, observed the same rules, and joined of their own free will, and that group decisions were made on the basis of a representative system. In actual practice, parti-
cation through free will may have been limited to religious groups alone. However, it is to be surmised that the use of these terms reflected a contradistinction to the castes (jātī), affiliation to which was determined by birth. In regard to religion, it may be said that, in contrast to the Brahmins who as the highest of the four castes took pride in their birth, the motive force behind the establishment of the saṃgha consisting of śramaṇa was that such groups provided an opportunity for escape and emancipation from the regulations of the caste or home. The reason for a polity which adhered to a republican form of government being called a saṃgha probably lay in the fact that, instead of being under a hereditary monarch who was born a ruler, the leader was chosen by common consensus, in other words in accordance with the will of the people. The Buddhist order was in its origins clearly one of the religious groups composed of śramaṇa, but in regard to its administration it is said to have followed the example of the representative system of the town of Vesālī of the Vajjis, which constituted a model saṃgha-polity.

Vesālī was at the time of Śākyamuni a city-state still preserving its independence of Magadha and economically thriving. Śākyamuni frequently visited it to spend the retreat during the rainy season there, and for the Buddhist community it remained an important centre far into the future. Śākyamuni praised the people of this city and expressed the wish that it might prosper forvermore.

According to the Mahāparinibbāna-suttanta, Śākyamuni spent his last retreat during the rainy season on the outskirts of Vesālī. Prior to this he had set out from Rājagaha in Magadha, and when he arrived at the village of Pātalī on the banks of the Ganges, it so happened that the people of Magadha were engaged in constructing a fortress there to serve as a stronghold for attacking Vesālī. Seeing this, Śākyamuni predicted that as long as seven conditions continued to be fulfilled, the town of Vesālī would never decline. The seven conditions were in brief as follows: (1) the Vajjis hold frequent assemblies, and a great number of people gather for these assemblies; (2) they assemble in unanimity, they make decisions
in unanimity, and they dispose of matters of business in unanimity; (3) they observe the ancient traditions of the Vajjis; (4) they honour, revere and serve their elders; (5) they do not force unreasonable marriages upon their children; (6) they respect and make offerings to shrines both in their own land and elsewhere; and (7) they protect and honour saints.

Śākyamuni then predicted that if the Buddhist order were to observe seven principles, it too would prosper far into the future.2)

(1) The monks should hold frequent assemblies.
(2) They should assemble in unanimity, make decisions in unanimity, and dispose of matters relating to the order in unanimity.
(3) They should not adopt new institutions or abandon old institutions, but should observe the authorized rules.
(4) They should honour, revere and serve their elders, seniors and leaders, and heed what they say.
(5) Even if passions should arise, they should strive not to succumb to them.
(6) They should have preference for living in secluded places (avoiding association with secular authority).
(7) They should devote themselves to their practice, so that seeing this others of potentiality may be drawn to join the order and those who have already joined may remain there in spiritual comfort.

In addition, Śākyamuni is also said to have expounded five further varieties of such “seven conditions of non-decay” (sapta aparīḥāṇiyā dharmāḥ, P. satta aparīhiṇiyā dhammā, 七不退法, 七不衰法). But since these overlap with virtues associated with the path of spiritual cultivation, we shall not enumerate them here.

The characteristics of the Buddhist samgha are also likened to the ocean and described in the following terms:3)

(1) Just as the ocean becomes gradually deeper the further one recedes from the shore, so one’s learning gradually gains in depth the longer one remains in the samgha.
(2) Just as the waters of the ocean do not rise above the shoreline, so the disciples do not violate the precepts.
(3) Even if a corpse is thrown into the ocean it is invariably
cast ashore; likewise, the *samgha* does not overlook those who have violated the precepts, calling them to account without fail.

(4) When rivers enter the ocean, they all lose their names and become part of the same ocean; likewise, when one enters the *samgha*, one renounces one’s social class, position and name, and all alike are addressed as “ascetic belonging to the son of the Śākyas.”

(5) Just as there is no rise or fall in the amount of water in the ocean regardless of the number of rivers which flow into it, so there is no increase or decrease in the *samgha* regardless of however much the monks may increase in numbers or however many may enter Nirvāṇa.

(6) Just as the ocean has only one taste, the taste of salt, so all members of the *samgha* enjoy the same single taste of liberation.

(7) Just as the ocean is full of many riches, so in the *samgha* there exist a subtle and profound teaching (Dharma) and the precepts (Vinaya).

(8) Just as the ocean is inhabited by various large fish and similar creatures, so is the *samgha* the resort of many great disciples.

Among the above similes, (4) is especially important in that it represents the advocacy of the equality of castes. Needless to say, this principle was realized only within the order itself, and it was not meant to imply a reform of Indian society itself. At the same time, this declaration also means that the Buddhist *samgha* was acknowledged as a seat of power within Indian society standing outside the jurisdiction of regal authority. This was because the Buddhist *samgha* was recognized by the world at large as something supramundane, a community existing on a plane different from that of normal society, and because it was also regarded as a model
of morality.

*The Organization of the Community*

When we speak of the Buddhist community, we may in some cases, in the broadest sense of the term, be referring to adherents of Buddhism in general, namely, the entire body of both renunciant practitioners and lay followers. To our way of thinking today this would be the rule, but the term "(religious) community" may also refer to only those who devote themselves completely to the religious life (clerics, etc.).

In Buddhist scriptures too there has existed from an early stage an awareness of this distinction. The most comprehensive term for the former, embracing both renunciant practitioners and lay believers, is the "four assemblies" (*catuṣ-paraśad*, P. *catu-parisā*, 四衆). The "four assemblies" consist of (1) monks, (2) nuns (—namely, male and female renunciant practitioners), (3) laymen, and (4) laywomen (—namely, male and female lay believers). The original term for "monk," *bhikṣu* (P. *bhikkhu*, 比丘) means literally "mendicant" and has its origins in the fact that the monk lived on the food offered by lay believers. "Nun" is expressed by the corresponding feminine form, *bhikṣunī* (P. *bhikkhunī*, 比丘尼). The lay follower—the male *upāsaka* (優婆塞) and female *upāsikā* (優婆夷)—was literally "one who attended upon" (近事男，近事女) Śākyamuni and his disciples, and was called thus because he or she listened to the teaching and made offerings to the renunciant community. These "four assemblies" thus represent those who make offerings and those who receive offerings, and as an organic whole they constituted an indispensable factor in the economic structure of the Buddhist community. However, it will be noticed that the term for "assembly" in this case is *pariśad* (P.
parisā, 衆) and not samgha, and there exists no single term embracing all four assemblies (even though individuals might be referred to as “Buddhists” [bauddha]). In other words, the “four assemblies” are not referred to collectively as the samgha.

In Buddhist scriptures the use of the term samgha is restricted to the community of renunciants alone. As was described in chapter 1, the establishment of the samgha in Buddhism goes back to the time of the First Sermon. Prior to this, Śākyamuni is said to have met two traders who accepted his teaching, took refuge in the Buddha and the Dharma, and became lay followers. It is therefore evident that the existence of lay followers was not considered to signify the establishment of the samgha. This was probably because the term samgha presupposed the existence of a community such as might be amenable to some sort of control. The Vinaya-piṭaka is in fact a collection of regulations for such a community of renunciants.

The renunciants bound by the stipulations of the Vinaya-piṭaka were further divided into five groups, depending upon age and other factors. Adult members (twenty years of age and over) consisted of monks and nuns, whereas minors were divided into male novices (śrāmaṇera or śrāmaṇeraka, 沙彌) and two categories of female novices, śrāmaṇeri (or śrāmaṇerikā, P. sāmaṇeri, 沙彌尼) and śikṣāmāṇā (P. sikkhamānā, 正等摩那). The latter category of female novices referred to probational female practitioners during the two years prior to becoming fully ordained nuns, and it is said to have been a measure taken for checking whether the candidate was pregnant or not. These five groups of practitioners were known as the “five assemblies” (五衆), and together with the male and female lay followers they were also referred to as the “seven groups” (sapta-nāikāyika, 七衆). The division into “five assemblies” was
made because the regulations of the Vinaya differed for each
group in accordance with their respective circumstances. Since
in actual practice novices could not form an independent
samgha, there existed in fact two orders or samgha, that of
monks and that of nuns.
Insofar as they observe the regulations of the same Vinaya-
pitaka, the order of monks and that of nuns belong to the
one and the same community, but in actual daily life it is
inconceivable for all members of the samgha to be always
gathered in a single place. Yet in order to apply the
regulations of the Vinaya, it sometimes becomes necessary to
hold a council and make decisions with only those members
who happen to be present at the time. As a result, the
term samgha is also used to refer to a chapter or group of
monks or nuns of a specific number assembled at a certain
place at a certain time. This is called the "order actually
present" (sammukhi-bhūta-samgha, 現前僧伽). In contrast
to this, the entire community of renunciants as represented
by the "five assemblies" is called the "order of the four
quarters" (cātur-dīśa/[deśika]-samgha, P. cātu-ddisa-saṃgha,
四方僧伽).
The "order actually present" thus represents an organi-
zation for applying the regulations relating to the administra-
tion of the samgha, and depending upon the importance of
the matters to be resolved five varieties were distinguished,
consisting of four, five, ten, twenty, or more than twenty
members. For example, in order to grant permission for
entry to the order, the consent of ten or more members was
considered necessary, and so if there should happen to be less
than ten members present a decision could not be made on
this matter. In the case of a group of less than four
members, it was not qualified to be called a samgha and was
unable to make any decisions whatsoever. An administra-
tively incompetent assembly such as this was called simply
a *gaṇa* or "group." Because of these rules, it was necessary to restrict the membership of the "order actually present" to a particular area. This was called "fixing the boundary" (*ṣīmā-bandha*, 結界). Since especially in its initial stages the Buddhist community did not possess any monasteries or temples, it was always necessary at for example the time of the annual retreat during the rainy season to fix certain boundaries and ascertain the number of monks or nuns within these boundaries.

The administration of the order, namely, the method for making decisions in accordance with the Vinaya, was referred to simply as "proceedings" (*karman*, P. *kamma*, 羨磨). Depending upon the relative importance of the matter under consideration, a motion was put either once (*jñāpti-dvitiya-karman*, P. *ṇatti-duṭṭiya-kamma*, 白二羯磨) or three times (*jñāpti-caturtha-karman*, P. *ṇatti-catutthaka-kamma*, 白四羯磨) to a vote, and the consent of all present was required. Because of this condition that the consent of all present be requisite, it was necessary to confirm on each occasion the number of the members of the *saṅgha* present.

Insofar as the members of the order submitted to the regulations of the Vinaya and were entitled to a vote, all were equal. But in respect to levels of spiritual cultivation there were of course distinctions, and various names were given to the different positions within the order. Those who on account of their seniority and experience occupied a position of leadership were called "elders" (*sthavira*, P. *thera*, 上座) and were also addressed by titles of respect such as "reverend one" (*bhaddanta*, 大德) or "sir" (*āyuṣmat*, P. *āyasmat*, 尊者, 具壽). Those with special qualifications included the "preceptor" (*upādhyāya*, P. *upajjhāya*, 戒師, also transliterated as 和尚), who was required to have been in orders for ten or more years and was permitted to take disciples, and the "teacher" (*ācārya*, P. *ācariya*, 軌範師, also transliterated as
阿闍梨), who undertook to give instruction in matters of
doctrine to members of the order. With the gradual di-
vision of roles within the order in accordance with individual
endowment, there also arose titles such as "preacher of the
teaching" or "Dharma-master" (dharma-bhānaka, P. dhamma-
bhānaka, 法師), "meditator" or "meditation-master" (dhyānin,
dhyāyin, P. jhāyin, 禪師), and "Vinaya-holder (or -master)"
(vinaya-dhara, 律師). The "meditation-master," synonymous
with "yoga-practitioner" (yoga-ācāra, P. yoga-ācāriya, 瑜伽
師), referred to one who devoted himself to the cultivation of
meditation. The "Dharma-master," on the other hand, was
a preacher whose principal task was to instruct the laity.

But what was the position of Śākyamuni within the samgha?
The different recensions of the Vinaya-piṭaka which were
compiled after Śākyamuni's death were in actual fact regula-
tions laid down at a time when Śākyamuni was no longer
alive, and so in theory it would have been quite justifiable
to formulate them without taking him into account. But
the samgha had been founded by Śākyamuni and ideally the
Vinaya had to represent the regulations which he had laid
down. Depending upon whether they reflect reality or the
ideal, the various recensions of the Vinaya-piṭaka may be
divided into those which exclude Śākyamuni from the samgha
(僧中無佛: the Buddha does not exist within the samgha)
and those which regard Śākyamuni as a member of the
samgha (僧中有佛: the Buddha does exist within the samgha).
The former standpoint is based on the view which would
clearly distinguish between the Three Treasures of the
Buddha, Dharma, and Samgha.

