

THE DIAMOND SUTRA

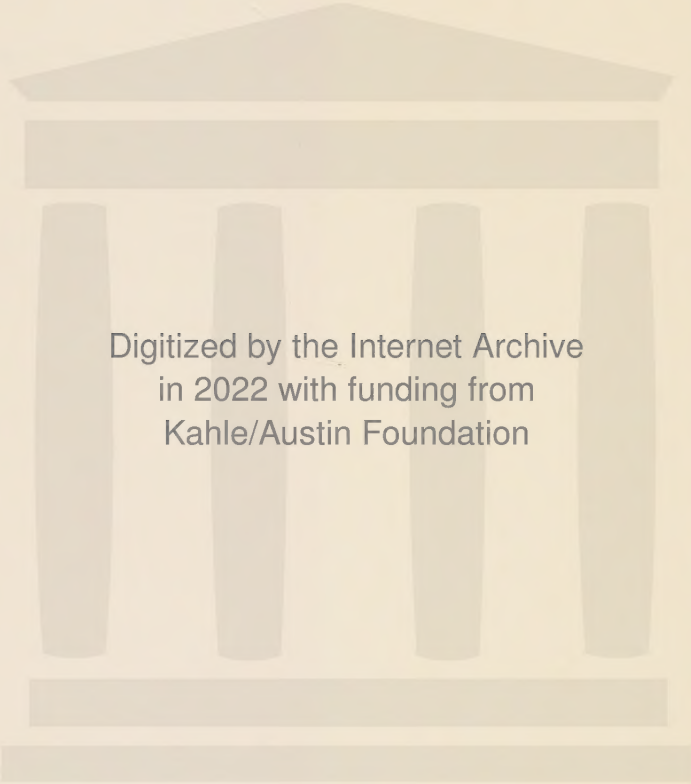


FROM THE FINAL TEACHINGS OF THE BUDDHA
WITH SUPPLEMENTAL TEXTS

THE DIAMOND SUTRA

The Diamond Sutra was the first book ever printed (on a Chinese block press in A.D. 868) and contains the core of Buddha's final teaching. A concise summary of the *Prajnaparamita* or wisdom literature of the Mahayana Buddhist tradition, this canonical text is accompanied by the equally revered *Heart Sutra* and amplified by selections from other Buddhist scriptures and commentaries. In addition, there are insightful essays on "Buddhi Yoga" and "The Message of Gautama Buddha" by Raghavan Iyer, as well as an instructive essay on "The Diamond Heart" (*Hermes*, June 1975). A glossary of terms is also included.





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THE DIAMOND SUTRA

Seek this wisdom by doing service, by strong search, by questions, and by humility; the wise who see the truth will communicate it unto thee, and knowing which thou shalt never fall into error.

SHRI KRISHNA



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GENERAL EDITOR

RAGHAVAN IYER

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CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| BUDDHI YOGA | 5 |
| <i>VAJRACHHEDIKA</i> (THE DIAMOND CUTTER) | 13 |
| THE DIAMOND HEART | 31 |
| THE HEART SUTRA | 37 |
| INSTRUCTION TO SURYAGARBHA | 39 |
| THE EIGHTFOLD AWAKENING | 41 |
| EMPTINESS | 45 |
| THE WORLD AS ILLUSION | 47 |
| ALAYAVIJNANA | 49 |
| THE OCEAN AND THE WAVES | 53 |
| THE TATHAGATAGARBHA | 55 |
| SONG OF FOURFOLD MINDFULNESS | 57 |
| NIRVANA | 59 |
| LOOKING WITHOUT WORDS | 65 |
| THE TRIPLE PARAMITAS | 67 |
| TURNING INWARD | 69 |
| TATHATA | 73 |
| ASPIRATION AND DISCIPLINE | 75 |
| SANDS OF THE GANGA | 77 |
| KWAN-YIN | 81 |
| THE MESSAGE OF GAUTAMA BUDDHA | 83 |
| GLOSSARY | 91 |

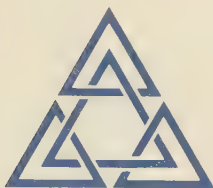


As the natural fire, O Arjuna, reduceth fuel to ashes, so does the fire of knowledge reduce all actions to ashes. There is no purifier in this world to be compared to spiritual knowledge; and he who is perfected in devotion findeth spiritual knowledge springing up spontaneously in himself in the progress of time. The man who restraineth the senses and organs and hath faith obtaineth spiritual knowledge, and having obtained it he soon reacheth supreme tranquility; but the ignorant, those full of doubt and without faith, are lost. The man of doubtful mind hath no happiness either in this world or in the next or in any other. No actions bind that man who through spiritual discrimination hath renounced action and cut asunder all doubt by knowledge, O despiser of wealth. Wherefore, O son of Bharata, having cut asunder with the sword of spiritual knowledge this doubt which existeth in thy heart, engage in the performance of action. Arise!

SHRI KRISHNA



ॐ



BUDDHI YOGA

Words can merely clothe the ideas, but no number of words can convey an idea to one who is incapable of perceiving it. Every one of us has within him the latent capacity or a sense dormant in us which can take cognisance of Abstract Truth, although the development of that sense or, more correctly speaking, the assimilation of our intellect with that higher sense, may vary in different persons, according to circumstances, education and discipline. That higher sense which is the potential capacity of every human being is in eternal contact with Reality, and every one of us has experienced moments when, being for the time *en rapport* with that higher sense, we realise the eternal verities. The sole question is how to focalise ourselves entirely in that higher sense.

DAMODAR K. MAVALANKAR





.Consciousness implies limitations and qualifications; something to be conscious of, and someone to be conscious of it. But Absolute Consciousness contains the cognizer, the thing cognized and the cognition, all three in itself and all three one.

H. P. BLAVATSKY

In *The Voice of the Silence* we are told that the aspirant on the Secret Path must come to see the voidness of the seeming full, the fullness of the seeming void. At first glance, this injunction seems to say no more than Samuel Butler's statement in his *Notebooks* that everything matters more than we think it does and that, at the same time, nothing matters as much as we think it does. In fact, however, the seeker of truth soon finds in his attempt to practise his self-chosen discipline that impersonality, detachment and discrimination are profounder concepts and more elusive virtues than once anticipated at the threshold of his study and meditation. *Abamkara* or egotism is so deep-seated and so pervasive that the very struggle for transcendence seems to facilitate its expression in newer and subtler forms. Similarly, the continual effort to free ourselves from personal preconceptions in our perceptions of the realities around us and in our relationships seems to engender new and unnoticed presuppositions, fresh and unseen barriers to understanding. In order to see the central problem of the spiritual life more clearly, it would be valuable to ponder over the Mahayana classic known as the *Diamond Cutter* or the *Diamond Sutra*, a master-key to *Buddhi Yoga*.

The *Vajrachchedika (Diamond Cutter)* is a small Sanskrit text belonging to the *Maha-Prajnaparamita (Perfection of Transcendental Wisdom)*. It has been suggested that this text was first transmitted by Nagarjuna in the second century, but this has been denied by some scholars who have declared it to be written down only in the fourth century. It is, however, definitely known that this deeply stimulating discourse was first translated into Chinese by Kumarajiva about A.D. 400 and has been subsequently rendered

into Chinese and more recently into English by several scholars. Although the supreme doctrine of Voidness is now accessible to all truth-seekers, it remains essentially esoteric and difficult to comprehend. Mere head-learning will not enable us to grasp the Heart-Doctrine, and the *Diamond Sutra* stresses that the state of transcendence over all conditioned consciousness cannot be visualized by purely intellectual means or in terms of categories applicable to our common modes of awareness.

The first and last requirement for the attainment of spiritual wisdom is to rid our consciousness and our conduct of our continual obsession with the idea of an ego-entity, a personality, the dire heresy of separateness and derivative notions of individual progress, personal salvation and self-realization. In order to hinder the hindrances to ego-free meditation and awareness, the mind should be kept independent of any thoughts which arise within it; for, as long as the mind depends upon anything, it has no sure haven. We are urged not to become passive or nihilistic but rather to make our Manasic consciousness more universal and eventually Mahatmic by freeing it from the compulsions, obsessions and tortuous rationalizations of *kamamanasic* activity. In practice we must become increasingly aware of the extent to which every single thought, feeling and judgement is conditioned by the limited context in which we experience it. The wider, more universal and more enduring the context, the easier it should be for us to prevent ourselves from becoming dependent upon and attached to it.

This requires not only regular meditation but also the adoption of an attitude of relaxed and well-meaning impersonality in all our activities and relationships. The more we do this, the more meaningful it becomes for us to consider, in any particular context of a personal thought or reaction, how a Mahatma or a Bodhisattva would respond and vibrate in the same context. It is no doubt extremely difficult for our Manasic consciousness to adopt or even to visualize a Buddhist standpoint in any given situation, but this is precisely the object of our training and our daily discipline. We are told that if a Bodhisattva cherishes, even to the slightest extent, the idea of an ego-entity or personality, he is consequently not a Bodhisattva.

In the practice of *Buddhi Yoga*, there must be, as the *Diamond Sutra* and the *Bhagavad Gita* make clear, no mental or emotional

attachment to the results of our actions. In this system of yoga, the *Gita* points out, no effort is lost and even a little of this practice delivers a man from great risk. The *Diamond Sutra* warns us against even charitable acts performed with a view to attaining spiritual benefit. An aspirant to divine wisdom must not give of his time, money and energy with any thought of personal result or recognition or even because he is urged to do so, but it must become second nature for him to do so in view of the fact that he has initially accepted that all his obligations are wholly self-determined. It is paradoxically true that the assumption of full personal responsibility is the beginning of impersonality, for by ceasing to concern ourselves with the responsibilities of others we are ready to see that all our freely self-chosen responsibilities flow solely from the potency and will-energy of the Higher Self or the Divine Triad which belongs to all and therefore to none.

In the *Diamond Sutra* the Buddha denies the reality of all predictable things, of the individual self as of all changing appearances, likewise of merit and demerit, even of liberation and non-liberation. In the ultimate analysis, no differentiation is at all possible between the primordially undifferentiated and the differentiated cosmos. However we conceive the idea of the One Reality or of transcendental wisdom, it is no more than a mental concept, 'merely a name'. If we make a hard-and-fast distinction between Nirvana and Samsara, the Goal and the Way, we fail to see that they are, for the mind of man, merely the ultimate pair of opposites, no less unreal than all lesser pairs of opposites, like ego and non-ego. Only on the plane of the unconditioned consciousness, which is beyond all pairs of opposites and all dichotomous thinking, do we realize the Truth, because we become IT.

Similarly, it would be a mistake for us to become concerned about our present incarnation in relation to past and future lives. It is no doubt useful to reflect upon the workings of Karma in relation to our present or to any other personality, but we must gain the "higher carelessness" that is based upon an awareness that "there is no passing away nor coming into existence". Again, we must not become self-conscious about helping in the liberation of all beings, for this thought is itself illusory, in not acknowledging the relativity of notions of being and of liberation. Above all,

we must see that the attainment of Buddhahood is not the attainment of anything, but only the realization of the eternal and indestructible potential in every living creature. The Buddha and the non-Buddha are not different in kind; a Buddha knows and the non-Buddha does not know that he, like everyone else, is a Buddha. On attaining Buddhahood, nothing is either lost or gained; "look inward, thou *art* Buddha".

The continual stress of the *Diamond Sutra* is upon the attainment of true impersonality, the performance of every activity, including charity, without any attachment to appearances. It is necessary for us to persevere one-pointedly in this instruction.

Another lesson in the *Sutra* for students of *Gupta Vidya* is the assertion that the Tathagatas, the Masters of Wisdom and of Compassion, cannot be recognized by any material characteristic. As long as we are concerned with personal and material characteristics, we remain deluded. Nor should we cling to particular formulations of the truth; so long as the mind is attached even to the teaching of the Good Law, it will cherish the idea of 'I' and 'Other'. In order to enter the stream and become a *srotapatti*, the disciple must pay no regard to form, sound, odour, taste, touch or any quality. A Bodhisattva is one who has developed a pure, lucid mind, not depending upon sound, flavour, touch, odour or any quality. The Tathagata is He who declares that which is true, that which is fundamental, that which is ultimate. A disciple who practises charity with a mind attached to formal notions is like a man groping sightless in the gloom, but a Bodhisattva who practises charity with a mind detached from any formal notions is like a man with open eyes in the radiant glory of the morning, to whom all kinds of objects are clearly visible. Thus, by perceiving the voidness of the seeming full, he participates in the fullness of the seeming void. The Tathagata is a signification implying all formulas for the attainment of Enlightenment and he is beyond them all. Wholly devoid of any conception of separate selfhood, he cannot be identified with any sect or any particular formulation of doctrine, but understands the manifold modes of mind of all living beings, like the Krishna of the tenth and eleventh chapters of the *Gita*. All Bodhisattvas are insentient as to the rewards of Merit. "Because TATHAGATA has

neither whence nor whither, therefore is He called Tathagata." The Buddha tells Subhuti: —

Who sees Me by form,
 Who seeks Me in sound,
 Perverted are his footsteps upon the Way;
 For he cannot perceive the Tathagata.

The *Diamond Sutra* has sometimes been misunderstood as a plea for a world-denying and inert standpoint. It was actually meant as a dynamite to the complacency of formal believers and self-righteous coteries. At the time when the *Sutra* was written down, there were many Buddhists who had become as smug and yet as anxious for personal advancement in spiritual life as the Brahmins to whom the Buddha came with a profoundly relevant message.

Seekers of wisdom today fall prey to the cosiness of complacency and the curse of anxiety. The message of the *Diamond Sutra* has been reiterated with pertinent clarity by W.Q. Judge and Robert Crosbie in their letters to those who came to them for counsel. Though we are not separate from anything, we are surrounded by appearances that seem to make us separate, and we are urged by W.Q. Judge to proceed to state and accept mentally that we are all these illusions. If we are anxious, we raise a barrier against progress, by perturbation and straining harshly. No matter where we are, the same spirit pervades all and is accessible. "What need, then, to change places?" Again, we are told: "Now, then, is there not many a cubic inch of your own body which is entitled to know and to be the truth in greater measure than now? And yet you grieve for the ignorance of so many other human beings!" Resignation, we are told, is the sure, true and royal road. "The lesson intended by the Karma of your present life is *the higher patience*. . . . Insist on carelessness. Assert to yourself that it is not of the slightest consequence what you were yesterday, but in every moment strive for that moment; the results will follow of themselves." The higher carelessness that we are asked to cultivate is in reality a calm reliance on the law, and a doing of our own duty, checking ourselves by a periodic examination and purification of our motives. As we begin to rely on the Higher Self — the

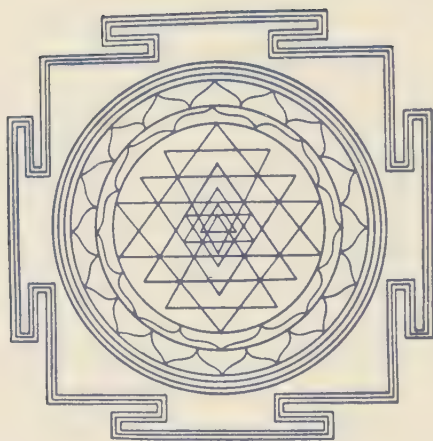
Buddha-nature — little by little new ideals and thought-forms will drive out the old. This is the eternal process of transformation in the natural order. It can also become the firm basis of self-conscious mastery of *Buddhi Yoga*, the divine dialectic of alchemical transmutation.

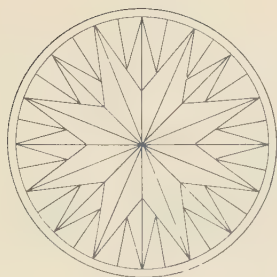
In our daily strivings towards *Buddhi Yoga*, we are wisely warned by Robert Crosbie against the danger of thinking too much of ourselves, our present conditions and future prospects. While gaining greater control over our thoughts, we need the power of self-conscious direction as well as the peace of self-transcendence. The exercise of deliberation and discrimination at all times can and must become as natural as breathing. “Get the point of view of the One who is doing the leading and hold to it.” One cannot clear one’s own sight, much less another’s, where there is any tension of self-concern. “We try to free *ourselves* from *something*. Is not this the attitude of separateness?” We forget that “The One *sees* All.” We have power over nothing but the ‘is’. ‘We’ are the One Self and there is nothing but the One Self. Masters cannot interfere with Karma. The Egoic perceptions on this plane are limited by all compensatory claims, by any anxious constriction of the free flow of the boundless compassion of the Buddhas. “Impersonality isn’t talking; it isn’t silence; it isn’t insinuation; it isn’t repulsion; it isn’t negation.” It means becoming “less doctrinal and more *human*”. Is that not the central message of the *Diamond Sutra*?