Thus there remains some uncertainty about the actual state
of affairs during Śākyamuni's lifetime, but it is probable that
as leader of the samgha he too was a member of it and lived
in accordance with the same regulations as governed the other
members. This would have been a matter of course in his
position as a religious leader. It would have been inconceivable when for example offerings were made to the *samgha* that he should have appropriated them for himself or received more than other members just because he was the Buddha. But since the right to lay down rules was restricted to him alone, he did in this respect differ from the other members of the order. And since this was reconfirmed after his death too (consequently in theory no amendments to the Vinaya were permitted after his death), it gradually became customary to exclude Śākyamuni from the *samgha*. After his death, he was revered in the form of memorials such as the *stūpa*, and the offerings made to these memorials, known as “things belonging to the Buddha” (佛物), were clearly distinguished from the “things belonging to the *samgha*” (僧物) which were donated to the community.

*Community Regulations*

The collection of regulations governing the monastic community is called the *Vinayapitaka*. *Vinaya* (律, also transliterated as 昱尼) literally means “guidance” or “instruction”; accordingly, *Vinayapitaka* means something like “educational guideline.” It is divided into two major parts, that which lists the precepts to be observed by members of the order and that consisting of regulations concerning regular community events and the administration of the order.

The code of precepts is called the *pratimokṣa* (*P. paṭimokkha*, 戒本, also transliterated as 波羅提木叉) and consists of 250 precepts for monks and 348 precepts for nuns (although the various recensions of the *Vinayapitaka* evidence slight differences in the actual number of precepts). As was explained in connection with the path of cultivation (chap. 6), these precepts were originally something which the practitioner
himself vowed to observe, and therefore even if they should be violated, that in itself would not become an offence. But insofar as they are regarded as community regulations, any infringement incurs some sort of penalty. Consequently the precepts as laid down in the Vinaya-piṭaka are accompanied by penal provisions, and depending upon the relative severity of the punishment incurred “five divisions” (五篇門), consisting of pārājika, saṁgha-avaśesa, pāyattika, pratideśaniya and duṣkṛta, are distinguished. Alternatively, taking into consideration their contents, the precepts are also classified into “eight categories” (八法): pārājika, saṁgha-avaśesa, aniyata, naiḥsargika-pāyattika, sūdana-prāyaścittika, pratideśaniya, śaikṣa-dharma and adhikaraṇa-śamatha.

Among the above divisions, the pārājika (波羅夷) represents the most serious variety of offence and is punished by expulsion from the order. The offences to which this is applied are the taking of life, theft, unchastity, and false claims to miraculous powers. These correspond to violations of the five precepts excluding that forbidding the consumption of intoxicants. The pārājika is compared to execution.

Saṁgha-avaśesa (P. saṁgha-adisesa, 僧殘) means literally “remaining in the order,” and precepts coming under this rubric are so named in contradistinction to the pārājika which results in expulsion from the order because those guilty of violating them, although punished, are permitted to remain in the order after a period of penitence. But since offenders incur punishment by the order, these precepts too, like the pārājika, belong to the category of major offences. One week’s penance is imposed, and during this time the offender must live apart from the rest of the order. Rehabilitation to the order is decided by a chapter of twenty members. In the case of a monk, the saṁgha-avaśesa applies to thirteen offences, such as self-pollution and physical contact with a woman.
Violations of the remaining precepts are all regarded as minor offences and may be atoned for by confession. Pāyattika (or prāyaścittika, pātayantika, etc., P. pācittiya, 僅, also transliterated as 波逸提) is frequently interpreted as meaning “causing to fall,” but the original meaning is “expitiatory” or “requiring expiation.” In the case of an offence arising from the possession of an article which it is forbidden to have, expiation begins by abandoning the article in question, and such offences are called “expiable through forfeiture” (naihsargika-pāyattika, P. nissaggiya-pācittiya, 拾墮). Other instances are called “purely expiatory” (suddha-prāyaścittika, P. pācittiya, 善墮), and include mendacity and slander. Confession is performed before one to three monks. Next, pratideśaniya (P. pāṭidesaniya, 波羅提舍舍尼), meaning literally “requiring to be confessed,” refers to offences arising from the consumption of food which it is not permitted to eat, and in this case too confession alone is deemed sufficient. All other infringements of the community regulations fall under duṣkṛta (P. dukkāta, 惡作, also transliterated as 突吉羅) or “misdeeds.” Particularly serious misdeeds require confession before others, but otherwise it is held to be sufficient to repent inwardly for one’s error. Infringements of the śaikṣa-dharma and adhikaraṇa-śamatha are considered to come under “misdeeds”: the former, śaikṣa-dharma (P. sekhiya-dhamma, 行學法) or “rules of training,” concerns rules of etiquette at mealtimes, etc., whereas the latter, adhikaraṇa-śamatha (P. adhikaraṇa-śamatha, 滅諦) or the “settling of disputes,” refers to the method of dealing with matters of contention that might arise within the order. But the manner of imposing punishment in such cases is not clear. Finally, aniyāta (不定) or “indeterminate” offences are offences the nature of which remains indefinite until an investigation of the circumstances be made: for example, in the case of a monk having been found together with a woman,
he would be guilty of a pāyattika offence if they had been simply sitting together, of a saṁgha-avaśeṣa offence if they had been holding hands, and of a pārājika offence if they had gone any further.

In addition, mention is also made of the sthūlātyaya (P. thullaccaya, 傣蘭遮) or “grave transgression.” This corresponds to an attempted offence and represents the preliminary stage to an action deserving the punishment applicable in the case of a pārājika or saṁgha-avaśeṣa offence. Confession before the saṁgha is required.

The provisions of the code of precepts as recorded in the Vinaya-piṭaka are each accompanied by an account of the “occasion” or “origin” (nīḍāna, 因縁) of the institution of the provision in question. This is a reflection of the fact that the provisions of the Vinaya were “laid down in accordance with (the committal of) an offence” (隨犯隨制), being successively added to as fresh questions arose. The first case of infringement of a particular provision, namely, the deed which provided the occasion for the institution of the said provision, was not subject to punishment.

The latter half of the Vinaya-piṭaka, that part dealing with regulations governing the administration of the order, is called skandhaka (P. khandhaka, 健度), meaning “division” or “chapter.” These regulations are arranged in separate chapters according to their contents, and in all there are about twenty-three such chapters. The principal regulations concern the following:

(1) Admission to the order (prāvrajyā, P. pabbajjā, 出家: literally, “going forth”): Admission to the order requires “ordination” (upasampada, 受戒, 具足戒, 受具, 進具). When being admitted to the order, the candidate is required to first take refuge in the Three Treasures and vow to observe the precepts, and is further required to observe a way of life
based on the “four supports” (see below). Initially, it had probably sufficed for the postulant to take refuge in the Three Treasures or for Śākyamuni to address him with the words, “Come, monk.” But according to the usage established as the rule in the Vinaya-piṭaka, after having gained thrice the consent of all the members of a chapter consisting of ten members, the candidate is made to vow observance of the precepts for an ordained renunciant, consisting of all the provisions of the prātimokṣa, and observance of the “four supports.”

(2) Meeting days (upavāsa, P. uposatha, 布薩): Each month all the members of a chapter residing within a certain area assemble on fixed days to recite the precepts and reflect upon their daily conduct.

(3) Retreat during the rainy season (varṣa, P. vassa, 安居): This covers the three months of the rainy season each year, during which time members of the order maintain a fixed place of abode and devote themselves to their practice. This custom is said to have been adopted because the rainy season was not suited for alms-begging since it was difficult to move about and because there was a danger of accidentally killing insects and other forms of animal life underfoot. At the end of the retreat a ceremony called pravāraṇā (P. pavāraṇa, 自恣) is performed at which any misdemeanors of conduct during the rainy season are put before members of the saṅgha, after which cloth (kaṭhina, 迦𫄨那) for robes is procured in preparation for the retreat of the following year.

(4) Four supports (catvāro niśrayah, P. cattāro nissayā, 四依): The daily life of the members of the order is based upon “four supports.” These are: (1) food, which is obtained by begging; (2) robes, which are made by patching together discarded rags found in places such as cemeteries and are called “rubbish-heap rags” (pāmsu-kāla, P. paṃsu-kāla, 憂掃
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衣); (3) abode, which is provided by the foot of a tree for
resting and sleeping; and (4) medicine, literally “medicine
made from the putrid urine (of cattle)” (pūti-mukta-bhaiṣajya,
P. pūti-mutta-bhesajja, 腐尿藥, 陳棄藥).

In its initial stages the order was little more than a group
of wandering ascetics and was probably without any fixed
abode. The next stage in its development would correspond
to the period when gardens such as the Jeta Grove at Sāvatthi
and the Bamboo Grove at Rājagaha were donated or permis-
sion granted for their use by the order; these sites became
centres for the order, and the annual retreat during the rainy
season came to be spent at a number of such places. Even
so there would have been no residential dwellings but at
best only temporary shelters. The “four supports” reflect
the basic spirit of the order up until this time. With the
development of the order the custom of fixed residence
gradually came to take root: residential dwellings were con-
structed, following Śākyamuni’s death memorial stūpas were
also erected, and monasteries such as we know them today
gradually took shape. At the same time this trend also
indicates that the order had come to possess land and other
property. Features of this period too may be found reflected
in the provisions of the Vinaya-piṭaka. But for the individual
members of the order the possession of private belongings
was severely restricted.

The most basic articles which it was permitted to possess
were three garments (tri-cīvara, P. ti-cīvara, 三衣)—over-
robe, upper garment and lower garment—and a single alms-
bowl: (pātra, P. patta, 應量器, also transliterated as 鈀),
known collectively as the “three robes and one bowl” (三衣
—鈀). Apart from these, the possession of absolute essentials
for daily life, such as a sitting mat, straining bag, sewing
implements, and a razor for shaving, was also allowed. Meals
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were permitted only up until noon and comprised of two meals of alms gained from the daily round of alms-begging. Occasionally members of the order were invited to meals offered by lay believers. The consumption of any nourishment apart from water and medicine was not permitted after noon. The keeping of butter and similar nutriments was allowed only in the case of the sick. Initially the possession of money was also strictly forbidden.

But these regulations differ in their details in the various recensions of the Vinaya-piṭaka and also underwent changes with the passing of time. The first schism in the order is said to have been brought about by a conflict in views concerning the possession of money, salt, and similar articles.

*The Schismatic Schools and the Vinaya-piṭaka:* Approximately one hundred years after Śākyamuni’s death the Buddhist saṅgha gradually began to break up and individual orders came to be established in various parts of the land. These individual orders or schools each possessed its own Vinaya-piṭaka. The initial “basic schism” gave birth to the Theravāda and Mahāsāṃghika schools, and further subdivisions of these two schools are said to have given birth to an additional eighteen schools. Although we do not today have access to the Vinaya-piṭaka of every one of these schools, a considerable amount of material is available, including several Chinese recensions as well as Pāli, Sanskrit and Tibetan versions. The complete recensions extant together with the schools by which they were transmitted are as follows:

[Chinese Translations]

*Dasabhāṇavāra-vinaya* (十詮律: Ten-Chapter Vinaya; 61 chūan): Sarvāstivāda school; brought to China from Kashmir.

*Caturvargika-vinaya* (四分律: Four-Part Vinaya; 60 chūan): Dharma-gupta school; brought from Kashmir to China, where the Four-Part Vinaya school (四分律宗) based on this text was founded, and ever since this recension of the Vinaya-piṭaka has provided the basis of the Vinaya in China and Japan.

*Mahāsāṃghika-vinaya* (摩訶僧祇律, 40 chūan): Mahāsāṃghika school; obtained at Pāṭaliputra by Fa-hsien (法顯), who brought it to China.
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Pañcavargika-vinaya (五分律: Five-Part Vinaya; 30 chüan): Mahāśāsaka school; obtained in Sri Lanka by Fa-hsien, who brought it to China.

Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya (根本說一切有部律: 18 parts, 194 chüan): Mūla (Basic)-sarvāstivāda school; brought by I-ching (義淨) to China from central India, where it is said to have been transmitted by followers of the Mahāyāna. (The Mūlasarvāstivādins are said to have had their centre at Mathurā.) There also exists a complete Tibetan translation, and considerable portions of the Sanskrit version are also extant.