Osiris, Krishna, Buddha, Christ, will be shown as different means for one and the same royal highway of final bliss — Nirvana. Mystical Christianity teaches *self*-redemption through one’s own seventh principle, the liberated Paramatma, called by the one Christ, by others Buddha; this is equivalent to regeneration, or rebirth in spirit, and it therefore expounds just the same truth as the Nirvana of Buddhism. All of us have to get rid of our own Ego, the illusory, apparent self, to recognise our true Self, in a transcendental divine life.

THE MAHA CHOCHAN





VAJRACHHEDIKA
(THE DIAMOND CUTTER)



Thus have I heard:

The Buddha once dwelt in Anathapindika's Park, in the Jeta Grove at Sravasti, with 1,250 monks and many Bodhisattvas. Near dawn, the Lord clothed himself, took up his bowl and entered the great city of Sravasti to collect food offered as alms. Having returned and eaten, the Lord put away his bowl and cloak, bathed his feet, and sat with legs crossed and body upright upon the seat arranged for him, mindfully fixing attention in front of himself. Many monks approached the Lord, showing great reverence, and seated themselves about him.

The Venerable Subhuti arose from his seat in the midst of the monks and, showing great respect for the Buddha, said: "It is wonderful, O Lord, how much the Tathagata, the Fully Enlightened One, has helped the Bodhisattvas, protecting and instructing them. How should men and women who set out on the Bodhisattva Path progress, and how should they control their thoughts?"

The Lord replied: "That is true, Subhuti. The Tathagata has helped the Bodhisattvas greatly. Listen carefully; I will teach you how those who set out on the Bodhisattva Path should progress and how they should control their thoughts."

"So be it, O Lord," the Venerable Subhuti said, "we long to hear you."

The Lord Buddha then addressed the assembly: "All Bodhisattvas of Great Courage should hold this thought: Every kind of creature which can be called a 'being', egg-born, formed in a womb, born from moisture (sweat-born) or produced by metamorphosis, with form or without it, or transcending the distinction between perception and non-perception, all these I must guide towards the Nirvana of Absolute Liberation. Though the number of such liberated beings is countless, no being at all has been led to Nirvana.

"Why? If in a Bodhisattva of Great Courage the conception of

'being', 'egotistic entity', 'personality' or 'separate existence' should take place, the Bodhisattva would not be an authentic Being of Wisdom and Compassion.

"A Bodhisattva of Great Courage should practise *dana* without regard to appearances, unsupported by sights, sounds, smells, tastes, tactile sensations or mental attachments. A Bodhisattva should practise *dana* without attachment to externals. Why? Because the value of such giving is incalculable. Do you think, Subhuti, that the eastern sky is easy to measure?"

"No indeed, Blessed One."

"Similarly, can you measure the space in the south, west or north, or the space below or toward the zenith, or in all the ten directions?"

"No, Honoured of the World."

"Even so, the efficacy of *dana* without attachment is not easy to measure. Those who tread the Path of the Bodhisattva should practise *dana* without attachment to appearances.

"But what do you think, Subhuti? Can the Tathagata be recognized by any phenomenal attribute?"

"No, O Lord. Why? Because the Tathagata has taught that the possession of phenomenal attributes is in fact non-possession of any phenomenal attributes."

The Buddha said: "Where there is possession of phenomenal attributes, there is delusion; where there is non-possession of any phenomenal attributes, there is no delusion. The Tathagata is therefore recognized by the attribute of having no phenomenal attributes."

Subhuti asked the Lord Buddha: "In the future, in the last five centuries when the good doctrine is obscured, will any beings understand the truth of these teachings?"

The Lord answered: "Do not say this, Subhuti! Even then, in the remote future, there will be beings who will understand the truth when these words are taught. There will even then be Bodhisattvas meritorious in conduct, practised in virtue and full of wisdom who will understand the truth when they hear these teachings. Such Bodhisattvas, Subhuti, will not have honoured one

Buddha alone, nor will they have rooted their merit under just one Buddha. Rather, these Bodhisattvas, who will find serene faith awakened upon hearing the words of this teaching, will have honoured and rooted themselves in merit under countless Buddhas. They are known to the Tathagata through his Buddha-thought; they are seen by the Tathagata with his Buddha-eye. Hence they are fully known to the Tathagata, and they will all acquire and produce inestimable merit.

“And why? Because, Subhuti, these Bodhisattvas will have no perception of an egotistic self, neither of a separate entity nor of a soul, no perception of a personality. Nor will they even have a perception of *dharma* or *adharma*, for in them there will be neither perception nor non-perception.

“How can this be? If these Bodhisattvas, Subhuti, should perceive either *dharma* or *adharma*, they would think of an ego, a separate entity, a soul or a personality. Therefore the Tathagata has taught this saying with a hidden meaning: ‘Those who know that the teachings about *dharma* are like a raft should renounce *dharma* and, even more, renounce *adharma*.’ ”

The Lord asked: “Do you think, Subhuti, that the Tathagata knows any *dharma* as the ultimate and perfect enlightenment? Has the Tathagata ever set forth such a teaching?”

Subhuti responded: “Not according to my understanding of the teachings of the Tathagata. Why? The *dharma* which the Tathagata fully knows and has set forth can neither be thought nor formulated in words, for it is neither *dharma* nor *adharma*. It is the Absolute which exalts the Holy Ones.”

“What do you think, Subhuti,” the Buddha asked, “if a man or woman filled a thousand million worlds with the seven treasures and made a gift of them to the Tathagatas, the supremely Enlightened Beings, would they accumulate inestimable merit?”

Subhuti answered: “Blessed One, the merit accrued would be beyond reckoning. Why? Because the Tathagata has taught that such merit is non-merit.”

The Lord said: “If a disciple took only one stanza of four lines from this sutra on *dharma*, and if he lived it and explained it

to others, he would generate greater, more incalculable and immeasurable merit. For from this teaching issues the supreme Enlightenment of the Tathagatas, those who are fully Enlightened, and the Buddhas are produced from it. Why? Because the Tathagata has taught that the *dharmas* attributed to the Buddhas are not any Buddha's unique *dharmas*. Hence they are called 'the *dharmas* attributed to the Buddhas'.

"What do you think, Subhuti," the Lord again asked, "does a *srotapatti*, one who has entered the stream which flows to Enlightenment, say 'I have entered the stream'?"

"No, O Lord", Subhuti replied. "For he has won no *dharma* and therefore he is called one who has entered the stream. No objects of sight or hearing have been won, no smells or tastes, no objects of touch nor even objects of mind. Thus he is called one who has entered the stream. If the thought 'the fruit of entering the stream has been attained by me' occurred to such an one, then he would be seizing upon a self, or personality, a soul or a concept of being."

The Buddha asked: "Subhuti, do you think that a Sakradagamin, who has to return but once again, ever entertains the thought 'the fruit of a Once-Returner is mine'?"

"No, O Lord", Subhuti replied. "For nothing ultimately real has won the status of Sakradagamin: that is why he is called Sakradagamin, Once-Returner."

"Do you think", the Lord asked, "that the Anagamin, one who will not return at all, ever thinks 'the fruit of a Never-Returner is mine'?"

"No, O Lord", Subhuti answered. "For nothing which can be considered ultimately real has won the status of Anagamin. Therefore he is called 'Never-Returner'."

"Then", the Buddha asked, "does the Arhat, who is fully Enlightened, ever think, 'full Enlightenment is mine'?"

"Indeed not," Subhuti answered, "for nothing ultimately real is called 'Arhat', and that is why one who is fully Enlightened is called 'Arhat'. If an Arhat ever thought 'Arhatship is mine', he would grasp a self, a personality, a soul or a concept of being.

Lord, the Tathagata has pointed me out as the first among those who abide in peace, free from strife and passion. But if the thought could arise in me that I have become Arhat, the Tathagata would not have said of me: 'Subhuti, who is first among those who abide in peace, free from strife and passion, does not abide anywhere. That is why he is called one who abides in peace.' "

"Do you think, Subhuti," the Buddha then asked, "there is any *dharma* or attainment which the Tathagata acquired from the Tathagata Dipankara, the Fully Enlightened One?"

"No, not one", Subhuti replied.

The Lord said: "If a Bodhisattva of Great Courage declared 'I perfect serene Buddha-fields', his words would be false. Why? Because the Tathagata has taught that the perfection of serene Buddha-fields is non-perfection. Thus the Tathagata speaks of serene Buddha-fields.

"The Bodhisattva of Great Courage therefore should develop a thought which is in no way dependent upon sights, sounds, smells, tastes, tactile sensations or mental objects.

"Suppose, Subhuti, a man had an enormous body, like Sumeru, the king of mountains. Would the sense of personal existence he had also be enormous?"

"Yes, indeed, O Lord", Subhuti answered. "His sense of personal existence would be enormous. But the Tathagata has taught that personal existence is no existence, for it is in fact neither existence nor non-existence. So it is called 'personal existence'."

The Buddha said: "Subhuti, do you think if there were a Ganges river for every grain of sand in the great Ganges, would the grains of sand in those rivers be numerous?"

"Those rivers", Subhuti replied, "would be numerous indeed, and the grains of sand in them would be innumerable."

"And if", the Lord continued, "someone filled as many worlds as there are grains of sand in those rivers with the seven precious treasures, and if they were given as a gift to the Tathagatas, would great merit accrue to the giver?"

"That merit would be immeasurable and incalculable, O Lord",

Subhuti responded.

“Yet,” the Buddha said, “if a man or woman takes four lines from this sutra and if he or she lived it and explained it to others, such an one will attain even greater and more inestimable merit.

“Further, Subhuti, even the place on earth where this sutra is learnt, used or explained becomes a shrine for the world and for its gods, men and *asuras*. How much more can be said for those who continuously remember this whole sutra, and who study, teach and manifest it for others! Such are wonderfully blest, Subhuti, and on the place where this is done will be found either the teacher or disciples worthy of him.”

Subhuti asked the Buddha: “What is this teaching on *dharmā* and how shall it be remembered?”

The Lord answered: “This teaching, Subhuti, is known as *Prajnaparamita*, the perfection of wisdom, and you should remember it as such. Yet the very discourse the Tathagata has taught as ‘the perfection of wisdom’ is exactly the teaching which is not the perfection of wisdom. Thus it is only *called* *Prajnaparamita*.

“Do you think, Subhuti, that the Tathagata has taught any special *dharmā*?”

“No, O Lord,” Subhuti answered, “not at all.”

“Subhuti,” the Buddha asked, “are there many bits of dust in this galaxy of a thousand million worlds?”

“Indeed there are, O Lord,” Subhuti answered, “but what the Tathagata called ‘bits of dust’ the Tathagata taught are not bits of dust; further, the ‘galaxy’ is not ‘galaxy’.”

The Buddha asked: “What do you think, Subhuti? Can the Tathagata be seen by the thirty-two marks of a Great Being?”

“No, O Lord,” Subhuti answered, “for the Tathagata has taught that the thirty-two marks of a Great Being are in reality no marks, even though they are called ‘the thirty-two marks’.”

The Buddha said: “Suppose, once again, Subhuti, that a man or woman renounced all belongings once for each grain of sand in the Ganges, and suppose that another took from this teaching on *dharmā* only one stanza of four lines and demonstrated it to

others: the latter would more surely gain immeasurable and incalculable merit.”

The Venerable Subhuti, hearing this discourse on *dharmā*, understood it and was moved to tears. He spoke:

“O Lord, the teaching of the Tathagata regarding *dharmā* is most precious. Through it, Buddha-cognition has arisen in me. Never have I witnessed such a teaching! Blessed are those who, when this discourse is taught, have true perception. Yet true perception is in fact no perception, though the Tathagata teaches true perception.

“When this discourse on *dharmā* is being taught, it is easy for me to accept and believe it. But in future days, in the last period of the sweet doctrine, in the last five hundred years when the teaching wanes, beings will listen to this teaching, retain it, ponder it, and illuminate it for others, and they will be blessed indeed. For in them no sense of self, no conception of an entity, no perception of personality, will exist. A sense of self is no sense, in truth, a conception of being is no conception, and a perception of personality is no perception. The Buddhas have transcended all perceptions.”

The Buddha said: “It is as you say, Subhuti. Blessed indeed are those beings who do not tremble with fear or awe when they hear this teaching. The Tathagata has taught *parama paramita*, the supreme perfection. And this teaching of the Tathagata is also the teaching of countless Buddhas.

“Further, Subhuti, the perfection of patience (*kṣanti*) taught by the Tathagata is in reality no perfection. Why? When the Raja of Kalinga mutilated my body, I had at that time no sense of self, no conception of a being, no perception of personality. If such a conception or perception had arisen at that time, anger and hatred would have arisen in me. But for five hundred lives I have been a sage suffused with patience, having no sense of self, no conception of being, no perception of personality.

“A Bodhisattva of Great Courage, once he has relinquished all perceptions, raises his thought to the Supreme Enlightenment. He releases a thought free of form, sound, smell, taste, touch or

mental activity, free even from *dharmā* and *adharma*, for all such supporting conditions are in reality no support at all. Hence the Tathagata teaches: *dāna* should be practised by a Bodhisattva who relies on no supporting conditions.

"A Bodhisattva should practise *dāna* in this way for the welfare of all beings. And yet, the perception of a being, *Sūbhūti*, is no perception. All those beings just spoken of are in fact no beings. The Tathagata does not speak falsely, but rather speaks the truth, in accord with Reality. Yet the *dharmā* which the Tathagata has attained and now illuminates for others is neither real nor unreal.

"A Bodhisattva who is attached to conceptions and perceptions, and who renounces *dāna*, is like a man groping in the dark. A Bodhisattva who is free from conceptions and perceptions, and who renounces *dāna*, is like a man whose eyes see all things clearly in the bright morning sun."

The Buddha said: "Those good men and women who will take up this teaching on *dharmā*, who will think on it, recite it, study it, and who will illuminate the whole of it for others, they are known to the Tathagata. He recognizes them by His Buddha cognition and perceives them with His Buddha-eye. These good beings will each bring to fruition immeasurable and incalculable merit.

"If, *Sūbhūti*, a man or woman were to renounce all belongings once for each grain of sand in the great Ganges, and if this were done in the morning and again at noon and in the evening, and if this renunciation were repeated for numberless aeons; and if another being received this discourse without reservation, then this latter would bring to fruition immeasurably greater merit. How then could anyone be compared to him who writes out this discourse, thinks on it, masters it and explains it fully to others?"

"This teaching, *Sūbhūti*, is inconceivable and cannot be confined by comparison with anything else. The Tathagata teaches it for the benefit of beings who have set out on the path in the most excellent vehicle. Those who learn, master, recite and

explain to others this discourse on *dharma* are known to the Tathagata through His Buddha-cognition and are seen by Him with His Buddha-eye. Every one of these beings will achieve a perfection of merit which is inconceivable, immeasurable and beyond all limit. And they will all equally share in Enlightenment.

“Why? Beings attached to concepts of self or entity, who think of a personality, or who have an inferior resolve, cannot possibly hear this discourse on *dharma*. Those who have not taken the Bodhisattva Vow cannot learn this teaching, nor remember, recite or study it. It is impossible for them.

“Wherever this discourse is taught, Subhuti, that place on earth is worthy of veneration by the whole world with its gods, men and *asuras*. That place is like a shrine at which flowers and incense are offered.

“Nevertheless, Subhuti, those good men and women who take up, remember, study and recite this sutra will suffer and be humbled. These misfortunes are the inevitable effects of the impure deeds of their former lives. Yet their present woe will counterbalance those impure deeds and they may reach the enlightenment of a Buddha.

“I recollect through my Buddha-cognition, Subhuti, that in the remote past, aeons before the Tathagata Dipankara, the supremely Enlightened One, I faultlessly served millions of Buddhas throughout incalculable ages. Nevertheless, the merit gained by those who take up, remember, study, recite and explain to others this discourse in the future, when the good doctrine is waning, will surpass the merit gained in the service I rendered to all Buddhas millions of times over. Their merit has no number; it is incalculable and incomparable.

“If I were to teach just how vast this merit which will be gained in the future is, Subhuti, good men and women who hear me would become confused, mentally disturbed and even frantic. But since the Tathagata has taught that this discourse on *dharma* is inconceivable, an incommensurable karmic fruit should be expected from it.”

Subhuti asked: “How, O Lord, does one who seeks the

Bodhisattva Path tread it?"