[Pāli Recension]

Vinaya-piṭaka (律藏; 5 volumes): Theravāda school; edited by H. Oldenberg and published by the Pali Text Society, 1879–83. There are English and Japanese translations available.

Apart from the above complete recensions of the Vinaya-piṭaka there also exist a number of Chinese translations of various versions of independent prātimokṣa, karman, and skandhaka. Fragments of Sanskrit versions have also been discovered and are still being edited and published.
CHAPTER TEN

The History of Buddhism

The history of Buddhism is the history of the Buddhist community. As was explained in the Introduction, without the continuance of the *samgha* or Buddhist community there would have been no transmission or development of Buddhism up until the present. It is for this reason that so much importance is attached in Buddhism to the personal transmission of the teaching from one to another, in particular from master to disciple.

In the present context *samgha* is of course being used in its ideal sense, referring to the entire body of Buddhist followers. In regard to the individual schools and sects, however, it will be found that the actual history of Buddhism has been a history of division, a recurrence of ups and downs, rise and ruin. But this process gave birth to new developments in doctrine and also led to the dissemination of Buddhism to other regions, particularly to extensive regions outside of India. Today Buddhism is not only active in the lands of East and Southeast Asia, where it is supported by a powerful organization and large numbers of followers, but is also, although principally through the medium of the written word, attracting the attention of people in Europe and America on a philosophical level and further extending its influence.

This historical development of the Buddhist community in time and space may be illustrated by the diagram on the following page. As this diagram indicates, the history of Buddhism may be divided broadly into the history of Indian
Buddhism, namely, the development of the Buddhist community in the land of its birth—representing the trunk as it were—and the dissemination of Buddhism in neighbouring lands with its attendant developments—representing the branches as it were. These branches further sprouted twigs which each underwent additional growth while from time to time taking nourishment from the main trunk and major branches. But the main trunk itself—Indian Buddhism—collapsed as an organized community at the start of the thirteenth century owing to the community's internal circumstances and to external factors occasioned by the historical situation in which Indian society found itself at the time.

In this chapter we shall describe briefly the current of Indian Buddhism up until its fall and the history of the transmission of Buddhism in China, Korea, and Japan.

1. *Buddhism in India and the Surrounding Lands*

*The Basic Schism*
For a period of approximately one hundred years after Śākyamuni's
death the Buddhist community maintained a unified monastic organization, abiding by Śākyamuni’s teaching (Dharma) and observing the same community regulations (Vinaya). But the expansion of the community led to internal conflict in opinions, and on the subject of the interpretation of the Vinaya the community split into a conservative school composed of the upper stratum of monks and a progressive school centred on the mass of practitioners. The former was called the Sthaviravāda (P. Theravāda) or “Elders’ Doctrine” school (上座部) and the latter the Mahāsāṃghika or “Great Community” school (大衆部). This schism is said to have been occasioned either by a dispute over whether “ten points,” including the possession of money, were to be recognized as “pure rules” or by a difference in the interpretation of “five points” concerning the nature of the “saint” or one who had consummated his spiritual training.

There still remains much that is unclear about when the schism actually took place in history and what in real fact occurred. However, as a result of regional diversity and differences in doctrine, this basic schism led to further subdivision of the Buddhist community, heralding the advent of the period of “Schismatic Buddhism” (部派佛教); in all there are said to have been twenty schools. (Buddhism in its form prior to this period is called either “Primitive Buddhism” [原始佛教] or “Early Buddhism” [初期佛教].)

The Mauryan Dynasty and Dissemination to Sri Lanka
From the standpoint of the ideal, the schism within the Buddhist community may have been a regrettable event, but it was in fact a manifestation of the growth of the community. A powerful factor in the expansion of the community throughout India was provided by the unification of India under the Mauryan dynasty around the third century B.C. and the patronage given by the third ruler of this line, King Aśoka
(阿育王; acceded 268 B.C.). After the third century B.C. Buddhism came to spread not only within India but also to Sri Lanka (Ceylon) and the cultural sphere of Hellenism too. In the case of Sri Lanka Buddhism is, according to legend, said to have been first introduced through the missionary work of Mahinda, a son of Aśoka, and ever since Sri Lanka has thrived up until the present day as a major centre of Buddhism with a proud history. The Buddhism of Sri Lanka is of the Sthaviravāda (or Theravāda) school and is generally referred to as Theravāda Buddhism.

The Kushan Dynasty and the Northern Tradition of Buddhism

The fall of the Mauryan dynasty was followed in northern India by successive invasions of Greek and other foreign peoples, and as a result this region came under their rule. But for Buddhism this provided the occasion for its dissemination northwards. Among the Greek kings there were even some, such as for example Menandros (Milinda; reigned ca. 150 B.C.), who converted to Buddhism. Under the subsequent rule of the Scythians (Sakas) and others Buddhism gained wide acceptance among the various tribes of Central Asia. The decisive factor in these developments was provided by the rule of the Kushan (Kuṣāṇa) empire, founded in the first century A.D. by a branch of the Greater Yüeh-chih (大月氏) of Central Asian provenance, which extended from northern India to Central Asia. During this period Buddhism spread from Central Asia still further eastwards and was transmitted to China (in A.D. 67, according to the Chinese tradition).

King Kaniska (acceded A.D. 128) of the Kushans was no less fervent a believer of Buddhism than Aśoka had been. He ruled over northern India, with his capital at Gandhāra, and became in particular a patron of the Sarvāstivāda school,
one of the schismatic schools which was flourishing at the
time in northern India. As a result, the Sarvāstivādins be-
came thereafter the most powerful of the schismatic schools,
and were to maintain in northern India the centre of their
influence far into the future.

The Characteristics of Schismatic Buddhism
The doctrines of the Sarvāstivāda school may be summed up
in the proposition that “all elements are truly existent through-
out the three ages” (三世實有法體恒有), and “dependent co-
arising” was explained in terms of the interrelationship held
to obtain between the “truly existent” elements (see chap.
4). This doctrine was born as a result of the typological
classification and organized systematization of Śākyamuni’s
teaching (Dharma), and study of this nature was called “Abhi-
dharma” (the analysis or interpretation of the Dharma).
Generally speaking, each of the schools possessed a basic body
of scriptures consisting of the “Dharma,” or sūtras, and the
“Vinaya.” As a result of regional demands and the needs of
the times, the Vinaya gradually came to be coloured by char-
acteristics and variations peculiar to each of the schools, and
the sūtras too underwent changes in the process of transmis-
sion. But it was in the “interpretation of the Dharma” that
the distinctive features of each of the schools were demon-
strated most clearly. The individual schools codified such
interpretations of the Dharma in the form of “treatises,”
which they transmitted while developing still further original
doctrines of their own. In this sense the Buddhism of the
schismatic schools is also called “Abhidharma Buddhism.”

Among these schools, it was the Sarvāstivāda school which
produced the most systematic body of doctrine (embodied in the
Abhidharma-mahāvibhāṣa-tāstra [阿毘達磨大毘婆沙論:
Treatise of the Great Commentary on the Abhidharma], 200
chüan). The Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya is important as a repre-
sentative synopsis of Sarvāstivādin thought. If one excludes the Theravāda school of Sri Lanka, the treatises of only a small number of other schools, such as the Dharmaguptaka (法藏部), Sautrāntika (經量部), and Sāmmatiya (正量部) schools, are extant in Chinese translations, and as for the remaining schools almost nothing is known about them except for references found in mainly Sarvāstivādin works.

In this manner the schismatic schools made a considerable contribution to the formulation of Buddhist doctrine. But their members were composed mainly of renunciant practitioners, and the genesis of their doctrines was due in no small degree to the fact that they were able to enjoy a life of stability under the patronage of kings and other representatives of secular authority, devoting themselves to study and practice. There is also no denying the fact that the intricacies of their doctrines tended to devitalize Buddhism and cause the element of faith to wither away. Resistance to this among the lay believers and self-reflection on the part of the renunciants themselves eventually gave rise to a new religious movement.

The Birth of Mahāyāna Buddhism
This new movement is thought to have been born from among the lay groups of devotees which had congregated around the memorial mounds or stūpas in which Śākyamuni’s remains had been enshrined. The members of these groups devoted themselves to eulogizing Śākyamuni, and their lives were centred on their faith in him. The deification of Śākyamuni is also thought to have been the product of such a milieu, and eventually they began to compose on their own initiative new sūtras as an instrument for the expression of their ideas. In these new scriptures, they called their own path the “Great Vehicle” (Mahāyāna) since it represented a large vehicle which aimed at the salvation of all, and referred
derogatively to the Buddhism of the existing schismatic schools as the “Inferior Vehicle” (Hinayana) since it was a path for only a limited number of renunciants. Whereas the teaching of Hinayana Buddhism was centred on the “Dharma,” the teaching of the Mahayana was centred on the “Buddha,” and in contrast to the Hinayana which represents a Buddhism with its focus on renunciants, the Mahayana may be described as a Buddhism with its focus on the laity. Mahayana Buddhism discovered the basis of its teaching for the laity in the concept “bodhisattva,” Sakyamuni’s designation in his former lives, and in his altruistic activities for the welfare of others; this term consequently became the appellation for any person who embodies the ideal of one who exerts himself on behalf of the Buddha for the sake of others. At the same time, the adherents of the Mahayana asserted that in regard to the Dharma too they had returned to the fundament of Sakyamuni’s teaching and were clarifying its true meaning.

This new teaching was gradually elaborated from after the first century B.C. in Mahayana sutras such as the Prajnaparamitā-sūtra, Lotus Sūtra and Avatamsaka-sūtra. As distinctive features of its doctrines, it may be noted that the philosophy of “emptiness” lies at its basis and that it places emphasis on the absolutization of the Buddha in his status as the Dharma-body and on “wisdom” and “expedient means” (practice of compassion) as the activities of the Buddha. Mahayana Buddhism as a Buddhism of faith is found typically formulated in the Pure Land teachings of the Sukhāvatīvyūha and related works.

The Mādhyamika and Yogācāra Schools
It was principally through the achievements of Nāgarjuna (龍樹), born in the second century A.D. in southern India, and Vasubandhu (世親), who was active around the fifth century under the rule of the Gupta dynasty, that the doctrines of
Mahāyāna Buddhism were formulated and systematized.

On the basis of the teachings of the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra, Nāgārjuna gave a philosophical explication of the doctrine of "emptiness," composing the Madhyamaka-kārikā (中頌：Middle Verses), and in the Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa he presented in a systematic fashion the doctrines of the Mahāyāna through the medium of an exegesis of the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra. Since his achievement was basic and of universal significance for Buddhism, all Buddhists of later ages sought a foundation for their respective teachings in his views, and consequently he came to be known in China and Japan as the "patriarch of the eight schools" (八宗祖師). His disciples included Āryadeva (提婆), who composed the Śataka-śāstra (百論：Hundred [-verse] Treatise) and a number of other works.

Vasubandhu initially belonged to the Sarvāstivāda school and wrote the Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya, an introduction to this school of thought based on the doctrines of the Sautrāntika school. But later he was persuaded by his elder brother Asaṅga (無著) to convert to the Mahāyāna, and as successor to his brother he laid the foundations to a new body of doctrine. This current of thought had been developing since after the time of Nāgārjuna and is said to have been initiated by Maitreya (彌勒). In view of its methods of practice it was called the Yogācāra school, but on account of its philosophical features it is also known as the doctrine of cognition-only. Vasubandhu wrote commentaries on Maitreya's works and the works of Asaṅga, the latter including the Mahāyānasamgraha (攝大乘論：Compendium of the Mahāyāna), and also composed original treatises such as the Trimśikā-vijñaptimātratāsiddhi (唯識三十論：Thirty Verses on the Establishment of Cognition-only). The Vijñaptimātratasiddhi-śāstra (成唯識論：Treatise on the Establishment of Cognition-only) which is preserved in the Chinese is a commentary on this latter work.
This current of thought stemming from Vasubandhu flourished, becoming the mainstream of Mahāyāna Buddhism. But although its primary concern was with the analysis of the mind, it came under the strong influence of the Sarvāstivādins, assuming an Abhidharma-like character, and was gradually transformed into a complex body of thought. In opposition to this the Mādhyamika school, the direct successor to Nāgārjuna and his thought, began to assert itself in the sixth century, and lively debates took place between the two schools. During the course of these polemics Buddhist logic was brought to completion through the efforts of such figures as Dignāga (陳那) and Dharmakirti (法稱). But eventually Mahāyāna Buddhism too became a scholastic form of Buddhism, the monopoly of renunciant specialists, and gradually came to lose its initial lay colouring.