The Lord answered: "One who sets out on the Bodhisattva Path should continuously think, 'I must lead all beings to absolute Nirvana; nevertheless, even when all beings have been led to Nirvana, no being in reality has been led to Nirvana.' For if the idea of a being, entity or personality should arise in him, he is not a Bodhisattva. He who has set out on the Bodhisattva Path is not one of the *dharmas*.

"Do you think, Subhuti, that when the Tathagata was with Dipankara there was any *dharma* by which he came to know supreme Enlightenment?"

"There was not", Subhuti answered, "any *dharma* by which the Tathagata has known supreme Enlightenment."

"For this reason," the Lord said, "the Tathagata Dipankara said to me then, 'In the future you will be a Tathagata, supremely Enlightened, and you will be called Shakyamuni.' Subhuti, 'Tathagata' signifies *tathata*, attributelessness, and if someone were to say, 'The Tathagata has fully known supreme Enlightenment', he would speak falsely. *Tathata* implies all *dharmas*, and so there is no one specific *dharma* by which the Tathagata has fully known supreme Enlightenment. The *dharma* of the Tathagata is neither real nor unreal. Hence the Tathagata teaches that all *dharmas* are the Buddha's own special *dharmas*. Why? The Tathagata has taught that all *dharmas* together are no *dharmas* at all.

"Thus, Subhuti," the Lord said, "the Bodhisattva who says, 'I will lead all beings to Nirvana', should not be called a Bodhisattva. Why? Subhuti, is there any *dharma* named 'Bodhisattva'?"

"No, O Lord", Subhuti answered.

"Thus," the Lord continued, "the Tathagata teaches that all *dharmas* are selfless and are not beings, entities or personalities. Even if a Bodhisattva wished to create tranquil Buddha-fields, he should not be called a Bodhisattva, for the Tathagata has taught that tranquil Buddha-fields are not really tranquil Buddha-fields.

"Subhuti, the Bodhisattva who continually dwells on the selflessness of all *dharmas*, however, is known by the Tathagata, the supremely Enlightened One, as a Bodhisattva of Great

Courage.”

The Buddha asked Subhuti: “What do you think? Does the Tathagata possess the physical eye?”

“Yes, O Lord”, Subhuti replied.

“Does the Tathagata possess the divine eye of Enlightenment?”

“Surely, O Lord, the Tathagata possesses it.”

“Does the Tathagata possess the eye of transcendental wisdom, Subhuti?”

“Indeed He does, Lord.”

“Does the Tathagata possess the *dharm*a eye?”

“Yes, Lord.”

“And, Subhuti, does the Tathagata possess the Buddha-eye of universal compassion?”

“Without doubt, O Lord, the Tathagata possesses all these eyes.”

“Do you think, Subhuti,” the Lord asked, “the Tathagata has spoken of the grains of sand in the great Ganges?”

“The Tathagata”, Subhuti replied, “has done so.”

The Lord continued. “If there were a Ganges river for each grain of sand in the Ganges, and if there were a universe for each grain of sand in those many rivers, would the number of universes be great?”

“Indeed, O Lord, their number would be great.”

“Subhuti, I know the mind of every sentient being in all that host of universes, regardless of any modes of thought, conceptions or tendencies. For all modes, conceptions and tendencies of thought are not mind. And yet they are called ‘mind’. Why? It is impossible to retain past thought, to seize future thought and even to hold present thought.

“Do you think, Subhuti,” the Lord asked, “if a man or woman filled this whole galaxy with the seven precious treasures, with gold, silver, lapis lazuli, crystal, agate, red pearls and coral, and offered it to the Tathagatas, he would gain great merit?”

“Great merit would surely be his”, Subhuti answered.

The Buddha said: “The merit gained would be immeasurably great. But if there were such a thing as great merit, the Tathagata would not have called it ‘great merit’.

“Is the Tathagata to be seen”, the Buddha asked, “in the

manifestation of His *rupa*?"

"Indeed not," Subhuti replied, "for the Tathagata has taught that the manifestation of His *rupa* is no manifestation, even though it is called 'the manifestation of His *rupa*'."

"Then do you think, Subhuti," the Lord asked, "that the Tathagata can be seen by His marks?"

"No," Subhuti answered, "for the Tathagata has taught that these marks are not in truth marks, even though they are called 'marks'."

The Buddha said: "Does the Tathagata think, 'I have demonstrated *dharmas*'? If anyone says, 'The Tathagata has demonstrated *dharmas*', he speaks falsely, for he misunderstands the Tathagata by grabbing at what is not there. There is no *dharmas* which could be taught as a demonstration of *dharmas*."

Subhuti asked: "In the far distant future when the good doctrine wanes, will there be beings who, upon hearing these *dharmas*, will believe them?"

"Subhuti," the Lord replied, "they would be neither beings nor non-beings, for the Tathagata has taught that beings are not in truth beings, even though He has called them 'beings'."

"Do you think, Subhuti," the Buddha asked, "there is any *dharmas* by which the Tathagata has known supreme Enlightenment?"

"There is no such *dharmas*, O Lord."

"Thus, Subhuti, no atom (*anu*) of *dharmas* is to be found. Therefore, Enlightenment is called supreme (*anuttara*). This *dharmas* is identical only with itself, and is undifferentiated. Therefore it is called 'supreme Enlightenment'. Being unique and undifferentiated because of the absence of a self, entity or personality, this supreme Enlightenment is known as the collectivity of all good *dharmas*. But, Subhuti, the Tathagata has taught that *dharmas* are not in truth *dharmas*, even though they are called '*dharmas*'."

"If anyone made a gift of the seven precious things, equal in amount to all the Sumerus in a galaxy of a billion worlds, and if another were to demonstrate to others just one stanza from this Prajnaparamita discourse on *dharmas*, the merit of the first would not approach an infinitesimal fraction of the incomparable merit of the second."

“Does a Tathagata ever think, ‘I have liberated beings’? Never imagine this, Subhuti, for there is no being to be liberated by the Tathagata. If the Tathagata thought to liberate any being, a concept of self, entity or personality would have arisen in Him. The Tathagata has taught that the concept of self is no concept. Nevertheless, common people cling to the concept of self. The Tathagata has taught that the common people are not common people, even though they are called ‘common people’.

“Is the Tathagata to be seen by His marks, Subhuti?”

“Not at all, O Lord”, Subhuti answered.

“If the Tathagata could be recognized by His marks, then even an imperial ruler would be a Tathagata.”

“As I understand the Tathagata’s teaching,” Subhuti said, “He cannot be recognized by any marks whatsoever.”

Whereupon the Tathagata taught these stanzas:

Who sees Me by form,
Who seeks Me in sound,
Perverted are his footsteps upon the Way;
For he cannot perceive the Tathagata.

The Buddhas are seen through *dharmā*,
From *dharmā*-bodies their guidance comes;
But the nature of *dharmā* is never discerned,
It cannot be grasped by the mind alone.

The Buddha said: “Do you think, Subhuti, that the Tathagata attained supreme Enlightenment through His perfect marks? Cradle no such thoughts, Subhuti, for the Tathagata did not attain supreme Enlightenment through His marks.

“No one should say, ‘Those who set out upon the Bodhisattva Path presume the annihilation of a *dharmā*’, for it is not so, Subhuti. Those who tread the Bodhisattva Path do not presume the annihilation of any *dharmā*.

“Suppose, Subhuti, that a man or woman filled with the seven treasures as many galaxies as there are grains of sand in the great Ganges, and then offered them all to the Tathagatas; and suppose a Bodhisattva patiently forbore all *dharmas*, which in

themselves have no essence. This Bodhisattva would gain an immeasurably greater merit. And yet a Bodhisattva should gain no merit."

"But would not, O Lord," Subhuti asked, "a Bodhisattva gain much merit?"

"He would gain it, Subhuti, but he should not grasp it."

The Lord Buddha continued: "If anyone says that the Tathagata comes or goes, sits or reclines, he fails to understand my teaching. Why? The Tathagata has neither whence nor whither, and therefore He is called 'the Tathagata, the Arhat, the Supremely Enlightened One'.

"If a man or woman took a galaxy for every particle of dust in this vast galaxy and thoroughly ground each one until it was reduced to atoms, would the heap of atoms be great?"

"Indeed, O Lord," Subhuti answered, "the heap of atoms would be immense. And yet this enormous heap of atoms is not really a heap of atoms, even though it is called 'a heap of atoms'.

"Further, although the Tathagata has said 'galaxy', He teaches that it is not in truth a galaxy. For, O Lord, if there were in truth a galaxy, it would be a material object to be seized upon, and the Tathagata has taught that there is no seizing at all."

"Indeed, Subhuti," the Lord said, "this 'seizing upon a material object' is a convention of language, an expression devoid of real content. It is neither *dharmā* nor *adharma*, even though ordinary people have seized upon it foolishly.

"Suppose, Subhuti, that someone said that the Tathagata has taught a conception of a self, an entity or a personality. Would he be right?"

Subhuti answered: "Not at all, O Lord. That which the Tathagata has called 'a conception of self' is no conception."

"Therefore, Subhuti," the Lord said, "one who has set out on the Bodhisattva Path should know all *dharmas* and view them intently. Yet he should know them and view them in a way which does not give rise to a perception of any *dharmā*. Why? The Tathagata has taught that perception of a *dharmā* is no perception, even though it is called 'perception of a *dharmā*'.

“If even a Bodhisattva of Great Courage filled innumerable galaxies with the seven precious treasures, and offered them as a gift to the Tathagatas, the Arhats, the Supremely Enlightened Ones, his merit would not compare with the immeasurable merit of a good man or woman who took just one stanza from this Prajnaparamita discourse on *dharma* and remembered, recited, studied and illuminated it for others. How is this done? In a way which is free from appearances. Thus one illuminates it for others.”

Like a meteor, like darkness, as a flickering lamp,
 An illusion, like hoar-frost or a bubble,
 Like clouds, a flash of lightning, or a dream:
 So is all conditioned existence to be seen.

Thus spoke the Buddha. In blissful rapport, the disciples, men and women, simple devotees, the Bodhisattvas and the whole world with its gods, men, *asuras* and *gandharvas*, delighted in the teaching of the Tathagata.



MINDFULNESS OF *SUNYATA*

All through the circle of apparent and transitory objects
 Spreads the space of the clear light of the real, the ultimate,
 In which all things have a transcendental being.
 Forsaking all mental inventions,
 Dwell in the pure state of *sunyata*.
 Draw in your mind, centering it in the real.
 Guide your attention with mindfulness,
 Holding it within the real.

Precepts of Manjusri
To Tsong-kha-pa

LOSANG KALSANG GYATSO
 THE VIIth DALAI LAMA



Double Dorje



THE DIAMOND HEART

The great powers attributed to the diamond are suggested in the etymology of its name. The word itself comes from the Sanskrit *dyu*, meaning 'luminous being', a symbol of light and brilliance. The word is also linked with 'adamantine', which comes from the Greek *adamas*, meaning 'unconquerable' or 'indomitable'. It was a word applied by the old Greeks to hard metals and stones. Later, *adamas* became corrupted into *adamant*, *diamant* and diamond. The ancients believed the diamond to have more power than any other stone in its effect upon humanity both spiritually and physically, reflecting purity and innocence, a protection against evil. Set in fine steel, the Romans considered the diamond a safeguard against insanity, and ancient astrologers believed it to be particularly powerful, when worn by someone born under a strong aspect of the planet Mars, in fortifying constancy and strength of mind. For many, it gives courage and promotes harmony and love while worn on the left side of the body, since the strength of the diamond's growth is towards the north, the left side of man as he faces east. Worn for its occult powers or treated as an emblem for the sparkling mystical centre of life, the diamond, from its discovery in the depths of the earth to the many-faceted brilliance of its revealed heart, provides a rich insight into the unerring accuracy with which nature reflects archetypal ideas in physical formation.

It was in the ancient land of Hind that the earliest diamonds were discovered. Cherished for their beauteous qualities and symbolical meaning, the irradiating power of the fabled stone subsequently sparked the imagination of men throughout the world. The greatest and most vile acts of humankind have been linked symbolically and physically with this precious stone. The flashing diamond in the forehead of a carved deity or at the heart of a sacred altar symbolizes the pure reflective light of soul wisdom, but the stolen diamond eye and the lust for its barter or influence represents man's betrayal of himself.

An ancient Greek story describes how Alexander alone reached the source of the diamond, believed to be in a valley in the land of

Hind. "The glance cannot penetrate to its greatest depths and serpents are found there, the like of which no man hath seen, and upon which no man can gaze without dying." Alexander wished to transport the diamonds but since no one was willing to undertake the descent, he sought the counsel of wise men, who cryptically told him that if he threw sacrificial flesh into the valley, the diamonds would adhere to it and birds of the air would bear it up to him together with the diamonds. Like Alexander, man has wanted to steal the light of the diamond without understanding the nature of the serpent-wisdom that guarded it.

The diamond is a mineral formed of carbon, the only gem composed of a single element. Although it is chemically the same as graphite, the atomic structures of the two minerals differ, diamonds crystallizing in isometric systems, most commonly in octahedrons, but occasionally in hexagons and dodecahedrons. The atomic structure of the diamond is comprised of carbon atoms linked to four equidistant neighbours so that a tetrahedral linkage occurs throughout the crystal. It has a perfect cleavage in four directions parallel to its octahedral faces. Being the hardest natural substance known to man, the diamond can only be cut and faceted by the rotary action of its own dust. This hardness is directly related to its atomic structure, as is the degree to which light is refracted and dispersed. Light hits the atoms of an object and starts them vibrating sympathetically. These vibrations are passed through the structure from atom to atom. Transparency is that condition where light passes through aligned atoms and is ejected at the other side. Depending upon their arrangement, the atoms will select out the wavelengths or colours that are ejected. Because of its atomic structure, the diamond has the ability to refract light more than any other transparent substance and can produce a full spectrum of wavelengths. A beam of white light encountering the angle of a diamond is widely dispersed into various wavelengths, producing vivid sequences of rainbow colours.

Kimberlite is the basic igneous material in which diamonds are found. It is intrusive, having been formed deep within the earth and exposed after millions of years of erosion, during which thousands of feet of surface material have been washed away. In some parts of the world this diamond-bearing rock is found in the necks of extinct volcanoes or in bits along stream beds leading to

the sea. Whilst diamonds are often found more than 3000 feet within the earth, they have also been discovered in meteorites, indicating a universal evolution of their chemical and structural formation.

If we view the physical properties of the diamond as analogues of more abstract principles in nature, the significance of its form and symbolic meaning increases. The element carbon, which composes the diamond, is one of the four basic elements in the universe. As a principle in nature, it is the basis of all organic substances. The carbon atoms of the diamond are transformed through crystallization, involving the element in a geometric form of great significance. Philosophically, if we conceive of nature as alive and intelligent, then all its processes must be continually informed by intelligence. *The Secret Doctrine* says that this is the work of informing creators who are "like the numerous rays of the solar orb" and who become the mediating agents in "fructifying and awakening the dormant vitality inherent in Nature and its differentiated matter". Thus carbon atoms, in tetrahedral linkages describing octahedrons, are informed by, and in turn structurally manifest, the information of intelligent Nature.

The octahedron, the form most common to the diamond, is a double pyramid, combining two crosses reflective of the tetrahedral atomic structure and symbolic of the joining of heaven and earth or God and man. It is this geometric form which, more than any other in nature, precisely describes the ancient teaching "AS ABOVE – SO BELOW." The double pyramid provides the perfect reflection of the divine process wherein idea becomes form, and it is deeply significant that the basis of all organic substance – carbon – should be the element involved in this structure. The fact that the atomic ordering of this element produces the double pyramid is suggestive of the geometric alignment necessary to realize the divine in the mundane. The hardness of the diamond suggests the immutability of this archetypal pattern in nature. It can literally make its mark upon all other formations in life, retaining its own structure long after other material has been transformed. Just as the hardness of the diamond is so great that it can only be faceted by itself, so nature comes to realize itself through itself, and man, seeking the pure light of spirit, must perfect himself by the power of his inmost being.

Pure white light, striking the diamond, would pass readily

through it, but encountering any of its angles, is fragmented into all the basic colours of life, as the light of pure spirit manifests itself in the seven coloured rays of the architects of the universe. But buried deep within its material shroud, the undiscovered diamond cannot be reached by the pure light. Encrusted in the earth, it is recognizable only to one who looks within the layers of matter for its pure reflecting crystal, as it unveils the divine pattern.

In the Buddhist tradition, the diamond obtains its richest symbolic expression. The Sanskrit word *vajra* is used to connote various attributes connected with the diamond, as is the Tibetan term *dorje*. *Vajra* or *dorje* often refers to a weapon or instrument in the hands of a god having occult powers to repel evil influences. The Sanskrit *vajra* literally means 'diamond club' or sceptre, such as that of Indra, referred to as his thunderbolt. It is the sceptre of Initiates and Adepts and is the symbol of possession of all the *siddhis*, the highest spiritual powers. Controlling these powers, such a one is also called *Dorjesempa*, which literally means 'Diamond Holder', another title for 'Diamond-Souled'. The power and strength of the spiritual condition of such a soul reflects the adamant quality of the diamond which symbolizes its "immortal individuality and personal invulnerability".

The Tibetan Buddhist associates *vajra* with the quality of anger which is transmuted into mirror-like wisdom when the essence of violence is transmuted into precision and openness. It is also associated with water which is clear and reflective. *Vajra* analyses everything in its own terms, and its intelligence never leaves any area unexplored or unconsidered. *Vajrayana* is the practice of creating a direct link with life experience. Of the three Buddhist *yanas*, *Vajrayana* is the vehicle of direct energy. It is that practice which leads to full development. It gathers whatever were formerly kindred tendencies into definite lines of thought and action. It is said that "he who mounts the *Vajrayana* will go to the other shore of the great ocean of this world of relativity". This tenet upholds the idea that reality is not transcendent to phenomena but immanent in them. Followers of *Vajrayana* intensify their awareness of this by prefixing the term *vajra* to all the accessories of their practice. Thus, on a higher level, *Vajracharya* is the spiritual guru, the 'Supreme Master of *Vajra*', guru of the

Yogacharyas, who themselves are masters of the *siddhis*. On a lesser level, *Vajrasana* indicates the posture of the disciple, whilst *Vajraghanta* is the name of the bell he uses in worship.

The use of the *vajra* prefix indicates the spirit reflected in the relationships, objects and acts. It indicates the consciousness of their transcendental significance, and it is through this consciousness that the disciple ultimately hopes to grasp a *Vajrakaya*, or transcendental body, and become a *Vajrasattva*, a transcendental being, one who is Diamond-Souled. Such are the Mahatmas whose individual personalities are given lustre by their impersonal individuality. The First Logos or *Vajradhara* presides over the Dhyani Buddhas and, according to Tibetan tradition, "sends into the world of manifestation his heart". The *Vajrasattva* is the 'Diamond Heart', the Creative Logos at one sublime level, the Mahatma at another. Again, the name *Vajrapani* is that given to the Dhyani Bodhisattva who is the spiritual reflection or son of the Dhyani Buddhas on earth. He is born directly from the subjective form of existence and through its subtlest force, known only to the highest Initiates of the Yogacharya School.

Thus the symbol of the diamond, reflected on many levels, describes a vast spectrum of unfolding spiritual potency. From the simplest material object to the highest transcendental embodiment, all are like slowly emerging crystals which increasingly reflect the light of pure spirit. Perceiving this, the patient disciple seeks to realize in every act and thought the nature of the 'Diamond Soul'. With constancy and strength of mind he must strive to achieve the purity of clear ideation. In embodying the powers attributed to the diamond, he becomes one, his whole mind and heart cool and fixed in reflection. But all the strength and powers of lives spent enwrapped in earthly robes must be brought to bear upon this task. For, as it is written in *The Voice of the Silence*:

The light from the ONE MASTER, the one unfading golden light of Spirit, shoots its effulgent beams on the Disciple from the very first. Its rays thread through the thick, dark clouds of matter . . . But, O Disciple, unless the flesh is passive, head cool, the soul as firm and pure as flaming diamond, the radiance will not reach the chamber, its sunlight

will not warm the heart, nor will the mystic sounds of the akasic heights reach the ear, however eager, at the initial stage.

All life meanders slowly towards a clearer reflection of spirit, and man is the reflective pivot in nature in whom the process becomes self-conscious. The disciple must struggle with adamantine firmness to reach that fixity in consciousness which is constant. The whole of evolution reaches fruition in this 'self-analysing reflection', and the clarity of the diamond perfectly symbolizes the realization of this in the *Vajrasattva*. The potential of divine geometry of manifested life is reflected in his 'Diamond Soul' when that light radiating as colour through his seven principles becomes a perfectly dispersed benediction in the world. So the perfected man, the 'Diamond Holder', draws all nature closer to conscious Godhood.



Know, if of Amitabha, the "Boundless Age", thou would'st become co-worker, then must thou shed the light acquired, like to the Bodhisattvas twain,* upon the span of all three worlds.

The Voice of the Silence

* In the Northern Buddhist symbology, Amitabha or "Boundless Space" (Parabrahman) is said to have in his paradise two Bodhisattvas – Kwan-shi-yin and Tashishi – who ever radiate light over the three worlds where they lived, including our own, in order to help with this light (of knowledge) in the instruction of Yogis, who will, in their turn, save men. Their exalted position in Amitabha's realm is due to deeds of mercy performed by the two, as such Yogis, when on earth, says the allegory.



THE HEART SUTRA

Om Namo Bhagavatyai Arya Prajnaparamitayai.

Om! Obeisance to the illustrious, noble *Prajnaparamita!*

The holy Bodhisattva Avalokiteshwara, absorbed in the profound practice of *Prajnaparamita*, looked in compassion upon the five *skandhas*, the aggregates constituting personal existence, and saw their nature as *sunyata*, voidness.

“O Sariputra,” Avalokiteshwara said, “here *rupa*, form, is *sunyata*, voidness, and *sunyata* itself is *rupa*. *Sunyata* is no different from *rupa*, and *rupa* is not different from *sunyata*: whatever is *rupa* is *sunyata* and whatever is *sunyata* is *rupa*. So too with the other *skandhas* — feeling, perception, disposition and consciousness.

“Thus, Sariputra, all *dharmas* are *sunyata*, without differentiating marks. *Dharmas* are unborn and undying, neither tainted nor pure, neither waning nor waxing.

“Therefore, Sariputra, where *sunyata* is, there is no *rupa*, no feeling, no perception, no disposition and no consciousness. There is no eye, ear, nose, tongue, body or mind; no appearances, sounds, odours, flavours, tangibles or mental objects. Nor is there modification of sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch or mind. There is neither ignorance nor its extinction. There is no formative force, consciousness, *nama rupa*, field of sense, contact, sensation, craving, grasping, becoming, birth, decay, death or their negations. Thus there are neither the twelve *nidanas* nor their negations. There is no suffering, no origination or cessation of suffering, and there is no path. Nor is there cognition, attainment or the opposites of these, nor even the four *Dhyanas*.

“Therefore, Sariputra, the Bodhisattva without mental impediments, without notions of attainment and non-attainment, abides in reliance upon *Prajnaparamita*. Without mental impediments, he is undisturbed. He has fearlessly transcended the false tendencies to crave for permanence, comfort, concept of self or delight. Thus Nirvana is gained.

“All Buddhas who appear in the past, present and future are awake to utmost, true and perfect Enlightenment through reliance upon *Prajnaparamita*.

“Therefore, all should know as truth the great *mantra* of *Prajnaparamita*, the *mantra* of highest knowledge, the supreme *mantra* which alleviates all suffering and contains no deception. This *mantra* is proclaimed by *Prajnaparamita* itself:

gate gate paragate parasamgate bodhi svaha

Gone, gone, gone beyond,
Gone to the other shore, O Bodhi!
So let it be.

Thus ends the Sutra of the Great Heart of *Prajnaparamita*, the Perfection of Wisdom.

Maha Prajnaparamita Hridaya



*Thou hast to study the voidness of the seeming full,
the fulness of the seeming void. O fearless Aspirant,
look deep within the well of thine own heart, and answer.
Knowest thou of Self the powers, O thou perceiver
of external shadows?*

The Voice of the Silence



INSTRUCTION TO SURYAGARBHA

Homage to all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas

Thus have I heard. The Lord dwelt in Magadha, in a remote forest conducive to the practice of Dharma, together with many monks and with Bodhisattvas gathered from endless, immeasurable and innumerable Buddha-fields. A Bodhisattva named Suryagarbha, Seed of the Sun, was present in the assembly at that time. He rose from his seat, went before the Lord and spoke with the Lord's consent.

"I have come to ask the Tathagata a question."

The Lord said: "Ask, and I will answer."

The Bodhisattva Suryagarbha said: "How, Lord, should a Bodhisattva skilled in means practise the *Prajnaparamita*?"

"There is, noble son," the Lord replied, "a form of concentration called 'skilled in means like the sun'. Bodhisattvas should practise it."

"How", Suryagarbha enquired, "should they practise therein?"

The Lord said: "The concentration called 'skilled in means like the sun' is sevenfold. First, just as the sun causes sprouts to grow, the concentration of the Bodhisattva matures the sprout of Enlightenment in beings. Secondly, as the sun ceaselessly radiates heat, so the concentration of the Bodhisattva encompasses all beings with compassion. Thirdly, as the sun burns away pollution, so the Bodhisattva endowed with insight and wisdom burns away the pollution of the *kleshas*. Fourthly, as the sun melts whatever is frozen, so the concentration of the Bodhisattva, who has cognition of the antidotes, melts the frost of the *kleshas*. Fifthly, as the sun dispels the darkness, so the Bodhisattva immersed in contemplating thought dispels the darkness of craving. Sixthly, as the sun passes over the four continents, so the Bodhisattva, in accomplishing his labour, liberates from the four floods of suffering. Seventh, as the sun warms all things equally, so the Bodhisattva, in reaching his goal, gladdens all beings with the warmth of his skill in action.

“Further, noble son,” the Lord continued, “the Bodhisattva should train in *Prajnaparamita*. He should gain mastery over all *dharmas* as having no reality in themselves, as being devoid of signs, as having no true existence, as being impersonal and empty of being. A Bodhisattva, noble son, should train in Dharma, in the Dharma Element, in suchness and in the limits of reality. He should train in suchness free from illusion and change, in Truth and the truly real.”

Again the Lord instructed Suryagarbha: “A Bodhisattva, noble son, should train in all *dharmas* as unproduced and in their essential, original nature. He should recognize all *dharmas* — form, feeling, perception, disposition and consciousness — as void in their essential, original nature, and he should cognize them as isolated in their individual being.

“Those, noble son, who take up the *Prajnaparamita Sutra* will witness the hindrances resulting from their past deeds vanish. They will generate an instrument with merit, a measureless instrument of wisdom, and they will be endowed with mindfulness, morality and concentration. So again, noble son, Bodhisattvas should train in *Prajnaparamita*.”

The Lord at that time intoned these verses:

One who is learned,
 Who is devoted to the supreme Dharma,
 Who is ever friendly to all creatures,
 Who has put on the armour of Virya,
 Who is intent on the welfare of all beings,
 Who is devoted to concentration and meditation,
 Who has no concept of self or of other beings,
 Who treads the Path of the true vehicle,
 Who courses like the Jina’s sons in the past,
 A wise one is he, who trains in Truth.

Thus spoke the Lord. The Bodhisattva Suryagarbha and the whole world with its devas and men rejoiced in the teachings of the Lord.

Prajnaparamita for Suryagarbha





THE EIGHTFOLD AWAKENING

Disciples of the Lord Buddha ceaselessly recite the eightfold awakening of the Great Ones day and night.

I

This world is impermanent and the divisions of the universe are transitory.

The four elements are a source of pain, being empty.

The five *skandhas* do not constitute the real Self.

The endless alternations between birth and death, death and birth, are empty, false and beyond control.

The mind is the source of delusion and the body and abode of misdeeds.

By awakening to this, one is gradually released from the cycle of birth and death.

II

To have a multitude of desires is an affliction. The cycle of birth and death — a source of great weariness — results from desire.

When desires are diminished and all action to satiate them is renounced, the mind and body are sovereign.

III

When the mind remains unsatisfied, desires wantonly proliferate and misdeed is heaped upon delusion.

A Bodhisattva is not thus.

His thoughts are ever those of contentment; in tranquillity he accepts his lot, however poor; he keeps to the Way and indulges in no action other than the pursuit of knowledge.

IV

Laziness and neglect result in backsliding.

Diligent and continuous effort is necessary to root out the *asavas* — desire, hatred and ignorance — and to subdue the four

demons — birth, death, sickness and senility — and in order to escape from the prison of the *skandhas* and realms of sense.

V

The ignorant are infatuated with the circle of life and death. But the Bodhisattva continually ponders the way, studying it deeply and attentive to the Teachings, that he may grow in knowledge and attain the powers of convincing speech in order to rescue all beings. Every success inspires great joy.

VI

Constant complaints against poverty and affliction enmesh the complainer in much evil karma.

The Bodhisattva lavishes his help on all, without distinction between those who ill treat him and those who hold him dear.

He dwells not on old wrongs nor feels hatred for evil men.

VII

The desires of the senses are delusions, bringing calamities in their train.

Even worldly men should not become contaminated by worldly enjoyments, but should think constantly of the three garments and the earthen begging bowl — symbols of the Teaching — and form the unshakeable intention of leaving the world and cleaving to the Way in purity.

They should practise the pure life in the highest degree and show compassion to all beings.

VIII

The cycle of life and death is like a raging fire attended by immeasurable sorrow.

Cultivate the Mahayana Heart and be ready to rescue all beings.

Be willing to suffer afflictions without number on their behalf, and lead them all to find joy at last.

It was by means of this awakening that the Great Ones, the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, attained Enlightenment. Diligently following the Way, exercising compassion and knowledge, they boarded the *Dharmakaya* raft and sailed to Nirvana's shore. They

returned to the world of birth and death to ferry others across. By these eight means, they instruct all beings and lead them to awaken to the sorrow of birth and death, to put away the desires of sense, and to cultivate the Noble Path in their hearts. If a disciple of Lord Buddha intones them, if he recites and ponders them, he will be cleansed immeasurably. He will progress towards the attainment of supreme Wisdom and the Terrace of Enlightenment. For him birth and death will be forever finished and he will abide in eternal bliss.

Sutra of the Eightfold Awakening





EMPTINESS

All things conditioned are impermanent, unstable,
As fragile in essence as an unfired pot;
Like a borrowed object, like a city on sand,
They endure only for a little time.

Without exception they are destroyed
Like plaster washed away by rain;
Like the river's sandy bank,
They are conditioned, their nature frail.

They are like the flame of a lamp
That quickly flares up and quickly goes out.
Without strength to endure, they are like wind,
Or like foam, without substance, in essence feeble.

They have no power, being empty within —
Like the plantain stem — to pellucid thinking,
Like conjurers' delusions taking in the mind
Or a fist closed on nothing, teasing a child.

From strands of grass a rope is woven
By the force of effort.
The turning wheel draws up the well-bucket,
But each revolution in itself is naught.

Thus the turning of all that compose existence
Arises from mutual interaction.
The turning is traceless in each part alone,
Either at the beginning or in the end.

Wherever the seed, there is the young plant,
But the seed is not the plant's nature;
Though not the plant, it is not something other —
Thus is the Righteous Law, neither passing nor permanent.

All things conditioned are confined by ignorance;
 Pursued to the core, they do not exist,
 For they along with ignorance are alike *sunyata*
 In their true nature, devoid of power.

The mystic discerns the beginning and end
 Of consciousness produced and passing away.
 From nowhere it came, to nowhere returns,
 Of reality as empty as the conjurer's trick.

Through the drawing together of three elements —
 Firesticks, fuel and the hand's labour —
 Fire is kindled. Having served its purpose,
 Fire soon burns out again.

A wise man may search here, there, everywhere,
 Whence it came and whither it goes,
 Through all regions in every direction,
 But he will not discover its ultimate nature.

Thus all things in this contingent world
 Depend on causes and conditions.
 The mystic knows the heart of reality
 And sees lesser things as empty, without power.

Lalitavistara Sutra XIII, 175-177





THE WORLD AS ILLUSION

Just as nothing remains when a banana palm is torn to bits, so too with a person divided into the six elements – earth, water, fire, air, space and consciousness.

Hence the Victorious Ones declare: “Phenomena are without a self.” Thus, the six elements are to be regarded as without a self. Therefore neither self nor non-self are to be taken as real. The Great Subduer has spurned assertions of self and non-self. He rejected sights, sounds and the like as neither true nor not-true, for if from one view the other follows, neither holds. This world at root is beyond the true and the false, and so he refrained from saying that it truly is or is not. Given the emptiness of things, the All-Knower could not declare them either to have limits or no limits, or both or neither.