In addition to above, the current of Mahāyāna thought also embodies the teaching of the tathāgata-garbha and Buddhist-nature, which grew out of the teaching of the one vehicle in the Lotus Sūtra and is to be found developed in such sūtras as the Śrīmālā-sūtra and the Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra. The Ratnagotra-vibhāga and Mahāyānaśraddhotpāda-śāstra represent treatises in which this current of thought is presented systematically, but the allegiance as regards doctrinal schools of adherents of this doctrine lay mainly with the Yogācāra school. When the Chinese monks Hsüan-tsang (玄奘) and I-ching (義淨) visited India in the seventh century, they recorded that Mahāyāna Buddhism consisted of the Mādhyamika and Yogācāra schools and that among the schismatic schools the Sarvāstivāda, Sautrāntika and Sāṃmatiya schools were exercising the greatest influence.

The Age of Esoteric Buddhism
While the schools of Mahāyāna Buddhism were being transformed into scholastic forms of Buddhism, Esoteric or Tantric
Buddhism was coming to the fore, and winning large numbers of followers, it eventually became the mainstream of Indian Buddhism.

Esoteric Buddhism is a teaching characterized by magical rituals and a doctrine coloured with mysticism. Already from the time of Early Buddhism magical elements had been entering Buddhism, partly under the influence of Indian thought in general, and it had proved impossible to completely eliminate such elements, especially among the lay believers. This trend became even stronger in Mahāyāna Buddhism, which had arisen from among the laity, and while giving birth on the one hand to a philosophy of "emptiness," the majority of Mahāyāna sūtras also expound magic formulae called dhāraṇī (陀羅尼) and recommend them for their efficacy. Owing to its pantheistic leanings, it was easy for the teaching of the Buddha’s Dharma-body to become linked with mysticism, and it came to be considered that it was rather in an interpretation rooted in mysticism that the ultimate standpoint of Buddhism was to be found. It was in this manner that the doctrines of Esoteric Buddhism were established, in the guise of a new interpretation of Mahāyāna Buddhism. This was around the seventh century, and the first scripture belonging to this current of thought to appear was the Mahāvairocanabhīsambodhī-sūtra. This was followed a little later by the Sarvatahāgata-tattvasaṃgraha, in which the characteristic features of Esoteric Buddhism as distinct from Mahāyāna Buddhism were brought out quite clearly.

In Esoteric Buddhism it is regular practice to set up a maṇḍala (曼荼羅) depicting the world of the Buddhas, bodhisattvas and other deities, in front of which the practitioner performs ritual hand-gestures (mudrā, 印契), chants incantations (mantra, 真言), and practises yoga (瑜伽). The mantra, also rendered in Chinese by "spell" (呪), is synonymous with dhāraṇī and is generally translated in Chinese as
“true word” (真言) because it is considered that the essence of the Buddha’s teaching is contained therein. And since Esoteric Buddhism lays greatest emphasis upon the mantra, it is also called the “Mantra Vehicle” (mantra-yāna, 真言乘).

With the development of its own methods of yoga, the doctrines and practices of Esoteric Buddhism were formulated in careful detail, and this resulted in the birth of various schools. These included the “Adamantine Vehicle” (vajrayāna, 金剛乘), “Innate Vehicle” (sahaja-yāna, 俱生乘), and “Time-wheel Vehicle” (kālacakra-yāna, 時輪乘; based on the Kālacakra-tantra), and there even appeared an unorthodox libertine path of so-called “left-handed” practices. Equating the female with wisdom and the male with expedient means, it sought the ideal state of the union of wisdom and expedient means (or compassion) in the union of male and female. Esoteric Buddhism represents a form of practice underscored by the Buddha’s standpoint (秘密行: secret practice; 三密: three mysteries), and as such it lacks somewhat in elements of cultivation based on self-discipline, affirming instead present actualities as they are. Consequently it was welcomed as readily accessible to the general populace, but at the same time it harboured the danger of moral degeneration. In late Esoteric Buddhism the scriptural texts are called tantra (“warp,” in contrast to sūtra) and their contents concern mainly directions and rules for ritual practice (kalpa, 儀軌). The term tantra is used also in Hindu esotericism in the meaning of “scripture,” and accordingly Indian esotericism is in a broad sense also known as “Tantrism.” It is probable that the left-handed practices of the Vajrayāna developed under the influence of Hindu Tantrism.

When the Mohammedans commenced their invasions of northern India in the eleventh century, Indian Buddhism had under the name of Tantric Buddhism become almost indis-
tistinguishable from Hinduism. Later, when the large monasteries of Bengal were destroyed by the Mohammedan armies in the early thirteenth century and Buddhism became deprived of its strongholds, renunciant practitioners and scholar-monks, carrying with them copies of the scriptures, sought refuge in Nepal and Tibet. And with the collapse of the monastic organization, adherents of Buddhism were gradually absorbed by Hinduism. Thus Indian Buddhism met its end.

**Tibetan Buddhism**

The establishment of Tibet as a unified nation took place in the seventh century A.D. This corresponded to the time of the T'ang dynasty in China, and the Buddhism of Tibet developed in its early stages through importation from both Nepal and the T'ang. But since Tibet was more closely linked both geographically and culturally with India, once the political connections with China wore thin, the influence of Chinese Buddhism declined, and from the ninth century onwards Buddhism continued to be imported primarily from India. A factor in these developments was a debate held between Indian and Chinese monks in which the latter were defeated (late eighth century).

In accordance with the trends of the times, the Buddhism which entered Tibet was Mahāyāna Buddhism, accompanied by Esoteric Buddhism. In particular, the immigration of large numbers of Indian monks to Tibet in the wake of the Mohammedan invasions would appear to have given impetus to the prominent position of Esoteric Buddhism. In this manner the various schools of Tibetan Buddhism centred on Esoteric Buddhism (called rNying-ma-pa or "Old Schools") appeared one after the other. During this period Atiśa (982–1054), who entered Tibet in the eleventh century and had himself been initiated into Esoteric Buddhism, endeavoured to introduce the doctrines of the Mahāyāna in unadulterated form
into Tibet. His efforts were not sufficient to change the character of Tibetan Buddhism, but in later years when Tsong-kha-pa appeared and advocated a reform of Buddhism, he declared that he was following in the footsteps of Atiśa and his teachings in doing so.

On the occasion of the establishment of the Yüan dynasty following the Mongol conquest of China in the thirteenth century, Tibet too came under its rule. However, 'Phags-pa (發合思巴, 發思巴, 八思巴) of the Sa-skya-pa school succeeded in converting the emperor, and with the emperor's assistance not only was he able to spread Buddhism to Mongolia but the Buddhist order also won political control of Tibet. This again became a cause for the degeneration of Buddhism, and such was the situation when Tsong-kha-pa (1357–1419) arrived on the scene in the fourteenth century.

Tsong-kha-pa called his school the dGe-lugs-pa school, and he succeeded in bringing his reform to fruition through the enforcement of the strict observance of the precepts. His is the school which today constitutes the mainstream of Tibetan Buddhism. The position of leader of this order later came to be passed down through a religious head called the “Dalai Lama,” but the manner of succession is not master-disciple transmission but an original method based on rebirth. The fifth Dalai Lama also won political power, as a result of which Tibet became what might be termed a hierocratic state. But today Tibet is under the rule of the People’s Republic of China, and the fourteenth Dalai Lama is at present residing in exile in India.

Modern European scholars named the Buddhism of Tibet "Lamaism" since they considered it to be the teaching of the lamas (bla-ma, 上人: teacher, master). But in order to avoid any misunderstanding that Tibetan Buddhism be something distinct from Buddhism in general, this appellation is not used today.
The Southern Tradition of Buddhism

Buddhism had already been transmitted to Sri Lanka (Ceylon) in the third century B.C., and in the first century A.D. the threefold canon or *tri-piṭaka* consisting of the Collections of the Sūtras, Precepts and Treatises is said to have been transcribed in Ceylonese script. This is the Pāli Canon which has been used in the Southern tradition of Buddhism as the authoritative corpus of scriptures up until the present day.

In the fifth century Buddhaghosa (佛音) appeared, and composing commentaries on the majority of the scriptures, he finalized the codification of the doctrine. Ever since this time the Buddhism of Sri Lanka has preserved up until the present day a tradition of faithfully observing this established body of teaching. This is a distinctive feature not to be found in Indian Buddhism or in the Buddhism of China and Japan, and this same attitude has been maintained in the Buddhism which spread from Sri Lanka to various regions in southern Asia. In the eyes of Buddhists in such lands as Japan this becomes reason for referring disparagingly to the Southern tradition of Buddhism as the Hinayāna and bemoaning it as conservative. But the adherents of this Southern tradition are firmly convinced that it is they themselves who are the true custodians of the teaching of the Buddha, and there is in fact much to be learnt from their strict adherence to the precepts.

The Theravāda Buddhism of Sri Lanka was introduced to Burma in the eleventh century and entered Thailand in the thirteenth century. From Thailand it further spread to Laos, Cambodia, and southern Vietnam, and in this manner the present order of the Southern tradition of Buddhism was established. There has been interchange between the Buddhist communities of these lands all along, and at one stage when there had been a temporary break of the Theravāda tradition in Sri Lanka monks were received from Burma.
In the past there have existed large numbers of Buddhists also in the regions of Southeast Asia extending from the Malay Peninsula through Sumatra, Java and as far as Borneo. The majority of these arrived together with Indian immigrants from eastern and southern India around the eighth and ninth centuries, and their Buddhism was a form of Mahāyāna Buddhism coloured by Esoteric Buddhism and containing elements of Hinduism. As in the case of the Indian mainland, it too disappeared with the inroads of the Moham medans.

The fact that the Theravāda Buddhism of Sri Lanka with its firmly established monastic order of renunciants has continued to flourish up until the present day, whereas Esoteric Buddhism and Mahāyāna Buddhism have vanished from these regions, would seem to give some sort of hint at the form that it is desirable for Buddhism to take.

**The Revival of Buddhism in India**

When in the nineteenth century under the colonial rule of England cries were being raised for a renaissance of Indian culture, there arose in India a Buddhist revivalistic movement under Dharmapāla and others from Sri Lanka. As a result, the restoration of the pagoda at Buddhagayā was effected and it was placed in the charge of Buddhists. This movement was centred on the Mahā Bodhi Society. At the same time there also arose among the so-called "untouchable" lower classes a movement which adopted Buddhism with its principle of the equality of the four castes as an anti-Hindu rallying point. Following India's independence, this movement succeeded in performing on the occasion of the Buddha Jayanti celebrations commemorating the 2,500th anniversary of Śākyamuni's death (1956) a group conversion to Buddhism under the leadership of B.R. Ambedkar. Consequently the number of Buddhists in India today has reached 3,800,000.
In addition, the influx of Tibetans and the activities of the Nihonzan Myōhōjī (日本山妙法寺) from Japan and similar movements have also contributed to the considerable vitality of Buddhism in India today.

2. Chinese Buddhism

The Introduction of Buddhism

According to legend, the history of Chinese Buddhism begins in the tenth year of the Yung-p'ing (永平) era (A.D. 67) during the reign of the Emperor Ming (明帝) in the Later Han (後漢) when Kāśyapa Mātanga (迦葉摩騰) and Chu Fa-lan (竺法蘭) came to Lo-yang (洛陽) from Scythia and translated the Sū-shih-ērh-chang ching (四十二章經: Sūtra in Forty-two Sections). But in actual fact it is probable that Buddhism had been gradually introduced by people from Central Asia who had been visiting China as a result of the management of Central Asia by the Former Han (前漢) ever since the second century B.C.

In the early stages of the transmission of Buddhism to China, the Chinese were rather hesitant in accepting this foreign religion, for Confucianism provided the guidelines for their government and they also took pride in their cultural traditions. By the time of the Western Chin (西晉) following the upheavals of the Three Kingdoms (三國) period Taoism had spread among the upper classes, and under the influence of this trend Buddhism too began to infiltrate into Chinese society as a teaching which concurred with the teachings of Taoism. Buddhism was thus during this period comprehended through the medium of Taoism, and even in the translation of sūtras Taoist concepts were used. (This method of interpreting Buddhism was called “matching the meaning” [格義].)
Buddhism Takes Root: The Period of the Northern and Southern Dynasties

It was after entering the period of the Northern and Southern dynasties (南北朝) that Buddhism really took root in China and underwent spectacular developments. Prior to this the Western Chin dynasty, put to flight by the might of Turkic tribes, had moved to Chiang-nan (江南) where the Eastern Chin (東晉) dynasty had been founded. This became the first step in the advance of Buddhism to southern China and also allowed Buddhism to succeed in planting its roots in Chinese society.