Countless Buddhas have arisen, will arise and are present now; there are myriads of sentient beings, and the Buddhas abide in the past, the present and the future. The emancipation of beings from the world of the three times brings about no increase in it. Why then does the All-Knower remain silent about the limits of the world?

Hidden from common view, the profound doctrine of the world as illusion is the ambrosial teaching of the Buddha. The formation and disappearance of an illusory elephant may be witnessed, yet neither formation nor disappearance exists. Just so, the formation and disappearance of the illusory world are seen, but ultimately neither exist. An illusory elephant is but a mere obscuration of consciousness, neither coming from any place nor going forth nor persisting. Just so, this illusory world is such an obscuration of consciousness – neither coming nor going nor persisting.

Thus, in its nature, the world is apart from time. Except for convenience of speech, what world could there be that either is or is not? Thus the Buddha remained silent at all times regarding the four views of the world – that it is limited, not limited, both or neither.





ALAYAVIJNANA

False ideas of *Atman* and *dharmas* arise, attended by varieties of phenomenal appearance. Such representational and manifesting consciousness exhibits three transformations.

These are: consciousness of fruits maturing in time, deliberative consciousness, and consciousness of objective discriminations. The first is *Alayavijnana*, the storehouse of ideation, also called the retributive and seed-bearing consciousness.

Incomprehensible in its basis, location and power of perception, it is manifest in feeling, attention, sensation, conception and volition.

Indifferent to all its manifestations, it is undefiled and unlimited. It flows in a perpetual torrent.

It is renounced by Arhats. The second transformation is called *Manas*. It is deliberative, depending upon and objectifying *Alayavijnana*.

Manas is accompanied by the four *kleshas*, roots of defilement and limitation: *atmadristi*, self-belief; *atmamoha*, self-delusion; *atmamana*, self-conceit; *atmasneha*, self-love; and by dark ignorance.

Neither good nor evil, it is involved in feeling and the other binding manifestations of consciousness. It is extinguished with the transcendence of conditioned thought on *lokuttara marga*, the supramundane path.

The third transformation is discernment through the sixfold consciousness. It is the power of objective discrimination and is either good, evil or neither.

It is accompanied by the *chittas*, universal, particular or good; by the greater and lesser *kleshas*; and by the indeterminate mental functions. All these act on the mind through the *trivedana* – joy, sorrow and indifference.

The universal *chittas* are feeling, attention, sensation, conception and volition; the particular *chittas* are desire, resolve, memory, concentration and discernment, each dependent on distinct conditions; the good *chittas* are belief, the sense of shame and the sense of integrity.

These are the three roots of non-covetousness, non-anger and

non-delusion, as well as of energy, calmness of mind, vigilance, equanimity and harmlessness.

The *kleshas* are covetousness, anger, delusion, conceit, doubt and false views.

The lesser *kleshas* include fury, enmity, hypocrisy, affliction, envy, parsimony and duplicity, deception, pride, harmfulness, shamelessness, lack of integrity, torpidity, agitation, unbelief, indolence, idleness, forgetfulness, distraction and lack of discernment.

The indeterminate mental functions are remorse and drowsiness, reflection and investigation, forming respective pairs.

Depending on the root-consciousness, the fivefold sense-consciousness manifests singly or separately, according to objective conditions, just as waves appear, depending on the condition of water.

Manovijnana, the synthesizing consciousness, manifests at all times, except for beings born into the realm beyond thought; in the two forms of concentration where thought is extinct; or in states of stupor or unconsciousness.

The three transformations of consciousness manifest in two modes: illusory conception and its object. Both are unreal. All is mind only.

The various transformations arise from the seeds stored in consciousness; through the force of their interaction various illusions arise.

The impetus of past actions affects both the organs and their objects, so that the exhaustion of retribution is succeeded by still further retribution.

By particular modes of illusion, various illusory notions arise, but whatever is conceived by illusion is no true self-nature.

Such dependent self-natures result from the conditioned nature of illusion. Nirvana differs from this in being ever free from all conditionality.

But the non-dependent and dependent are not wholly the same or different. Like the eternal and the transitory, they may only be seen in each other.

The three aspects of self-nature are the ground of the three aspects of non-self-nature; thus the mysterious teaching that no *dharmas* are self-natures.

The first of these is the non-self-nature of phenomenals, the second that of self-existences, the third that of supposedly ultimate existences.

The supreme truth of all *dharmas* is *tathata* — suchness. Eternally pure in nature, it is mind only.

When not abiding in the state of mind only, the organs and their dark attachments cannot be controlled or extinguished.

To hold to some object, declaring it to be mind only, is not to abide in mind only, but rather in a state of attachment.

But when knowledge is unbounded by conceptions arising from perceived objects, then mind only is realized, beyond attachment and its objects.

This transcendental knowledge is beyond comprehension and thought; the inner transmutation into its state stems from renunciation of the gross organs and their objects.

It is the pure realm, inconceivable, good and eternal. It is the blissful vesture of emancipation, the Great Silence.

Vijnaptimatratasiddhi Trimsika 1-30

VASUBANDHU



In the Yogacharya system of the contemplative Mahayana school, Alaya is both the Universal Soul (*Anima Mundi*) and the Self of a progressed adept. 'He who is strong in the Yoga can introduce at will his Alaya by means of meditation into the true Nature of Existence'.

The Secret Doctrine



THE OCEAN AND THE WAVES

The Blessed One uttered these *slokas* to the Bodhisattva Mahamati:

“As waves rise and ceaselessly dance upon the ocean stirred up by the wind, so the ocean of *Alayavijnana* is roused by the winds of objectification, its waves — the waves of heterogeneity — dancing with the *vijnanas* — the sixfold sense-consciousnesses.

“Indigo, red and all the colours, the conch shell, salt, milk and honey, the fragrance of fruits and blossoms and the rays of sunlight — all are neither different nor the same. Rather, the relation is analogous to the ocean and the waves upon it. Thus are the seven *vijnanas* joined with *chitta* — the mind.

“As the endless tumult of waves is stirred on the surface of the ocean, so in *Alayavijnana* does the variety of *vijnanas* arise. *Chitta*, *Manas* and the *vijnanas* are distinguished by their form, but in truth these eight cannot be separated one from another, for nothing qualifies them or is qualified by them.

“Just as there is no distinction between the ocean and its waves, so in *chitta* there is no evolution of the *vijnanas*. Karma is gathered by *chitta*, pondered by *Manas*, recognized by *Manovijnana*, and the visible world is distinguished by the five *vijnanas*.”

Mahamati spoke: “Various colours like indigo and red appear to sense-consciousness. Tell me, great Sage, just how all these colours are like waves on the ocean.”

The Lord replied: “There is no variety of colour in the waves. Only for the ignorant is *chitta* said to be involved in the evolution of form. There is no evolution in *chitta* itself, which is beyond comprehension. Comprehension occurs where there are waves.

“Matter, quality and location appear as such to the *vijnanas* and thereby they are seen as evolving just as waves appear to evolve.”

Mahamati asked: “Since the ocean is manifestly seen in the state of dancing waves, how is it that the evolution of *Alayavijnana* is not recognized by the intellect just as the ocean is?”

The Lord answered: “The comparison of the *Alayavijnana* to an ocean is for the sake of the particularizing mind of the ignorant.

The analogy of waves in motion is used only by way of illustration.”

Mahamati spoke: “The sun rises and shines impartially on all people high and low. You who are the light of the world should promulgate the truth to the ignorant. How is it that in taking up your abode in the Dharma you do not announce the truth?”

The Lord replied: “If the truth is given out by me, the truth is not in the mind. As waves appear at once upon the ocean, or as images appear all at once in a mirror or a dream, so the mind is reflected in its own fields of sense. Because of unsatisfying conditions, the evolution of the *vijnanas* occurs by degrees.

“The function of *Manovijnana* is to recognize; that of *Manas* is to ponder, and the objective world appears to the five *vijnanas*. But there is no gradation in *samahita*, the state of intense concentration.

“Like an accomplished painter instructing students who arrange colours to produce a picture, so I teach. The picture is not in the colours, nor in the canvas, nor in the palette, yet in order to make it attractive to all beings, the picture is presented in colours. One’s teaching is a transgression, for the truth transcends words.

“Establishing myself in the Dharma, I preach the truth for *yogins*. The truth is self-realization, beyond categories and distinctions. I teach it to the sons of the Victorious One — the Teaching is not meant for the ignorant. Whatever is seen as heterogeneous is a fantasy which does not exist.

“The Teaching is given in many guises, and is thus subject to transgression. The Teaching is not really Teaching if it is not relevant in each case. According to the nature of the disease, the healer adjusts the medicine. Just so, the Buddhas teach in accord with the mentalities of the hearers.

“Such a region of mind is not reached by the philosophers and the *shravakas*. The Ones who teach affirm the state of self-realization.”

Lankavatara Sutra II, 46-48





THE TATHAGATAGARBHA

Queen Srimala addressed the Lord Buddha: “Lord, *samsara* is based on the *Tathagatagarbha*, the womb, the seed, the ego, the embryo of the Tathagata. When the Lord said, ‘It is without limit in the past’, he referred to the *Tathagatagarbha*. Since the *Tathagatagarbha* exists, there is reason to speak of *samsara*, the cyclic flow. In regard to this cyclic flow, as soon as the organs for sensory perception pass away, the *Tathagatagarbha* seizes the organs for sensory perception – and that is the cyclic flow.

“Lord, the two natures – ‘passing away’ and ‘rebirth’ – are conventional terms for the *Tathagatagarbha*. Lord, ‘perished’ and ‘born’ are conventional terms for the world. ‘Perished’ is the loss of the senses; ‘reborn’ is their renewal. Yet the *Tathagatagarbha* is neither born nor dies, nor does it pass away to be reborn.

“The *Tathagatagarbha* excludes the realm to which the characteristic ‘constructed’ applies. The *Tathagatagarbha* is permanent, steadfast and eternal. Therefore the *Tathagatagarbha* is the support, upholder and basis of the constructed Buddha natures that are non-discrete, associated, and whose mode of knowing is liberated from the store of defilement, as well as of all external constructed natures that are discrete, dissociated, and whose mode of knowing is not liberated.

“Lord, if the *Tathagatagarbha* did not exist, neither aversion towards suffering nor longing, eagerness and aspiration towards Nirvana could be. Why? Whatever the six sense-perceptions are, and whatever the seventh is, these seven natures – seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching, mental awareness of sensation and the defiled mind – are alike unsteady, momentary and without the experience of suffering. Hence these natures are inadequate for aversion towards suffering or for longing, eagerness and aspiration towards Nirvana.

“Lord, the *Tathagatagarbha* has ultimate existence without beginning or end, has an unborn and undying nature, and experiences suffering. Thus it is adequate to have aversion towards suffering and longing, eagerness and aspiration towards Nirvana.

“Lord, the *Tathagatagarbha* is neither self nor sentient being, neither soul nor persona. The *Tathagatagarbha* is not the realm of beings who fall into belief in the reality of the persona, adhering to misleading views, whose thoughts are marred by empty distractions. Lord, the *Tathagatagarbha* is the womb of the illustrious *Dharmadhatu*, the seed of the *Dharmakaya*, the egg of the supramundane Dharma, the embryo of the intrinsically pure Dharma.

“Lord, this intrinsically pure *Tathagatagarbha*, stained by adventitious defilements, is the domain of the Tathagata, the Inconceivable Master. Why? The virtuous consciousness is momentary and thus unstained by defilements. But then, the consciousness without virtue is also momentary and is not stained by defilements. Since defilements do not stain consciousness, and consciousness does not touch defilements, how can consciousness, by nature free of contact, become defiled? There is both defilement and defiled consciousness. Thus the stain on the intrinsically pure consciousness is difficult to understand.

“The Lord alone has the Buddha-eye, the knowledge for it. The Lord is the root of all teaching. The Lord is omnipotent. The Lord is the refuge.”

The Lord Buddha, hearing Queen Srimala discourse on matters difficult to understand, rejoiced in sympathy and said:

“Exactly so, O Queen! Difficult it is to understand the meaning of the intrinsically pure consciousness in a condition of defilement.

“O Queen, these two teachings are difficult to understand — the teaching of the intrinsically pure consciousness and the teaching of the defilement of that consciousness.

“O Queen, you along with the unswerving Bodhisattvas who know the great doctrine alone are able to hear these two teachings through divine sounds. The disciples, O Queen, accept these two teachings only through faith in the Tathagata.”

Srimala Sutra XIII





SONG OF FOURFOLD MINDFULNESS

I. MINDFULNESS OF THE *GURU*

Upon the seat of the union of wisdom and method
Sits the Teacher of Compassion, the Refuge of all beings,
A Buddha perfect in renunciation and wisdom.
Forsaking all images of your imperfection,
Approach with pure perception.
Draw in your mind, centering it in reverence and adoration.
Guide your attention with mindfulness,
Holding it within reverence and adoration.

II. MINDFULNESS OF *ANUTTARA SAMYAK SAMBUDDHA*

Suffering in the prison of endless cycles of existence
Wander the six classes of sentient beings, all in unhappiness,
Even those fathers and mothers who protected you with kindness.
Forsaking all desire and hate,
Meditate upon altruism and compassion.
Draw in your mind, centering it in compassion.
Guide your attention with mindfulness,
Holding it within compassion.

III. MINDFULNESS OF THE DIVINE BODY

In the divine sphere of supreme bliss, joyous to experience,
Abides the divine body of your pure *skandhas* and *dharmas*,
The sacred and impartite *Trikaya*.
Forsaking all thoughts of a mundane self,
Practise divine reserve and vivid appearance.
Draw in your mind, centering it in voidness and the manifest.
Guide your attention with mindfulness,
Holding it within voidness and the manifest.

IV. MINDFULNESS OF *SUNYATA*

All through the circle of apparent and transitory objects
 Spreads the space of the clear light of the real, the ultimate,
 In which all things have a transcendental being.
 Forsaking all mental inventions,
 Dwell in the pure state of *sunyata*.
 Draw in your mind, centering it in the real.
 Guide your attention with mindfulness,
 Holding it within the real.

In the meeting of the modes of *samsara*
 With the sixfold consciousness,
 Reside the confused and baseless phenomena of duality,
 Like the illusory shows of a deceiving conjurer.
 Forsaking all phenomena, apprehend them within *sunyata*.
 Draw in your mind, centering it in *samsara* and *sunyata*.
 Guide your attention with mindfulness,
 Holding it within *samsara* and *sunyata*.

Precepts of Manjusri
To Tsong-kha-pa

LOSANG KALSANG GYATSO
 THE VIIth DALAI LAMA



The Voice of the Silence describes a Yogi advanced enough to have the real perception of the high and the low, the great and the small. He comes to be "a 'Walker of the Sky,' who treads the winds above the waves, whose step touches not the waters." His "body becomes as one formed of the wind . . . he beholds the things beyond the seas and stars." Tsong-Kha-Pa is such a 'Walker of the Sky.' We are told that his "luminous form . . . under the shape of a fiery cloudlet, that separates itself from the dancing beams of the sunlight, holds converse" at a large lamasery "with a great congregation of lamas, numbering thousands, the voice descending from above, like the whisper of the breeze through foliage."

The Theosophical Movement
 Bombay, 1936



NIRVANA

Master, tell us about Nirvana”, Mahamati asked the Blessed One.

The Buddha replied: “The word ‘Nirvana’ has many different meanings for different people, but these people may be divided into four groups. First, there are people who are suffering or fear suffering and therefore think of Nirvana. Then there are philosophers who attempt to characterize Nirvana, and, thirdly, there are those disciples who think of Nirvana only in relation to themselves. Finally, there is the Nirvana of the Buddhas.

“Those who are suffering or fear suffering think of Nirvana as an escape and a recompense. Imagining that Nirvana consists in the eventual annihilation of the senses and their mental synthesis, they are not aware that *Alayavijnana* and Nirvana are one, that Samsara and Nirvana should not be separated. Being ignorant, they do not meditate on the imagelessness of Nirvana, but rather speak of different modes of liberation. They fail to understand the teachings of the Tathagata and cling to a notion of Nirvana which is external to the mind, and thereby remain self-chained to the revolving wheel of life and death.

“The Nirvanas of which the philosophers speak do not exist. Some hold that Nirvana is found where the whole system of the mind ceases to operate because the elements of the personality have ceased to be. Others say this occurs where there is utter indifference to the objective world and to its impermanent nature.

“Some philosophers think that Nirvana is a state where there is no recollection of past or present, as a lamp extinguished, a seed burnt up, a fire gone out. For them all substrata cease to be. This is called the non-arising of mental distinctions. Yet this is not Nirvana, because Nirvana cannot be mere annihilation and vacuity.

“Again, other philosophers speak of Nirvana as though it were simply the cessation of discursive thought, as the wind stops blowing, or when one overcomes the dualistic view of knower and known through self-effort, or dispels the notions of permanency and impermanency, good and evil, or when one transcends passion through knowledge. Nirvana means deliverance for these

philosophers.

“Others see in *rupa* the vehicle of pain and, frightened by the very notion of *rupa*, seek for happiness in an *arupa* world. Some hold that individuality and universality are recognizable in all inner and outer things and hence that there is no real destruction of beings, and in this eternality they see Nirvana. Others recognize the eternality of things in a Nirvana which is the absorption of the finite consciousness in the Supreme *Atman*, or who see the manifestation of the vitality of a Supreme Spirit in all things and to which all things return. Among thinkers who are especially foolish, some teach two primary elements, a primary substance and a primary soul, which mutually interblend and produce all things through the transformation of qualities. For some, action and interaction alone are sufficient to explain the birth of the world, and for others, Ishwara freely creates all things. Because they cling to these feeble notions, there is no awakening, and so they believe that Nirvana consists in the fact of no awakening.

“Philosophers sometimes imagine that Nirvana is identical with the existence of self-nature (*tathata*), unaffected by other self-natures, like the variegated feathers of a peacock or a variety of precious crystals, or the pointedness of a thorn. While some identify Nirvana with being, others with non-being, yet others say that Nirvana is inseparable from everything. Again, some teach that time produces the world which depends on time and that Nirvana is the realization of its identity with time.

“Orthodox religionists may think that Nirvana is the attainment of heaven, or the consequence of royal piety.

“These many views, taught by philosophers, supported by many forms of reason, are neither consistent with logic nor sufficient to the wise. At root, all such conceptions of Nirvana are dualistic and are bound up with causality. Nirvana is conceived discursively, but where there is no emergence or disappearance, how can there be discursive thought? These philosophers rely on their special manuals and understand accordingly, and so obscure the truth because truth is not simply one’s imagination of it. Their minds become increasingly confused, for Nirvana cannot be found by mental searching alone. The confusion of the philosophers becomes the confusion of the people.

“Those disciples and teachers who think of Nirvana in relation

to some conception of the ego, and who search for it by retiring into personal solitude, seek Nirvana as the eternal bliss of *Samadhi* for themselves alone. They see that the world is a manifestation of mind, that all discursive thought is a product of the mind, and so they abandon society to practise a variety of spiritual disciplines. In solitude they seek realization in *Prajnaparamita* through self-effort. They follow the stages up to the sixth, that of the *Samadhis*, but since they still cling to egotism they cannot attain the deepest turning around of consciousness. They are never free from the thinking mind and the karma of inertia. Attached to the bliss of the *Samadhis*, they indeed enter their Nirvana, but this is not the Nirvana of the Tathagatas. Though they have entered the stream, they must return to this world of life and death.”

Mahamati addressed the Blessed One: “When Bodhisattvas yield up their merit for the emancipation of every being, they become spiritually inseparable from all life. But, though Bodhisattvas may be utterly pure, other beings are tainted with unexhausted evil and unprecipitated karma. How, O Blessed One, are Bodhisattvas confident of Nirvana? And what is the Nirvana of the Bodhisattvas?”

Lord Buddha replied: “This confidence, Mahamati, is an assurance neither of numbers nor logic. It is not the mind that is assured, but the heart. The Bodhisattva’s assurance arises with the intuition released through removal of the hindrances of passion, dissolution of the hindrances of knowledge, and awakening of the clear perception and patient acceptance of egolessness. When discriminations of the mortal mind cease, the fourfold thirst — for life, sexual indulgence, learning and eternal existence — disappears. Its extinction ends the accumulation of habit-bound energies, and the obscurations on the face of Universal Mind are dissolved. Thus the Bodhisattva attains the enlightenment of *Prajnaparamita*. This is the heart’s assurance of Nirvana.

“But here and in other Buddha-fields are Bodhisattvas, devoted to the Bodhisattva Path, who have not yet fully renounced the bliss of *Samadhi* or the peace of Nirvana. The teaching of the Nirvana without substratum contains a hidden meaning for the benefit of those disciples who still cling to the thought of Nirvana. This is so that they may be inspired to exert themselves on the Bodhisattva Path for the enlightenment of all

beings. The Buddhas, adept in transformation, teach a doctrine of Nirvana which accommodates beings as they are. Thus they encourage the timid and the selfish. The sustaining power of the Buddhas of Transformation, though not that of the Dharmata-Buddha, gives assurance of the future and aids in turning thought for self into profound compassion and earnest zeal for others.

“The Dharma basis of *Prajnaparamita*, however, belongs to the plane of the Dharmata-Buddha. To the Bodhisattvas who have attained the seventh and eighth stages, the Dharmata-Buddha reveals Transcendental Intelligence and shows the Path. The Bodhisattva’s separative will dies in an inconceivable transformation that is followed by perfect self-realization of *Prajnaparamita*. No longer living for himself, his life is now the universal life of the Tathagata, manifest in its myriad transformations. The Bodhisattva, perfect in self-realization of *Prajnaparamita*, realizes that for the Buddhas there is no discrete Nirvana.

“*Paranirvana* — upon the passing of a Buddha — is no destruction. Nor is it death, for that could only produce birth and continuation. If it were a destruction, the deed would produce effects, but no effects follow from *Paranirvana*. It is neither vanishing nor abandonment, neither attainment nor non-attainment, neither significant nor non-significant, for there is no distinct Nirvana for Buddhas.

“Tathagata Nirvana is recognition of there being nothing outside the mind. Comprehending the self-nature of mind, there is an end to cherishing the dualisms of discrimination, a cessation of all thirsting and grasping, and a detachment from any sense of externality. The Nirvana containing a residuum of thinking-mind — including discrimination, attachments, aversions and egoism — is forever dissolved, along with dead logic and even the notion of truth. The four propositions are dispelled and there is insight into the realm of Reality.

“Tathagata Nirvana arises wherever there is a waning of the twofold passions, a disappearance of the twofold hindrances, and a patient acceptance of the twofold egolessness. It follows upon attainment of the turning around of consciousness within its deepest seat, and upon full blossoming of the self-realization of *Prajnaparamita*.

“Nirvana lies in the passage through the Bodhisattva stages one

by one, in the sustaining power of the Buddhas upholding Bodhisattvas in the bliss of the *Samadhis*, in the compassion for others transcending all thought of self, and in the realization of the Tathagata.

“Nirvana, then, is the very realm of Dharmata-Buddha, where *Prajnaparamita* or Buddhahood manifests in Perfect Love for all, where Perfect Love or the Tathagata state expresses itself in *Prajnaparamita* for the enlightenment of every being. That truly is Nirvana.

“Two types of beings do not enter Tathagata Nirvana: those who abandon the Bodhisattva ideal, holding it not to conform with the sutras, codified morality, or emancipation; also, those true Bodhisattvas who keep their vows, made for the sake of every being, saying, ‘So long as they do not attain Nirvana, I will not attain it myself.’ These true Bodhisattvas voluntarily renounce Nirvana.

“But no being is excluded from Nirvana by the will of the Tathagata. Eventually, each being will be touched by the wisdom and love of the Tthagatas of Transformation and will ascend the stages through merit.

“If only all beings realized it, they are already in the Tathagata Nirvana. In *Prajnaparamita*, all beings are ever in Nirvana.”

Lankavatara Sutra XIII





LOOKING WITHOUT WORDS

Mahamati addressed the Buddha: “Blessed One, do not all things exist because of the reality of words? Without words, Blessed One, there would be no rising of things. Hence, all things depend on the reality of words.”

The Blessed One spoke: “Even where there are no corresponding objects, Mahamati, there are words — for example, a hare’s horns, the tortoise’s hair, or a barren woman’s child. They are not to be found in the world, but the words are. They are neither entities nor non-entities, but they are expressed in words. If you say that objects exist because of the reality of words, this makes no sense.

“Words are not known in all the Buddha-lands, Mahamati. Words are an artificial creation. In some Buddha-lands, ideas are indicated by a steady look, in others by gestures, and in still others by a frown, by the movement of the eyes, by laughing or by yawning, by clearing the throat, by recollecting or by trembling. For example, Mahamati, in the worlds of the Steady-Looking as well as in those of Exquisite Odours, and in the Buddha-land of the Tathagata Samantabhadra, the Arhat, the Fully Enlightened One, the Bodhisattva-Mahasattvas attain the realization of all things as unborn and equally attain unsurpassed *Samadhis* by steadily looking, without so much as a wink. Therefore, Mahamati, the validity of things has nothing to do with the reality of words. Even in this world, one can observe the kingdoms of such remarkable creatures as ants and bees and see them carry on their work without words.”

Thus it is said: Just as space, the horns of a hare, and a barren woman’s child are non-entities save as constituted by verbal expression, so is this whole existence imagined.

When the causes and conditions are in combination, the ignorant imagine the birth of this world. Since they fail to understand the true cause, they wander about in the triple world which is their dwelling.





THE TRIPLE PARAMITAS

Mahamati the great Bodhisattva spoke: “The Blessed One has said that Buddhahood is realized by fulfilling the six *paramitas*. What are the six *paramitas*, and how are they fulfilled?”

The Blessed One answered:

“There are three levels of *paramitas*, Mahamati. What are they? The worldly, the celestial and the transcendental.

“The worldly *paramitas* are practised while clinging fast to the notion of an ego with all that belongs to it and while adhering to dualistic views. Those who desire this world of form will practise the *dana paramita* in order to gain these regions of existence, and likewise, Mahamati, the ignorant will practise the *paramitas* of *shila*, *kshanti*, *virya*, *dhyana* and *prajna*. Thus they will attain the psychic powers and be born in Brahmā’s heaven.

“The celestial *paramitas* are practised by *shravakas* and Pratyeka Buddhas whose thoughts are coloured by the notion of Nirvana. All the *paramitas* are performed by them, but like the ignorant, they desire to enjoy Nirvana for themselves.

“The transcendental *paramitas*, Mahamati, are practised by the Bodhisattva-Mahasattvas who are adepts in the highest form of spiritual discipline. They perceive that there is nothing in the world save what is seen of the Mind itself as a result of discursive thought. They understand that duality is of the Mind itself, and they see that discursive thought ceases to function. They know that grasping and clinging are non-existent.

“The Bodhisattva-Mahasattvas practise the *dana paramita* free from every thought of attachment to specific objects – for they are constructions of Mind – and only to benefit and offer happiness to all sentient beings.

“In dealing with the objective world, Bodhisattvas do not succumb to discursive thought; rather, they simply practise the *shila paramita*.

“Bodhisattvas practise the *kshanti paramita* without allowing discursive thinking to arise, and yet they have full knowledge of grasped and grasping.

“Bodhisattvas practise the *virya paramita* energetically from evening twilight until the break of dawn while strictly maintaining every discipline, and yet they permit no discursive thoughts to arise.

“Bodhisattvas practise the *dhyana paramita*, neither cherishing discursive thoughts nor slipping into the philosophers’ notion of Nirvana.

“Bodhisattvas practise the *Prajnaparamita*. When the discursive thinking of the Mind itself ceases, and when everything is exposed to the light of the Intellect, then there is no falling into dualistic views. A turning around occurs at the very root of consciousness, though previously generated karma is not destroyed. When transcendental knowledge is used to attain self-realization — that is the *Prajnaparamita*.

“These, Mahamati, are the *paramitas* in their triple meanings.”

Lankavatara Sutra LXXXVII



These portals lead the aspirant across the waters on ‘to the other shore’. Each Portal hath a golden key that openeth its gate; and these keys are:

1. *DANA, the key of charity and love immortal.*
2. *SHILA, the key of Harmony in word and act, the key that counterbalances the cause and the effect, and leaves no further room for Karmic action.*
3. *KSHANTI, patience sweet, that nought can ruffle.*
4. *VIRAGA, indifference to pleasure and to pain, illusion conquered, truth alone perceived.*
5. *VIRYA, the dauntless energy that fights its way to the supernal TRUTH, out of the mire of lies terrestrial.*
6. *DHYANA, whose golden gate once opened leads the Narjol toward the realm of Sat eternal and its ceaseless contemplation.*
7. *PRAJNA, the key to which makes of a man a God, creating him a Bodhisattva, son of the Dhyanis.*

Such to the Portals are the golden keys. Before thou canst approach the last, O weaver of thy freedom, thou hast to master these Paramitas of perfection — the virtues transcendental six and ten in number — along the weary Path.

The Voice of the Silence



TURNING INWARD

The Bodhisattva Manjusri arose from his seat, bowed low at the feet of the Buddha, and chanted this *gatha* with reverence.

Perfect and pellucid is the nature of the *Bodhi* ocean,
Pure and unflawed the dazzling essence of *Bodhi*.
When its inner luminosity shone forth, it formed
A field which eclipsed its radiant nature.
Thus from delusion arose a relative emptiness
Wherein illusory worlds were arbitrarily built.
Stabilizing itself, thinking created the continents
While the deluded knower became a living being.
This voidness formed with *Bodhi*
Is only a bubble in the ocean.
When this bubble bursts, the unreality of the void
Is revealed – how much more that of the three worlds!
Though all return to the One at the Source,
There are manifold methods for doing so.
In truth, Thou Honoured by the World,
All Buddhas appear in this world
To teach the most suitable method –
That of using omnipresent sound.
Samadhi can be reached
By making use of hearing.
With reverence I will tell the Tathagata
What Avalokiteshwara said:
When one dwells in inner solitude,
Rolling drums are heard
From all the ten directions;
Thus hearing is complete and perfect.
Eyes cannot pierce a screen,
Nor can mouth or nose;
The body feels only when it is touched;

The mind's thinking is distorted, discontinuous.
 Voice, whether from far or near,
 Can always be heard.
 The five other organs are imperfect,
 Hearing alone is pervasive.
 Presence and absence of sound and voice
 Are registered by the ear as being and not-being,
 Yet absence of sound is only nothing heard,
 Not hearing devoid of its nature.
 Absence of sound is not the cessation of hearing,
 Nor presence of sound its beginning.
 Hearing, beyond creation,
 Beyond annihilation, is in truth everlasting.
 In this *Saba* world,
 Teaching is by voice.
 Beings who do not understand the nature of hearing
 Follow sound and continue to be born again.
 You may hear of secret methods
 From Buddhas countless as dust,
 But without vanquishing desires,
 Hearing much only causes error.
 To hear the Self, why not turn within
 The power to hear the Buddha's words?
 Hearing does not create itself
 But owes its origin to sound.
 When freed from external sounds by turning within,
 What can hearing be called?
 If one organ of sense is returned to its source,
 All six are thereby liberated.
 Seeing and hearing are like optical illusions;
 The three worlds are like flowers in the sky.
 When hearing is withdrawn, the illusion vanishes;
 With sense-objects gone, *Bodhi* is perfect and pellucid.
 In pristine purity, its illumination suffuses all,
 And its shining stillness enfolds the great void.
 Ananda and all who listen here

Should turn inward the power of hearing
 To listen to the one nature
 Which alone reaches highest *Bodhi*.
 Thus Enlightenment is found.
 Buddhas countless as the sands of the Ganges
 Have passed through this gate to Nirvana.
 All Tathagatas of past ages
 Have followed this method
 And all Bodhisattvas here and now
 Cultivate this perfection.
 Those who practise in the future
 Should rely on this *dharmā*.

Surangama Sutra IV, passim



The seeds of Wisdom cannot sprout and grow in airless space. To live and reap experience, the mind needs breadth and depth and points to draw it towards the Diamond Soul. Seek not those points in Maya's realm; but soar beyond illusions, search the eternal and the changeless SAT, mistrusting fancy's false suggestions.

For mind is like a mirror; it gathers dust while it reflects. It needs the gentle breezes of Soul-wisdom to brush away the dust of our illusions. Seek, O Beginner, to blend thy Mind and Soul.

Shun ignorance, and likewise shun illusion. Avert thy face from world deceptions: mistrust thy senses; they are false. But within thy body — the shrine of thy sensations — seek in the Impersonal for the "Eternal Man"; and having sought him out, look inward: thou art Buddha.

The Voice of the Silence



TATHATA

The Mind is the same as the mind of pure Self, Nature, true *tathata*, Buddha-nature, Tathagata-store, *Dharmakaya*, the realm of *dharmas*, and Dharma-nature.

Why is the Mind called true *tathata*?