As a figure of epoch-making importance and representative of this period mention must be made of Kumārajiva (鳩摩羅什; 344–413) and his activities in the sphere of translation. He was popularly known by the name of the Tripitaka Master Lo-shih (羅什三藏) and is famous for his translations of many Mahāyāna sūtras, including the Lotus Sūtra which is still venerated and used today, and of important treatises such as the Madhyamaka-śāstra (中論: Middle Treatise; a commentary on Nāgārjuna's Madhyamaka-kārikā) and the Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa. Owing to his translations the Chinese are said to have attained an orthodox understanding of Buddhist doctrine for the first time. Many Buddhist scriptures had already been translated prior to Kumārajiva, and there had also been skilled translators such as Dharmarākṣa (竺法護; third century), also known as the Bodhisattva of Tun-huang (敦煌菩薩), but still these earlier translations did not read as natural Chinese and consequently yielded their position to those of Kumārajiva. The translations dating from before Kumārajiva are today referred to as the “ancient translations” (古譯).

The principal elements of Kumārajiva’s thought were passed on by Sèng-chao (僧肇) and other disciples, and the earlier interpretation of “emptiness” based upon Taoist “nothing-
ness” (無) was discarded and the concept of “emptiness” as rooted in *prajñā* or “wisdom” came to be correctly comprehended for the first time. It was out of this tradition that the San-lun and T‘ien-t‘ai schools (the latter based upon the *Lotus Sūtra*) were to be born in later years.

When considering the manner in which Buddhism took root in China, one cannot afford to overlook certain figures who predate Kumārajiva: Tao-an (道安; 312–85), who put in order the Buddhist scriptures already translated into Chinese and organized the rules of discipline, and Hui-yūan (慧遠; 334–416) of Lu-shan (廬山), who encouraged the practice of meditation and the Amitābha cult, as well as the activities of the White Lotus Society (白蓮社) founded by Hui-yūan.

After Kumārajiva’s death the task of translating the scriptures was pursued with ever greater zeal. In particular, the translation of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* (大方廣佛華嚴經) by Buddhahadra (佛頂駁陀羅) during the Eastern Chin dynasty and the translation of the Mahāyāna *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* (大般涅槃經) by Dharmakṣema (曇無谶) of the Northern Liang (北涼) exerted considerable influence upon later developments in Chinese Buddhism. The *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* especially, with its doctrines that “the Tathāgata is eternal and unchanging” and that “all sentient beings possess Buddha-nature,” appearing at first sight to run counter to the “emptiness” of the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*, had a great impact from the very outset. Furthermore, it would appear that for the Chinese people this strongly affirmative standpoint rather than any negative mode of expression was the more readily understood, and these doctrines rapidly spread to become the fundamental ideas of Chinese Buddhism.

Whereas during the period of the Southern dynasties it was the upper classes who endeavoured to absorb Buddhist thought on an individual basis (this was so even in the case of the famous Emperor Wu [武帝] of Liang [梁]), the Buddhism of
the Northern dynasties had a strong state colouring. This feature was carried over by the subsequent Sui and T'ang dynasties and became one of the outstanding characteristics of Chinese Buddhism. In particular, the Northern Wei (北魏) dynasty, with its long period of rule (386–534), was in general well-disposed towards Buddhism, even though there did at times appear rulers such as the Emperor T'ai Wu (太武帝) who ordered a persecution of Buddhism, and under its rule Buddhism enjoyed remarkable growth. The caves at Yün-kang (雲岡) and Lung-mén (龍門) were also products of this dynasty. But among the monks there also appeared some who entertained ideas likening the emperor to the Tathāgata. This was in marked contrast to for example Hui-yüan who had composed a work entitled Sha-mên pu-ch'ing wāng-chē lun (沙門不敬王者論: A Monk Does Not Pay Homage to a King).

In regard to the translation of Buddhist scriptures during the period of the Northern Wei dynasty, the introduction of Yogācāra doctrines by Bodhiruci (菩提流支) and others in the early sixth century is of importance. In China this current of thought developed its ideas on the basis of Vasubandhu's Daśabhūmikasūtra-śāstra (十地經論: Treatise on the Sūtra of the Ten Stages) and was accordingly known as the Ti-lun or “Stage Treatise” school (地論宗).

In the sphere of Yogācāra thought, there subsequently appeared the Shē-lun or “Compendium Treatise” school (讐論宗) based on the Mahāyānasamgraha which was translated by Paramārtha (真諦; 499–569) towards the end of the Liang dynasty. This school of thought did not gain acceptance in the south and spread first in the north. The Ti-lun school was later absorbed by this current.

Paramārtha's other translations include the Mahāyānasraddhāotpāda-śāstra. This treatise, expounding Tathāgatagarbha thought, was circulated from an early stage in the north by
the Ti-lun school and eventually came to exert great influence upon all aspects of Chinese Buddhism.

*The Establishment of Chinese Buddhism: The Sui and T'ang Dynasties*

It was stated above that the period of the Northern and Southern dynasties represents an age when Buddhism took root in Chinese society. However, as far as the doctrines of Buddhism are concerned, it was an era totally devoted to the import and assimilation of Buddhism. It was only after entering the Sui (隋) dynasty that these doctrines were fully digested and transformed into a form of Buddhism truly Chinese in character.

But first it must be noted that the concept “school” (*tsung*, 宗) as used in Chinese Buddhism is quite different in its connotations from the same term as used in Japanese Buddhism (*shū*, 宗), where it is closer to “sect” in meaning. In the first place, *tsung* signifies a school of thought or a doctrinal system based upon a particular interpretation of the scriptures, and does not refer to mutually exclusive religious groups. Up until the period of the Northern and Southern dynasties these schools of thought had in the main been groups each distinguished by particular interpretations of doctrine based upon a specific sūtra or treatise. Towards the end of this period, however, a new trend developed whereby it became customary to determine by various criteria which of the vast number of translated scriptures was to be considered supreme and to comprehend the complete corpus of Śākyamuni’s teaching by organizing the scriptures under some unifying principle. Such methods of classification were called “critical interpretation of the aspects of the doctrine” (敘相判釋; also abbreviated to 敘判). As a result of such selective classification there arose new schools of thought, such as the San-lun school of Chi-tsang, with its theories of the two-
fold canon and the three turnings of the Dharma-wheel, and
the T‘ien-t‘ai school based on Chih-i’s doctrine of five periods
and eight teachings. We shall now briefly describe those
schools which were established during the Sui and T‘ang (唐)
dynasties.

(1) San-lun school (三論宗): As was noted above, this
school derives from the teachings transmitted by Kumārajīva’s
disciples. However, the establishment of its doctrines was
the achievement of Chi-tsang (吉藏; 549–623). (The term
san-lun [三論] or “three treatises” refers to Nāgārjuna’s
Madhyamaka-śāstra and Dwādaśamukha-śāstra [十二門論:
Twelve-gate Treatise] and the Śataka-śāstra by his disciple
Āryadeva.) Apart from composing the San-lun hsūan-i (三
論玄義: Profound Meaning of the Three Treatises), in which
he expounded the doctrines of this school, Chi-tsang also
wrote commentaries on a large number of sūtras and pro-
pagated the ideas of “emptiness” and prajñā.

(2) T‘ien-t‘ai school (天台宗): The doctrines of this school
were brought to their final codification by the third patriarch
Chih-i (智顗; 538–97), who succeeded Hui-wén (慧文) and
Hui-ssū (慧思) of Nan-yüeh (南嶽). Settling on Mt. T‘ien-
t‘ai (天台山), he devoted himself to furthering his experiences
in meditation, on the basis of which he created his own
method of spiritual cultivation called chih-kuan (止觀) or
“calm and insight.” His body of doctrine was centred on
the Lotus Sūtra, and he did much to encourage the cir-
culation of this scripture. Distinctive terms in T‘ien-t‘ai
thought are the “perfect interpenetration of the threefold
truth” (三諦圓融) and “one thought is equivalent to the three
thousand (modes of existence)” (一念三千), and it propounds
a theory of “intrinsic inclusiveness” (性具) according to which
“each of the ten realms mutually contains (the other nine)”
(十界互具).

(3) San-chieh teaching (三階敎): Towards the end of the
Northern Ch’i (北齊) dynasty, when the idea of the latter days of the Dharma (末法) was much in vogue, this San-chieh teaching was propounded by Hsin-hsing (信行) as a religion suited to the times. San-chieh (三階) or “three stages” refers to the three stages into which the temporal development of Buddhism may be divided, and according to this teaching the third stage is one in which on the basis of the doctrine of Buddha-nature all people are equally worthy of respect. This school emphasized religious practice, and because its followers formed fraternities it frequently met with suppression by the authorities.

(4) Pure Land teaching (淨土教): As a teaching suited to the age of the latter days of the Dharma, similar to the San-chieh teaching, the Pure Land teaching taught rebirth in the Pure Land. This teaching goes back to T’san-luan (曇鸞; 476–542?) of the Northern Wei who wrote a commentary on Vasubandhu’s Sukhāvatīvyūhopadesa (無量壽經論, 淨土論, 往生論: Instruction on the Sukhāvatīvyūha) entitled the Wangshēng-lun chu (往生論注: Commentary on the Treatise of Rebirth [in the Pure Land]) and taught the practice of reciting and meditating on the name of Amitābha. Upon entering the T’ang dynasty, Tao-ch’o (道绰; 562–645) appeared and established a body of doctrine based on the Kuan wu-liang-shou ching (觀無量壽經: Sūtra on Visualization of [the Buddha] Infinite Life). His teachings were brought to their final completion by his disciple Shan-tao (善導; 613–81), the fundamental tenets of whose thought are to be found expounded in his Kuan-ching su (觀經疏: Commentary to the Sūtra on Visualization). The Pure Land teaching was not so much a school of thought but rather a religious movement which extended its influence as far as the general populace, and its teaching of reciting the name of the Buddha was to remain imbued in the minds of the Chinese people far into the future.

(5) Ch’an schools (禪宗): Ch’an was first introduced to
China by Bodhidharma (菩提達摩) during the time of the Northern Wei dynasty, but the foundation of the Ch' an schools as we know them today was consolidated by Hui-nêng (慧能; 638–713), also known as the Sixth Patriarch (六祖). Subsequently the so-called Southern school (南宗) or Hung-chou school (洪州宗) of Ch' an was established by masters such as Ma-tsu (馬祖) of Chiang-hsi (江西) and Shih-t'ou (石頭) of Hu-nan (湖南), and this became the mainstream of Ch' an, developing into the Five Houses and Seven Schools (五家七宗) of Lin-chi (臨濟), Ts'ao-tung (曹洞), Yün-mên (雲門), Fa-yen (法眼), and Kuei-yang (潯仰). The period prior to this saw the vicissitudes of currents such as the Niu-t'ou school (牛頭宗), Northern school (北宗), and Ho-tsê school (荷澤宗).

The Ch' an schools advocate the principles of “separate transmission outside of the teaching” (教外別傳) and “not establishing words” (不立文字), and their motto is “to see one's intrinsic nature and become a Buddha” (見性成佛), but these are all tenets which were established after the time of Hui-nêng. Because Ch' an does not rely upon any particular sūtra, it was able to develop original ideas of its own, and great numbers of yü-lu (語錄), or “recorded sayings” of the masters, and kung-an (公案), or “cases,” were produced as a mode of expression for its thought. Another of its characteristics is the importance it attaches to transmission from master to disciple.

(6) Fa-hsiang school (法相宗): Hsüan-tsang (玄奘; 602–64) first studied Yogācāra thought under the Shê-lun school, but unable to find satisfaction in the teachings of this school, he departed for India in search of the true Yogācāra teachings. After eighteen years of study he returned to China, bringing back with him a large number of Yogācāra texts, including the Yogācarabhūmi and Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi-śāstra. He further translated many sūtras and treatises, including the
Mahāprajñāparamitā-sūtra (大般若經: Sūtra of the Great Perfection of Wisdom) in 600 chüan, and is regarded as a representative figure among the translators of Buddhist scriptures into Chinese. He considered the earlier translations of works related to Yogācāra thought to be inaccurate, asserting that his own "new translations" (新譯) were the more correct. Consequently, translations predating those of Hsüan-tsang are generally known as "old translations" (舊譯).

Hsüan-tsang himself ended his career as a translator, but his disciple Chi (基; 632–82), also known as the Great Master Tz'ü-én (慈恩大師), systematized the doctrines of the Fa-hsiang school on the basis of his master's teachings. The tenets of this school were organized on the basis of the Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi-śāstra, and the Abhidharma doctrines of the Abhidharma-kosā-bhāṣya and similar works were also highly valued. For a time this school greatly flourished, eclipsing all other schools, but because it regarded the doctrine of the three vehicles as supreme and propounded a theory of "five distinctive natures" (五性各別), asserting that there were some sentient beings who would never attain Buddhahood, it was criticized by the mainstream T'ien-t'ai and other schools which stood by the doctrine of the one vehicle, and later with the establishment of the Hua-yen school by Fa-tsang it rapidly declined.