All *dharmas* or elements of conditioned existence depend on the Mind for their being and have Mind as their substance. From this standpoint, all *dharmas* are illusory and imaginary, and their being is in reality non-being. By contrast with these unreal *dharmas*, the Mind may be called true.

Yet, even though these *dharmas* have no being in reality, because they originate in illusion and fancy, they nevertheless appear to be created and annihilated. But when such unreal *dharmas* are created, the Mind is not brought into existence, and when they are annihilated, the Mind does not perish. Uncreated, Mind is never augmented; imperishable, it is never diminished. And as it never increases or decreases, Mind is called *tathata*.

Concentration means knowing that all *dharmas*, having from the beginning no *tathata* of their own, are never created or annihilated by themselves, but arise as productions of illusion and imagination. They have an unreal existence. The existence of these created *dharmas* is, in truth, non-existence. They are only the One Mind, the substance of which cannot be differentiated. If one seizes this standpoint, then in total mental calm one can stop the flow of false ideas. This is concentration.

Insight means knowing that *dharmas* are neither created nor annihilated, but that they originate in and arise out of the Mind to serve an illusory and fanciful worldly purpose. They are like the illusions of dreams – seeming to exist when they do not. To know this is to attain insight.

When concentration is achieved, the Pure Mind is merged through insight with non-dual Nature and is harmoniously united with all beings as a body of one single character. When this occurs, the three Treasures – the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha – are fused without being dual. There is calmness, tranquillity and purity, depth, stability and quietude. The inner

silence is pure and pellucid. It moves without the appearance of movement. It acts without the appearance of action. Thus it is, for all *dharmas* are originally the same everywhere without differentiation, and the nature of Mind is *dharma*. This is the root of the most profound Dharma-nature.

When insight is attained, the root of Pure Mind and the activity of the phenomenal world are manifest without obstacle, spontaneously showing forth the capability of all things pure and impure.

When there is concentration, one's mind is everywhere the same, and one is freed from the cycle of birth and death, though because of insight, one's attitudes and activities are the fruit of causation, and one does not enter Nirvana.

When there is concentration, one dwells ever in Nirvana, though because of insight, one remains in the realm of birth and death.

When there is concentration, one is not polluted by the world, though because of insight, one is not restricted to the realm of silence.

When there is concentration, one attains eternal silence in the process of acting, though because of insight, one attains eternal activity within the realm of silence.

When there is concentration, one knows that the round of birth and death is the same as Nirvana, though because of insight one knows that Nirvana is the same as the round of birth and death.

When there is concentration, one knows that the cycle of birth and death and Nirvana cannot be attained simultaneously, though because of insight, one knows that transmigration is the cycle of birth and death, and the cessation of transmigration is Nirvana.





ASPIRATION AND DISCIPLINE

B*hutatathata* has a twofold influence – one derived from its essential nature, the other from its energy. In its essential nature, *bhutatathata* enshrines eternal purity, supremely stainless and without any limit. As an inexhaustible reservoir of benefits, it is the basis of all manifestation. Under its irresistible influence, men and women turn away from oppressive Samsara and seek the life-giving bliss of Nirvana. They share the faith that the energy of *bhutatathata* resides within themselves, but they must release it through their aspiration and discipline.

If it is true that all beings without exception share the energy of *bhutatathata* among themselves, why are some conscious of this indwelling energy while others are oblivious to it, and why are there glaring inequalities amongst beings in their pilgrimage from aspiration to Nirvana? Should not everyone attain Enlightenment simultaneously? This diversity is due to the fact that though *bhutatathata* is common to all beings, their degrees of ignorance are as numerous as the sands of the Ganges, and human beings entangled in ignorance markedly differ in their imprisonment. Ignorant notions and desires are numberless. Their range and reach are known only to the Tathagata.

The sacred teachings have always distinguished between energy and its use, and there must be a fusion of the two for true attainment. Though wood contains within itself the latent force of fire, it will not burn unless ignited. So, too, with the divine fire of *bhutatathata*. Although human beings share it among themselves, they might never release it if the means to do so were not disclosed by the Enlightened Ones. And if they learn it but do not practise, it is of little avail. Yet even the exemplification of the Enlightened could not arouse the sacred flame within human beings were it not for the latent resolve within them to nurture it with devotion. Only when the energy is used is true attainment possible.

There is within the inner recesses of each human soul a divine flame – nurtured and protected by the compassionate ideation of the Blessed Ones – which in its own radiance has no connection with Samsara, but which continually turns towards Nirvana. This

inner radiance sustains the practice of virtue together with the earnest endeavour to achieve it. Thus the aspiring soul enters into the companionship of the Blessed Ones, receives their instruction, is benefitted and beatified, and eventually attains to the blissful realm of Nirvana.

Bhutatahata in its energetic flow exerts externally incalculable force, radiating its influence over all that exists. Its mode of activity is twofold, the specific and the universal. The specific influence suffuses every stage of a person's unfoldment, and to this end the Buddhas manifest themselves as parents, family, relations, servants, friends and even as seeming enemies to those whom they choose to instruct. The Buddhas may endear themselves to humanity in every conceivable way to persuade it to perfect itself in wisdom and goodness. The Blessed Ones through tenderness inspire them to increase their store of merit. The specific influence is also twofold, direct and indirect. Through direct influence, attainment is very rapid, and through indirect influence, it is gradual in respect to time. Each mode is divisible into phases of practice and attainment.

The universal influence is active through the determination of the Mighty Ones to deliver all beings from bondage. It is like a great benediction eternally uttered, encouraging all beings to think on them and thus grow in merit. When human beings at last enter into a state of purity, they behold the hidden Buddhas that are germs in the souls of all humanity.

Mahayana Shrad-dotpada III, 1

ASVAGHOSHA





SANDS OF THE GANGA

Once the great Bodhisattva Mahamati addressed the Blessed One in these words: “It is said by the Blessed One in a scriptural text that the Tathagatas of the past, present and future are like the sands of the river Ganga. Is this, O Blessed One, to be understood literally? Is there some distinct meaning? Please explain this to me, Blessed One.”

The Lord Buddha said: “Mahamati, do not take this literally, for the Buddhas of the threefold time are not measurable by the sands of the Ganga. Why? An analogy to anything superior to the world and surpassing it cannot be called an analogy because within it is that which resembles and that which does not resemble. Fully Enlightened Ones offer no such analogies.

“Nevertheless, Mahamati, this comparison is made by myself and the Tathagatas – likening the Tathagatas, Arhats, Fully Enlightened Ones, to the sands of the Ganga – to shock the ignorant and simple-minded caught on the wheel of transmigration, tenaciously clinging to the notions of permanent and perishable and acquiescing in the erroneous thinking of the philosophers. But to those seeking to escape the wheel of existence, searching after the perfect state, wondering how it can be realized, it is taught that the appearance of the Tathagatas is not really like the flowering of the Udumbara tree. Thus they will see that attainment of Buddhahood is not an impossible undertaking and will exert their energies.

“The scriptural text teaches that the Tathagatas appear as rarely as the flower of the Udumbara, and this is for the sake of those human beings who are to be guided by me. No one, however, has ever seen the Udumbara blooming, nor will anyone do so. Nevertheless, the Tathagatas are present in the world; they have been seen and are to be seen. Saying that the Tathagatas are as rare as the Udumbara blossom has no reference to the establishment of supreme truth.

“When absolute truth is established, Mahamati, it surpasses beyond reckoning anything in the world that might be offered as an analogy to it. Hence the ignorant and simple-minded are incapable of believing. The realm of self-realization, attained

through noble wisdom — *arya prajna* — has no room for analogies. Truth transcends all notions characteristic of *Chitta*, *Manas* and *Manovijnana*. Truth is the Tathagatas. In them, therefore, there is nothing describable by analogy.

“Nevertheless, a comparison is sometimes useful. For instance, the Tathagatas are compared to the sands of the Ganga because they are ever the same and impartial to all beings, ever free from images and discursive thought. The sands of the Ganga, Mahamati, are tossed about by fish and tortoises, elephants and lions, but the sands do not conjure images or think discursively. They do not express resentment, saying, ‘We are the under-trodden’ or the opposite. They are non-discursive, pure in themselves and free from taint. In the same way, Mahamati, the self-realization of *arya prajna*, attained by the Tathagatas, Arhats, Fully Enlightened Ones, is like the Ganga; their powers, psychic faculties and self-control are like its sands; and however much they are tossed about by the fish of the philosophers and by the ignorant of various schools, they are untroubled by images and discursive thought. Filled with the joy of *Samapatti*, because of their original vows, the Tathagatas are free from partiality, being devoid of likes and dislikes.

“To illustrate, Mahamati, the sands of the Ganga share the character of the earth. The conflagration that will break forth at the *kalpa*’s end will scorch the earth, but cannot destroy its inner nature. The earth is not consumed, Mahamati, for it is inseparably connected with the element of fire. Thus only the ignorant imagine through false ideas that the earth shall be consumed. Yet the earth provides only the material for the element fire, and is never consumed. In the same way, Mahamati, the *Dharmakaya* of the Tathagatas, like the sands of the Ganga, is indestructible.

“To illustrate, Mahamati, the sands of the Ganga are without measure. Similarly, the light-beams of the Tathagata are without measure, shining for all assemblies of the Buddha in order to arouse beings and bring them to maturity in knowledge of truth.

“To illustrate, Mahamati, the sands of the Ganga never assume a nature other than their own. Similarly, Mahamati, the Tathagatas, Arhats, Fully Enlightened Ones, neither evolve nor disappear in transmigration. In them the cause of coming to be is destroyed.

“To illustrate, Mahamati, the sands of the Ganga care not

whether they are swept away or are added together. In the same way, Mahamati, the knowledge of the Tathagatas — drawn upon for the sake of all beings — is neither depleted nor augmented, for the Dharma has no material body. Only that which has a material body is subject to extinction.

“To illustrate, Mahamati, the sands of the Ganga, however much compressed to squeeze out ghee and oil, yield nothing. In the same way, Mahamati, the Tathagatas never abandon their deep concern, original vows, and joy in the *Dharmadhatu*, however much oppressed by pain for the sake of all beings, so long as any being has yet to be led into Nirvana by the Tathagatas. They are endowed with a great compassionate heart.

“To illustrate, Mahamati, the sands of the Ganga flow with the stream wherever there is water. In the same way, Mahamati, the teachings of the Tathagata regarding the Buddha-truths arise along the entire course of the stream of Nirvana.

“In the Tathagata, Mahamati, there is no going away, for that would mean destruction. The prime limit of transmigration is unknown, Mahamati. How then can I speak of going away? That is annihilation, though it is not known by the ignorant and simple-minded.”

Mahamati asked: “If, Blessed One, the prime limit of transmigration is unknowable, how is the emancipation of beings knowable?”

The Blessed One replied: “When it is understood, Mahamati, that the objective world is nothing else than what is seen by the Mind, the habit-energy of false speculation and erroneous discursive thinking — active through beginningless time — is dissolved. When there is a turning about at the root of discursive thought there is emancipation, not annihilation. Hence there can be no talk of endlessness. Endlessness in limit is but another name for discursive thought. Apart from products of discursive thought, there are no beings. When everything internal and external is intelligently examined, knowing and known remain quiescent. If it is not seen that all things arise from discursive thought, discursive thinking asserts itself. But when this is understood, discursiveness ceases.

“Therefore it has been said:

“Those who regard the removers of obstruction, the Buddhas,

like the sands of the Ganga, as neither destroyed nor gone forever, see the Tathagata.

“Like the sands of the Ganga, they are empty of error. They flow with the stream and are enduring, like the nature of Buddhahood.”

Lankavatara Sutra LXXXV



Alas! when once thou hast become like the fix'd star in highest heaven, that bright celestial orb must shine from out the spatial depths for all – save for itself; give light to all, but take from none.

Alas! when once thou hast become like the pure snow in mountain vales, cold and unfeeling to the touch, warm and protective to the seed that sleepeth deep beneath its bosom – 'tis now that snow which must receive the biting frost, the northern blasts, thus shielding from their sharp and cruel tooth the earth that holds the promised harvest, the harvest that will feed the hungry.

Self-doomed to live through future Kalpas, unthanked and unperceived by men; wedged as a stone with countless other stones which form the “Guardian Wall”, such is thy future if the seventh Gate thou passest. Built by the hands of many Masters of Compassion, raised by their tortures, by their blood cemented, it shields mankind, since man is man, protecting it from further and far greater misery and sorrow.

The Voice of the Silence



KWAN-YIN

Aksayamati, the Bodhisattva of Infinite Mind, questioned Lord Buddha in a *gatha*:

O Honoured by the World, endowed with the mystic marks!
Let me enquire about her,
Child of the Buddha, why she is called
Kwan-Yin, Who Hears the Cries of the World?

Lord Buddha spoke these *gathas*:

Listen to the deeds of Kwan-Yin,
Who wholly responds in every direction;
Her all-embracing vow is deep as the sea,
Inconceivable in its *kalpas* beyond reckoning.
Serving thousands of millions of Buddhas,
She has intoned the great pure vow.

I will tell you briefly:

Whoever hears her name, whoever sees her
And remembers her unceasingly,
Will extinguish the sorrows of existence.

She is ever longed for, ever sought after,
The spotless pure ray of light,
The Sun of Wisdom dispelling darkness,
Subduer of misfortune of wind and fire
Who illuminates all the world,
The Law of Mercy, and clarifying thunder,
The numinous cloud of compassion
Pouring forth spiritual rain like sweet nectar
To quench the flames of agony.

The wondrous voice of Kwan-Yin,
The Brahma-voice, voice of the sweeping tide,
Surpassing the sounds of the world,
Is to be held firm in the mind,

Unaccompanied by even the shadow of doubt.
 For one who is pure, Kwan-Yin,
 In every pain, suffering and even death,
 Can be a centre of reliance.
 Perfect in every attainment,
 Whose compassionate eye beholds all beings,
 A boundless ocean of blessings —
 Prostrate, let all revere Kwan-Yin.

Thereupon the Bodhisattva Dharanimdhara, Holder of the Earth, arose, came forward and addressed the Buddha: "O Honoured of the World! Whosoever hears of the sovereign work of Kwan-Yin, such an one will have great merit." And all present set their minds upon perfect enlightenment.

Kwan-Yin Sutra, passim



Kwan-Yin-Tien means the 'melodious heaven of Sound,' the abode of Kwan-Yin, or the 'Divine Voice' literally. This 'Voice' is a synonym of the *Verbum* or the Word: 'Speech,' as the expression of thought. Thus may be traced the connection with, and even the origin of the Hebrew *Bat-Kol*, the 'daughter of the Divine Voice,' or *Verbum*. . . . For Vach . . . is, in company with Kwan-Yin, with Isis . . . and other goddesses, the female *Logos*, so to speak, the goddess of the *active* forces in Nature, the Word, Voice or Sound, and Speech. If Kwan-Yin is the 'melodious Voice,' so is Vach; 'the melodious cow who milked forth sustenance and water' (the female principle) — 'who yields us nourishment and sustenance,' as Mother-Nature. She is associated in the work of creation with the Prajapati. She is male and female *ad libitum*, as Eve is with Adam. And she is a form of Aditi — the principle higher than *Ether* — in Akasa, the synthesis of all the forces of Nature; thus Vach and Kwan-Yin are both the magic potency of Occult sound in Nature and Ether.

The Secret Doctrine



THE MESSAGE OF GAUTAMA BUDDHA

It is necessary to state the main message of the Buddha in a way which makes apparent the basis of its universal appeal. The teachings of the Buddha can be studied under various heads. One can study Buddhist metaphysics, or interest oneself in the formulation of Buddhist ethics; one can also enquire into the possible existence of a Buddhist psychology, or concern oneself with deriving from the teachings of the Buddha a complete, coherent social philosophy. All these form part of one central message, and have the characteristic of an organic unity between them because they are derived from the various qualities of the life of one man — a master man, a man who was different from each of us, from the ordinary man of today, but only in degree and not in kind.

We must, therefore, study the various aspects of the Buddha's message in the light of certain universal keys that can be applied by all men. It is easy but wrong to go away with the idea that the Buddha was a very special kind of preacher who came to give a unique kind of message to humanity for a purpose different from that which was behind the efforts of other Teachers who came to other people. We must regard the Buddha in the light of the eternal wisdom of mankind. It is in the light of the Perennial Philosophy, itself only a reflection of the innate wisdom of the one Divine Spirit, that the message of Gautama the Buddha can best be understood.

Before we can understand this message, we must ask ourselves: What manner of man was the Buddha? From whom did he come? To whom did he come? What was his aim and the significance of his impact?