(7) Hua-yen school (華嚴宗): Following the transmission and translation of the Avataṃsaka-sūtra, commentators and practitioners taking this sūtra as their authority gradually began to appear. One of these was Tu-shun (杜順; 554–640), who is regarded as the founder of the Hua-yen school, and he was succeeded by Chih-yen (智嚴; 602–68) and Fa-tsang (法藏; 643–712). It was Fa-tsang who completed the codification of the doctrines of this school. These doctrines, which carry over from those of the Ti-lun school and interpret the Avataṃsaka-sūtra via the medium of the doc-
trine of “dependent co-arising from the tathāgata-garbha” (如來藏緣起) as expounded in the Mahāyānaśraddhotpāda-
sāstra, are centred on the doctrine referred to as the inex-
haustibly interpenetrating “dependent co-arising from the Dharmarealm” (法界緣起). Furthermore, the intrinsic virtues
of the Tathāgata are said to be manifested in each and every
sentient being, and this is called “the arising of intrinsic
nature” (性起). Fa-tsang won the favour of Empress Wu
(武后), and under her patronage the Hua-yan school came
to wield considerable influence. One reason behind this
growth was perhaps the fact that the doctrine of dependent
coa-rising from the Dharmarealm provided a world view sup-
porting the ideology of the T'ang empire.

After Fa-tsang, the Hua-yan school flourished to an even
greater degree owing to the efforts of Ch'eng-kuan (澄觀)
and Tsung-mi (宗密), but finally it was assimilated by the
Ch'an schools which had fully absorbed its doctrines. The
doctrines of the Hua-yan school may be said to rival those
of the T'ien-t'ai school, and together these two schools repre-
sent the acme of Buddhist theory to have been born in China.

(8) Discipline schools (律宗): The organization of monastic
orders in China begins with Tao-an’s arranging of the Vinaya.
On the basis of subsequent study of the various institutions
such as ordination described in the Caturvargika-vinaya, vari-
ous schools devoted to research of the precepts were es-
stablished. The most influential among these was the Discipline
school of the Southern Mountain (南山律宗), founded by Tao-
hsüan (道宣; 596–667). Tao-hsüan is also important as a
Buddhist historian. The wish to amend the deficiencies in
the Vinaya texts had earlier inspired Fa-hsien (法顯; 339–
420) to travel to India for the purpose of further study, re-
sulting in his translation of the Pāñcavargika-vinaya and his
Fo-kuo chi (佛國記: Record of Buddhist Kingdoms), and during
the T'ang dynasty I-ching (義淨; 635–713) was similarly
motivated to visit India. I-ching brought back to China the Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya and also described the state of the Buddhist communities in the countries of Southeast Asia in the account of his travels entitled Nan-hai chi-kuei nei-fa chuan (南海寄歸內法傳: A Record of Buddhist Practices Sent Home from the Southern Sea).

Whereas the Discipline schools endeavoured to faithfully observe the precepts as transmitted from India and thus provided the standards for the regulations governing the monastic orders, there arose among the Ch’an schools as a result of an awareness of the incompatibility of Indian institutions with Chinese social customs a movement to formulate regulations of their own. These were called “pure rules” (清規) and consist of regulations covering all aspects of daily life. They were established by Pai-chang Huai-hai (百丈懷海; 720–814). An outstanding feature of these “pure rules” was the emphasis attached to physical labour and the recognition of a self-sufficient mode of life for the monasteries. This was something which would have been quite inconceivable in India.

(9) Esoteric Buddhism (密教): The history of Esoteric Buddhism in China begins with the translation of the Mahāvairocanaśambodhi-sūtra by Śubhakarasīṇha (善無畏; 637–735). The Sarvatathāgatatattvaśāṅgraha was subsequently translated by Vajrabodhi (金剛智) and Amoghavajra (不空), and Indian Esoteric Buddhism of this period was introduced directly to China. The teachings of Śubhakarasīṇha and Amoghavajra were transmitted by their disciples I-hsing (一行) and Hui-kuo (惠果) and gradually began to take root in Chinese soil. But they had not yet developed into an established school when the Hui-ch’ang (會昌) persecution of Buddhism broke out (845) and any further chances of development were cut short. Esoteric Buddhism underwent original developments after having been transmitted to Japan by Hui-kuo’s disciple Kūkai (空海) and others.
Subsequent Developments
During the Sung (宋) dynasty and later times Buddhism met with retaliatory measures on the part of Confucianism, and any further development being arrested, it was once again relegated to a position on the fringes of Chinese society. Not only did the Neo-Confucianists of the Sung dynasty fully master Buddhist metaphysics but they even launched attacks on Buddhism. The Buddhists for their part attempted to counter this by advocating for example the integration of the three teachings of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, but instead they only divested themselves of any originality they might have had. Following a period during which Tibetan Buddhism was introduced in the Yüan (元) dynasty, a form of Buddhism combining the practices of Ch‘an and the recitation of Amitābha’s name came to constitute the mainstream of Chinese Buddhism and has continued to do so up until the present day. However, the influence of Buddhism is evident among Confucian scholars, and the influence of Ch‘an thought is particularly prominent in the pragmatic school of Wang Yang-ming (王陽明; 1472–1528). Ch‘an has further provided the undercurrent of Chinese Buddhism in the form of the chū-shih (居士) or “lay” Buddhist movement.

3. Korean Buddhism

In Japan it is often said that Japanese Buddhism has its origins in three lands: India, China, and Japan itself. As far as Buddhism since the middle of the Nara period is concerned, this course of transmission is in accordance with the facts. But from the time of its initial introduction to Japan up until the early part of the Nara period Buddhism was imported via the countries of the Korean Peninsula, namely, the kingdoms of Koguryo (高句麗; also Koryo, 高麗), Paekche
(百濟), and Silla (新羅). Historically speaking, the influence exerted upon Japan by the Buddhism of these three countries has been quite considerable.

The earliest transmission of Buddhism to the Korean Peninsula is said to have taken place in A.D. 372 when Fu Chien (符堅) of the Former Ch‘in (前秦) dispatched envoys with Buddhist images to Koguryō. Thenceforth Koguryō absorbed the Buddhism of the Northern Wei and other Northern dynasties. Silla’s first contacts with Buddhism took place in the fifth century when it was introduced from Koguryō, although it is also said to have been first introduced in 527 by a monk named A-tao (阿道).

Paekche, on the other hand, was first exposed to Buddhism in 384 when a foreign monk by the name of Mo-lo-nan-t‘o (摩羅難提) transmitted it from the Eastern Chin, and he is said to have ordained ten monks at Hansan (漢山). In order to counter the influence of Koguryō, Paekche had from an early stage cultivated political connections with the Southern dynasties, and it is to be supposed that the Buddhism of the Southern dynasties continued to be imported after this time too. It was from Paekche that Buddhism was first transmitted to Japan in 538.

The characteristics of Buddhism in the kingdoms of the Korean Peninsula during this period remain unknown. However, the monk Hye-gwan (Jap. Ekan, 慧観) from Koguryō, who was invited at the time of Prince Shōtoku, transmitted the San-lun school to Japan, and To-jang (Jap. Dōzō, 道藏), who later arrived from Paekche, introduced the Ch‘êng-shih school (成實宗). This latter was a school which had flourished in the Southern court during the Liang dynasty.

In the wake of the unification of China under the Sui and T‘ang dynasties, Paekche and Koguryō were successively brought to their ruin and Silla, which had succeeded in checking the might of the T‘ang, completed the unification of the
peninsula. It was during this period that Korean Buddhism enjoyed the height of its growth. The principal figures at this time were Üi-sang (義湘; 625–702), who studied Hua-yen philosophy under Chih-yen and became the founder of the Hua-yen (K. Hwaöm) school in Korea, and Wôn-hyo (元曉; 618–86), who broke original ground through his own independent studies. Wôn-hyo was well-versed in the doctrines of the Hua-yen school, and the commentaries which he wrote were held in high regard in China, where they were known as the “Korean commentaries” (海東疏). Pursuing a way of life which avoided both monasticism and secularism, he mingled with the masses and contributed to the diffusion of Buddhism. The Hua-yen school was introduced to Japan by Sim-sang (Jap. Shinjö, 寧祥), who was invited from Silla. A Buddhist scholar of importance also from Silla was Wôn-ch’ük (圓測; 613–96) of the Fa-hsiang school who was active in China. Then there was also Hye-ch’o (慧超) who travelled as far as India.

The Ch’an school was introduced in the ninth century, and later during the Koryö period Chi-nul (知訥; 1158–1210) founded the Chogye school (曹溪宗). The Koryö dynasty also revered Buddhism, and one of its achievements was the printing of the Koryö edition of the Chinese Buddhist Canon. Üi-ch’ön (義天; 1054–1101) who revived the T’ien-t’ai school was also of royal birth.

Owing to the anti-Buddhist policy taken by the I (李) dynasty which had adopted Confucianism as its governing principle, Buddhism was prevented from achieving any further development: Up until the present day it has been the Chogye school, with which Hua-yen doctrines have been blended, that has wielded the greatest influence. At one stage, when Korea was under Japanese rule in the first half of the present century, monks adopted the customs of meat-eating and marriage, but the Chogye school has now abolished.
any such practices and is endeavouring to maintain a strict observance of the monastic code of discipline.

4. Japanese Buddhism

*The Introduction of Buddhism and Prince Shōtoku*

According to the *Nihon shoki* (日本書紀: Chronicles of Japan), the official record of early Japanese history, Buddhism was first introduced to Japan in the thirteenth year of the reign of Emperor Kinmei (欽明), namely, A.D. 552. But the date given in the *Gangōji engi* (元興寺緣起: History of Gangō-ji Temple) and *Jōgū shōtoku hōō teisetsu* (上宮聖德法王帝說: Imperial Biography of Prince Regent Shōtoku) is 538, and this is thought to be the more correct. But in actual fact Buddhism had probably already entered Japan prior to this time via immigrants from the Korean Peninsula. It would seem that the Soga (蘇我) clan, which had close contacts with these immigrants, acted as intermediary when King Sŏng-myŏng (聖明) of Paekche sent copies of Buddhist scriptures and an image of the Buddha—this represented the first official transmission of Buddhism to Japan—and following a struggle with the Mononobe (物部) and other clans who objected to Buddhism, the Soga clan overcame their opposition, this leading to the official recognition of Buddhism.

Shōtoku Taishi (聖德太子; 574–622), or Crown Prince Shōtoku, who had close links with the Soga clan, embraced Buddhism from an early age, and when he set about organizing the political structure of the state after having become regent, he actively strove to assimilate Buddhism along with the culture and institutions of the continent. The constitution of seventeen articles which he formulated extolled the value of harmony and recommended reverence of the Three Treasures. He was also zealous in his personal study of
Buddhism, undertaking various charitable works and giving lectures on Buddhist scriptures. The so-called “Commentaries on the Three Sūtras” (sangyō-gisho, 三經義疏), which commentate the Lotus Sūtra, Śrīmālā-sūtra and Vimalakīrtinir-deśa-sūtra, are said to have been composed by him.

The activities of Prince Shōtoku were instrumental in consolidating the foundations of Japanese Buddhism, and it is for this reason that Shinran was later to refer to him as the “religious founder of Japan,” an appraisal which may be considered to be held in common by all Japanese Buddhists. This feeling of respect for Prince Shōtoku gave birth to a cult centred on him, and it continues to live on in the present day.

The Sects of the Nara Period
After the reform of the Taika (大化) era (645–50), which followed the guidelines laid down by Prince Shōtoku, Buddhism came to be introduced not only from the Korean Peninsula but also directly from the Chinese mainland, and visits for the purpose of study by student-monks also multiplied. The state, which had adopted a policy of assimilating the new culture from the continent, caused large temples to be constructed and made active efforts to absorb Buddhism. But forces which wished to preserve Japan’s traditional customs and religion were also deep-rooted, and as a compromise measure the proponents of Buddhism formulated a doctrine of “original source and trace-manifestation” (honji-suijaku, 本地垂迹), according to which the Shintō gods of Japan were regarded as manifestations of the Buddhas and bodhisattvas of India. This amalgamation of Shintoism and Buddhism was to become a long-lasting feature of Japanese Buddhism. Thus the Nara (奈良) period (710–84) represents an age when, under the patronage of the state, efforts were initiated for the acclimatization of Buddhism to Japanese soil. But
in regard to doctrinal matters it was an age totally intent upon the absorption of Chinese Buddhism. As a result there appeared a number of schools or sects, each reflecting the different routes whereby Buddhism had been introduced. These were the so-called “six sects of the southern capital (Nara)” (nanto-rokushū，南都六宗).