The Buddha was a master man and not a god, a man who became a master man by his own spiritual strivings, carried on through a period of many lives on earth and brought to final fruition in his last recorded life — the life we imperfectly know. He attained to *Bodhi-Dharma*, the supreme state of wisdom, because he fully developed in himself the faculty possessed by all of us, the faculty of *Buddhi*. It was by the unfoldment of *Buddhi* — perfect intuition, spiritual discernment, universal perception — that the Buddha

himself became possible. Therefore, the title of 'Buddha' assumed by this great soul is only possible after a long process of questioning carried on through a whole series of lives. Spiritual life, like ordinary life, is a process of progress through repetition. It takes the form of a steady spiral-like ascent, going round and round through similar phases, but all the time going higher and higher. The Buddha, the Anointed One, the Wise One, the Great Master, by his sacrifice demonstrated to common human beings the possibility of developing the spiritual powers latent within themselves.

Whence did he come? Ultimately, from nowhere else than the 'place' from which all of us have come, the one great Spirit, from which, far back in the dawn of time, we derived our own individuality, and since when we have gone through various stages of manifestation in the different kingdoms of nature. In another sense he came from a glorious fraternity of perfected prophets and teachers and of illuminated seers, because in previous lives he had already entered the membership of this fraternity by dint of his own efforts. The Buddha came from a fraternity of divine men who, like him, had achieved spiritual wisdom by their own efforts through many lives in a previous period of evolution.

He came immediately to the people of India, to the Hindus, to destroy idolatry and the power of the priests, and to fight against blind belief. He showed them that the spirit of true Hinduism had vanished because of the importance which had been given to the letter of the law and to mere mechanical ritual. But though that was his immediate historical mission, he came also to a second and small class that had always existed; he came to a class of *chelas* who were ready to receive that knowledge which he alone could give, souls who were waiting in the later stages on the threshold of final spiritual realization. He came to disciples who were not only his in that life, but to whom he had taught in previous lives under different names. He came to a third class, the ordinary men and women in his time and in our own. He came to common humanity, but also to statesmen and rulers. He did not directly teach any statesmen or rulers except in the sense in which the spiritual truths he gave are observable in some of the policies of specific rulers in his own time. They took his message and gave it a special significance, so that in Ashoka's work we have the complete example of a Buddhist social system. All those classes of people

were the recipients of the Buddha's teaching because he, by his own life, showed certain qualities that inspired all of them.

The aim of the Buddha was to restate the Perennial Philosophy by showing the corruptions into which its latest forms in India had fallen, and his extraordinary influence was based upon his own life of enlightenment, compassion and sacrifice.

The Buddha taught not that there was nothing divine or deific in the universe, but rather that there was no *personal* god upon whom the burdens of human sins could be thrown, or to whose arbitrary act the creation of the universe could be attributed. The whole universe is but the manifold and variegated application of a single, supreme, Life Principle. This Life Principle works through various forms under a universal law of causation. Things are related to each other in a cause-effect-cause sequence, every effect having within itself the possibility of leading to other causes, other effects, just as it is itself a result of prior causes. The Buddha not only proclaimed the existence of this one Life Principle but also pointed to the interconnectedness of its different aspects, the unity of this one Principle in itself and the unity of its various manifestations. He taught that any particular position in space and time must be viewed as a part in relation to the whole, and not in terms of the separative self. The latter is in a relative position, from which complete knowledge cannot be gained and from which all perceptions obtained contain within themselves the elements of error and illusion. He showed that error and evil are purely relative, removable by attaining to that universal consciousness gained only by going within oneself, for it is, in essence, that which unites all beings in the cosmos.

He taught that the individuality of every one of us, though spiritual, and though permanent and real compared to the illusory and ever-changing phenomena of the present, is itself relative and unreal in terms of the one Supreme Spirit. He showed that the universal Life Principle is not exhausted in any one form or described by any definition, and it cannot be given any attributes. Therefore, whenever he was questioned about the Absolute, his only answer was utter silence. His silence should not be taken for atheism, a denial of a divine Principle in nature and in man; rather he taught that this condition of universal self-consciousness is, in itself, the highest possible form of knowledge. In order to attain

spiritual knowledge, we must cast off the shackles of our identification with the personality.

These are some of the main elements in Buddhist metaphysics, and they are enough to enable us to go on to understand the importance of Buddhist ethics, as derived from the metaphysics. But one point may be made a little clearer. The laws which govern the inter-connectedness between the various parts of the phenomenal world are all different expressions of One Law, which is only the One Life in action. The Buddha stressed the law-governed aspect of the universe rather than the deific aspect for the sake of human understanding. There is only one Law – the Law of Karma, of intelligent causation, of divine rhythm. All aspects of the Law give rise to different conditions of existence. He taught that all the problems which face men and women, especially the problems of suffering and evil, may be met successfully because they merely present aspects of the one Law itself, and ordinary human beings may go from the knowledge of those aspects to an understanding of the whole, and from that to a contemplation of the one Life Principle. Then they can begin to meditate upon the Cosmic Consciousness, the Great Unknowable.

Buddhist ethics in its most familiar form has been stated as consisting of eight steps upon one great Path. This teaching of the Eightfold Path was called the fourth Truth, the first three being really statements of metaphysics based upon empirical evidence. Suffering exists. Suffering is inevitable. The cause of suffering is selfish and possessive desire. The cure of suffering is the removal of the false sense of attachment and possession so that each individual is no longer caught in the meshes of his own personality but goes outside and beyond it and looks heavenwards.

The existence of the Path itself is a metaphysical truth. The Path exists because there exists the goal of the unity between the individual man and the Great Self or the Godhead. The Path ever exists. It is not something which the Buddha created; he merely made it more easily evident to common human beings by walking that Path himself. It is the famous Eightfold Path that constitutes the central ethical message of the Buddha.

The Buddha started with *Right Knowledge* because he wished to show human beings the possibility of attaining a rational understanding of the spiritual universe. His method was a

scientific approach to the subject-matter of religion. It was particularly important in his life to reveal the rational character of his doctrine because he came to fight blind belief. We start with Right Knowledge, which is Self-knowledge, but we wish to gain spiritual knowledge, not for the sake of the edification of the illusory personal self, but to gain knowledge of the One Self. So we must cease to want anything for the lower separative self; that gives us *Right Motive* or Right Thought.

With Right Motive we seek Right Knowledge, and to do this we begin by working on the mind, which is the first organ available to us for getting knowledge. But we also begin to concern ourselves with expressing our growing spiritual knowledge in the mind through proper speech. Self-knowledge *is* in the mind of man, it is not gained by the mind of man; it is merely unfolded. So *Right Speech* arises as a condition of gaining and manifesting the Self-knowledge which we want for the highest motive, and in manifesting Self-knowledge with the Right Motive through pure speech, we automatically come to the level of action. We do not concern ourselves with ritual, with do's and don'ts, because we start from within and go outward. From *Right Action* we go to *Right Livelihood*. The man who wishes to gain spiritual Self-knowledge with the Right Motive, and wishes to express that knowledge through better forms of speech will, in his life, have a duty which he must perform in a way that makes it possible for him to keep to his main spiritual pursuit uninterrupted. Perseverance in this main pursuit amidst the cares and duties of ordinary life is *Right Effort* or Right Mindfulness.

The next step is *Right Concentration*, for with all this knowledge, motive, speech, action and livelihood, we must be able to work upon and control the lower mind involved in the desires of the personality, as well as to reveal the knowledge of the higher mind illuminated by intuition. That is why various habits and practices in the direction of mind control become important, because it is the only way of organizing the lower mind so that it does not inhibit the expression of higher mental activity. That leads us to the last step of *Right Meditation*. It was because the Buddha wished in his own life to gain and show the possibility of true self-transcendence for the sake of the spiritual service of humanity that he took birth again and again.

All these eight steps of the Path merely follow from Buddhist metaphysics and must naturally lead to Buddhist psychology. Buddhist psychology is essentially a code of self-discipline which it is possible for any human being to adopt for himself. Even if we cannot as yet understand completely the great goal of Self-knowledge, we can already show, in our lives, some self-control. That is the basis of Buddhist psychology. The Buddha showed that we cannot deny the existence of the one Life Principle. Therefore any exaggerated emphasis or wrong use of its particular manifestations is, in fact, a denial and desecration of the one Life Principle. When a man commits any of the 'vices', he defies the Law of the Life Principle itself, for each one of the 'vices' arises purely from the inflated and false values we give to the various forms, powers and manifestations of the one Spirit. It is impossible to commit any of the ordinary, so-called 'sins' unless we have given a wrong value or improper use to one of the natural functions and faculties of man. It is possible for the true follower of the Buddha to enjoy life and to extract from every experience the essence, but only the primordial essence, and only for any purpose relevant to the Real Self. The Buddha recommended self-discipline and self-control not for their own sake, but because he showed that without them the faculties were wasted, and suffering was inflicted upon oneself. Buddhist psychology is one of fulfilment, balance and peace.

What of Buddhist social philosophy? It is centered mainly in the principle of conformity to and emulation of the great Wheel of Law. Law is itself the expression of a state of order and rhythm eternally established in the universe. We are taught to look upon every human being as an individual soul gaining experience, learning from the school of life, suffering for a purpose, coming back again and again to live on earth so that greater knowledge and more freedom may be attained. The Buddhist state is a welfare state in that it provides citizens with an environment in which it is possible for all to pursue the great spiritual efforts which the Buddha proclaimed as the true needs of human life. But the state does not do the work of its citizens for them; it merely aims at easing inevitable human misery. It works with the Great Law of moral interdependence. Man, by righting his relations with the universe, can right his

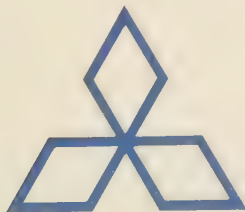
relations with society, but he has as yet no complete knowledge of his true relations with the universe. He can begin, however, by having right relations with his neighbours.

Thus the entire message of the Buddha constitutes a wonderful unity, universal because it is applicable to all men and has been restated by different Teachers in different ways. The Buddha gave to one and all the possibility of attaining to the one and only end of spiritual endeavour, which is, as it were, escape from the lower life and entry into the higher, the spiritual life. He taught, not the going into some eternal retreat, but the gaining of Nirvana or Enlightenment *in* life, in the company of one's fellow men, and voluntary reincarnation for the sake of sharing the same possibility of self-knowledge and inner peace with suffering humanity.

The Buddha's own life was the beautiful and lustrous realization of three great principles – the principle of regeneration, the principle of renunciation and the principle of reverence. We must regenerate ourselves as he did, we must gain more and more divine knowledge and power and then renounce all we gain; thus, by a series of steps, each greater than the last, we come to the final step, the supreme renunciation of individual bliss which he superbly demonstrated in his own life. Above all, we must take refuge in the Tathagata light of Gautama the Buddha and in the Order of Disciples which he came to re-establish upon earth. We must show reverence to the Buddhas, for without reverence nothing is possible in human life.

Caxton Hall, London
March 25, 1952

RAGHAVAN IYER





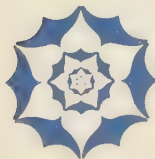
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GLOSSARY

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|---------------------|--|
| <i>Adharma</i> | Irreligion; lack of dutifulness; confusion |
| <i>Alayavijnana</i> | Storehouse of consciousness; consciousness beyond the pairs of opposites; consciousness corresponding to pure potential |
| <i>Anagamin</i> | One who will not have to enter involuntary incarnation again |
| <i>Anu</i> | Atom; point |
| <i>Anuttara</i> | Supreme, ultimate |
| <i>Arhat</i> | An emancipated being, an Initiate |
| <i>Arya Prajna</i> | Noble Wisdom |
| <i>Asuras</i> | Class of celestial beings |
| <i>Atman</i> | The Universal Spirit; the seventh and highest principle in man; the Self |
| <i>Bhutatatbata</i> | The root of manifestation; the reservoir of good |
| <i>Bodhi</i> | Wisdom |
| <i>Bodhi-Dharma</i> | Supreme state of wisdom; full consciousness of ultimate reality; teachings of Gautama Buddha |
| <i>Bodhisattva</i> | Literally, Wisdom-being, one on the way to enlightenment; an enlightened being (Buddha) who renounces Nirvana to aid all human beings to achieve enlightenment |
| <i>Buddha-field</i> | The field of consciousness created by the ideation of an enlightened being |
| <i>Buddhi</i> | The Universal Soul; the spiritual soul in man (the sixth principle); the vehicle of <i>Atman</i> ; divine discernment |
| <i>Chitta</i> | Modes of limited consciousness, both universal and particular |
| <i>Dana</i> | Love or charity; the first <i>paramita</i> or virtue that leads beyond conditioned existence |
| <i>Dharma</i> | Element of existence; ultimate nature, reality, truth, existence; Sacred Law; duty; righteousness; the Moral Law |

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| <i>Dbarmadbatu</i> | The realm of Spirit |
| <i>Dbarmakaya</i> | The vesture of pure, unqualified reality; the robe of Nirvana |
| <i>Dhyana</i> | Meditation; state of absorption in meditation |
| <i>Dorje</i> | The Diamond Sceptre; source of strength and self-mastery; inherent quality of the Soul |
| <i>Gandharvas</i> | Class of celestial beings |
| <i>Gatha</i> | Hymn in the <i>Zend-Avesta</i> |
| <i>Gupta Vidya</i> | Secret Wisdom; highest knowledge |
| <i>Guru</i> | Spiritual Teacher |
| <i>Kalpa</i> | A vast cycle of time |
| <i>Kleshas</i> | Roots of defilement, limitation, taints |
| <i>Ksbanti</i> | The perfection of patience; calmness; the third <i>paramita</i> |
| <i>Mahasattva</i> | Literally, great being; courageous being |
| <i>Manovijnana</i> | Synthesizing consciousness, capable of asserting universal propositions |
| <i>Mantra</i> | Incantation; sacred invocation |
| <i>Nama rupa</i> | Name and form |
| <i>Nirvana</i> | Complete absorption into the undifferentiated ground of Being; spiritual bliss |
| <i>Parama paramita</i> | Supreme perfection, the ultimate quality of character |
| <i>Paramita</i> | Virtue, quality of character, soul-quality |
| <i>Paranirvana</i> | Highest emancipation; Nirvana without any residual conditions |
| <i>Prajnaparamita</i> | The <i>paramita</i> or virtue of wisdom; hence the wisdom-literature of the Mahayana schools |
| <i>Rupa</i> | Literally, form; body or vesture |
| <i>Sakradagamin</i> | One who has only one more life to live before enlightenment |
| <i>Samadhi</i> | Literally, self-possession; the highest state of <i>yoga</i> ; ecstatic meditation; supreme self-control |

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| <i>Samsara</i> | Conditionality, as contrasted with Nirvana; realm of becoming, in contrast to Being; birth and death; conditioned existence; illusion |
| <i>Sbila</i> | Harmony in action; the second <i>paramita</i> |
| <i>Skandhas</i> | Literally, aggregates; composites, congeries, 'heaps' |
| <i>Sloka</i> | A verse or stanza |
| <i>Shravaka</i> | A listener; first stage of discipleship (especially in the Hinayana schools) |
| <i>Srotapatti</i> | One who has entered the stream leading to enlightenment |
| <i>Suryagarbha</i> | Literally, seed or womb of Surya, the sun; name of a Bodhisattva |
| <i>Sunyata</i> | The Void; ultimate reality; nothingness, emptiness |
| <i>Tathagata</i> | Nature of a Buddha; one who has followed in the steps of his predecessors |
| <i>Tathagatagarbha</i> | The seed, womb or embryo of the Tathagata |
| <i>Tathata</i> | Real nature, ultimate nature; attributelessness |
| <i>Trikaya</i> | Triple body or vesture of an enlightened being |
| <i>Trivedana</i> | Three basic experiences: joy, sorrow and indifference |
| <i>Vajra</i> | See <i>Dorje</i> |
| <i>Vijnana</i> | Consciousness; mind in general; mind associated with the senses |
| <i>Virya</i> | Energy directed towards truth, the fourth (in some systems the fifth) <i>paramita</i> |
| <i>Yana</i> | Vehicle, path; hence Mahayana, greater vehicle, and Hinayana, lesser vehicle |
| <i>Yogin</i> | A practitioner of <i>yoga</i> or spiritual disciplines |



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When this discourse on *dharma* is being taught, it is easy for me to accept and believe it. But in future days, in the last period of the sweet doctrine, in the last five hundred years when the Teaching wanes, beings will listen to this Teaching, retain it, ponder it, and illuminate it for others, and they will be blessed indeed.

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