(1) Sanron sect (三論宗): This school (corresponding to the Chinese San-lun school) was introduced at the time of Prince Shōtoku by the Korean monk Hye-gwan (Jap. Ekan, 慧觀) from Koguryō. He resided at Gangō-ji (元興寺) temple and lectured on the three treatises from which the name of this school derives. After his death, Gangō-ji became the centre of this school and produced many scholar-monks.

(2) Jōjitsu sect (成實宗): This school (corresponding to the Chinese Ch'êng-shih school) was first introduced by To-jang (Jap. Dōzō, 道藏), who arrived in Japan from Paekche in 721 and lectured on the Satyasiddhi-śāstra (成實論: Treatise on the Establishment of Truth) on which this school is based. But it remained to the end a school affiliated to the Sanron sect and does not seem to have assumed an independent existence.

(3) Hossō sect (法相宗): This school (corresponding to the Chinese Fa-hsiang school) was first introduced by Dōshō (道昭; 629–700), a student-monk who brought its teachings back from China during the Hakuchi (白雉) era (653). This school was subsequently transmitted a further four times by Japanese student-monks and monks from Silla. It had its centre at Kōfuku-ji (興福寺) temple, and the traditions of this school have also been preserved at other temples such as Hōryū-ji (法隆寺) and Yakushi-ji (藥師寺) up until the present day. In addition, there was also affiliated to this sect (4) the Kusha (Ch. Chü-shê) sect (俱舍宗), based upon the Abhidharmakośa-bhāsyā (kusha/chü-shê represents a transliteration of koṣa).
The Hossō sect preserved a tradition of studying both Yogācāra and Abhidharma doctrines and remained for a long time the centre of Buddhist academic studies, being held in esteem as a seat of learning by members of all sects.

(5) Kegon sect (華厳宗): The first transmission of this school (corresponding to the Chinese Hua-yen school) was by Sim-sang (Jap. Shinjō, 禪祥) of Silla who, received by Rōben (良辨; 689–773), lectured on the Avatamsaka-sūtra at Tōdai-ji (東大寺) temple. Rōben, who became his disciple, later established the Kegon sect in Japan. With its centre at Tōdai-ji, this sect continued to exert influence for a long time as representing the foundations of Mahāyāna Buddhism and has survived to the present day. During the Kamakura period, eminent monks such as Kōben (高辨) and Gyōnen (凝然) appeared, carrying out reforms of the monastic code and bringing about new developments in doctrine.

(6) Discipline sect (律宗): The story of the Chinese monk Chien-chên (Jap. Ganjin, 鑑真; 687–763), who refusing to despair after five abortive attempts finally succeeded in crossing over to Japan, is well-known, and his transmission of the Discipline school based upon the Caturvargika-vinaya and the establishment of a “precept platform” (kaidan, 戒壇), required for the ceremony of ordination, are of particularly important significance in that the admission of monks to the monastic order in accordance with the prescribed ordination ceremony became possible for the first time in Japan. Tō-shōdai-ji (唐招提寺) temple which he founded later became the head temple of the Discipline sect.

During the Nara period the number of monks permitted to be ordained was restricted by the state and all religious matters were under state control. Provincial temples (kokubun-ji, 國分寺), with their headquarters at Tōdai-ji, were established, one in each of the provinces, the duty of which was
to pray for the security of the state, and the significance of this measure too lay to no small degree in the fact that it symbolized the might and authority of the unified state. In this manner Buddhism was placed under the protection and control of the state, and owing to the extreme fears of the latter it was forbidden for monks to proselytize among the general populace and to undertake any public works. The reason that Gyōki (行基; 668–749) had initially been subject to oppression also lay in the fact that he had organized private groups and undertaken public works on his own initiative. But when it came to constructing Tōdai-ji, his influence could not be ignored, and he was utilized by putting him in charge of the collection of donations for this great undertaking. Links with the authorities eventually led to the degeneration of Buddhist monks.

The Tendai and Shingon Sects
During the early Heian (平安) period (794–1185) new currents of Buddhism were introduced from China by Saichō and Kūkai.

(1) Tendai sect (天台宗): Deploiring the corruption of the Buddhism of the Nara sects, Saichō (最澄; 766–822) founded Enryaku-ji (延暦寺) temple on Mt. Hiei (比叡山) to the north-east of Kyōto (京都) with the intention of training true monks such as might set an example for the nation. In the face of opposition from the Nara sects, he made an application to be allowed to ordain a number of monks each year; this being granted, he then established a Mahāyāna “precept platform” and laid down rules of ordination based on the “perfect and sudden precepts of the Mahāyāna” (daijō-endon-kai, 大乗圓頓戒). In the view of Saichō, the ordination ceremony performed by the Nara sects was that of the Hinayāna precepts and did not incorporate altruistic practices motivated by a
vow to save others. His action resulted in the birth of an ordination ceremony peculiar to Japan and representing a distinctive feature not found in any other parts of Asia.

In the sphere of doctrinal matters, Saichō adopted the doctrines of the Chinese T’ien-t’ai school and built up a body of doctrine founded on the doctrines of the one vehicle and universal attainment of Buddhahood as expounded in the *Lotus Sūtra*. But he also introduced elements of Ch’an, the Pure Land teachings, and Esoteric Buddhism, aiming at a synthesis of Mahāyāna Buddhism. As a result Mt. Hiei became a centre of academic studies, attracting great numbers of monks and eventually acting as cradle to the new Buddhist sects of the Kamakura period.

(2) Shingon sect (真言宗): Kūkai (空海; 773–835) crossed over to China at the same time as Saichō but remained in Ch’ang-an (長安) where he was directly initiated into Esoteric Buddhism by Hui-kuo, the disciple of Amoghavajra, and upon his return to Japan he founded a monastery on Mt. Kōya (高野山). As a youth he had undertaken ascetic practices as an unordained monk, and his circumstances presented a contrast to those of Saichō. He was also on good terms with the Nara sects, particularly the Kegon sect, and unlike Saichō he refrained from making excessive attacks on the older sects. In regard to monastic discipline, he observed the precepts prescribed by the traditional form of ordination, and this tradition came to be preserved as the Shingon Discipline sect (真言律宗). In addition, as in the case of Gyōki, he is recorded to have instructed the people and performed works for the public good. In short, his style contrasted in all aspects with that of Saichō, and his influence lives on today throughout Japan in the form of a cult centred on him, seen for example in the Shikoku (四國) pilgrimage.

The tenets of the Shingon sect have their foundation in the *Mahāvairocanābhisambodi-sūtra*, further blended with the
Sarvatathāgata-tattvasaṃgraha, and the doctrines of both these scriptures are symbolically represented by the Mahā-karunāgarbhasaṃbhava-maṇḍala (大悲胎藏生曼荼羅, generally abbreviated to 胎藏曼荼羅 : Maṇḍala born from the womb of great compassion) and Vajradhātu-maṇḍala (金剛界曼荼羅: Maṇḍala of the adamantine realm) respectively. By receiving the blessings of the “three mysteries” (sanmitsu, 三密; namely, the secret functionings of the body, speech and mind) of the Buddha through the power of mantra-chanting, it is taught that the practitioner is able to enter the world of the Buddha. Kūkai expressed this as the “attainment of Buddhahood with this very body” (sokushin-jōbutsu, 即身成佛) or “the phenomenal is no different from reality” (sokuji-nishin, 即事而真). The inner profundities of these teachings are not easy to penetrate, but through its ritual services for worldly benefits the Shingon sect won a broad spectrum of support, ranging from the nobility to the general populace.

In the case of the Tendai sect, Saichō’s disciple Ennin (円仁) crossed over to China in accordance with Saichō’s wishes and again transmitted Esoteric Buddhism to Japan. Ever since, this branch of Esoteric Buddhism has been called Tai-mitsu (台密), meaning the Esoteric Buddhism of the Tendai sect, and in contrast it has become customary to refer to the Shingon sect as Tōmitsu (東密) since one of its centres was Tō-ji (東寺; also known as Kyōōgokoku-ji, 敬王護國寺) temple in Kyōto.

Both the Tendai and Shingon sects developed into religious orders with an organization of an exclusive nature, and in this respect they represent the prototypes of the Buddhist sects of Japan. In regard to matters of doctrine too both took the standpoint of the universal attainment of Buddhahood, the former advocating “innate enlightenment” and the latter teaching the “attainment of Buddhahood with this very
body”; compared with the tenets of Indian Buddhism which demand a period of practice staggering to the imagination in its length, both these schools advocate doctrines coming close to an affirmation of the present life. This too may be regarded as indicative of a characteristic of later forms of Japanese Buddhism. But insofar as they received the patronage of the court and nobility and were unable to expunge completely the traits of state Buddhism, both sects belong to the same category as the Buddhism of the Nara sects.

The Rise of the Pure Land Teachings
Around the middle of the Heian period, the idea of rebirth in the Pure Land through nenbutsu (念仏) or the recitation of Amitābha’s name was gaining in popularity on Mt. Hiei, and through the nobility it gradually come to spread among the masses too. This movement is thought to have been influenced by the continual strife taking place in the provinces and the belief that this strife was linked to the advent of the latter days of the Dharma (mappō, 末法; the seventh year of the Eishō [永承] era [1052] during the reign of Emperor Goreizei [後冷泉] corresponded to the two-thousandth year since Śākyamuni’s death, and the following year was believed to mark the beginning of the latter days of the Dharma). As a result the populace seriously began to cherish thoughts of escape from this defiled world and to aspire to rebirth in the Pure Land. A work entitled Ōjō yōshū (往生要集: Essentials of Rebirth) by Genshin (源信; 942–1017) exerted a particularly potent influence, and thenceforth the nenbutsu movement was to become ever stronger.

Such was the situation when Hōnen (法然; 1133–1212) appeared and advocated the exclusive practice of the nenbutsu, claiming that for rebirth in the Pure Land no other form of practice be necessary. His declaration of independence from the Tendai sect marks the founding of the Jōdo or “Pure
Land” sect (淨土宗). His disciples included Shinran (親鸞; 1173–1262), who in place of the nenbutsu as a method of practice emphasized the function of the nenbutsu as an act of thanksgiving based on the belief that our rebirth be already predetermined through the compassion of the Buddha Amitābha. He founded a new sect independent of the Jōdo sect, called the Jōdo Shin sect (浄土真宗) or “True Sect of the Pure Land.”

Hōnen and Shinran both asserted that the lineage of their sects could be traced back to the teachings of the Chinese patriarchs T‘an-luan, Tao-ch‘o and Shan-tao, but as organized religious movements they are of purely Japanese origins. In the early stages of their activities both Hōnen and Shinran met with violent resistance from Mt. Hiei and were even sent into exile by the imperial authorities, but this had the reverse effect of their winning deep-rooted support among the masses.

With the founding of these Pure Land sects Japanese Buddhism entered a new era. This was the period of so-called Kamakura Neo-Buddhism.

*The Introduction of the Zen Sects*

Alongside the popularity of the Pure Land teachings, it is the arrival of the various schools of Chinese Ch‘an (Jap. Zen) which marks the Kamakura (鎌倉) period (1185–1333). Ch‘an of the Northern school had already been introduced by Saichō and others, but it had not developed into an independent sect, for Saichō had based his practices on chih-kuan (Jap. shikan, 止観), the T‘ien-t‘ai equivalent of meditation. Following the break in official contacts with China, the mainstream of the Southern school of Ch‘an after the ninth century was deprived of any opportunity of being transmitted to Japan, and this state of affairs lasted until the end of the Heian period.

When private trade with the Sung was revived towards
the end of the Heian period there arose calls for the intro-
duction of Ch‘an, and Eisai (栄西; 1141–1215) succeeded in
transmitting it after his second visit to China. Gaining the
support of the Kamakura shogunate, he founded Kennin-ji
(建仁寺) temple and made it a centre for the Zen sect, al-
though at first the Zen sect remained ancillary to the Tendai
sect. But as a result of subsequent visits to China by Dōgen
and others and the successive arrivals of Chinese monks in
Japan, many branches of Ch‘an were introduced. These are
said to number twenty-four in all, but they may be subsumed
under the Rinzai (Ch. Lin-chi) sect (臨濟宗) and Sōtō (Ch.
Ts‘ao-tung) sect (曹洞宗). (Later during the Edo period a
further branch was introduced by Yin-yüan [Jap. Ingen, 隱
元], assuming the name Ōbaku [Ch. Huang-po] sect [黄檗
宗], but according to the Chinese classification it too belongs
to the Lin-chi school.)

Dōgen (道元; 1200–53) had received ordination on Mt. Hiei
and later studied for a time at Kennin-ji. He then crossed
over to China and after having travelled about the land met
the Ts‘ao-tung master Ju-ching (如淨), whose teachings he
transmitted to Japan. Although Dōgen himself avoided the
terms Sōtō sect or Zen sect, calling his group the Busshin or
“Buddha-mind” sect (佛心宗), his successors were to establish
an independent sect going by the name of the Sōtō sect.
Dōgen’s chief literary work was the Shōbōgenzō (正法眼藏:
Treasury of the Eye of the True Law), in which he upholds
a religion grounded in the scrupulous observance of “won-
drous practice rooted in innate realization” (honshō-myōshū,
本證妙修) and the “identity of practice and realization”
(shushō-ichinyo, 修證一如). His standpoint of personal in-
struction to a small number of disciples within a monastery
resembled the stance taken by Saichō. But later during the
times of his successors esoteric rituals were introduced, inroads
were made into the hegemony of the Tendai and Shingon
sects, and absorbing elements of these two sects the Sōtō sect rapidly spread throughout the country.

The Rinzai sect, on the other hand, attached importance to Chinese traditions and advocated practices aimed at the discovery of one’s intrinsic nature and the attainment of enlightenment through the use of kōan (Ch. kung-an, 公案) or “cases.” This sect won the confidence of the shōgun and other members of the warrior-class nobility in Kamakura, Kyōto, and other centres, and as a result expanded its influence to such an extent that it usurped the position held by the Tendai and Shingon sects in former times. With its emphasis of personal discipline and its succinct teachings, Zen became popular among the pragmatic warrior class.

In addition Zen monks also introduced customs related to everyday eating habits, such as the practice of drinking tea, and exerted considerable influence upon the food and living style of the Japanese. In cultural domains such as architecture and painting too they assumed a leading role during the Kamakura and Muromachi periods. The Zen monks of this period represented as it were intellectuals just returned from abroad, and the study of Confucianism and poetics was also preserved through their efforts. Borrowing the name Gozan (五山) or “Five Mountains” by which the major Rinzai monasteries of both Kamakura and Kyōto were collectively known, this literary current is known as Gozan literature.

The Nichiren and Ji Sects
As the final new religious movements to adorn the Kamakura period, mention must be made of the establishment of the Hokke sect (法華宗) or Nichiren sect (日蓮宗) and the movements of the “occasional assemblies” (jishu, 時衆) or Ji sect (時宗) initiated by Ippein.

As in the case of Hōnen and other founders of the new Kamakura sects, Nichiren (日蓮, 1222–82) too first studied
on Mt. Hiei, where he embraced the current of belief which took as its sole authority the *Lotus Sūtra*, and then declared his independence of the Tendai sect. Nichiren was somewhat over-hasty in his attacks of other sects and as a result was sent into exile by the shogunate. But he was pardoned when, on the occasion of the Mongol invasion, his prophecy based on the advocacy of the security of the nation through the establishment of right was recognized. In his case too the simplicity of his teaching, which compressed the basis of practice into the recitation of the *daimoku* (題目) or title of the *Lotus Sūtra*, won the acceptance of the people. But there was also a strong nationalistic colouring in that for example the gods of Japan were revered as tutelary deities of Buddhism. This was in contrast to the Pure Land sects which stressed the transcendency of religion and the inner life of the individual, relegating the state to an inferior position.

The Hokke or "Dharma-flower" sect later spread principally in the Kantō (関東) region of eastern Japan, but during the Muromachi period it also became very influential among the burghers (*machisha*, 町衆) of Kyōto.

Ippen (一遍; 1239–89) was a wandering practitioner of the *nenbutsu* in the tradition of Kūya (空也; 903–72) of the middle Heian period, and he attracted the masses with his plain teachings and simple sermons. There are several interpretations of the term *jishu* (時衆) by which the groups gathering around him were known, but it would appear to mean something to the effect of an assembly (*shūi*) which gathered in accordance with the occasion (*jit*). This appellation derived from the fact that the members of these groups had no fixed abode and did not form any consolidated religious organization. Ippen also attached importance to the Japanese gods and advocated the integration of Shintoism and Buddhism.

Another sect which taught a similar form of peregrine
nenbutsu was the Yūzū-nenbutsu or "Interpenetrative Nenbutsu" sect (融念念佛宗) founded by Ryōnin (良忍; 1072–1132).

Features common to all the sects founded during the Kamakura period include the condensation of their teachings into a single element, such as the nenbutsu, meditation, or the Lotus Sūtra, their beginnings not as state religions but as personal religions, and the fact that the foundations of their organization lay outside of the nobility, among the masses. It was during the Kamakura period that Japanese Buddhism may be said to have been truly acclimatized for the first time to the Japanese environment.

On the other hand, special mention must also be made of movements in the revival of monastic discipline and academic studies which arose among the older Nara sects as a result of stimulation received from Kamakura Neo-Buddhism. Leading figures in these movements included Jōkei (貞慶), also known as Gedatsu Shōnin (解脫上人), and Kōben (高辨) of Toganoo (楫尾), also known as Myōe Shōnin (明恵上人).

**Buddhism since the Muromachi Period**

As has already been indicated, the Buddhism of the Muromachi (室町) period (1392–1573) represents an extension of Kamakura Buddhism. The diffusion of the new forms of Buddhism throughout the land was in fact occasioned by the upheavals of the age of the Northern and Southern courts (Nanboku-chō, 南北朝; 1336–92), and it was under such circumstances that the expansion of the Sōtō sect under Keizan Jōkin (霊山紹薫; 1268–1325) of Sōji-ji (總持寺) temple and the growth of the Shin sect under Rennyo (蓮如; 1415–99) took place. The activities of the Shin sect gave birth to the Ikkō-ikki (一向一揆) or "Single-minded (sect) rebellions" which aimed at the establishment of an independent religious kingdom, and at one stage Hongan-ji (本願寺) temple, the head-
quarters of the Shin sect in Kyōto, became in effect a feudal power. The Hokke sect too gave birth to the Hokke-ikki (法華一揆) or “Dharma-flower (sect) rebellions” among the burghers of Kyōto. But these movements were brought to complete submission with the unification of the nation by Oda Nobunaga (織田信長; 1534–82) and Toyotomi Hideyoshi (豊臣秀吉; 1536–98).

At the same time, the new political order established by Nobunaga and Hideyoshi also launched attacks against the power of the older sects of Buddhism based on Mt. Hiei and Mt. Kōya and in Nara, and the Buddhist orders were completely deprived of all authority they had held as manorial lords.

Buddhism, which had now been divested of all secular authority, was subsequently not only placed under the complete control of the Edo (江戸) shogunate but also assigned a role in the educational measures designed to protect the Japanese people from Christianity, and under the danka (檀家) or “parishioner” system the Buddhist temples were forced to serve the role of registry offices.

Under such conditions the Buddhist sects achieved economic stability, but the energy of former times had been lost and no new religious movements were born up until the Meiji (明治) period (1868–1912). But this period of stability did bring about marked developments in doctrinal studies and created the foundations for the development of modern academic studies.

During the period before and after the Meiji Restoration (明治維新; 1867–68) Buddhism was confronted with an anti-Buddhist movement occasioned by the rise of nationalism. This in turn gave birth to a purificatory movement within Buddhism itself, producing many outstanding monks. As a result the individual Buddhist sects were transformed into modern religious organizations which have continued to thrive
up until the present day. In addition, great numbers of new religious groups have also been born, representing modern popular Buddhist movements. A greater part of these are in some way linked to the Nichiren sect, and all have taken the form of lay Buddhist movements.
SOURCES

Abbreviations


AN *Aṅguttara-nikāya* (PTS edition).

APS *Ariyapariyesana-sutta* (contained in MN).


Dhp *Dhammapada* (PTS edition).

DN *Dīgha-nikāya* (PTS edition).


MPS *Mahāparinībbāna-suttanta* (contained in DN).


MŚU *Mahāyānaśraddhotpāda-śāstra* (contained in T. XXXII).

PTS Pali Text Society.


SN *Samyutta-nikāya* (PTS edition).

T. *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō.*


Introduction

1) *Dhp* 368 (p. 53), 381 (p. 54).
2) *SDP* VII.54 (p. 177); T. IX, p. 24c.
Chapter One

1) *ThG* 91 (p. 13).
3) *Mahāvagga* I.1–5 (*VP I*, pp. 1–7). On Brahmā’s entreaty, see especially I.5 (pp. 4–7).
8) *T. XII*, p. 1110c.
9) *SDP* XV.1 (p. 323); *T. IX*, p. 43b.
10) E.g. *T. XII*, p. 381c.

Chapter Two

3) *SDP* I (p. 17.10–11); *T. IX*, p. 3c.
6) *SN* 12.65 (II, pp. 104–6).
8) E.g. *Aggañña-suttanta*, 9 (*D N* III, p. 84).
10) *T. XII*, p. 1112b.
Chapter Three

1) E.g. MPS 2.9 (DN II, p. 93).
2) E.g. Sāmaññaphala-sutta 40 (DN I, p. 62).
3) Mahāvagga I. 23.5 (VP I, p. 40); the Sanskrit version is to be found in the colophons of many manuscripts of Buddhist works; the standard Chinese translation is that of I-ching (T. XXIII, p. 1027b).
5) E.g. Chü-shê-lun chi (倴舎論記), T. XLI, p. 8c; Ch'êng-wei-shih-lun shu-chi (成唯識論述記), T. XLIII, p. 239c.
6) AKBh ad I. 2a (p. 2.10).
7) Mahāvagga I. 1.1–7 (VP I, pp. 1–2). Cf. CPS 7.5–12 (pp. 104–8).
9) SN 12.10 (II, p. 10); T. II, p. 79c.
10) Cūlamālukya-sutta (MN I, pp. 426–32); T. I, pp. 804a–5c.
11) Cf. Ekottari-āgama 26.9 (T. II, p. 640b); Yogācārabhūmi, T. XXX, p. 544a; MSA XVIII. 80 (pp. 148–49); Ta-chêng i-chang, T. XLIV, pp. 507b–9c.
14) MPS 2.26 (DN II, p. 100).
15) MPS 6.7 (DN II, p. 156).
18) SN 12.37.5 (II, p. 65); CPS 7.3–4 (pp. 102–4).
Chapter Four

1) See in particular AKBh I, II.
2) AKBh I.24.
3) Chü-shē-lun chi, T. XLI, pp. 70a ff.

Chapter Five

1) See in particular AKBh III, IV, V.
2) Jakushōdō kokkyōshū (寂照堂谷響集) 4 (Dai Nihon Bukkyō Zensho, 149, p. 60).
3) E. g. Sonaḍanda-sutta 6 (DN I, p. 115).
5) AKBh I.4 (p. 3), V.17 (p. 289), ad V.31 (p. 304.6), etc.
7) E. g. AKBh ad I.28 (p. 18.23), III.4 (p. 115.1).

Chapter Six

1) E. g. T‘ien-t’ai ssū-chiao i (天台四教仪), T. XLVI, p. 777a.
2) T. XII, p. 522c.
3) Śrīmālā-sūtra, T. XII, p. 221bc; RGV, p. 12.14.
5) E. g. Ta-ch’êng i-chang, T. XLIV, pp. 697c–99b.
Chapter Seven

1) DhP 183 (p. 27).
3) The following discussion of the doctrine of cognition-only is based primarily on the Mahāyānasamgraha, Madhyāntavibhāga, and Triṃśikā.
5) AN I.6.1–2 (I, p. 10).
6) SN 46.33 (V, p. 92).
8) Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra, T. XII, p. 402c.
10) MŚU, T. XXXII, p. 576b.

Chapter Eight

2) E.g. Śamaññaphala-sutta 98 (DN I, p. 84). Cf. AKBh ad VII.12 (p. 399.3).
4) AKBh ad VI.25 (p. 350.6). Cf. T. XXIX, p. 121b.
5) T. IX, p. 449c.
7) SDP II. 54 (p. 46); T. IX, p. 8a.
SOURCES

8) SDP III. 33–149 (pp. 69–99); T. IX, pp. 12a–16b.

9) Cullavagga IX. 1.4 (VP II, p. 239).

10) On the five categories of beings, see for example LAS, pp. 63–65.


Chapter Nine

1) MPS 1.4–5 (DN I, pp. 73–75).

2) MPS 1.6 (DN I, pp. 76–78).

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GENERAL INDEX

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Tibetan words by T.

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